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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of Imperial College London
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I hereby declare that the work contained in this PhD thesis is my own original and independent research and everything else is appropriately referenced.

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Abstract

The following interdisciplinary study focuses on the poetic, prose and translation work of the Austrian Jewish writer Erich Fried. The present research concentrates on expressions of Fried’s identity or his sense of self in his work.

Rather than being interpreted as a constant value, identity is perceived as fluid, expressed as a strategic positioning in one’s surroundings. It is postulated that various aspects of Fried’s identity appear in his work. Several traits coalesce to show one aspect or a combination of aspects, presenting an unexpected unity in disparity, as is shown throughout four core chapters.

The kaleidoscopic blend of apparent inconsistencies and uncertainties becomes visible in the shape of different faces of Fried which shine through his work. This is indicated in the main proposition: the title of the thesis and the image of the ‘Vexierbild’ draw on Fried’s idea of ‘hidden faces’. The current thesis does not seek the author’s one ‘true face’ which possibly remains hidden under layers of traced and distorted circumlocutory accounts in his work, but rather captures the dynamic which drives the interchange between and metamorphosis of various components which contribute to the framework of Fried’s identity at different times of his life.

The complexity of Fried’s identity in exile and its combined evidence in Fried’s literary and translation work is an aspect which has so far not been analysed. The findings reflect the main hypothesis—as suggested by the ‘Vexierbild’ image, aspects of Fried’s identity are complementary and opposing at times, dynamically and productively mirrored in his work.
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Introduction

The following study focuses on the poetic and prose oeuvre of the Austrian-Jewish writer Erich Fried. Fried was born in Vienna to Jewish parents in 1921, took refuge in Britain in 1938 and lived there as a British citizen until his death in 1988. He was mainly published in Germany, where he played an active public role during the 1960s and 1970s. The present research concentrates on expressions of Fried’s identity in his oeuvre. Fried’s work encompasses a wide range of poetic and prose writings, composed over fifty years. His literary work is both thematically and formally diverse. It includes essays, short stories, an experimental novel Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen, and most essentially, poetry. Thematically, Fried approached an array of diverse concerns. In his poetry, he addressed current affairs, love and victimhood almost in the same breath. His prose tackled, amongst other things, aspects of his biography and his attitudes to political and literary issues of his time. Much of Fried’s early political poetry is compiled in two collections, Deutschland (1944) and Österreich (1945), followed by Gedichte (1958), the introspective assemblage of cyclical poems Reich der Steine (1963), the volumes Warngedichte and Überlegungen (both published in 1964), the collection und Vietnam und (1966) dealing with topical issues and Anfechtungen (1967). At the start of the 1960s, the publication of Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen in 1960, although in itself more a foray into humanism than politics, introduced a period of renewed and increasing political interest, lasting for the rest of his life. During the 1960s and 1970s, Fried continued to write both poetry and prose, such as a collection of allegorical short stories Kinder und Narren (1965) and the controversial poetry volume Höre, Israel! (1974). In the 1980s, both his poetry and prose assumed a more introspective tone. The author appeared to look back and reassess his life, such as in the poetry volume Um Klarheit (1985) and in a collection of short stories Mitunter sogar Lachen (1986), a kind of a biographical
retrospective. Towards the end of his life, Fried became increasingly troubled by the threat of atomic war. In *Kalender für den Frieden* (1984), *Die da reden gegen Vernichtung* (1986) and *Wächst das Rettende auch? Gedichte für den Frieden* (1986) Fried simultaneously advocated peace and warned against the use of atomic energy. As well as composing poetry and prose, he was a prolific literary translator from the English into the German language. He became famous for his translations of Renaissance drama and in particular for producing translations of Shakespeare’s works which brought Shakespeare’s language into 20th-century German.

The primary material drawn on for the present study includes Fried’s early poetry which appeared in the collections *Die Vertriebenen: Dichtung der Emigration* (1941) and *Mut: Gedichte junger Österreicher* (1943), published by the exile organisations in wartime London; the poetry collections *Deutschland* (1944) and *Österreich* (1945); political essays written for the BBC as part of Fried’s employment as a political commentator for the German East Zone Programme and a hitherto undiscovered essay dating from the late 1940s, ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’; the novel *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen* (1960); the poetry collection *Überlegungen* (1964), his later poetry collections *und Vietnam und* (1966), and *Höre, Israel!* (1974); and his translations of Renaissance dramas *The Merchant of Venice* (1979) and *The Jew of Malta* (1988). The rationale for selecting these particular writings for a study of Fried’s identity is that they are not only perceived to be written at destabilising moments in the development of Fried’s self-knowledge but are also regarded as being particularly illustrative of the kaleidoscopic nature of Fried’s sense of self.

The notion of identity is central to the present thesis. In the consideration of Fried’s work, identity as a conception is understood as a defining sense of self construed in relation to a person’s social environment. Rather than being interpreted as a constant value, identity is
perceived as fluid and dynamic, expressed via subjective agency as a strategic positioning in one’s collective surroundings. It is postulated that various aspects of Fried’s identity appear in his poetry and prose. Two or three traits coalesce to show one aspect or a combination of aspects, presenting an unexpected unity in disparity. This is the case, as the current thesis will attempt to show, with Fried’s writings after the Second World War, for instance during his employment with the BBC, when Fried found himself commenting on current affairs for the broadcasting network of a country which could have been described by his target audience in the GDR as a capitalist, imperialist, western power.¹ The kaleidoscopic blend of, on the face of it, inconsistencies and uncertainties, becomes visible in the shape of different faces of Fried which shine through his work. This is indicated in the main proposition of the present research: the title of the thesis *Ich lebe in einem Vexierbild. Ich bilde mich aus und heraus für ein Vexierleben.*—Erich Fried—Jew, Humanist, Socialist—A Study of Opposing and Complementary Aspects of his Identity as Reflected in his Work draws on Fried’s idea of ‘hidden faces’. The poem ‘Vexierbild’ has the following verses which form a part of a longer cycle and may be interpreted as a metonymic extension for Fried’s sense of self in his oeuvre. They appear to be an attempt on the part of the author to come to terms with visual and linguistic representations of his individuality:

¹ Fried’s political commentaries whilst in employment at the BBC were aimed at the listeners in the Ostzone and as Chapter Five attempts to show, at times had a flavour of propaganda. It is accepted that his writings at the BBC as a political commentator for the Ostzone were composed to an editorial brief, nevertheless his own paradoxical position of working against the people whose socialist beliefs he appeared to share only a few years before offers an interesting and illuminative perspective on how within a short space of time Fried came to perceive himself as belonging to the other political camp.
Ich lebe in einem Vexierbild
Ich bilde mich aus und heraus
für ein Vexiertleben
und nicht für seine Umschreibung [...]

The aim of the current thesis is therefore not to seek the author’s one ‘true face’ which possibly remains hidden under layers of inscribed and distorted circumlocutory accounts (‘Umschreibung’ in the above excerpt) in prose and verse, but rather to capture the dynamic which drives the interchange and metamorphosis between various components which are understood to contribute to the framework of Fried’s identity at different times of his life. In the course of the present study, the analysis will in places dwell on the visual impulse which appears to stimulate subjective expression and present various aspects of Fried’s identity in his work.

In the elucidation of identity, which as a concept subsumes personality, attitudes and beliefs, the current thesis draws on theories by the social theorists and scientists Charles Taylor and Sinisa Malesevic and the cultural theorist Charles Altieri. A common thread in the work of all three theorists is their emphasis simultaneously on both the social and the subjective element in the expressions of identity. The present study makes use of Taylor’s ideas on the interplay between the social environment, which partly delimits the personal sense of self, and the identification inspired by particular social surroundings. Altieri gives more priority to the subjective drive in the expression of identity and Malesevic widens the perspective to include the ideological dimension of the expression of identity. The concept of identity is further investigated in Chapter Three, ‘Conceptual framework: “Jew”, “Humanist”, “Socialist” and Issues of Identity’ which

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focuses additionally on key concepts used in the interpretation of selfhood in Fried’s work. At the outset of the study it is assumed from aspects of Fried’s biography that due to the specific circumstances in which he found himself as an adolescent in Vienna, in exile in wartime London and following the end of the Second World War, his sense of identity developed in an idiosyncratic way. The present study considers parts of Fried’s oeuvre mentioned above in order to capture key and revelatory moments in his writings. It is hoped that throughout the investigation, a complex web of intersecting lines will be revealed in the shape of a cogent set of beliefs and practices which Fried adopted throughout his life. This web both derived from and engendered a composite and elaborate identity. The component aspects of Fried’s complex identity are perceived in this study as divergent, with different faces of Fried being shown at varying points in his work. Additionally, by relating the historical and political circumstances in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and America at the time to Fried’s biography and his writings, it is hoped that a relationship can be established which in turn can reveal how his identity shaped his work through time and vice versa. The analysis of Fried’s poetic and prose works is complemented by a case study of Fried’s translation technique when adapting scenes from Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* and William Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* in order to indicate his attitudes to Judaic and humanist dimensions in the transfer of both plays into German. The present thesis draws on all available secondary literature and refers to the archival material held in Vienna, Caversham and the British Library, whilst also relying on interviews with Fried’s associates for the analysis of his sense of self. These sources provide the context for the appraisal of how Fried’s complex identity is reflected in his work.

In the study of his writings, for instance, in his later politically engaged poetry such as *und Vietnam und* and *Höre, Israel!*, the prismatic quality of Fried’s sense of self, distilled from his
ethical, philosophical and political beliefs, is emphasised. This approach is taken instead of tracing the more conventional ethnic and national elements in his identity. The preference for this methodology is given in Chapter Three which focuses on the conceptual tools used in the analysis of Fried’s oeuvre. It is assumed that Fried’s identity presents a particular hybrid with different converging and relational elements at different times of his life, often strategically employed. The relational element is for instance significant in Chapter Seven, which is devoted to Fried’s anti-Zionist poetry and which postulates that Fried’s sense of self following the Six-Day War between Israel and its Arab neighbours in 1967 was shaped in relation to his social environment, i.e. the particular set of people and their beliefs, with whom Fried was associated just before and during the time of the conflict. This premise of the hybridity of Fried’s sense of self is eventually used to support the conclusion that his identity was mobile and ultimately undefined. It may be said that it developed through identification with others, especially in political forms of identification, and is expressive in character, i.e. articulated throughout his writings.

This is one of the primary reasons why this analysis centres particularly on the political sites of Fried’s identity. As will be argued in the following chapters, identification on a political level also includes participation in political action, i.e. resistance to ossification and alienation, which in turn encourages a renewed quest for authenticity. Fried’s multi-levelled identity finds its expression in the productive relationship with the groups which he perceives as dispossessed, defenceless and suffering injustice. These groups are symbolic representations of his own self. The sources of political and ethical identification come from the most unexpected corners, such as from the complex relationship between an American-Jewish soldier and the former concentration camp guard on trial in his novel *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen*. The sites of
identification form a metonymic structure which enables Fried to affirm his own identity. Geographic components also play an integral part in the expression of Fried’s identity in his work. By anchoring his beliefs within varied geographic locations, he globalises his protest and sites of identification. Fried does not possess a stable reference point from which he can construct his identity, therefore he sustains his identification in various contexts. In the process, he affirms the importance of the literary text as opposed to media reports and official communication of any form as the most apt manner of conveying a set of beliefs. For Fried, being able to define oneself in the changing world always implies one’s ability to align oneself ethically and humanly. The main themes that run through this thesis include identity expression in literary writings and the possibility of strategic identity expressions in a very diverse oeuvre such as Fried’s, including political commentaries and translation of Elizabethan plays.

As much as any author’s work can be characterised by uniformity of any kind, in Fried’s oeuvre there is a recognisable thread running through all his works. The humanist dimension in his poetry is a strand that sometimes immediately, at other times upon second reading, appears both a decisive and defining aspect of Fried’s entire authorial enterprise. In his many interviews and prize speeches, Fried describes himself primarily as a poet who decided to write poems as a weapon in the fight against what he termed Entfremdung, against alienation in everyday life and injustice on a global plane. Although his love poetry is not explored within the course of this study, it is worth noting here that even in those verses, Fried expresses humanist concerns.

Fried’s poetry is characterised by an almost fanatical dedication to contemporary affairs, to the unsolved social and political issues, which allows him to be as creative in his political as in his
love poetry. In his poetry, Fried merges pressing topical issues with linguistically inventive verses.

As has already been noted, as well as being a poet and prose author, Fried is known in the German-speaking literary world as the translator of poetic works by Dylan Thomas, T.S. Eliot, Graham Greene, Sylvia Plath and William Shakespeare. Although played down in some of the early theses on Fried’s work, for example in the concluding remarks in Angelika Heimann’s thesis, and sometimes by Fried himself, the influence that Fried’s translation commissions exerted on the style and form of his poetry is undeniable.

The split and at times conflict in Fried’s professional life between his own literary production and the translation of English language poetry and drama into German is possibly an indicator of another conflict and subsequent split—one in Fried’s personal life. As suggested by the discussion of Fried’s biography in Chapter Two, his personal background is complex and his own ideas on his identity are conflicting. He spent his formative years in Vienna at a time of great political upheaval which had direct consequences for his own personal life. The Austrian dimension, in combination with his Jewish cultural and historical legacy acquired in the period in Fried’s life leading up to his exile to Britain, may be taken as a prevailing feature in his identity. Fried’s professional and personal identity is subject to many influences, revisions and controversial (and contradictory) declarations by Fried himself at very different periods in his life. The interplay between Fried’s literary work and his personal life is best illustrated by Fried’s

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4 Angelika Heimann, ‘Bless Thee! Thou Art Translated!’: Erich Fried als Übersetzer moderner englischsprachiger Lyrik (Amsterdam: Grüner, 1987).
5 Fried, in his volume Gedichte (1958), objected to the assertions that he was influenced by Dylan Thomas.
own statement that his translation of *Othello* was greatly aided by the actions of the British Home Secretary in Edward Heath’s Conservative government, Reginald Maudling, who was instrumental in the deportation of Rudi Dutschke from Britain.⁷

Despite, or indeed because of, the lack of finality, Fried’s identity as the topic of this thesis is a fruitful research topic. As the chapters devoted to Fried’s politically engaged writings show, there is a huge amount of individual, self-reflexive material included in his verses. This is indicative of a poet whose approach is deeply personal and who draws his inspiration from the interaction between external impulse and intimate considerations.

The focus here on Fried’s political writings and poetry can be best explained by taking into consideration Fried’s own tendency from his early and adolescent years in Austria towards the political. Additionally, the language in which his sense of self is couched is often intended to have a potent illocutionary⁸ effect on others, both in Fried’s political poetry and in his translation.⁹

This introduction is intended to acquaint the reader with the purpose of the research and give a brief outline of the study. In Chapter One, ‘Publications on Fried and Other Sources: A Survey of Academic Writings with a Focus on Erich Fried, Complemented by Personal Accounts and Archival Material’, the study focuses on the review of existing literature relating to Fried’s biography and his literary work, including doctoral theses examining various aspects of his literary oeuvre. A distinctive place is occupied and shared by two works devoted to Fried’s

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⁸ A term from linguistics determining a communicative act. By phrasing his or her message in a particular way, the speaker/author presents a particular attitude and in turn attempts to elicit a response from his imagined interlocutor/reader.
⁹ Fried added an epilogue to his translation of *The Merchant of Venice* in order to try to impose his reading of the play upon his German-speaking audience.
literary achievement and his biography. Volker Kaukoreit’s *Vom Exil bis zum Protest gegen den Krieg in Vietnam: Frühe Stationen des Lyrikers Erich Fried. Werk und Biographie 1938–1966* (1991) is now considered seminal in the study of Fried’s early biography and initial stages of politically active work which generate notions expressed in his later political poetry and prose writings. The second is Steven Lawrie’s study of the first half of Fried’s literary life, *Erich Fried: A Writer without a Country* (1996). Ideas analysed by Lawrie are taken here as starting-points in the analysis of Fried’s identity as a political poet and a literary gadfly. Other works reviewed with significance for this study are literary essays included in collections devoted to Fried’s work, such as the 1986 edition on Fried in the literary series *Text+Kritik*, which provides a good overview of Fried’s literary work. In a further section, in which the doctoral theses on Fried are reviewed, the present study is positioned in relation to theses previously completed.

Chapter Two focuses on aspects of Fried’s biography. It starts off by relating Fried’s early years in exile in London and describes his identification with various political and cultural groups in the exile milieu in London. Emphasis is put on the influence of biographical factors on the establishment of Fried’s identity as expressed in his writings, indicating a reactive personality formation. His contact with Judaism and Zionism is considered along with personalities who influenced his thinking and his attitudes. Fried’s early childhood in Vienna and formative years spent witnessing political upheaval in Austria are illustrated by his eyewitness accounts of the conflict between the socialist and the radical fascist factions in Austrian society. His liberal upbringing in Vienna was juxtaposed with and interrupted by the increased limitations imposed by the Austrian conservative regime which was highly approving of Hitler’s policies against Jews and generally against dissenters in Germany. Memories of the difficulties experienced in pre-Second World War Vienna by Fried, the politically active Gymnasium pupil, and Fried the
Jew (publicly declared a Jew after which he was segregated from the ‘Aryan’ portion of the population in secondary education), were used in the most productive capacity by Fried in his later prose and poetry to illustrate as well as debate consequences of these experiences for perceptions of his identity. The task of interpreting Fried’s identity, particularly focusing on its re-writing in his anti-Zionist poetry, is at times linked to an exploration of particularly Jewish elements. Thus the argument presented in Chapter Seven that the debate relating to the Six-Day War and its consequences threatened to deteriorate into a dispute exclusively amongst Jews, may be given particular currency. Limiting the debate to an exclusively Jewish dimension would additionally imperil some of Fried’s main principles, such as all-inclusive humanist concerns, a precept which informed Fried’s writing in an almost exclusive fashion. Although thematically heterogeneous and at times derivative (his inspirations were diverse, ranging from love to exile, from anti-nuclear, environmental to anti-establishment concerns), Fried’s poetic identity as a political activist is woven into the very fabric of much of his poetry and prose writings.

The feeling of life-long exile sustained by the consequences of his decision to remain in London after the Second World War is juxtaposed with Fried’s later identity as the citizen of the world, as discussed in Chapter Two, where his political involvement in London and generally in Europe is also analysed. Since from this part we can infer crucial information in respect of how Fried combined his socialist leanings with his Jewish heritage in the literary condemnation of the Zionist enterprise, it is considered of great importance particularly for Chapter Seven.

The main thrust of Chapter Three, ‘Conceptual Framework: “Jew”, “Humanist”, “Socialist” and Issues of Identity’ is the understanding of the concepts of Judaism, socialism and humanism within the overarching framework of analysing the expression of Fried’s identity in his oeuvre. The significance of this chapter lies in the provision of contextual and theoretical information
relating to the concepts used in the analysis of Fried’s writings. Some of the concepts are viewed in a different manner to how they were perceived in previous doctoral theses on the subject. This necessitates, additionally, the theoretical issues surrounding the nature of the concepts under investigation to be examined in greater depth. The chapter is divided into several sections, each dealing with a different term in turn. The principal term, identity, is situated within literary and social studies. The role of subjective agency which is understood to set the course for the development of identity is emphasised. Jewish ethics and the humanist dimension of Judaism are contained in the section on Judaism and Jewishness. The section on humanism situates Fried’s philanthropic tendencies within ethics and philosophy. The concept of socialism is related to the particular circumstances which shaped Fried’s early life in Austria. It is also correlated with Fried’s war-time exile years in London, when as a member of the exile organisations he was exposed to a particular blend of communism and Austrian nationalism in the form of the Austrian Centre and later the Free Austrian Movement.

Having reviewed the existing literature in Chapter One, considered aspects of Fried’s biography in Chapter Two and established the theoretical framework in Chapter Three, the study continues with Chapter Four “[…] Die liegen nebeneinander/und schlafen sehr (un)gleichen Schlaf”—Fried’s Early Communist and Socialist Identity (A Journey from Communism to Socialism), which explores the influences on the development of Fried’s literary identity as a politically engaged poet. Its particular focus is the investigation of Fried’s view of himself as an author whose task it is to be an engaged member of society. This task is juxtaposed with the pariah perspective afforded to Fried by his exilic background and conditioned by his Jewish heritage. Fried’s journey from communism to socialism is explored in focusing on his early writings mainly composed during the Second World War.
Chapter Five, ‘Socialism, but also Humanism? Aspects of Fried’s Identity from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s’ charts Fried’s development into an uncompromising humanist. His disillusionment with the communist cause and his attempts to come to terms with the divisions in ideology between East and West in the post-war world are analysed in an examination of his essays written for the BBC. His novel *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen* is included here since it provides insight into the development of Fried’s ethical concerns. Although the novel is not normally considered a significant marker in his development as a literary political activist, it is analysed with focus on the issue of Fried’s identification with victims, whether of ideology, oppression or military conflict, as an aspect of his identity. The novel also introduces a multitude of issues relating to Fried’s early attraction to the metaphysical and psychoanalytical and at the same time it offers a fertile ground for an analysis of how Fried develops a set of moral and ethical beliefs which are productively employed in his later politically engaged poetry. This chapter also analyses an only recently discovered essay by Fried, probably written in the mid-1940s, in which Fried exposed what he perceived as the heartless misconceptions of his fellow communists. As a post-script to this chapter, Fried’s final disillusionment with and farewell to Stalin-era communism is analysed in the cycle of poems *Überlegungen*, devoted to the Austrian journalist, writer and politician Ernst Fischer.

In the Sixth Chapter, “‘Gelegentlich einzelne Schüsse’—Documents from Vietnam—The Reflection of Fried’s Identity in his Poetry Devoted to the Vietnam War’, Fried’s anti-Vietnam War poetry is examined, including his ideas of political engagement and protest. Close analysis of Fried’s style and thematic choice in poems dedicated to this cause reveals an identity of a poet as a political activist. His inspiration—a war waged in a location far from his audience in Western Europe—as well as Fried’s poetic style, reveal an author who is not afraid to use
derivative stimulus, i.e. to analyse the media reports and infer from their content, in order
achieve the maximum effect on his readers. This has further consequences for his poetic
development as traced in his anti-Zionist poetry.

Chapter Seven, ‘Erich Fried and his Anti-Zionist Poetry in the Collection Höre, Israel!’,
evaluates Fried’s attitudes to Judaism and Zionism expressed in these poems. The attitudes are
then related to his private life. His public denunciation of Israeli official policies towards
Palestinian Arabs is juxtaposed with his private affiliations. Traces of anti-colonialism, anti-
imperialism and anti-capitalism are sought in order to investigate the hypothesis that Fried uses
these to indicate belonging to a particular political camp. As an addition to this chapter, Fried’s
anti-Zionist sentiments are considered as a particular feature of his identity.

Using an original combination of selfhood and language in his exploration of political topics,
Fried reaches beyond the prevailing ‘sociopolitical ethos’, i.e. political and social opinions
prevalent in public life at the time of his literary protest, and undergoes a process of development
ultimately leading towards the expression of a strong social critique. The quandary of whether
his identity is split between loyalty to Jewish ethics and loyalty to his socialist and
internationalist comrades is not easily resolved. At the end of the chapter, it is suggested that the
fact that Fried had Jewish roots played a smaller role in his protest against Israel than his
political, mainly socialist, conscience. However, the citation of the references is interspersed
with language that at times leans towards the ideological, even the dogmatic. This sends a mixed
message in relation to the origin of Fried’s outrage.

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The Eighth Chapter, “‘Möglicht nah am Original’—A Reflection of Fried’s Complex Identity in his Work as a Translator’ evaluates selected scenes from Fried’s translation of Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*. This chapter supports the rest of the thesis and is intended to bring together variables postulated during earlier chapters. The evaluation of Fried’s approach during these translation commissions sets out to test the hypothesis that his identity is played out in his translation work as much as in his poetry. It might be thought that Fried kept his translation and the poetic domain separate. Such a split, if it existed, could also indicate that Fried’s identity is only articulated in his poetry and prose. Chapter Eight, however, shows that Fried’s sense of self in the case of *The Merchant of Venice* also permeated his translation work just as much as it suffused his poetry and prose. As a counter-example to this, in the case of *The Jew of Malta*, Fried’s identity is finely nuanced in a few select passages, whilst the work as a whole does not betray major intervention by Fried in translation.

The Conclusion sets out to bring together the findings arrived at whilst analysing different aspects of Fried’s work. It indicates that the complex identity of a poet and a translator working in exile cannot be reduced to one particular feature or one definitive selfhood. Moreover it points to the fact that Fried finds politics and political engagement the most suitable outlet for his identity expression. The attempt to put a particular designation on Fried, to label him with any fixed determinant would inevitably mean to reduce his complex identity and with this, his impressive achievement as an author. The present thesis finds that Fried’s identity is revealed as tentative images from the ‘Vexierbild’, or ‘hidden faces’ of Fried’s writings and translation work and it is perceived as one complex ‘hidden face’ or a combination of different ‘hidden faces’.
Chapter 1 Publications on Fried and Other Sources: A Survey of Academic Writings with a Focus on Erich Fried, Complemented by Personal Accounts and Archival Material

The present study brings together evaluations of personal accounts by Fried’s immediate family members and his close friends during the 1960s and 1970s, doctoral theses published in the English and German language on varied aspects of Fried’s oeuvre, secondary literature sources focusing on different periods of Fried’s life and features of his work, and a collection of publications resulting from Fried’s translation of *The Merchant of Venice* for the Schauspiel Köln running in 1979 and 1980, all of which provide the basis for the analysis of Fried’s identity and its reflection in his translation work. The secondary sources mentioned above, such as *Erich Fried: Gespräche und Kritiken* (1986) edited by Rudolph Wolff, a German journalist and literary editor, offer a critical reading of Fried’s work, particularly focusing on his political poetry. A special edition of the literature journal *Text+Kritik*, which appeared in 1986, just two years before Fried’s death, is devoted to Fried’s literary achievement and presents illuminating articles to which references are made during the exploration of Fried’s translation oeuvre.

The present study also relies on the comprehensive works describing as well as critically and statistically appraising the socio-political position of the German-speaking exiles in the United Kingdom before, during and after the Second World War, such as *Island Refuge: Britain and Refugees from the Third Reich, 1933–1939* (1994) by Ari Joshua Sherman, Bernard Wasserstein’s *Britain and the Jews of Europe, 1939–1945* (1999), and Louise London’s *Whitehall and The Jews, 1933–1948: British Immigration Policy, Jewish Refugees and the Holocaust* (1999). From these general works of research into German-speaking exiles, the present study moves to the more focused publications of the Centre for German and Austrian
Exile Studies, mentioned later in the chapter. These works provide a general background to Fried’s initial experiences as an exiled Viennese Jew in Great Britain.

Archival sources in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna and in the BBC Written Archives are compared with the information obtained from interviews with Fried’s widow and his friend Akiva Orr and from the secondary literature. These lead to new conclusions in the study of Fried’s identity. Personal accounts by his friends provide an invaluable insight into Fried’s attitudes with respect to the aftermath of the 1967 war between Israel and its neighbours. The background to this period is supported by references to literature such as A Blood-Dimmed Tide: Dispatches from the Middle East (1997) by Amos Elon, who reported from the Middle East for thirty years. General information on the history of Judaism in the present study is provided by a theologian Brad H. Young and his Meet the Rabbis: Rabbinic Thought and the Teachings of Jesus (2007), as well as by Rabbi Milton Steinberg’s Basic Judaism (1947). Contemporary Jewish Ethics and Morality (1995) by Elliot N. Dorff, a Rabbi and a theologian, and Louis E. Newman, a scholar of Jewish ethics, offers a thorough theoretical resource for the study of the interrelation between Jewish ethics and Jewish identity. The social scientist Sinisa Malesevic in his Identity as Ideology: Understanding Ethnicity and Nationalism (2006) offers a theoretical basis for the general study of identity and its discursive derivative, identitarianism, significant for the exploration of Fried’s identity as reflected in his political poetry. Charles Altieri, a literary and cultural theorist, in his work Subjective Agency: A Theory of First Person Expressivity and its Social Implications (1994) complements Malesevic’s theoretical study of identity by emphasising specific human agency which constantly seeks identification in an attempt to delineate identity. These sources complement and provide a background to the personal accounts, the archival sources and the academic literature on Fried.
1.1. Doctoral theses

Fried’s literary oeuvre has inspired a number of published and unpublished doctoral theses which examine various features in his poetry and/or prose. The investigations draw on Fried’s biographical data and careful archival study, as is the case with Volker Kaukoreit’s *Frühe Stationen des Lyrikers Erich Fried* (1991) and Steven Lawrie’s *Erich Fried: A Writer without a Country* (1996). Kaukoreit and Lawrie were amongst the earliest scholars to embark on a comprehensive study of Fried’s literary oeuvre. Other analyses of Fried’s work combine the study of religious and ethnic elements. Two authors who combine ethnicity and religion are Katrin Schäfer\(^{11}\) and Tanja Gojny.\(^{12}\) Other theses focus on public controversies, largely inspired by Fried’s politically charged poetry in the Federal Republic of Germany during the 1960s and 1970s, as is the case with Tillman von Brand’s *Öffentliche Kontroversen um Erich Fried* (2003). Another study focusing on the political and its moral content in Fried’s poetry is Patricia Collard’s unpublished doctoral thesis ‘Political Morality in the Poems of Erich Fried’ (1995). Collard draws obvious benefits from personal acquaintance with the author in her analysis. The study focuses predominantly on the author’s message in his poetry, instead of on the form in which the message is given. Collard explores Fried’s collections *und Vietnam und* and *Höre, Israel!*, reaching the conclusion that his political poetry, rather than being of ephemeral value, is just as applicable to today’s concerns and world events. Whilst evaluating Fried’s poetry devoted to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Collard does not ponder extensively on the issues of Fried’s identity, nor take into account research findings which focus on the relationship between the European Left and Israeli politics which were available at the time. Although in personal contact

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with the author, she is not able to discern the significance of his social milieu in London and his own experience of persecution for his anti-Zionist stance.

Themes of exile and homelessness in Fried’s work written after 1945 are analysed by Christine Dressler. Dressler refers to Fried’s Jewish identity in places, although the focus of the study is not entirely on Fried’s Jewishness. Formal characteristics of Fried’s poetry, such as in the collection *Reich der Steine* (1963), are analysed for their power to convey Fried’s poetic engagement in the thesis by Nadia Luer. She studies Fried’s poetic language as a malleable and deceptively simple, but powerfully expressive paradigm. One of Luer’s perspectives on Fried’s oeuvre is a focus on his scepticism towards the ability of language to depict reality reliably and his ability to experiment with the meaning and form of language, distilling and reducing the semantic and the morphological elements to extremes in order to push the boundaries of expressivity. Luer also touches on Fried’s Jewish identity, but does not explore the relation between identity and political activism, for instance in Fried’s anti-Zionist poetry. From her analysis, Luer hopes to open up new directions in the study of Fried’s poetry primarily from its *formal* perspective.

The only thesis dealing solely with Fried’s translation work is Angelika Heimann’s, *‘Bless Thee! Thou Art Translated!’: Erich Fried als Übersetzer moderner englischsprachiger Lyrik* (1987). Heimann focuses mainly on the modern lyricism of James Joyce, Sylvia Plath and Dylan Thomas. Although the title of the thesis also indicates emphasis on modern-day poetry in English, one chapter additionally analyses translation features of songs from Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*. Heimann’s analysis of Fried’s translation work is very formal and bears marks of

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the linguistic focus in translation studies, neglecting more recent translation theory research e.g. relating to cultural/identity studies which would have been available at the time the thesis was written.

Two theses cited in the introductory paragraph at times intersect in their focal point—Gojny’s and Schäfer’s theses both analyse some aspects of Judaism in Fried’s poetry (Gojny) and prose (Schäfer). Guoqing Feng also concentrates on Fried’s prose work, however, in contrast to Schäfer’s, only in part and only on prose writings not longer than three pages.15 This approach facilitates easy comparison with other poets; however, Feng offers conclusions without providing any real background to the questions which Fried himself poses relating to the political writings and Fried’s understanding of (self) alienation. Schäfer, on the other hand, takes advantage of the available archival material and focuses on prose texts not published in any of the collections, but held in the Nachlass in Vienna. In her work on Fried’s Jewish identity, however, she shows a lack of insight into the interrelationship between Fried’s residual Jewishness and his political activism.

In his study, Feng concludes that Fried wanted to arouse his readership and question the unquestionable, passed down through generations, in order to present a new angle and force an alternative perspective. Here, Feng’s thesis intersects with Gojny’s study of intertextuality in Fried’s work with the Bible. Both Gojny and Feng reach the conclusion that Fried uses biblical references as a means of shaking up stale ideologies and becomes a heretic in order to put the world to rights. Where Schäfer does not pass many comments on the formal structure of Fried’s prose work, Feng finds explication as a strategy used by Fried in his prose writings (just as

Heimann in his translations) detrimental to the overall effect. Both Feng and Heimann find that Fried’s tendency to oversimplify an argument in his prose work, or denote the meaning excessively in his translations, diminishes the quality of his work.

On the subject of identity in the above theses, whilst Schäfer extensively references Fried’s Jewish identity, Gojny is not concerned with Fried’s identity as a Jew, unless this is used to support her own findings regarding the biblical traces in his poetry.\textsuperscript{16} Her conclusions do not show evidence of work in the archives. Gojny does not appear to have consulted personal material held in the \textit{Literaturarchiv der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek} in Vienna, since at several places in her thesis she neglects to provide conclusive proof for her interpretation, such as when she considers the difficulties surrounding the publishing of \textit{Höre, Israel!} and gives information only contained in Fried’s \textit{Gesammelte Werke}—where Fried indeed does not provide any details as to the adversity faced before securing the publishing contract. Fried’s \textit{Nachlass} in Vienna provides the background to this.\textsuperscript{17}

In his doctoral study focusing on the part of Fried’s work at the heart of public controversies in Germany in the 1970s,\textsuperscript{18} von Brand postulates that Fried’s poetry necessitates controversy as its generic and constitutive element.\textsuperscript{19} The analysis centres on ‘Auf den Tod des

\textsuperscript{16} An example of how Gojny forces religious interpretations on poems is her analysis of the poem ‘Kleines Beispiel’ (\textit{GW2}/p.625) ascribing to it the reference to Matthew 5,15f (Man zündet auch nicht ein Licht…). Although she admits that the poem is divorced from its biblical pretext, she gives an explanatory footnote that the poem exemplifies an \textit{unintended} biblical intertextuality (Gojny, p. 255).
\textsuperscript{17} Additionally, when considering Zionist thinking in Fried’s work, Gojny makes a fundamental mistake; Fried’s perspective on Zionism was formed as much by his social environment in Great Britain in the 1960s as by material he obtained in Germany (the latter would have included the majority of Gojny’s sources). The references to Herzl, Borochow and Buber in Fried’s case may have been used as support for his writing, but the fresh impetus for writing came from the contacts Fried had in London. This geographic difference is significant when considering Fried’s anti-Zionist writings.
\textsuperscript{18} Tillman von Brand, \textit{Öffentliche Kontroversen um Erich Fried} (Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2003).
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 15.

Von Brand concludes that Fried in his verses expresses a wish to be understood by his readers, whether they agree with his views or oppose them.\(^{20}\) He stresses the dialogic nature of Fried’s literary endeavour, i.e. the productive engagement with the particular (West German) social and historical context. As a broader issue, he explores the extent to which poetry can be provocative if it does not elicit any response. Von Brand indicates that arousing public controversy can also be a means to an end for both the poet and the object of his focus. However, his argument remains within the topical confines of 1970s German politics and, although published in 2003, it does not offer a much updated interpretation of the primary material.

### 1.2. Two seminal monographs

The point of reference used by all scholars conducting research into Erich Fried’s oeuvre is Volker Kaukoreit’s exhaustive study of Fried’s literary oeuvre and biography. It focuses on the period up to the Vietnam War.\(^{21}\) It provides crucial bibliographical references and combines archival elements with interviews with the poet himself. Kaukoreit’s research results in a detailed study of Fried’s early work and influences on his literary development; it touches on Fried’s engagement with the re-education journals and his work for the BBC. His findings are used to support further enquiry into Fried’s work for the re-education journals and the BBC in the current thesis.

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\(^{20}\) Ibid., p. 308. The misunderstanding in relation to the Buback poem stems from an erroneous advance publication, ‘Es wäre besser / so ein Mensch hätte nie gelebt’, instead of ‘Es wäre besser / ein Mensch hätte nicht so gelebt’.

Kaukoreit’s analysis of Fried’s literary work is perhaps at times overly formal. The present thesis acknowledges Kaukoreit’s findings and takes the current level of knowledge on Fried’s work further by adding an interdisciplinary dimension to the analysis. Although Fried’s translation work is not analysed in Kaukoreit’s study, a detailed bibliography is provided, which offers a solid base for further research into Fried’s oeuvre. Both Kaukoreit and Lawrie include the analysis of Fried’s narrative prose and poetry in their methodology and the present thesis uses this basis and combines the analysis of Fried’s translation work with the analysis of the other two literary genres. Lawrie does explore Fried’s translation of Dylan Thomas’s *Under Milk Wood* from the backdrop of Fried’s role as an intermediary between the English and the German cultures, which is one way of illustrating the poet’s role as a translator. The other route of enquiry into translation work would be an analysis of the poet’s identity as reflected in his translation work, which is the focus of Chapter Eight in the current thesis. In comparison with the two seminal works, this thesis adopts a different theoretical framework, borrowing a number of methodological tools and concepts from social and cultural theory with a focus on identity studies in particular. The theoretical skeleton used for the backbone of the thesis is discussed in Chapter Three. Close analysis of Fried’s early exile also benefits from background details provided by more recent works in exile studies by Charmian Brinson and Richard Dove. In comparison with the two seminal works, this thesis additionally provides a deeper analysis of Fried’s anti-Zionist writings, uses information acquired from recent interviews with Fried’s associates and refers to archival material obtained from Fried’s Nachlass in Vienna.

Chapter Eight takes the interplay between translation and poetic work noted both by Gerrit-Jan Berendse22 and Lawrie further. Both authors analyse the intertextuality between the two areas of

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22 See section 1.3 for details of Berendse’s work in the present thesis.
Fried’s oeuvre, although in different periods. Berendse draws parallels between Fried’s Shakespeare translations and his engaged poetry written during the 1970s and devoted to the political developments in West Germany. In contrast, Lawrie examines Fried’s translation work in the 1950s, in particular his rendering of *Under Milk Wood* into German, and the influence of Thomas’s radio drama in Fried’s work for the German radio in the 1960s. The present thesis draws on the findings from both Berendse and Lawrie and integrates them in the study of Fried’s identity in his translations of Elizabethan drama, in particular *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Jew of Malta*. The biography of the German theatre director and scriptwriter Peter Zadek provides an understanding of Fried’s and Zadek’s collaboration during the staging of Fried’s Shakespeare translations.\(^23\) Data obtained from Zadek’s biography is compared in the present study with the existing works chronicling Fried’s work and this comparison illuminates interesting contrasts discussed in Chapter Eight.\(^24\)

Amongst the early forays in the English language into Fried’s literary oeuvre, now also considered seminal, is Steven Lawrie’s study *Erich Fried: A Writer without a Country*. Lawrie analyses Fried’s poetic and prose work with a focus on the notion of exile in his oeuvre. His study thus shares certain similarities with Dressler’s thesis, however, Lawrie’s concluding remarks on Fried’s concept of *home* put greater emphasis on the absence of *nationality* in Fried’s private and working life, i.e. the reluctance of the poet who lost his home in 1938 to be fettered with chains of national or ethnic affiliations. Lawrie defines the end of Fried’s exile in literary terms and finds that the publication of Fried’s poetry collection *und Vietnam und* (1966) marks a dividing point between strategies employed in Fried’s literary work. Punning and half-rhyme


\(^{24}\) Zadek claims that his request to Fried to translate *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* for the theatre was the catalyst for Fried’s Shakespeare translations. See section 8.1 in the present thesis.
characterise his earlier work, such as *Reich der Steine* whilst they are rarely employed in his later work. In this period, Fried found a new ersatz-home with the West German Left and the Student Movement, which, according to Lawrie, effectively marked his return to his German-speaking audience. Lawrie compares the politicisation of the Federal Republic of Germany with an increased anti-establishment stance in Fried’s poetry. His analysis makes meticulous use of British archives and benefits from personal contact with the author’s widow Catherine Fried and his close associate Stuart Hood. Lawrie makes particularly good use of the Claasen archives and the BBC’s Written Archives. The archival material is minutely researched with a wealth of references provided to support further research into the area. The present thesis builds on the data provided by Lawrie and additionally refers to cultural theory and theories of Judaism and identity.

It should be noted here that a number of research articles stem from Lawrie’s original study, which are used to support argumentation in the present thesis, in chapters relating to Fried’s early poetry and in the study of the latter’s novel.25 An overview of Fried’s work for the BBC is given in Lawrie’s article “‘Ein Urviech und eine Seele von Mensch”: Erich Fried at the BBC’ (2003), although due to obvious space constraints, it does not provide a detailed analysis of any of the pieces written by Fried during his time at the BBC.26 Another study of Fried’s relationship with his lost ‘home’ (*Heimat*), is presented in Lawrie’s article ‘Erich Fried: Language and *Heimat*’.27 Lawrie identifies Fried’s reason for not writing in English as the latter’s wish to represent an

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alternative Austria together with other exiles, a belief which was reinforced by the desire to preserve German and Austrian culture for the future, i.e. after the Second World War.

1.3. Other studies with emphasis on conceptually-structured argument

A number of scholarly works present a similar approach in the interpretation of Fried’s oeuvre. Two doctoral theses, one by Christine Dressler and the other by Billy Badger, share the same methodology by relying more on the conceptual tools rather than on a timeline to study Fried’s work. A recent study by Jan-Gerrit Berendse also makes use of this hermeneutical method in part.

The point already mentioned above relating to the connection between language and home, is taken up by Dressler in her analysis of exile motifs in Fried’s work. She recognises the significance of language for any exile’s identity and notes how often Fried embraces the language as a formal aesthetic element when considering the loss of home in his poetry.28 Dressler fixes the exact point in Fried’s oeuvre when Fried found the metaphorical asylum in the (German) language, which enabled him to overcome traumatic events and renew his faith in language as a means of mediating between his inner world and outer reality, with the poetry cycle ‘Die ersten Schritte’ in Reich der Steine. Dressler traces Fried’s poetic strategy (use of homonyms, synonyms and proverbs) and experimentation with language in a wide selection of primary material, touching also on Fried’s overtly political poetry, such as und Vietnam und. The methodology here is largely formal and remains without recourse to identity and cultural theories. Dressler’s intention to include material stemming from such a long time span as a consequence contains no detailed analysis of any one poetry collection, but rather a conceptual approach to a broad range of writings from Fried’s oeuvre.

Billy Badger’s *Zwischen dem Meer und dem Nichtmehr*\(^{29}\) traces psychoanalytical and ethnopsychoanalytical concepts in Fried’s work, such as anxiety, repression and hope. Badger focuses on the archival material from Fried’s *Nachlass* in Vienna whilst exploring the relationship between Fried and his father and makes references to the work of the controversial Austrian psychoanalyst and anarchist Otto Gross. He analyses Fried’s ethical impulse against a psychological background. Fried’s political commitment is described as stemming from his deeply rooted psychological need to ensure other people’s welfare. It will be shown in the course of the following chapters that Fried’s political commitment cannot be reduced to purely a psychoanalytical field, but is a product of a complex set of historical, socio-political and cultural factors in Fried’s environment.

The most recent conceptually structured study into Fried’s work is Gerrit-Jan Berendse’s *Vom Aushalten der Extreme: Die Lyrik Erich Frieds zwischen Terror, Liebe und Poesie* (2011). His analysis investigates parts of Fried’s oeuvre as they are created between the concepts of love, terrorism and poetry.\(^{30}\) Some of Berendse’s findings stem from an earlier article where he compares Fried’s and Heiner Müller’s translation work and its traces in their poetry.\(^{31}\) The article draws on Fried’s translation work and seeks similarities between his translation of Shakespeare and his poetic work. Berendse focuses more on poetic strategy, functional use of metaphors and imagery in Fried’s work rather than how they mirror Fried’s identity. The analysis touches on the concept of the visual in Fried’s work, but fails to make connections between Fried’s complex identity and any one of the dimensions in which it is visible in his work, i.e. philosophy or


Jewish ethics. Unlike the present thesis, Berendse’s study is concerned more with the manner in which Fried contended with the extremes in his life as a publicly engaged poet.

Two anthologies of articles relating to Fried’s translation work and literary oeuvre, *Erich Fried: Gespräche und Kritiken* (1986)\(^{32}\) and *Interpretationen: Gedichte von Erich Fried* (1999)\(^{33}\) provide brief findings relating to Fried’s translation and poetic work. The former collection contains two interviews with Erich Fried which are used in support of the argumentation in the current study. The latter collection of articles offers succinct analyses of selected poems by Fried. Due to the brevity of the articles, in this study they are used solely for their informative value. A collection of articles in *Text+Kritik*\(^{34}\) was used to support critical appraisal of Fried’s literary oeuvre. The publication of the Erich Fried Society in Vienna *All right, what’s left*\(^{35}\) as well as *Erich Fried: Gespräche und Kritiken* provide not only a collection of informative critical appraisal of Fried’s work, but also include two interviews with the poet himself which are used to support findings in the chapters on Fried’s early poetry and his translation work. The article by the German author Michael Zeller analysing Fried’s anti-Zionist and other politically engaged-poetry, ‘Im Zeichen des ewigen Juden. Zur Konkretion des politischen Engagements in der Lyrik Erich Frieds’, is included in the latter anthology and forms part of the analysis of Fried’s anti-Zionist writings.

### 1.4. Articles relating to Fried’s political poetry

Fried’s political poetry has inspired a number of scholarly articles over the years which focus on various periods of Fried’s literary oeuvre. Similar to Berendse’s work above, some of these


studies make connections between Fried’s political engagement and his translation work. Martin Kane’s article traces the development of Fried’s political engagement without making references to the political poetry Fried penned during the Second World War. Walter Pape attempts to apply the postmodernist slant on a selection of Fried’s political poetry exploring the dialogue between reality, politics and art and focusing on the controversial poem ‘Auf den Tod des Generalbundesanwalts Siegfried Buback’. The same focus is maintained by Sandra Beck, who explores the historical and social context of the poem written in the 1970s. Although she does not make a connection with Fried’s translation of Julius Caesar explicitly, she relates Fried’s dirge over Buback’s dead body to Mark Anthony’s lament over Julius Caesar. Beck’s article, in contrast to von Brand’s analysis, concludes on a philosophical and humanist note. Beck raises Fried’s act of writing an obituary in verse in the charged atmosphere of West Germany in the 1970s above any socio-historical assessment and sees it as an expression of sadness over a loss of life. Von Tillman’s thesis, in contrast, views Fried’s poetry in the 1970s as a provocation in order to stimulate a constructive dialogue.

Fried’s impetus for writing engaged poetry is analysed by Henz Gockel who uses examples from Fried’s anti-establishment poetry (‘Auf den Tod des Generalbundesanwalts Siegfried Buback’), and anti-Vietnam War poetry (‘Gespräch über Bäume’) in order to perform his analysis. The article is partly original in its choice of primary material, but does not enlarge greatly the current

36 Martin Kane, ““From Solipsism to Engagement”: The Development of Erich Fried as a Political Poet”, in *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, April 1985, pp. 151–169.
40 Beck notes that Fried’s poem stirred political controversy discussed in political reports rather than in *Feuilleton*, or feature articles; Beck, ‘Totenklage’, p. 409.
knowledge on Fried’s engaged poetry.\textsuperscript{41} The same is the case with Jerry Glenn’s article ‘Erich Fried’ (1987). It exemplifies one of the early forays into Fried’s work in the English language. Glenn presents a good overview of Fried’s work in a limited space, draws examples from poetry collections which inspired mixed reactions, such as und Vietnam und and Höre, Israel!, however, it does not go much further than introducing Fried’s oeuvre and giving a short biography.\textsuperscript{42}

Italo Michele Battafarano draws interesting parallels between the works of German author Günter Kunert\textsuperscript{43} and Fried’s poems devoted to Karl Marx.\textsuperscript{44} Battafarano concludes that, whilst both poets are eager to detach the Marxist legacy from the monopoly of the bureaucratic communist regimes, Fried draws on the mutual Jewish heritage he shares with Marx in his poetic strategy. Jewish emphasis on the correct semantic interpretation, Battafarano argues, finds its counterpart in Fried’s insistence that erroneous dogmatism is a result of literal exegesis. Fried’s strategy of establishing a relationship between the political, ethnic and religious is expanded on in the current thesis, in the chapters devoted to Fried’s early poetry and his protest poetry (anti-Vietnam War and anti-Zionist) of the 1960s and 1970s.

1.5. Other works with focus on identity and exile

Since the concept of identity is of fundamental importance for the methodology of the present thesis, it is also important to briefly compare scholarly articles which are thematically linked to

\textsuperscript{43} Up to 1979, Kunert lived in the German Democratic Republic, when he emigrated to the Federal Republic following his protest against the East German Government’s decision to strip the dissident Wolf Biermann of his citizenship.
\textsuperscript{44} Italo Michele Battafarano, ‘Kunerts dialektischer und Frieds skeptischer Marx’, in Günter Kunert: Beiträge zu seinem Werk, eds. Manfred Durzak and Hartmut Steinecke (Munich: Hanser, 1992), pp. 65–85.
it. Ursula Reinhold’s article ‘Erich Fried’,\textsuperscript{45} published in 1988, addresses Fried’s formulation of his poetic identity by briefly analysing the cycle of poems ‘Zweifel an der Sprache’ included in the collection \textit{Gegengift} (1974) and relating Fried’s dialectic use of words to the Austrian cultural tradition and to Ludwig Wittgenstein. She posits that by ever expanding the semantic and the pragmatic, Fried diffuses and enlarges the limits of his world. Reinhold also devotes a portion of her article to the analysis of Fried’s novel \textit{Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen} and in its convoluted structure sees Fried’s attempt to create a distance between the events, the author and the reader, thus eliminating the danger of sentimentalising and trivialising the narrative. This point is taken further in the current thesis in Chapter Five. Axel Goodbody in his article briefly debates various ethnic, political and national nomenclatures and their presence in Fried’s work, using various data from Fried’s biography in order to support his argument.\textsuperscript{46} Goodbody indicates that Fried’s stylistic choices and his motivation as a writer are a result of his links with the various cultural traditions to which Fried was exposed throughout his life. This argument is taken further in the current thesis in the analysis of Fried’s anti-Zionist and anti-Vietnam War poetry. As already stated above, Goodbody’s findings are supported by biographical data and some secondary literature on Fried, such as Michael Zeller’s article ‘Im Zeichen des ewigen Juden’.\textsuperscript{47} The current thesis enlarges on this argument by using archival resources available in the \textit{Nachlass} in Vienna and findings from identity theory and applying them in the analysis of Fried’s poetry.

In a later study, Goodbody examines the relationship between poetry and translation in Fried’s and Michael Hamburger’s oeuvre and provides parallels by establishing a relationship between emigration and bilingualism. He also indicates that Fried’s translation work of English poetry in the 1950s influenced the style of Fried’s early poetry collections.48

Information relating to Fried’s early life in Great Britain and his place in the exile organisations is provided by the two publications by members of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, i.e. Out of Austria and Politics by Other Means: The Free German League of Culture in London, which situate Fried in his exile milieu and provide the backbone to the chapters focusing on Fried’s biography and early writings.49 Findings in Chapter Two are supported additionally by data from the periodical Young Austria.

1.6. Archival and additional sources

Apart from drawing on published and unpublished theses, critical studies and articles, the analysis of Fried’s complex identity is further supported by a variety of other sources. Archival sources in Vienna and London, primary sources in the media and interviews with Fried’s close relatives and associates have yielded original information which have complemented and further built on the basis provided by the secondary literature. A collection of original writings and epistolary exchanges kept in Fried’s literary Nachlass in the Literaturarchiv der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Vienna have supplied the basis for the chapter analysing his anti-Zionist poetry in particular. The original material available for consultation in the Nachlass provided the basis for the part of the present thesis which discusses the hypothesis that

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48 Axel Goodbody, ““Eine Synthese deutscher und englischer Dichtungstraditionen”: Erich Fried and Michael Hamburger as Translators and Poets”, in German-Speaking Exiles in Great Britain, ed. Ian Wallace, Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, vol. 1 (Amsterdam, Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999), pp. 163–199.

49 See Chapter Two.
Fried’s identity as a Jew played a significant role in his attitude to the creation of the state of Israel and the conflict in the Middle East from the outset. It will be shown in the chapter focusing on Fried’s poetry devoted to the Palestinian issue that his interest in this long-standing conflict only came to prominence in particular social and political circumstances.

This finding is further supported by the information gleaned from the interviews which the author of the current study conducted with Fried’s widow, Catherine Fried and his friend and once neighbour in London Akiva Orr, now living in Netanya, Israel. Further details to the Jewish dissent to the official policies in Israel from the 1960s to today were obtained during two interviews which the author of the present study conducted in August 2010 with the Israeli historian and academic Moshe Zimmermann. The interviews and the archival findings form a point of intersection from which the chapter on Fried’s anti-Zionist poetry and to some extent the chapter on Fried’s translation work develop. The doctoral theses focusing on Fried’s Jewish identity are also evaluated in view of this newly acquired information, i.e. interviews and archival documents.

The material held in the Written Archives of the British Broadcasting Corporation, previously meticulously studied by Lawrie, offered an invaluable resource for appraising the development of Fried’s identity in the 1950s and 1960s. The Written Archives provided sources of background information for Fried’s commentaries for the East Zone Programme, which were analysed in conjunction with Fried’s political writings of the era. This archival resource also painted the picture of the general milieu in which Fried worked and which influenced his development as a later political commentator in his essays, speeches and poetry. The link between his work at the BBC and his later critical appraisal of the role of media (soft censorship
and hard propaganda) in his political poetry and writings could not have been established without reference to the BBC Written Archives.

Additionally, the sound archive in the British Library in London provided invaluable information relating to Fried’s own views on his identity, as expressed in his speeches given at the Edinburgh Literary Festival in 1962 and at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London in 1981. By comparing the information obtained from these two occasions twenty years apart and relating it to the archival material obtained in Vienna as well as assessing the findings in relation to the interviews with Fried’s daughter and widow in London and his friend and political associate in Israel, it was possible to discern the complexity of Fried’s identity and interpret Fried’s writings accordingly.

Finally, it should also be noted here that an interesting by-product of the present analysis is that none of the German authors researching the life and work of Erich Fried, with the exception of Steven Lawrie, appear to have consulted the relevant academic theses available in the UK and vice versa. The present thesis seeks to correct this imbalance. In the analysis of Fried’s translation, the present thesis also refers to the works of philosophy and translation studies hitherto unexplored in this way. It establishes links between key moments in Fried’s public life and consequences these had for the development of his identity and thus brings significant elements of originality to this work.
Chapter 2 Aspects of Fried’s Biography

This chapter will outline aspects of Fried’s biography. Since this thesis focuses on the issue of Fried’s ‘hidden selves’ as a persecuted adolescent of Jewish origin, an Austrian émigré in London during the Second World War and a politically-active poet with Marxist leanings, the biographical details will, amongst other things, concentrate on Fried’s Jewish background, his membership of the Austrian and German exile organisations in London during the Second World War and his early political involvement. These elements of Fried’s biography will be considered in order to establish links between his early engagement and later periods in his oeuvre. The background from Fried’s biography for the key concept in his poetry—*Entfremdung*—will also be given.

2.1. A spider’s web

Seen as one of the most prolific writers in German in the 20th century, Fried frequently expressed controversial attitudes in his writings. These attitudes were shaped not only by experiences from his youth, but also by experiences which he related back to his youth. In this way, Fried’s experiences in Austria during the 1930s and in Great Britain during the 1940s influenced his later political affiliations in the 1960s and 1970s. In Germany he was affiliated with the Student Movement during the 1960s. In the late 1960s and 1970s in Britain, he became familiar with the work of the founder of *Matzpen*, the Israeli Socialist Organisation, the socialist Moshe Machover, who originally came from Israel. In the same period Fried became acquainted with Israel Shahak, a civil rights activist and the president of the Israeli League of Human and Civil

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50 Interview with Akiva Orr, Netanya, 10 August 2010.
Rights, a fierce critic of Israel’s treatment of its Arab population.\textsuperscript{51} Throughout his lifetime, despite a wide circle of friends, professional acquaintances and readers, Fried remained an outsider, from the beginnings in the refugee milieu in North London in the 1940s to the glory of the Georg-Büchner Prize in 1987 and an honorary Doctorate from the University of Osnabrück in 1988.\textsuperscript{52}

Herbert Steiner\textsuperscript{53} described his friendship with Fried dating from the early days in Vienna before the Second World War and during exile years in London, ending with an anecdote about an incident in modern-day Austria. Fried was asked to deliver a speech on the occasion of the new Bruckner musical festival in Linz in 1987. The speech became a conciliatory occasion between the Austrian audience and Fried. It contains the essence of ideas which permeate Fried’s entire oeuvre, relating to the position of art and literature in the fight against alienation:

\[\ldots\] Es fehlt nicht an Dichtern. Aber die, die sich dem Kulturbetrieb nicht anpassen, oder die schwer einteilbar sind, von denen man nicht berechnen kann, was sie zu dieser oder jener Sache sagen oder taktvoll verschweigen werden, läßt man ein wenig im Schatten. \[\ldots\] Aber alle echte Kunst und Dichtung hat einen Hauptfeind, gegen den sie ankämpft: die Entfremdung, die Verdinglichung und alle ihre Taten und Werke. Nun sind aber alle etablierten Institutionen leider ihrem Wesen nach, geradezu per definitionem, Brutherde der Entfremdung und Verdinglichung. \[\ldots\] Der Staat ist Herrschaftsapparat und als solcher auch Unterdrückungsmaschinerie und Träger von Entfremdung. Gleichzeitig aber ist er bisher—und noch lange Zeit—notwendig zur Aufrechterhaltung des gesellschaftlichen Lebens. \[\ldots\] Die Einsicht in diese Gespaltenheit, die unserem Kulturleben zugrunde liegt, kann vielleicht die Auseinandersetzung fruchtbarer machen. \[\ldots\]

Fried throughout the speech critically appraised the involvement of the state and the church in Austrian social and cultural life as well as the legacy of National Socialism. Eventually, he

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{52} Lawrie, \textit{Writer}, p. 325. Fried’s involvement with the Austrian Centre buffered the outsider perspective to a certain extent. However, his sense of belonging was diminished as soon as he voiced his disagreement with the political views of the other members at the Centre.
\textsuperscript{53} Herbert Steiner fled to Great Britain from Austria in December 1938. He was a member of Young Austria from its inception, a secretary of Young Austria and the founder of the publishing enterprise \textit{Jugend Voran}.
decided to finish on a more appeasing note: ‘Die Überwindung der Mißstände, mit denen ich mich hier befaßt habe, könnten zu einem wirklichen neuen Aufschwung der Kulturleistungen dieses Landes führen’.  

The episode in Linz testifies to the awkward if ultimately conciliatory relationship between Fried and his country of origin.

2.2. Early years in Vienna

Fried was born in 1921 to assimilated Jews in Vienna, in the IX District. In statistical reports dated a few years before, this district was described as populated by the middle class with one-fifth being Jewish. The awareness of Judaism in his life came not from his parents, who were secular Jews, but from school, where he read the Bible, the Jewish prayer books and the Chassidic legends.

When Fried was still a young boy, his father had built for him a theatre and performed plays by Ferdinand Raimund (abridged for a younger audience), which made an impression on young Erich. Fried’s early ideas were thus formed by early exposure to literature with moralistic and anti-capitalist overtones. Fried’s physical disability had soon become apparent (he was later diagnosed as having Charcot Marie Tooth disease). The realm of literature and particularly

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57 Gerhard Lampe, ‘Ich will mich erinnern an alles was man vergißt’: Erich Fried, Biographie und Werk (Cologne: Bund, 1989), p. 20.
58 Lampe, p. 29.
59 A degenerative neurological disorder, originally misdiagnosed as Friedreich’s Ataxia.
theatre beckoned Fried into another world where he found that physical strength and ability were unimportant.

Although Fried’s father himself had wanted to forge a literary career, he had no understanding of his son’s literary and theatrical leanings. When the famous Austrian actor and film director Max Reinhardt offered to pay for young Erich’s schooling on condition that Erich joined his acting ensemble, Hugo decisively rejected the offer.60 Nevertheless, Fried’s latent desire to become a writer began presumably under his father’s influence during the late 1920s and early 1930s in Vienna.61

As a young boy, Fried refused to participate in a performance attended by the police authorities, having witnessed a massacre previously, in June 1927:


His refusal was additionally motivated by seeing the posters around Vienna, which were a reaction to the official handling of the demonstration and the excessive use of force by the police. The message on the posters was written by Karl Kraus, the famous Austro-Jewish writer, and contained the words ‘Ich fordere Sie auf, abzutreten’:

60 Lampe, p. 34.
62 Fried, ‘Wunderkinderzeit’, in Mitunter Sogar Lachen, GW4, pp. 537–532, see p. 536. He describes the clash in Vienna between the workers, the armed forces (Schutzbund) of the Social-Democratic Party in power at the time, who attempted to calm the workers, and the police who were believed to be secret sympathisers of the right-wing paramilitaries causing the original conflict. Many civilians and a small number of police were hurt in the clash.
Die Worte *auf* und *ab* waren typographisch [...] untereinander angeordnet, was auf mich, der ich erst vor kurzem lesen gelernt hatte und noch keineswegs ornamental schreiben konnte, tiefen Eindruck machte.⁶³

The statement Fried admired was aimed at Johann Schober, whom Kraus saw as responsible for the bloodshed. From this refusal we can glean that Fried’s tendency to ‘disobey’, or disrupt the established codes of behaviour (in this case showing respect to elders and officials), which was uncommon at the time in Austria, was recognisable at an early age. Although it would be difficult to trace Fried’s love of wordplay as a stylistic device back to Karl Kraus exclusively, this writing skill had certainly made an impression on young Fried. Another inclination of Fried’s was also indicated here. His determination not to recite the poem before the *Polizeipräsident* was inspired as much by hearing about the bloody street-battles from the adults around him as by a visual stimulus.

Fried was provoked by seeing the wounded and the dead on the streets of Vienna, but also by seeing the graphic display of the play on words *auf* and *ab* one below the other in an effective single sentence slogan. It may be argued that the graphic representation of Kraus’s reductive style combined with the images of many innocent Viennese citizens hurt or killed and Fried’s budding inclination to sympathise with the victims were illustrative of what was later to become Fried’s creative signature. In ‘Für Karl Kraus’, Fried admired and attempted to emulate Kraus’s style, as demonstrated by the last two lines in the following extract:

[...] Und so hast du uns Form und Spott gelehrt
und schliffst uns scharf zur Schneide das Gewissen. [...] (1942/3)⁶⁴

It should be noted that during Fried’s early childhood Austria was ruled by the Social Democrats, a party whose platform was a particular strand of Marxism, i.e. Austro-Marxism. The members,

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⁶³ Fried, *GW4*, p. 536.
⁶⁴ ‘Für Karl Kraus’, in *Bausteine*, p. 47.
critical of Russian-style politics, strove to develop Marxism as social science rather than dogma or a highly theoretical cluster of ideas. The party was in power in Vienna until 1934 where it provided the working class with housing, health and welfare services. The adverse changes which Fried experienced had begun with the gaining of social power by the National Socialists from 1934 and in particular from 1938.

Fried’s budding awareness of growing anti-Semitism in Vienna could be dated even earlier, when he wrote a protest letter edited by his mother in response to the treatment of the Halsmann incident to the Jewish weekly Die Wahrheit which was published in the 1/1930 edition. Philipp Halsmann, a Jew from Riga, had been accused of murdering his own father (pushing him into a ravine) whilst on a climbing trip in Austria, in 1929. The letter was a testimony to many characteristics that would later mature in Fried. Although only 8 years old, Fried recognised that the main motivation behind the prosecution was the fact that Halsmann was a Jew.

Fried emphasised his own Jewishness and expressed sympathy with the accused not only as a Jew but also as a human being, a trait that would become increasingly pronounced during Fried’s later life. Although in other writings he emphasised the Anschluss of Austria by Nazi Germany as the event that turned him from a schoolboy into a Jew, in this letter, written eight years before the annexation of Austria, Fried had already emphasised the Jewish side of his identity. Both the refusal to recite in 1927 and the Halsmann incident in 1930 illustrated Fried’s tendency to sympathise with the innocent and persecuted at such a young age.

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66 Ibid.
67 As given in Lampe, pp. 52–54. Lampe included a copy of the original page from Die Wahrheit, Jüdische Wochenschrift (Vienna), no. 1/1930, which shows the typesetters’ omission of two lines from Fried’s letter.
68 Lampe, p. 52.
70 Fried’s letter is reprinted in Lampe, pp. 53–54.
The rise of fascism and associated anti-Semitism in Austria had direct consequences for the development of Fried’s personality. Fried witnessed a growing hostility to Jews, which permeated all sections of the society. The division of the Jews and Catholics during religious service and the growing division in Viennese society, now not between fascists and Social Democrats, but between Jews and all others was disconcerting young Fried to the point of desperation. 

It was a stark contrast to the picture painted by Steiner about life in the preceding years:


Soon the Jews were persecuted all over Austria. Fried showed his spirit of resistance—he organised a few Jewish school friends around him and they formed a group whose intention was to take books classed as posing a danger to the current state order (since the annexation of Austria) from Jewish families and give them to the socialist and communist sympathisers of Austrian Catholic origin, in whose possession they would not have presented such a risk.

During 1938, Fried was increasingly a witness to the daily abuse that his Jewish neighbours were subjected to in Vienna. Hitler’s proclamation of Austria as a part of Germany effectively robbed the Austrian people of their national identity. It is difficult to argue that these historical events did not mark young Fried’s lifelong relationship both with Austria and with his Jewish heritage.

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71 Kaukoreit, Stationen, pp. 29–33.
72 Steiner, Bausteine, p. 9. Both Fried and Steiner were present at the demonstrations.
73 Historian Ari J. Sherman describes the situation which sealed the fate of many Jews in Austria; ‘The process of driving Jews out of the economy [...] was accomplished in Austria within two or three months, by means of large-scale looting and takeover of Jewish property [...] often in circumstances of the utmost brutality.’ In Sherman, Island Refuge: Britain and the Refugees from the Third Reich, 1933–1939 (Ilford: Frank Cass, 1994), p. 86.
75 Steiner, Bausteine, p. 9.
As established, although Fried’s early years in Austria before the annexation were spent in the atmosphere of increasing danger and menace, this did not deter him from developing a keen sense for literature and theatre. As a younger boy, he was surrounded by acting and theatre. Fried’s nanny, Fini, who during the day trained as an actress, learned her roles at bedtime while he undertook to read the texts and correct her.\textsuperscript{76}

Soon, Fried served as an audience to Johanna of Schiller’s \textit{Die Jungfrau von Orleans}, and the mental images conjured up by this play remained in his memory to be invoked again in the novel \textit{Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen} many years later.\textsuperscript{77} August Strindberg was another influence. Reading \textit{The Son of a Servant} inspired Fried to adopt ‘doubt’ as a motif of his primarily political poetry. The following extract from the novel shows what could have inspired Fried to accept this idea:

\begin{quote}
What then had he of his own? Nothing. But he had two fundamental characteristics, which largely determined his life and his destiny. The first was Doubt. He did not receive ideas without criticism, but developed and combined them. Therefore he could not be an automaton, nor find a place in ordered society.\textsuperscript{78}
\end{quote}

The following extract from a cycle ‘Zweifel an der Sprache’ included in the collection \textit{Gegengift}, may illustrate that the notion of doubt remained with Fried throughout his life:

\begin{quote}
Darum Zweifel an denen die sagen:
\textquote{Die Sprache kann alles.}
\textquote{Man muß nur die Vollkommenheit der Sprache erstreben.’}
Darum Zweifel an der Vollkommenheit ihres Sinnes
Und an denen die sagen sie muß im Unsinn ersterben […]\textsuperscript{79}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{77} Lampe, p. 45.
\textsuperscript{78} August Strindberg, \textit{The Son of a Servant}, trans. Claud Field (New York, London: G.P Putnam’s Sons, 1913), p. 261. This is a largely autobiographical novel by the Swedish author August Strindberg, charting the social and psychological development of a young man in 19\textsuperscript{th}-century Sweden.
\textsuperscript{79} Fried, ‘Zweifel an der Sprache’, in \textit{Gegengift}, \textit{GW2}, pp. 239–249, see p. 244.
Fried apparently identified with the character and learned from Strindberg’s praise of doubt as one of the origins of wisdom.\textsuperscript{80}

In 1938, Fried left Austria and arrived in London via Belgium on the 5 August 1938, having successfully obtained entry clearance.\textsuperscript{81} The scale of the refugee influx from Austria into Great Britain following the \textit{Anschluss} in 1938 was great and Fried might easily have been refused a visa. In the first half of 1938 there were 2,740 visas granted, about 420 refused and by September the consular staff in Vienna were dealing with 200 enquiries a day.\textsuperscript{82} In London, Fried initially received aid from the Jewish Refugees Committee and managed to bring his mother only days before the start of the Second World War.\textsuperscript{83}

\textbf{2.3. London, in exile}

Although Fried found himself in a country that had a long-standing tradition of slow assimilation, this position was a vital factor in determining the further development of his literary activity. Fried associated himself with exile organisations in London, such as the Austrian Centre and the Free German League of Culture. Both organisations published journals where Fried’s early writings appeared. The absence of assimilative tendencies in his surroundings, the German-speaking exile environment with limited publishing facilities and Fried’s own intention to become a German author were all contributing elements in his path to literary achievement.

\textsuperscript{80} Lampe, pp. 41–46.
\textsuperscript{81} Kaukoreit, p. 34.
\textsuperscript{83} Urbanek, \textit{Am Alsergrund}, pp. 53–54.
Fried’s subsistence was funded by a post at the German Jewish Refugees Committee and another post as a part-time librarian with the Austrian Centre at Paddington. Fried marvelled at the number of titles to which he had access in the library, by the authors such as Marx, Engels, Trotsky, Tucholsky, Brecht, Toller, Feuchtwanger—the possession of any of these in Austria at the time would have been a serious offence.

The Austrian Centre was established in March 1939, a place originally founded to bring Austrian refugees in London together and provide a place where culture, education and networking between the Austrians and their British hosts were fostered. Although initially established to include all political affiliations or factions, it soon came under the influence of its members with more communist leanings. It was an organisation intended to gather under one roof young exiles irrespective of their political beliefs. The Centre had pressing concerns—it provided cultural well-being and sustenance to its young members. The majority were young people who were in the UK without their families, and who had interrupted their schooling. The majority of the exiles from Austria after the Anschluss were Jewish, and a minority of those had communist sympathies or had been members of the Austrian Communist Party (KPÖ). At the time of the creation of the Austrian Centre, the Austrian communists followed a covert policy along the lines of the Popular Front of the 1930s when the attempt was made to unite anti-Nazi intellectuals, artists and academics under the umbrella of ‘progressive humanism’. However once the Non-

85 Lampe, pp. 73–74.
86 Brinson, Out of Austria, p. 18.
89 Grenville, Out of Austria, p. 25.
Aggression Treaty between Hitler and Stalin was signed in 1939 these ideas proved difficult to maintain, due to obvious difficulties (after the signing of the pact and the outbreak of war Great Britain became an enemy to those loyal to the Soviet Union). Refugees were not permitted to fulfil any political role officially within organisations such as the Austrian Centre due to their status of enemy aliens, however, the Centre focused with success on social issues, such as providing a place to stay (such as hostels for refugee domestics who lost their positions on the outbreak of war). Other political groups, such as the Social Democrats, who were in favour of a Pan-German alliance, posited the idea of revolutionary struggle of the working classes both in Germany and Austria (sharing a common class enemy) which was in stark contrast to the ideas published in the Zeitspiegel and the Young Austria journals after Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, when the image of Austria as Germany’s first victim began to emerge. From such surroundings and circumstances hail Fried’s initial experiences as an exile, as a member of an exile organisation and living and working amongst those who had been his compatriots, but with whom he did not always share the same political opinions, even if he shared the same patriotic sentiments. As Steiner, who remained a lifelong communist, explained:


90 Ibid.
91 Ibid., p. 34.
92 Steiner, Bausteine, p. 10.
Fried’s early literary work as an author and a literary critic appeared at the events and in the publications of the Austrian Centre and the Free German League of Culture. As Steiner described:

In den Heimen der ‘Young Austria’ las Erich Fried seine Gedichte und Erzählungen vor. In den Exilzeitungen ‘Junges Oesterreich’ und ‘Jugend voran’, wurden seine Gedichte veröffentlicht. [...] Bereits 1943 konnte [...] die opferreiche Geschichte des Österreichischen Widerstandes gegen den Nationalsozialismus in einer englischsprachigen Broschüre ‘They fight in the dark’ verbreitet werden. Der Verfasser war Erich Fried.93

The longer narrative piece, *They Fight in the Dark: The Story of Austria’s Youth* was published in 1943. Later that year Austria was pronounced the first victim of Nazi Germany and the annexation of 1938 was declared invalid by the UK, US and the Soviet Union, in the Moscow Declaration (October 1943). The declaration was signed by the above powers in Moscow, where the meeting was held to discuss their wartime policy.94 Fried’s pamphlet *They Fight in the Dark* contributed to the overarching ideological goal of winning the hearts and minds of the Austrian youth in exile and its British hosts, as propounded by the Centre—the portrayal of Austrians before their young Austrian audience of exiles (with the hope of reaching the young British as well) as anti-fascist fighters in the resistance against Hitler and Nazi invasion:

Every Austrian knows that without the Germans, Austria would never have been involved in war, and now one out of every six Austrians has died, has been wounded or taken prisoner, for the foreign ‘Master Race’, and even young men, little more than boys, are being pressed into the Army.95

93 Ibid.
In this English-language publication, Fried not only attempted to portray his country of birth as victimised and abused by its Nazi neighbour, but also depicted Austrians as freedom-fighters who found effective ways of fighting the Nazi yoke by guerrilla actions. With such ideas the Austrian Centre and its youth organisation Young Austria attempted to reach both English and Austrian younger audiences (since the young exiles of Austrian origin were expected to return home with refreshed if not ‘corrected’ memories of Austria as Germany’s prey and many were so young when they left they had no memories of the Austrian social and political system). Fried’s patriotic writings at the time of his membership of the Austrian Centre and Young Austria contained little recollection of the anti-Semitic behaviour by the fellow-Viennese citizens which he had witnessed in Austria at the time of the Anschluss.

Steiner, who had a leading role in the publishing house of the Austrian Centre, Jugend voran, recalled that one of the important aims of the organisation Young Austria had been for the young people to have knowledge about their country of origin as well as for the organisation to offer a possibility to the young writers of being published. The opportunity to publish was welcomed by the members. The organisation itself benefited if the main thrust of the written work was propaganda for Young Austria. Fried found himself in a position where he was an active member of a communist organisation, had to provide sustenance for himself and, due to the pressing concerns of the day, was not able to devote himself fully to becoming an author. Since he was an

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96 The publishing imprint of the Young Austria organisation, Jugend voran, had an enthusiastic attitude to the anti-fascist struggle in Austria at the time, which it subsequently tried to depict in its publications. Charmian Brinson and Richard Dove, ‘Publishing with a Purpose: Free Austrian Books’, in Out of Austria, pp. 86–113, see p. 97.

97 The intention to educate the young subscribers on Austrian recent history is illustrated by an editorial of Young Austria’s Chairman, Fritz Walter, in the 1941 August issue. In ‘The Real Story of Austria’, he related the socio-historical and economic background to the Anschluss and the role of the German military and political might in the exploitation of Austria as a colony. Fritz Walter, ‘The Real Story of Austria’, Young Austria, no. 16, August 1941, pp. 1–2.

98 Brinson and Bearman, Kindheit, p. 157.
active member of the Kommunistischer Jugendverband, the work for the organisation gave him the opportunity to publish a number of written pieces, themed in the general communist propaganda vein. His song ‘Wir stürmen das Land’ was performed at the Stoll Theatre in Kingsway with great success. It was subsequently printed in the June issue of Young Austria in 1942, in a special issue devoted to the Austrian-Soviet Friendship week. An essay by the Austrian Centre’s functionary, Franz West, directly preceded Fried’s poem. West enthusiastically stated that ‘österreichische Arbeiterbewegung und sozialistische Sowjetunion [...] sind auf [sic] engste verbunden.’ Fried’s poem, by implication, carried similar sentiments of class unity and unity between communist and capitalist states in the strife against a common enemy:

Wir stürmen das Land
und kein Feind hält uns stand
weil sich Ost und West vereint! [...]102

It is worth noting here that Fried’s early ‘communist years in exile’ were spent in the company of young people who were offered a substitute ‘home’ in the shape of Young Austria and encouraged into party work and engagement by the party functionaries within Young Austria such as Fritz Walter and his wife Berta, who had already been members of the Communist Party in Austria, before their exile to Great Britain (there were other Communist Party members or sympathisers within the organisation and their cooperation within Young Austria was seen in a

100 Young Austria, no. 13, late June 1942, p. 7.
101 Ibid., p. 4.
102 Ibid., p. 7.
103 Brinson and Bearman, Kindheit, p. 159. See this article for the changes in the name of the exile journal from Junges Österreich to Young Austria. Österreichische Jugend, Junges Österreich, Young Austria, Jung-Österreich, p. 150. N.B. For ease of reference, Young Austria will be used in the Bibliography.
very positive light,\textsuperscript{104} although political campaigning and constant engagement were demanding to its members and promulgated under ever stricter party discipline). The journal \textit{Young Austria} increasingly encouraged its members to participate in the British war effort by working in factories and on farms and by posting requests for funds (asking young Austrian exiles to give up a proportion of their salary to help the Soviet forces fighting against Hitler).\textsuperscript{105} Whilst in the original phases in 1939 and 1940 the calls for help focused on simply being useful to the British hosts (for instance, the exile organisation Young Austria campaigned for the ‘Aufstellung von Arbeitsbrigaden, welche sich der ARP zur Verfügung stellen, um bei der Herstellung von Sandsäcken und beim Bau von Shelters mitzuhelpen’)\textsuperscript{106} and presenting a positive image for ‘another Austria’ untainted by the Nazi ideology, after Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 the narrative centred on the help for Soviet heroes and the Soviet war effort. For instance, Young Austria presented the Soviet Ambassador with a cheque for £1500 to aid the Soviet Red Cross and Crescent.\textsuperscript{107}

Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union had another consequence for the work of Young Austria—up to this point, the organisation aimed to care for the welfare of young exiles and offer a space for cultural development. After the invasion, the shadow of the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union, previously acting as a deterrent for overt political activity, was lifted. The real political engagement commenced in earnest, particularly with the formation of the openly and vociferously politically active Free Austrian Movement (FAM) in December 1941, with Young Austria as one of its founding members.\textsuperscript{108} Fried’s offering to the Soviet war effort was the poem ‘Traschenkos Tod’, expressing typical sentiments of sympathy

\begin{flushleft}\textsuperscript{104} Interview with Fritz Walter, DÖW, Interviewabschrift 734, p. 4, quoted in \textit{Kindheit}, p. 159. \\
\textsuperscript{105} See \textit{Young Austria} editions in 1941 and 1942 for instance. \\
\textsuperscript{106} \textit{Young Austria}, no. 5, September 1939, p. 4. \\
\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Young Austria}, no. 16, early August, 1942, p. 1. \\
\textsuperscript{108} Brinson and Bearman, \textit{Kindheit}, p. 160. \end{flushleft}
with the Soviet Union, whilst also motivating the audience in Britain, an extract from which reads:

Russland und England zu gleicher Zeit –
Und kein Heil mehr für Hitler und Rommel!
Anders, ganz anders klingt dann, was man schreit. […]\textsuperscript{109}

It is of note here that Young Austria did not see itself as a communist organisation under Soviet influence or patronage. Its leading functionaries bristled at the mention of their communist activity. For instance, in May 1941, they issued a statement answering accusations by the National Trade Union Centre in the UK, the TUC, which in the \textit{Industrial News} announced that Young Austria, among others, was firmly under communist influence.\textsuperscript{110}

Fried’s relationship with Austria during the time of the early exile was influenced by his membership of the exile organisations. Although the acceptance of the annexation of Austria by Germany was pervasive (the British, along with the rest of the international community had accepted the Anschluss of Austria by Nazi Germany),\textsuperscript{111} Fried as a member of Young Austria, would have read the essays and readers’ letters in \textit{Young Austria} which promoted the ideal of an independent Austrian state after the end of the war and defined its current position as an enslaved nation. For instance, an editorial in English ‘Why we still love Austria’ appeared in August 1939, urging the readers to consider that there never had been a union with Germany and that those who had welcomed Hitler’s invasion of Austria in 1938 were victims of Nazi propaganda. The editorial simultaneously emphasised the ‘wonderful stand that Austria made for five years

\textsuperscript{109} \textit{Young Austria}, no. 17, late August 1942, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{110} The statement was issued by Young Austria, FGLC, Freie Deutsche Jugend, Austrian Centre and Young Czechoslovakia on 17 May 1941, \textit{Young Austria}, late May 1941, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{111} Brinson and Bearman, \textit{Kindheit}, p. 161.
against German threats’.\footnote{Young Austria, no. 4, mid-August 1939, p. 2.} In *Young Austria*, there were almost constant references to the separate Austrian identity since 1939, and to the fact that Austria had become merely a colony of Prussian invaders only after the *Anschluss* and for whose liberation Austrian freedom fighters bravely fought. Fried’s *They Fight in the Dark* was the result of such beliefs. The Austrian communists were the propagators of a separate Austrian national identity. The editorials in *Young Austria* echoed the work of Alfred Klahr, a member of the Austrian Communist Party. The interconnectedness between the ideas of Austrian communists and Alfred Klahr is discussed in Chapter Three. Fried’s return to Austria as a Jew and as a politically engaged poet would have been seen as desirable by the members of the Austrian Centre and *Young Austria*. However, Fried’s decision to remain in Britain after the war, as stated previously, could be regarded as the best solution to his predicament under the circumstances.

Fried’s literary activity received a boost in 1943, when he edited a collection of poems, *Mut: Gedichte junger Österreicher*, together with Steiner and Walter. In the poems, Erich Fried, Arthur Rosenthal,\footnote{Arthur Rosenthal, or Arthur West, was Fried’s fellow exile and a member of *Young Austria*. Towards the end of his life, Fried resumed contact with both West and Steiner, having hour-long telephone conversations with the latter almost daily (see Steiner, *Bausteine*, p. 13). In the 1980s, West published his collection of anti-Zionist poetry *Israel-Sprüche*, for which Fried wrote an introduction, as Kaukoreit states, ‘bei allen politischen Meinungsverschiedenheiten’, see Kaukoreit, *Stationen*, p. 59. In the introduction, ‘Zu den Israel-Sprüchen’, Fried declares his respect for West; ‘Zu diesen Gedichten einige Worte schreiben zu dürfen, bedeutet mir viel. Nicht nur, weil ich den Dichter, seine Menschlichkeit und Konsequenz seit nahezu 40 Jahren kenne [...]’, in *Nicht verdrängen*, pp. 171–175, see p. 171. Fried’s loyalty to former comrades, despite their differing political beliefs, is palpable here.} Willy Verkauf and Hans Schmeier as young exiled poets attempted to relay an image of Austria as a country fighting against the Nazi occupation, in accordance with the ideological focus of *Young Austria*.\footnote{Brinson and Dove, *Out of Austria*, p. 98. The prevailing tone of the collection is nostalgia for the past.}

During his early exile in London, Fried was also a member of the Free German League of Culture (FGLC)—established in March 1939 with four honorary presidents, Alfred Kerr (the
only German amongst the four otherwise Austrian presidents), the theatre critic, Berthold Viertel, the writer and film director, Stefan Zweig, and the author and artist Oskar Kokoschka. The League defined itself as a German and anti-Nazi refugee organisation, with the focus on preserving Free German Culture, facilitating an understanding between the exiles and the British, safeguarding the interests of the refugees and fostering cooperation with other similar organisations.\footnote{SAPMO-BArch (Bundesarchiv at Berlin-Lichterfelde), SgY13/V239/1/1 quoted in Charmian Brinson and Richard Dove, ‘Remain Good Germans: December 1938–September 1939’, in Charmian Brinson and Richard Dove, \textit{Politics by Other Means: The Free German League of Culture in London 1939–1946 [Politics]} (London; Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2010), pp. 13–24, see p. 16.} It strove to speak for the ‘other Germany’\footnote{Brinson and Dove, \textit{Politics}, p. 21.} and was keen to portray an alternative to National Socialist Germany. Whilst Fried was associated with both refugee organisations, the Austrian Centre and the Free German League of Culture, he was a part of the effort of both organisations to depict Austria and Germany respectively as different from the impression given of both countries in the British media and widespread amongst ordinary people at the time. In the early days of its existence, the Free German League of Culture tried to correct the image of Germans as a race naturally aggressive, bloodthirsty and war-mongering, an idea propounded in British politics by Sir Robert Vansittart, an influential political figure in Britain during the War. Vansittart was a former Permanent Under-Secretary at the British Foreign Office and after 1938 Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the British Government. After his retirement from the Civil Service in June 1941, he wrote pamphlets and articles and appeared in the House of Lords vociferously representing his opinion of the German people as unanimous supporters of the Nazi regime.\footnote{Aaron Goldman, ‘Germans and Nazis: The Controversy over “Vansittartism” in Britain during the Second World War’, in \textit{Journal of Contemporary History}, vol. 14, no. 1, January 1979, pp. 155–191.} The same image was accepted by some of Fried’s co-exiles in the Free German League of Culture, who were sympathetic to the Soviet propaganda of Ilya Ehrenburg, a
Soviet journalist and writer, credited with the line ‘only a dead German is a good German’, although in general the communist members emphasised the necessity and the presence of resistance to Hitler inside Germany and promoted the idea of ‘the other Germany’.

The British Secret Service kept a keen eye on the developments within the FGLC, even calling it the ‘largest Communist [sic] sideshow in London’. It is possible to conclude that Fried’s early affiliations with the organisations seen by the British government as too radicalised may have hindered his first attempts to have his work read in the Austrian Service of the BBC in early 1944. In the following paragraph, Fried, however, paints a positive picture of the Austrian communist organisations as the only exile group able to organise and inspire its members as compared with other similar associations, thus attempting to justify his own membership:

Nur ist es so gewesen, daß die Sozialdemokraten und die Revolutionären Sozialisten, [...] ein ungeheuer bescheidenes und propagandistisch [...] sehr untüchtiges Vereinendasein geführt haben, daß die Kommunisten die einzigen waren, die gewußt haben, wie man Massenarbeit gut aufzieht dort. [...] Aus ähnlichen Gründen bin ich, obwohl ich zuerst bei den Trotzkisten gewesen bin, die sich aber gespalten haben, [...] dann zum Young Austria gegangen und zum Kommunistischen Jugendverband, weil ich geglaubt habe, die Lügen über Trotzki usw., das ist eine Kinderkrankheit, das wird sich später schon richtigstellen [...] darin hatte ich mich eben verkalkuliert und bin dann auch wieder weggegangen.

The Free German League of Culture, in a similar manner to Young Austria, also contributed to the literary development of several young poets in exile and Fried’s membership of this organisation was particularly auspicious. His poems were read in public for the first time by the

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Austrian exile actor Martin Miller in December 1940 at a Christmas performance.\textsuperscript{122} In March the following year he was part of a group of young exiled poets who were invited to read their work before the Writers’ Section of the FGLC.\textsuperscript{123} The Writers’ Section, as a part of the FGLC, had as one of its main aims to provide exiled authors with a reading audience and some possibility of publishing their work. It offered a place for exchange of opinions and even facilitated contact with English writers and translators.\textsuperscript{124} The FGLC journal \textit{Kunst und Wissen} (in circulation between 1942 and 1946 and with a focus on providing literary material) reflected the preoccupations of the FGLC itself at any particular point in time—for instance, turning to Soviet war concerns between 1942 and 1943. Fried’s poem ‘Rostov’ appeared in issue 21 in 1942, where he, very much following the party line and acting as a propagandist, celebrated the re-capturing of Rostov on the Don by the Soviet forces from the German Army. In August 1943, Fried was again provided with the opportunity to read his work before an audience in the FGLC.\textsuperscript{125} Despite the fact that Fried was a member of the Writers’ Section within the FGLC, he also joined Club 1943, an autonomous group which broke away from the FGLC in 1943 and whose members were intellectuals with generally socialist and progressive leanings (the group was founded in protest at the perceived aggressive politicisation of culture, which the Club members blamed on the communist influence).\textsuperscript{126} The main principles of Club 1943 were the shared cultural identity and promotion of German culture, but respect for the individuality of its members and resistance of the tendency recognisable in other exile organisations to impose political opinions as strait-jackets or corsets, thus stifling the creativity of the budding and established artists under its wing. Although Club 1943 tended not to promote political activity,

\textsuperscript{122} Brinson and Dove, \textit{Politics}, p. 43.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., p. 40.
\textsuperscript{125} A programme of FGLC, \textit{Erich Fried liest eigene Arbeiten}, ibid., p. 43.
\textsuperscript{126} Brinson and Dove, \textit{Politics}, pp. 25–39, see pp. 26–27.
the circumstances of its existence did not allow complete abstinence from political opinions and its relationship with the issues of current affairs was complex. In line with the cultural offering of the Club, Fried read his work during an evening devoted to Austrian poetry in December 1945. Brinson and Dove call these years the ‘apprentice years’ which prepared Fried for his later literary endeavours. His ambivalence in relation to the membership of the various exile organisations was apparent in the fact that Fried divided his loyalties between them (for instance he was a member of a FGLC Writers’ Section, whilst simultaneously attending meetings of the breakaway Club 1943). His relationship with the Austrian Centre hard-line communists deteriorated after 1943.

Fried’s poetry appeared in the exile press with some regularity. There are no fewer than twenty-five entries for Fried’s literary and journalistic contributions, in journals and magazines appearing in Moscow (Internationale Literatur, Deutsche Blätter), Sweden (such as Weg und Ziel, information journal of the German Antifascists from Czechoslovakia, appearing in Sweden), Mexico (Neues Deutschland), Montevideo (Informationsblatt des Deutschen Antifaschistischen Komitees), together with the publications of the exile organisations in London, such as Freie Tribüne, Freie Deutsche Jugend, Freie Deutsche Kultur and Die Zeitung.

Unfortunately, despite the culturally rich and rewarding programme, the inner strife within the Free German League of Culture threatened to undermine one of its principal aims—unity of the exiles in Britain. This was due to the intransigence of the social democrats and the focus on relations with the Soviet Union by communists. In fact, although all factions offered some kind

128 Brinson and Dove, Politics, pp. 39–54, see p. 43.
of programme, in the shape of educational, literary or political propaganda against National Socialism and fascism, whether with communist/Soviet, Trotskyist or socialist/liberal/monarchist exile organisations, it was difficult to keep within the confines of one association. Fried’s ambivalence as a young exile was to a certain measure a consequence of such disputes and disunity.

For its part, Young Austria exerted a great amount of pressure on the young Austrian exiles to return to their homeland at the end of the war, to the point of organising a *Jugendführerschule des Jungen Österreich in Gross Britannien* [sic], a school for young leaders in preparation for their return as functionaries in the liberated (and communist) Austria. Although some communist members returned to Austria after the war, the disappointing results at the first post-war elections put a firm stop to any active involvement in the political development of the new state, with a few exceptions.\textsuperscript{130} Steiner, for instance, later became ‘wissenschaftlicher Leiter des Dokumentationsarchivs des österreichischen Widerstandes’.\textsuperscript{131}

It is worth noting here that at the end of the war those communist exiles who returned to Austria were victims of their own propaganda,\textsuperscript{132} with unrealistic expectations of the communist revival and new social order, following Austria’s liberation from Germany. Fried’s own decision not to return to Austria at the end of the Second World War was based on a more realistic set of ideas.

In 1940, two years after Fried’s arrival in Britain the mass internment of the German and Austrian refugees in Britain commenced.\textsuperscript{133} Fried wrote in English about the treatment of Jewish refugees arriving from the European mainland. Of note is the statement that nothing had changed

\textsuperscript{130} Brinson and Bearman, *Kindheit*, pp. 164–165.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., p. 165.
\textsuperscript{132} Grenville, *Out of Austria*, p. 40., Brinson and Dove, ibid., p. 91.
in the treatment of Jews, but the terminology (‘the Jews are now Refugees’).

In the same period his opinions in relation to the communism which Moscow offered and the fascism/National Socialism that raged in Germany together with annexed Austria were refined and crystallised. In contrast to many of the other affiliates of the exile organisations, he expressed outrage both against demonising Germany entirely and against the blind following by some fellow exiles of the party line promoted by Stalin’s Soviet Union. Later, in an interview, whilst commenting on those years, Fried emphasised his humanist concerns, ‘Zwischen der Vernichtung der feindlichen Idee und der Vernichtung der feindlichen Menschen wollte ich immer einen großen Unterschied machen’.

The suicide of his close friend Hans Schmeier in 1943, who was pressured by his fellow-communists to follow the party line although he had increasingly doubted the ideology, brought much despair and guilt. This incident was one of the reasons why Fried broke with Young Austria and lost any sympathy he may have had for the communist cause after 1943. In an interview, Fried related the circumstances in the background of the split:

Er hat sich 1943 im Herbst umgebracht, da war er 18 Jahre alt... [...] Jedenfalls aus seinen Papieren, [...] habe ich damals gesehen, daß er dieselben Bedenken hatte gegen die Partei wie ich, nur hat er es nicht gesagt [...].

Having considered the developments in Austria after the end of the war, Fried perceived an unbridgeable gap between his former home and his current circumstances and decided to remain

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in Britain. His psychological state had undergone such profound change, conditioned by pre-war anti-Semitism in Vienna, Nazism, flight to Britain and war, and this had considerable consequences; however, his basic concepts remained the same—sympathy for the oppressed, destitute and wronged. Instead of an exile, Fried became a cosmopolitan and his literary oeuvre represents this transformation.

2.4. Relationship with Austria

Fried’s relationship to his home country was something which had been formed in his childhood and to which the poet had since had a ‘gebrochenes Gefühl’. Fried only re-visited Vienna for the first time in 1962, following his exile in 1938. His contact with Austria in the early years after the Second World War was displaced by his contact with Germany. However, following his first post-war visit to Austria, he found himself progressively drawn to political and current affairs there. It was as if the magnetism of controversy and perceived or real injustice was directing him to the thorniest issues of the moment, such as the treatment of the Slovenian minority in Carinthia, or the revelations of Kurt Waldheim’s Nazi past which caused a scandal in Austrian public life. In the period just before his death, in the speech Fried sent to Vienna where he could not attend the rally against Kurt Waldheim, he emphasised the concept of moralische Mitschuld of which Kurt Waldheim had been guilty whilst serving in the German army in Greece at the end of the Second World War (Waldheim had been attached to a German unit responsible for the death of 42,000 Jews).

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138 See Lawrie, _Writer_, pp. 100–102.
139 Claudia Theurer, ‘Ein Dichter macht sich Luft’, in _Abendzeitung_ (Munich), 24 April 1985, quoted in _Bausteine_, pp. 41–69, see p. 41.
2.5. Lifelong exile and a citizen of the world

After the war, Fried resolved to remain in the UK, disappointed at the treatment of his fellow exiles on their return to Austria. He did not move to Germany, or the GDR, which at the time could have been an attractive choice for him since his immediate concerns regarding joblessness and survival would have been solved. Another reason for not returning to Austria was a continuing disagreement with those who remained faithful to Stalin’s party politics. This was also his reason for refusing a post at the Humboldt University in former East Germany:

Ich wurde dann zwar, zum Beispiel als die Humboldt-Universität in Ost-Berlin ihre Arbeit aufnahm, eingeladen, dort als Dozent zu arbeiten. Das wäre aber mit der Bedingung verknüpft gewesen, nicht eine Position einzunehmen, die mit der des offiziellen sozialistischen Realismus unvereinbar war. Ich bin lieber Fabrikarbeiter in London geblieben.142

His writing career in Great Britain was impaired by his lack of language knowledge: although he later grew into one of the most respected German translators of Shakespeare and many modern poets, his English language skills at that time were insufficient to secure publishing contracts. Fried’s decision to remain an author in the German language was perhaps aided by his precise geographical location.

In the same post-war period (1947–1950), Fried gathered together a small group of poets in London, with whom he had already been in contact during the Second World War—Hans Günther Adler, Franz Baermann Steiner, Hans Werner Cohn, Hans Eichner and Georg Rapp. Fried appeared to be the driving force behind the gatherings, which were beneficial to his poetic development, since the group fostered discussion and critical feedback on individual work.143 All members were German-speaking Jews who did not feel at home in Great Britain, did not

142 Kesting, in Gespräche, p. 30.
seriously consider returning to Germany and although of mixed ages (Cohn, Adler and Steiner were already in their forties at this time), professionally they were all still to make their mark.\textsuperscript{144}

In 1948, Fried wrote to his (future) publisher Eugen Claasen, describing the work of the group. Unfortunately, the gatherings stopped in the early 1950s, with the emigration of Hans Eichner to Canada and the death of Steiner in 1952.\textsuperscript{145}

Fried’s literary career was boosted by the contact with the Claasen publishers in Germany in the early 1950s, via Elisabeth Langgässer, a German poet who used her contacts within the German publishing industry to procure a contract with Eugen Claassen. This publishing house also hoped to help Fried forge a career in literary translation, an undertaking hampered by German currency reform\textsuperscript{146} and Fried’s geographic location. His other post, as a political commentator at the BBC’s German East Zone Programme [GEZP], certainly provided a means of subsistence. His commentary on world events read for the Programme was heard by thousands of people in former Eastern Europe.

In the 1950s, as well as having a thriving career with the BBC, Fried also became a successful translator. After the translation of Dylan Thomas’s \textit{Under Milk Wood}, his career in literary translation threatened to overshadow his career as an author. However, membership of the \textit{Gruppe 47}, in 1963, and attendance at its meetings in the years leading up to his nomination to be a member, helped to establish Fried as a poet in the German-speaking world. This association of literati was critical of the cultural climate in Germany and was engaged in bringing about a fundamental change in German literature as well as in providing a fertile ground for discussions

\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., p. 166.
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid., pp. 165–166.
\textsuperscript{146} Lawrie, \textit{Writer}, p. 144.
on German and world events.\textsuperscript{147} From this point on, Fried developed further as an engaged poet, espousing causes relating to the oppressed and exploited worldwide, to student protests during 1968, the German terrorist organisation Red Army Faction and to nuclear disarmament. With the Six-Day War in 1967, he experienced an identity crisis\textsuperscript{148} and published perhaps his most controversial poem—‘Höre, Israel’, a warning to the Israeli Jews following the conflict. His political poetry written during the 1960s and 1970s otherwise appeared to be a continuation of the engaged lyricism practised in early exile in London. Although the geographic locus of Fried’s poetry was Germany (once he was published by German publishers), he felt at home (or not) equally in Germany and the UK. In an interview in 1986, Fried answered the question of where he felt most at home with the following words:


Fried’s death in 1988 brought to an end a prolific and a successful career of one who left rich traces on European literature.

2.6. An engaged poet

The notion of political engagement in Fried’s character can be traced back to his poetry beginnings in Vienna, when he composed a poem dedicated to the bloody conflict between the

\textsuperscript{147} Lampe, pp. 98–99.
\textsuperscript{148} Interview with Catherine Fried, London, 13 January 2012.
police and the workers in Vienna in 1927 (‘Mir träumte jüngst von frohem Leben’). In his interview with Dick van Stekelenburg in 1975, Fried was at pains to elucidate his idea of engaged poetry. He indicated that all poetry was engaged. Fried further clarified his view that public opinion often discriminated against poetry perceived as engaged and defined it as within the narrow confines of strictly political polemics as opposed to seeing it, like Fried, as a means of combating injustice:


Fried saw engaged poetry as a message from the poet to himself and about himself simultaneously, and if it succeeded in motivating others—so much the better.

During the interview Fried quoted the British socialist Richard Henry Tawney, who maintained that socialism had elements of Christian ethics—such as conscience and pacifism.

Remembering his experiences during the Second World War as a member of Young Austria in London, Fried emphasised that dogmatism led to the loss of instinct:

Dogmatik wertet das Denken ab, macht es instinktlös... [...] dogmatische Marxisten sind keine Marxisten mehr, sondern [...] Mörder des Marxismus. Sie haben eine Lehre der Hoffnung umgebracht. [...] Nun sehe ich aber auch, daß Entfremdung kein schuldhafter Zustand ist, sondern daß die Menschen sich da nicht helfen können. Sie geraten in den Zustand, daß sie alle komplexen menschlichen Zusammenhänge, alle Ursachen und Folgen ihres eigenen gesellschaftlichen Lebens [...] nicht mehr seelisch-geistig erleben und begreifen können.

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150 The poem is included in Bausteine, p. 43.
152 Ibid., p. 55.
153 Ibid., p. 47.
154 Ibid., p. 52.
155 Ibid., pp. 52–53.
Entfremdung, one of the key concepts in Fried’s work, implies that one should be able to experience life mentally and socially; and that if one were not able to, then this state was caused by alienation—the imbalance in the presence and perception of these two elements. Fried elucidated the concept with the following example:

Ich kämpfe dort [in Deutschland] dagegen, daß man z. B. einen Faschisten ohne weiteres zum Tode verurteilen darf, bloß weil er ein Faschist ist. In dem Moment, in dem man es tut, in dem man sich keine Gedanken mehr darüber macht, hat man einen anderen Menschen getötet, ohne über diesen existenziellen Extremfall zu reflektieren.\(^\text{156}\)

Fried’s focus on Entfremdung had, he claims, therefore been present since he was a young man, whilst he wrote his first political verses published in the exile journals and collections. Fried elsewhere emphasised the need to fight and root out Entfremdung in all aspects of social and personal life:

Ich glaube, es ist auch so, daß die Hauptaufgabe der Literatur ja wirklich keine direkte tagespolitische oder parteipolitische ist, sondern gerade die Bekämpfung der Entfremdung, der Abstumpfung. Es ist wichtig, daß man ihr auch näher bei sich selbst und in den eigenen Kreisen nachspürt. Dadurch entsteht allerdings als Nebenprodukt auch politische Kritikfähigkeit, besserer politischer Instinkt.\(^\text{157}\)

Although this extract is taken from a speech Fried delivered on the occasion of the Erste österreichische Schriftstellerkongreß in 1981, as a mature author, his support for questioning and critical thinking had been a source of a life-long inspiration in Fried’s literary work. Chapter Four will focus on Fried’s early poetic endeavours where the seeds of Fried’s engagement took their roots, whilst the next chapter focuses on the conceptual framework used to analyse the dynamic of Fried’s ‘Vexierbild’ identity.

\(^{156}\) Ibid., p. 53.


Erich Fried investigated and revealed his identity through his literary work, to varying degrees, at times accidentally and subconsciously, on other occasions deliberately. This literary exploration took various forms. Most frequently it was presented in his poems, shifting to and including prose writings, such as pamphlets and speeches, later published as short essays when he spoke in front of student audiences in Germany, or read in his role as the BBC’s Political Commentator for the German East Zone Programme. At the same time, Fried engaged with his identity in what later became an overwhelming archive of personal correspondence and records, held in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna. What at first glance appears a diffuse collection of mostly subjective texts, peppered with ambiguity and contradiction, is in fact a very detailed account of Fried’s ethnic, national and political identity as a Jew, as an Austrian, a German-speaking author and a socialist. Although Fried never declared himself officially as a humanist, he often voiced opinions which were in accordance with humanist notions, and this aspect of his identity will be explored briefly later in this chapter and in greater depth in the remainder of the thesis.

Fried’s relationship with Austria, his country of origin, always appears to be interrogated from a retrospective view. I would argue that in this instance, Fried displayed a kind of reactive personality formation—his attitudes, as expressed in his writings, were not only shaped by experiences from his youth, but also by experiences which he related to his youth—what Fried was exposed to in Austria influenced his later political perspective and affiliations. In his youth in the refugee milieu, his writings were influenced by the work of an Austrian political writer and member of the Communist Party, Alfred Klahr. As explored in more detail in section 3.5,
Klahr’s writings on the distinctiveness of the Austrian nation and its unique identity separate from Germany formed an important element in the philosophy of the exile organisation, the Austrian Centre and its youth organisation, Young Austria, to which Fried was affiliated. Young Austria actively contributed to the excellent organisation of the Austrian Centre. The vigour and tenacity with which its members executed their work within the Austrian Centre was indeed admirable and may have left a lasting impression on Fried, whose later immediacy and dynamism in responding to the moments of crisis as an author may bear some roots in the time when he observed the enthusiasm of his former fellow exiles.

Fried was a cosmopolitan before cosmopolitanism was en vogue, moreover, before it was a recognised social trait, in a very modern sense subsuming cosmopolitanism under the quality of possessing global concerns. Geographically, the route from Vienna, his birthplace, to London as a place of refuge and later residence, seems uncomplicated enough. With the help of his cosmopolitan nature, Fried appears to have created several identities and used them on many occasions both as a shield and as a weapon during his literary career. Despite some statements to the contrary, his own views on his identity were ambiguous.

In one BBC documentary where Fried discussed his identity, he stated that he was Austrian by mother tongue and by the fact that he had spent his formative years there.¹⁵⁸ His memories of Austria as expressed in his writings and in the writings of his biographers such as Gerhard Lampe often focused on Fried’s relationship with his father and his father’s death at the hands of the Austrian Gestapo. Fried’s subsequent exile pushed him into being a Jew of Austrian origin, a fact emphasised often by Fried himself and in many academic or media writings. Steven Lawrie

claims that Fried’s view of Austria was always retrospective, but this is perhaps also explained by the task which Fried took upon himself with regards to the Austrian recent past.\textsuperscript{159}

3.1. Identity

The politics and issues of identity have increasingly been a focus of academic enquiry in the last two decades. Their interdisciplinary nature testifies to the variety of angles from which it is possible to broach the subject—and it offers a solution at the juncture of therapeutic and political fields of discourse.\textsuperscript{160} In this thesis, Fried’s notions of identity are analysed predominantly within the political discourse. What Altieri terms ‘specific human agency’\textsuperscript{161} involved in the seeking of identity or identification has not been considered so far in identity studies as vital to the social process within which the key factors used for the delineation of identity operate.\textsuperscript{162}

Political and social scientist and philosopher, Charles Taylor, in his work on the issues of modern identity \textit{The Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity} presents the issue of identity in the form of a question:

\begin{quote}
[T]he question is often spontaneously phrased by people in the form: Who am I? But this can’t necessarily be answered by giving name and genealogy. What does answer this question for us is an understanding of what is of crucial importance to us. To know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand. My identity is defined by the \textit{commitments and identifications} [own emphasis] which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose. In other words, it is the horizon within which I am capable of taking a stand.\textsuperscript{163}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{159} Lawrie, \textit{Writer}, p. 327.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., p. 4.
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid., p. 25.
\end{flushleft}
In many places in his poetic and prose oeuvre, Fried referenced his own position as an exile and as a victim of National Socialist persecution with the situation of those who inspired him to take a stand on their behalf, such as the people in Vietnam, Palestinians in the Middle East or children in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. The identification with victims of injustice and the commitment to global ethical responsibility to all human beings appear in Fried’s work passionately expressed.

Although defining one’s identity limits the subject within the boundaries of that definition, it nevertheless demands as clear as possible a definition of the origins of the subjective identity, based on self-reflection and consequent articulation of the individual’s claim. Therefore, the identity narrative presupposes subscription to a dialectic—putting the emphasis on the human being setting out on this path as much as on the target that the human being moves toward and hopes to attain. Fried in his wartime poetry, while considering the events in wartime Germany and Austria, debates at times in a symbolic monologue, at times in a dialogic fashion, his roots, his present situation and his relationship with the cause and locus of his misery.

This chapter therefore addresses conceptual terminology which will be applied during the analysis of Erich Fried’s poetry and prose writings. In order to assess Fried’s position regarding his identity, it soon becomes necessary to traverse the boundaries of literature (for the purposes of this study, translation is subsumed under this term), history, theology and political science. Although the study will follow the narrative relating to identity issues, it will also explore the Jewish, socialist and humanist identity narrative taking into consideration Fried’s work as a politically engaged poet.
At this point it is important to add that identity theorists sometimes emphasise the social and cultural side of identity and sometimes the personal side and rarely supply a distinction between the two. But what many agree on is the fact there is no ‘jack-in-the-box’ identity which is revealed under the right conditions.\(^{164}\) Rather, the identities are narratives and as such are created, situated and articulated in discourse.\(^{165}\)

In order to assess the concept of identity, which forms the analytical backbone of this thesis, it will be necessary to review the varied definitions which exist in the research field and supplement the one already mentioned above (Altieri). For instance, what one theorist in his work *Identity as Ideology* terms as ‘identity talk’, or ‘identitarianism’, seems apposite when considering Fried's identity as it appears in his oeuvre.\(^{166}\) Identity theories have formed the staple of intellectual enquiry in the 20th century, in disciplines such as anthropology, sociology and psychology. The body of research focusing on identity is simply too large to be inspected in the course of this chapter in any great depth. Malesevic's work stands apart because it destabilises current notions of identity and re-examines this concept as an ideological paradigm. Rather than situating identity within theories of group interaction (see theorists such as Fredrik Barth\(^ {167}\)) and social identification (Tajfel and Turner\(^ {168}\)), Malesevic underscores the ideological background of the identity claims. Declaring or maintaining a particular identity, whether ethnic or national, is laden with ideological claims, since ethnicity and nationhood are 'articulations of politicised


\(^{165}\) Ibid., p. 233.


In the analysis of Fried's identity I partly endorse Malesevic's ideas with respect to the political and ideological underpinnings of identity, however, where Malesevic's work proceeds to analyse ethnic and national collectivity, my ideas remain in the field of individual identity discourse. More specifically, I focus on the ‘identity talk’ in Fried's work, i.e. the oscillation between denotations such as ‘Jew’, ‘Austrian’, ‘socialist’, ‘atheist’ apparent in his work and how Fried himself productively grappled with these notions. The identity referred to here subsumes ideas regarding ‘self-image’ and ideas of ethnic belonging from sociology. The notion of self-image exposes the connection between identity and its ‘audience’—as human beings we affirm who we are and where we have come from in relation to the others around us. The audience therefore plays a crucial role in determining our selves. The idea of identity hence involves not only our inner world, but the position we have and take in the community which defines us. This means that, to Fried, the audience to his literary writings played a crucial part in how his identity was shaped. It will be seen in later chapters how Fried’s identity was shaped by his commitments and identifications and how they provided the frame of reference for his self-reflection.

Fried's views on his identity are present in his literary oeuvre, as in the following example:

Daß ich deutscher Schriftsteller und zugleich Jude bin, zwar nicht religiös, aber mit jener etwas skeptischen Anteilnahme [...], das empfinde ich meistens nicht gerade als schlechte Kombination.

On the face of it, it should be possible to form an opinion on Fried's life philosophy. However, at different times in his life, Fried declared himself an atheist, a secular Jew, a German poet, an Austrian poet, a socialist. It appears that it is almost impossible to claim with any certainty which

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170 Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 28.
—ethnic, cultural, religious or political—aspect defined Fried's sense of self, thus offering support to the notion of identity as a fluid and non-distinct, changeable and destabilised concept, which certainly complicates the analysis in this thesis. As the title of my thesis suggests, Fried's own perception of self operated on several levels—philosophical/social, non-religious and ethnic and political and had no discernible semantic unity.

Fried’s desire to reveal the linguistic foundations and rhetorical devices, which were essential ingredients in the alienation against which he fought so relentlessly, serves as a testimony to his underlying wish to preserve authenticity. If the state, political structures, art, history and human beings themselves become alienated from each other, then it would appear that man himself becomes alienated from his own kind and loses his validity and actuality.¹⁷² Authenticity is threatened by the worst kind of alienation, the alienation of language as a means of communication. Language serves not only as a vessel for communication generally, but also as a means of conveying one’s identity. If language becomes tainted by mystification and alienation, then identity which we articulate through language becomes blurred and tarnished by the same rhetoric of alienation. A consequence of language alienation is a changed self-consciousness and altered behavioural patterns. An example of Fried’s thoughts on the dangers in alienation is given in the example below:

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Der Gedanke [...] der eigenen Machtlosigkeit, der zur Übernahme eines irreführenden Verhaltensmusters verführt, ist ein Erfolg der Verschleierung und Mystifikation, und von der Erhaltung solcher Mystifikationen hängt der Fortbestand der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft ab.¹⁷³
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¹⁷² This is my hypothesis reached after reading Fried’s interview with van Stekelenburg, in which Fried discusses ‘Selbst-entfremdung’, Einer singt, pp. 43–57.
Authenticity contaminated by mystification and alienation on all levels gives way to doubt as an inescapable feature of contemporary existence. Fried’s tendency to emphasise doubt as a fundamental element in his reasoning is emphasised in Chapter Two. For now, it is important to underscore that the notion of doubt destabilises the concept of authenticity in the analysis of the presence of Fried’s identity in his work.

Fried’s consideration of his identity in his work and the authenticity which he observes as lacking in the world (one of the main causes of alienation) results in a kind of reflexive awareness, which is sustained throughout his writings by acts of self-reflexivity. This is the reason why an analysis of the presence of self-reflexivity is used in the analysis of how Fried’s identity is manifested in his literary oeuvre. This self-reflexivity constitutes a narrative, which is in existence consistently in his work from Fried’s early adolescence in pre-war Austria to the end of his life in Great Britain. For instance, the letter Fried writes to a Jewish newspaper as an eight-year old child, mentioned in Chapter Two, contains a sentence ‘[...] Auch ich bin als Jude geboren, bemühe mich immer, nur Mensch zu sein [...]’.\(^{174}\) In his conversation with Heiner Müller, in 1987, Fried says ‘[...] ich meine, wenn ich etwas über mich aussage, so ist das niemals notwendigerweise die Wahrheit, sondern nur wie es nach meinem besten Wissen und Gewissen aussieht.’\(^{175}\) The self which Fried debates here is understood as a reflexive consideration of his biography, shaped and adapted by life, or by the change of external and internal circumstances, the social environment and the inner self-actualisation.\(^{176}\)

\(^{174}\) Lampe, pp. 50–51.
\(^{176}\) I rely here on Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, p. 9. This supplements Malesevic’s concept of identity as sustained by ‘identity talk’, by adding a narrative dimension of philosophical self-reflexivity to the analysis.
3.2. Judaism and Jewishness

The term Judaism in itself is not a uniform concept. It presents a two-pronged phenomenon with two distinctive features and consequently it can be approached from either direction. On the one hand, it is perceived, studied and applied as a religious doctrine which interprets the universe and God, regulates morality and law in its religious writings and customs; therefore it relates to the spiritual dimension of the Jewish segment of any population, giving it a specifically Jewish character which sets it apart from other segments of that population. On the other hand, it can refer to the totality of the Jewish civilisation, subsuming both religious and worldly elements, such as language and literature, philosophy of life, communal organisation and secular as well as sacred institutions. Any precise definition of Judaism is fraught with ambiguity, due to the sheer longevity of its existence and divergence in interpretation following the period of Enlightenment and the French Revolution in the 18th century.177

This uncertainty in respect of the essence of Judaism is most aptly reflected by a statement that ‘Modern Judaism is most uncertain about itself’.178 The diversity inherent in the contemporary interpretation of Judaism will be reflected in the analysis of Erich Fried’s relationship with the Jewish elements in his identity. The anthropological strand within the interpretations of Judaism, for instance, can be related to the strand of the Zionist concept which supports group behaviour and allows vigorous censure of dissent, positively sanctioning only that behaviour which is beneficial to the predominantly accepted manner of conduct, thus ensuring survival of the group to the exclusion of dissenters and outsiders alike. The fact that Fried’s loyalties were drawn asunder between different strands of Judaic and subsequently Zionist theories warrants a closer

investigation of this split. It also warrants an analysis of the ethical conflict that this split inspired. The manner in which Erich Fried chose to reconcile the split in his beliefs, or the ethical conflict, indicates that the origins of this method were in Jewish ethics. These will be discussed following inspection of the traditions of Judaism.

As a mature person, Fried saw the Jewish religion more as something ethnographic or a part of cultural history, as opposed to adhering himself to a rigid belief in a set of theological precepts, an idea which signalled how Fried’s thinking on Judaism had moved from a narrow concept of inevitable risk towards a model of richer and wider-encompassing (but multi-faceted) cultural heritage.

Erich Fried’s poetry and prose are imbued with allusions to both Old and New Testament as well as direct references to elements from Judaic and Christian faith. Fried’s technique of intellectual enquiry and hermeneutics follows, at times closely, the method in verbal interpretations practised by rabbis, sometimes obviously pursuing the technique of Talmudic casuistry. A tendency in Fried’s personality to consider the issue from all aspects, apply more than one (prescribed) reading and derive a moral may on closer inspection reveal a purposeful reliance on components of both faiths. It may also suggest that Fried, in his drawing from both rabbinic and Christian sources, may have been attempting to reconcile possibly opposing elements in his identity of an assimilated and an atheist Jew, elements stemming both from the Christian and Jewish tradition.

It is relevant to emphasise here that scholarly interpretations of Christian teachings have always revealed a profound influence of Judaic faith. By mixing Judaic and Christian elements in his poetry, Fried may have attempted to reflect this causative and unifying effect. The

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commandment ‘Thou shalt not kill’ is a repeat of the older censure of murder found in the Aramaic translation of the Torah, Gen 9:6.\footnote{180} It could be argued that Fried’s well-documented warning against loss of any life finds its origins in this fusion of Christian and Judaic beliefs, as much as it does in the more secular humanist tradition.

It is also possible to argue that the influence of the religious strand of Judaism is apparent in some if not all of Fried’s writings.\footnote{181} Fried’s ethical impetus is recognisably influenced by one of the Judaic religious figures, Rabbi Hillel the Elder. His belief in the importance of altruism, a generally philanthropic attitude to life and respect for the dissenting opinions in every argument\footnote{182} may have influenced Fried’s personality. Fried was apparently known to quote the instruction of Rabbi Hillel to his acquaintances and cite them during public readings.\footnote{183}

Rabbi Hillel’s instruction ‘What you do not want someone to do to you, do not do to them’\footnote{184} finds its counterpart in Matthew 7:12, where it is suggested that the Torah and the prophets in essence say that one should only treat others how one expects to be treated oneself. Fried’s employment of rabbinic teachings and the teachings of Jesus, both in the ethical vein, stem from parallels between rabbinic literature and the description of Jesus. In Matt 23:2-3, Jesus cautions his listeners that those who sit in Moses’ seats, i.e. Pharisees, eminent sages who read and taught Scripture, only ask for conformance, but Pharisees themselves do not practice what they preach. Similarly, Fried cautioned his audience against hypocrisy and arrogance in his anti-war and anti-establishment poems.

\footnote{181} Erich Fried, ‘Fragen in Israel’, in *Um Klarheit, GW3*, p. 201. In the poem Fried quotes Rabbi Hillel’s teaching: ‘Rabbi Hillel hat schon gefragt/vor 2000 Jahren:/’Und wenn nicht jetzt/Wann?’”
\footnote{182} Young, *Meet the Rabbis*, pp. 190–191.
\footnote{183} Kaukoreit, ‘Fragen eines engagierten Dichters’, in *Interpretationen*, pp. 95–119.
\footnote{184} Young, p. 75.
Traces of the components common to both Christianity and the religious element in the concept of Judaism can be repeatedly found in Fried’s writings. Likewise, some of Christian and Judaic ethics could easily be reconciled with the socialist ideas of equality and social justice, which are implied in Fried’s basic ideas. It will be recalled from Chapter Two that Fried in his interview with van Stekelenburg explained that some elements of Christian ethics such as pacifism have been adopted by the socialists and form a vital element of our conscience.¹⁸⁵

In the following chapters, the hypothesis that this stimulation of discussion and questioning of seemingly obvious interpretations is a hallmark of Fried’s writings and, it could be argued, is his philosophy of life, will be tested. Although the Judaic tradition of questioning is normally perceived as relating to the religious sphere, Fried applies it to real life circumstances; nevertheless the roots of this method are in his Jewish heritage.

In the deconstruction of Fried’s identity it is important to consider not only elements of Judaic faith and secular aspects of Judaism relating to the concept of Jewishness, but also a component that encompasses both religious and secular Jewish life and relates to the treatment of ethical decisions in life.

3.3. Jewish ethics

Jewish ethics draw on ‘classical Judaic tradition’, which as a consequence necessarily induces a redefinition of the relationship between modernity and tradition. New political conflicts and the new world order, sweeping changes and new philosophies, the choice between unbridled

¹⁸⁵ Einer singt, pp. 43–59.
capitalism and burgeoning socialism, between nationalism and internationalism, ‘ethnics and ethics’ put severe challenges in the way in which the world is perceived by the Jews.\footnote{See ‘Introduction’, in \textit{Contemporary Jewish Ethics and Morality: A Reader}, eds. Elliot N. Dorff and Louis E. Newman (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 3–9, see p. 3.}

For Jews in modernity, the way in which the world is perceived is no longer the holy unity of the God, Torah and Israel. Significantly in the case of Israel, the consequences of the Holocaust and the political creation of the state of Israel put severe challenges in the way of Jewish ethics as they were traditionally observed and in the way of those who observe them.\footnote{Daniel Breslauer, ‘Modernizing American Jewish Ethics: The Liberal Dilemma’, in \textit{Contemporary Jewish Ethics and Morality}, pp. 94–106, see p. 95.} An important element in Jewish ethics and general philosophy is group loyalty, the premise that all Jews depend on one another and bear responsibility for one another.\footnote{Breslauer, pp. 94–106, see p. 99.} This concept of group loyalty equally exists within the anthropological interpretations of Judaism and Jewishness. It also influences the understanding of ‘identity’ as a concept, which will be related to Fried’s writings in the following chapters.

In the life of a modern-day Jew, issues of group loyalty sanctioned by religious writings and millennial tradition are put to the test when a Jew is required to morally justify that loyalty in the face of a legacy such as Auschwitz, or Vietnam. The religious facet of group loyalty is replaced by the political aspect of group loyalty, i.e. the perceived necessity of loyalty continuation albeit within drastically altered conditions and a severe paradigmatic shift from the spiritual and ethical issues to the field of political principles.\footnote{Hannah Arendt, \textit{The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age}, ed. Ron H. Feldman (New York: Grove, 1978), see p. 133 and p. 214.}

The religious dimension of Judaism possesses a pseudo-speculative dimension as an integral part, thus viewing knowledge attained by freedom of thought, questioning and critiquing as
paramount to the understanding of Judaic tenets. As will be shown in the ensuing chapters, these very characteristics of critical thought and associated questioning in the specific tradition of Judaism form an essential element in Fried’s writing, most notably in elements of his political poetry, in particular when inquiry and critique are directed at Israeli policies against the Palestinian Arabs.

Following the hypothesis that Fried was not turning away from his Jewishness, but embracing aspects of his Jewish heritage in his work, it is pertinent to investigate to what extent he criticised Jewish solidarity, i.e. ethnic collusion which could have deleterious effects for Jews outside Israel, Israeli citizens and the Arabs in and around Israel, and to what extent he subscribed to the populist left-wing view in his condemnation of Israeli policies against Palestinians.

Fried’s life experiences whilst in early exile provided an unyielding impetus for a considered and empathetic observance of others who, in the same or similar position to himself once, were about to or had already lost their homes and loved ones. Over the years, the exilic quality of his life gave way to cosmopolitanism. When contemplating the cosmopolitan feature of Fried’s identity, it is difficult to ignore the fact that concepts of cosmopolitanism and rootlessness have always been considered as quintessentially Jewish characteristics, demonstrated as a latent or performed stereotype, as well as a genuine distinguishing trait. However hesitant Fried felt towards his identity as a Jew, the quality of never being fully rooted in any of the cultures and his subsequent attempts at normalization not by localization, but by cosmopolitanism, point strongly towards an aspect of his personality that displayed typically Jewish traits. An analysis of Fried’s personal life suggests that there was an increased restlessness beyond the necessity of travel for literary or

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100 Steinberg, pp. 34–35.
political purposes. The details in his biography are indicative of an acquiescent, flexible identity that existed in two languages and straddled four cultures, English, German, Austrian and Jewish.

It is possible to assume that due to the above four-fold cultural heritage and due to the exilic quality of his early life, Fried rejected his Jewish identity at times and accepted elements of the other cultures at will. It is also possible to argue that Fried felt varying degrees of identification during a particular period in his life, which does not necessarily mean that he rejected his Jewish identity, nor that this rejection was a symptom of self-hatred. ¹⁹¹

3.4. Humanism

Whilst Fried attempts to come to grips with his identity as a poet of Jewish origin, he tries at the same time to affirm his humanity by regularly positing and questioning the moral principles under which human beings operate. In Chapter Four it will be shown how Fried’s initial crisis of confidence in his fellow human beings occurred quite early, reinforced by a number of horrific incidents in Austria. The next crisis occurred soon after his arrival in Great Britain, and will be considered in the same chapter. Constant trials to which Fried as a young refugee of Jewish origin was exposed made him re-evaluate his own perception of humanity. As he emphasised in the Nachwort to the first edition of Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen:

Wofür und wogegen ich mit diesem Buch Zeugnis ablegen wollte, das kann ich hier nicht einmal aufzählen. Natürlich gegen die Todesstrafe, gegen billigen, leichtfertigen Haß, gegen die unpsychologische Einordnung von Menschen in Scheinkategorien [...]. Natürlich für eine Auffassung der Menschlichkeit, die auch im letzten SS-Mann und

¹⁹¹ Fried was accused of suffering from Jewish self-hatred in a letter kept in his Nachlass of 18 November 1969, by Alice Schwarz-Gardos, an Israeli German-language journalist and an ardent Zionist, in an epistolary debate following the publication of ‘Höre, Israel’. ‘Ich habe fuer Sie tiefstes Mitleid und Bedauern, denn ganz offensichtlich sind Sie ein Opfer des altbekannten juedischen Leidens, dass man “Selbsthass” nennt. [sic]’, Erich Fried’s Nachlass, Österreichisches Literaturarchiv [ÖLA], ÖLA 4/90 145/B4/3.
As far as the definitions of ‘humanist’ and ‘humanism’ are concerned, which are here used as philosophical terms and conceptual tools in the analysis of Fried’s identity, there are a number of scholarly opinions on how to determine their connotation, and I shall, in the course of the next chapters, rely on the notion of humanism that is as wide as an idea of how humans should live together, supplementing it with the statement from the International Humanist and Ethical Union that humanism is rational and ethical, affirming the dignity of the individual and seeking to use science creatively rather than destructively, valuing artistic creation and imagination.

In addition to the above interpretations of humanism, it is at this point important to mention Dagmar Lorenz’s illuminating study of the place Austria held in the work of Jewish and non-Jewish authors. As a scholar of literature in German, Lorenz in her research emphasises the importance of the humanist ideal which formed part of the syllabus in the Austrian Gymnasium in the period leading up to the Second World War. Lorenz notes that this paradigm ‘did not provide for a separate Jewish identity, let alone a Jewish nationalist one. As a consequence, the attitude toward Jewish concerns on the part of the Jewish Social Democrats and Communists [...] is ambivalent at best.’ This point was taken further in Chapter Two while focusing on Fried’s early biography. For now it is important to note that a version of humanist ideals was present in Fried’s early life and that his later humanist concerns may appear a continuation of a journey commenced at an early age.

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193 Full text of the Amsterdam Declaration of 1952, stated by the International Humanist and Ethical Union, is available from http://www.iheu.org/adamdecl.htm, last accessed 31 October 2011. This is the umbrella organization for humanist, atheist, sceptic organizations worldwide, representing the humanists worldwide.
Although Fried himself did not refer to himself as a ‘humanist’, the ideas and sentiments with which his body of work brims could be easily classed as humanist and/or philanthropic. A case in point for Fried’s philanthropy is his decision to share a substantial portion of his prize Österreichischer Würdigungspreis für Literatur 1972 with the lawyer Kurt Groenewold for his support of the persecuted Palestinians, and to Israel Shahak from Jerusalem for his Israeli League of Human and Civil Rights, at the time when his family would have welcomed the extra income.195

Whilst analysing Fried’s identity in his work, the humanist aspect will be sought particularly in the more social, or communal dimension in his writings. Humanists share an awareness of ethical concerns and a strong belief in responsibility towards other human beings. The commitment to all humans and the all-inclusive emphasis on both social and personal responsibility is taken as the humanist credo. Humanism is defined as secular, its precepts are grounded in ethics, focusing on the dignity of individuals and their right to shape their own destiny.196

Fried’s work as a translator of Shakespeare’s dramas would have provided him with arguably one of the most celebratory humanist passages in the history of literature:

What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!197

This unswerving faith in human nature is translated into Fried’s work easily. In Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen Fried depicts a former Nazi concentration camp guard not as an otherworldly

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195 Interview with Catherine Fried, London, 13 January 2012.
monster, but as a fictional human being tragically falling victim to the atrocities of the Second World War. Later in his life, Fried also attempted to understand rather than condemn another human seduced by ideology when, in 1985, he visited a convinced Nazi Michael Kühnen, a leading member of the German Neo-Nazi movement, in prison, spent five hours in discussion with him in an attempt to understand Kühnen and exchanged letters with him in an effort to maintain a dialogue.\(^\text{198}\)

The above tendency of Fried can be easily related to a strand of humanism which offers an insight into oneself by looking through the prism of others. Understanding our own humanity is never as simple as seeing it as practised by those around us. The visual metaphor is of particular importance here, since it is visual impulse which inspires Fried onto his creative path. The outrage felt at the injustice committed against others sets him on a course of self-discovery. Fried trusts in the inherent humanity of all of us, concentration camp guards and neo-Nazis included. Fried’s courageous translation of *The Merchant of Venice*\(^\text{199}\) is another cry against misrecognition of the suffering and inequality of human beings.

### 3.5. Socialism

Socialism is a two-pronged concept. It can represent a way of organising social, political and economic life where private property is abolished, education and welfare are provided by the state and the means of production are collectively owned. In Marxist theory it is also a historical necessity and a transitional phase between capitalism and communism.\(^\text{200}\)

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\(^{199}\) Courageous in the sense that Fried’s ‘tampering’ with the original by adding an epilogue to the original is almost as sacrilegious as it is brilliant.

concept of socialism as an aspect of Fried’s identity will be explored bearing in mind the above two definitions and their motivation for Fried’s creative endeavour.

It will be recalled from Chapter Two that Fried’s familiarisation with socialist ideas started in Vienna in his childhood. Herbert Steiner, his fellow exile, described how in Vienna both Fried and Steiner participated in May 1st, the International Workers’ Day celebrations. Additionally, the availability of *Meyer’s Lexikon* to Fried in the early 1920s meant that Fried could compare socialism and communism. The authors of the *Lexikon* emphasised one significant difference—the insistence on the collective means of life and production in the case of communism. It should also be briefly repeated here that Fried’s early childhood years were spent in Vienna which was then ruled by the Social Democrats, who introduced an elaborate social welfare system for its era and whose policies included provision of housing and healthcare to the workers.

Together with the impressions of socialism which Fried acquired in his childhood and young adolescence in Vienna, Fried’s later socialist identity is also linked to his wartime membership of the communist-influenced Austrian Centre and Young Austria. In his early exile, Fried was, together with many other Austrian refugees in London, indirectly involved in a hotbed of suspicion and conflict between different factions of the Austrian socialist, monarchist and communist organisations in London, all vying for the refugees’ following and membership. The socialists clung to their former pan-German ideas and subsequently kept themselves out of the

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201 Lampe, pp. 41–43. Fried came across the first elucidation of socialism, communism, Marx and Engels in the editions of *Meyers Lexikon*.
202 After Lampe, p. 42.
creation of the Free Austrian Movement as a united platform in the fight against Hitler in 1941.\textsuperscript{203}

The collaborative spirit formed part of the ethos in the Austrian Centre and Young Austria, for instance in the form of cooperation with Young Czechoslovakia. The pages of \textit{Young Austria} from mid-October 1939 show calls to join forces in the fight against militarism and exploitation:

\begin{quote}
Die tschechoslovakische [sic] Jugend wendet sich an Euch. [...] Die Kräfte der alten Welt, Unterdrückung [sic], Ausbeutung, Militarismus, Imperialismus und Faschismus müssen [sic] zum Verschwinden gebracht werden.\textsuperscript{204}
\end{quote}

Not only was Fried’s sense of political identity\textsuperscript{205} influenced by these organisations, but his defining sense of self as an individual and a member of a wider community was also fashioned in those days in the collaborative spirit. His sense of identity was certainly defined within the parameters of the groups to which he belonged. It could almost be argued that at the time his identity was part of the collective sphere, especially during his time as a communist, rather than in the domain of the individual and private. His sense of national identity whilst in early exile was also moulded by the Austrian Centre and the underlying influence of the communists within it.

For instance, in the 1939 December issue of \textit{Young Austria} there is an article on the Austrian fight for freedom and social justice as an integral part of the freedom fight. The author implores his audience:

\begin{quote}
[...] ein Oesterreich [sic] zu schaffen, das nicht nur frei von jeder Fremdherrschaft ist, sondern auch der Jugend ein Leben, frei von jeder Unterdrückung [sic], gibt. Die Jugend wird sich ihre vollen sozialen und politischen Rechte erkaempfen [sic] [...]. Hinter Hitlers
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{204} \textit{Young Austria}, no. 7, mid-October 1939, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{205} The transition from communism to socialism is addressed in Chapter Four and Chapter Five.
The above message is written in the overall spirit of patriotism and love for a lost country, but communist notes of social inequality shine through its content. There are notions of the necessity for class struggle to bring enlightenment to the deceived, enslaved and exploited masses and fight imperialist militarism of the industry giants. To give the message its historical and political context, the lines above were composed at the time the editors of Young Austria were compelled to carefully negotiate their column space and content between appearing sympathetic to the struggle against Nazism and the historical fact that Soviet Union, the home of the Communist Party leadership where much propaganda material for the communists amongst the members of the Austrian Centre came from, was still a signatory to the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union. Overall, however, the sentiments of patriotism and concerning the fight against the Nazi yoke were the sentiments which surrounded Fried in his early exile.

At this period of his life, Fried’s sense of his identity was influenced by another issue. A very active part of the Austrian Centre and Young Austria were communists whose vision of the Austria they had left behind was coloured by a specific type of thinking. The following editorial in Young Austria for instance echoed the work of Alfred Klahr:

\[\text{Die Auffassung, daß das österreichische Volk ein Teil der deutschen Nation ist, ist theoretisch unbegründet. Eine Einheit der deutschen Nation, in der auch die Österreicher miteinbezogen sind, hat es bisher nie gegeben und gibt es auch heute nicht. Das österreichische Volk hat unter anderen wirtschaftlichen und politischen Lebensbedingungen gelebt als die übrigen Deutschen im Reich und daher eine andere}\]

\[206\] Young Austria, no. 11, early December 1939, pp. 1–2.
In his seminal work of 1937, *Zur nationalen Frage in Österreich*, Klahr debated the historical idiosyncrasies which conditioned the development of Austria as a separate nation. The exiled Austrians found these ideas attractive following the *Anschluss* and used them in many other *Young Austria* editorials. Klahr’s communism and Austrian nationalism coalesced to generate a specific kind of ‘Austrianness’ which is palpable in Fried’s early work, for instance in his early pamphlet *They Fight in the Dark* on the resistance of Austrian youth to their German oppressors.

In contrast to the representatives of Austro-Marxism such as Otto Bauer, Klahr defined the peculiarity of nationhood in economic and territorial terms, not just cultural (which Klahr criticised as too narrow and idealistic):

> Die Definition von Stalin ist die einzig marxistische, ist eine historisch-materialistische, sie lenkt unsere Aufmerksamkeit auf die Bedeutung, die das gemeinsame Wirtschaftsleben und das gemeinsame Territorium für die Entstehung einer Nation haben.  

At the same time, Klahr emphasised a close and brotherly relationship between the working classes in Austria and Germany. He guarded against alleging that the entire German nation supported Hitler.

Klahr’s belief in the idea of a separate Austrian nation was later used as a mobilising appeal in the fight against Hitler and could be found in the programme of Young Austria and the

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209 Ibid., p. 109.
publications of the Austrian Centre. The Free Austrian journals constantly emphasised the separate Austrian identity and the need for all Austrians irrespective of their political and religious beliefs to join forces in fighting Nazism. The notion of ‘Austrian’ took precedence over Jew or Christian, and foregrounded a notion of the unity of the Austrian people faced with the common enemy. At the time, the perceived equality and unity before the National Socialist invaders and planned return after the war to an Austria liberated by the freedom fighters conflicted with the Zionist endeavour in Britain to encourage the Jewish emigration to Palestine in the hope of boosting the size of the Jewish population in the Middle East and providing a safe haven for those of Jewish origin faced with anti-Semitism. The return of the Austrian refugees of Jewish origin to Austria at the end of the war had been a thorny issue. Some Jews were in a sense stuck between the communist refugee organisations on one side and the Zionist organisations on the other. Fried’s own position with regards to the British Mandate in Palestine and the Zionist enterprise was ambivalent. Although some historians find that the Austrian Centre did not report on the elimination of Jews by the National Socialists in exclusivist terms and tended to see the anti-Semitic persecution as one mode amongst many of Nazi oppression in the occupied countries,²¹⁰ the Zeitspiegel in late 1942 indeed implored its readers ‘[…]

Die Rettung des Lebens von 5 Millionen Juden ist eine der dringendsten Sofortaufgaben der zivilisierten Menschheit. […]’ following reports on the plans of Hitler’s Germany to exterminate ‘die gesamte europäische Judenschaft’.²¹¹ The solution to the Jewish predicament was offered in the

²¹⁰ Grenville, Out of Austria, p. 41.
brochure by Willy Scholz, notably a non-Jewish member of the Austrian Centre, which appeared in 1943 and underscored the benefits of returning to Austria:

Der Weg nach Österreich zurück ist nicht der Weg in den Tod, sondern der Weg in ein freies Österreich. [...] Der Weg nach Österreich zurück ist ein Weg in ein neues Leben [Scholz’s emphasis]. Das neue Österreich wird die Schäden der deutschen Fremdherrschaft gutmachen. [...] In diesem neuen Österreich darf es im Interesse des österreichischen Volkes keine antisemitische Propaganda und Praxis geben. Der Antisemitismus war der Vorreiter der reaktionärsten und volksfeindlichsten Politik. 212

In Chapter Four, this particular fusion between Fried’s national and political identity will be analysed. The movement from political to personal in Fried’s socialist identity will also be explored. Fried’s identity was exposed to a variety of influences during his formative years in Austria and on his arrival in London. Fried’s affiliation with Young Austria played a significant part in determining Fried’s development as a young political activist. This thread in his early identity will be further explored in Chapter Four, where Fried’s early writings published in exile periodicals will be analysed. His identity as a Jew and identity as a temporary communist/socialist in London were interlaced with his identity as an exile from Austria. Fried was disillusioned with the communist cause as it was presented to him in the early 1940s and he re-evaluated his attitudes to communism and socialism during the following two decades. The strong propaganda work of Young Austria and its eponymous journal in the field of national identity were a temporary factor in Fried’s sense of self. As will be seen, in the Österreich collection published in 1946 the feelings of patriotism on false grounds (such as those expressed in They Fight in the Dark), are transcended 213 and roots of a purer, more authentic relationship with his homeland emerge.

213 Some of the poems included in Österreich were written during the early 1940s.
In a talk given by Fried as a mature author in London in 1981, he retrospectively elucidated his early attraction to communism.\(^ {214} \) He started his explanation by saying that communism had been one of the two things which the Nazis hated most, the other being the Jews. Since Fried did not believe that being a Jew was ‘a full-time profession’ and further clarified the fact that he also did not feel very attracted to Zionism due to the Zionist angle on the indigenous Palestinian population in the Middle East, the only other—radical—option for him had been to join the communists. Fried accounted for the link between his early socialism and communism thus:

> I had been for the Viennese socialists as a boy and after 1934 when they were forbidden and destroyed in the most shameful way and thus incidentally paving the way for Hitler to come to Austria. I thought, well, one must do something more radical. This was an idea that was very much within the framework of the Austrian socialism, which was slightly more radical and slightly more Marxist than the German Social Democratic Party. The leader of the left wing of the Austrian Socialist Party, Ernst Fischer, then became an outstanding Austrian communist and my friend. The communists [later] claimed that I was instrumental in getting him away from the party but that is not true, he had it with the party up to here, because of his experiences with Stalinism.\(^ {215} \)

Looking back he stated that ‘these experiences, for me—this was conflict—right from the beginning—I never believed that the Trotsky trials were true, only very lightly—these were terrible childhood diseases of a big movement.’\(^ {216} \) He added, ‘but the system was not able to learn enough from its own mistakes and crimes, because mistakes in human terms are always crimes and politics is made out of the deaths of human beings.’\(^ {217} \)

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\(^{215}\) *Poet as a Historical Witness*, ICA, July 1981.

\(^{216}\) Ibid. Also see Kaiser, ‘Gespräch mit Erich Fried’, pp. 80–81.

\(^{217}\) Ibid.
The emphasis put on the very real consequences of ideological beliefs measured in human suffering, as well as the importance given to the human dimension of politics, are points which will be taken as a bedrock for further analysis of the interplay of humanist, socialist and other components of Fried’s complex identity.

Fried’s statements on and expressions of his identity will be sought and analysed throughout the ensuing chapters keeping in mind the theoretical aspects discussed above. The conceptual framework discussed in this chapter will be adopted when considering literary texts in Fried’s oeuvre, since they are acknowledged as a vessel for conveying Fried’s ideas and experiences.
Chapter 4    [...] ‘Die liegen nebeneinander und schlafen sehr (un)gleichen Schlaf’—Fried’s Early Communist and Socialist Identity (A Journey from Communism to Socialism)

Now that the conceptual framework necessary for the analysis of Fried’s complex identity has been put in place, this chapter will address Fried’s literary work and trace the development of his identity particularly as a communist, then socialist and a humanist in his early writings. The intention here is to focus primarily on the poetry published in the two poetry collections, Deutschland and Österreich. Some of the poetry included in these two collections had already been published in the exile periodicals, such as Die Zeitung, the German-language newspaper published in London from March 1941 to June 1945. Fried’s early longer piece of work, composed before his exile to London and entitled Der Kulturstaat, will also be briefly mentioned, since it is here that Fried’s incipient humanist and socialist ideas germinate. The early influences on Fried’s political and philosophical outlook will also be briefly introduced.

Fried’s early writings from the time immediately after his arrival in Britain comprise a collection of poems, essays and pamphlets. Reflecting on the two poetry collections (Deutschland and Österreich), one can trace subjective agency in two geographical spaces. Geography and location are important concepts for Fried. His later poetry collections, written in protest at the Vietnam War and the conflict in the Middle East, would also bear names signifying the locus of the conflict. Using titles Deutschland and Österreich, Fried immediately situates his concerns outside the territory he inhabits. The titles represent signposts for the source of his inspiration and point towards his later proclivity for geographic positioning of his poetry. Fried’s first

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[218] For instance, ‘Botschaft an Macbeth’ appeared in Die Zeitung, 4 February 1944, p. 6 (included in Deutschland), St. Georgslied on 7 April 1944, p. 6 (in Österreich re-named ‘Altes Heiligenbild in St. Georgen’), ‘Ebbe’ on 14 April 1944, p. 7 (in Deutschland re-named Nach der Sintflut), ‘Notgesang I’ appeared with the title ‘An Hitlers Soldaten’ on 18 August 1944, p. 6 (included in Deutschland), ‘Wiener Glockenspiel’ on 15 September 1944, p. 8 (included in Österreich).
volumes of verse not only openly express his criticism of and revulsion at what had at the time been happening in Germany and Austria, but are also an attempt to reconcile three separate impressions—Fried’s beginning of a new life in a foreign country, the dawning of a realisation that he would not be returning to Austria in the near future and his growing aspiration to become a writer despite unfortunate personal circumstances. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Fried announced his wish to become an author immediately on arrival in Great Britain. Despite adverse conditions in every sense, linguistic, political, existential, Fried had success, however tenuous and moderate, as an exiled author with his early writings. It is in this period of his literary development that Fried met with the Austrian actor in exile, Martin Miller, at one of the literary teas organised by the Free German League of Culture, and where Fried’s literary work was given its first public performance. The meeting with Miller was auspicious for Fried’s public presence as a poet. Perhaps more importantly, Miller also financed Fried’s second poetry volume, Österreich in 1946. Fried’s meetings with Martin Miller, an admirer of Kraus throughout his life, may have caused Kraus’s work to influence Fried’s poetry. Both Fried and Miller were affiliated to the Austrian Centre, where Miller presented Kraus’s works; for instance, a ‘Kraus Abend’ was organised by Miller in 1941. The evening was supported by Kraus’s old piano accompanist Georg Knepler, which endowed the event with a particular authenticity.

Fried’s later formal acknowledgement of the influence of Karl Kraus (the initial and indirect meeting between Kraus and Fried is described in Chapter Two) with the following verses is a kind of a confession. Fried here hinted that a tie with Austria was preserved during the War via other (more literary) means apart from the propaganda of the Young Austria organisation:

\[\text{Kaukoreit, } \textit{Stationen}, \text{ p. 122.}\]
Du warst der Kläger und du warst der Richter,
und eine Fackel in der Dämmerung.

[...] Du irrtest oft: es hat dich dein Verstand
von Glück und Hoffnung sehr weit fortgetragen,
doch öfter trafst du: Moder stand in Brand, [...] 221

4.1. *Der Kulturstaat*

Chronologically, Fried’s first attempt as a novelist, *Der Kulturstaat*, written in 1937, represents
only a premature exercise in creative writing. It is of limited literary quality, however, it
represents an early indication of Fried’s humanist ideas. The novel is barely 60 pages long and
aimed at one particular audience—his girlfriend at the time and a great inspiration—Zita Litwok.
Fried, in this short piece written in the spirit of popular science fiction novels of the period,
attempts to describe an alternative future society observed through the eye of a visitor from the
1930s. The novel has already been examined in detail in the doctoral thesis by Katrin Schäfer.222
For the purposes of this thesis, it is important to note briefly that the ideas which Fried
promulgates in *Der Kulturstaat* through the mouthpiece of its main protagonist, a young
pedagogue and eventually the visitor’s life partner, are broadly humanist. The utopian society in
which Fried’s protagonists live is founded on the principles of mutual respect. Conflict and
social inequality are rooted out; welfare and education are available to all members of society,
who foster the common spirit of love, respect and happiness.

Although broadly humanist, Fried’s utopian ideas become blurred, however, in his eager wish to
depict a society devoid of human suffering and misery. Fried’s *Kulturstaat* residents have a
disconcerting approach to illness and disability, bordering on Eugenics, a movement within
genetics and social sciences, which in the early 20th century gained momentum in European

science. It is possible to assume that Fried, as a young student, may have been familiar with both scientific developments and at least some of the literary fiction dealing with utopian themes at the start of the 20th century. 223

Even if likely to be tinged by Fried’s adolescent naivety and idealism, the novel indicates concerns which would still occupy Fried in later life—equality, welfare, peaceful co-existence, tolerance and mutual understanding amongst people the world over.

4.2. Early exile publications

In his initial poetic work published between 1940 and 1944 in Die Zeitung and Young Austria and included in the early poetry collections Die Vertriebenen, Zwischen Gestern und Morgen and Mut, Fried’s focus was only in part on the atrocities being committed during the Second World War. The weekly newspaper Zeitspiegel and the periodical Young Austria were focused on the Eastern Front and the bloody battles for the liberation of the Soviet Union from its fascist occupiers.

Fried’s early poetry volumes, Deutschland and Österreich, offer a clear, elementary and emotional response to the horrors of war and occupation taking place on the European mainland. Reports were already in circulation of the extent of the horrific orchestration of mass murder in Europe; Thomas Mann, for instance, spoke ‘Jetzt ist man bei der Vernichtung, dem maniakalischen Entschluß zur völligen Austilgung der europäischen Judenschaft angelangt’ in his radio broadcast of 27 September 1942. 224 The following letter printed in Young Austria in

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223 For instance, Looking Backward (1888) by Edward Bellamy, Freiland (1890) by the Austrian author Theodor Hertzka, H.G. Wells’s A Modern Utopia (1905), or Red Star (1908) by the Russian author Alexander Bogdanov. The first two futuristic novels are quoted by Schäfer as having distinct similarities with Der Kulturstaat.

224 Thomas Mann, Deutsche Hörer: 55 Radiosendungen nach Deutschland (Stockholm: Bermann-Fischer, 1945), pp. 71–73, see p. 72. Also see Karl-Heinz Janßen, ‘Was wußten die Alliierten vom Holocaust? Warten auf die Retter:
December 1942 can serve as an illustration of the level of awareness in London of the situation over the English Channel:

Dear Comrades and Friends, there are no words in the English nor in our language to express our feelings of mourning and hatred when we learned about the latest crimes of Hitler brutes. [...] When the horrible facts about the wholesale annihilation of the Jewish people, which is now being pursued by the Nazi criminals, became known to us, we declared Sunday the 12th December 1942 as a day of solidarity and mourning. [...] there is no hope that millions of Jews can be given the opportunity of leaving the Hitler occupied countries. The only way to help them is the destruction of the Nazi murderers. [...] We from young Austria and you from the Zionist Youth are facing the same enemy. [...] We are at one with you at this protest rally. [...] Forward to victory - Signed by Walter and Propst. 225

The above letter illustrates that information regarding the destruction of the European Jewry in Nazi-occupied territories226 had found its way to Britain and the refugee organisations from continental Europe. Additionally, the letter also sheds light on the social and political milieu which surrounded Fried in London during the Second World War. Whilst still associated with Young Austria, Fried’s sense of identity and belonging blended three distinct elements—communist/socialist (i.e. political), Austrian (national) and Jewish (ethnic and religious). Although Fried’s early exile in wartime London was coloured by the highly dangerous conditions under which he left Austria and the depressing experiences in London, his sense of self was also fashioned by the assertive and vigorous approach to new life promulgated by his Austrian comrades and illustrated by the last sentences in the above letter. This would particularly be illustrated by the agility and purposefulness, with which Fried pursued his later political topics.

Von der Hilflosigkeit der Verfolgten und der Ohnmacht des Westens’, Die Zeit, 24 January 1997, available from Zeit-Online, http://www.zeit.de/1997/05/Was_wussten_die_Alliierten_vom_Holocaust/komplettansicht. The article gives a good illustration of how the information regarding mass murder of Jews in Europe was available to the British government and reported in newspapers such as the Daily Telegraph. Last accessed 23 June 2013.

225 Letter to the Jewish Youth, (Fritz) Walter, (Hans, i.e. Fritz) Propst, Young Austria, no. 26, late December 1942, n.

226 No context provided in Young Austria.
In Chapter Two, it has been shown how Fried was politicized by his social environment in London and previously, during his adolescence in Vienna. Due to his connections with the Austrian Centre at the time of his early exile, Fried’s political outlook and his literary output were the product of the Austrian Centre’s political focus. On the pages of the periodical *Young Austria*, together with declarations of support for the British war effort, mobilisation for the fight against fascism and National Socialism, and general statements offering help and advice for Austrians in exile in Great Britain, there were also essays and articles expressing, at times subtle, at times acutely clear, support for the communist ideas of class struggle, anti-imperialism and revolutionary re-alignment of the social order in Germany and Austria. Fried’s wish to become an author, seen through the lens of his early involvement with the refugee organisations such as the Austrian Centre which offered him a chance to publish his work, puts his early literary work in a different perspective from his later publications. By way of example, one of Fried’s early poems ‘Zwei Tote’ printed in an anthology by *Young Austria*, entitled *Mut: Gedichte junger Österreicher*, was amended prior to the final publication. The poem describes the futility of war in the face of death, as well as indicating hope in the lines:

[…] Der Feind wird zu Erde zerfallen
das Korn wird Kraft aus ihm ziehn.

The very last lines describe former adversaries in the war, a German and a Soviet soldier, who lie next to each other in a field. Originally, Fried’s intention was to show how in death the lines between enemies are erased. From this intention we can glean his humanist tendencies—respect

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227 Brinson and Dove, *Out of Austria*, p. 86.
228 Grenville, ibid., pp. 22–53. The class struggle was particularly a topic between signing of the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union in August 1939 and Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941.
230 *Mut*, p. 22.
for human life (even in death), and the acknowledgment of the fact that soldiers (even enemies) should be perceived as human beings, as opposed to being nominally generalised into categories, such as ‘enemy’, ‘German’, ‘Nazi’ etc. It is this approach that would later in Fried’s life make a poem such as ‘Benennungen’ possible. ‘Benennungen’ introduces Fried’s poetry collection Höre, Israel! and debates the designations that rule our language, society and ultimately life. As will be shown in Chapter Seven, Fried believed that the evil of designations and false categorisations inevitably led to alienation between humans, or dehumanisation of our society. In the case of ‘Zwei Tote’, Fried had originally intended the last stanza in the anthology Mut to reflect the paradox and futility of war, by making the German and the Russian equal in their death/slumber (‘die liegen nebeneinander/und schlafen sehr gleichen Schlaf’, [my emphasis]).

However, in its final version as it appeared in Mut, the last stanza was amended to reflect the Centre’s platform on Germany, on the orders of the communist chairman of Young Austria, Fritz Walter:

Ein Russe und ein Deutscher,
die beide die Kugel traf,
die liegen nebeneinander
und schlafen sehr ungleichen Schlaf.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, at this time communists within the Austrian exile organisations were propagating the policy of Vansittartism and the Ehrenburg doctrine, both promulgating the perception of Germans as naturally bloodthirsty and warmongering people. The poem was included in the version which suited the party line propounded by the Austrian Centre. Fried,

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231 Kaukoreit, Stationen, p. 85.
although at the time already known to challenge statements which flew in the face of reason, or conflicted with his beliefs, evidently did not contest Walter’s decision with sufficient vigour.\textsuperscript{232}

Similarly, Fried’s poem published in the May 1941 issue of \textit{Young Austria} on the title page of their ‘Werbeblatt’ and also printed in the collection \textit{Die Vertriebenen}, published by Free German League of Culture in collaboration with the Austrian Centre, Young Czechoslovakia and FDJ, represents a case of partial acceptance of the dogmatic attitudes of the editors and fellow exiles. With the title ‘Wir lieben das Leben...’ the poem’s function is to inspire increased membership of Young Austria. Fried attempts in six stanzas to describe typical members of Young Austria in Great Britain and simultaneously arouse the interest of prospective members. This he (and the editorial staff at \textit{Young Austria}) intend to achieve by presenting a picture of young men and women who wish to influence decisively and intelligently the outcome of their lives by studying, thinking and questioning. Additionally, Fried hints beyond their educational and cultural development at their political proselytising:

\begin{quote}
Wir lieben auch die, die’s nicht besser verstehn\textsuperscript{233} \\
die dumpf und gedankenlos dienen \\
und abends im Kino nur Traumbilder sehn, \\
Wir bringen das Licht auch zu ihnen.
\end{quote}

This political evangelism to other exiles, who uncritically attended to their daily work and evening entertainment, as much as this was possible in war-time Britain, was presumably an activity practised by members of Young Austria. The poem appeared in the sensitive time between the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union in 1939 and Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, in which period the Austrian Centre and its

\textsuperscript{232} Ibid., p. 85.
\textsuperscript{233} Orthography and punctuation are given after the original printed in the May 1941 issue of \textit{Young Austria}, p. 1.
publications were, politically, in a state of uncertainty, anxious to be perceived as leading an ideological battle against Nazi Germany and not fraternising with, until June 1941, their political ally, the Soviet Union. The uncertainty is perhaps palpable in Fried’s ambivalence in determining the real target of his poem. More importantly, a line which stands in harsh contrast with Fried’s beliefs expressed in his later writings is included in the final fourth line of the fourth stanza:

Wir lieben die Menschen!– Doch jene nicht\textsuperscript{234} die andre nicht frei leben lassen
Wir kämpfen [sic], dass ihre Herrschaft zerbricht.
Weil wir lieben, muessen wir hassen!

Although from the standpoint of any member of the Austrian Centre and Young Austria, particularly bearing in mind their backgrounds, the physical and mental anguish that the majority suffered before coming to Britain or whilst fleeing the Nazis, these sentiments are understandable; in the case of Fried they are untypical. By combining the feeling of hatred with the struggle for a better future Fried creates an artificial mood of false happiness and élan. This is in opposition to the message Fried communicates with his later poetry or with his novel \textit{Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen}, written during the 1950s, not long after his experiences with the exile organisations in London.

Fried as a nascent poet had to endure a negotiation process which possibly compromised his personal beliefs and life philosophy expressed in his writings. The choices open to Fried at this time of his life and literary career, whilst in any negotiation regarding publishing opportunities, would have been significantly curtailed by virtue of his political affiliations and restriction to the German language. In later life with increasing literary status, as will be shown in further

\textsuperscript{234} Orthography and punctuation are given after the \textit{Young Austria} publication from May 1941.
chapters, this predicament, although present, was significantly reduced, allowing Fried to express his beliefs with freedom and consistency.

The tendency of the *Young Austria* periodical to include and manipulate material for a political purpose and the extent to which this was felt by its readers is perhaps best illustrated by one of the reader’s letters included as early as January 1940. In the section ‘Tribüne der Jugend’, an Ilse H. wrote to the editorial staff:


This passage serves as an illustration of the perceived leanings within the periodical to present arguments from a more ‘left-wing’ perspective. For a youth organisation, such as Young Austria, with a young and eager communist membership, this is hardly surprising. Ilse H.’s comment above, however, illustrates another important historical and literary point. At the time of his early exile in London, Fried wrote poetry and pamphlets and some of these were imbued with the patriotic sentiments towards Austria, in addition to the feelings of nostalgia felt for his former home. This patriotism was not exclusively an expression of young Fried’s identity as an Austrian and a Viennese adolescent. It was a result of a wider context within which Fried found himself on arrival in London as a Jewish refugee. By virtue of his Austrian identity and a wish to preserve contact with his countrymen and avoid isolation, Fried became affiliated to Austrian refugee organisations such as Young Austria. Fried was a part-time librarian at the Austrian Centre for a short time during 1941.236 It was a great opportunity for Fried’s literary and general

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235 *Young Austria*, no. 2, January 1940, p. 4.
236 Lawrie, *Writer*, p. 11.
development, since he was able to gain access to a large number of books, which he would have never been able to read in Austria, either due to general unavailability or due to being deemed by the Nazi occupiers as politically unsuitable. The propaganda work performed by these exile organisations influenced Fried’s own political and philosophical perceptions. It will be recalled from the previous chapter that the ideas of separate ‘Austrian identity’ by Alfred Klahr formed a large part of the Austrian Centre’s and Young Austria’s philosophy. The material passed from Moscow to the refugee organisations during the Second World War was re-used in the periodicals and publications, such as Young Austria. Erich Fried himself reminisced about this period of his life in an interview:

Wir hatten immer Kontakt mit der Sowjetunion, haben dort Material für unsere Zeitschriften bekommen, z.T. hoffnungsloses Material: wir kriegen dauernd ellenlange Telegramme mit Rekorden über sozialistische Arbeit [...] Wir haben gesagt, wir brauchen das nicht für unsere Zeitungen, wir wollen Kulturmaterial. Aber das war nicht abzustellen.237

This statement by Fried gives an indication of the extent of the ‘flood’ of the Soviet propaganda arriving at desks of the refugee offices. It also points to the fact that it was nearly impossible to avoid being influenced by the propaganda material contained in the despatches. It was probably impossible to deflect the impact of such a strong and tenacious propaganda team and it is unsurprising that young exiles, members of Young Austria, were falling under the influence of the message contained in the despatches arriving in London from the Soviet Union, whether it had formed part of their political beliefs originally, or not. Fried’s statement that he and his colleagues at the refugee organisations had repeatedly demanded culturally more suitable material and that this request had consistently fallen on deaf ears was made in retrospect. The

material published in *Young Austria* did include some cultural material, for instance works by the
great Russian author Pushkin. However, the following extract entitled ‘Stalin’, may work in
support of Fried’s sentiments:

> Stalin hat bedeutende Bücher in grosser [sic] Anzahl geschrieben. Viele von ihnen
> gehören zu der klassischen Literatur des Marxismus. Aber wenn man ihn fragt, was er ist,
> so antwortet er: ‘Ich bin nur ein Schüler Lenins und mein ganzer Ehrgeiz ist, sein treuer
> Schüler zu sein.’ [...] Wer ihr auch seid, der beste Teil eures Geschicks liegt in den
> Händen jenes anderen Mannes, der jetzt auch wacht und für euch wacht und arbeitet – der
> Mann mit dem Kopf des Gelehrten, mit dem Gesicht des Arbeiters und dem Anzug des
> einfachen Soldaten.\(^{238}\)

The lack of literary or journalistic quality, as well as the general tone of adulation in the above
article is sufficient to illustrate the severity of the task faced by Fried and his colleagues in
London, when editing the material dispatched from Moscow. The author of the excerpt above
was Henri Barbusse, who would have had an iconic status amongst young communists generally
at the time. He was a fervent communist from France and one of a number of Western
intellectuals who visited the Soviet Union in the 1930s and helped perpetuate Stalin’s personality
cult.\(^{239}\) These facts may have presented an additional and a significant obstacle for Fried and
other exiles in the course any editorial work.

Fried’s short story ‘Das Gewehr mit den zwei Seelen’ appeared in the December 1941 issue of
the *Zeitspiegel*.\(^{240}\) Fried uses the play on words, a technique which would later become his
hallmark style particularly in his poetry, in order to convey to his audience his political leanings.
The indelible feeling of solidarity between ‘Arbeiter’ is conveyed by the tears and conscientious

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\(^{238}\) Henri Barbusse, ‘Stalin’, *Young Austria*, no. 23, November 1942, p. 5. Quotation is given as printed in *Young
Austria*.

\(^{239}\) *Stalin: A New History*, eds. Sarah Davies and James Harris (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge
Vyvyan Holland (London: John Lane, 1935).

\(^{240}\) Erich Fried, ‘Das Gewehr mit den zwei Seelen’, *Zeitspiegel*, no. 49, 6 December 1941, p. 8.
work through the ‘Seele’, in German a homonym for both ‘soul’ and ‘bore’. The bore of the gun barrel becomes endowed with spirit during its manufacture by enslaved workers. The political message of the prose piece is palpable—the solidarity of the workers, regardless of their nationality or position they have in the war and their eventual and inevitable coming to unity. The short story was published four months after Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union and Fried’s support for the Eastern Front is unmistakeable. The political agenda of the Austrian Centre and the communist sympathisers within the Centre is also present in the narrative of workers’ solidarity, factory production propped up by slave labour and the endorsement of the Eastern Front.

Similar ideas are recognisable in two other poems—‘Rostov’, published in the Zeitspiegel in 1941 and ‘Traschenkos Tod’ published in Young Austria in August 1942. The idea of brave resistance to the German occupiers in the face of adversity and the sense of enduring love of homeland point towards ideas which will later appear in Fried’s They Fight in the Dark prose piece (1943). In ‘Rostov’, the German occupiers are eventually pushed back into snow and ice by the Rostov patriots:

[...] Die Deutschen, die aus diesem Kampf entkommen, Die trieben sie in Schnee und Eis zurück.

[...] Hier hat im Kampf um Freiheit, Glück und Leben Das Volk von Rostov seinen Feind besiegt.

Similarly, an account in verse of a heroic deed by Traschenko, who was a ‘Soviet Politkomissar, einer Kompanie in Sebastopol [...]’, destroying an enemy tank and killing himself in the process, has in its ending the same proselytising effect of Fried’s other political poems, such as ‘Wir

241 Erich Fried, ‘Traschenkos Tod’, Young Austria, no. 17, late August 1942, p. 5.
lieben das Leben’. However, while in the case of ‘Wir lieben das Leben’ the evangelism is strictly political, here it is bellicose. The impulse to join the fight and heroically face the enemy is inspired by the support for the Soviet ally, invaded by Hitler in June 1941.

Traschenko. – Wir haben ihn niemals gesehen, wissen wenig von ihm zu sagen. Doch werden wir, wenn wir hinübergehen, und wenn wir im Kampf und im Nahgefecht stehn Sein Opfer groß in uns tragen.

4.3. *They Fight in the Dark*

It could be argued that, on the whole, Fried’s poetic work in the 1940s was not entirely tinged by politically indoctrinating tones, as demonstrated by some poems included in the anthologies *Mut* and *Die Vertriebenen*, such as ‘Das tote Haus’ which will be analysed in more depth later in the chapter.\(^{243}\) However, a contrasting example is provided in the form of Fried’s 16-page narrative piece, *They Fight in the Dark: The Story of Austria’s Youth*. It was entirely typical of the Austrian Centre’s propaganda. Although Fried’s interest in the communist cause had already been waning at this time, a process later exacerbated by the suicide of his friend and fellow Austrian communist Hans Schmeier, Fried nevertheless here still espoused his identity as an Austrian with broadly communist sympathies.

In the pamphlet, Fried swiftly establishes a distinct Austrian cultural and national identity by saying:

> The streets are still broad and beautiful, the trees in the front gardens [...] are green and from the bridges of the Danube one can see [...] the slopes of the Vienna Woods, where the Dukes of Austria used to have their castles 900 years ago.\(^{244}\)

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\(^{243}\) Erich Fried, ‘Das tote Haus’, *Young Austria*, no. 2, January 1941, p. 3. Also included as ‘Totes Haus’ in *Die Vertriebenen: Dichtung der Emigration* [37 poems by refugee authors from Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany], ed. Albert Fuchs (London: Free German League of Culture, Austrian Centre and Young Czechoslovakia, 1941).

\(^{244}\) *They Fight in the Dark*, in *Am Alsergrund*, p. 145.
The ideas promulgated by the Austrian Centre and Young Austria are visible within this extract. It should be noted here that similar sentiments are reflected in Fried’s *Ring-Rund* scene, performed in 1941 and well reviewed. In this one-acter Fried’s intention is to galvanise his audience into action against National Socialism and portray the spirit of resistance in Vienna. The scene was praised for its literary quality by the critic Paul Reimann in ‘Das wieder leuchtende Laterndl’.  

Fried’s pamphlet *They Fight in the Dark* also appears to follow the Vansittart doctrine (using expressions such as ‘German bullies’, ‘Hitler Youth leaders’ and the ‘German “Master Race”’), generalising that without (all) Germans, Austria would not have been drawn into the Second World War. Fried also attempts to demonstrate the alleged link between the Austrian resistance and the Soviets with the lines: ‘Karl and he hadn’t been able to go over to the Russians; pity that.’ 246 This is later complemented by, ‘Karl, like most Austrian patriots, was immensely proud of that miracle of underground daring the Austrian Freedom Front had achieved.’ [Commenting on the underground free radio station.] 247

The pamphlet contains seeds of the propaganda writings which peppered the *Young Austria* periodical during the war years. It is unsurprising that Fried’s literary and spiritual élan is palpable between the lines. Although a persecuted exile who had been compelled to leave his home country, Fried may have wanted to contribute to the propaganda of the exile organisations for nobler reasons than simply adhering to the party line. His view of Austria during the war was at best ambivalent. Even if influenced by the propaganda work during his affiliation with Young

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245 Paul Reimann in ‘Das wieder leuchtende Laterndl’, *Zeitspiegel*, no. 40, 5 October 1941, p. 7. The play was performed at the Austrian exile theatre in London, *Das Laterndl*.
246 *They Fight in the Dark*, in *Am Alsergrund*. p. 147.
247 Ibid., p. 149.
Austria and the brutal circumstances of his exile to London, he may have still harboured sentiments of homesickness and an ideal that he would be returning to Vienna some day.

The argument between the President of the Court during a trial of one of the underground fighters and an Austrian patriot illustrates the presence of Alfred Klahr’s ideas i.e. his doctrine of an independent Austrian identity:

President: Do you admit that you have betrayed your people?
Strasser: No. Never have I betrayed my Austrian people.
President: There is no such thing as an Austrian people!
Strasser: I am, and I shall remain an Austrian.  

This is supported by the concluding paragraph in which Fried triumphantly says: ‘The Austrian people don’t know any parties in the struggle for national birth. [...] They know what they live for and what they are ready to die for.’

This kind of moving and proselytizing rhetoric illustrates how Fried’s sense of identity was greatly influenced by the communist ideas promulgated by the Young Austrians.

4.4. Anthologies

Before publishing his two first poetry collections, Deutschland (1944) and Österreich (1946), Fried actively participated in the literary life of the exile organisations and the wider exile community. This provided him with an opportunity to interact with other authors. Between 1941 and 1943, Fried’s poems were included in three poetry collections, published by the exile organisations the Austrian Centre, the Free German League of Culture and Young Czechoslovakia. The three collections are Die Vertriebenen (1941), Zwischen Gestern und Morgen (1942) and lastly, Mut (1943).

248 Ibid., p. 154.
249 Ibid., p. 163.
The first collection, *Die Vertriebenen*,\(^{250}\) was edited by Albert Fuchs, one of the leading functionaries of the Austrian Centre and an enthusiastic communist.\(^{251}\) With four poems, Fried’s poetry was as represented as the poems by a better-known poet, such as Max Hermann-Neiße, a successful and award-winning German author during the 1920s, for instance. Fried contributed the poems ‘Totes Haus’, ‘Jugend’, ‘Ballade vom Feuerschlagen’ and ‘Ostfront’. ‘Totes Haus’, although broadly focusing on the topic of war is the most remote thematically of the four poems within Fried’s selection. The other three poems have a much sharper focus on the programme promulgated by the Austrian Centre and other exile organisations at the time in London. The poem was originally published under the title ‘Das Tote Haus’, in the January edition of *Young Austria*, in 1941. Of note in the poem are particularly the absence of any political pathos, motivational proselytizing and propagandistic tone. Fried here focuses on the war and its effects on nature, omitting the human factor or presence completely from the poem.

The poems of Eva Priester, a journalist and a poet exiled to London from 1939 to 1946, are also included in the collection—‘Die Legende’, in which the baroque elements are intertwined with the communist look towards the future.\(^{252}\) Although Priester’s and Fried’s poetry are formally dissimilar it will be shown in later paragraphs that both poets used similar sources of inspiration in their poetry of this period. Priester and Fried for a time shared accommodation in London,\(^{253}\)

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\(^{250}\) *Die Vertriebenen: Dichtung der Emigration* [37 poems by refugee authors from Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany], ed. Albert Fuchs (London: Free German League of Culture, Austrian Centre and Young Czechoslovakia, 1941).


and it is possible that Priester’s writings at the time had an influence on Fried’s development as a poet.\textsuperscript{254}

The second poetry volume published by the Austrian Centre and Young Austria is entitled \textit{Zwischen Gestern und Morgen},\textsuperscript{255} in which Fried participated with poems such as ‘Tote Gedichte’, ‘Es war ein Weg’ and ‘Unruhvolle und voll von Ruh’.\textsuperscript{256} The collection also includes poems by Josef Kalmer, Theodor Kramer and Eva Priester. Priester collaborated with Fried in writing the pageant \textit{Immortal Austria}, performed in London on 13 March 1943, devoted to the celebration of Austrian nationhood.\textsuperscript{257} Fried’s literary development into a successful poet was also influenced by Theodor Kramer. Fried later emphasised that his presence during Kramer’s own creative process, in which both poets debated correction and best composition, was of great significance for his later life as a poet.\textsuperscript{258}

In the collection \textit{Zwischen Gestern und Morgen}, Priester’s poems ‘Boticelli: Die Geburt der Venus’ and ‘Dürer: Ritter, Tod und Teufel’ were included.\textsuperscript{259} The poems draw their inspiration from the medium of art rather than politics, current affairs or literature.\textsuperscript{260} Tropes of hope in the new beginning in the first poem are combined with ideological armour as the carrier of hope in the second one:

\begin{quote}
Aus Rauch und Trümmern sprang der Sommerwind, auf Donnerflügeln kam der Tag herbei.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{254} Ibid., p. 11. Fried here stated that he perceived Priester as very intelligent, but too orthodox politically.
\textsuperscript{255} \textit{Zwischen Gestern und Morgen: Neue Österreichische Gedichte} (London: Austrian Centre/Young Austria, 1942).
\textsuperscript{256} \textit{Zwischen Gestern und Morgen}, pp. 3–4.
\textsuperscript{257} Brinson, ‘‘Immortal Austria’’: Eva Priester as a Propagandist for Austria in British exile’, in \textit{‘Immortal Austria’: Austrians in Exile in Britain}, eds. Charmian Brinson, Richard Dove and Jennifer Taylor, Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, vol. 8 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), pp. 93–103, see. p. 93.
\textsuperscript{260} This particular point is also raised by Steven Lawrie in Erich Fried, \textit{Writer}, p. 79.
Und Wind und Segel sangen auf: Vorbei!  
Und Meer und Himmel donnerten: Beginnt!\textsuperscript{261}

Similarly in the ensuing poem:

Die Welt war kalt und voller Finsternis,  
[...]
So nahm der Ritter Sache, Rüstung, Schwert  
und ritt dahin. Und dann, nach vielen Tagen  
war ihm, als hätte etwas sich verkehrt:  
Er trug die Fahne nun, die ihn getragen.\textsuperscript{262}

Several of Fried’s poems published at the time draw inspiration from the world of art too, such as  
‘Aus einem Rodin-Zyklus’\textsuperscript{263} published in 1944 in Die Zeitung. The marble within the sculpture  
created by Rodin comes alive in the museum and produces shadows which accompany bombers  
on their flight from West to East—to Berlin, and augur the time of further destruction—‘Das  
Reich von Staub und Stein hat angefangen’.\textsuperscript{264} Fried’s humane criticism of death inflicted on  
innocent civilians is palpable in this line.

Priester’s influence can also be traced in Fried’s ‘Pieter Breughel’ poem in two parts, published  
in Die Zeitung in 1943.\textsuperscript{265} The first part, titled ‘Die Welt ist bunt’, paints a picture of hell rather  
than the world:

Und die grossen Fische fressen die kleinen,  
und die Blinden leiten einander zum Fall,  
und zu Babel steigt nimmer ein Turm aus den Steinen,  
und die trennlose Welt schleicht krumm im gleissenden Ball.

\textsuperscript{261} Priester, ‘Boticelli’, p. 25.  
\textsuperscript{262} Priester, ‘Dürer’, p. 25.  
\textsuperscript{264} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{265} Fried, ‘Pieter Breughel’, Die Zeitung, 2 February 1945, p. 6.
In the second part of the poem, entitled ‘Der bethlehemitische Kindermord’, Fried paints an equally depressing and hopeless picture. Breughel’s painting ‘The Murder of the Holy Innocents’ is used as a model for the senseless suffering of all mankind in the Second World War:

Denn ein Mann kann vieles ertragen,  
wen die Reiter am Marktplatz stehen.  
Er verbeisst sich das sinnlose Flehen.  
Nur die Frauen bleiben und klagen.

The collection *Mut*, published in 1943 is introduced by Fritz Walter, who emphasises the Austrian dimension in the poems included in the volume. The sentiment is continued in the English introduction to the volume—‘They are united by their love of Austria from which they have been so cruelly separated’.

Significantly, the collection was published just six months after the Red Army’s victory at Stalingrad, a fact which would have particularly been welcomed by those amongst the poets and editors of the article who were communist sympathisers.

Roughly half of the texts included in the poetry collection have a visionary quality. A good example of this concern with the future is Fried’s poem ‘Die Bücher’:

Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin – Menschen heben  
euch auf wie Waffen, wenn ein Nachbar fällt.  
Ihr bautet Wissen uns aus Welt und Leben.  
Das Wissen lebt. Wir bauen damit die Welt.

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266 Lawrie quotes *Freie Deutsche Kultur*, June 1941, p. 5, and a cultural evening at the Free German League of Culture on 26 April 1941 when John Heartfield gave a talk ‘Was uns Bauern-Breughel zu sagen hat’, which Fried may have attended. Lawrie finds further references to 10 paintings by Breughel. See Lawrie, *Writer*, note 97, p. 95 and p. 80.

267 *Mut*, p. 3.


269 *Mut*, p. 25
The communist teachings, the process of learning as a future weapon in the struggle to rebuild a nation and the naming of the key figures of communist ideology form a three-pronged strategy which Fried recommends to his audience. The communist influence shines clearly through the lines, although at the time the poetry volume was put together, Fried would have already begun to have doubts about communist propaganda as it was perpetrated around him by the party members in London. His constructive use of protest is nevertheless palpable in ‘Die Bücher’, thus hinting at Fried’s later proclivity to combine erudition with political statements, for instance in his anti-Zionist poetry. Whatever Fried’s political leanings were at the time, he felt compelled to participate in the fight against a common enemy, the National Socialists. His memories of Austria, although tarnished by his experiences as a persecuted Jew, were still fresh in Fried’s mind. In Austria, alongside being a persecuted Jew, Fried also existed as a member of a small resistance organisation and after his arrival in London in 1938, he was known to catalyse a group of like-minded people around him into action, for instance with an ‘Emigrantenjugend’ organisation Fried had established in 1939, together with fellow Austrian exile Stefan Brill, and a handful of other émigrés. Fried’s wish to appear useful to the common cause as a young exile in Great Britain and a member of the Young Austria organisation was an important stepping stone in his development as an engaged poet later in life. Fried’s early tendency to gather and organise like-minded people around him, or to belong to such associations, was obvious at this time. His sense of self was reflected in the collective rather than individual identity, which is also illustrated by the linguistic characteristics in his writing—a preponderance of pronouns such as ‘wir’, ‘uns’, ‘unsere’ when referring to the Emigrantenjugend.

270 The members’ age ranged from 15 to 21 years.
271 Kaukoreit, “‘Die Zustände verschlimmern sich täglich”: Erich Fried und die Londoner “Emigrantenjugend”’, in 126, Westbourne Terrace, pp. 97–130, see pp. 103–104.
Fried’s friend Hans Schmeier is also represented in the collection Mut. Together with Fried he was a member of the Communist Party and the Young Austria organisation. His suicide followed soon after the publication and, as previously mentioned, was one of the main causes for Fried’s break with the communists. Schmeier’s poem ‘Erkenntnis’ is similar to Fried’s verses in the collection—it puts emphasis on his belonging to the group of like-minded people and brightly looks to the future:

Zum ersten Mal seh ich mich selbst  
in Einigkeit mit andrem Leben,  
[...]  
Jetzt ists nicht mehr Vergangenheit allein,  
Die mich zu formen scheint.  
[...]  
Zum ersten Mal bin ich ein voller Mensch,  
durch volles Wissen andrer Menschlichkeit.272

By way of contrast, Schmeier’s preceding poem, ‘Widerspruch’, is an example of the doubts which beset young exiles:

Ist uns der Weg bekannt,  
Den wir bereiten,  
führt er ins gute Land,  
wer kann uns leiten?273

The portrayal of Austria as Hitler’s first victim after the Moscow Declaration contributed significantly to the black-and-white distinction between the two countries, one about which Fried, as will be shown by his Deutschland collection, was later ambivalent in his acceptance. The perceived victimhood of the Austrians was already a palpable feature of Fried’s They Fight

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272 Mut, p. 39.  
273 Mut, p. 38.
in the Dark pamphlet, and this style of ‘patriotic argumentation’ was continued by the editors of Young Austria throughout its publication. One important point arises from the line of argumentation followed by Young Austria—as already mentioned in previous chapters, the victimisation of Austria as portrayed in this exile periodical followed the national, as opposed to ethnic or religious lines. The Jews, although mentioned in a number of articles, appeared incorporated into the official categorisation. From Fried’s writings at the time devoted to the ‘Austrian Cause’, it may be concluded that his identity as a Jew was almost completely obscured by the political and national propaganda (the communist and quasi-nationalist discourse) of his social environment. Fried’s short story ‘Angst’, published in Die Zeitung in December 1943 is an example of this, where only in one sentence does Fried explicitly mention the Jewish dimension - ‘ich bring meiner Schwester Wäsche; sie war Bankbeamtin. Sie hat einem Juden helfen wollen, Geld hinauszubringen. Darum sitzt sie jetzt hier’. It can be assumed that during Fried’s early exile, his Jewish identity was marginalised.

4.5. Deutschland and Österreich

In his first poetry collection, Deutschland, Fried’s Germany is in a metonymic relationship with his native Austria, both countries presenting parts of one abject misery, united by language, human suffering, Nazism and the political and military catastrophe. In this Germany, as if in a parallel world, devoid of blanket vilification, Fried creates an atmosphere of understanding as much as condemnation, of subverted fear as much as of martial arrogance. Additionally, he at times conducts a multivalent dialogue expressing concerns of German children, soldiers, poets,

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275 Ibid.
fathers and combining these into a voice of humanity as well as his own poetic voice, between self and various representatives and representations of the territory only crossed on the way to the final destination (Fried explains ‘Deutschland habe ich nur auf der Durchreise nach England gesehen’278). Having established the parameters, Fried oscillates between marching boldly into the battlefields of the Eastern Front and quietly lamenting the end of the world, soliciting assistance and salvation from the threatening cosmic void.

The publication of Deutschland in 1944 signifies a break with the more ideologically coloured tradition. The thematic choice is not altogether different from verses which Fried had penned previously—war and suffering, pointless militarism. The ways in which Fried approaches these themes are different, however, from his poetry hitherto written. In his approach he lacks the motivational vigour and alacrity present in the poems such as ‘Wir lieben das Leben’, or ‘Wir stürmen das Land’, which appeared in Young Austria. The mood is altogether more introspective and Fried appears to have had a much more ambiguous relationship with Germany than some of his fellow-exiles. His refusal to participate in the black-and-white portrayal of Germany and the Germans, even active participants in the fighting and occupation, is illustrative of what will later become his hallmark method in approaching complex geopolitical issues and conflicts, such as those in Vietnam and Israel.

Deutschland was published by the Austrian PEN-Club in Exile. The financial assistance for printing came from David Martin and Joseph Kalmer,279 two fellow exiled poets. David Martin, Fried’s senior by six years, lauded a number of poems in Deutschland, such as ‘Botschaft an Macbeth’ and ‘Hamlet an Fortinbras’:

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278 Fried, Deutschland, in GW1, p. 10.
279 Kaukoreit, Stationen, p. 122.
I like your two Shakespear[e] poems (on Macbeth and Fortinbras) best of the lot now. This implies my general attitude to the others which are still too direct, occasionally too crude. But they are all sincere and there are more poems of promise than one finds in new, especially first, books of poems.\textsuperscript{280}

Fried had relied on assistance from Kalmer previously—although more in terms of poetic advice than financially. As Fried himself pointed out in the Introduction to his \textit{Frühe Gedichte}, ‘Joseph Kalmer hat mir, mehr als irgendwer sonst, das Schreiben beigebracht’.\textsuperscript{281} Kalmer’s review of \textit{Deutschland}, printed in the periodical \textit{Zeitspiegel} in 1944 is encouraging and positive. The reviewer lauds \textit{Deutschland} as:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

Kalmer’s review hints at Fried’s distance from Austria in spiritual, rather than regional, terms. It also emphasises that Germany as the poet’s inspiration was best employed as a proxy, putting the emphasis on the French and Czech victims, rather than German military or civilian casualties.

The age difference between the budding and the mature poet was over 20 years. Although, like Fried, Kalmer was involved with the Austrian Centre and the newspaper \textit{Zeitspiegel}, his motivation was not political but ‘operational’. Kalmer admired the efficient running of the Austrian Centre and its wide audience, rather than agreeing with its policies. Kalmer’s emphasis

on poetry as a trade which has to be honed in order to be mastered proved of great importance for Fried’s literary development.


Fried’s sense of identity as suggested in this collection, marked by over five years in exile, was more pliable, more confused—his social environment was not exclusively Austrian. As mentioned in Chapter Two, his association with several exile organisations influenced his social circle, his poetic choice and his writing style. As a first published volume of poetry devoted exclusively to the topic of Germany in war and Germany as one of the major elements in the cause of war, Deutschland was an interesting first choice—the option to write verses on the Austrian theme would have been a more obvious one. The ambiguity inherent in his exile position, social and political, may have played a part in Fried’s decision to embark on the publication focusing on Germany, rather than Austria.

‘Ein Deutscher in britischen Heer’ included in the collection is an example of the ambivalence which Fried felt and was compelled to portray in his poetry. It is strategically placed halfway through the collection, surrounded by poems devoted to the German occupiers (‘Den Herrschenden’) and the German exiles returning to the country ravaged by war (‘Heimkehrer’). Written in the first person from a perspective of a German exile in the British Army, it is endowed with a curious sense and mixture of desperation and hope. It could be concluded that Fried’s sentiments for Austria may have been a part of the inspiration.

283 Kalmer to Fried, 24 April 1943, in 126, Westbourne Terrace, p. 184.
[...] Deutschland, aber dich nur noch zu hassen
und die Zukunft dir zu versagen,
hieße: Brüder drüben zu verlassen
Und ihre letzten Türme zerschlagen.
[...]
Deutschland, ich habe dich niemals verraten;
Deutschland, um dein gerechteres Leben
kämpf ich für dich gegen deine Soldaten –
und ich werde dir Rechenschaft geben.\textsuperscript{284}

‘Den Herrschenden’ directly precedes this poem and appears to be positioned as an introduction
to ‘Ein Deutscher in Britischen Heer’:

Hat es euch Herz und Augen ausgebrannt?
Sind nicht mehr zehn Gerechte in dem Land?
Ihr seid nicht tierisch, denn so schlägt kein Tier.
Keins eurer Opfer ist so tot wie ihr.\textsuperscript{285}

The inclusion of the Old Testament motives, ‘zehn Gerechte’, the ‘Augen’ and ‘Herz’ and their
amalgamation within the contemporary context of the Second World War endows the poem
simultaneously both with a haunting sense of timelessness and immediate currency. The pain,
death and destruction caused by the army are not directly attributed to the German occupiers, but
appear to be in the limbo of eternity stretching from biblical times to the modern era.

Fried’s technique in the collection is appellative, both in the sense that he uses a number of
designations to address the particular groups with his poems, and in the sense that his poems
often act as earnest appeals to either the perpetrators or the victims of war. For instance, apart
from ‘Der Sieger’\textsuperscript{286} ‘Kinder’, ‘Trankopfer’\textsuperscript{287} and ‘Heimkehrer’\textsuperscript{288}, all but the last written in the

\textsuperscript{284} Fried, ‘Ein Deutscher in Britischer Heer’, Deutschland, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{285} Fried, ‘Den Herrschenden’, ibid., p. 16.
\textsuperscript{286} Deutschland, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{287} Ibid., pp. 12–13.
\textsuperscript{288} Ibid., p. 17.
first person singular, Fried also sends a plea to ‘Den Herrschenden’, ‘Den Nationalsozialisten’, ‘Denen in Deutschland’, ‘An die deutschen Soldaten’. The same technique is present in the poem ‘An Hitlers Soldaten’, whose title was on its inclusion in the Deutschland changed to ‘Notgesang’. In these poems there germinates the technique which Fried would use later in his anti-Zionist poetry.

The collection Österreich was dedicated to Fried’s fellow exile, an active member of the Young Austria youth organisation, Stefan Brill, with whom Fried shared a flat in London in 1940 and who, as mentioned in earlier paragraphs, was a member of Fried’s ‘Emigrantenjugend’.

In Österreich, Fried replicated the sentiments already expressed in Deutschland. In the verses, Fried grappled with the concepts of guilt and victimhood. No emotion, image or phenomenon is clear-cut and simplistic. His selfhood is similarly debated throughout the collection. Fried’s sense of belonging to the Austrian nation in this volume was ambivalent, drawing on sentiments such as love, sadness and despair. The feeling of belonging in turn produced confusion, ambivalence and frustration.

The change in Fried’s sense of self, especially the change in his political leanings, is discernible in this collection. The reader is allowed to glimpse a more individual, questioning, less self-righteous and propagandistic poet. Although Austria as a possible home, or a point of departure, is romanticised in some poems, it is sombrely interrogated in others. In the introductory poem ‘Drei Gebete aus London’, Fried idealises Austria still in the picture-postcard fashion of his

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289 Ibid., p. 27.
290 Ibid., pp. 20–21.
291 Ibid., p. 21.
293 Lawrie, in Writer, p. 86, explains the appellative function of the titles by Fried’s wish to be heard in public. Die Zeitung was also dropped over Europe by the RAF, hence Fried was able to reach at least some of his audience. His translation work is another example of an exiled poet wishing to reach a wider German-speaking audience.
(former) companions from the Austrian Centre—‘Dann bet ich dich, du mein Berg, du mein Bach, du mein Baum’. Three spaces—two geographical (Austria and Great Britain) and one spiritual (Judaism) in Fried’s poem combine to present a yearning for an, although defined in geographical terms, undefined space of a young exiled poet. This is intimated in the title—in the Jewish religion, believers are expected to pray three times a day.

The motif of exile is reinforced by the following poem ‘An der Bahn’. The train tracks are seen in a positive light, since they carry the promise of bringing the lyrical persona home:

Noch hat mich die Ferne
doch bald werd ich reisen... ²⁹⁴

The train tracks and the train become symbols of homecoming as opposed to means of military transport with the allusion of an even more evil purpose. In continuation of exile, train travel and a promise of homecoming, Fried appends the ‘Bekenntnis zu Wien’. Composed as a tribute to Fried’s hometown, the poem has an autobiographical flavour:

Du trugst mir meinen Vater aus,
bis dich die Nacht umfing.
Sie brachten sterbend ihn nach Haus.
Er liegt in Simmering.
[...] daß du mir meine Toten birgst
mein Wien, ist gut.²⁹⁵

The autobiography however stops short of declaring Fried’s Jewish origin, which had played a crucial role in Fried’s position in 1930s Vienna. The repetition of the last verse, ‘mein Wien, ist gut’ at the end of each stanza endows the poem with a song-like quality, reminiscent of Theodor Kramer’s ‘Der Heimgekehrte’, included in Zwischen Gestern und Morgen:

²⁹⁵ Österreich, p. 6.
Volker Kaukoreit in his study of Fried’s early poetry finds Kramer’s influence in the form of ‘Bekenntnis zu Wien’—the stanza consisting of eight lines and each stanza ending with the same line was a formal technique of Kramer’s in his poetry of the same period.  

The key poem in the collection is undoubtedly ‘An Österreich’, in which Fried, in contrast to his comrades from the Austrian Centre, sends out a sobering warning to his homeland (‘Und dennoch wird die Bahn mich heimwärts [my emphasis] tragen’), to confess and acknowledge its guilt—‘und im Gericht den eignen Namen nennen’. The ‘Österreich’ which Fried was attempting to inspire into a Catholic confession of guilt was a country he had left in 1938. The Austrian Centre’s visionary propaganda, however strong, did not appear to instil enough hope in young Fried of Austrian atonement and positive change:

However, Fried’s picture of the Austria of his youth is not as black-and-white as that of some of his fellow exiles—in the ‘Österreichische Pieta’, Fried, by using a biblical metaphor endows his poem with enough ambivalence to allow some measure of Austrian victimhood:

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297 Kaukoreit, Stationen, pp. 140–141.
298 Österreich, p. 13.
Mein Volk hat das Eiserne Kreuz getragen
auf seiner schwarzen Passion.
Der Zenturio hat es gezerrt und geschlagen
von Station zu Station.\textsuperscript{299}

The feeling of yearning for Vienna does not occlude Fried’s vision. The absence of a particular and selective Jewish or Austrian perspective on the events signals a young mind undecided about Jewishness, national identity and spiritual belonging. Fried’s immediate liberal environment in Vienna was an important factor in helping Fried fashion a sense of self rather than a sense of Jewish self.\textsuperscript{300} In this partly lie the roots of his later quandary relating to the third geographic sphere—Israel. So far as Austria and Germany are concerned, Fried’s sense of loyalty worked on two levels—linguistic (on this level we appear to partially form and perform our identity) and familial. In the case of Israel, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven, the dense citation of Arab issues and the focus on the invocation of the Shoah does not immediately relate back to the clearly defining sense of self. Neither does it provide a determined assurance of Jewish identity. Although in his introduction to the \textit{Höre, Israel!} volume, Fried insists on his Jewish identity, this fact rather points back to Austria and his Austrian liberal upbringing, precisely the humanist view of the world that is often emphasised when considering Fried’s oeuvre.

Throughout Fried’s poetry his true self is interrogated and provided as an intertext, in which his receptor dons diverse roles. The topographical landscape featured in the collection \textit{Österreich} provides parameters within which Fried renders his malleable, still painful identification with anchors such as the monuments, churches and monasteries of Vienna. The landscape of conflict and bloodshed stretching from Germany to the steppes and cities of Ukraine (Charkow and

\textsuperscript{299} Ibid., p. 27.
\textsuperscript{300} Dagmar C. G. Lorenz, ‘Separate Reality...’, pp. 120–132.
indicates an attempt on the part of the poet at communicating his revulsion at the horrors of war, identifying in an oracular fashion both with perpetrator and victim.

All topographical settings are interconnected with the weaving and rattling train tracks and trains, which simultaneously offer an escape from the social and real stasis and the return to it. Fried deconstructs the inner and the real landscape, intimating a dispossession which heralds no messiah. The poet stumbles through topography in an attempt to discover his own place and whilst remaining in control of his poetic work he endeavours to overcome space, to seek redemption in landscape, still not attaining the transfiguration he desires. The topography, however, appears partly suppressed, at times only vaguely referenced, allowing for a liminal space, an in-between boundary zone within which Fried situates his own uncertainty. Particularly in Österreich, Fried embeds the melancholy nostalgia within the landscape. In this act of conflation, as well as by previous citation or anchoring to the object rather than the subject, Fried attempts to re-appropriate, to seize his presence.

During the war, whilst in exile in London, where his political beliefs were constantly put to the test, Fried was confined by the historical conditions and he was at great pains to position himself from the outset, commencing with the period when he initiated his literary career. He starts his journey as an exiled Austrian schoolboy turned into a refugee Jew by the Nazi takeover of Austria in 1938. In addition, on arrival in London, Fried is a communist and a party propagandist. Following the war, he turns to more humanist concerns and develops as a socialist.

The battle of Korsun is mentioned in Die Zeitung, 10 March 1944, on the front page. SS-Reichsführer Himmler attempted to present it as a victory for the Germans by parading the few rescued SS officers from the battle, whilst leaving the majority of the ordinary soldiers to die in the battle with the Soviet Army.
By the end of the war years, Fried remained unconvinced by the political campaigning of the refugee organisations. Schmeier’s suicide in 1943 and the growing awareness of the crimes by Stalin and his followers in the Soviet Union forced Fried to re-evaluate gradually his political identity and move increasingly towards a more subtle, less propagandistic, more honest and less collective political identity—that of a socialist. A poem from this period, originally written for Young Austria but unpublished, is included in Gerhard Lampe’s biography of Erich Fried:

Und ohne Fahnen, ohne Lieder
heiβt’s jetzt die letzte Strecke gehn.
Wir blicken oft zu Boden nieder,
den Weg uns besser anzusehn.
 [...] Und wenn wir keine Traumbilder bauen
Dann zerfallen sie uns auch nicht. 302

Feelings of careful consideration, even quiet disappointment, prevail in the verses.

Fried’s membership of Young Austria and his association with the Free German League of Culture, his following of the norms of one particular group of the Austrian emigration is similar to the identity performance which later occurs when Fried pens his anti-Zionist poetry. The identity which Fried espoused in his early exile in London partly came into existence because of the common ideas, shared history and experiences within the exile community gathered around the Austrian Centre. Citation of Soviet themes, imagery, names, geographical locations from the Eastern Front point towards Fried’s later use of naming and citation in his anti-Zionist poetry. His sense of self is defined in this period along political and national lines, rather than ethnic or religious. The citation of names and regional references provides a context within which Fried’s identity as a member of a particular milieu is defined. Indeed, his sense of belonging is elicited

302 Lampe, p. 79.
via dense citation of contextual geography or personal details (i.e. the repetition of the trope of train tracks in the case of London and Austria or the repetition of names of the freedom fighters in the case of Vienna and Austria). By citing and repeating the normative structures, or codes, which constituted the identity and ideology promulgated by the Austrian Centre, Fried was situating himself within the communist and nationalist dialogue of Young Austria. With Deutschland, Fried tentatively breaks free from the citation of the Austrian Centre’s and Young Austria’s codes, necessary in order to preserve and re-invent Austria—the code-switching performed by Fried with Austria constitutes another Austria—not built on propaganda or liberated by home-grown freedom fighters and city guerrillas, but Austria subdued and ambivalent towards political regeneration, an Austria which must be appealed to in order for it to recognise and transcend its own guilt.

In a sense, Fried created his own ‘diasporic’ belonging, communist, Jewish and humanist, by switching political and cultural codes from communism to socialism, from dogmatism to humanism and tentatively acknowledging and coding his Jewishness within the poetry of Österreich.
Chapter 5  Socialism, but also Humanism? Aspects of Fried’s Identity from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s

Whilst in the previous chapter the focus was on analysing Fried’s war-time and immediate post war collections, Deutschland (1944) and Österreich (1946), this chapter will briefly survey Fried’s work for the re-education journals in the late 1940s, it will address Fried’s writings in the 1950s, i.e. some of his political contributions for the BBC’s Ostzone programmes, an unpublished manuscript ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’ (early 1950s), and his novel, Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen (1960). The continuation in Fried’s development into an engaged author and a humanist will be traced in the course of the chapter. The study of Fried’s writings in the 1950s will focus particularly on two contributions for the Ostzone programme from the mid-1950s, ‘Reformismus und Arbeiteraristokratie’ and ‘Langweilige Demokratie?’ where Fried comments on complex issues of democracy and humanism. In addition, humanist ideas contained in Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen will also be analysed. Finally, this chapter will also consider Überlegungen, a cycle of poems published in 1964, which signifies Fried’s cathartic assessment of his former political allegiances and augurs a shift towards participatory democracy of the movement subsumed under the umbrella term New Left and its philosophy of ‘communalism based upon enlarged social autonomy and greater individual freedom’, rejection of ‘stupefying routines and ingrained patterns of patriarchal domination’, and most importantly, its ‘international and interracial solidarity’.  

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate two very different strands, socialism and humanism, in Fried’s writing during one period in his work, from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s. Although Fried during this time published individual poems and a poetry collection entitled Gedichte

(1958), which were all thematically far more diverse than the writings analysed here, to include them in this study would enlarge the thesis beyond its intended scope. It should also be recorded here that during the two decades (1940s and 1950s) Fried also wrote cyclical poetry which would later be included in his densely coded collection *Reich der Steine* (1963). Poetry included in this collection does not have direct or overt political and historical references in general; it is described as solipsistic. However, it is important to recognise that in this time period Fried remained as diverse as at other times during his life and in his work. During the late 1940s, Fried also contributed to the journals issued by the Allies during the occupation of Germany. The general objective of these journals was to aid general democratization, inspire Germans to accept political responsibility and turn Germany back to its liberal traditions.

On the face of it, Fried’s task in his early political commentaries written for the BBC’s German East Zone Programme (GEZP), to address those people who had the same beliefs as the communist sympathizers with whom Fried associated himself in wartime London, could be construed as unexpected. However, the perceived contrast was not as great as it would have appeared initially—Fried felt political disillusionment and remorse for not having been able to prevent the suicide of his close friend, Hans Schmeier, which he partly blamed on the pressure by the communists on Schmeier while he was a member of the Party in London. Fried’s intolerance of hardened dogmatism was already evident during the Second World War, when he distanced himself from the communist hardliners in London. The strongly polarised world of the Cold War era left Fried seeking a different, a third way, which would provide an alternative to the uncompromising communists of the Soviet Union and their nascent satellite, the German

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304 Martin Kane, ‘From Solipsism to Engagement…’, pp. 151–169.
Democratic Republic. Kaukoreit mentions ‘Pinocchio’—a story which Fried submitted to the literary agency of Josef Kalmer in 1953 and in which he ridiculed an East German communist, member of the _Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands_ who, during the war, killed two unarmed German soldiers\(^{306}\) in order to stay true to the Ehrenburg doctrine.\(^{307}\)

### 5.1. False humanism?

Fried’s critical stance against the rigid East German politics and, in his view, false humanism was also expressed in ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’.\(^{308}\) This is a story submitted probably during the early 1950s to Joseph Kalmer’s literary agency in London but never published.\(^{309}\) Its style is somewhere between the exegetic contributions for the BBC and straightforward story-telling such as in the story ‘Der Liebesautomat’, published in _Die Zeitung_ in 1944.\(^{310}\) It is a story within a story, told by a narrator who relates how his presence was required (‘es war keine Zellensitzung, sondern eine Zwanglose [sic] Zusammenkunft’) during a meeting with Communist Party functionaries in a London flat in order to welcome a guest of honour from the Soviet Union shortly after the end of the Second World War. This guest, Hans-Peter, whose real name remains unknown, deserves the honour, as the author points out, simply by being the first German communist to visit Great Britain from the Soviet Union since the end of the War. The tone of Fried’s narration is initially satirical, although it changes into one of despair and tragedy as the story progresses.

Fried lampoons the relationship between his two communist hosts, Heinz Schmidt (a German exile and a prominent Communist Party functionary who had arrived in London via former

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\(^{306}\) Kaukoreit, _Stationen_, pp. 218–219.

\(^{307}\) See Chapter Two.

\(^{308}\) ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’, _Literaturarchiv der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Nachlass Joseph Kalmer, ÖLA 45/96_.

\(^{309}\) The manuscript was submitted by Fried under the pseudonym Hans Billwärder and kept by Irena Marner Literary Agency, Dossier Fried. Kaukoreit, _Stationen_, p. 219.

Czechoslovakia under the auspices of the Czech Refugee Trust Fund), and Eva Kolmer (a committed member of the Austrian Communist Party, exiled in London, one of the chief organisers of the Austrian Centre). Kolmer, according to this story, proclaimed the Germans as Austria’s evil on a daily basis. Fried here went as far as accusing Kolmer of toeing the Party line when she stated that even those Germans who had married Austrians should be thrown out of Austria. This, according to Fried, constituted hypocrisy, since she herself was in a relationship with Heinz Schmidt, a German. Fried makes his distaste obvious by describing both hosts as ‘krankhaft ehrgeizig’ in their adherence to the party line.  

Fried begins the story in medias res, boldly announcing ‘Die Sache mit dem sozialistischen Humanismus ist eines von den Dingen, die mich von den Kommunisten weggebracht haben’. He proceeds to give details of the location of this obligatory meeting, of the condition of the flat and takes great care to describe its geographic location, as if to endow his story with as much credibility as possible. The veracity is further maintained by Fried’s direct use of the names of the functionaries present and by describing the flat as ‘Die Wohnung von Heinz Schmidt und Eva Kolmer hatte zwei Ausgänge, was konspirativ sehr praktisch war’, he implies that a certain measure of stealth was necessary. The story told by the guest of honour is described by Fried as somewhere between ‘sachlicher Brutalität’ and ‘eine[r] besondere[n] Abart von Sentimentalität’ and is in turn described by its narrator, Hans-Peter, as ‘dialektisch-materialistische Moral’.

Fried then continues to re-tell the terrible story of socialist humanism, as originally narrated by Hans-Peter. This story, in turn, is also told second-hand, since Hans-Peter’s source is a Soviet official, Genka, a ‘grosse [sic] Nummer bei der NKVD [sic]’, the communist Secret Police.

312 Ibid.
responsible for implementing Soviet policies and intelligence activities. The subject matter of Hans-Peter’s story is the humane disposal of state enemies. Genka has apparently acquired a long list of enemies of the Soviet state who have to be eliminated. One of them is the father of a girl with whom Genka allegedly has a relationship. In order to dispose of his prisoners humanely, he asks one of his colleagues, a certain Krylow, for assistance. They devise a cover story to tell the prisoners. As Hans-Peter re-tells his listeners, the executions would be filmed by the party to use as propaganda, and the prisoners would be given new tasks, new identities and lives in China. Those with families would be joined by their family members in a matter of months. All that is required of the prisoners is to admit to the accusations, sign confessions and make sure to fall on the ground before the firing squad when they hear ‘fire’ and pretend they are dead. Only one of the prisoners, fortunately not the girl’s father, needed the second shot in order to fall to the ground in a more persuasive manner. The story bears a strong similarity to the trials and executions which took place all over Eastern Europe in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The author finishes the anecdote by returning to the entry in his diary made on the day of this meeting and stating that had he had more courage, he would have left the Party on the spot, after hearing the cruel anecdote.

During narration, Fried embeds expressions in general use by the Communist Party members in order to typify the character of the story, such as ‘Zellensitzung’, ‘konspirativ’, ‘dialektisch-materialistisch’, ‘Parteiauftrag’, and ‘dialektische Vorwegnahme’. The unexpected and cruel turn at the end of Genka’s story affects listeners, as Fried describes in the narrative, ‘es war grauenhaft, aber zugleich auch wieder seine eigene Karikatur’.\(^\text{313}\) Socialist humanism was an expression used, according to Fried, in order to accommodate not the actual humanist stance of

\(^{313}\) Ibid., p. 2.
Stalin’s followers, but what was supposed to become humanism at the end of the interim period during the social development from socialism to communism.\footnote{Ibid., p. 3.} What was at the time of Stalin’s Soviet Union seen as socialist humanism was illustrated by Fried with Genka’s story. The process of interrogation is depicted as involving humiliation, sleep deprivation, drugging, exposure to blinding lights, but, by way of consolation, Hans-Peter adds—‘geprügelt wird kaum’.\footnote{Ibid., p. 4.} Fried embeds the term ‘Revolutionsromantik’\footnote{Ibid.} in the account of the sorry end of the deluded party members, as if wishing to illustrate blind faith of the Party followers, as well as the subterfuge and fallacies inherent in the party dogma.

The intended reader of this unpublished piece is provided with a clue to the background of the story ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’ in Fried’s ‘Abschied von der BBC’. Whilst explaining the conditions under which Fried worked there for a number of years, he states:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

According to Kaukoreit, Fried was personally involved in aiding a victim of the first wave of Stalinist repression in Prague. A former fellow exile and one of the contributors to the collection \textit{Die Vertriebenen}, Peter Pont (alias for Oskar Kosta) had returned to Prague after the end of the war and was arrested in the purges of the Czech Communist Party by the Soviet communists in 1949.\footnote{Kaukoreit, Stationen, p. 219.} His release was secured after an international protest, in which Erich Fried vociferously participated. Soon after, Fried had to endure listening to stories about yet more communists who had left London for Czechoslovakia:
It was indeed difficult to maintain faith in any political and social system in the light of such circumstances. Stalinist purges across Europe and the obduracy of the East German political system went against the very fibre of Fried’s being. Fried’s belief in the value of human life as reinforced in ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’ and expressed in the novel *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen* is essentially replicated in his writings for the BBC, only in a different form. His poetry penned towards the end of the war and published within the collections *Deutschland* and *Österreich*, as shown, is humanist too. Just as in his debate on guilt and responsibility in the novel, in his verses Fried sought and juxtaposed different ends of the spectrum, debating universal guilt and pan-human atonement, forgiveness and punishment. In his writings for the *Ostzone* programme, he attempted to approach an audience which, in many research reports prepared by the BBC’s External Services, was portrayed as disillusioned, isolated, and repressed. These attributes describe nearly the same audience as the one he had previously addressed in his verses in *Deutschland* and *Österreich*.

### 5.2. A propagandist?

Following the end of the war, Fried continued steadfastly on the path which he had set out for himself on his arrival in Britain, i.e. persisted in building a career for himself as a German-speaking author. In his determination, he worked on three fronts with varying degrees of success—he acted as a focal point for a London Group of poets which previously existed as an

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320 See also Greene’s and Brinitzer’s statements later in this chapter.
321 See Chapter Two.
offshoot of Club 1943; additionally, he submitted work for publication in a number of British, German, Austrian and Swiss journals, most notably the British re-education digest, *Neue Auslese* and the journal *Blick in die Welt*; he also pursued contacts with publishers in Germany. Alongside his contacts with Theodor Kramer and Joseph Kalmer, Fried in the mid-1940s became acquainted with Werner Milch, a Jewish-German émigré and a Germanist, who in turn put Fried in touch with Elisabeth Langgässer, a German author and teacher. Langgässer interceded on Fried’s behalf with the publishers Hilde and Eugen Claasen in Germany and is partly to be credited for the ultimate publication of Fried’s novel *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen*.

Fried worked as a translator for Bruno Adler’s *Neue Auslese* (which appeared from 1945–1950), published by the US Information Services Division, Central Office of Information in London after the war and for Wolfgang von Einsiedel’s *Blick in die Welt* (1946–1950) as a ‘Redaktionsassistent’, although only during the final year of the journal’s existence. *Neue Auslese* had a broad spectrum of contributions and its main objectives were to establish the exchange of ideas between the rest of the world and Germany, report on the most significant social and political events as well as to familiarise the audience in Germany with the literary and cultural developments internationally. Those employed by both journals were predominantly members of the German PEN-Club in Exile and their main task was [...] ‘eine[r] an die Leser in

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322 Adler, ‘Erich Fried, F.B. Steiner…’, pp. 163–193, see Chapter Two.
324 Fried was an Assistant Editor of *Blick in die Welt* 1950–1951.
325 Lawrie, ‘‘Ein Urviech und eine Seele…’, pp. 117–139, see p. 117.
326 See Chapter Four.
328 Lawrie, “‘Etwas Romanartiges…’, pp. 199–221.
329 Art historian, exile from Germany, who worked for the BBC and the German Service during the war.
330 An exile from Germany, co-founder of *Kindlers Lexikon*.
332 Ibid., p. 175. Kaukoreit draws his information from the 1948 editions of *Neue Auslese*. 

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Nachkriegsdeutschland adressierte[n] literarische[n] Arbeit als Umerziehung durch Kulturvermittlung’. 333 At times, the contributors may have been fraught with doubt regarding the real value of and motivation for their writing:

Keins der PEN-Mitglieder verriet [...] ein Bewußtsein der Problematik des doppelten Maßstabs: einerseits die eigene Arbeit in der re-education relativ als ‘Utiliteratur’ anzuerkennen, andererseits autonome Kunst als absoluten Maßstab zur Verurteilung ‘kommunistischer Propaganda’ zu benutzen. 334

Texts published in Neue Auslese were not, in contrast to Blick in die Welt, written primarily for publication in the journal itself, but harvested from a wide range of sources. 335 Blick in die Welt focused on material written directly for its own publication and had as broad a spectrum thematically as Neue Auslese. 336 The independence from a propaganda objective, as indicated in the above statement by Peitsch, may have been of limited concern for Fried since the journal’s brief was sufficiently broad 337 to allow him some autonomy. As an editorial assistant of Blick in die Welt, Fried had the opportunity to publish diverse texts, short stories and poems. Some of the contributions published in this journal in summer 1950, such as ‘Kommunisten gegen Stalin’ 338 and ‘Sklavenarbeit in der Sowjetunion’, 339 may have provided Fried with additional background knowledge when penning his anti-Stalinist broadcasts for the BBC and ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’. In his role as a translator for Neue Auslese, Fried translated modern English prose and poetry, for instance Liam O’Flaherty’s 340 short story The Beggars (Die Bettler) in Fried’s

334 Ibid., p. 151.
335 Kaukoreit, Stationen, pp. 175–176.
337 Kaukoreit, Stationen, pp.174–177.
338 Blick in die Welt, vol. 15, 1950, pp. 12, 13, 22.
340 Incidentally, O’Flaherty was a fervent socialist. It can be speculated that Fried’s choice of poetry was almost subversively not altogether governed by the journals’ requirements.
translation), or Sidney Keyes’s poem ‘War Poet’ (rendered by Fried as ‘Dichter im Krieg’), both published in 1947. These editing and publishing opportunities were certainly to prove useful for his later employment with the BBC.

In 1949, Fried was offered a position at the Humboldt University in East Berlin in the literature department—a position which could have offered stability in the form of permanent employment and held a promise of academic success and fame. The prospect of academic success may have even been a factor in the decision-making process. A scene from Fried’s novel *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen* will be used here to illustrate this point. In this novel, Fried used a complicated technique of splitting his narrative voice between two narrators, one of whom is a soldier who in the story strongly resembles Fried’s own physical appearance and mental characteristics. At the start of the narrative, the soldier is introduced to his conversation partner, the second narrator in the novel, as ‘Herr Dr. Sowieso. [Own emphasis] Zu Besuch aus den Vereinigten Staaten.’ It may be conjectured that Fried’s own ambitions may have been mirrored in the character of the second narrator. However, whether Fried had had a latent wish for academic recognition, or not, he decided not to take up the offer, citing as his reason for rejection his disagreement with the official policies of the East German government, i.e. their Stalinist stance.

Another factor in his decision against taking up the post at the Humboldt University could have been Fried’s wish to address his German audience from a different position. During the late 1940s Fried repeatedly attempted to place his work with the BBC and after the termination of the

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re-education journals in 1950, he worked at the BBC on a freelance basis from 1950 and full-time from 1952. Fried contributed to the BBC’s German Service and to the Austrian Service simultaneously. His fellow exiles, Theodor Kramer and Joseph Kalmer, were both contributing to the German programmes of the BBC by the late 1940s and although it is difficult to determine the exact date of Fried’s first contribution, it is known that his translations were commissioned by the BBC sporadically between 1945 and 1952. From 1950 Fried regularly contributed to the BBC’s German Service on a freelance basis, which improved his financial position. By 1952, his superiors at the BBC realised Fried’s potential and he became permanently employed as a Programme Assistant for the BBC German Service.

Since one of Fried’s responsibilities at the BBC was to put together a programme on German literature, this gave him an opportunity to include his own work. Additionally, he participated in other features, where he was able to some extent to influence the selection of the material for inclusion. The Austrian actor, Martin Miller, who had already been an employee of the BBC’s German and Austrian Service during the Second World War, enabled Fried to include eleven of his poems in Miller’s programme ‘Austrians in England IV’ transmitted in July 1949. Fried was certainly able to offer a variety of literary content aimed at German audiences generally. The objective of the broadcasts to Germany also included building bridges between the German and the British nations, to which purpose Fried provided many translations of British poetry.

345 Kaukoreit, Stationen, p. 180.
347 Eine Chronik, p. 49.
348 Ibid., p. 50.
Simultaneously, and more significantly for the analysis of Fried’s work in this chapter, the increasing appreciation by the managing staff at the BBC of Fried’s fluency in Marxist ideas and broad political knowledge meant that from 1950 he regularly contributed to the Topical Unit of the GEZP and from 1952 he was employed on a full-time basis. His political commentaries became a part of the GEZP where Fried gave his views (political and artistic) on a number of issues on a weekly basis. Although it could be argued that Fried’s work with the GEZP was directed solely by a broadcasting brief, he was given ‘considerable freedom’ by his superior Richard O’Rorke. Fried also stated that he was given ‘die Freiheit eines Schriftstellers oder Freiheit des Oppositionellen im Rahmen des Ganzen’. His contributions to the German Service and to the GEZP ran in parallel and, while in the former his role was predominantly that of a literary commentator and scriptwriter, in the latter, his knowledge of the ‘politics of the Left, rather than his literary ambitions [...] made him a useful addition to the BBC staff’.

5.3. Between communism, socialism and humanism

Fried’s time at the BBC can be seen as a fruitful period of his life which fostered his career as a literary translator and a writer. It also gave Fried an opportunity to strengthen his ties with other German-speaking exiled intellectuals and literati, such as Bruno Adler and Hans Flesch-Brunningen. Since his weekly contributions for the GEZP were political in nature, it was also a time when Fried honed his art of political argumentation in written form. The BBC broadcasts

350 Lawrie, “Ein Urviech…”, p. 120.
351 Lampe, p. 91.
352 Eine Chronik, p. 50.
356 Ibid., p. 131.
to Germany in war-time had been considered an element in the general British war effort.\textsuperscript{358} The German Service therefore had had an important role to play in wartime and this continued if to a lesser degree, after the end of the war, for obvious historical and political reasons. Geopolitical division between East and West with Berlin precariously positioned as a border with communism meant that programmes emitted to the German-speaking regions had to be carefully crafted and modulated. An interesting comment is made by Hugh Carleton Greene, Head of the German Service during wartime, who referred to the programmes transmitted by the German Service during the Second World War and in the time of the Cold War as ‘psychological warfare’.\textsuperscript{359} During the war, the broadcasts to Germany had been designed, however, with a principle in mind perhaps unusual for war propaganda. The main objective when preparing scripts for war-time broadcasts was to tell the truth, even if the truthfulness meant reporting on Britain’s losses.\textsuperscript{360} The value in such an approach was that by the end of the war the German Service had, according to Greene, a large audience amongst the German population and apparently even amongst the German armed forces,\textsuperscript{361} despite the fact that listening to enemy radio was strictly forbidden. Greene continued to use the term ‘psychological warfare’ in his references to the post-war broadcasts to Germany. His concept of broadcasts to the German-speaking audiences, especially those in the Soviet-occupied regions during the Cold War, may serve to illustrate the guiding principles and pressures under which Fried came to operate during this time as a Programme Assistant for the GEZP:

The psychological warrior has to adapt himself to changing circumstances day by day [...] and he has to persuade people who may be hostile or frightened. He has to provide material

\textsuperscript{358} Richard Dove, ‘Introduction’ to Stimme der Wahrheit, p. x.
\textsuperscript{360} Ibid., p. 21.
\textsuperscript{361} Ibid., p. 22.
which is really worth the effort or risk which may be involved in listening to it, or reading it.\textsuperscript{362}

Greene further explained that the objectives of the programmes to Soviet Russia (according to Greene, the German East Zone was subsumed under this region) during the lifetime of the programme changed—although the method was still to tell the truth and the ‘subsidiary aim was to shake faith in Stalin’:\textsuperscript{363}

But no one in his senses could believe that it should be any part of our objective to contribute to the overthrow of the Soviet Regime or to ‘liberate’ the Soviet peoples [...] In the case of the countries of Eastern Europe under Soviet domination, it was certainly part of our aim to keep alive their links with the West and the belief that somehow, [...] things might be better and Russian rule might be shaken off. But in broadcasts directed from Britain to Eastern Europe we have always been careful to avoid any hint of encouragement to sabotage or revolt.\textsuperscript{364}

This was the broad framework within which Fried’s weekly broadcasts occurred.

In his time with the BBC German East Zone Programmes, Fried’s contributions were written from a personal perspective—as Kaukoreit emphasises:

\begin{quote}
Tatsächlich entsprach eine ‘persönliche Betrachtung’ ganz Frieds Naturell. Wie in seinen Schriften und bei seinen Auftritten griff er auch als politischer Kommentator zur Verdeutlichung seiner Position immer wieder auf sein eigenes Schicksal und auf seine Erlebnisse zurück.\textsuperscript{365}
\end{quote}

So, for instance, during the 1960s, Fried wrote about Hans Schmeier’s suicide, or his visit to Poland in 1967.\textsuperscript{366} The personal perspective, much favoured by Fried in his later poetry, was

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\item \textsuperscript{362} Ibid., p. 27.
\item \textsuperscript{363} Greene, p. 29.
\item \textsuperscript{364} Ibid., p. 28–29.
\item \textsuperscript{366} Ibid.
\end{thebibliography}
used by the poet-cum-political commentator in the scripts for the BBC and in the novelistic writings unrelentingly and purposefully. Although vilified by some listeners in the GDR as ‘ein Agent’, presumably an agent of the Western powers, Fried firmly denied the allegation in his ‘Abschied von der BBC’. 367

A report on the Eastern German [sic] programme composed in February 1949 outlined the challenges faced by the scriptwriters and broadcasters to the region. Conscientious reporting and features which went deep into cultural, economic, political and moral problems were necessary in order to assure the population of the Ostzone that they were not forgotten by the West and equip them with the intellectual means of enduring Soviet propaganda. It was necessary not to paint a black and white picture and not to equate the dangers of communism with the dangers of National Socialism. The report noted that communist ‘intellectual expression’ regularly emphasised the moral aspects of its policies and used vocabulary rich with ‘moralistic’ terminology—‘anti-imperialism’, ‘anti-fascism’, ‘proletarian’—endowing the communist idea of social justice with a ‘seductive power of Messianism’. 368 Similarly, the report emphasised the necessity of convincing the audiences that the reports were reliable and trustworthy—deriding or misrepresenting positive achievements in the communist world would only play into the hands of communist propaganda. 369 The greatest potential source of listeners were opponents to the communist regime in Eastern Germany, such as social democrats, Christians and most importantly for Fried’s audience—humanists. In the report, the last three groups were described as ‘our best friends’ and one of the main objectives of the Eastern Zone programmes was to give

367 Fried, Anfragen, p. 62.
368 This is discussed in a report by F. Beer to H.G.S., dated 24 February 1949, BBC WAC.E1.756.
369 Ibid.
these people ‘confidence and arguments for their resistance against communist propaganda’.

The importance of the broadcasts to the population in the Ostzone was illustrated by a paper detailing the German Listening Research findings from interrogation of East Zone refugees, completed in December 1950. The refugees drew attention to the fact that the listeners in the Ostzone were hungry for news and that they relied on the radio as a source of information and contact with the free world.

Another element in the decisions on how to conceptualise the broadcasts to the German Ostzone was the feedback from listeners received by the BBC via its representative office in Berlin in which many expressed their despair at the East German communist regime. The general aim of the programmes was to convey to the audiences in the Soviet-occupied regions that the broadcasters were aware of their audience’s circumstances and to attempt to dispel their feeling of isolation from the rest of the world. One of the German Service’s doyens, Carl Brinitzer, explained that he and his colleagues attempted ‘die skrupellose Verlogenheit der Kommunisten [...] zu entlarven’. Fried’s target audience was precisely these wrongly informed and isolated citizens in the Ostzone. It could be argued that amongst those, taking into consideration the nature of Fried’s contributions, a particular group were disillusioned members of the SED, as Brinitzer suggests:

Viele Besucher kamen [ins Berliner Büro] nur, um ein wenig zu politisieren. [...] Andere aber waren selber Mitglieder der SED, die der Kommunismus in der Zone bitter enttäuscht hatte. Viele von ihnen glaubten früher einmal ehrlich daran, daß der Marxismus ihnen eine Lösung für die Schwierigkeiten des Lebens [...] bringen könnte. Nun hatten sie nicht nur an der Problematik [...] des Lebens unter dem Ostzonenregime zu leiden, sie litten auch

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370 Ibid.
373 Ibid., p. 303.
374 Ibid., p. 303.
under Gewissensbissen, weil sie sich auch an der verhängnisvollen Entwicklung mitschuldig fühlten.\footnote{Brinitzer, p. 304.}

In his weekly broadcasts, it was Fried’s mission to speak to such audiences.

The focus will now turn to two of Fried’s prose pieces, BBC’s GEZP broadcasts, during the 1950s. Both pieces were carefully chosen with regard to their broadcast date. Although Fried in his ‘Abschied von der BBC’ claims to have been free of the editorial yoke during his work at the BBC, it is important to note that the BBC’s German and Ostzone Services, as part of the BBC’s External Services, generally worked to a brief from the Foreign Office from January 1947, when the third Royal Charter ending wartime controls on the BBC\footnote{William Haley, ‘The Next Five Years in Broadcasting’, in \textit{BBC Yearbook 1947} (London: BBC, 1947), pp. 7–11.} and also on foreign language broadcasting was brought into force.\footnote{Alban Webb, ‘Constitutional Niceties: Three Crucial Dates in Cold War Relations Between the BBC External Services and the Foreign Office’, in \textit{Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television}, vol. 28, no. 4, October 2008, pp. 557–567.} The Government, via the Foreign office, attempted to exert pressure from 1948 onwards on the formulation of BBC’s programmes to the Ostzone and the Soviet satellite states, accusing the External Services of being too fair and objective. However, the change in the tone of the programmes was encouraged rather than dictated and the real government censure was partly implemented only after 1956 when the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Anthony Nutting, informed the Director General of the BBC ‘of the government’s belief that firstly in recent months overseas broadcasting had not given value for money’, that it therefore intended to withdraw around 20% of its funding from the External Services budget and secondly that a Foreign Office liaison officer, a censor, would be present at Bush House in order to provide advice and direction to the BBC’s External Services staff.\footnote{Alban Webb in ‘Constitutional Niceties...’ quotes TNA FO 953/1644, PB1011/60/G, Note by C.C.B. Stewart, 26 October 1956.} The
influence which the editorial staff at the External Services may have in turn exerted on Fried may have therefore been greater after 1956.

The first contribution, ‘Reformismus und Arbeiteraristokratie’, was broadcast by the BBC for the GEZP on 2 May 1955. At the start of his ‘persönliche Betrachtung’ Fried stated that his inspiration for the article had come from the writings appearing in the Soviet newspaper Pravda which commented on the elections in Great Britain and their (lack of) significance for the British workers, since there was allegedly no difference between the policies and main tenets of the Conservative and the Labour Parties.

Fried established that such a position was ‘laughable’ as the opinion had come from a country governed by a one-party regime. He then undertook to discuss this point theoretically:

 [...] Ich will lieber auf die theoretischen Hintergründe dieser Anschuldigung eingehen. Diese sind nämlich, daß die Labour Party nichtmarxistisch und nicht revolutionär ist. Und da komme ich eben auf den Ausspruch von Attlee zurück, der schon vor dem letzten Krieg erklärt hat, der englische Arbeiter habe sehr viel zu verlieren, nicht nur die berühmten Ketten.379

From here Fried continued to argue that the position of the worker in the West was perhaps more precarious than that of the worker in the Soviet Union or in the ‘Sowjetzone’ since his material wealth was greater.380 Fried developed his argument logically and interpreted the contrast between the early opinions of the Marxist theorists and their misunderstanding of the historical processes:

 [...] Und so kam es, wie es kommen mußte: Kommunistische Revolutionen siegten nicht, wie Marx und Engels geglaubt hatten, in den fortgeschrittensten Ländern, sondern im Gegenteil, in den rückständigsten. Und daraus ergab sich dann für die kommunistischen Staatsmänner die peinliche Lage, ihren Arbeitern einreden zu müssen, es gehe ihnen besser

380 Ibid., p. 13.
als den Arbeitern in den höher entwickelten bürgerlichen Ländern. So etwas läßt sich natürlich auf die Dauer nur dann behaupten, wenn man den Menschen die Möglichkeit abschneidet, sich selbst von der Wahrheit zu überzeugen; daher Zensur, Freiheitsbeschränkungen und so weiter. 381

Having thus touched on the problems of freedom of expression in the communist countries and the material position of the workers, Fried then continued to discuss the manner in which the communist states narrowly interpreted the social conditions in the East and the West and to stress the absence of dogmatism in British party politics:


The emphasis on the ‘modernity’ and ‘open-mindedness’ of the Labour Party can perhaps best be explained by the fact that Fried, since the Second World War, had developed a particular dislike of the rigid and obsolete communist doctrines across which he had come during his early exile in London. Perhaps he intentionally used the term ‘modern’ in order to emphasise the difference in relationship between the Labour Party and its members and the inexorable attitudes of the communists in London which had contributed to Schmeier’s suicide. Fried finished his discussion of the allegations of the unitary exploitation of the British worker published in Pravda by returning to his opinion of the communist regime in the Soviet Union and the Ostzone—he underlined the dogmatism of the communists and their intransigence in clinging to outdated ideals. This way of thinking is entirely of a piece with how Kaukoreit described Fried after the

381 Fried, ‘Reformismus’, p. 15.
382 Ibid., p. 16.
war—a Marxist and a budding socialist who sought an alternative to the dehumanising rigidity of the Communist Party dogma.\(^383\)

In the second of the two prose pieces, ‘Langweilige Demokratie?’, broadcast by the BBC on 1 July 1957, Fried was keen to emphasise the different positions in which critics of the regime found themselves in the West and in the East. He lampooned the relative peace in the western democracies as ‘boring’ (‘Langweilige’ in the title) and contrasted this with rapid change of eminent or favoured personalities in the East, whose sudden fall from grace could mean a prison sentence for the unsuspecting and unfortunate citizens. The mere mention of a disgraced name could mean denunciation and incarceration for the average citizen in the East:

Diesem stabilen Charakter der westlichen Demokratien entspricht auch ein ruhigeres Herangehen an gesellschaftliche und politische Probleme und ein weniger hysterischer Ton in der Propaganda. [...] Wie in einem kommunistischen Land Propaganda betrieben wird, darüber muß ich Ihnen ja nichts erzählen. Das wissen Sie selbst! Ich finde, dass die Gehässigkeit, die persönliche Verdächtigung jedes Gegners, die skrupellose Verwendung von Unglücksfällen, [...] die glatte Lügen- und Verleumdungspropaganda, [...] es einem hier manchmal schwer macht [sic], ruhig Blut zu bewahren. \(^384\)

As can be seen from the above excerpt, also bearing in mind the reports and analyses by the BBC in preparation of its Ostzone service, Fried attempted to establish a rapport tinged with a healthy dose of frankness in his use of the phrase ‘Das wissen Sie selbst’. By using words such as ‘Verleumdungspropaganda’ in combination with ‘Unglücksfällen’, Fried indicated that the Stalinist regimes performed real as well as character assassinations just as effectively. As if admitting that he was partly speaking according to a brief from his superiors, Fried applied the word ‘Propaganda’ to both the West and the East in the first sentence whilst with the last sentence he wanted to let his listeners know that the BBC was aware of their plight and followed

\(^383\) Kaukoreit, *Stationen*, p. 218.
\(^384\) ‘Langweilige Demokratie?’, in *Anfragen*, pp. 17–21, see p. 18.
the events in the Ostzone with a keen ear. It should also be noted here that the above broadcasts were not chosen for analysis because they could be seen as typical, but because they replicate the same non-exclusory and all-encompassing direct address to an audience which can be found in Fried’s latter poetry collections.

Fried’s work for the BBC and exposure to first-hand reports, which were acquired from and about the Ostzone, in some way formed his opinions of the communist regimes and allowed him to make informed decisions about the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic during this time.\(^{385}\) A question may be asked here as to the nature of Fried’s own standpoint as a commentator on current events at the time. Both his knowledge of party politics and his experiences gained whilst associating with the communist-influenced exile organisations in London meant that Fried had the essential requirements for the job. It might be possible to assume that Fried used these pre-requisites in order to produce work which he expected would conform with the BBC’s strategy of anti-communism. Fried himself described his relative independence as a political commentator as ‘Narrenfreiheit’,\(^{386}\) which may illustrate that his views, even when they did not conform fully to the editorial brief, were tolerated and broadcast by the BBC. The fact that Fried was accorded relative artistic licence could also be explained by the manner in which the BBC’s External Services were funded for a time. From the above discussion it would appear that Fried embraced his role as a political commentator not as a willing participant in ‘cold warfare’, but as a humanist, anti-Stalinist and a critical Marxist who

\(^{385}\) These include reports acquired by the BBC from the Ostzone about the disillusionment of former communist enthusiasts and the Ostzone refugee listener surveys by the BBC, e.g. BBC WAC E1.753:4 September 1954, detailing the audience reactions from German East Zone [sic], or BBC WAC E3.88:1 reporting after the interrogation of the East Zone refugees, November–December 1950.

observed the developments in the communist East with acute consternation, although it has to be acknowledged that at the time his work was subject to some censorship and self-censorship.

5.4. New humanism?—Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen

Whilst in the poems written during the Second World War in London Fried attempted to address the issues of guilt, responsibility and culpability from a collective vantage point, in his writings which originated following the end of the war and during the 1950s, Fried succeeded in manoeuvring himself at times into a more individual position, more removed from the political and ideological collective considerations which influenced his earlier work.

From this period there hails a collection of prose pieces which was later, as a result of a protracted and a laborious process, lasting over a decade, edited into the loosely-structured *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen*. The novel is significant for a number of reasons—because of Fried’s experimentation with a double narrative voice and a free narrative form, because of the unusual ideas put forward by his narrators, and lastly, because the humanist ideas expressed by Fried in the novel could be amongst the most heartfelt in his entire work due to the time of their writing and the position in which Fried found himself.

The collection of texts from which the novel was put together for its publication by Claasen in 1960 were written during the period in Fried’s life which was beset by depression, loneliness and frequent change of address.  

387 His attempts at procuring employment of a more intellectual nature were unsuccessful during the early post-war period and Fried worked in two factories in a

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menial capacity in London.\textsuperscript{388} Publishing opportunities were sporadic and insufficient to foster a secure source of financial support.\textsuperscript{389}

The novel is divided into three parts—the first part ‘Ein Bericht’ and the third part ‘Schluß des Berichts’ form the bookends of the story, while the second part of the novel is formed from a disparate collection of short stories and entitled ‘Schriften des Soldaten’. In the introductory part of the novel, we are presented with two geographic locations—the exile milieu in London and the prison in Germany. Fried disrupts the progression of the plot by introducing two narrative layers—one recounted by the soldier, and the other by the narrator who, as is generally accepted, is the thinly disguised author, Fried himself.\textsuperscript{390} The second part of the novel, formed of seemingly independent short allegories, parables, poems and fragments, does not keep to the linear timeline which would normally be expected to support the overarching narrative progression of the plot. Additionally, in ‘Ein Bericht’, as the first part of the novel, the timeline is disrupted by the interventions of the second narrator. Although different parts of the novel thus appear discordant and even confusing, the novel on the whole is a significant marker in the study of Fried’s philosophy of life and its reflection in his work. The ideals which had taken seed in Fried’s poetry in Österreich and Deutschland—the necessity of forgiveness and the insistence on seeing and recognising the value of human life—were taken one step further in the novel. In comparison with his other writings, Fried’s humanist ideas were here presented in a more extended form—rather than arranging them cryptically in verses, Fried here allowed himself entire paragraphs in order to make his views known. By attempting to deal with such a

\textsuperscript{388} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{389} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{390} See Lawrie, Writer, pp. 228–229.
controversial topic so soon after the gruesome events of the Second World War Fried boldly stepped ahead and offered a very personal and original interpretation.

In order to introduce the storyline, Fried uses the term ‘Fragment’. The account is indeed composed of a number of fragmentary narratives. The two protagonists are also intentionally fragmentary in order to complement Fried’s narrative strategy. The elements of Fried’s own history are woven into the story, too, as an overarching common denominator acting as a bond between fragments. Although the novel, as stated above, is divided into three main parts, its structure is irregular and fragmentary with regard to the second part of the narrative, which makes following any clear line of argumentation arduous. For this reason, although the main storyline will be elucidated below, the analysis will focus on extracts where Fried’s humanist philosophy is the most obvious, rather than the entire novel.

The narrator meets one of the two main protagonists of the story in an ‘Abendgesellschaft’ in Hampstead. The story begins on a moral note—the other participants in the social gathering, in contrast to the soldier who is situated apart from the crowd, comment gaily on the immediate post-war conditions in Germany. Their comments indicate insensitively the social disintegration and moral decay, consequences of the desperate position in which many Germans found themselves following the end of the Second World War. The soldier disputes and criticises the general commentary and finds himself pressing his manuscripts on the second narrator of the story, a guest in the small gathering in London. The story is then taken up by the second narrator and the reader is subsequently furnished with the origin of the soldier’s mental anguish.

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391 Fried, Soldat, p.16.
As a member of the American and Allied occupation force, the soldier is present at a court hearing in Hamelin, Germany, in which Helga, the young concentration camp guard, is sentenced to death for her part in the atrocities. During the last moments of the legal procedure, the defendant is allowed one last request and, as described by the second narrator, more out of spite than out of any real consideration, she asks to spend the night with a man, randomly pointing at the American soldier.


This display of despair and powerlessness has dire consequences for the other protagonist in the story. The seemingly gloating smile from the American soldier effectively marks him as Helga’s choice of partner. On the next morning, he tries unsuccessfully to save Helga’s life, suffers a breakdown after her execution and is brought into a hospital for American military personnel.

The second narrator, as if insisting on his remoteness from the actual events he intends to depict and on his unwillingness to follow the classical dramatic unity of time, space and action, also interjects:

Einzelheiten des Ortes, der Zeit und der Handlung kenne ich überhaupt nicht, weder die genauen Gepflogenheiten bei der Urteilsverkündigung, bei der Bewachung der Häftlinge und bei der Hinrichtung, noch die Stimmung, die damals geherrscht haben muß, um die Menschen herum, in ihnen und über ihnen allen.

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392 Fried, Soldat, p. 21.
393 Ibid., p. 16.
By his own admission, the second narrator is also unable to provide more detail—‘ohne die [Lokalfarbe] [bleiben] die Menschen Schatten oder Skelette [...],’\(^{394}\) but decides to present a report on the events, thus giving this section the title ‘Ein Bericht’.

Significantly, the soldier who, seemingly inadvertently, becomes implicated in the story of Helga’s execution, is of Jewish origin and exiled in the United States. At this stage it is possible to question the extent of the randomness in the movement of Helga’s pointing finger, when it comes to rest on the American-Jewish soldier. Fried uses this image to make the connection between two human beings whose fates up to that point are on opposing sides, socially, ethnically, and politically as a prisoner and guard, as a victim and a perpetrator and, most importantly in these significations, as a Jew and a German.

The writings of the American soldier, which form the second part of the novel, are an attempt to come to terms with his extraordinary experience. The reader is invited into an imaginary and very personal world also inhabited by the second narrator, who includes short explanations and commentary in his capacity as inadvertent editor. The third part of the novel, entitled ‘Schluß des Berichts’ is included by way of a conclusion—it depicts the attempts of the soldier to lead an ordinary life following his return to the United States.

The subject of the ‘mock Gallup poll’,\(^{395}\) added as a historical support by the narrator to the overall framework of the novel and a discrete autobiographical detail planted by the author

\(^{394}\) Ibid., p. 16.
\(^{395}\) Fried, *Soldat*, p. 22.
himself, was a 22-year-old concentration camp guard, Irma Grese who was executed in 1945.

Fried’s idea for the romantic involvement, however brief in the novel, came in part from his exile milieu in London during the Second World War, where he met another Jewish exile from Austria, Hilde Goldscheider. Hilde’s boyfriend followed the family to London and although a Nazi, he was prepared to abandon his political beliefs for Hilde. Her father was unwilling to negotiate and sent him away. In the story ‘Hilde’ included in Mitunter sogar Lachen, Fried is at pains to portray not only the father’s inability to see how the match between the two young people, an exiled Jew and a former Nazi, could possibly develop and function in their new country of domicile, but also his reluctance to believe that sentimental attachment would be stronger than political beliefs.

An dieser Stelle unterbrach Marcel Goldscheider seine Frau und fragte ungehalten, was denn seine Liebe damit zu tun habe. Das sei doch keine Eifersucht seinerseits, wenn er nicht wolle, daß Hilde einen dahergelaufenen jungen Nazi—also gut—einen halben Nazi!—heirate, [...], dessen Laune gerade so gut wieder wechseln könne, denn vor ein paar Wochen habe er ja noch ‘Deutschland erwache, Juda verrecke!’ geschrien.

As a consequence of these tragic circumstances, the girl Hilde had a nervous breakdown and eventually died. The similarity between the two narratives is unmistakeable, working along the same principle of perceived impossibility of reconciliation between two opposing sides. Although the two young women come from the opposite sides of the fence and Helga’s guilt and

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396 Fried’s letter held in the Nachlass indicates that he, in later life, denied that Grese was his inspiration for the character of Helga. His unpublished letter to The Observer, 2 January 1987 in response to the ‘True Daughter of the Third Reich’, from 28 December 1986, states: ‘R. Scherer writes of Irma Grese (who, incidentally, was not my ‘inspiration’ for the book which alludes to her marginally only)’. ÖLA 4/90 2.1.2.
399 Fried, Hilde, p. 596.
400 Ibid.
the judgement over her are determined from the outset, the strength of the feeling between two human beings is negated by the parents in Hilde’s story and by the court in Fried’s novel—apparently, it cannot represent a bond strong enough to overcome past sins and future obstacles.

The focus will now turn to the initial part of the novel, since it is in these pages that frequent interventions by Fried as a second narrator in disguise are found and where references to what appear to be personal attitudes and philosophy are included. Fried’s humanist stance and his assiduous attempt to lead the narrative in the direction of his concerns are presented in the excerpts discussed below.\footnote{That is, Helga’s seemingly random choice of Jewish partner.} The overtly political dimension, otherwise present in his writings, is, in the case of the novel, absent from its pages. Otherwise vociferous in expounding his political views, Fried in \textit{Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen} chooses to stifle references to the ideological and political, providing his audience in contrast with an introspective, philosophical examination of human relations and the frameworks within which it is possible to write about them.

The equality of all human beings is a prominent feature of the novel. The second narrator declares his interest in the subject early in the first segment of the novel. The geographic location of the part of the story relating to Helga’s sentencing is in Hamelin. Fried immediately establishes an intertextual relationship between the fable of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, who according to legend, in the Middle Ages led away a large group of children from the town and the present-day location of the legal proceedings. By doubly locating the narrative within Germany and within Hamelin, Fried makes an unmistakeable reference to the fact that many of Hitler’s followers, especially younger ones—therefore Helga also—were seduced and gullible children. The geographic positioning is further strengthened by the fact that the initial
information is contained in a collection of papers thrust by the Jewish-American soldier into the hands of the second narrator—the poem without a title included in the collection of papers ends prophetically:

Hameln ist eine Stadt im westfälischen Land,  
Dort stand der Galgen, dort liegen die armen Sünder.  
Durch seinen Rattenfänger und viele verlorene Kinder  
War der Ort schon zuvor seit alters bekannt.\textsuperscript{402}

The second narrator seizes on this reference to the fable repeated throughout German literary history and proceeds to add his comment. He uses the sentiment in the poem in order to hint at the equality of all human beings, at the belief in the inherent goodness of humans and at the sanctity of the precious time given to humans during their lifetime:


The second narrator then attempts to maintain moral and humanist argumentation throughout this segment of the novel, even intervening in the soldier’s narration, interspersing it with his own dispositions and convictions. He continues to muse on the importance of truth in the humanist discourse and its distortion by alienation:

‘[...] wenn einer schon ganz nah is’ bei seiner eigenen Wahrheit, aber er will nicht oder er kann nicht und sagt dafür was anderes! Wohlgemerkt, diese andere Wahrheit, die kann auch ganz wahr sein; aber meine eigene Wahrheit ist es nicht. Sehen Sie, das ist das reine

\textsuperscript{402} Fried, \textit{Soldat}, p. 10.  
\textsuperscript{403} Ibid., p. 11.
Although this passage can be interpreted within the contextual framework of the novel as a statement of the soldier about himself, it also indicates that on a more general level, Fried as an author appears to value the openness and truthfulness of any dialogue, clearing the ‘Dampfabblasen’ and the ‘Umschreibung’ in order to reach the authentic in every human being.

Parallel to the discourse of humanism runs the discussion on novel-writing. The second narrator (or Fried as an author who places himself in the role of the second narrator) doubts his ability to organise the sentiments and observed impressions into any artistic form. Moreover he questions his ability to discern the authenticity of the original impulse:

As if teasing the reader with his musings on authenticity, the author-narrator injects the text with a measure of contrast between the real world and the world existing in artistic creation, pushing the first narrator, the soldier, aside into the world of ideas with a tentative brushstroke.

Fried then positions Helga within the second narrator’s doleful debates on literary and humanist themes thus placing her in a metonymic relationship with many Germans who by playing a small role in the running of the Third Reich supported its horrific machinery. Although her actions are culpable, the narrator stops short of conceding that she is a murderess:

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404 Ibid., p. 13.
[Dieses Verhalten machte ihren Fall hoffnungslos] obgleich man ihr nicht gerade einen Mord nachgewiesen hatte, sondern nur zahllose kleinere Taten, die allerdings immer noch so unfaßbar arg waren wie alles in jenen Lagern.\textsuperscript{406}

As well as describing her as a typically deceived German adolescent, Fried uses Helga’s visual representations in order to embed her within a mythical discourse:

\begin{quote}
Man kann sich schwer des Eindrucks erwehren, daß die wirkliche Helga, ihr wirkliches Gesicht, ihre wirkliche Gestalt, vor dem geistigen Auge ihrer Richter bald verschwommen sein und älteren Bildern Platz gemacht haben muß, dem bekränzten Opfertier oder dem nackten gefesselten Mädchen, das in die Grundfesten der neuen Brücke, des neuen Hauses eingemauert wird, um dem Bau Glück zu bringen.\textsuperscript{407}
\end{quote}

Fried combines the otherworldly beauty of the young prisoner with her obstinacy in persevering in her behaviour which effectively and distinctly marks her as a representative of the defeated Nazi regime. Whilst retelling this segment of the story, Fried ensures that his reader has no doubts that the second narrator’s distance from the actual story and from the first narrator (who is the only eyewitness to the legal proceedings) is obvious and unmistakable. ‘Von den Personen kenne ich nur eine, meinen Gewährsmann, der zur Zeit der Handlung Soldat war’ \textsuperscript{408}

It is possible that Fried is using this strategy to create a distance and an air of impartiality, thus attempting to gain the trust of his readers. This feature points towards a later period in Fried’s poetic development, when he employs the strategy of using his own experiences as an exile and a victim of persecution in his anti-Vietnam War and anti-Zionist writings. Although it could be argued that the approach in his later poetry is exactly the opposite, i.e. that in his later works, Fried is much more concrete and his mode of writing far more direct, rather than emphasising the narrator’s distance which the author is at pains to create here, it is the \textit{intention} of creating an air

\textsuperscript{406} Ibid., p. 17.
\textsuperscript{407} Ibid., p. 18.
\textsuperscript{408} Ibid., p. 15.
of credibility which is common to both periods in Fried’s development as an author. Additionally, Fried’s propensity for using visual sources and evidence typical of his later poetry has its roots here—‘Ich kenne auch eine Photographie des Mädchens Helga’.409

In addition, the two main protagonists, the soldier and the girl Helga who support the tenuous and fragile framework of the story, have curious qualities as characters. The soldier to whom Fried allows a voice remains nameless and Helga, the female prison camp guard, who has a name, remains nearly, but not completely, voiceless throughout the novel. In the initial account of Helga in the soldier’s ‘Bericht’, Fried also underscores Helga’s mythical dimension—‘Das Gesicht sieht auf dem Bild merkwürdig zeitlos aus’410—by placing her outside time when introducing her visual representations in the narrative. In this way, due to Helga’s positioning in a meta-historical time, she suddenly resembles a sacrificial lamb (see her description as an ‘Opfertier’ or ‘nacktes gefesseltes Mädchen’ in the above excerpt) instead of a human capable of cruelty and harm, for indeed, ‘was Helga getan hatte, war ungeheuerlich und unerträglich’.411 Her status as an offering in place of atonement is demonstrated by Fried prior to the actual verdict being given by the judge in the novel, thus proclaiming her sacrificial status before the final consideration by the representatives of the law has taken place. Presented as an object of sacrifice, Helga has suddenly become guiltless and victimised. Fried’s strategy here perhaps is to portray a situation in which the exchange of roles is possible and the perpetrator becomes a victim in an endless cycle of persecution, delusion and victimisation.

Fried as the author of the novel oscillates between putting himself in the position of, on the one hand, the unreliable, but willing, second narrator, and on the other, as that same narrator now

409 Ibid., p. 16.
410 Ibid., p. 19.
411 Ibid., p. 17.
acting as an ‘eye-witness’ contributor. Fried’s presence in the role of a willing contributor is, for instance, obvious when the second narrator describes his social environment in London at the time of the court proceedings in Germany. Although Fried is previously at pains to announce the fragmentary nature of the story and the tenuous quality of its detail, he readily embeds his philosophy within the narrative as soon as the story commences. By focusing on Helga’s last wish to spend the night with one of the American soldiers, Fried introduces a number of ideas into the narrative. He debates the right to the last request in its statutory and more traditional, almost mythical, light. By re-introducing the concept of the ‘alter Brauch’, Fried makes a connection between the juridical and the traditional, between the court proceedings taking place and the mythical background in which he has placed Helga earlier in the story. The notion of the last request in turn introduces concepts of conscience, verdict (in a juridical sense), or judgement (in a mythical and a biblical sense); and the play on words between ‘Urteil’ (verdict), ‘Vorurteil’ (prejudice) and ‘Vorurteilslosigkeit’ (impartiality) is a strategy which will become Fried’s signature style in his later poetry. The intimate connection between the core ‘Urteil’ and its derivatives broadens the meaning of the root word linguistically and, more significantly, broadens the context in which Helga’s imprisonment and ultimate sentencing are taking place.

In the 1946 issue of the re-education journal Neue Auslese, Judge Robert H. Jackson details the judiciary approach to the examination and sentencing of German war criminals. The statement is taken directly from a report by Lead Counsel of the United States to the American president at the time, Harry Truman, relating to the prosecution of war criminals. ‘Schuld oder Unschuld der Angeklagten müssen ermittelt werden und zwar nach einem Verhör, das so leidenschaftslos sein muss, wie es die Zeiten und die Abscheulichkeiten, mit denen wir es zu tun haben, nur zulassen

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412 Ibid., p. 18.
Perhaps statements such as these constituted the background to Fried’s depiction of Helga’s courtroom scene and provided a contrast between dry, legal proceedings and the passionate aftermath between Helga and the soldier.

Fried’s narrative intention is to underscore the dimension of general applicability of Helga’s behaviour and possibly to emphasise that this trial, removed from its finality in the novel (i.e. ending in a death sentence), becomes a micro-representation of all other metaphoric and real trials where culpability is contrasted with blamelessness. The trial becomes the judgement of the beautiful Helga. The author here supplies details such as ‘Eine grausame Lageraufseherin, kaum erst erwachsen und von Kreaturen erzogen, die solche Grausamkeit forderten und als verdienstvoll bezeichneten’,\(^{415}\) as if indicating that Helga’s life might have turned out differently had it not been for those who ensnared her and encouraged a particular behaviour. He may also go as far as to suggest that Helga’s trial might have provoked tentative questioning of the path she had followed during the war, now that the ‘Kreaturen’ which demanded and fostered such terrible behaviour were no longer in power:

> Es ist merkwürdig, daß vor Gericht derlei trotzige Bekenntnisse immer für bare Münze genommen werden, obwohl sie oft nur eine letzte Wand sind, hinter der mehr echtes Entsetzen, Schuldgefühl und Verzweiflung aufgespeichert sein kann, als bei den meisten bereitwillig Zerknirschten.\(^{416}\)

By using the words ‘Schuldgefühl’ and ‘echtes Entsetzen’ and exposing Helga’s feelings in the above excerpt in his attempt to understand the real human being who acted in such despicable ways, Fried turns Helga into a Nazi Everyman. It is unsurprising that this work is therefore seen

\(^{414}\) Ibid., p. 10.
\(^{415}\) Ibid., p. 17.
\(^{416}\) Ibid., pp. 16–17.
as a novel describing the indescribable or unspeakable: ‘Mit anderen Worten, seine Form ist
durch die Grenzen des fiktionalen Schreibens geprägt; es ist darum auch treffend vom
“Umschreiben” (des Unbeschreiblichen) die Rede [...]. Und die außerordentliche Kunst dieser
Erzählungen ist daher, den Leser wie auf einer konzentrisch laufenden Spirale wandeln zu
lassen, detaillierte Beschreibungen aber konsequent auszusparen.’

Linguistically, the meaning of ‘Schuld’, on which the judge is to decide at the end of the trial,
becomes a prism through which other connotations are dispersed—fault, blame, guilt and debt. If
the reader interprets the term ‘Schuld’ as lying between guilt and blame, he or she will arrive at
the conclusion that one of those (guilt) is laden with more personal responsibility and culpability
than the other (blame), i.e. that the ability of the adjudicators in Helga’s case to assign blame
without truly considering Helga’s culpability could be doubted. This notion is only hinted at by
the author and presents a small and metaphorical window into the workings of the courts in
Germany set up by the Allies following the Second World War to deal with the trial and, in some
cases, ultimately execution of the Nazis.

It is worth here briefly returning to Fried’s wish to combat what he termed Entfremdung
discussed in the preceding chapters. While Fried considered Helga’s responsibility and guilt and
juxtaposed these with the soldier’s feelings of guilt and loss once Helga was executed, he also
contemplated the ability of Germany to come to terms with their past. Fried put forward a very
borderline and tenuous distinction between ‘Schuld’ and ‘Mitschuld’ as if to question his own
ability to discern between the two notions. By delving into the distinctions between the ideas of

417 Jörg Thunecke, “Zu den Feinden zählt ohne Zögern sie nicht”, oder die Thematisierung der Feindesliebe: Erich
Frieds Auseinandersetzung mit dem Nationalsozialismus im Roman Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen’, in Echo des
Exils: Das Werk emigrierter österreichischer Schriftsteller nach 1945 (Wuppertal: Arco, 2006), pp. 139–154, see
pp. 142–143.
guilt and complicity, Fried treated the issue of coming to terms with the past from a very personal perspective. In her study, Katrin Schäfer emphasises:

> Die Schuldfrage kann nur dann beantwortet werden, wenn nach der Ursache gefragt wird; und das kann nur, wer vorurteilslos den Kampf gegen Entfremdung führt—und das wiederum setzt voraus mit diesem ‘Kampf’ bei sich selbst zu beginnen.\(^{418}\)

Helga’s position as a defendant in the case is used by Fried to introduce another argument. Whilst describing the origin of the soldier’s obsession with Helga, i.e. Helga’s last request before her execution, Fried embeds in the narrative an almost abstract discussion on the notions of rights, entitlements and verdicts, judgements and prejudices, which are placed simultaneously outside and inside the time of the narrative and its timeless dimension.\(^{419}\) Suddenly, the notion of ‘Mitverantwortung’ is introduced:


In unserer Zeit, in der so viel von Schuld ganzer Gruppen geredet wird, ist dieses eindeutige Gefühl vielleicht eines der greifbarsten Beispiele für ein Bewußtsein solcher Schuld.\(^{420}\)

\(^{418}\) Schäfer, *Die andere Seite*, p. 154.
\(^{419}\) Fried, *Soldat*, p. 23.
\(^{420}\) Fried, *Soldat*, p. 23.
The discussion of guilt and responsibility will be continued by Fried in his poetry collection *Höre, Israel!* (1974) and in his writings devoted to American foreign policy during and following the Vietnam War. In this earlier work, however, Fried is at pains to include as much as possible of his private musings on the subject, although he himself as an author is still developing the framework to support them. The undertaking appears particularly brave, since the writing of the novel takes place at, historically and politically, a supremely sensitive time for Germany, a country dealing with the military and social fallout of the Second World War and simultaneously training its eyes towards the future.

Additionally, the notions of group responsibility, human involvement in other people’s fate and the consequences of this involvement (‘alle Gegengründe [beginnen] wie schlechte Ausreden zu wirken […], durch die man sich nur immer tiefer in seine Schuld verstrickt’, above) and culpability enter the discussion at the same time as a young human being, on the cusp of becoming an adult (therefore, Fried may imply, not completely accountable for her actions), is executed for committing what in today’s terms are ‘crimes against humanity’. The witnesses are present and her guilt is easily proven. Yet, Fried is intent on including the concepts of ‘Mitleid’, ‘Gewissen’ and ‘Moralregeln’ of the participants in the general human process of administering justice in courts or prisons in the same discussion. By doing so, he, as the author, influences our reception of the original story. The fact that the involvement between Helga and the soldier is allowed to happen has as much to do with the administrative process of the court, i.e. allowing the defendant her last request before execution, as with the overarching, subverted but very present, feeling of meta-guilt, shared by all those present, who are about to take a human life away:
Ja, es bleibt nicht einmal bei der Schuld von Menschen, ein ganzes Gebäude, sogar eine ganze Gegend kann vom Geruch der Schuld ergriffen werden. Die gleichen Desinfektionsmittel verbreiten eine andere Atmosphäre in einem Gefängnis als in einem Krankenhaus. Der Karbolduft in einem Gefängnis hat mehr als Ungeziefer und Krankheitskeime zu bekämpfen, und die Wärter brauchen ihn nötiger als die Gefangenen.\textsuperscript{421}

The author’s quandary between the judicial rectitude and the simple belief in the preservation of human life at all costs becomes apparent throughout the discussion. Helga’s request to spend the night with the American soldier of Jewish origin is put into a complicated context of rights, responsibilities, legalities; historical and mythical explanations, for instance, ‘Das Gewähren des letzten Wunsches ist nur unser Eintrittsgeld, das wir überlebenden Zuschauer am Aufgang zur Tribüne bezahlen’.\textsuperscript{422}

This widening of the lens from the very concrete position of Helga’s imminent death to a general, although topical, deliberation on death, is a narrative strategy which is already present in Fried’s poetry collections \textit{Deutschland} and \textit{Österreich}. In this novel, however, it is far more introspective and, perhaps due to its longer medium and form, more encompassing.

With regards to the form of the novel, although on the surface it is simply structured, i.e. divided into three clear parts, the novel’s second section is subdivided into writings of the soldier, which are designed to give the reader a clearer idea of the soldier’s state of mind. However, as Ilse Newbery notes, the intention of the author and the final form are two different things, so that the link between the three parts is not established in a persuasive manner. Neither is the bridging between the three sections firm enough to support the entire narrative in its original function, i.e. in asking the reader to suspend his or her disbelief when considering the unlikely plot. Newbery

\textsuperscript{421} Fried, \textit{Soldat}, p. 23.
\textsuperscript{422} Fried, \textit{Soldat}, p. 24.
goes as far as comparing it to the story of Romeo and Juliet.\textsuperscript{423} Although it is possible to make a general comparison between the two stories, it is unlikely that Fried expected his readers to make this association.

However, as one critic put it, this tenuous structure, especially due to the circumlocution and the allegorical stories included within the narrative, generates more questions than answers.\textsuperscript{424} By presenting a kind of ‘society of authors’ at the beginning of the novel, Fried, with the help of his biography (hinting at the murder of his father in Vienna after the \textit{Anschluss})\textsuperscript{425} indicates that the novel is intended to question the strength of any literary endeavour to sustain biographical writing or support any description of prior events truthfully and aptly. This society consists of the narrator, ‘Herr Doktor’, visiting from the United States, the soldier, who at one point was a would-be author and the three authors quoted in the opening paragraphs, i.e. Christopher Marlowe, T.S. Eliot and Ernest Hemingway, who are all complemented by the addition of the author himself, i.e. Fried.

The second section of the novel, with its parables, even if this is contrary to the author’s desire, distracts the focus away from the biographical. Although the stories, such as ‘Der Brand’ and ‘Die letzte Fliege’ included in the ‘Aus den letzten Kriegsjahren’ section were intended to support the biographical narrative by virtue of their being parables, they demand additional decoding on the part of the reader. Their Kafkaesque character has indeed at one time been

\textsuperscript{425} Fried, \textit{Soldat}, p. 232. Bornebusch in his article ‘Umschreiben des Unbeschreiblichen’ also notes the ‘gathering’ of authors at the start of the novel, concluding that this is an indication of Fried’s intention to thematise and problematise literature.
criticised and seen as detracting from and confusing the overall narrative. However, far from being self-referential, they simultaneously create an interruption, a dislocation in the narrative which enables the overall text to convey from many angles intrinsically human feelings of anguish, fear and loss. The contrast between the centrally placed parables and their ‘factual bookends’ offers an alternative space in which concepts of loss, pain, victimhood and forgiveness are portrayed and analysed. The dislocated narrative also serves another important purpose—it represents Fried’s attempt to introduce Jewish aspects of his identity via a route other than speaking explicitly of war and Nazism. Within the stories contained in the second section of the novel is ensconced the Jewish imperative Zachor! or ‘Remember!’ as Schäfer states, an imperative given by the author to himself, but also imposed on his reader. The examples of the atrocities to be remembered are incorporated in the stories ‘Der Brand’ or ‘Der Wagen fährt durch die Straße’. These stories, it might be argued, deal with the event of Nazi burning of the ideologically ‘unsuitable’ books in Berlin in 1933, the phenomenon of unquestioning Nazi followers and the Nazi strategy of dividing people according to their perceived racial characteristics, i.e. Jews, Slavs, etc. Fried presented the Jewish precept to remember and attempted to focus this process of remembrance on his recent history in a convoluted way, requiring the reader to unravel not only the parables in relation to the historical events, but also to discover the author’s wish to represent these by using an element from his—Jewish—tradition.

It may be relevant here to cite Fried’s letter to Heinrich Böll, in which he related his resolution to fight against ‘Barbarei’ to his protest against the sentencing of Irma Grese. Fried’s criticism of

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428 Schäfer, p. 117.
Grese’s death sentence and his understanding of Grese’s position within the entire machinery of the Third Reich is easily related to the position of the individual within the later Stalinist regime:


Fried ends his Nachwort to the 1981 edition of the novel, as if giving a conclusion to his literary oeuvre, with ‘die Grundthemen dieses Buches sind leider noch aktuell. Menschlichkeit und Auflehnung gegen jedwede Unmenschlichkeit sind unteilbar.’ Fried’s renewed stress on the fight against inhumanity is evident from his Nachwort. We are offered a glimpse into a possible solution to this struggle in the scene when Helga and the soldier become one, and through their short-lived symbiosis Fried foresees the possibility of reconciliation.

5.5. Re-educating his audience?

Fried’s writings for the BBC, his deeply affecting story ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’ and his novel Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen were a way of coping with the National Socialist past. Particularly in the novel, Fried attempted to pave the way for mutual understanding and a balanced relationship with the Germans, which coincided with the aims of the BBC’s German Service. The fact that Fried spent almost 15 years writing and editing the novel should testify to the extent of his devotion to the subject and dedication to his audience in both German states and Austria.

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429 Fried to Heinrich Böll, 5 July 1972, in Alles Liebe und Schöne, p. 54.
430 Fried, Soldat, p. 238.
431 Also see Alexander von Bormann, ‘Verschlechterung’, in Interpretationen, pp. 30–41, p. 36.
432 Newbery, p. 46.
The difficulty of the social relations in the milieu to which Fried belonged immediately after the war is illustrated in his story ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’. His association with the exile organisations in London and affiliation with the Communist Party members within those organisations, as described in the previous chapter, for a time made it difficult for Fried to find his place in his country of refuge. Presumably the other members of his exile community found it challenging to distinguish between different strands of communist and socialist beliefs emerging after the war and recognise those more or less truly humane in the turbulent post-war times. Fried’s identification with different elements within the exile milieu always consisted of seeking and seeing the humane in others, i.e. rested on the belief in the value of human life. As Fried states in ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’:


It is perhaps easy to conjecture that in the early days of the East German state, which was also a time of vertiginous economic development in West Germany, Fried’s motivation as a mediator from Great Britain was ambiguous. His role as a political commentator and broadcaster to both East and West Germany on behalf of the BBC may have been fraught with controversy and conflicting interests. Fried’s political past was hardly of a piece with the BBC’s broadcasting objectives in the midst of the Cold War. His initial affiliation with the communist elements in the

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433 It is interesting that Fried here gives a very general theory on all communists being ‘only human’, but when he mentions individual communists, such as Kolmer and Schmidt, his comments are scathing and his opinion very critical.
434 ‘Sozialistischer Humanismus’, p. 2.
Austrian Centre and subsequent socialist/Marxist leanings ostensibly would not have made Fried first choice for propaganda work directed at the East German geopolitical area. However, as mentioned earlier, it is precisely this background which enabled Fried to speak to his audiences in East Germany from a standpoint of someone who was familiar with the political and social conditions. Fried’s inside knowledge of the dogmatic, ideological rigidity of Soviet-coordinated policies, now applied in the German Democratic Republic, and his inclination towards political heresy made him into an almost ideal candidate. The opportunity to mediate between the distinct worlds of East and West Germany, apart from offering obvious financial benefits, was a chance for Fried to relay his views and thus establish a relationship, however tenuous, between himself and his audience behind the Iron Curtain. At the same time, he was able to establish a relationship between his topics, cultural and political, and comment on the links between the ideological workings of a state such as the German Democratic Republic and its populace. Fried’s keen desire to unmask the workings of an undemocratic regime which oppressed and bullied its citizens and his singular perspective on current affairs contributed to his unique status. Just as in the novel *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen*, in his broadcasts, Fried is able to offer an ethical analysis, or criticism, of social life and interpersonal relations which are elements in social cohesion both in Germany and in Britain. Ethical here does not mean moralising or didactic, but essentially demystifying and humanist. Fried was possessed of a genuine desire to address those who were both victims and perpetrators in the recent war and were soon to play a far greater role in his coming life as a literary figure. Symbolism employed as a stylistic technique in the novel is replaced by objective argumentation in the broadcasts for the BBC. However, their ultimate purpose is the same—reaching out to an anonymous, vast audience and
grasping at the individuals within, demolishing the antagonism between the two polarities—the innocents and the malefactors.

The quandary between service to the employer, perceived utilitarianism in re-educating the German audiences and independently inspired artistic endeavour seemed to be reflected in Fried’s writings rarely, at least in the beginning of his time with the BBC. The tension only came later when his financial position was significantly improved and when his employer’s brief and his own personal beliefs stood far apart, as was the case with differing attitudes to the Vietnam War, which inspired a collection of poems analysed in the following chapter. In his reflection on his time at the BBC in Abschied von der BBC Fried said that in retrospect, he did not agree with everything he had said, although he had believed it at the time. However, he appraised his writings for the Ostzone, his wish for ‘Umerziehung’ of his audience is surely just as fervent in these as when writing the novel about Helga and her soldier.

5.6. Überlegungen

It is probably true to say here, as a Postscript to this chapter and as a prelude to the following chapter, that Fried’s final farewell to Stalinist and communist ideas actually came as late as 1964, when the short cycle of poems Überlegungen was published. It is dedicated to Ernst Fischer, Austrian journalist, writer and politician, who was a representative of the Communist Party in the Austrian parliament from 1945 to 1959. Fischer’s transformation from an ardent believer in the communist cause to a critic of dogmatic party resulted in his expulsion from the party.

435 Richard O’Rorke, ‘Der Deutsche Dienst...’, p. 43.
437 Ibid.
Fried announced the publication of Überlegungen to Hans Werner Richter in a letter in 1965 by saying that it was a ‘marxistischer Gedichtzyklus’ and added that Marcel [Reich-Ranicki] ‘bemerkte, es sei immerhin eine sinnige Weihnachtsgabe, die einem Kommunisten gewidmet ist und als Motto ein Zitat aus der Internationale trägt’. The collection has two further dedications in the form of quotations. One quote, ‘Und hätte der Liebe nicht’, stems from the Bible and emphasises the importance of love between humans. Fried borrows from Paul’s letter to the Corinthians—‘Wenn ich mit Menschen und mit Engelzungen redete, und hätte der Liebe nicht, so wäre ich ein tönend Erz oder eine klingende Schelle’. The other is a quote from the International: ‘Es rettet uns kein höh'res Wesen,/kein Gott, kein Kaiser noch Tribun’. Although these two quotes are seen as determining the span of this poetry cycle, it seems more apposite to see Fried’s intention here as expressing an open-ended dialectic. The movement from the biblical verses towards the International may not end with the second quotation and it does not limit Fried’s horizon in terms of his Marxist politics or humanist ideals. The love at the biblical beginning and the self-ruling masses preparing their own salvation at the end serve not as two end points, but only as two stages in further development of mankind.

The collection consists of 22 poems. The introductory poem is written in an impersonal style by an unknown observer and it sets the scene of a compact and intolerant community run by ‘Priester’. It is followed by the next six poems in which the perspective changes and the narrative is told from within. The narrator appropriates the story by using the pronouns ‘wir’ and ‘uns’ in order to emphasise his participation within the project. He tells of a structure which is supposed to give foundations to freedom, but instead turns into its opposite. Although the plans have been

439 1 Corinthians 13.
drawn up by the builders themselves, they do not recognise that they have ultimately built a prison. In the third poem, Fried makes a swift reference to the exclusionist techniques of the communists, to his unfortunate friend Hans Schmeier and through him to all others who were excluded from the community due to their critical stance:

Das Gleichnis vom neuen Bau
schien einleuchtend
und erbaulich
Wer es nicht gelten ließ
*war dumm*
*oder bösen Willens* [own emphasis] ⁴⁴¹

Fried also alludes to the brainwashing techniques used by the over-zealous activists of the Communist Party, in the fifth poem in the cycle:

*Wir haben gelernt*
und wir haben dazugelernt
*Wir haben verlernen gelernt*
und dazugelernt wie man dazulernt⁴⁴²

In the next nine poems, from the 7th to the 15th poem in the cycle, the perspective changes again and the narrative is told from a more impersonal point of view. In the 7th and 8th poems in the cycle, the poet introduces the dialectic between two groups of voices. One group defends the structure:

[…]*Ich will lieber*
*mir selbst nicht glauben*
*als glauben daß dieser Bau*
*kein Bauwerk der Freiheit ist* […]

The other group recognises the futility of the building:

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⁴⁴² Ibid., p. 347.
The two fronts are easily recognisable from Fried’s own reality—the socialist East and the capitalist West. Fried’s own quandary in the choice between the two ideologies is recognisable in the 14th poem:

In the 15th and 17th poems, the narrator changes perspective again by employing a ‘du’, i.e. Fried addresses Fischer and praises him for having seen through the superficiality of images which are not as substantive as the thoughts which create them:

By skilfully using a play on words, Vorbild/Abbild/Nachbild, Fried underlines the difference between role models, their images and the reality which these models and their likenesses are able to simulate. The above verses point to Stalin’s cult of personality, the abundant presence of

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444 Ibid., p. 357.
his images in communist Russia and throughout Eastern Europe and the harsh reality which these images attempted to hide.

From this poem on, Fischer is assumed to share in this conversation as an addressee. Fried praises him as someone who has moved from the ‘old’ to the ‘new’ (i.e. post-Stalinist) times, who no longer hides the old methods, but actively participates in the process of building a new society:

Die Zeit ist in dir
die Zeit von gestern und heute
[...] ein Sohn der alten Zeit
der die neue Zeit mit ihr zeugt [...]445

The cycle of poems ends on a positive note, by the poet’s recognition of Fischer’s ability to question and doubt, two qualities which Fried esteemed highly.

The motives for writing a cycle of poems with a Marxist theme may be understood better when the following fact is taken into account. In 1940, Ernst Fischer wrote a small booklet entitled Was ist Sozialismus? (1940), translated and published by Workers Library Publishers in New York.446 In this early work detailing Fischer’s belief in socialism and communism, he frequently quotes Stalin’s works and speeches, to such an extent that these quotes appear on almost every third page from page 10 to 61. He also ends the booklet by emphasising the humanising effects of communism on the human race, by saying that the communists of tomorrow ‘will look back on the crippled and cramped humans of capitalism as the man of today does on troglodyte [...] still half a beast and only half a man.’447 Later in life, following the tragic developments behind the Iron Curtain in the 1950s, Fischer, together with many staunch communists, revised his

445 Ibid., p. 359.
447 Ibid., p. 64.
opinions, some of which were published in Kunst und Koexistenz (1966), translated as Art against Ideology (1969). In the following excerpt, Fischer follows Fried’s introductory poem in the cycle Überlegungen:

Man has become manipulable to the extreme. But who is to manipulate him in the future? The underdeveloped consciousness of rulers who use the means of an overdeveloped technology and who know the meaning of power and nothing else. [...] Since this is so and since all these things-to-come are rushing towards us with gathering speed, can we afford to look only at our own group, our own party or system, for answers to questions which, if they are to be answered at all, must be answered jointly? [...] Every ideology must contain vague or confused reflections of reality, distorted insights and half-truths, or it is ineffective.

Similarly Fried in Überlegungen:

Die Gläubigen sangen im Chor
die Litanei
und fühlten sich sicher
im Schutz ihres Gottes der Freiheit [...]Sie wurden kleinlaut [...]und suchten nach Ketzern
und stießen sie aus der Gemeinde [...] In comparison, both authors emphasise the ability of ordinary men and women to become easily entranced by false ideas propounded by the manipulating few to their own ends. The believers (Gläubigen) in Fried’s poem are seen as ‘manipulable to the extreme’ by Fischer and their search for freedom only puts them under the control of the rulers who ‘know the meaning of power and nothing else’. Fischer finds the reason for the inability of the believers, those who have not the strength or critical ability of the ‘Ketzer’, to flee the confines of false ideology, in the fact that the ideology serves as a simulacrum for reality, however distorted.

448 Fischer, Kunst und Koexistenz (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1966), Art against Ideology, trans. by Anna Bostock (New York, George Braziller, 1969). In the present chapter, the quotations are taken from the translated volume.
449 Fischer, Art against Ideology, pp. 42–43.
450 Fried, Überlegungen, in GW1, p. 345.
In the third poem in the cycle, Fried continues to paint a picture of a metaphorical building project which has freedom as its ultimate goal. The construction project is supposed to provide a structure within which Freedom is housed.

Wir lernten
das Streben nach Freiheit
unterbrechen
um zuerst ihre Fundamente zu bauen
und später die Freiheit [...]  

[...] Wir bauten weiter
der Bau wurde breit
und hoch
Pfeiler und Stufen
Mauern Fenster
und Gitter [...]\textsuperscript{451}

The idea of freedom in Fried’s poems becomes a structure which resembles a prison. Fischer, in his \textit{Art against Ideology} states:

In every ideology ideas are arrested so that they become idée fixes, immovable supports of a class, a system, a ruling group. What is lost is the movement of the idea, therefore its dialectic and therefore its reality. The idea is placed in a coffin of dogma. Ideologies are fortresses. Ideas operate in open territory, measure their forces in direct combat, test one another, [...] it may even happen that an idea, although challenging another, will recognise its own inadequacy and allow itself to be corrected by its opponent. This is a most alarming possibility for the commanders of ideological fortresses.\textsuperscript{452}

The background to Fischer’s own membership of the Communist Party may be demonstrated by the following write up of an interview with the magazine \textit{Spiegel} in 1968. In an article entitled ‘Ernst Fischer’, Fischer’s reasons for having been a Stalinist are given:

[...] Er sei damals Stalinist geworden, weil er meinte, die fäschistische Gewaltherrschaft sei nur durch Gegen-Gewalt zu bekämpfen. Ernst Fischer sagte sich selbst vom

\textsuperscript{451} Ibid., p. 346.
\textsuperscript{452} Fischer, \textit{Art against Ideology}, p. 45.
Additionally, throughout the cycle Überlegungen, there are references to Irrtum, i.e. error, which may point to Fried’s own doubts and mistakes at the time he was a young communist. In poem no. 11, Fried connects the biblical image of the snake with the concept of an ‘error’. This may imply that Fried’s own membership of the Communist Party was an instance where, like Adam, he was tempted and made the wrong decision. It is precisely these instances of Irrtum which later change into Irrwege in Fried’s poem ‘Höre, Israel’. Fried’s own disillusionment with the communist cause had long-term effects on the manner in which he considered politics and regarded his role as a poet in society. Some of his letters held in the Nachlass testify to this.

In a letter addressed to Robert Bialek454 Fried elucidated his early relationship with the communists in London, carefully expanding on the issue of his misguided relationship with the communist cause:


454 Former member of the GDR Security service der Staatssicherheitsdienst, who in 1953 escaped to the West and became an SPD politician and a BBC correspondent before dying under suspicious circumstances back in the GDR.
Rather than distancing himself from the early mistakes of the original Communist Party doctrine, Fried positioned himself on the margins, as an observer noting the errors and suggesting improvements to the Marxist philosophy:


Furthermore, Fried used his disillusionment which ultimately caused his distancing from communism as a way of illustrating and benchmarking other mental afflictions. While negotiating (ultimately unsuccessfully) a publishing contract for his collection Höre, Israel! with Klaus Wagenbach, Fried wrote:

Es wäre hysterisch und übertrieben, diese Depression mit der zu vergleichen, die mir die Enttäuschung über den Stalinismus in den ersten fünf Jahren nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg vermittelt hat. Es ist aber doch, so unwahrscheinlich das klingt, irgendein vergleichbarer Faktor darin.

In the remainder of the letter Fried emphasised the destructiveness of Stalinism in a figurative way, because the dire mistakes of its followers stopped Fried from focusing on his earlier resolutions:


456 Ibid., p. 22.  
458 Ibid., pp. 52–60.
It may be assumed that as an employee of the BBC, Fried was privy to the full exposure of Stalinist horrors throughout countries behind the Iron Curtain, such as Hungary or Czechoslovakia. In 1962, whilst still in the BBC’s employment as a political commentator on the GDR, Fried participated in the International Writers’ Conference in Edinburgh.\(^{459}\) During his speech Fried commented on the style of reporting on the events in the Soviet Union\(^{460}\) and complained about the excessive use of details contained in these. Although Fried did not elaborate on the provenance of the reports, he stated that, almost without exception, ‘the descriptions of atrocities went much further than necessary for good journalistic practices’.\(^{461}\) As incisively as ever, Fried maintained that reporting on the political changes in the Soviet bloc in the media in the West supplied ‘excessive and upsetting detail’ which he viewed as a form of censorship. He equated excessive detail in the media reporting with pornography and placed it on the same level as ‘a subversive element used to rattle the subconscious or show undesirable representations, or images, of the otherwise morally unquestioning elite’.\(^{462}\) In his speech, Fried added that he had ‘no stomach for orthodox communist censorship’, but that he was not ‘for anti-communism per se’,\(^{463}\) presumably indicating his latent ambivalence towards the future outcome of a more collective social order generally. This detail also reveals that, whilst Fried’s early association with the Communist Party in London remained a source of embarrassment to him throughout his adult life, as noted above, his break with one dogmatic organisation did not signify a break with its foundations.


\(^{460}\) Fried here does not elaborate further on the nature of events [which were being reported] from the Soviet Union.

\(^{461}\) Ibid.

\(^{462}\) Ibid.

\(^{463}\) Ibid.
Indeed, as Ursula Reinhold stated in her discussion of Fried’s movement towards socialism and the New Left:

In seinen Zukunftserwartungen identifiziert sich der Autor in wachsendem Maße mit dem Sozialismus, wobei sein Verhältnis zu den konkreten Vorgängen im sozialistischen Teil der Welt distanziert und kritisch bleibt. Er steht in seinem Verständnis von Sozialismus im gedanklichen und kommunikativen Umfeld der sogenannten Neuen Linken, begreift die Entwicklung des Sozialismus als einen umfassenden historischen Vorgang, zu dem er sich als Intellektueller in Beziehung setzt. [...] Die Polemik richtet sich gegen Tendenzen der Bevormundung des einzelnen, gegen Selbstgewißheit und mangelnde Bereitschaft zum Zweifel.\textsuperscript{464}

Whilst assessing this progress of communism and socialism as a historical process, Fried understood that new developments would inevitably contain traces of the old beliefs,\textsuperscript{465} as in poem no. 13 in Überlegungen:

Wer spottet daß neue Hoffnung
und neue Erkenntnis
so Schnell zum Glauben werden
mit Glaubensartikeln und Priestern

bedenkt nicht die Macht
des alten frei waltenden Unrechts
das auch seine Gegner
geformt hat nach seinem Bild

Fried here emphasised the intrinsic flaw within this historical process. The fight against injustice and social inequality inevitably involved elements of injustice and inequality. Thus it was necessary to be able to understand and critically appraise the intricacies of ‘neue Hoffnung’ and ‘neue Erkenntnis’.

In his lecture in 1981 at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, Fried reminisced about his early political affiliations and stated that the leader of the ‘left wing of the Austrian Socialist Party,

\textsuperscript{465} Ibid.
Ernst Fischer became an outstanding Austrian communist and my friend’. Fried revealed his belief that other [presumably Austrian and post-War] Communist Party members had claimed that he [Fried] was ‘instrumental in getting him [Fischer] away from the Party, but that is not true, he had it with the Party up to here, because of his experiences with Stalinism [...]’. In the same lecture Fried noted that ‘one of the things which attracted me very much at the time was Yugoslavia, Titoism, and friends of mine were liquidated in eastern Europe because they were suspected of being Titoist, on trumped up charges. That of course radicalised me.’

This radicalisation contributed to Fried’s literary and cathartic farewell to the Stalinist reading of the communist cause in the mid-1960s. With Überlegungen, Fried’s interests shifted towards the New Left and culminated in his association with the charismatic leader of the Student Movement, Rudi Dutschke, propelling him onto the plane of global protest. With his verses, not only did Fried appraise hardline communism in Europe critically; he also foresaw the burgeoning protest against the increasingly patronising and repressive German state in the late 1960s. As Fried explained in an interview:

> Es war ein In-Fluß-Kommen der Dinge nach dem Tode Stalins, die endgültige Zerstörung der Stalin-Mythen durch Chruschtschow. Im Westen waren die materiellen Voraussetzungen für eine Jugendkultur vorhanden—die Studenten haben davon Gebrauch gemacht.

A new kind of moral critique, which became politicised internationally, morphed into a mounting protest against exploitative, colonial and rampant capitalism of the West (especially on the part of the United States, supported by Western Europe), support for civil rights movements and the growing opposition to the war in Vietnam. The New Left in West Germany, particularly its student members, were the most theoretically inclined and internationally conscious of the all

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466 Erich Fried, Poet as Historical Witness, Institute Of Contemporary Arts, London 1 July 1981.
467 Ibid.
468 Einer singt, p. 50.
participants in this global phenomenon.\textsuperscript{469} In fact, the international nature of the *Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund* (SDS) in Germany was its most defining trait.\textsuperscript{470} The international character of Fried’s protest, as Chapter Six will show, and his outrage at the events in Vietnam, provided an inspiration for the controversial and groundbreaking collection of poems *und Vietnam und*, analysed in the following chapter.

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\textsuperscript{469} Katsiaficas, p. 49.
\textsuperscript{470} Ibid.

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Chapter 6 ‘Gelegentlich einzelne Schüsse’—Documents from Vietnam—The Reflection of Fried’s Identity in his Poetry Devoted to the Vietnam War

The final part of Chapter Five centred on the analysis of Fried’s critical reading of Stalinist, or, it could be assumed, any political orthodoxy in the collection Überlegungen, published in 1964, which signalled a marked change in his thinking. Fried’s association with the Student Movement in West Germany also had, at its core, ideas which were already expressed in Überlegungen, such as protest against ‘Bevormundung’, against absence of critical thought and absence of doubt. In general, the 1960s signalled a change in Fried’s orientation—Ein Soldat und ein Mädch, the focus of the previous chapter, was published at the start of this period. As previously mentioned, Fried also became a member of the famous Gruppe 47—for Fried a momentous occasion, since he described attending the meetings as feeling finally at home, at least in literary terms. The group was one of the most influential associations of authors in the Federal Republic of Germany at the time, which could only be joined by invitation and recommendation by an existing member of this Gesellschaft. Steady employment at the BBC with lucrative translation contracts secured with increasing frequency from West Germany signified, on the one hand, the opportunity to establish and maintain contact with a wide group of literati and intellectuals in West Germany, on the other a more stable financial position. As stated above, Fried’s political ideas also underwent a change. The death of Stalin and the speech made by his successor Nikita Khrushchev, ‘On the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences’ in 1956 were milestones in the partial thaw of the relations within the Soviet bloc countries and contributed to their more favourable reception by Western Europe. Frequent contact with like-minded intellectuals in West Germany resulted in Fried’s inclusion in the group which in 1966

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471 Explored in section 6.6 in the context of the protest against the war in Vietnam.
472 Reinhold, p. 592.
473 Eine Chronik, p. 62.
received an invitation from Princeton University to travel to the United States and participate in a gathering in protest against the Vietnam War which was being waged by American military forces against the Northern Vietnamese. Fried’s active interest in politics, in this case especially in international politics, never waned, and the social environment in which he found himself, further stimulated his writing. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the change that Fried’s identity underwent in this period, particularly focusing on his controversial collection of poems *und Vietnam und* (1966).474

It has been noted in Chapter Three that the discourse of identity and identification are closely connected. In the consideration of Fried’s identity as an engaged poet throughout the current work it is shown that the manner in which his identity developed strongly followed his identification. One of his close associates, social scientist Gerhard Wilke, noted in a recent interview that Fried was prone to identifying with victims of any persecution to the extent that he almost suffered from an ‘over-identification syndrome’.475 It is suggested here that Fried’s identity and identification are deeply intertwined. The product of this symbiosis is identitarianism476—an underlying, but persistent undercurrent in Fried’s poetry of approximation and identification. In the volume *und Vietnam und*, the general anti-war discourse is combined with the discourse of identification. Fried plants his memories of the Second World War within the poetic narrative about Southeast Asia and the suffering of the Vietnamese people. By using specific vocabulary, he connects his trauma with the tortured existence of the ordinary Vietnamese caught up in the wider strategic and military conflict. Although the specifics of the vocabulary will be considered later in the chapter, it should be noted for now that Fried’s

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475 Interview with Gerhard Wilke, London, 16 May 2012.
476 See paragraph on ‘identitarian’ talk in the Chapter Three.
tradition of ‘naming’, a very direct strategy of using proper nouns for geographic locations in order to make his message precise and unequivocal, which he employed in his early two poetry collections,\(^{477}\) is re-deployed here, too. Kaukoreit’s assessment of this period in Fried’s oeuvre supports this argument:

Der Trend zur sprachlichen Verknappung und größerer [sic] Verständlichkeit setzt sich fort. [...] Immer deutlicher tritt ein Warngestus [...] hervor, der aber nicht an ein Textmodell gebunden ist. Gesellschaftskritik äußert sich u.a. in Sprachkritik [...]. Erst ab 1965 nennt Fried [...] wieder direkt Orte und Personen.\(^{478}\)

The return to the strategy of precise pared-down expression supported by using proper nouns is a fundamental change of direction for Fried, especially after the almost inaccessible symbolism of the cyclical poetry of *Reich der Steine* (1963).

**6.1. Use of memory in *und Vietnam und***

The general narrative of memory, current in much of Fried’s poetry, especially during the period of the 1960s and 1970s, builds a metaphorical bridge between memories of two generations—the one which experienced the Holocaust first-hand and the one which had to rely on eye-witness accounts, media coverage of the Nazi war criminals trials and cinematographic representations, especially by the American media. The discourse on the Second World War atrocities and the sentiments of guilt, remorse, victimhood, justice and outrage which inevitably follow are present, as a stark background to the verses in *und Vietnam und*.

Fried’s use of memory and remembering in this collection is explained by Jan-Gerrit Berendse with the thesis of ‘multidirectional memory’, where he relies on Michael Rothberg’s construal that the memory of the inhumanity of the Holocaust is present in the public memory of other

\(^{477}\) *Deutschland* and *Österreich* contain references to localities in Ukraine and Austria, as well as to nationalities (Czech, French, German).

\(^{478}\) Kaukoreit, *Stationen*, p. 448.
atrocities in human history.\footnote{479} Rothberg’s theory that the memory of the Holocaust, albeit a memory of a unique event, facilitates memory and remembrance of other events and lends a voice to identification and remembrance of other catastrophes, is generally applicable. However, a more precise reading of Fried’s approach to memory and identification would be by borrowing Alison Landsberg’s theory of prosthetic memory.\footnote{480} Despite the multitude of its appearances the purpose of memory has always been to negotiate a relationship with the past, thus establishing and strengthening identities and fostering social cohesion. Landsberg postulates a new-style memory, which in modern times proves to affect our ideological choices and politics intensely. In her musings on memory, Landsberg factors in the consequences of modernity and mass culture, which present a particularly fertile ground from which simulated, artificial, but more importantly easily disseminated, \textit{prosthetic} memories are engendered and propagated, which enable its recipients to participate in collective memory without ever having experienced the commemorated events. Prosthetic memory thus facilitates enhanced participation in social and political issues which are not limited by ethnic, national or gender alliances. Since memory in the modern, or now even, postmodern, age is ‘unreliable’—diverse projects aimed at capturing and preserving memory proliferate. The dislocating effects of modernity on memory and commemoration, or re-remembering, are challenged and reformed by technological advancement (mainly in the media) which give light speed to the dissemination and re-enactment of representative material. Landsberg’s theory applied in the current study works in the opposite direction to Berendse’s application of Rothberg. By identifying with the victims of persecution and war atrocities, Fried productively uses his memories from the Second World War not only to

\footnote{479} Michael Rothberg, \textit{Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonisation} (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2009), quoted by Berendse in \textit{Vom Aushalten der Extreme}, see p. 45. \\
emphasise the suffering but warn of it, too. In the process of warning, Fried also challenges his
audience to identify with him and empowers it by endowing it (particularly those amongst it who
are either too young or too unwilling to remember) with a prosthetic memory. The concept of a
‘prosthetic memory’ is that much more acceptable, since Fried’s early impulse to devote a poetry
collection to a war in a remote part of the world comes from newspaper and television reports.\textsuperscript{481}

In the following excerpt, Fried appears to quote from the British press:

\begin{quote}
[...] Außerdem ist es
\begin{quote}
eine ‘nichtgiftige Abart’
i ein ‘nichttödlicher Reizgas’
es ‘verursacht nur Kopfweh und Brechreiz
und in einigen Fällen
\end{quote}
\begin{quote}
\begin{quote}
vorübergehende Blindheit’ [...]
\end{quote}
\end{quote}
\end{quote}

In ‘17.–22. Mai 1966’, for instance, Fried actually embeds snippets of media reports within his
poetic protest.\textsuperscript{483} Alternatively, he employs his own experiences as a victim of Nazi persecution
in order to provide a template which enables his audience to engage productively, in this
instance, with the crisis in Vietnam. By creating a shared structure, rather than one specific for
either Germany or Vietnam, Fried creates a shared social space, in this way facilitating the
common ground within which to share a memory and thus, an identity.

In recent history, the Vietnam War and the contribution of the United States government to the
Vietnam conflict is still one of the most frequently explored topics. In literature and
cinematography dealing with the period of the 1960s the War is present in the background of
many films and books. It touched the conscience of many citizens in many countries in the
world. The social consequences of the American military quagmire in Vietnam were strongly felt

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{481} One of the fiercest critics of Fried’s anti-Vietnam War poetry, Peter Härtling, focused on this journalistic feature
precisely, when disparaging Fried in the press. This is discussed further in the course of the chapter.
\textsuperscript{483} \textit{und Vietnam und}, p. 23.
\end{footnotes}
both on American soil and abroad. The political motives behind the involvement of the US military establishment, with the surreptitiously increased presence of the United States army and the challenges which the media faced when reporting on the conflict have been examined in a variety of ways, on screen, in print and aired in public on numerous occasions.

6.2. und Vietnam und—The background

The film industry took a number of years to deal with the war's legacy (one of the earliest films dealing with the subject of Vietnam was *The Deer Hunter*, released in 1978 in the US). In September 1966, Fried published his collection of poems, suitably named *und Vietnam und* in Germany, while the conflict in Vietnam was still to reach its climax.

In view of the fact that the general public in Germany was not widely familiar with this subject at the time of the publication, Fried's publisher, Klaus Wagenbach, thought it wise to include the map and the chronology of the War in the edition, to provide as much additional information as possible and contextualise the conflict between South and North Vietnam. There is little evidence from this period that Fried actively approached any other publishing house. During the winter of 1965, Wagenbach, who published almost all of Fried’s later work, lent his support whilst starting up his own publishing business and negotiated a publishing contract for this volume.

In November 1965, Fried, together with other members, signed the Declaration of the *Gruppe 47* against the war in Vietnam. In the declaration, the authors distanced themselves from the statements of the Chancellor of West Germany, Ludwig Erhard, in which Erhard assured the US of West German support for the war in Vietnam, which by the time of Willy Brandt was valued

484 See Wagenbach in *Eine Chronik*, p. 71.
485 Lampe, p. 108.
486 Ibid., pp. 107–108.
at over 100 Million DM annually. This figure included the deployment of German personnel in South Vietnam and the training programme for South Vietnamese in West Germany.  

A notable German author and Fried’s contemporary, Peter Rühmkorf, writing about the collection in his article ‘Die Mord- und Brandsache’, which appeared in Der Spiegel, described Fried as a ‘dichtender Diversant’. In his introduction in Der Spiegel Rühmkorf pointed to a common misapprehension regarding politically-engaged poetry: ‘Daß zeitgenössische Gedichte sich tunlichst politischer Stellungnahmen enthalten sollten, ist ein öffentliches Vorurteil, das uns verfolgt, mal so, mal so gewendet, seit die Kulturreaktion in unseren Breiten eine stehende Einrichtung wurde.’ In the same article he emphasised what he perceived to be a large quantity of politically engaged poetry of mediocre quality in the works of other poets. Rühmkorf’s doubt about the quality and indeed validity of political and protest poetry was, however, diminished when he turned to Fried’s und Vietnam und, explaining that where the horizon of the other engaged poets ended, Fried’s only began:

Dieser Mann gehört nun tatsächlich zu jener vielbeschriebenen, im Grunde sagenhaften und konkret nur in einigen [...] Exemplaren nachweisbaren Gattung dichtender Diversanten, denen der scheinbar abgelegte Krieg in Südostasien ein naheliegender, das heißt, ein paradigmatischer Vorwurf auch fürs Schreiben ist.

Thus Rühmkorf placed Fried on a pedestal shared by few German literary figures, because of Fried’s heartfelt and original handling of a conflict which had nothing at all in common with the day-to-day lives of the ordinary European citizens, when considered superficially.  

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489 Ibid. 
490 Ibid.
juxtaposed Fried’s almost intimate approach to the crisis in Vietnam with Günter Grass’s reaction described by Rühmkorf in the same article as of geographic irrelevance.\footnote{Ibid.} This comparison between Grass, who at the time actively campaigned for the Social Democratic Party in the German elections, and Fried, who held the conflict in Vietnam to be a more important issue on which to focus, puts Fried and his work in an interesting perspective.

The suffering of the Vietnamese people in North Vietnam, and indeed in the entire region, would have certainly inspired compassion in both Fried’s and Grass’s readership, however, only one of those authors decided to turn to the subject. Why did Fried decide to focus on a geographically very distant, almost unknown region, instead of, like Grass, promoting the message of a social-democratic political party in West Germany, since he was already involved in German public life and turned his interests to Germany rather than Austria in the course of the 1950s?\footnote{Ibid.} The answer lies partly in Fried’s biographical details. It will be recalled that Fried lived in London during the war. The shared experiences of persecution, exile and social issues commonly associated with exile sharpened Fried’s perception of justice and his revolt against obfuscation when dealing with important social issues.

The fact that the details of the Vietnam conflict were distributed around the globe in the news and that the representation of the war in the media became more frequent with the progress of the conflict made it possible for Fried to access information about the war and make his own judgement on the issue. His decision to embark on such a subject can also be explained by the nature of the wartime and post-war social environment in which he lived. Some element of protest had always been present in the exile milieu, although it was not always vociferous, due to

\footnote{Ibid.} It will be recalled that Fried had worked on the re-education journals, such as Blick in die Welt, published by the Allies in the late 1940s and early 1950s. One of the tasks of these journals was affirming the democratic ideas in West Germany.
the specific position of the exiles in Britain, who were not allowed to engage in any overt political activity. However, besides the rhetoric aimed at the criticism of Nazi Germany, a certain amount of protest was present in Fried’s poetry even at the time of his early exile, for instance in the poem, ‘Refugee Song’ (1940), written, unusually, in English:

 [...] They arrest us now
And we have to bow
Helpless to stupid violence again.
Whilst British fascist traitors and spies remain
Unhindered on the street [...]\textsuperscript{493}

The poem expressed Fried’s outrage and disappointment at the treatment of the refugees from Austria and Germany by the British authorities. As already analysed in previous chapters, Fried revolted both against the rigid communist rule in the Soviet bloc and the ‘berufsmäßige Antikommunismus’ in Germany and Austria, as he succinctly, but eloquently, put it in an interview.\textsuperscript{494} The outrage he felt at the events in Vietnam was a product of Fried’s war-time experiences and his association with the writers and intellectuals in Germany with leftist leanings critical of the American approach to the conflict in Southeast Asia. His location in Great Britain also meant that Fried was in a position to become acquainted with authors and journalists other than from the German-speaking countries. His employment at the BBC also offered many opportunities to meet German, British and US public and literary figures. Fried attended literary meetings and congresses in the UK and abroad which enabled him to meet radio and TV personalities engaged either in political activism or journalism. One of these meetings was with a US novelist and an outspoken socialist/Trotskyite political commentator Mary McCarthy, who

\textsuperscript{493} J26, \textit{Westbourne Terrace}, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{494} Kesting, in \textit{Gespräche}, p. 30.
visited Vietnam several times during the conflict and came into contact with Fried during the International Writers’ Conference in Edinburgh in 1962.\footnote{The conference took place in Edinburgh during March 1962. Mary McCarthy chaired several meetings at which Fried was a speaker. A sound recording from the conference is held in the British Library in London.}

Fried explains that the title of the collection was chosen very deliberately in order to convey the intrinsic interconnectedness between all political and social events no matter where they took place in the world:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

\textbf{6.3. The protest of und Vietnam und}

The volume is divided into three sections and introduced by the poem ‘Das Land’ which sets the tone for this collection. The poem is formed of two-line statements mimicking newspaper reporting style, without punctuation and pregnant with allusions to Vietnam’s past and present. By introducing his topic with ‘\textit{Das Land} liegt sieben Fußtritte und einen Schuß weit’ and by visually marking \textit{das Land} in italics, Fried places what is about to be described by the poem in his audience’s aural vicinity, since it is possible to hear shots fired in this area. There are biblical references to practices of deviant sexual behaviour in South Vietnam’s capital Saigon, allegedly due to the large presence of the American Army: ‘In ihrer Hauptstadt Sodom/\textit{Mein Kampf} lernt’;\footnote{In the poem ‘Gründe’, Fried criticises the presence of the American Army in South Vietnam and their supposed defence of democracy by providing military and strategic support to Marshall Ky, an alleged admirer of Hitler.} references to Chinese interrogators from the Nung tribe renowned for their cruelty towards the captured partisans: ‘Der Stamm Nung spricht chinesisch/und bringt schweigende Menschen zum Sprechen’; and references to the self-immolation of the protesting
Buddhist monks: ‘Die buddhistischen Mönche werden oft Rote genannt/In Wirklichkeit sind sie gelb/aber nicht wenn sie brennen’.\textsuperscript{498} The last four lines stand apart from the rest of the poem and indicate the poet’s return from Vietnam in his mind’s eye. ‘Wenn man die Augen zumacht und völlig stillsitzt, kann man von weitem sehen/was in dem Land geschieht’. The abandonment of physical eyesight to improve one’s faculty of perception is a motif reminiscent of scenes from \textit{King Lear}, where Gloucester must lose his sight in order to see through the duplicity and ulterior motives of his fellows.\textsuperscript{499}

The next 14 poems resemble short newspaper articles (which was probably their source). In these Fried paints with unrelenting clear-cut arguments a horrifying picture of infanticide, American shallowness\textsuperscript{500} and the propaganda machinery. A good example is the now famous ‘17.–22. Mai 1966’ poem.\textsuperscript{501} Especially here, Fried endeavours to strengthen, or rather, reawaken the reader’s power of judgement and curiosity by intentionally contrasting two contradictory reports:

\begin{verbatim}
Aus Da Nang
wurde fünf Tage hindurch täglich berichtet:
Gelegentlich einzelne Schüsse

Am sechsten Tag wurde berichtet:
In den Kämpfen der letzten fünf Tage
in Da Nang bisher etwa tausend Opfer\textsuperscript{502}
\end{verbatim}

Fried uses simple vocabulary and sentence structure with frugal punctuation consisting of only two colons preceding the poet’s real message.

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{499} Some of Fried’s poetic work contains references to Shakespeare’s oeuvre. It is possible to assume that Fried in this instance made a vague, or an unconscious, reference to the Elizabethan play.
\textsuperscript{501} 17.–23. Mai 1966, \textit{ibid.}, p. 23.
\textsuperscript{502} \textit{Ibid.}
The first poem, ‘Gründe’, justifies the poet's engagement and cautions the reader simultaneously.

It indicates the interconnectedness between this volume and wider historical circumstances.

‘Weil das alles nicht hilft
Sie tun ja doch was sie wollen
Weil ich mir nicht nochmals
die Finger verbrennen will’

[...]

Das sind Todesursachen
zu schreiben auf unsere Gräber
die nicht mehr gegraben werden
wenn das die Ursachen sind503

Fried’s themes of child murder (‘Gezieltes Spielzeug’), Auschwitz and Nazism (‘Beim Zeitungslesen in London’), collective responsibility, humanism and criticism of conformism are apparent throughout the volume, confirming that the collection deals with a chain of perpetual brutality. For instance, in ‘Beim Zeitungslesen in London’ there are frequent references to the gas used by the South Vietnamese army against the North Vietnamese guerrillas and innocent civilians indiscriminately:

Aber es gestattet den Südvietnamesen
vergaste Partisanen
von vergasten Zivilpersonen
zu trennen und sie zu töten
noch kampfunfähig und blind. [own emphasis]

The theme of infanticide is painfully present in ‘Gezieltes Spielzeug’, where Fried paradoxically uses sarcasm in order to stem his outrage (as a father as much as an author) at the behaviour of the American army. During the ‘Fest der Kinder’ celebrated by the Vietnamese, the American

helicopters drop children’s toys on villages which had already been bombed and where there had been civilian casualties:

Hätte das Flugzeug
lieber vor vierzehn Tagen
Spielzeug heruntergeworfen
und jetzt erst die Bomben

hätten meine zwei Kinder
noch vierzehn Tage
durch eure Güte
etwas zum Spielen gehabt. 504

The second part consists of 11 poems and concentrates on the general atmosphere of war, for instance in ‘Eiserne Ration’:

Wenn man das Unrecht
in viele Scheiben zerlegt
wie dünn muß die Scheibe
auf meinem täglichen Brot sein 505

In ‘Antiquitätenladen in Saigon’ Fried uses a metaphor, of the balls made out of elephant tusks (such as early artwork for billiard balls, or roulettes). The image of pierced and concentric balls indicates the interconnectedness of all wars and human politics (‘und durch die Löcher bestaunt man kleinere Kriege’, see below). The use of the colonial name for Vietnam—Annam—also serves to remind the reader of the Vietnamese past and its unavoidable interrelatedness with the imperialist war waged by the American army at the time the poem was written:

Durchbrochene Elfenbeinkugeln
geschnitzt noch im alten Annam

umschließen kleinere Kugeln
die wieder Kugeln umschließen

505 ‘Eiserne Ration’, ibid., p. 28.
alle vielfach durchbrochen
und frei beweglich

ineinander geschnitten
in mühsamer Arbeit

aus einem Stück ohne erkennbaren Zweck
Auch der Krieg in Vietnam

ist vielfach durchbrochen
und durch die Löcher bestaunt man kleinere Kriege [...]

Morphologically, syntactically and aurally the words ‘durchbrochen’, ‘geschnitzt’, ‘geschnitten’ create the impression of damage suffered by harsh and sudden movements. The cyclical character of the volume’s title is re-enforced syntactically and morphologically with ‘umschließen’ and ‘Kugeln’. The unrelenting repetition of atrocities, inhumanity and cruelty signifies an endless production line of innocent victims. Alliteration in and semantic proximity of ‘geschnitzt’ and ‘geschnitten’ serve to reinforce the poet’s message of pain and endless suffering perpetrated by one human over another. Fried is keen to emphasise the human agency in the process—‘ineinander [own emphasis] geschnitten/in mühsamer Arbeit’ implies those inflicting the suffering and the sufferers. In the final two stanzas, Fried conflates ‘ohne erkennbaren Zweck/auch der Krieg in Vietnam’ in order to underline his incomprehension and incredulity at a vacuous (‘ist vielfach durchbrochen/und durch die Löcher bestaunt man kleinere Kriege’), purposeless (for Fried) state of militancy. It is as if the poet is asking himself if humanity has not learnt its lesson after the Second World War. Fried’s missive encompasses those living in South-East Asia, in the United States and in Europe. His appeal is fashioned by his self-knowledge. By looking deep inside one’s own soul (‘wenn man die Augen zumacht/und völlig stillsitzt’ as Fried

506 , Antiquitätenladen in Saigon’, ibid., p. 32.
507 Both ‘geschnitzt’ and ‘geschnitten’ imply that there is a human agent inflicting the cutting/performing the process of cutting.
beseeches his audience in the introductory poem ‘Gründe’ to do) one, in a state of trance, is able to discern the truth held captive by the alienated phraseology. In fact, as will be discussed in a later section within the current chapter, Fried’s poetry serves as a stark warning against limitations of our ability to recognise crimes against humanity.

Fried also turns to the Bible in order to make his message explicit. Thus in ‘Nach dem Monsun’, he states:

Regenstadt
da baut sich der Wind
eine Arche
für die Tauben
und für den Staub
und seine drei Söhne
die werden die Flut überleben
den Himmel versöhnen
Statthalter dieser Welt
wieder staubig
und wieder taub

Biblical images of the dove and the flood, and Fried’s propensity for creative word play (i.e. Tauben/Staub/staubig/taub) set the scene further for the third and final part of the collection, in which the poet further questions the role of the Americans in Vietnam and relates the particular situation in Indochina to the more general ideas about conflict and human nature:

Es kann nicht sein
daß die Amerikaner
Marschall Ky unterstützen
wenn er wirklich ein Schurke ist

Er sagt wirklich

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508 See also Chapter Two, Fried’s interview with Steckelenburg.
509 ‘Nach dem Monsun’, und Vietnam und, p. 34.
510 Ibid., p. 34.
sein Vorbild ist Adolf Hitler
also kann es gar nicht so schlecht sein
wenn man Hitler zum Vorbild nimmt.

Doch auch Hitler hat Kinder verbrannt
und nicht in Vietnam sondern näher
Warum also regt man sich auf
wenn die Amerikaner das tun.\(^{511}\)

Reading the newspaper stories and seeing the television footage of the Vietnam War, Fried identified with the victims of violence, seeing in the reports from Vietnam another version of the Second World War atrocities. His incisive gift of observation is most obviously at work in the poem ‘Vordruck’, where he uses the old fascist slogan ‘Die Juden sind unser Unglück’, and gradually moves his reader towards what he perceives to be a customary usage in West German politics: other minorities, such as students, communists and guest workers were victimised as scapegoats and real issues and their solutions were neglected:

Links ist Platz geblieben
auf den man schreiben kann
Rechts steht ... \textit{sind unser Unglück}
Wie fing die Zeile an\(^{512}\)

Fried raised important questions on how media influence our perceptions of war and suffering and whether there is a difference between our aesthetic judgement and social and political engagement (i.e. can an artistic form, such as poetry, focus on challenging political issues). Fried’s answer was:

Wie ist der gegenwärtige Zustand dieses Ich, was sind die gegenwärtigen Gefahren, was sind die Dinge, die in diesem Ich so widerhallen, daß es manchmal davon erfüllt ist? Deswegen ist für mich die Frage, ob ich auch politische Gedichte schreiben soll, gar

\(^{511}\) ‘Einleuchtend’, ibid., p. 57.
\(^{512}\) ‘Vordruck’, ibid., p. 58.
Additionally, the aesthetic and the socio-political are intentionally juxtaposed because Fried obtained the information used in his commentary on the Vietnam War second-hand. His sources were media reports instead of eye-witness accounts, therefore not perceived first-hand, on the battlefield or in the cities and villages of North or South Vietnam. This would imply that his creative inspiration for his socio-political engagement also came second-hand and might contain inaccuracies in order to produce an effect on the reader. The ‘Ich’ in the above excerpt provides a bridge between the second-hand inspiration and the outrage felt first-hand at the human suffering portrayed in the media reports. Ethical impulse in Fried’s anti-war poetry realised via aesthetic (poetic) means should be understood as genuine, even if he runs the risk of ‘danebenzuhauen’, i.e. missing his target, precisely because the poet’s moral outrage echoes within his entire being.

Fried’s volume on the Vietnam War mediates between the literary and the moral, whilst at the same time attempting to resolve the dilemma of the poet’s engagement and the purpose of his poetry in the world of alienated language and obtuse moral consciousness. Although at the time his poetry was seen as banal, it was precisely this quality of being banal that set Fried apart from many of his contemporaries, simultaneously inspiring both harsh criticism and praise.

Fried’s political thinking in this volume and in his later poems and speeches directed against the war in Vietnam reveals a multilayered approach by which the poet demonstrates an inclusive re-

thinking of social and historical circumstances and demands a scrutiny of reality which he perceives as driven by rampant capitalism. Fried’s vocabulary is at constant guard against alienation, which grows out of our hackneyed everyday experiences. The poet attempts to break through the barriers of cliché using deceptively simple language to reach the repressed meaning and by doing so, shake his readers out of their archetypal comfort zone. The mention of the death of schoolchildren in the Vietnam village of Man Quang is as forbidding as the mention of Hiroshima or Guernica, the bombardment of North Vietnam towns as destructive as those of Dresden and Coventry. Fried firmly believes that the use of terms such as Hiroshima or Guernica in the daily news and public life is intended to dull our sense of outrage for the new atrocities as they arise, when they are, in reality, all equally horrifying and should all inspire the same protest and loathing.

6.4. Criticism of Fried’s Vietnam stance

During the meeting of the *Gruppe 47* in 1966 in Princeton, there was discord within the group primarily over how much criticism could be levied at their host’s foreign policy—as Wagenbach observed, only four members of the group expressed their solidarity with the Anti-Vietnam War Movement of the American writers.\(^{515}\) Against this backdrop, Fried gave his speech *Schriftsteller, Erfolg und Wohlstandsgesellschaft* in which he saw the writer as the guardian against empty phrases and habitual thinking (his and others) that led to obtuseness of spirit and perception.\(^{516}\) At the end of his speech, Fried stated that it was the ‘uncomfortable’ poet that mattered and achieved this change. In his farewell speech in 1968, on leaving the BBC’s German


\(^{516}\) In *Anfragen*, pp. 44–54.
Service Programme, Fried used the expression ‘Narrenfreiheit’ to acknowledge the tolerance of his superiors towards his views on Vietnam which were earlier broadcast on-air.  

Fried’s anti-war stance and focus on the war in Vietnam met with harsh criticism by some of his contemporaries, for instance, Günter Grass. Admittedly, Fried's poems were published just after an election year in Germany, during which time Grass held over 50 election speeches across Federal Germany aiding the German Social Democratic Party's election campaign. The SPD lost and Grass later, in his Büchner Prize speech, caustically attacked the attitudes of some of his fellow members of the Group (and wider, members of the German Student Movement), accusing them of sitting in the ivory tower of their Marxist ideals and with their slogans prodding the nation's conscience about problems in remote Indochina as opposed to concentrating on issues closer to home.

The German poet Peter Härtling blamed Fried for reducing the war to putative binaries of good and evil when projecting the horror of the Second World War on the reports from Vietnam. Censuring Fried for not being in possession of the complete picture, Härtling apostrophised the narrow scope of Fried’s verses and suggests that Fried was captivated by the emotional propaganda of President Ho Chi-Minh of North Vietnam, presumably made available to and proliferated by the Student Movement in Germany and in this way, also by Fried.

To Fried’s rescue came the author Peter Rühmkorf in his article on this collection—‘Die Mord- und Brandsache’, also referred to earlier in the chapter. Rühmkorf pointed out astutely that the

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517 Ibid., pp. 61–63.
limits of Grass's cognition stopped where Fried's began. In the article, Rühmkorf recognised the full value of Fried’s poetry:

Die Qualitäten solcher Verse und ähnlicher zu erme-
sessen, bedarf es gewiß keiner neuen Ästhetik, sondern allenfalls des Kehrbildes der alten romantischen. Haben wir uns aber einmal frei gemacht von einer Urteilsweise, die schön und faszinierend nennt, was ‘dem Gewöhnlichen ein geheimnisvolles Aussehen verleiht’, und sind wir zaglos genug, unser Interesse statt auf die ‘Würde des Unbekannten’ auf den ‘Verrat nichtswürdiger Geheimnisse’\textsuperscript{520} zu lenken, dann bietet einem der Gedichtband von Erich Fried sogar Verwunderungsmomente die Fülle.\textsuperscript{521}

It also has to be noted here that Fried’s decision to publish und Vietnam und required a certain amount of bravery. In his letter to his publisher Klaus Wagenbach approximately a year after this poetry collection appeared, Fried voices concerns over the impact the publication of the protest poetry may have had on his public image and his earning potential:

Ferner ist, seit ich die Vietnamgedichte veröf-
nentlich habe, kein einziges Gedicht von
mir mehr in der Zeit erschienen [sic], obwohl dort von mir früher ziemlich regelmäßig Dinge veröffentlicht wurden. […] Ähnlich verhält es sich nun auch seit geraumer Zeit mit dem Kulturprogramm NDR Hamburg […] Oder meinst Du, ich phantasiere entweder völlig oder etwa 50 Prozent der aufgeführten Punkte. Über das Nichtrezensieren der Vietnamgedichte, nicht nur bei Springer, muß ich Dir ja wohl nicht sagen. Ich erwähne das alles in diesem Zusammenhang, weil die Frage der finanziellen Repressalien gegen unliebsame Gesinnungen in der Bundesrepublik für mich als Familienvater praktisch ja nicht ganz ohne Bedeutung ist.\textsuperscript{522}

The above extract offers a glimpse into the gulf which existed between Fried’s decision to protest publicly and vociferously and the anxieties which plagued him privately following the publication of und Vietnam und. There is no way of establishing whether the financial hardship was real or feared. Fried had no misgivings about the justification of his protest, but he had

\textsuperscript{520} See Ingeborg Bachmann’s anti-war poem ‘Alle Tage’—‘Er [der Stern] wird verliehen […] für den Verrat unwürdiger Geheimnisse’.
\textsuperscript{521} Peter Rühmkorf, Der Spiegel, 24 April 1967, pp. 166–168.
\textsuperscript{522} Fried’s letter to Klaus Wagenbach, 5 May 1967, ÖLA 4/90.
suspicions about its effect on his family life and income. The excerpt from the letter reveals a poet beset by doubts which is a face not immediately, if at all, apparent from his poetry.

6.5. Against propaganda

In ‘Macht und Wissen’, included in the edition Anfragen und Nachreden, Fried mentions two Pulitzer prize-winning journalists, Peter Arnett and Horst Faas, who in one of their articles wrote about a US civil servant supplying a report to his superiors in Washington on the progress of ‘strategic villages’ (this failed project involved moving entire villages in South Vietnam out of reach of Viet Cong insurgents, i.e. North Vietnamese guerilla fighters who depended on these villages for supplies). The official's rather frank statement met with the criticism that it was too defeatist for further consideration. As in his poetry volume, Fried in the essay alludes to the mighty machinery supporting propaganda within the US State Department, referring to renowned journalists as his sources. Fried’s stance is clear—he plants the seeds of doubt in his audience’s conscience regarding the ‘official version’ promulgated by American propaganda about the conflict in Vietnam. He sees the increased protest activity as one of the only means to prevent succumbing to the advancing capitalist might, which in Vietnam warred mercilessly for political and economic objectives under the guise of a fight for democracy.

In preparation for his attendance at the gathering at Princeton University in protest at the Vietnam War, Fried wrote a letter, now kept in his Nachlass at the Literaturarchiv der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, dated 16 March 1966 to one of the organisers of the protest gathering. Fried’s unease with the topic of propaganda and with the general abuse of public

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523 Anfragen, p. 55.
discourse and its (mis)appropriation by the mass media is palpable. His spirit of engagement spills from poetry to prose, or more accurately, from the field of literary to journalistic writing:

In the above excerpt Fried alludes to his current work at the BBC as a political commentator for the GEZP (already discussed in the previous chapter). He fears manipulative censorship and appeals for vigilance against self-perpetuating alienation. In his role at the BBC, Fried no doubt experienced the world of media as a fertile ground for reproducing opinions which were absorbed without due critical thought. At the BBC, Fried was able to reach a wide audience within a short space of time and he was mindful of his responsibility as an author of texts aimed to reach such wide readership. As a socially and politically engaged author Fried recognised challenges and he contrasts between the role he played at the BBC as a political commentator with that of an engaged author whose role was to teach his audience how to overcome alienation rather than accept it unquestioningly. The struggle between his role as a commentator and Fried’s perception of himself as an engaged author battling against alienation on the page and in everyday life lasted throughout his employment at the BBC, ending with his resignation in 1968.

527 Fried’s letter to an organiser in Princeton, 16 March 1966, ÖLA 4/90 2.1.1.2.
In his speech *Schriftsteller, Erfolg und Wohlstandsgesellschaft* given at Princeton University in 1966, he states:


Here Fried reveals the extent of his own doubts and uncertainties which will continue to plague his life as an author. He also points to the uncertainty of his, or anyone’s, self-knowledge (‘Bewußtsein’ above). It almost appears as if his identity as an author is sometimes at odds with his identity as a socially engaged critic of his time. This contrast may sound controversial; however, in the light of his statement above, it is not altogether unbelievable. Fried then continues in his attempt to elucidate the alienation effect:

> Es ist übrigens interessant, daß in mehreren westlichen Demokratien, in Funk und Fernsehen, um nur zwei Massenkommunikationsmittel zu nennen, die Widerstände gegen Texte und Filme, die sich an diese anerkannten und sozusagen privilegierten Durchbrüche knüpfen, relativ gering sind. Ein Programm über Hiroshima, über Sharpeville, über Auschwitz ist relativ leicht durchzusetzen. Ein Manuskript über bisher weniger bekannte Greuel [...] in Südafrika oder in Vietnam, wird viel weniger leicht angenommen. Das ist besonders deshalb interessant, weil der *politische* Akzent ohnehin bei den bekannten und unbekannten Namen jeweils der gleiche wäre. Es handelt sich also wirklich um ein Verdrängungs-Entfremdungs-Syndrom.

In the above extract from the same speech, Fried criticises the power of the mass media to elevate certain events over others, simply by approving and affirming particular compartmentalised semantic content (Hiroshima/Auschwitz) in the public life of the democratic Western governments. By putting the emphasis on the all-pervasive alienation syndrome, Fried

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529 Ibid., p. 53.
points to his fear of his audience’s inability to recognise and fathom the above *Entfremdung* as much as to his own tentative sense of futility as an author with ‘Ein Manuskript [...] wird viel weniger leicht angenommen [...]’.

6.6. Fried’s anti-Vietnam War poetry and the Student Movement in Germany

Fried’s alliance with Rudi Dutschke, the Student Movement in Germany during the 1960s and in particular the SDS, was a significant factor in his attitudes towards the war in Vietnam. He participated in sit-ins and teach-ins across the country, modelled on the one that took place in Berkeley, USA (originally organised in protest against the African American civil rights activist Malcolm X being prevented from speaking there). These gatherings provided a fertile ground for discussion of world politics. In addition, a number of exhibitions, films and newsreels were presented about the American involvement in the Vietnam War. Fried was referring specifically to this type of action in his later speech during the *Vietnam-Kongreß* held at the Technical University Berlin on 17 February 1968, *Unsere Opposition in den großen Städten*.

Apparently the popular judgement was especially clouded by the media insistence on the fact that the American military establishment in Vietnam was defending the same democratic rights there that they were defending in Berlin, on the proverbial front door of the communist bloc.

However, for the majority of Germans, especially those living in West Berlin, the realities of Vietnam were but a snapshot of a remote conflict, whereas the existence of the Berlin Wall reminded them daily of a somewhat different, but nevertheless very unsettling presence lurking a few metres over the barbed wire. The representation of American military power provided a

530 Ibid.
532 Ibid.
533 Re-printed in *Anfragen*, pp. 44–54.
peace of mind appreciated on a far greater scale in comparison to the appreciation of the suffering of a nation in a remote part of Asia.\footnote{The Anti-Authoritarian Student Movement’, p. 107.}

Fried maintained that what happened in Vietnam was just one link in the chain of events and could not be seen as an isolated and remote incident but as something inextricably connected to all our lives, whether in Britain, Austria or the US.\footnote{Kesting, in Gespräche, pp. 22–40.} In his interview in 1980, Fried admitted that he had been deeply moved by what happened in Vietnam and then clarified this by saying that his poems were a way of dealing with the topic earnestly and attempting to convey his thoughts on the conflict to his readers:

Weil ein Dichter ein Mensch ist, der sich von anderen Menschen nicht grundlegend unterscheidet, ist es möglich, daß seine Formulierungen auch anderen Menschen etwas sagen können. Das ist die Grundlage der Kommunikation. Wenn man völlig anders wäre, dann könnten die eigenen Emotionen und Gedanken ohnehin nicht vermittelt werden. Nur deshalb, weil man nicht grundlegend anders ist, hat man das Recht zu erwarten, daß das vielleicht einigen anderen Menschen auch etwas bedeuten kann. Der Vietnam-Band hat übrigens die höchste Auflage von allen meinen Gedichtbänden gehabt, obwohl er, was gelungene Gedichte betrifft, mir nicht der liebste Band ist.\footnote{Kesting, in Gespräche, p. 38.}

It seems from the above excerpt that Fried himself did not think that some of the Vietnam poems were very successful creations. However, they are important both as a testimony to the Vietnam War and as its moral scrutiny.

An echo of Fried's indignant response to the war in Vietnam still comes from varied sources and as recently as 2007. The History Channel’s programme, \textit{Vietnam's Unseen War}, used the footage taken by Tim Page, the \textit{Time Life} photographer, in order to portray the suffering of the Vietnamese people in the conflict. Page spent several years in the 1960s recording footage in Saigon and with the American soldiers in action, documented the brutality of the American
military and the South Vietnamese army in their treatment of the captured insurgents (Viet Cong). However vicious the scene before his camera, Page remained detached and photographed the violence and tragedy in front of him, such as the gutting of an alleged Viet Cong insurgent, seized some 10 minutes prior to his killing, by an American GI in 1968.\textsuperscript{538} The only protest that the artist could offer in this instance was to make sure to capture the pictures in the hope that one day they would be published and that their reception would shock the audience enough to prevent a repeat. In 1966, Fried in his artistic endeavour anticipated and described scenes like this one, inspired partly by the same hope that by unmasking the propaganda and the political machinations he would, if not influence the course of history, then draw the attention of his readership to the carnage and its futility.

Furthermore, the identity of the poet and the human being merge by means of the perceived ethical impulse. Precisely the ‘Ich’ to which Fried refers in his interview with Hanjo Kesting cited above (‘[…] was sind die gegenwärtigen Gefahren, was sind die Dinge, die in diesem Ich so widerhallen, daß es manchmal davon erfüllt ist?’) represents his moral subjectivity, an ethical construct in a dialectic relationship both with ethics and with reality, i.e. events inspiring the ethical impulse. As in the collection \textit{Höre, Israel!}, which will be discussed in the following chapter, Fried’s identity is conditioned by the challenge to his intrinsic ethics and by the harsh reality of perpetual conflicts worldwide. In his poetry written in protest against the Vietnam War, this ‘Ich’ becomes a shared construct between Fried, his audience and his inspiration, i.e. the Vietnamese people. The absence of the first person singular is uncanny. There is almost no reference to ‘ich’ in \textit{und Vietnam und}. Not a single poem contains a reference to ‘I’ as the poet’s

\textsuperscript{538} \textit{Vietnam’s Unseen War}, The History Channel, National Geographic Television, 21 October 2007.
self. His sense of self becomes shared with the Vietnamese, to whom he lends his language and his identity in order to endow them with a voice.
Chapter 7 Erich Fried and his Anti-Zionist Poetry in the Collection Höre, Israel!

The prismatic quality of Fried’s identity is apparent in his Höre, Israel! (1974) more than in any other part of his literary oeuvre. Religious overtones are combined with political ideology while Judaic emphasis on memory and remembrance is amalgamated with Fried’s insistence on ethics. Fried’s preoccupation with ethical concerns otherwise permeates his literary oeuvre. The trope of memory in his poetry and prose appears strongly entwined with the trope of ethics. Verses in Höre, Israel! are written in protest against a perceived injustice. Simultaneously, they offer a glimpse into a struggle of a publicly engaged poet to define his position relative to his ethical beliefs, heritage, ideology, ethnicity and self-knowledge. As in the case of the verses written in protest against the war in Vietnam, Fried’s creative impulse is both visual and autobiographical.

In their recent interviews with the author of the current thesis, Erich Fried’s widow Catherine Fried and his close associate Akiva Orr related how Fried’s support for the state of Israel rapidly declined after the start of the Six-Day War waged between Israel and its Arab neighbours, Egypt, Jordan and Syria. The deterioration was caused by a photograph which only came into Fried’s possession after the start of the war by way of Paris Match weekly magazine in 1967. It portrayed a group of Egyptian Bedouin and fellahin soldiers (captured by the Israeli troops in the Sinai Peninsula) who had allegedly been ordered to take their shoes off and walk over hot desert sand back to Egyptian territory.⁵³⁹ According to Fried’s widow, Fried was deeply affected by the photograph portraying the suffering of the prisoners of war on every level imaginable—as a poet, as a Jew, as a victim of Nazi persecution and as a human being. The provocation by the photograph did not only catalyse Fried’s versed response to the horrors of war. It triggered an undercurrent of identity crisis in Fried’s writings which lasted until the end of his life. There is

⁵³⁹ Interview with Akiva Orr, Netanya, 10 August 2010. Interview with Catherine Fried, London, 13 January 2012.
no evidence in Fried’s Nachlass which would indicate that Fried sought clarification regarding this photograph from his Israeli contacts in London with regards to the photograph’s authenticity or context in which it was taken.\textsuperscript{540} An eye-witness, journalist Amos Elon who followed the Israeli army units in 1967, in his book A Blood-Dimmed Tide describes a similar scene following the Israeli victory in the Six-Day War.\textsuperscript{541} His account puts a different perspective on what may have happened with the prisoners of war in the Sinai. Elon, who since the Six-Day War became an outspoken critic of the Israeli policies towards the Arab population, claims that many Egyptian military units consisted of conscripted fellahin, who, following the army’s defeat, panicked and ran for their lives:

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\text{[...]} \text{there were burning tanks everywhere and Egyptian uniforms, hurriedly cast off, lying about the fields. Fleeing Egyptian soldiers had thrown them off, hoping to be taken for civilians [own emphasis]. And shoes, – tens, hundreds of shoes, cast off when their owners, broken as soldiers, had turned into frightened men and tried to escape into the dry hills – barefoot, in their underwear, bareheaded, and without water. […] Wandering through the desert toward the Canal […] they were doomed to die […] unless they came back to surrender.}\textsuperscript{542}
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As this chapter will attempt to show, Fried’s crisis of identity, inspired by the Paris Match photograph, was not an interminable discourse of Jewishness, but a far more complex identity narrative encompassing Fried’s ethnic, political and philosophical beliefs. Similar to the moral demands it posed for many Jews both inside and outside Israel the Six-Day War destabilised and challenged Fried’s own perceptions of what it meant to declare oneself Jewish.

At the same time when Fried commenced compiling the collection Höre, Israel! in Great Britain, in mainland Europe of the 1960s a Pandora’s box of both literary and theoretical controversies

\textsuperscript{540} Interview with Akiva Orr, Netanya, 10 August 2010.
\textsuperscript{541} Amos Elon, A Blood-Dimmed Tide: Dispatches from the Middle East (London: Allen Lane, 2000), pp. 15–16.
\textsuperscript{542} Ibid.
was opened by the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961 and the Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt between 1963 and 1968. These trials had significant consequences for the sphere of German social development. Not only was the past minutely inspected, but theories created and lessons prepared for posterity. Hannah Arendt in her work on the Eichmann trial543 for instance, posited the thesis that the mass murder of Jews was a crime aimed at all humanity but practised on the Jews.544 Although open to criticism, this position unlocked an alternative approach to the mainstream thesis on aspects of anti-Semitism as prime motives behind the Holocaust (Arendt postulated a theory that the choice of the victim rather than the nature of the crime connected the barbaric acts during the Second World War with anti-Semitism).

7.1. Writing about the Holocaust

The authors of Jewish origin who were survivors of the National Socialist atrocities in the concentration camps and those who, like Fried, survived in exile, display a proselytizing tendency in their writing, attempting to relay the message from the past and formulate it as a lesson for future generations. In the case of Erich Fried, not only is his writing informed by his experiences during the Second World War and pre-war years in Austria, but through espousing the cause of the persecuted, dispossessed and displaced worldwide, it also seeks to put this message across in novel ways; these are sometimes not immediately obvious to the average reader, such as the technique employed in some of his anti-Zionist writings.

For instance, in ‘Zwei Äußerungen Theodor Herzls über die Zukunft der nichtjüdischen Bevölkerung im Judenstaat’, Fried turns to alternative sources of historical facts in order to

illustrate his point in verses.\textsuperscript{545} He cites verbatim from the biography of the father of modern-day Zionism, Theodor Herzl. Fried's sense of identity had been destabilised during his early exile in Britain, an issue which became more complicated following the end of the Second World War, when Fried chose not to return to Austria and gradually assumed close contact with German authors, intelligentsia and later, members of the Student Movement. The points which affect the identity issue relate particularly to the questions of ideological distance from his former environment in Vienna, to the inability to reconcile his own ideological development with his surroundings in Britain and the forced transformation from an Austrian to a Jew and from a Jew to a homeless Jew in increasingly adverse circumstances. Whilst in his novel \textit{Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen} and other prose writings Fried both directly and indirectly re-visits this period of his life and attempts to deal with the more immediate concerns of the time as consequences of the Nazi legacy, such as the question of guilt, responsibility and (for Fried most importantly) forgiveness, his anti-Zionist poetry, from a greater temporal distance, offers an alternative reading of the National Socialist past, presenting it as a psychological and ideological framework used to support the revisionist Zionist enterprise in Palestine.\textsuperscript{546} Thus the echoes of the Shoah in Fried's anti-Zionist poetry are put to a substantially different use than was the case with most authors of Jewish origin of his generation and circumstances.

Fried's writings pre-dating the collection \textit{Höre, Israel!}, such as poems ‘Ägypten’ and ‘Wadi’, published in \textit{Gedichte} (1958) and \textit{Warngedichte} (1964) respectively, display tenuous anti-Zionist notions. In ‘Ägypten’, for example, Fried turns to the Old Testament, borrowing biblical

\textsuperscript{545} Fried, \textit{Höre, Israel!} (Hamburg, Association, 1974), p. 29.
\textsuperscript{546} Comparisons also drawn by Lenni Brenner, American Marxist writer, for example, in writings on Jabotinsky and Revisionist Zionism, in \textit{The Iron Wall: Zionist Revisionism from Jabotinsky to Shamir} (London: Zed Books, 1984).
terminology such as ‘Pharao’ and ‘Sklaven’ in order to paint a picture of devastation taking place in an arid, bleak wasteland:

Sie haben die wüsten Soldaten ausgesandt
in den Wüstensand
Kein Bote

Und Pharao fuhr
und verrohte Rotten noch mehr
ins Rote Meer

Wer schafft die Sklaven her?
Keine Botschaft
kein Boot [...]

Similarly in ‘Wadi’, Fried draws an image of a helpless victim in his or her last futile attempts to evade death in the dried up river bed:

Er warf die Arme hoch
schlug um sich
Hilfe

Dann lag er tot
im trockenen Flußbrett
zwischen den heißen Steinen

ertrunken
im Wildbach
des kommenden Wüstenregens
[...]

The images in ‘Ägypten’ and ‘Wadi’ impute a Middle Eastern landscape, a military conflict and victims of war and destruction. Both poems were indeed interpreted by some writers such as Michael Zeller as proof of anti-Zionism present from the outset of Fried's literary work, although they seem covert to a degree in order not to be considered a definite proof of Fried's critical

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547 ‘Wadi’ is not included in Höre, Israel!, while ‘Ägypten’ is.
stance towards the Zionist cause. Zeller in his article ‘Im Zeichen des ewigen Juden’ claimed that Fried had written ‘Ägypten’ against the backdrop of the growing crisis in the British Mandate of Palestine.\textsuperscript{548} In his analysis, Zeller sees the use of biblical images in ‘Ägypten’ as the expression of Fried’s attitude to the Zionist claims on the Palestinian soil:

Fried setzt sich darin kritisch mit den Ansprüchen der Zionisten auf die Gründung eines Staates in Palästina auseinander. Er wählt als mythische Ebene die Geschichte des Alten Testamentes über den Auszug Israels aus Ägypten. Dieser Rückgriff auf das Alte Testament scheint dem jüdischen Agnostiker Fried zu Recht angemessen, denn die zionistische Bewegung leitete ihren Rechtsanspruch auf einen Teil Palästinas je von eben dieser Botschaft der Bibel her. [...] Der Bibelvers taugt heute weder zur Vergegenwärtigung einer historischen Schuld (begangen von Pharao und den ‘verrohten Rotten’ seiner ‘wüsten Soldaten’) noch als Rechtstitel bei der Gründung eines neuen Staates Israel.\textsuperscript{549}

It will be recalled from earlier chapters that Fried’s use of biblical allusions throughout his oeuvre is well documented in the study by theologian Tanja Gojny\textsuperscript{550} of how Fried combined sacred texts within his poetry in order to strengthen his message. Gojny points out that Fried employed biblical references in early poems, such as ‘Ägypten’, from a wider perspective. By drawing parallels with the personalities from the Old Testament Fried indirectly depicted leadership qualities and attitudes which could apply to any political personality and gratuitous use of militant force.\textsuperscript{551} Reducing the scope of Fried’s allusions and depictions tendentiously to...

\textsuperscript{548} Palestine was under British rule until 1948. General Allenby, the Commander in Chief of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force from Egypt, occupied Jerusalem in December 1917 and set up a basic structure for political administration of Palestine. This event was preceded by the Balfour Declaration, one of the most significant documents for the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. The Declaration was addressed to one of the leaders of the Jewish community in Great Britain, Lord Rothschild, on 2 November 1917 by the British Foreign Secretary, Arthur James Balfour. This document confirms that the British government supported the establishment of a Jewish national home on the Palestinian territory. The declaration also stipulates that the existing non-Jewish population should not have their civil and religious rights compromised in the process. In May 1948 the state of Israel was proclaimed in Tel Aviv with Chaim Weizmann, President of the World Zionist Organisation and former Head of the Jewish Agency, as its first President.


\textsuperscript{550} See Chapter One.

\textsuperscript{551} Gojny, Biblische Spuren, pp. 179–181.
one specific historical event would be too one-sided, particularly when there are no unambiguous references in the poem to the events surrounding the creation of the state of Israel.

The comments Zeller makes in his analysis of Fried’s anti-Zionist poetry should be evaluated from the perspective of authenticity as well as Zeller’s actual familiarity with the circumstances in the Middle East leading up to the creation of the state of Israel.\footnote{Zeller, pp. 94–150.} Zeller points to the fact that Palestine was the British Mandate and that parts of the British government supported the Zionist cause of creating a Jewish homeland in Palestine in spite of the guerrilla warfare exerted by the Jewish Zionist insurgents on the Mandate’s territory against the British authorities during and immediately after the Second World War. Zeller finds support for his argument in the fact that Fried was in London in exile during the Second World War and that his relative isolation in Britain would have preserved him from the Auschwitz shock from which Germany suffered.\footnote{Zeller, p. 95.} Zeller’s thesis is that Fried was sufficiently aware of the circumstances in Palestine at the time of writing his first, according to Zeller, anti-Zionist, verses to make informed opinions and voice his judgement on the treatment of Palestinians in the emerging state of Israel. Ultimately, he reduces Fried’s early poetry to a black and white anti-Zionist narrative, instead of seeing it within a wider framework of lyrical pacifism.

7.2. The Zionist narrative

As indicated by the contents page of the Höre, Israel! collection, the Zionist narrative forms a strong feature of this part of Fried’s literary oeuvre. The title of the collection is borrowed from one of the most important prayers in Judaism where Moses declares the Lord's commandments to the Jewish people, Sh’ma Yisrael, or Deuteronomy 6:4, \footnote{‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord’, Deuteronomy 6:4, King James Version.} recited in the daily morning and
evening prayer by observant Jews. This prayer is traditionally seen as the equivalent of the Lord's Prayer amongst those who practise the Jewish religion. The New Testament also contains various references to Sh’mà Yisrael, most obviously in the Gospel of Mark, 12:29. In both cases, the words of the prayer affirm a relationship between God and his worshippers. Additionally, Sh’mà Yisrael is understood to represent one of the sermons which Moses delivered standing before the Promised Land. The title of the collection therefore has immediate implications for both the Zionist enterprise in Palestine and for Fried’s attempt to berate the Israeli Zionists.

One could argue that part of the Höre, Israel! collection is a form of poetic enquiry into the alternate origins of Zionism, since it contains a thematic cycle devoted to and quoting solely from the theorists and initiators of modern political and cultural Zionism, Theodor Herzl, Zionist leader and author Max Nordau and a Marxist Zionist Ber Borochow. However, it can also be interpreted as Fried's journey into an exploration of his own identity, inspired by the suffering of the Arab population and supported by his ideological socialist and Marxist background. In this collection, whilst outwardly voicing criticism of the Israeli policies towards Palestinian Arabs, inwardly Fried questions his sense of identity. He probes and pushes himself to extremes in order to discover whether in connecting the events that led to and that constituted the Shoah with the Palestinian suffering, he is able to discover a path to self-knowledge. However, if we assume the postulate that identity and nationality are inextricably connected, Fried voices a number of opinions about his identity, defining himself for instance as a Jew and as a German-speaking author in his preface to a publication about Zionism and Palestinian Arabs, in other biographical works stating that he is an Austrian assimilated Jew with few traces of genuine Judaism passed on from his parents. In his essay ‘Ist Antizionismus Antisemitismus’, he defines himself as a Jew, since he spent his formative years being persecuted due to Hitlerfaschismus and can since
sympathise with all who are persecuted. On the question of nationality Fried was mostly silent, mentioning his Austrian passport and Britain as his home in exile. Fried viewed the concept of nationality almost as an impediment and in the words of Steven Lawrie, his real nationality ultimately defied definition. This provided the necessary freedom to engage with causes however they related to his personal history, or his sense of patriotism.

7.3. Aspects of Fried’s biography influencing his attitude

In the critical exploration Höre, Israel! it is important to take into consideration the biographical elements which may have contributed to the mode in which Fried's criticism of the Zionist policies takes place. It is clear from Fried’s own biography that his knowledge of the atrocities as they took place on mainland Europe came second-hand. Nevertheless, the persecution of Jews which he witnessed in Vienna immediately preceding his flight to Britain was sufficient to substantially influence later development of his personality, both as an individual and as an author. In these times there took seed Fried’s sense of justice and relentless pursuit of truth, even in the face of adversity. The early loss of close family reinforced certain features in Fried’s personality, such as solidarity with the persecuted and sympathy for those who shared similar life-shattering experiences.

The emphasis by Fried himself on his Jewish identity was never as vociferous as when he protested against Israeli domestic or foreign policy. His letters to the British and German newspapers in the 1970s and 1980s testify to this fact. For instance, a letter to the Guardian, stated ‘A growing number of Jews, of which I am one, can see no great difference between what

556 Lawrie, Writer, p. 327.
happens to second class citizens under white South Africa, Portuguese or Zionist domination’.  

In another two letters to the Guardian, Fried described himself as ‘a Jew, but neither religious nor Zionist’ and ‘As a Jew’ [I would like to state that, like many Jewish and non-Jewish friends of mine, I was deeply distressed by Israel’s attack on Uganda]. His letter to the Editor of the Frankfurter Rundschau, of 4 May 1981 started with ‘Als Schriftsteller deutscher Sprache und Jude [own emphasis], der selbst Angehörige in den Gaskammern verloren hat […]’. This sentiment is repeated in a letter to the Guardian on 6 June 1982 with ‘As a Jewish victim of German aggression under Hitler I well understand the collective guilt felt later by many Jews’.

When considering moments in Fried's biography which had decisive ramifications for his choice of topic and form in Höre, Israel!, it is important to note that, for instance his visit to Auschwitz took place on 17 April 1967. In the visitor’s book, the deeply affected author wrote that he would never forget the sight before him and that he would help preserve the memory, i.e. make sure that what took place in Auschwitz and why, is never forgotten. Temporally, this visit almost directly precedes the first poem devoted to one of the consequences of the Six-Day War between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Its first version was published within the collection Anfechtungen in June 1967, voicing protest against the behaviour of the Israeli army and ultimately its government during the Six-Day War.

Another detail in Fried’s biography is also significant for a better understanding of his motive to write a controversial collection of poetry. In 1972, Fried was awarded the Österreichische Würdigungspreis für Literatur in Vienna, with the sum of fifty thousand Austrian schillings. He

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558 Letter to the Guardian, 8 July 1972, Nachlass Erich Fried, ÖLA 4/90.
559 Ibid., 6 September 1972.
560 Ibid., 5 July 1976.
562 Letter to the Guardian, Nachlass Erich Fried, ÖLA 4/90.
563 Eine Chronik, p. 77.
decided not to keep the money, but to share out the award between two of his close associates. He gave half of the sum to a solicitor from Hamburg, Kurt Groenewold, for his support of the persecuted Palestinians. Groenewold also acted on behalf of the Rote Armee Fraktion members in the Stuttgart Stammheim trials, i.e. Ulrike Meinhof, Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin und Jan-Carl Raspe. The other half of the money was awarded by Fried to Israel Shahak, a chemist, a Holocaust survivor and a human rights activist from Jerusalem, and his Israeli League of Human and Civil Rights, whose founder in 1935 was the Israeli poet and translator Mordechay Avi-Shaul. The original purpose of this society was to oppose the British oppression of Jews and Arabs in Palestine under the Mandate. Fried's contact with this society was presumably mediated by the information passed to him by his contacts in London and Germany. Shahak’s own opinion on Zionism was revised when he witnessed an incident in Jerusalem in the mid-1960s. As a bystander, he observed an ultra-religious Jew refuse to telephone for an ambulance on the Sabbath for a non-Jew who collapsed on the street. This incident, coupled with Shahak’s interpretation of the policies pursued by Israel after the Six-Day War, were sufficient to challenge his beliefs in the Zionist enterprise. He decided to devote his life to investigating and reporting on the perceived violations of rights of the non-Jewish residents in Israel. Amongst Fried’s papers held in the Literaturarchiv der Österreichisch Nationalbibliothek in Vienna there are many information sheets received from Shahak on the perceived human rights violations in Israel. Much original information was also received from Moshe Machover and his

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566 Fried's contact with the anti-Zionist and generally Jewish left elements in London is important. One of them, Akiva Orr, lived near Fried in north London and still writes about Zionism.
contacts in Israel. Fried’s participation in the demonstration Israelis raus aus dem Libanon, in Bonn on 25 September 1979, was instigated by the information he had received from fellow anti-Zionists in London. This demonstration followed the first performance of Fried’s translation of The Merchant of Venice on 15 September 1979 in Bielefeld.

7.4. Fried’s Jewishness expressed in Höre, Israel!

The theatrical nature of a public protest, the performance that it presupposes and uses in its execution, is a significant factor which should be taken into consideration when assessing a part of Fried’s literary legacy relating to the Israeli-Palestinian situation. The performativity of the protest is deeply connected with Fried’s view of himself as a successful politically engaged author and an ambivalent idea of himself as a person of Jewish heritage. One of the successful techniques Fried uses in Höre, Israel! is direct citation from the writings of the Zionist authors, for instance, from Der Judenstaat by Theodor Herzl. The quality of performativity inherent in this citation can be better understood in comparison with the more recent tradition of verbatim theatre in Fried’s adoptive country, Great Britain. Here, for instance, the performative aspect of the public appearance is suffused with the theatre itself. As Michael Billington relates in his book on British theatre, the popularity of plays carrying eyewitness accounts, recounting individual memories and newspaper reports word for word can be accounted for by two factors. The first factor is the thirst of the audience for factual reality, and the second is the strong sense of and need for social justice. Similar factors can be found in the development of the Dokumentartheater in the Federal Republic in the 1960s and 1970s. In the

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568 Interview with Akiva Orr, Netanya, 10 August 2010.
569 Interview with Akiva Orr, Netanya, 10 August 2010.
570 This will receive more attention in Chapter Eight.
571 Rolf Hochhuth’s Der Stellvertreter (1963) and Heinar Kipphardt’s In der Sache J. Robert Oppenheimer (1964) are examples of German documentary theatre. Fried’s tendency to adopt authentic material could be traced back to Karl Kraus (whose literary prowess Fried admired, see Chapter Two and Chapter Four) and his inclination towards
Dokumentartheater, as in the British verbatim theatre, the author refrains from changing the content of the authentic material and only adapts its form in order to present facts to be examined, both by the author and by the audience. Although the similarities between the German and the British strand of documentary theatre with Fried’s style in his anti-Zionist poetry collection are evident, no strong evidence was found in Fried’s literary estate to suggest that Dokumentartheater was used as a model in particular.

In both strands, the public sources are perceived as saturated by untrustworthy information. These can be used by the authors with a productive literary impact.\(^{572}\) The same productive effect is attempted by Fried in Höre, Israel! He particularly embraces the task of attempting to effect or instigate social change. As a politically committed author, Fried appears to avoid the course that would have kept his poetry on a purely aesthetically pleasing level. Instead, he performs the Zionist writings from the turn of the 20\(^{th}\) century within his collection and strives to stimulate a rapid response from his reader whilst inscribing the early Zionist discourse into the space of modern-day politics. Fried’s own perceptions of equality and democracy appear challenged by the essential tenet of Zionism, i.e. the view of Israel as a Jewish state. His apparent acceptance of his own Jewish ethnic origin is evident from the following verses from ‘Höre, Israel’, ‘ [...] ich spreche als einer von euch/der auch Irrwege kennt [...]’.\(^{573}\)

Here Fried appears to acknowledge his Jewish background by taking membership of the group he perceives as the perpetrators. In the interview conducted in the late 1980s with the German

\(^{572}\) Billington debates the state of the British theatre and elucidates the popularity of verbatim theatre amongst British theatre goers. Michael Billington, State of the Nation: British Theatre since 1945 (London: Faber and Faber, 2007), pp. 384–390.

photographer and documentary maker Herlinde Koelbl discussed below, Fried rejects his Jewish heritage. Although one of Fried’s strategies in the collection Höre, Israel! is to invoke the verses from the Hebrew Bible and to use religious terms in his argumentation, in his interview with Herlinde Koelbl he is dismissive of religion:


Although Fried invokes the Mosaic law in Höre, Israel!, this appears not to be done from an intimate and shared sense of religious belief. He appropriates the words of a prayer, Sh’ma Yisrael, by which Jewish identity is determined and affirmed, but frames it in a political and historical discourse, as opposed to ethnic and religious. Although ‘einer von euch’, as in the above-cited verses, Fried, according to his interview with Herlinde Koelbl, stops short of fully accepting his Jewish ethnicity. By comparing the concept of Messianism, central to the Jewish religion and tradition, to the yearning for an ‘idyll’, he explains the religious observance in terms of Freudian psychology. His denunciation of the policies of Israel as a perceived apartheid state after the Six-Day War in 1967, voiced both in the poem ‘Höre, Israel’ and throughout the entire collection Höre, Israel!, is expressed simultaneously from an insider’s perspective, as someone who shares the same background and also from an angle of an outsider, dissecting, observing, critically analysing, and drawing conclusions.

574 Herlinde Koelbl, Jüdische Portraits, pp. 69–73.
575 Ibid., pp. 70–73.
In the *Höre, Israel!* collection, Fried’s argumentation is similar to his other political poetry, such as *und Vietnam und*. He takes his protest against injustice, alienation and dispossession to another level, by making this cause highly personal. Here, Fried engages in a protest which, although presenting the same ethical quandary, is politically and socially far less supported and even less understood (its historical background was, according to some academic and journalistic sources,\(^{576}\) one-sidedly publicised) by the general public than all other conflicts which provoked Fried. At the time of publication, the sentiments both in the media and in the world of politics were largely sympathetic to the Israeli home and foreign policies (although the UN General Assembly Resolution in 1975 equated Zionism with racism).\(^{577}\) Since the notion of Judeophilia was allegedly entrenched in the politics of the West towards Israel since the Second World War, any opposition to the plans of the Israeli government or their execution were readily seen by the public in the light of anti-Semitism.\(^{578}\) In her epistolary exchange with Fried over the publication of ‘Höre, Israel’ and *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen*, the Israeli journalist Alice Schwarz-Gardos heavily criticised Fried’s approach:

Dennoch finden Sie die Grese rührend, aber bei uns vermuten Sie, dass der Wuestensand im Negew kühler sein konnte als im Sinai, wegen der sproelichen Vegetationsflecken! Faellt Ihnen nicht selbst auf, dass da etwas nicht in Ordnung ist? Ist das nicht ein Krampf [sic] nur um die Feinde freisprechen und die eigenen Leute verurteilen zu köennen?

In einer hiesigen Zeitung erschien ein Brief eines Prof. Gil Karl Alroy von der Universität Princeton, der eine Forschungsarbeit über die politischen Aktivitäten der Juden durchgeführt hat. Dieser Professor hat eine Erscheinung entdeckt, die er sehr treffend den politischen Masochismus der Juden nennt. Sogar Persönlichkeiten wie Dr Nachum Goldmann hätten demnach zuweilen die Feinde Israels und des Judentums mit

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\(^{576}\) For example, the British journalist Alan Hart, the revisionist historians in Israel (Ilan Pappe, Benny Morris), British academic Moshe Machover, the chemist-turned-human rights activist, Israel Shahak.


\(^{578}\) Interview with Professor Moshe Zimmermann of Jerusalem University, Tel Aviv, 7 August 2010. This opinion is also supported by the Israeli left-wing historians, Benny Morris and Ilan Pappe, critical of the Israeli Zionist enterprise.
Argumenten gegen Israel beliefert. Infolge der jahrhundertelangen Verfolgungen haetten es sich die Juden angewoehnt, durch Befriedungsversuche eine Besaenftigung ihrer Gegner anzustreben. Diese Schtadlanuth (unuebersetzbar) sei bis heute nicht ausgestorben. Es gibt auch in Israel noch Anhaenger dieser Richtung. Der Professor wie gesagt spricht von politischem Masochismus. Es sei dies jedoch kein politischer sondern ein klinischer Befund...579

Fried declared himself a Jew at the outset of the volume. He also stated that he was sympathetic to the suffering of Jews under National Socialism. Nevertheless, his solidarity with the Arabs was seen as Jewish anti-Semitism, or Jewish self-hatred, by his critics, as exemplified in the above excerpt. Indeed, in her letter Schwarz-Gardos spells this out:


Here Schwarz-Gardos makes a charge of self-hatred against Fried very explicitly. Implicitly, she cautions Fried to consider carefully to what use he puts his poetic talent. It could be said that she admonishes Fried nearly in the same manner in which he censures the Zionist Jews in Israel.

If not a Jew hater, or self-hater, then a critic of the Israeli state was seen by many as a traitor. Although politically an outsider, Fried chose to inspect the moral, personal and political problems caused by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is precisely this perspective of an outsider that provided him with an alternative, or a privileged view of the historical, social and political

579 Alice Schwarz-Gardos, letter to Erich Fried, 18 November 1969, ÖLA 145/B5/2. The letter focuses on Fried’s novel and on the poem ‘Höre, Israel’, having been written before the publication of the eponymous collection. The letter is typed on a typewriter with an English keyboard.
580 Alice Schwarz-Gardos, letter to Erich Fried, 18 November 1969, ÖLA 145/B5/2.
problems being battled out in Israel. Judging by the plain, uncomplicated language used and the
documentary material in the form of photographs and footnotes supplied with one of the
collections, Fried was at pains to reach as many in his audience as possible, however, he was also
seemingly not prepared to trivialise in any way the approach to his topic in order to secure a
publishing contract or play to those who were decidedly against his postulates.

Indeed, Fried countered his critics in a letter to Schwarz-Gardos, in an attempt to elucidate his
approach in the ‘Höre, Israel’ poem, as published in Anfechtungen (1967):

Was den ersten Teil meines Gedichtes betrifft, so stehe ich ebenfalls dazu. Ich glaube, das
gute Gewissen des israelischen Nationalgefühls kommt daher, daß es sich bei den Juden
um ein Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl der Verfolgten handelt, also das natürliche und
notwendigste Solidaritätsgefühl, das es gibt. Dabei aber sind die Verfolgten in Israel
schon zu Verfolgern und Vertreibern anderer geworden und haben das noch gar nicht
bewusst [sic] bemerkt, namentlich da sie ja von den Brüdern der nunmehr Verfolgten und
Vertriebenem umzingelt sind. Daß man in solcher Lage halb unbewusst [sic] die
Grausamkeiten der eigenen ehemaligen Verfolger übernimmt, ist ein altes
Verhaltensmuster der Menschen. ‘Jetzt sind wir oben auf und an der Reihe’ heißt das bei
primitiveren und unbewussteren [sic] Gemütern, und keine Armee könnte nur aus
Menschen bestehen, die über solche Reaktionen allesamt erhaben und davor gefeit sind.
Wenn mein Gedicht ein infamer Angriff auf die Juden ist, dann waren die harten Worte
der alten Propheten ebenfalls infame Angriffe. Womit ich mich nicht zum Propheten
erklären will, sondern nur dagegen ankämpfen will, daß man nur den gelten läßt [sic],
der einem zum Munde redet und das Angenehme sagt.581

Although towards the end of his explanation Fried turns to Judaism and religious terminology,
expressing hope that his poetic warning may be heeded as much as the prophets of the Old
Testament, he nevertheless insists on borrowing psychological terminology when giving his
reasons for structuring the poem with initial focus on the topic of ‘Verfolgung’.

In the introductory essay, simply entitled ‘Einleitung’, Fried informs us that many of the poems
were written two years before the first publication of the volume. He also underscores the notion

581 Erich Fried, letter to Alice Schwarz-Gardos, 10 November 1969, ÖLA 145/B11/2.
of ‘Rollenentsch’, taking an example not from Jewish or German history, but from colonial history:

Es konnte sogar, wie bei den Franzosen in Algerien, geschehen, daß frühere Widerstandskämpfer dahin gerieten, sich nun als Stützen der Kolonialherrschaft Frankreichs ihre alten Todfeinde zum Vorbild zu nehmen und stolz von sich zu erklären, sie seien ‘so gut wie Gestapo und die SS’.\textsuperscript{582}

Similarly to Fried’s collection \textit{und Vietnam und, Höre, Israel!} itself originally elicited almost no reaction from the literary public, or indeed from a wider audience. It was published again in 1983 and then in 1988. In the volume as it was published in 1974 the poems were accompanied by four drawings by Israeli conscientious objectors portraying Israeli soldiers, one with a stone in the shape of Star of David around his neck, another pinned to the ground by a Menorah (the seven-branched candelabrum), accompanied by the message, ‘Wir weigern uns, den Palästinensern das anzutun, was andere unseren Eltern angetan haben’.\textsuperscript{583} These reproductions introduce and set the tone for the cycle \textit{Judenfragen}. Fried in this edition also supplies a photograph of Theodor Herzl, and a host of photographs of the Palestinian Arab refugees, for instance from Nablus and Gaza, one of which has a caption stating that the pictures of the refugees look very reminiscent of the pictures from the Warsaw Ghetto.\textsuperscript{584} Fried anticipates the probable reception of his volume and is at pains to provide as much documentary proof as possible, adding photographs from around the territories occupied by the Zionist government. In 1983 there is a second edition where instead of pictures Fried extended the content by adding a section entitled \textit{Neuere Gedichte}, devoted to the moral and political issues raised by the Lebanon conflict in and after 1982. In 1988 he added to this chapter in the third edition ‘Ein Jude an die

\textsuperscript{582} Fried, \textit{Höre, Israel!}, p. 9.  
\textsuperscript{583} Ibid., p. 14.  
\textsuperscript{584} Ibid., p. 145.
zionistischen Kämpfer’, ‘Worauf es ankommt’ and ‘Fragen in Israel’ which were included in the Gesammelte Werke edition by Fried's long-term publisher, Klaus Wagenbach.

In the title of this collection, by specifically using ‘Höre, Israel’ as an invocation, Fried emphasises the agency of the biblical prayer rather than its connection to the Bible itself. The invocation of prophets in the poems in this collection points to the connection between wisdom and forecasting. By using their messianic vision, the reference to prophets might create a context in which it would be possible to imagine a viable alternative to the present state of affairs in the Israel of the 1960s and 1970s. The use of the incantation ‘Höre, Israel’ was known in poetry and politics long before Fried used it, both to indicate a warning and to ensure an attentive (Jewish) audience. An early Zionist text dating from the 18th century by Rabbi Yehuda Alkalay from Zemun (on the river Danube in Serbia) expounded the idea that if the Jews revived the Hebrew language their religious and national identity would be revived also.585 The connection between the language and national identity was certainly important during the creation of the modern state of Israel. In Fried's case, it would appear that whilst his home was, figuratively speaking, in his (German) language, his national identity is not in the least affected by the fact that he could or could not read and speak Hebrew.

The most famous invocation of the Jewish prayer, prior to Fried, was by Walther Rathenau, another assimilated Jew, a German politician and industrialist from the beginning of the 20th century, who used these words to draw the attention of his Jewish countrymen to the need to assimilate (therefore to a completely different purpose from Fried) and whose writings were

misread and misused by anti-Semites of the time.\textsuperscript{586} In the 1930s, Constantin Brunner, a German-Jewish philosopher and literary critic, rejected Zionism and called for assimilation in his *Höre Israel! Und Höre-Nicht Israel!*\textsuperscript{587}

7.5. Analysis of *Höre, Israel!*

The poetry collection as published in 1974 consists of six formal and thematically different parts. The first part—*Judenfragen*—contains poems already published in earlier poetry volumes. Some of these were written to establish Fried's opposition to anti-Semitism and some deal with the topic of the change of roles between the perceived victims and perpetrators. The beginning of this section turns to the Holocaust and here Fried discusses his Jewish roots. Fried here anticipates a confrontation with the Zionists and this section seems to serve as a pre-emptive explanation. The earliest poems, such as ‘Verwandlung’, deal with the suffering of the Jews during the Second World War. Fried in this poem, for instance, introduces the theme of memory and the punishment it executes on the conscience of the survivors.

Aus meinen Mädchen
werden langsam in drei bis vier Wochen
oder schnell über Nacht
meine Tanten und alten Kusinen

[...] Sie kommen mit Koffern und Bündeln
in Theresienstadt an
sie fallen aus dem Fenster
und tappen dabei nach der Brille

[...] versuchen sie strammzustehen
um verschont zu werden
bei der Aussonderung der Kranken [...]\textsuperscript{588}

\textsuperscript{587} Constantin Brunner, *Höre Israel! Und Höre Nicht-Israel!*: ‘Die Hexen’ (Berlin: Kiepenheuer, 1931).
\textsuperscript{588} Fried, *Höre, Israel!*, p. 20.
In ‘Masada’, Fried debates the oppression of Jews and the destruction of their fortress Masada centuries ago by the Romans.

Töpfe
gekittet
aus unsterblichen Scherben

Eine Sandale
ein Lederbeutel mit Salz
ärmlicher Halsschmuck
[...]

Nicht tausendneunhundert Jahre
nur zwanzig Jahre
nur Auschwitz\textsuperscript{589}

Fried emphasises that alertness to injustice and its background is still necessary. The poem, ‘Judenfragen’, attempts to examine the guilt of Israel within the context of Nazi Germany:

Das leise Lachen
der alten chassidischen Frager
in welcher Betonkammer hat er geendet
in welchem Husten
mit welchen Kristallen
aus welchen Büchsen der Degesch

Und die klugen Witze
mit dem traurigen Achselzucken
(sorgfältig aufbewahrt
von Philosemiten)
wem sind sie zugeteilt worden
zur Wiedergutmachung

Denen die schreien: Uns! Uns!
denen die spielen
Verkehrte Welt und arabische Landeskinder
im Judenland zu Juden der Juden machen
[...]\textsuperscript{590}

\textsuperscript{589} Höre, Israel!, p. 21.
\textsuperscript{590} Ibid., p. 25.
Here Fried re-visits the quandary set out in the original poem ‘Höre, Israel’ published in the collection *Anfechtungen* (1967)—asking the Israelis if their own experiences during the Second World War could really serve as an excuse for their government's alleged policy of expansion in the Middle East.

In the second section, entitled *Gefundenes*, Fried cites Zionist authors verbatim, using their letters and Theodor Herzl's tract *Der Judenstaat* to illustrate the policies and plans of the early Zionists. Fried's intention here is to show the discrepancy between what was originally presented as the Zionist enterprise and what it had seemingly become at the time of the publication of this collection. At the end of ‘Fröhliche Jagd’, cited directly from *Der Judenstaat*:

> Will man heute ein Land gründen
darf man
es nicht in der Weise manchen
die vor tausend Jahren die einzig mögliche gewesen wäre

> Es ist töricht
auf alte
Kulturstufen zurückzukehren
wie es manche Zionisten möchten [...]  

> Wir würden nicht
einzeln
mit Speer und Lanze
genegen Bären ausziehen
sondern

> eine große fröhliche Jagd
veranstalten
die Bestien zusammentreiben
und eine Melinitbombe
unter sie werfen\(^{591}\)

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\(^{591}\) *Höre, Israel!*, p. 34.
Fried adds an explanation to give more facts about the poem’s origin. The last two lines above predict what would happen to those who attempted to hinder the establishment of the state of Israel:

Herzls Meinung, daß man in alten Zeiten in der Regel einzeln auf Bärenjagd ausgezogen sei, ist absonderlich. Dafür ist seine Vorstellung von einer ‘Grossen [sic] fröhlichen Jagd’ mit Bomben auf die zusammengetriebenen Tiere in mehr als einer Hinsicht geradezu prophetisch.592

Fried here emphasises the question of human suffering as a result of the Zionist ideology. The purpose of such hints is to force the reader to reassess the events which had taken place since the publication and dissemination of Der Judenstaat. According to Fried, the Zionist violence towards the Palestinians is no better than a barbaric hunting episode and it certainly does not find its excuse in the preceding massacre of Jews under National Socialists in Germany. In the archive of Fried’s papers held in the Literaturarchiv der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Vienna there is a reference to a reprint (passed to Fried by Israel Shahak) of an old army report from the occupied territories, where the Arabs, referred to with a pejorative term ‘Arabushim’ in the story, were verbally abused and made out to be only good as cannon fodder.593 From the discussion contained in the reprint, the bomb that should be used on the Palestinian population is likened to the Melinitbombe,594 which Fried refers to in this poem. The persecution of the Palestinians, according to Fried, and his citation of the Zionist Max Nordau, often rested on racist foundations, lending the Jews the characteristics of a superior race in comparison to blacks or Asians:

592 Ibid.
593 ÖLA 4/90 2.1.1.1.
594 ‘Melinit’ is picric acid, highly explosive chemical, in the early 20th century used as a detonator.
Max Nordau über die Europäische Sendung des Judenstaates (aus seiner VIII. Kongressrede [sic], Haag, 14. August 1907)

Das Wort Asiatentum macht uns keine Angst
denn das Beispiel
des japanischen Volkes lehrt
daß man sehr wohl Asiate
und gleichzeitig
höchst fortschrittlich sein kann

Tatsächlich aber sind wir
unseres
dezitausendjährigen Europäertums
so sicher
daß wir über die Neckerei
wir würden in Palästina Asiaten werden
lächeln dürfen

Wir würden dort so wenig Asiaten im Sinne
anthropologischer und kultureller
Minderwertigkeit werden
wie die Angelsachsen in Nordamerika Rothäute
in Südafrika Hottentotten
und in Australien
Papuas geworden sind

Wir würden uns bemühen
in Vorderasien zu tun
was die Engländer in Indien getan haben
– ich meine die Kulturarbeit
nicht die Herrschaft –

Wir gedenken
nach Palästina
als Bringer von Gesittung zu kommen
und die
moralischen Grenzen Europas
bis an den Euphrat
hinauszurücken

By quoting verbatim, Fried exposes Nordau’s implied comparison between Hottentots, i.e. original inhabitants of the Western Cape, and the Arab population in Palestine (both seen as

595 Höre, Israel!, pp. 43–44.
‘minderwertig’ by Nordau in his congressional speech), Nordau’s wish for Jewish cultural proselytising in Palestine and his belief that the Arab inhabitants would benefit from a European perspective on civilised behaviour. By skilfully carving the sentences into smaller units, for instance in the fourth stanza by positioning ‘was die Engländer in Indien getan haben’ in a separate line, or by placing ‘als Bringer von Gesittung’ in the last stanza, Fried draws out what he perceives to be the hidden colonial agenda of the Zionists at the beginning of the 20th century.

In ‘Antworten aus Israel’ Fried indicates how the demagogic attitude dangerously produces the justification for the killing and persecution of other human beings.

Was geht das uns an?
Lang genug hat man uns getreten
Jetzt haben endlich wir die besseren Karten
Sollen sich doch ihre Brüder um sie kümmern!
Wer hat denn uns geholfen
als es uns an den Kragen ging?
Keiner. [...] Aber dann wollen auch wir uns
genau so verhalten: Jetzt endlich trifft es die anderen
nicht immer uns. Man macht uns das Leben auch so schon
schwer genug – und dann noch Moralvorschriften.

[...]
Lernt erst einmal die Araber kennen wie wir
dann werdet ihr weniger Mitleid haben.596

Fried's criticism of this and other unjust attitudes which, according to him, constituted the Zionist ideology, also implied a critique of a society too absorbed in its own gain, both military and monetary, which had unfortunately taken much from its masters and not learnt anything, or very little from its (both Palestinian and Jewish) victims. Hence the memory of Auschwitz is another running topic within the collection, serving to keep the memory of the Jewish oppression and

596 Höre, Israel!, p. 50.
victimhood alive and presented from a perspective other than to justify the attitudes underlying the official Israeli policies at the time.\textsuperscript{597}

The third section presents the real purpose of the volume and contains a cycle which took shape directly following the Six-Day War in 1967. The cycle is divided into twelve parts; each is organised to deal with a different issue. At the outset, Fried states his ‘friendly’ intentions, and his position as an insider. He also underlines the shared history which is still within living memory:

\begin{quote}
Nicht als Fremder und nicht als Feind von Haß gegen euch entzündet
ich spreche als einer von euch der auch Irrwege kennt

In den Gaskammern und in den Öfen
wo eure Familien vergingen
wurden auch meine Verwandten
vergast und verbrannt\textsuperscript{598}
\end{quote}

In the second section he admonishes Israel for attempting to act as a western outpost against the Arab world:

\begin{quote}
Sie wollen das gleiche von euch
was sie von Hitler wollten:
Ihr sollt Vorposten sein
für ihre Ordnung der Welt\textsuperscript{599}
\end{quote}

In the third part he reminds the Israelis of their own Nazi torturers and accuses them of learning the wrong lessons, i.e. how to become torturers of others.

\textsuperscript{597} For further development of these opinions, see Patricia Collard, ‘Political Morality in the Poetry of Erich Fried’, doctoral degree thesis at the University of Bangor, 1987.
\textsuperscript{598} \textit{Höre, Israel!}, p. 53.
\textsuperscript{599} Ibid.
Ihr habt in Europa
die Höllen der Höllen erlitten
Verfolgung Vertreibung
langsamter Hungertod
[...]

Was ihr gelernt habt
das wollt ihr jetzt weitergeben
Kinder der Zeit des Unrechts
erzogen in seinem Bild

In the fourth part Fried adopts a more direct strategy, positioning himself between the Arab soldiers in the Sinai desert and the Israeli army. Additionally, he covertly moves away from the Israeli-Arab military conflict and references the more general position of the Palestinian population, i.e. their access to water supplies, as a consequence of the perceived Israeli colonising behaviour.

[...] Ich wollte nicht
daß ihr im Meer ertrinkt
aber auch nicht daß andre durch euch
in der Wüste verdursten [...]  

The first two verses in the excerpt above are a famous reference to the Arab politician Shuqayri, first Chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), from the times of the Egyptian president Nasser who was around the time of the Six-Day War credited with the suggestion that all Jews should be driven into the sea. Overall, throughout the poem the suffering of the Jews is juxtaposed with Zionist policies in Israel and the blindness and evil of the desire for power.

The fourth part, entitled Trockene Gedichte, is designed as a chronicle of the trail of destruction on Palestinian Arab villages, Deir Yassin, Quibia, Kafr Kasem. The intention in this part of the

\[600\] Ibid., p. 54.
\[601\] Höre, Israel!, p. 55.
collection is to convey the suffering of the Palestinian villagers at the hands of the Zionist military might to the predominantly European readership, by very simply applying a ‘naming and shaming’ policy. With the technique of describing the sites of destruction initially as incidents rather than massacres, Fried portrays what appears to be the monstrous extent of the violence:

Einige von Ihnen

Zwischenfälle Ortsnamen Jahreszahlen
Deir Yassin – bis 1948
ein palästinensischer Dorf
dann 350 Tote
(nach israelischen Quellen nur 254)

Quibia am 14.10.53
Das ganze Dorf
Frauen und Kinder und Männer
Vergeltung für eine Jüdische Frau und zwei Kinder
ermordet in Jahud [...]  

Kafr Kasem 1956
Curfew, Ausgehverbot, verkündet mitten am Tag
Die Bauern waren schon draußen auf ihren Feldern
Sie wußten nichts vom Ausgehverbot und sie kamen zurück von der Arbeit – da stellte man sie an die Wand
56 Menschen – Es erforderte mehrere Salven

[...] Zwischenfälle
Alles nur Zwischenfälle
Terror ist das
was Palästinenser tun 603

In the above excerpt, Fried uses two strategies in order to make his protest at the Israeli military behaviour as explicit as possible. He positions the names of the villages, Deir Yassin, Quibia and Kafr Kasem at the start of each stanza in order to reinforce the Arab nomenclature of the

603 Höre, Israel!, pp. 66–67.
While for some of Fried’s audience, the bloody events which took place in the Arab-populated villages may be perceived as steps in Israel’s fight against terrorism, such as the response to the murder of Jews in Quibia, for others the ‘incidents’ are as abhorrent as any act of terrorism committed by the Arabs. True to his fight against Entfremdung, Fried here applies simple citation in order to strip his verses of any other nuances, but its factual content.

This section has strong thematic links with the section on Judenfragen. In the poem itself, ‘Trockene Gedichte’, Fried addresses the issue of honesty, or rather the price of honesty exacted from the poet when he tries to expose or warn against the injustice he acutely perceives:

Ich weiß daß diese Gedichte
trocken sind
vom Staub des Unrechts bedeckt
das sie bekämpfen

[...]

Viele Zeilen
sind ohne Freude geschrieben
und was ich sage in ihnen
das sage ich ungern

Fried is at pains to demonstrate his position as a poet and a Jew who very reluctantly sets out on the path of a critic. In the next stanza, his resolve is strengthened:

Aber ich sage es doch
denn es muß gesagt sein
unverschleiert
bitter vom Staub des Unrechts

Und wenn es trocken ist
so sind daran auch die schuld
die schuld daran sind
daß es gesagt werden muß605

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604 The village Deir Yassin does not exist any more, the land is now part of a Jerusalem neighbourhood.  
605 Höre, Israel!, p. 84.
This poem also has a function of a summary within the collection—the epithet ‘trocken’ can be perceived as describing the quality of the facts Fried supplies, or the Israeli climate, however, the result that Fried hopes to achieve with these poems is anything but dry in its character. The image of dry dust conjured by the verses is a metonymic representation of the military conflict in the desert and suffering of both sides and, more generally, a metaphor for dry facts which, according to Fried, are there for all who care to see them. He further regrets the absence of an aesthetically pleasing tone and language. The traces of his Vietnam poetry are visible: as in und Vietnam und, Fried abandons conventional poetic forms for the sake of an effective and unequivocal political message. In a similar approach to that of his anti-Vietnam War poetry, Fried supports his argument with documentary evidence. Also, his own expressivity as a poet is pared down almost to the ‘bare bones’ in order not to allow any misunderstanding and to convey his message in a compelling manner.

The above issues pose a certain difficulty with regard to the poetic language used in the collection. Fried is aware of the lack of understanding and the hostility which will meet these verses once they are published. It may be said that, due to this, his literary style is more akin to prose organised into verses. Another conclusion would be that the style which Fried employs in Höre, Israel! appears consistent with the content. On another level, the style seemingly does not detract from the expected result. His readership should consider his poems as a set of documentary evidence. In comparison to und Vietnam und, there is less wordplay in Höre, Israel!, or the language becomes less intricate. The most typical stylistic element is extended argument and the way the original documentation is included in the collection. In both cases, Fried's main argument and concern here is the presentation of information and its interweaving
with the issues he discusses within the poems. The stylistic effect achieved here is one of subtle political and factual argument, even if it does have negative consequences for the use of more literary language. This collection is, however, significant also due to its extensive and prescient use of verbatim citation, practised beforehand in the collection *und Vietnam und*.

Another stylistic device in the collection is the inclusion of the pictorial material and the abundance of explanatory notes. Berendse, in his study of Fried’s Vietnam volume, finds parallels between Fried and Bertolt Brecht in their use of ‘didaktischer Gestus’.606 Words are deemed by both poets to fail in their attempt to convey the message without any trace of misunderstanding. Therefore the poet is compelled to turn to all means of expression in order to convince the reader. In Brecht’s case, as Berendse shows, emblems were used in the form of a triad.607 In contrast to Brecht’s *Kriegsfibel*, however, the iconic status of the pictorial information in Fried’s collection of 1974 and the framing of the poetry are employed by the poet not only to illustrate the message, but also to provide those who disagree with the Israeli official policies with a means of expression.

A German translation of the Hebrew poem ‘Stimme einer Schalmei’ forms the fifth part of the collection. This is a long poem by Mordechay Avi-Shaul, who is introduced by Fried as one of the most interesting poets in modern Hebrew, who, however, was persecuted due to his solidarity with the Palestinians. Fried’s intention when including the translation of the poem at this stage is to underline the question ‘Ist das Kultur?’ asked by some of the Jewish newcomers into Palestine. Without attempting to discover the indigenous Arab and Bedouin culture, these Jewish

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606 Jan-Gerrit Berendse, *Vom Aushalten der Extreme*, p. 72.
607 Ibid., p. 73.
critics were disparaging the Arabic culture that was undergoing destruction under their very eyes:

‘Er konnte nicht lesen und schreiben unter seinem feudalen Herrn –
Ist das Kultur? Na also! Dorftrottelpack.
Und jetzt hätte er unser armes kleines Land gar zu gern
Denn jetzt sieht er, wie schön es ist; ganz nach seinem Geschmack!’

In the entire collection Fried is at pains to illustrate the dispossession of the Palestinian Arab population who were born and some of whom had led their entire lives in tents in the refugee camps, both inside and outside Israel. It is as if Fried is asking his audience to understand the zeal with which the Arab refugees sometimes express their hatred of the Israeli settlers, considering such stark images of expulsion and injustice. In ‘Die Abwesend-Anwesenden’, by contrasting the initial syllable at the start of the final four lines in the extract below, Fried depicts effectively the spectral existence of the Palestinians, who seem to be illegally stripped of all their legal rights:

[...] Die nicht da sind
obwohl sie da sind
werden darum
dableiben unter euch
in ihrem doppelten Dasein
abwesend wie euer Recht
anwesend wie euer Unrecht
abwesend wie euer Gewissen
anwesend wie eure Opfer [...]
Similarly, in ‘Kreuztragung 1972’, Fried subsumes the banishment of the entire Palestinian population under the image of a single Palestinian Arab woman:

Eine Palästinenserin
mittleren Alters
nicht kenntlich an ihrem Gesicht
das ihr schwarzer Schleier verhüllt
aber kenntlich von weitem
an dem entwurzelten Baum
auf ihrer Schulter
gehn langsam die Straße entlang

durch den Moshav
vorbei an den weißen Gipsköpfen
Jabotinskys und Golda Meirs
die ihn bewachen [...]^{611}

It would appear that Fried with the title ‘Kreuztragung’ and the image of the tree attempts to endow the scene depicted in the above verses with Christian connotations. It is as if he situates a representation of Christian suffering in the midst of an Arab and Jewish political, religious and geographic context, in other words, universal suffering.

The sixth section, entitled seit Fürstenfeldbruck, continues in the vein of controversy, detailing the events surrounding the kidnapping of some of the Israeli 1972 Olympic team in Munich by members of the Black September group and the subsequent killing of both hostages and the hijackers at the NATO airbase in the vicinity. In the poem ‘Das Menschenmögliche’, Fried openly criticises the behaviour of the German police during the stand-off with the Palestinian kidnappers, putting forward the argument that the decision to attack the kidnappers actually contributed to the deaths of the hostages, i.e. that three kidnapped Israeli athletes might have remained alive had the action been conducted more successfully:

611 Ibid., p. 102.
Acht Menschen haben versucht
elf Menschen gefängenzunehmen
um sie auszutauschen gegen zweihundert Menschen
die schon lange politische Gefangene sind [...]

Auf dem falschen Flugplatz hat dann die Polizei
überraschend das Feuer eröffnet auf die acht Menschen
um sie niederzuschießen
damit sie nicht länger versuchen können
ihre neun Gefangenen einzutauschen
und freizusetzen als Gegenleistung gegen
die Befreiung der zweihundert Menschen
die schon lange Gefangene sind [...]⁶¹²

By using a strategy similar to the one in the previous sections of the collection, Fried presents simple facts before his readership in the hope that his audience will reach the same conclusions as he had. He frames the subject matter within simple arithmetic. By, on the face of it, playing with numbers, Fried depicts the desperation of the hijackers and the ineptitude of the police on the ground. He is at pains to familiarise the German portion of his readership with the role that West Germany played in the Palestinian and Israeli conflict and he hints at the fact that the blame lies not only with the actual police on the ground in the airbase, but with the governments of both Israel and Germany, since they both failed to provide a truthful account of the reasons for and operational difficulties of the shoot-out. This is supported by a letter held in Fried’s Nachlass in Vienna, written to the Guardian following the incident in Munich:

A religious service mourning only the Israeli and not the Arab dead seems somewhat blasphemous. I, a Jew but neither religious nor Zionist, mourn the dead on both sides. Guilt, too, must be shared : The Israeli government, by refusing to release any prisoners, and the German police, by their attempted deception, bear their full share of responsibility for the massacre. The credibility of the German police [...] will be critically lowered by this treachery under the guise of negotiation.⁶¹³

⁶¹² Höre, Israel!, p. 111.
⁶¹³ Erich Fried, letter to the Editor, the Guardian, 6 September 1972, ÖLA 4/90 2.1.2.
The strong language here is illustrative of Fried’s outrage felt at the missed opportunity to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the hijackers, whom Fried significantly did not describe as terrorists, but Menschen.

Fried here tentatively justifies the actions of the Palestinian kidnappers and is at pains to portray the incident in simple and comprehensible terms. In a recent television documentary Vom Traum zum Terror—München 72, shown by ARD, many of the original participants in the unfortunate event, including Hans-Dietrich Genscher, then West Germany’s Minister of the Interior, were interviewed. It would appear from the statements made in the documentary that the breakdown of communication between the Special Forces on the ground and the command centre led to an early and unsuccessful attempt to free the hostages from, as was maintained until the last minute of the crisis, an unknown number of hijackers. The interviewees also hinted that an Israeli negotiator with experience in hostage situations was supposed to have joined the German police on the ground in Munich in the early hours of the crisis. The negotiator never arrived. Hans-Dietrich Genscher allegedly offered himself in exchange for the lives of the hostages, but the offer was not taken up by the hijackers.

The symbiosis of current affairs, historical events, ancient laws and their appraisal through the poet’s lens is typical of this volume more than any other poetry collection in Fried’s oeuvre. These references function as comparisons between the violent and bullying behaviour of today, sanctioned by power, and the equivalent behaviour in the distant past. ‘Vor einer Sintflut’ problematises the issue of hatred and revenge, with a stark warning of a catastrophe—which may re-occur if the Israelis do not remedy their behaviour—built into the ultimate line. Fried also re-

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614 Vom Traum zum Terror—München 72, ARD, Sunday 22 July 2012.
visits the justifications made in both cases, as in the contrast between the first three stanzas and the fourth and fifth stanza below:

Die Vergeltungsmaßnahmen der Israelis haben ihr Vorbild im Alten Testament

‘Ihr Weiber Lamechs hört meine Rede und merkt was ich sage’
so heißt es

‘Ich habe einen Mann erschlagen für meine Wunde und einen Jüngling für meine Beule
Kain soll siebenmal gerächt werden aber Lamech siebenundsiebzigmal!’

Die Regierung von Israel kann sich also mit ihrer kollektiven vervielfachten Rache auf die Bibel berufen auf das 1. Buch Mose, 4. Kapitel

In diesem Kapitel steht aber auch daß Lamech der Lehrer der Rache aus dem Hause des Kain kam und im übernächsten Kapitel folgt dann die Sintflut.

According to scholars writing about this part of Fried’s oeuvre, such as Ó Dochartaigh, Collard and Gojny, Fried's achievement was in being one of the first who realised the abuse that the Palestinian Arabs were subjected to and was subsequently morally outraged. Fried’s close associate, Akiva Orr, indicated that Fried was a member of a wide community which shared the same sentiments. His descriptions of human suffering ensue in the now recognisable style of moving from individual events to wider issues and presenting interconnectedness with all that is injustice and abuse of power, such as Guernica, the Vietnam War, or rather Mai Lai and the Warsaw ghetto. In ‘Einige von Ihnen’ cited earlier in the chapter, Fried throws the argument that

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615 Höre, Israel!, p. 122.
617 Interview with Akiva Orr, Netanya, 10 August 2010.
the Palestinian Arabs are all terrorists who desire the death of Israelis by means of guerrilla action back at the Israelis, emphasising events from Israeli history from which we have to conclude that the terrorists during the Second World War on the territory of the British Mandate in Palestine were actually Jews. Fried here effectively achieves a change—the reader’s attention is drawn to the abuse and dispossession of the Palestinians rather than to Israeli needs. By exploring the conditions in which the Palestinian students live in ‘Palästinensische Studenten sehen Ober-Nazareth’, Fried argues that the cultural and social differences between the Palestinian Arabs and the Jewish newcomers (‘Ein wanderer’ in the second stanza) from Europe (‘hohe Häuser’ contrasted with ‘Fellachenhütten’ and ‘Kamelmistfeuer’) should not have resulted in the undeserving dispossession of the Arab population:

Wahrscheinlich hätten wir
hier nicht so viele
Häuser hergebaut
und auch nicht so hohe

 Unsere Zeit zu bauen
wäre erst später gekommen
als die der Einwanderer
Jahrzehnte später

[...] Dann hätte – wer weiß –
mancher exotische Kaktus
bei uns nie geblüht
zum Beispiel der Bauspekulant

Nichts gegen neue Häuser –
aber sogar
Fellachenhütten
und Kamelmistfeuer sind besser

als schöne Betonwohnblöcke
einer neben dem anderen
in denen ein Palästinenser
nicht wohnen darf618

618 Höre, Israel!, p.100.
The allusion in the fourth stanza to the property developers who may have profited from the land acquired cheaply for development once the ‘absent’ Arab villagers from the ‘Abwesend-Anwesenden’ had been dispossessed is followed in the last stanza by a reference to ‘schöne Betonwohnblöcke’, which have satisfied the housing needs of only one part of the population in Israel.

Overall, two opposing themes permeate the collection—on the part of the author we are presented with the injustice exacted on Palestinian Arabs and significantly, regarding the situation which he describes, a combination of the theme of ethnocentrism and that of forceful, bullying violence. The combination of both provides a context in which the exposition of the abuse of power by a seemingly ideologically rotten World Zionist Organisation, results in the reader's condemnation of the monopolistic behaviour of the western and Israeli press. By challenging alleged Judeophilia in the West German government and wider, Fried hopes to expose the misuse of power and ideology and the grave consequences that this in turn can have on fellow human beings. Yet at the same time, in the poem ‘Das Bittere’, he states openly his anxiety about being a critic of a people who had suffered so profoundly and so recently:

Glaubst du es macht mir Spaß
gegen Menschen zu sprechen
von denen viele nur
durch Verfolgung und durch Verzweiflung
auf den Irrweg getrieben wurden
auf dem sie verrannt sind? [...]

Zwar weiß ich daß ich nicht wirklich
gegen die Juden spreche
sondern nur gegen den Irrweg
jener Juden
die glauben auf Verbrechen
gegen die Palästinenser
läßt sich ein Land
und eine Zukunft bauen [...]619

The reference to ‘Irrwege’ from the poem ‘Höre, Israel’ is replicated in the above two stanzas.

Fried uses the metaphor to illustrate, among other things, that he is not a self-hating Jew, i.e. he
does not criticise Jews generally, but only focuses on those who perpetrate atrocities in order to
secure their own state and its future. Semantically, ‘Irrweg’ may or may not imply intentionality,
i.e. losing one’s way may be not be a deliberate and considered act, but rather a consequence of
adverse circumstances. The fact that Fried states ‘viele nur [...] auf den Irrweg getrieben wurden’
implies that he is situating the discourse of blame and guilt in the historical context but does not
explicitly explore it in this instance. It is possible that Fried also refers to his own ‘Irrwege’ as a
‘temporary’ communist during the early exile in London.

In ‘Benennungen’, Fried continues with the discourse of cause and effect:

[...] Die geschrien haben
‘Die Juden sind schuld’
sind schuld daran
daß die Zionisten schuld werden konnten

Die geschrien haben
‘Die Juden sind unser Unglück’
sind das Unglück der Juden
und der Palästinenser geworden [...]620

Here Fried strikingly opposes the idea of collective guilt, which was imposed on the Jews by the
Nazis, and following 1945 by Jews on the Germans.621

619 Höre, Israel!, p. 90.
620 Höre, Israel!, p. 7.
621 See Chapter Four and Fried’s opposition to Vansittartism. It should be noted here that the idea of ‘collective
German guilt’ was also supported by many non-Jews.
With this collection, Fried actively espoused the revisionist cause even before it was officially in existence. Revisionist historians in Israel, such as Benny Morris and Ilan Pappe have denied what they termed the ‘official version’ of their country’s history and endeavoured to research key events leading to the creation of the state of Israel, attempting to ensure what they deemed to be the most truthful version of events. For Fried, this concept included not only revising the Israeli political past in his poetry, but also revising his own opinions throughout his working life, as well as admitting to misconceptions and misinformation. His opinions about the Six-Day War were possibly subject to revision and change. If anecdotal evidence suggests that at the outset Fried’s stance towards the creation of the state of Israel was not as negative as it grew to be following the successful Israeli completion of the Six-Day War, then it is also possible to assume that his opinion was revised following acquisition of new information.

Fried’s audience in Höre, Israel! is three-fold. He addresses those in Israel who in Fried’s eyes perpetrate crimes against the Palestinian Arab population and therefore against humanity. He implores his fellow Jews in Israel not to follow the path previously already taken by the National Socialists in Germany up to and during the Second World War. He also beseeches Jews outside Israel to focus on the current geopolitical issues in the Middle East (between 1967 and 1974 when the collection was published) without sentimentalising their past and Judaism as a religious belief and philosophy.

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622 Revisionism is a movement in the study of Israeli history, predominantly by some Israeli historians, who seek to re-appraise the key facts and events given as milestones in the creation of the State of Israel, especially the change these events had for the indigenous Palestinian population.
625 Interview with Akiva Orr, Netanya, 10 August 2010, interview with Catherine Fried, London, 13 January 2012.
In his interview with Herlinde Koelbl, Fried talks about his attitude to his Jewish identity. Although the conversation between Koelbl and Fried took place over 20 years after the Six-Day War, Fried’s attitudes towards and appraisal of his own relationship with Judaism and Jewishness in this interview are important for assessing his identity dilemmas in the earlier periods. Fried’s opinions are less raw and he allows his interviewer to approach and share his concerns more directly. On Koelbl’s question: ‘Fühlen Sie sich mit dem Judentum heute noch verbunden?’, Fried laconically answers, ‘Eigentlich nicht’. However, he immediately clarifies:


In the above extract Fried traces his Jewish identity back to his upbringing as a young boy in Austria. He is keen to point out the difference between those he considers das jüdische Volk (above) and himself. The contrast between the two sides is reduced to the field of culture. His Heimat, as he emphasises in the interview, is Austria, ‘[...] das Land, das mich in meinen entscheidenden Jugendjahren geprägt hat und das ich als Absolutum angenommen habe.’ Fried positions himself on the crossroads. He adopts the most intimate and simultaneously the

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626 Herlinde Koelbl, Jüdische Portraits, pp. 69–73.
627 Fried, in Koelbl, p. 69.
628 Ibid.
most complex word—*Heimat*—used in the German language to denote his native country as Austria between the two world wars, a country which does not exist anymore. The destiny of a large number of the European Jews which Fried was fortunate to avoid looms in his citation of gas chambers. It is as if the shared aspects of Jewishness are simultaneously reducible and irreducible to the most common denominator, the mass murder of European Jewry in the Second World War. The ambivalence with which Fried approaches his Jewish identity suggests that his attitude to the geopolitical situation in the Middle East is equally ambivalent, even if this is not immediately apparent in the collection *Höre, Israel!* The memory of the Holocaust and the importance of remembering the Holocaust also receive similarly ambivalent treatment in the collection. Fried’s attitudes oscillate between almost insisting on his right to speak because of his privileged position as a fellow sufferer and at the same time resisting the urge to monopolise the discourse of Jewish suffering.

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629 Ibid.
Chapter 8 ‘Möglichst nah am Original’—A Reflection of Fried’s Complex Identity in his Work as a Translator?

Fried’s translation oeuvre presents just as rich and complex an area of research as his literary output. Although in the present thesis there is no room for a more extensive analysis of Fried’s translation work, since it would greatly enlarge the scope of the research, the focus on two translations by Fried may reveal whether and to what extent his identity was reflected in his translation work. If the entire research project were focused solely on Fried’s translation work, an analysis of his translation of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* or *Othello* might reveal the humanist dimension in his identity and to what degree it is reflected in his translation of these two plays. An analysis of Shakespeare’s *Timon of Athens* or *Cymbeline* in Fried’s translation might expose the socialist facets of Fried’s identity. For the purposes of this chapter, however, the intention is to concentrate on William Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* and Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* from Fried’s oeuvre, focusing on Jewishness as one of the central features in Fried’s identity. In 20th-century literary research, both Renaissance plays chosen for analysis in this chapter have often been noted for their two-fold character, seen both as anti-Semitic and as quasi-anti-Semitic. It is shown later in the chapter that Fried was affected particularly by the anti-Semitism in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*, to the extent that, with his translation, he intervened significantly in the original and went over and above the role of the translator. In his translation of *The Jew of Malta*, as will be shown, Fried’s voice as a translator is more muted and almost merges into the background, in stark contrast to his translation of Shakespeare’s play, where Fried takes a more strident role. Whilst translating Marlowe’s play, Fried produces a more faithful translation, which in turn provides a more ambiguous and obscure indication of whether his identity is mirrored in his work. For this reason, in the case of *The Jew of Malta*, it was
thought necessary to provide additional information from literary and cultural theory in order to make examples as unambiguous as possible and better support the analysis.

It is also possible to assume that it is due to the fact that the final version of *The Merchant of Venice* in German was developed and completed by Fried in collaboration with the entire acting/directing ensemble, that the translation suffered such a bold intervention. Here Fried strayed from his motto ‘Möglichst nah am Original’.\textsuperscript{630} His presence at the rehearsals and active involvement in staging decisions\textsuperscript{631} indicated that his involvement in the presentation of the entire play on the stage was intimate and not only limited to translation. It may be that because Fried’s translation of *The Jew of Malta*, was conducted under entirely different conditions to the translation of Shakespeare’s play, it reveals less of the artist-translator himself. As a desk translation, Marlowe’s play did not offer the added benefit to its translator to hear and see various scenes acted out on the stage. The different medium in which Fried worked in this case, as well as what appears to have been a longer time span in its completion, may help explain why he gives an impression of obeying his own injunction on translation practice in general.

Fried’s contact with English literature ran almost parallel with his development as an author, due to his exile in London and subsequent employment at the BBC. His early familiarity with Shakespeare’s canon, for instance, is illustrated by two poems included in his poetry collection *Deutschland* (published in 1944), one entitled ‘Botschaft an Macbeth’, the other ‘Hamlet an Fortinbras’. In both poems Fried wove together images from the Renaissance tragedies with sentiments mourning the catastrophe of the Second World War. So in ‘Hamlet an Fortinbras’ Fried combined Shakespearean imagery with a vision of a future after the War:

\textsuperscript{631} For details see *William Shakespeare, Der Kaufmann von Venedig*, directed by Arie Zinger, trans. Erich Fried (Cologne: Schauspiel Köln, 1979).
Ein blutgetränkter Thronsaal wird dein Erbe,
Und traurig ist das Land, das ich dir laß.\footnote{632}{Erich Fried, Deutschland, in GW1 (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1990), p. 30.}

Or, in ‘Macbeth’, biblical metaphors coalesced with the vision of death and destruction:

So fliehn die Tiere vor der Flut
Von dem verfallnen Deich.
Macbeth, dein Mantel ist rot wie Blut,
Deine Wange kreidebleich.\footnote{633}{Ibid.}

As auspicious as Fried’s early contact with English literature was for his poetry, it was also fortunate for his translation work. It may not perhaps surprise that on the first page to his only novel Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen Fried included a quotation from Christopher Marlowe’s play The Jew of Malta. According to the narrator of Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen, the extract was discovered when he was reading T.S. Eliot’s poem ‘Portrait of Lady’:

Fried:
Getrieben hast du –
Hurerei: doch das war in einem anderen Land,
Und außerdem, die Dirne ist tot.\footnote{634}{Erich Fried, Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen (Düsseldorf: Claasen, 1982), p. 10.}

In his translation of The Jew of Malta, Fried revised this exchange as:

Marlowe:
Bernardine. Thou hast committed—
Barabas: Fornication?
But that was in another country,
And besides the wench is dead.\footnote{635}{Christopher Marlowe, The Jew of Malta (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1979), p. 82.}

Fried:
Barnardine: Du hast begangen –
Barabas: Hurerei? – Aber das war in einem anderen Land,
Between two readings, the ‘wench’ was changed from *Dirne* to *Weibsbild* (translated by the German author Eduard von Bülow in 1831 and extremely crudely as *das Mensch*), implying that Fried’s understanding of the intricacies of Elizabethan language improved too. Alternatively, it could be assumed that Fried’s ideas of the main protagonist’s characterisation developed and became clearer over the years. Barabas the Jew was confirmed in Fried’s translation as Marlowe’s mouthpiece of social critique. The narrator of *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen* stated additionally that the extract also appeared in Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms*, and then proceeded to probe the literary technique of both authors and, indirectly, his own approach to authorship:


Later, in the 1960s and 1970s, Fried himself used a similar technique of including direct quotations from other authors, for instance when quoting directly from early Zionist writings in his poetry.⁶³⁸ Fried used citationality as a technique of confirming, redeeming or denying his identity, defined in the above quote as a ‘faithful shadow’ from which one is best advised to keep a distance. In the above sentences Fried, through his narrator in *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen*, also briefly and indirectly touched on the relationship between the original and its translation.⁶³⁹ The musings suggest a questioning of the authorial distancing—the betrayal which the narrator in *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen* mentioned above reflects Fried’s description of the translation

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⁶³⁸ Fried’s technique of verbatim quotation is discussed in Chapter Seven.
⁶³⁹ There is a well-known Italian phrase ‘Traduttore, traditore’, which means the translator is a traitor. It was used by the Italians to refer to the French translators of Dante and may in this context be relevant for understanding Fried’s attitude to fidelity in translation and its distancing effect on the original. See Gregory Rabassa, *If This Be Treason: Translation and Its Discontents: A Memoir* (New York: New Directions Book, 2005), see p. 3.
process, which according to him was a Sisyphean task of ensuring fidelity to the original.\textsuperscript{640} I suggest here that Fried’s insistence on his translatorial approach of staying true to the original text (and retaining its semantic and dramatic effects) seen through the prism of the above quotation implies that he perceived the practice of translation as another form of dealing with fidelity to identity.\textsuperscript{641} Additionally, the fact that Fried was an exiled writer suggests that he saw translation and its ‘distancing’ effect as a means of expressing and recovering from alienation and loss.\textsuperscript{642} Semantic alienation was a technique which often appeared in Fried’s poetry as a way for him to ‘flag up’ alienation inherent in human society and apparently acutely felt by the author himself.\textsuperscript{643} During the time that Fried wrote much of the original content for his novel \textit{Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen}, he was also considering or working on a few translation commissions for English-language poetry and plays. In this novel, Fried attempted to deal with a number of issues, most notably those of forgiveness, justice, alienation and exile. His decision to quote an extract from Marlowe’s play suggests that Fried was already (tentatively) connecting and comparing authorship with ‘once-removed’ citation or translation. Marlowe’s extract was ‘translated’ for Fried via T.S. Eliot and Hemingway into modern English literature and then, via Fried, was made into an element of German culture and literature, both as part of an original novel and a play in translation. More generally, via the process of translation, Fried found himself again addressing the same concerns which inspired him to write his own creations—alienation, injustice and ethics. When approaching these concerns, he relied on words not only as

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{641} The concept of identity used in this sentence relates to both the author’s and translator’s identity.
\item \textsuperscript{642} I am grateful to Richard Jacobs and his unpublished paper ‘The Sentences of Loss in Beckett, Nabokov and Geoffrey Hill’ for this suggestion.
\item \textsuperscript{643} Fried frequently referred to himself as, although domiciled, never fully domesticated in Britain. This feature of his identity is taken up in Chapter Two.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
a means of expression, but also as a means of identification, as can be gleaned from the following:

Das Wort ist mein Schwert
und das Wort beschwert mich [...] 
Das Wort ist mein Fest
Und das Wort ist mein Los.\textsuperscript{644}

From this example it can be seen that Fried the author and Fried the translator see the word as a carrier of identity. As a consequence of this notion, the chapter takes issue with current research on Fried, which to a large extent considers Fried’s literary and translation oeuvre as two separate areas. The following paragraphs consider if Fried’s translation oeuvre reflects his identity, especially as an exiled poet of Jewish origin. Fried’s Jewishness appears as a strong influence in his poetic oeuvre and it has been suggested by German literary critics\textsuperscript{645} that his ability to translate was particularly aided by his Jewish background. Together with the other chapters considering the complex identity reflected in Fried’s work, this one will reflect on the significance of the translation process for Fried’s creative interaction with his identity, focusing specifically on how Fried, as an author of Jewish origin, dealt with source texts which, on the face of it, are imbued with anti-Semitic sentiments.

In the consideration of Fried’s translation oeuvre, the chapter will additionally reflect the conflict in translation studies between those who defend the case for performability and those who believe in the primacy of verbal translation. Fried, as we shall see, took a position somewhere in the middle, striving for as accurate a preservation as possible of linguistic intricacies, whilst preserving the performability and fluency of the stage text. It would appear that he also

\textsuperscript{644}Fried, ‘Logos’, in \textit{Befreiung von der Flucht, GW1}, p. 543.
anticipated the shift and argument in translation studies supporting the ‘three-dimensional’ thinking”—i.e. the need for the translator to become partly a theatrical scriptwriter and consider for instance the length of the line, rhythm of commas and how the acoustic effects reflect the semantic content of individual lines.

If it is assumed that Fried perceived language and writing as a means of sharing and shaping experiences, his task as a translator may equally be understood in social and participatory terms—as a translator, Fried acted as an intermediary between the English and German language and between the two cultures, he facilitated their interaction. Translation itself, defined as involving ‘the translator changing an original […] text in the original verbal language […] into a written text into a different verbal language’ on the surface presents a seemingly uncomplicated exercise. Translation studies however provide examples testifying to the contrary. The boundaries between which a translator operates as an intermediary between two languages/cultures have slowly been moved, re-assessed and destabilised in recent decades allowing for issues of ideology and politics to percolate steadily into an area previously preserved for pragmatics and contrastive analysis. From their relative invisibility, translators have also moved into the centre of literary production. A translator’s ability to influence the reception of a source text by their ‘linguistically inscribed preference in the choice and construction of discourses’ is seen as affirming for the translator as much as for the author.

Ways in which translation facilitates not just the construction of meaning, but also construction

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649 Ibid.
and re-construction of social and cultural values, replication or demolishing of ideological structures and representation of power relations are portrayed by a particular kind of ‘activism’ in translation studies. Although originating partly from the area of feminist translation and representations of gender in source texts,\(^{651}\) this activism is nevertheless to be found in all areas of literary translation, for instance, in the interventionist strategy by Michel Garneau in the Québécois translation of *Macbeth*, discussed by Douglas Robinson.\(^{652}\) Garneau superimposes his own interpretation whilst translating Act 4, Scene 3, where Macduff’s loyalty to Malcolm, and by extension Scotland, is tested.\(^{653}\) Garneau in his rendering injects the target text with a dose of bias which is not present in the source text with an explicit reference to the political status of Québec as a former colony. Fried’s translations of the two Elizabethan plays can be positioned somewhere in between such conscious acts on the part of the translator\(^{654}\) resulting in definitive shifts in target text reception.

It could be said that Fried’s translation work in some cases reveals more of the artist himself and that by choosing these particular Elizabethan plays, the Jewishness in Fried’s identity, which cannot be overlooked, is examined from yet another aspect. As stated above, I shall particularly explore if and to what extent Fried’s voice as a translator reveals aspects his complex identity.\(^{655}\)

The translation part of Fried’s oeuvre has been a subject of several academic works, most

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\(^{651}\) See Sherry Simon’s *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (London, New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 7–17 for a description of translation strategies such as prefacing, footnoting and hijacking (see p. 13 in this volume for Luise von Flotow’s practices of feminist translation).


\(^{653}\) Shakespeare’s original: Macduff: ‘I cannot but remember such things were/ That were most precious to me’, rendered by Garneau as ‘C’que j’ava’s d’plus précieux dans l’monde, chu t’obligé d’commencer à m’en souv’mir [own emphasis]’, *Macbeth* de William Shakespeare, Traduit en québécois par Michel Garneau (Montréal: vlb éditeur, 1978), p. 125. ‘Je me souviens’ ['I remember’, a controversial slogan with political connotations] is on every vehicle registration plate in Québec.

\(^{654}\) Here I refer to interventions both by feminist-activists/translators and by Garneau.

\(^{655}\) Jewishness is seen as one of the ‘main’ ingredients in Fried’s identity, but the complexity of Fried’s identity (i.e. Fried as a socialist and a humanist) is not to be overlooked in his work generally.
notably a doctoral thesis by Angelika Heimann, who analysed Fried’s translations of Sylvia Plath and Dylan Thomas into German.\textsuperscript{656} In the scholarship on Fried’s translation work there are no studies exploring Fried’s poetic translatorial identity,\textsuperscript{657} indeed, the question of whether elements of Fried’s identity are in any way reflected in his translation work has been left largely unexamined so far. It is therefore important that a portion of Fried’s translation oeuvre is examined bearing in mind precisely this aspect.

As the title of the present thesis suggests, Fried’s sense of identity escapes rigid denotation and is influenced by his cultural heritage and social environment. Different layers in his identity came to prominence at different times of his life. His identity as an active commentator of world politics is enmeshed with his identity as a persecuted Jew during the times of crisis in the Middle East, for instance, at the time of the Six-Day War in 1967. As discussed in previous chapters and further in this chapter, during this time Fried penned some of his most controversial verses in the poem ‘Höre, Israel’. The layering effect of Fried’s complex identity allowed his creative genius to develop on both fronts of his professional activity—as an accomplished poet he drew inspiration from a wide range of subjects referencing his identity as a Jew with his identity as a political poet with Marxist leanings; as a skilled translator he succeeded in conveying demanding drama and poetry without sacrificing much of either connotative felicity or form whilst working in challenging conditions.\textsuperscript{658} Fried owed his success as an esteemed literary translator to the combined effect of his Jewish descent and of an immense poetic talent. This particular issue in Fried’s background is almost nonchalantly mentioned by Peter Fischer in his article ‘Deutscher

\textsuperscript{656} Heimann, \textit{Bless Thee}!...
\textsuperscript{658} The difficulty stemmed either from the requirements of his commissions (some had remarkably tight schedules) or from personal circumstances, as was the case of Shakespeare’s \textit{Othello}, detailed later in the chapter.
Shakespeare zwischen Tradition und Transplantation’ in 1971. The suggestion itself is logical—Fried’s Jewish background must have played a decisive role in his personal and literary development. The casual claim\textsuperscript{659} that his success in literary translation was due to his ethnic background as much as to his great literary talent (and immense socio-historical and literary knowledge especially in the case of Elizabethan plays) is further explored in the course of this chapter. Fischer’s article refers to the propensity of Jews for linguistic intricacies such as wordplay and the ability to make and recreate associations from semantically diverse, but formally similar words.\textsuperscript{660} Fried’s poetry in German brims with examples of wordplay, for instance an example from the cycle \emph{Reich der Steine}:

\begin{verbatim}
[...] Daß mein Wort sich erneut
Daß es Segen wird in meinem Mund
Aus der Verwünschung ein Wunsch
Aus der Bitterkeit eine Bitte: [...]
\end{verbatim}

The contribution of this chapter to the debate on Fried’s work is thus in recognising the role of his Jewish descent both in his life as an author and work as a translator. Here, it is put forward that Fried’s Jewishness is intentionally or inadvertently present in his translations. In the translation of both \emph{The Merchant of Venice} and \emph{The Jew of Malta} Fried did not veer from his original approach, typical for his stage translations—when translating, one should not only heed the philological issues in the text, but provide a translation which takes into account the dramatic make up of the text—line length, pauses and gestures. Returning briefly to the article above, in

\textsuperscript{659} The author does not postulate this idea as the backbone of the article, nor does he delve further into the relationship between Fried’s Jewishness and his work in literary translation.

\textsuperscript{660} Peter Fischer, in ‘Deutscher Shakespeare zwischen Tradition und Transplantation’, p. 8.: ‘Er hat die Neigung zum Wortspiel, mit dem Shakespeare überraschend erhellende Assoziationen herstellt, im jüdischen Blute, das diese semitische Struktureigenart der Psalmensprache durch zwei Jahrtausende Diaspora bewahrt hat, und zeigt sie auch in seinen eigenen Gedichten.’

\textsuperscript{661} \emph{Reich der Steine}, \textit{GW1}, p. 206.
his translation of *The Merchant of Venice* it will be shown that Fried was indeed unsuccessful in conveying wordplay decisive for the continuation of the play’s sub-plot.

As ever with Fried, his translation work was a topic of some controversy in the German papers. It would appear that his vigorous political engagement allegedly gave cause for concern affecting his ability to secure translation commissions. As an author and a public figure, Fried was a subject of scrutiny and consternation due to his familiarity with at least one member of the German terrorist organisation *Rote Armee Fraktion*, Ulrike Meinhof, in the 1960s and 1970s. For instance, a feature article in *Frankfurter Rundschau* in 1978 claimed that:


As can be seen from the above extract, it is open to speculation why the frequency of Fried’s translation commissions fluctuated. Even with the perceived obstacles named above, Fried’s translation oeuvre is considerable and comprises translation of poetry, radio plays and translation of Renaissance drama. The modern poetry and radio plays stand in contrast to the translation of historical drama. Fried’s translation techniques varied—he approached the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas with daring boldness, experimenting with the target language, whereas with the translation of historical dramas his approach was more cautious. In his translations for the stage, he earned his fame by his at times daring, yet at times deceptively subtle approach to one of the

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most unassailable, canonised versions of Shakespeare’s plays in European literature, i.e. the Schlegel translations.

8.1. Fried’s approach to translation

For a translator of stage plays, the experience of stage and theatre life certainly has its benefits. As already mentioned in Chapter Two, first contact with the physical stage for Fried occurred very early - his father had built a small puppet theatre when his son was only four years old. Fried’s first contact with dramatic arts also came very early—he first experienced the stage as a young child. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, Fried was under the care of a nanny, Josefine Freisler, who in her free time studied to become an actress. He would often help his nanny practise her roles. Thus, as a young boy, Fried already had an opportunity to experience how important enunciation and breathing rhythm were for the effective delivery of lines.

Allegedly, it was his employment at the BBC that facilitated Fried’s contact with Rudolf Walter Leonhardt,\textsuperscript{663} who was impressed with Fried’s translation skills at the BBC and encouraged Fried to translate Shakespeare.\textsuperscript{664} Peter Zadek, however, in his autobiography suggests it was his idea:

\begin{quote}

\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{663} German journalist and later Feuilleton-Chef of the German national newspaper, \textit{Die Zeit}, at the time of his acquaintance with Fried an academic at Cambridge University.

\textsuperscript{664} ‘Es erinnert sich Erich Fried’, in ‘\textit{Hier ist England}’, p. 149; see also Lawrie, ‘“Ein Urviech...”’, pp. 117–139. The idea of translator invisibility is very relevant to Lawrence Venuti’s theory of translator invisibility, and will be discussed further in this chapter.
An analysis of Fried’s career as a literary translator is further complicated by another matter. The poetry and plays which he translated whilst in the employment of the BBC’s German Service, had all been intended for radio broadcast. This issue, coupled with the tight deadlines for some of the commissions, mentioned above, indicates that in the process of translation Fried would have possibly given primary consideration to the semantic content of the source text, rather than to any contextual clues which would have to be considered in stage projects. In the case of the radio plays Fried, as a skilled translator, would have presumably focused on the acoustic dimension of the dramatic impact of the plays he translated.

Fried’s opinion on literary translation was succinct, if a little eccentric, conflating the idea of usefulness and impossibility into a Sisyphean task, as already qualified above:

Das Übersetzen großer Dichtungen ist unmöglich und ist sehr nützlich. Beides weiß man längst, und alle bekannten Übersetzungen beweisen beides, teils mehr das eine, teils mehr das andere.'

Fried’s idea of the usefulness of poetry translation could perhaps be explained by the following—as a young man in exile in London he devoured English poetry, but found that he could only fully appreciate it if he translated it into German. He claimed the law of approximation from mathematics was the best approach to take in order to stay true to the original, to the extent that if the same translator translates various poets, he should remain

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666 ’Erich Fried, zu seiner Übersetzungskonzeption’, in *Begleitbuch*, see p. 23.
invisible, i.e. the audience should not be able to see any similarities in approach to the translation of various dramatic or poetic works. As far as stage translation was concerned, Fried was careful to emphasise the significance of speakability, i.e. endowing the target text with an enabling function. In other words, Fried took great care to produce texts which enabled an actor to deliver the lines to the best of his or her ability. He believed in the power of rehearsals, which offered another measure of, or testing ground for the result of the translation process. The places in which the actors had or the director foresaw difficulties and made suggestions accordingly, however absurd those suggestions seemed, would indicate that there was something amiss in characterisation, narrative or dramatic flow of the target text.

A translation generally accepted as the most successful rendering of Shakespeare in any European language was produced by August Wilhelm Schlegel, one of the leading representatives of German Romanticism, and his associates Count Baudissin and Ludwig Tieck’s daughter Dorothea. Schlegel’s translations introduced Shakespeare to the German readership in such a way as to universalise Shakespeare’s dramatic works and embed them into German literature and art. The work was completed under the supervision of the writer, critic and storyteller Ludwig Tieck. In his translations, Schlegel strove to adhere to the aesthetic

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668 Fried, in Begleitbuch, pp. 23–24.
conventions of his age. This was reflected in the forced regularity of rhythm and disambiguation of puns and imagery.  

The primacy of the Schlegel-Tieck translations safeguarded for over two centuries the presence of Shakespearean drama on the German stage. However, this advantage in modern times carried with itself a danger of diminishing the ‘audience appeal’ of Elizabethan drama. Some modern literary critics see the increasing lexical archaism as a barrier to the full understanding and appreciation of Shakespearean theatre (the particularity of alliteration and punning as often employed Elizabethan rhetorical devices became greater with the time distance from the era). Additionally, the formal idiosyncrasies of Schlegel’s translations proved at times challenging for the successful delivery of lines, i.e. for their speakability and performability. Fried’s translation, according to a doyen of German theatre criticism, appeared in time to solve the conundrum of modernising Shakespeare for the contemporary German theatre-goer. This is not to say that Fried in any way endangered the primacy of the original—his translations reflect the lexical richness and stylistic range of the plays.

Although he greatly valued Schlegel’s translations, Fried also expressed doubts on several occasions about their felicity and historical accuracy. In his critique of Schlegel’s approach, Fried revealed his own ideas on literary translation. It is apparent from his explanations that Fried was aware of the necessity to be familiar with the stage and to translate with the impending performance in mind. Whilst Fried the poet focused on the play on words, imagery, hidden meanings and associations and formal qualities, Fried the translator took into account the poetic

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671 Interview with Günther Rühle, German theatre critic and Intendant of *Schauspiel Frankfurt*, London, 15 September 2011.
quality of the source text and the effect that the target text would have on an audience and the ability of the actor to enunciate it. The power of the translated word grew under Fried’s choice of the right combination of consonants and vowels, punctuation and grammar (tense). He turned verbal translation into stage translation—translation of meaning aided by movement and facial expressions.

Fried’s first Shakespeare translation, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, was directed by Peter Zadek in Bremen and was staged in 1963. A letter written by Fried to Zadek at the beginning of 1963 illustrated Fried’s approach to work—meticulous attention to the ‘speakability’ of translated script. In the letter, Fried claimed to have added a number of corrections to the text, most to the effect of making the script easier to pronounce for the actors and to understand for the audience. Fried’s opinion of Schlegel’s overly formal version was also apparent—‘Zum Unterschied von Schlegel, der grammatikalisch und in der Wortstellung oft mühsam laboriert, um alles in gehör’gen Vers zu bringen, finde ich, es ginge [sic] ganz leicht.’ (Fried believed that Shakespeare himself was not a slave to exactitude in rhyming and counting the syllables, which should imply to a translator that he or she was allowed greater formal freedom in order to preserve syntactic and dramatic coherence). Shakespeare’s plays in Fried’s translation were staged at an average rate of two a year, from Hanover to Zurich.

Fried’s views on Shakespeare’s literary achievement are also illustrative of his own ideological position—as an engaged poet, Fried devoted his life to the fight against *Entfremdung*, a term examined in Chapter Two. By rescuing Shakespeare from archaism and fossilisation in German, one could speculate that Fried attempted to play his role in ‘rescuing the world’:

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674 Fried to Peter Zadek, 14 February 1963, in *Alles Liebe und Schöne*, p. 40.
In trying to fight, to show up something in order to fight against alienation, against self-alienation, against vilification, against lack of feeling and insensibility, it is no good just to want to do it. One must also have it inside oneself, otherwise it becomes top-heavy; and Shakespeare was able at the time to show the greatest horrors and, in between, to be funny and show love, and all kinds of things. [...] The way to rescue Shakespeare is, of course, in the long run the way to try and rescue the world and our society. You cannot have justice in an unjust society and you cannot have great drama in the long run in a rotten society.675

One of the ways in which this chapter brings original scholarship to the existing body of research on Fried’s translation work is its attempt to move away from a constative, or a linguistically more formal and static viewpoint, which appears to be employed in the work of the earlier Fried scholars, for instance Angelika Heimann. In her thesis, Heimann uses techniques which emphasise and evaluate aspects of Fried’s translation work such as form and structure, relating them to rigid theoretical models. This approach possibly has detrimental consequences for the overall study since Heimann relinquishes a position which would allow her to see Fried’s language (in translation), as inextricably linked to the social and cultural environment, or context, within which his translation work had been produced. The contextual aspect (the environment) represents a crucial element in the attempt to see the translation abstracts Heimann analyses as situated in the hybridity of Fried’s world and experience, and to allow for the elasticity and the prismatic quality of semantic layers within the extracts.676 Additionally, the quality of reality and contemporariness of Fried’s translation can be more suitably assessed by moving away from a formalist viewpoint.

The above point is illustrated by the following—in the case of *Othello*, directed by Peter Zadek in *Deutsches Schauspielhaus Hamburg* in 1976, Fried, as the official translator, initially translated the play. Zadek proceeded, as the director, to re-translate the play together with the actors for the stage.\(^677\) It would appear that the translation offered by Fried was not daring enough for Zadek, whose casting tricks included smearing shoe polish onto the leading actor Ulrich Wildgruber, which then rubbed off on his co-star Eva Mattes (in the role of Desdemona). Zadek’s interpretation was initially met with protests, only to obtain a cult-like status by the end of its run.\(^678\) Fried, in contrast to Zadek, whose conception of *Othello* rested on portraying sexual jealousy, looked for character motivation and emotional truths elsewhere. Whilst engaged in the translation of *Othello*, Fried was also involved in an awkward immigration procedure with the British authorities.\(^679\) In the 1971 Wagenbach edition of *Othello*, Fried related how his understanding of the narrative markers in the play had been greatly aided by his involvement in the immigration hearings. The collusiveness of the British political figures, decision-makers in Rudi Dutschke’s case, had assisted Fried’s understanding of both Iago’s and Desdemona’s character motivation. Fried’s translation technique was more dramatic as a result, seeking hesitations, repetitions and other stylistic markers signifying abrupt and conspicuous turning points which would have furthered his, as well as the audience’s, understanding of the plot.\(^680\)

Thus throughout this chapter, Fried’s work is evaluated from an inclusory perspective. I employ a more expanded paradigm and take account of aspects relating to the social, cultural and

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\(^679\) See Chapter Two.

ideological influences upon Fried’s work. Whilst in his poetic oeuvre these aspects appear widely and overtly, their presence in Fried’s translation work, as shall be shown, appears finely and ingeniously nuanced.

8.2. *The Merchant of Venice*

Turning to Fried’s translation of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*, we can see that as a translator, Fried was so much at pains to explicate Shylock’s predicament and his role within the play that he took a bold step of actively intervening and adding an entire epilogue spoken by the character of Launcelot Gobbo, Shylock’s servant. The epilogue served to underline the mistreatment of Shylock by society in Venice. Stylistically, it is very close to Fried’s poetry, brimming with wordplay, such as ‘Vorliebe’, ‘Nachlieben’, and ‘Mitlieben’.681 The artificial bridge to the original play was provided by loose contextual references to Launcelot Gobbo’s short soliloquy in Act 2, Scene 1, where he deliberates whether to leave Shylock’s service or not. In Fried’s epilogue, Launcelot refers again to the ‘Böser Feind’ [sic]. Whilst in the earlier soliloquy this ‘böser Feind’ tempts Launcelot to abandon Shylock and by extension, secure employment, here Fried uses the identical expression to refer to the origins of Shylock’s demand for his ‘pound of flesh’. By re-introducing the concept of the ‘böser Feind’ in his epilogue, Fried exonerates Shylock from his perceived bloodthirsty viciousness—the brutality of a piece of human meat soaked with blood, an image however little or much tempered by Portia’s argumentation when she cautions Shylock with its bloodless removal, is externalised, i.e. removed from Shylock and planted into the gory depths of a tempting fiend’s mind. Launcelot’s commentary on Shylock’s sorry fate following the legal proceedings demonstrates Fried’s unconcealed sympathy for the Jew and his servant, elevating the latter into an oracle of Swiftian

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proportions. The Juvenalian invective, entrusted to and cleverly delivered by the servant/clown, is expected by Fried to be the audience’s, too. It could be said that Fried wants his audience not just to share in his indignation at the original play—he wants his readers to feel it and breathe it.

Herr Shylock, der ehemalige Jude: Nicht einmal verbrannt haben sie ihn, sondern ihm sogar noch ein paar Groschen von seinem Reichtum gelassen! Und obendrein haben sie ihn bekehrt und so seine unsterbliche Seele für die ewige Seligkeit gerettet. Das ist doch mehr wert als alles Geld, das sie ihm genommen haben; jetzt müßte er nur noch sterben, dann hätte er das beste Geschäft seines Lebens gemacht. Ja, ja, manche muß man zu ihrem Glück erst zwingen.

Although in his interviews mentioned earlier in the chapter Fried commented on the greater ability of his German audience to empathise with the tragic in Shakespeare due to the historical circumstances, he nevertheless decided to underline the position of Shylock at the end of the play, precisely for the German audience.

Much as I hate the idea of censorship, [...] one cannot with an easy mind present The Merchant of Venice in Austria and Germany today. I once wrote an epilogue for a production of The Merchant of Venice which was given to Launcelot Gobbo, who said, ‘What a wonderfully civilised approach we have in Venice. We haven’t even killed the Jew. We’ve only taken away his money, his daughter, and his religion. We’ve only turned him into a Christian, and so we’ve saved his immortal soul. In our enlightened society, right triumphs over violence’. It’s very risky to write an epilogue to a Shakespeare play, but I felt that I had to stress the irony for the German audience. I don’t think that Shakespeare would have been entirely out of sympathy with this solution.

In the following statement Fried appears to come closest to taking away the sanctity of the source text. As in his poetry, in his stage translation work he is deeply affected by his past, his status as

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683 Kaufmann, p. 61.
684 Is Shakespeare still our Contemporary?, p. 181.
a witness and victim of the Second World War and a participant in the debate on how to come to terms with the past.

If it is to be performed [...] so that the evil is equally shared [...] Shylock has to be shown [own emphasis] as a victim of that society, otherwise you start hearing those things that I have heard in Austria, that the blame of Auschwitz lies on both sides.685

Fried additionally indicates below, however obscurely, that the ideas he expressed while writing his engaged poetry intersected with those conceived whilst reading literature for translation:

_The Merchant of Venice_ is so often performed in Israel, it is quite obvious that the play is being used as a practical justification for Zionism, which is quite as much of a distortion of Shakespeare as the Nazis’ use of it.686

The semiotic transfer,687 inherent in the process of translation, here acquires even more urgency, since, when translating drama, the translator has to bear in mind the transfer that is to take place after the translation is finished, namely the transfer between the director, actors and the audience. This process of semiotic transfer in turn may have effects on the audiences, unforeseen by either translator or director.

Fried’s translation and the staging of _The Merchant of Venice_ was presented by Schauspiel Köln in 1979 and directed by the Israeli-born theatre director Ari Zinger. Fried’s translation was used, as mentioned in earlier paragraphs as a point of departure from which the entire crew developed the play further. Whilst the stage design and the costumes reflected the decisions of the theatre’s artistic staff, some of the dramaturgy was dependent on Fried’s effective translation and explanations. An example for this occurs in Act 3, Scene 2. Bassanio is in Belmont vying for

685 Ibid., p. 178.
686 Ibid., p. 173.
Portia’s hand together with other suitors. As part of a selection process, he is presented with three caskets—one made of gold, one of silver and one of lead. He has to choose the correct one (the choice was determined by Portia’s father) in order to win Portia’s hand in marriage. In the source text, Bassanio supposedly receives a hint in the song sung by ‘one from Portia train’ (which is then taken up by all) as to which casket to choose.

Fried found it awkward to retain the implied rhyming of head/fed with lead in his translation, since it would prove detrimental to the overall fluency and ‘speakability’ of the lines in German (his translation shows that he considered the inherent rhythm of the lines and allowed for the pauses, i.e. actor’s breathing between speaking):

Shakespeare:
Portia: Tell me where is fancy bred
or in the heart or in the head? [...]  
Portia: It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring fancy’s knell:
I’ll begin it: ding, dong, bell. 688

Fried:
Portia: Sag mir, wo entspringt die Lust,
ob im Kopf, ob in der Brust? [...]  
Portia: erst im Aug kann sie entstehen,
und muß bald, genährt vom Sehn,
In der Wiege untergehn.

Läut ihr Totenglöcklein drum,
Ich beginne: Bimm-bamm-bumm. 689

The stage directions were not included in the printed stage text, published by the Schauspiel Köln, but, notes from the rehearsals were included. From these, it can be concluded that the acting crew, with the help of Fried, came to the decision that instead of a verbal clue, a gestic one should occur. In the event, Portia lightly touched the corner of the table on which the lead casket rested. The scene was further intensified by Portia’s gentlewoman, Nerissa, who secretly put a red rose before the lead casket.

Additionally, in Act 1, Scene 3 in *The Merchant of Venice*, Fried appeared to mimic the perlocutionary effect of Shakespeare’s line, which in the original linguistically ‘others’ Shylock in relation to his interlocutor, Bassanio. In the source text, on Bassanio’s statement ‘For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound’, Shylock replies ‘Antonio shall *become* bound. Well.’ [own emphasis]. The movement from ‘be’ to ‘become’ is not just semantic, it is also aural. Whilst Bassanio anticipates Antonio’s bond, Shylock already ‘evolves’ him into a debtor. The slightly odd semantic and aural effects are recreated by Fried in his translation:

Fried:
Bassanio: Für die, wie ich Euch sagte, Antonio bürgen soll.
Shylock: Antonio soll Bürge sein; schön. 690

Schlegel’s translation does little to mark Shylock linguistically and dramatically, leaving him only to parrot Bassanio’s words:

Schlegel:
Bassanio: Wofür, wie ich euch sagte, Antonio Bürge sein soll.
Shylock: Antonio Bürge sein soll – gut.

In the same scene, Shylock in the original states:

Shakespeare:
Shylock: The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

Schlegel renders the statement thus:

Schlegel:
Der Mann ist bei alledem vermögend – dreitausend Dukaten – ich denke, ich kann seine Bürgschaft annehmen.

690 Ibid., p. 38.
Fried in his rendering uses punctuation effectively and thus influences the delivery of lines. It should be reiterated here that the change that Fried helped effect in the German stagings of Shakespeare was the creation of a target text as a blueprint for its stage performance. This means that he did not see the source text as an immutable artefact. With this notion in mind, one could conclude that the punctuation could play a minor role in the ultimate staging of the translated play, since it is only a gesture from which the director and the actors develop the play further. However, Fried with such use of punctuation changes the delivery of the line and effects a different characterisation of Shylock—a more hesitant, careful lender who pauses after the first sentence to consider his decision:

Fried:
Der Mann ist nichtsdestotrotz gut dafür. Dreitausend Dukaten; ich denke, ich könnte seine Bürgschaft annehmen. 691

Furthermore, in a scene (Act 1, Scene 3) where Bassanio initially negotiates his loan with Shylock, Shylock replies with ‘Dreitausend Dukaten; schön’ and he repeats ‘schön’ twice after this instance, although the original states ‘well’. 692 However Fried’s rendering effectively marked Shylock, rather than normalised his speech, indicating avarice. Fried applied the same technique of patinisation, i.e. taking a semantic unit and giving it a slightly unusual use or connotation as in his translation of Marlowe’s The Jew of Malta. In the Prologue immediately preceding the appearance of the Jew Barabas, the lines providing the setting were marked with a patina—Fried rendered ‘with heaps of gold before him’ with ‘vor ihm Haufen Goldes’, using the genitive in order to endow the line with a mildly archaic air. Austrian author, Elfriede Jelinek, in

692 Schlegel’s translation ‘gut’ is in agreement with Shakespeare’s original.
this instance used a prepositional phrase ‘mit Bergen von Gold vor sich’ in her translation.\textsuperscript{693} The ‘patinisation’ in both cases served to support the dramatic marking that comes from the hesitant, but lingering sense of difference, which Fried was at pains to preserve and portray in his translations. It could be said that in the case of Shylock and Barabas, by linguistically separating the Jewish characters from the other participants in the scene, Fried in his translation achieved both the emphasis on their ‘outsider’ status in social terms and also in terms of their identity.\textsuperscript{694}

\textbf{8.3. The Jew of Malta}

One of the significant factors in the examination of the play \textit{The Jew of Malta} would be the fact that it is seen by some literary critics and audiences as an overtly anti-Semitic play, by others as Marlowe’s critique of the state, church and overall spiritual and social duplicity.

Apart from the charge of anti-Semitism, another important consideration is the decision of the publisher Klaus Wagenbach in 1991 to include three essays dedicated specifically to Jewish issues in the Wagenbach edition, one the famous essay by Karl Marx \textit{Zur Judenfrage}, which considers Bruno Bauer’s \textit{Die Judenfrage}, written in 1843, and debates the question of Jewish emancipation in 19\textsuperscript{th}-century Prussia, another a translation into German of Stephen Greenblatt’s seminal essay \textit{Marlowe, Marx and Anti-Semitism}, and lastly Friedmar Apel’s essay on Marlowe debating the provocation inherent in the play’s Jewish protagonist. In this final essay Apel considers issues which Marlowe brings into sharp focus in the play—the trope of the power-hungry, unscrupulous dissembling Jew, and more importantly, the issues of victimisation,

\textsuperscript{693} Christopher Marlowe, \textit{Der Jude von Malta}, trans. Erich Fried (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1991), p. 12, compared with \textit{Der Jude von Malta}, trans. Elfriede Jelinek and Karin Rausch (Hamburg: Rowohlt Theater, 2002), p. 4. Jelinek ignored the mildly archaic ‘before him’ in the original and rendered the phrase without marking it linguistically. As Fried was generally credited with bringing Shakespeare into 20\textsuperscript{th}-century German, his translation, in this case, might have been expected to have a more contemporary linguistic quality.

\textsuperscript{694} The postulate here is that identity construction on stage occurs via language as well as via physical performance (e.g. gesturing).
homelessness, of being an outsider, of the apparently destructive nihilism which threatens the established order. Some of these themes are also applicable to the consideration of Fried’s poetry and it would be difficult to maintain the viewpoint that Fried translated the play without taking the issues of anti-Semitism, duplicity in words and minds, victimisation and of being an outsider into account, thereby leaving a translation which had no discernible trace of his voice. Finally, the fact that the play was translated without an existing publishing contract and only posthumously published may indicate that it represents an unedited or not fully edited version, which could imply greater use of translatorial freedom or applications of techniques unrestrained by final editing. In contrast to Fried’s translations of English poetry (for example of T.S. Eliot’s or Sylvia Plath’s work), this play, as is the case with Fried’s translations of Shakespeare, is intended to speak to its contemporary theatre audience and allows for the interpretive powers of the reader and the theatre director, of the costume designer, as well as of individual actors. The source text itself is sufficiently pliable to support a creative interpretation, but Fried’s tendency to explicate, as will be shown later, may push the actor and the director into decisions which may or may not have been originally intended by the author. Fried’s ‘translatorial voice’ may have endowed the play with the quality of ‘performability’, both by transferring it into modern German and by providing stage directions and translations to the Latin quotations in the text, an approach which illustrates his inclination towards explicitness. Although it is impossible to say for certain whether Fried was inspired to translate Marlowe’s play for a readership or for a theatre audience, it is not inconceivable that the decision was at least partly due to the wish to see it performed on the German stage.

695 There is no clear indication in Fried’s literary estate in Vienna.
Even in the original English version, the play is tinged with a quality of modernity. John Barry Steane makes an interesting point regarding this almost anachronistic quality in his study of Marlowe’s play. He likens Barabas to a Wall Street tycoon, an astonishingly busy businessman who commands an impressive mercantile network from his seat in Malta. The associative power of the verses in Act 1, Scene 1 cannot but conjure up this image to any reader familiar with the mercantile power of Manhattan’s Financial District.

Marlowe:
So that of thus much that return was made;
And of the third part of the Persian ships
There was the venture summ’d and satisfied.
As for those Samnites, and the men of Uz,
That bought my Spanish oils and wines of Greece,
Here have I purs’d their paltry silverlings.
[...] Well fare the Arabians, who so richly pay
The things they traffic for with wedge of gold, [...]697

Barabas is easily equated to a Machiavelli, a villain, an outsider, a comic, a hero and a desperate victim of his social environment and unfortunate circumstances. Steane’s assessment of Barabas as essentially an entertainer, multi-voiced and many-faced, is persuasive. The characteristics of mutability in voice and expression are important when employing another lens to inspect the translation—if Barabas represents a character upon whom these qualities are inscribed and performed by Barabas himself at will, then his Jewishness is also a part of the performance. In Act 1, Scene 2, there are many allusions to the Bible in the dialogue between the Governor Fernese, the Knights and Barabas, when the first demand on Barabas’s fortune is made. The scene is also rich with many shifts and transformations between Jews, Pharisees, Christians and

‘infidels’ before the action is set on its right course following this scene. In the ensuing verses, Barabbas firmly takes the mantle of what Steane calls the ‘Stage Jew’, complete with the bottleneck,\textsuperscript{698} and from this point on he performs his Jewish identity in the play.

Furthermore, the presence of the ‘biblical harmonics’, as termed by Harry Levin in his examination of Marlowe’s works,\textsuperscript{699} transforms, even aggrandises Barabbas’s expressive style—the interplay of the religious and mercantile markers in the text makes for a pleasurable translating task, especially for a virtuoso such as Fried. Levin rightly makes the connection with \textit{The Protocols of the Elders of Zion}, which document the alleged secret plan of the Jews to dominate the world. Levin’s reference to \textit{The Protocols} (stating that the Jews use their overflowing coffers to secretly control Europe)\textsuperscript{700} finds a fitting counterpart in Barabbas’s declaration ‘Thus trolls our fortune in by land and sea’ towards the end of Act 1, Scene 1.

Barabbas is nevertheless aware that this mercantile prowess, precisely the ‘huckstering’ to which Marx refers in the second part of his article \textit{Zur Judenfrage} (not appended to the Wagenbach edition),\textsuperscript{701} inevitably attracts the evil of anti-Semitism. References to ritual murder and the myth of the Jew’s daughter brought on the scene to seduce the Christians, trap them and leave them to the mercy of her father and his dark chambers,\textsuperscript{702} evoke the depths of European anti-Judaism (in other words, the myth of a Jewish temptress),\textsuperscript{703} but their insinuation simultaneously hints at Marlowe’s criticism directed against invidious discrimination.

\textsuperscript{698} John Barry Steane, p. 182.
\textsuperscript{700} Levin, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{701} Karl Marx, \textit{Zur Judenfrage}, ed. Stefan Grossmann (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint, 1974).
\textsuperscript{702} Levin, p. 91.
\textsuperscript{703} Ibid.
Considering the significance of Barabas’s imposed Jewish identity for Fried’s translation further, it is manifest in the original that throughout the play Barabas plays at times almost an amiable rascal who does not deny his Jewishness, his alleged usury and fornication (as deeds which are expected to reinforce his Jewish background). He debates these, as Levin says, in merely legalistic terms. Indeed, Marlowe does not allow the denial of the Jewish mantle thrust upon the main character, however strategically performed. This mantle is defined in terms of greed and a complete absence of altruism. In Act 2, Scene 3, when Barabas describes how he had learned to degrade himself before the Christians in Florence, Fried renders these lines closely following the original, but manages to instil the verses with an element of perspicuity:

Marlowe:
We Jews can fawn like spaniels when we please,
And when we grin, we bite; yet are our looks
As innocent and harmless as a lamb’s.
I learned in Florence how to kiss my hand,
Heave up my shoulders when they call me dog,
And duck as low as any barefoot friar,
Hoping to see them starve upon a stall,
Or else be gathered for in our synagogue,
That when the offering-basin comes to me,
Even for charity I may spit into ’t.

Fried:
Wir Juden schmeicheln, wie Hunde, wenn wir wollen.
Und wenn wir Zähne zeigen, beißen wir.
Doch unser Blick ist grad so unschuldig und harmlos wie die Augen eines Lammes.
Ich lernte in Florenz mein Händchen küssen,
doch mich Hund nannten, die Achseln zucken
und bücken mich, tief wie ein Bettelmönch.
Ich hofft dabei, ich seh sie auf der Bank noch verhungern, oder daß man für sie sammelt Geld
in unserem Tempel, und wenn die Reih an mich kommt,
ich aus Erbarmen in den Beutel spucke.

In his German translation when rendering Spaniel as Hunde, Fried substitutes for the more specific semantic field of ‘spaniel’ the superordinate noun. He additionally switches between

705 Christopher Marlowe, The Jew of Malta, p. 50.
707 For an insightful debate on how to solve non-equivalence at word level, please see Mona Baker’s In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation (London, New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 12–22.
using and relinquishing the use of enjambment. As a result, the aural effect of the translated lines is greater. Fried’s rendering emphasises the connection between ‘Hund(e)’ in the first and the sixth line of the quotation, and may indicate his intention to endow the entire section with the connotation of inferiority. It is also of note here that in contrast to Eduard von Bülow’s translation dating from 1831, Fried renders the word ‘synagogue’ with ‘Tempel’. Although both words can be used to represent a Jewish place of worship, the term ‘synagogue’ is used generally in many cultures. The word ‘Tempel’ carries overtones of the author and Shakespearean scholar of the Enlightenment Era, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing and his play *Nathan der Weise* (Lessing endowed the eponymous character with the values of the Enlightenment which reflected the ideas defining the German secular Jews at the time). It may be concluded that Fried intentionally uses the term which the German audience would be familiar with. As a stylistic device, the term ‘Tempel’ is employed to patinise the text, to bestow a historical tone to a modern translation. Fried also uses this technique in other places, which will be examined later in the chapter.

Radical change in the quality of the verse after this second act in the original is now widely recognised in the scholarship relating to Marlowe and *The Jew of Malta* (Levin says the play progresses from the Old Testament to Machiavellianism). The shift is also palpable in Fried’s translation. In *The Marlovian World Picture* Godshalk also notes the shift in the second half of the play, explaining it as a shift from that of a rich merchant to a murderous schemer as if the

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709 Levin, p. 96.
enjoyment of plotting has completely engulfed Barabas to the point of blotting out his passion for money.\textsuperscript{710}

Another feature which indicates anti-Semitic myth-making in the original is the use of imagery and general language of wealth throughout to define personal relationships. Barabas interchangeably uses \textit{diamonds} and \textit{daughter} when discussing Abigail with Lodovic.\textsuperscript{711} Monetary value and the value of a human being are interchangeable and the reader is left with an impression that the value of easily movable assets is of utmost importance.\textsuperscript{712} Biblical harmonics are still employed by the inclusion of the biblical story of Job in this section of the play, however, the system of values within it is ‘totally inverted’.\textsuperscript{713} The loss which Barabas experiences in Act 1, Scene 2 (he is taxed by the Maltese Knights for Turkish tribute-money), is treated by Barabas himself in purely materialistic terms. As if an inverted picture of Job, who experiences emotional anguish with forbearance, Barabas sinks into angry abandon, cursing and seeking revenge. Paul Whitfield White, in \textit{Marlowe and the Politics of Religion}, states that if Marlowe gives ‘Barabas a well-developed Jewish identity, then Judaism is exposed as a bogus religion’.\textsuperscript{714} White implies that in Barabas’s world, the reward of his religion is the acquisition of wealth, maintaining that Barabas’s identity as a Jew is not based on any theological belief. Jewishness is a racial and nationalistic category as well, recognised with the development of such discourses. The inherent Jewish sin of betraying Christ, as invoked by the Maltese knight, indicates the definition of race by blood rather than nationhood.\textsuperscript{715} Fried appears to accept the position of non-theological Jewishness, not based on nationhood in his translation, and inclines

\textsuperscript{711} Christopher Marlowe, \textit{The Jew of Malta}, p. 51.
\textsuperscript{712} Godshalk, p. 211.
\textsuperscript{713} Ibid., p. 218.
\textsuperscript{715} White, p. 77.
more towards the view of Jewishness as performance by employing explication\textsuperscript{716} (for instance, with added translations of Latin sayings ‘Ego mihimet sum semper proximus’—‘Mir selber bin ich stets mein nächster Freund’ and by translating Marlowe’s ‘Jew’ in Act 2, Scene 2 with ‘Jud’ instead of ‘Jude’—in the case of the latter, endowing his translation with a more pejorative meaning, i.e. ‘Jud’, than was intended by the source text).

In his translation of the Jew of Malta, Fried attempts as much as possible to adhere to blank verse, imparting as a result of this formal approach a certain patina, whilst retaining the quality of realism and vibrancy. This in turn endows the entire drama with a character of otherworldliness, it places it in a particular historical context without dating the play. Additionally, this does not impair the flavour of modernity with which Fried dexterously infuses the text. This interplay between semantic and formal characteristics adds to the specificity of Fried’s translation technique. It still remains open to interpretation whether Fried recontextualises the characters and the setting, since it appears that Fried was at pains not to allow his personal situation and background to seep into the translation of the play. He allows the Marlovian notes of rage, humour, vengeance and nihilism to speak to the modern-day reader. However, he also provides more than sufficient information for the hypothetical director to facilitate the same for the modern-day theatre goer, by being extremely explicit in his translations of the stage directions.

\textsuperscript{716}A term from translation theory, implying over-exemplification of terms. See Anna Trosborg’s ‘Discourse Analysis as Part of Translator Training’, in *The Role of Discourse Analysis for Translation and in Translator Training*, ed. Christina Schäffner (Clevedon, UK, Tonavanda, NY, US: Multilingual Matters, 2002), pp. 9–52, see p. 19. In the case of Fried, it might be assumed that he is going over and above the role of the translator in order to steer his reader towards a particular meaning.
For instance in Act 4, Scene 3, Fried already imagines the stage and anticipates that the actor in the role of Barabas will at a given point (here patently determined by Fried himself) turn to Pilia-Borza to deliver his line:

Marlowe:
Barabas. [Aside] I am betrayed.—
‘Tis not five hundred crowns that I esteem,
I am not moved at that; this angers me [...]\footnote{Marlowe, \textit{The Jew of Malta}, p. 96.}

Fried:
Barabas. \textit{(leise)} Ich bin verraten. \textit{(zu Pilia-Borza)}
Mir geht es nicht um die fünfhundert Kronen.
Das rührt mich nicht. Mich macht nur eines zornig.\footnote{Der \textit{Jude von Malta}, trans. Erich Fried, p. 73.}

Fried’s translation here strays slightly from the original. As a stage translator, he is at pains to inform the actor of the tone and stress variations in the delivery of lines, as well as going over and above the task of the translator by including stage directions (‘\textit{zu Pilia-Borza}, above) which are not in the original. His interruption of the original sentence at a crucial place ‘Here, take ‘em, fellow, with as good a will—/ As I would see thee hanged.’ endows the line in the target text with particular bloodthirstiness ‘Da, nimm sie, Mann! Mit meinen besten Wünschen ... Daß ich dich hängen seh!’ Fried here not only changes the meaning of the original but, by manipulating the punctuation i.e. inserting an exclamation mark, visually emphasises the break in the sentence, which does not occur in the same place in the source text.

Marlowe:
Barabas. Sir, here they are. \textit{[He gives money.]} [Aside] Oh, that I should part with so much gold!
Here, take ‘em, fellow, with as good a will—\textit{As I would see thee hanged}. Oh, love stops my breath.\footnote{Marlowe, \textit{The Jew of Malta}, trans. Erich Fried, p. 73.}

Fried:
Barabas: Hier sind sie, Herr. \textit{(leise)}
Daß ich mich trennen muß von so viel Gold!
\textit{(laut)}
Da, nimm sie, Mann! Mit meinen besten Wünschen...
\textit{(leise)} Daß ich dich hängen seh!
\textit{(laut)} Mich macht die Liebe stumm.\footnote{Der \textit{Jude von Malta}, trans. Erich Fried, p. 73.
We may speculate that thus Fried in his translation wished to emphasise certain psychological traits in Barabas’s character, such as greed and disrespect for human life. It is possible that Fried simultaneously attempts to satirise the character by turning him into the most grotesque version of Barabas possible, which has also been a much speculated upon issue with regard to the original.\(^{721}\)

After the prologue, Marlowe situates Barabas with the adverbial phrase—‘heaps of gold before him’. Fried places the phrase ‘vor ihm Haufen Goldes’\(^{722}\) at the end of the sentence, when he could have applied a more contemporary expression involving a prepositional phrase (thus incidentally more in agreement with Marlowe’s original). For a German reader, this rendering not only provides the semantic patina, mentioned earlier, but as a consequence may elevate the ‘sacks’ or ‘heaps of gold’ to the defining moment of the sentence—the emphasis thus creating an early connection between Barabas the Jew and a ‘money-obsessed mercantile genius’ as opposed to a ‘politcising nihilist’, such as is introduced in the Prologue by Machiavelli. In the same instance, it is possible to conclude that the Jew Barabas is intended to parody or perform his identity as such—a mercantile Renaissance version of a Wall Street dealer of Jewish origin whose only interest in life is the one drawn from his balance sheets. Fried’s voice, however, is not forceful enough to allow the double performance of a character in the play and the translator whose voice is creating our impressions. The reader has to rely on his or her ability to delve into the other, visual, dimension provided by the theatrical world, by which the final impressions of the performance are created. For the purposes of this study, the printed text is everything with which the reader has been provided. This places Fried in a central, mediatory position.

\(^{721}\) See for instance the argument in White (\textit{Marlowe and the Politics of Religion}), or Sanders (\textit{Dramatist as Realist}), or Steane (\textit{Marlowe: A Critical Study}).

If we take into consideration the old adage that no translation is done in a vacuum and that during every translation process there are conscious and subconscious factors influencing decisions made by the translator, one may assume that Fried was affected by the overall character of the play and aware of the many levels on which the Marlovian piece worked: religious, psychological and political. His own political views, made abundantly clear in his poetry preceding this translation work, are collusive with Marlowe’s own views on hypocrisy and religion. Fried’s own masterfully effective use of lexis and his ability to construct and deconstruct words, ideas and situations mirror Marlowe’s talent for condensing the meaning and distilling the ideology of his contemporaries into fast-paced antithetical tableaux. In *The Jew of Malta*, Marlowe constructs his characters, ‘out of the existent discourse of anti-Semitism’. The meaning contained in these words works to construct and then deconstruct each character. Some critics explore Marlowe’s play from a perspective of textuality, indicating that the identity in the play is constructed out of the discourses that simultaneously build it and destroy it. The Jewish identity of the main character is a much discussed theme and a subject of many a scholarly work; one of the best known is included in the Wagenbach edition of the Jew of Malta. In his essay, Greenblatt debates the construction of Jewishness in the main character as a product of the social conditions of the time, seeing him simultaneously outside and inside the culture to which he does and does not belong. Barabas’s main traits are a product of the narrative of Jew-hatred and mistaken identity. This issue of identity constructed out of language is one of the issues debated in earlier sections of the thesis with a view to delineating the complex identities of Fried himself. Fried’s translation work is another aspect of his activity which helped construe his literary

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725 German translation of Greenblatt’s essay ‘Marlowe, Marx, and Anti-Semitism’.
identity and may arguably contain traces of his political views. Moreover, political and ideological issues debated in the play are not specific to Elizabethan times. Fried’s reading of this play could not have been devoid of the contextual baggage from recent history, including the anti-Semitic narrative which predated the Second World War and the anti-Zionist narrative during the tumultuous times of Israeli military history since Israel’s creation in 1948.

Indeed one of the fruits of Stephen Greenblatt’s analysis of *The Jew of Malta* is the notion that the brutality contained in the verbal onslaught of Hitler’s rhetoric is drawn from those linguistic constructions which bore the most concentrated form of Jew-hatred. The same can be said of the Marlovian Barabas, who appears to have been constructed out of the choice anti-Semitic notions of his time. His Jewishness itself seems to be coded with the most profoundly anti-Jewish elements, such as those that would most entice the simultaneous approval and loathing of the play’s Renaissance audience. Greenblatt reads both Marlowe’s and Marx’s views on Barabas from the perspective of an anti-capitalist critique, i.e. he claims that they perceive the presentation of Judaism as the egotistical pursuit of profit and consequently both Marlowe and Marx deny it. Greenblatt suggests that Marlowe appears to use Barabas as a rhetorical device to personify everything that is wrong with Elizabethan society, and by extension that Marx uses Jews to critique 19th-century Europe. Marlowe, according to Greenblatt, turns follies, sins and moral turpitude into linguistic markers that ultimately undo the main character himself and eventually implode the play into one bleak vision of nothingness. In comparison with the character of Shylock, another stock Jew from the English literary tradition, Barabas appears to be a part of the society of Malta in the play, whereas Shylock plays the role of the outcast usurer. Marx, interestingly, sees Barabas as the Jew who personifies all the social ills, but who

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simultaneously as a Jew is emancipated by the virtue (or sin) of his capital and is at the centre of a vast network of money. Fried’s own ambivalent opinion of other Jews hinges not so much on the trope of capital but the trope of injustice, both experienced and inflicted by Jews themselves. Nevertheless, his general stance, concomitant with the times in which he lived, is, if not nihilist, then certainly anti-capitalist. Additionally, Fried’s elucidation (given below) of Marx’s opinion of Marlowe’s contemporary Shakespeare, his version of the stock Jewish character Shylock and his characterisation also demonstrates how Fried’s opinion of politics/history, literature in translation and ethnicity interweave:

Karl Marx who was a profound admirer of Shakespeare, knew this very well – Shakespeare was no fighter. He would have been killed very quickly if, in his time, he had been a fighter. But he was beautifully subversive; and his psychological insight and his sensuality, his observation of human beings and of the world helped him in this. [...] *The Merchant of Venice* is always used by some commentators to further racist intolerance, even if the actors do not intend it that way. But Shakespeare, while giving the people their nasty Jew, equips Shylock with a psychological depth which none of the other characters have, and chooses to demonstrate that the trial is an absolutely merciless and shameless parody of justice by a fake lawyer, in which the woman then in the end by a trick wreaks vengeance on Antonio, who has loved her husband. [...] In Germany, it’s comparatively easy to bring out the barbarisms, not because they have a stronger stomach for them, but because in their recent history they’ve had a ring-side seat to watch similar ones. In England, it’s different. Although the German Establishment are almost as bad lick-spittles to the Americans nowadays as the English Establishment, they have had a tradition of revolt in Germany, dating back to the students’ revolt and extending even to terrorism. In England, there is nothing like that. English papers, like *The Guardian*, in a civilised way make fun, but half secretly, of a creep like Reagan, so that an ordinary reader couldn’t even understand it, if he wasn’t well informed. But they describe none the less events which ought to make the blood of every person who still has blood in his veins, boil. But they describe them as if they were nice. 727

Precisely the same argument is used when discussing Fried’s translation of *The Jew of Malta*:

‘Trotz [...] so vielem, was er [Fried] in der Bundesrepublik immer wieder kritisiere, hätten die Deutschen im Schatten der Massenmorde an den Juden, von der Tragik

The phantasmagorical anti-Semitic self-satirizing which Barabas employs in the scene with his slave Ithamore to describe his pastimes, such as poisoning Christian wells or killing Christian children, would have perhaps drawn a wry smile from Fried (after all, the play is full of dark humour). But the deep currents of identity formation, crisis, construction out of and into language itself, a dichotomy of the member/observer who is on the outside/inside are all well-known general notions to Fried whom we can imagine as simultaneously feeling disgust with the reductive anti-Semitic pronouncements on the surface of the play as well as appreciating the deeper intricacies of Marlowe’s dramatic method. The quality of Fried’s translation may be the testimony to such recognition.

8.4. Bakhtinian chronotope in translation. ‘Neutral’ translation as an illusion?

At this point of the analysis it may be relevant to introduce Mikhail Bakhtin’s idea of the chronotope, i.e. the unity of time and space in one concept. Although Bakhtin uses this model to analyse the narrative of the novel and to emphasise the uniqueness of the novel compared to any other literary genre, it is perhaps apposite to mention it in the case of Marlowe’s play and especially when considering Fried’s translation. For Bakhtin, the concept of chronotope is a perfect tool for following and analysing the changes that occur throughout the novel, therefore aiding the critical approach. The stage represents a suitable place where this concept, the unity of time and space, could be employed. Every scene offers a particular setting and the manner in

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which the time and space intersect in this setting provides further critical clues to the improved understanding of the original drama and its translation. Marlowe decides to introduce his main protagonist in his counting house—where Barabas is avariciously inspecting the state of his business affairs, mainly by looking over the heaps of gold before him. In Karl Marx’s terms, this is a pure representation of the first era of the capitalist accumulation.\textsuperscript{730} Another contribution Bakhtin makes, and which is relevant to the analysis of the translation, is the notion of \textit{internal dialogism} of any literary work, especially translation. Douglas Robinson, in his work on performative linguistics, considers the metaphor of the translator’s voice, and within this discussion includes Bakhtin’s musings on the social and dialogic nature of any language, emphasising the role of the social dimension and the contextual background. All utterances, our own voices, are personalised, or modified by our immediate social and historical environment. However, these expressions still contain traces of the others, of the other voices, which we as language users have, spontaneously or otherwise, assimilated during our lifetime. Essentially, both Robinson and Bakhtin before him, claim that our ‘language’ is a product of someone else’s words, which is in turn invariably used to produce a certain effect on the partner in the dialogic process.\textsuperscript{731} This leads us to conclude that the completely objectified discourse, whether written as an original or included in translation, is an illusion. By extension, the idea of a completely objectified translation, unencumbered by any ideological, literary, linguistic, personal or any other kind of baggage could also be seen as illusory.

The above ideas champion double-voicing, which, although here theorised in order to support the analysis of Fried’s translation approach, particularly in the case of \textit{The Merchant of Venice}, is

\textsuperscript{730} Ibid.
remarkably present in Fried’s poetry also—most notably included in his verbatim quotations from Theodor Herzl’s writings on Zionism and the future creation of the state of Israel. Briefly, what Bakhtin calls a ‘varidirectional passive double voicing’ serves to parodise the original speaker—the author repeats the words verbatim, but stylises them, either formally or tonally (in Fried’s case formally) in order to achieve a certain effect. In the case of Fried’s anti-Zionist poetry, the voice of the ‘narrator’ Herzl is clearly distinguished from the voice of Fried—who disapproves of the ideas and values represented in Herzl’s writings, but uses them in order to clarify his and Herzl’s divergent positions on the creation and subsequent administration of the state of Israel.

Unlike in The Merchant of Venice, it cannot be claimed that Fried’s work in The Jew of Malta represents a translation heavily coded with representations of his self. But then, even when he is seemingly overtly debating his self, or rather his identity in the poems devoted to the conflict in the Middle East, Fried is in reality only showing us a part of his true self. In Höre, Israel! he asserts his Jewishness and his sympathies with the Palestinian Arab portion of the population, in protest against what he regards as Zionist military campaigns and imperialist policies. These assertions are much subtler and quieter in his other work. Instead of containing unequivocal professions of his Judaic background, many of his verses display, whether included in political or love poems or prose works, a covert Jewish way of reasoning, e.g. the Talmudic question and answer technique or parables. In the translation of The Jew of Malta there are no obvious semantic shifts to associate the situation and character of Barabas with a modern paragon of Jewishness and Jewish tribulations, although the original text contains many references which could easily be described as anti-Semitic. There are only representations of Barabas in which some character traits appear more or less obviously, depending on how Fried decides to render
the target text in German. There are echoes of Barabas the Jew as a money-grabbing capitalist. The potential for the target text to be received by an audience other than the one Marlowe had intended for his original is vaguely indicated in the translation. There are instances where Fried’s translation creates a space which could accommodate a receptive context, or to put it more clearly, it could speak to a hypothetical audience about Barabas as a specific representative of something that Fried subconsciously intended to critique or consciously show in a particular light, either positive or negative. In contrast to the translation of *The Merchant of Venice*, Fried here only hints at creating a situational context.

In his translation of *The Jew of Malta*, Fried’s voice does not obtrude to a great extent, as will be shown in the extracts below, although Marlowe’s text presents plenty of opportunity to colour the translated text with his opinions, or endow individual characters with certain qualities by re-workings of their original dramatization.\(^{732}\) What Fried does in this instance, although not just with this translation, is very important—Fried not only translates the text, but re-performs it for the modern-day reader. He contextualises and subtly reworks the dramatic lines to the point of almost complete explicitness, including translations into German even of Spanish sayings included in the original, i.e. ‘Hermoso placer de los dineros’ is rendered as ‘Wie schön ist das Vergnügen an dem Gelde’.\(^{733}\)

Does this restyle Marlowe’s Barabas into a figure more explicit, more palatable, less evil, more nihilistic, more a representative of coming capitalist/bourgeois classes and less a figure conjured out of theological, traditional Jew-hatred? Fried appears to accept the relevance maxim, seen as vitally important to the translation process by many theorists, most notably Paul H. Grice, Mona

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\(^{732}\) I rely here on instances from translation theory, in particular on Douglas Robinson’s *Performative Linguistics* (especially p. 224 on iterability in translation as a way of adding relative originality to the translation) and Lawrence Venuti’s *The Translator’s Invisibility* (especially his Chapter One).

\(^{733}\) *Der Jude von Malta*, trans. Erich Fried, p. 33.
Baker and Kirsten Malmkjaer. He surreptitiously exemplifies without significantly altering the source text meaning, allowing his interpretative powers to achieve the equivalence of effect, if not formal and linguistic equivalence, without ever overtly flouting the fluency of his translation.

As a result of this modernisation and associated explicitness we witness a Barabas who is seemingly as black and white as the anti-Judaic stereotypes from which he is construed. Does this mean that Fried as a translator is at pains to make it as plain as possible to us that the character traits of Barabas are such that they inspire loathing without compassion? Or that as a representative of the later emergent capitalist classes he is the precursor of everything that Fried’s political ideology was so vociferously against? That as a nihilist, he is the exact opposite of what Fried had for years championed—the value of human life, the value of the individual regardless of his religious, political or social status and background? Can Fried identify himself with the very modern quality of homelessness and Barabas’s pariah perspective of which Fried himself was acutely aware? Or does Fried see Barabas only as a dramatic persona and understand his own task only as a process in which to facilitate a cultural and linguistic transfer from English to German to be performed on the stage without any other contextual baggage? It is impossible to conclude from Fried’s translation alone if his method here works in both ways.

Employed as a poetic strategy in for example Höre, Israel!, Fried’s explicitness heralds the abandonment of any decoration and intense focus on relevant informative facts. It signifies the chosen manner in which Fried informs his readership, pasting his own beliefs and his self together. In his translation of The Jew of Malta, the explicitness is employed as a dramatic tool possibly in order to facilitate easier transference to the stage, both for actors and for the audience. Nevertheless, it is important to ponder on Fried’s explicitness as an element in expressing

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himself in poetry and putting across his political beliefs (or could we go as far as to claim that Fried declares his poetic and political identity using this technique?), or as a method by which he transfers his ideas onto paper. This tendency to simplify, make covert nuances more understandable, bring about meanings that may or may not be included in the original either formally or otherwise, in order to ensure complete comprehension and assimilation of the text is present in many of Fried’s translations. This is not the first time that the charge of frank specificity has been levied at Fried—Angelika Heimann makes this point when inspecting Fried’s translation of the songs from Twelfth Night. Fried’s Shakespeare translations into German hold wide appeal and are generally recognised as more palatable due to the perceived overall modernisation of the Elizabethan lexis.

Translator and translation theoretician Lawrence Venuti ponders precisely this relationship between the author and translator and the elusive bond between the original work and its translation, lamenting the state of the translation production in the Western, or mainly Anglo-American, world in recent publishing history. His main complaint is the perceived status of a translation as a derivative, a copy ever dependent on its unchanging original document, a simulacrum which can never be elevated from its status of the artificial. He calls for a greater interventionist approach by the individuals engaging specifically in literary translation work to pursue methods which veer from the accepted acculturation strategies, whereby the translator allows the target text to mutate into an intelligible piece of writing, familiarised for the reader in order to provide, ‘a narcissistic experience of recognising his or her own culture in a cultural other.’

735 Heimann, Bless Thee!, p. 227.
translation significant elements of the target language values, in order to appease the receiving audience, translators bow to the economic ‘hegemony of target language publishers’.

Venuti, in a perceived contrast to this pervasive notion, calls for a more interventionist approach. Instead of explicitness, the translator should leave ambiguities in the text, and try to reflect critically on what is presented in the text and rework it according to the notion of abusive fidelity, safeguarding the linguistic and cultural differences inherent in the text. Translation appears as a resignification of yet another resignification, caused by the original mobility inherent in the text. We start from the premise that the original text comes into being by a signifying movement in language which is a result of many combinations of signifiers in an endless chain. This means that the original and the translation do not represent a ‘semantic unity’\textsuperscript{737} and that the translation is always a lack and a supplement (much like the supplement employed by Fried in his collection devoted to the military conflict in the Middle East, i.e. Hör\textit{e}, \textit{Israel}!). Therefore, the translation always contains an element of liberty, significantly—without ever establishing a firm and finite identity. The translator’s mind, his or her unconscious, interacts with the text, allowing the ‘socially aware’ and ‘politically engaged’ translator\textsuperscript{738} to develop a strategy by which it is possible to abandon the cultural hegemonic structures imposed by the target language and, to borrow from another two French theorists, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, to create these ‘lines of escape’ by ‘deterritorialising’ the original.\textsuperscript{739}

It is unlikely that Fried was aware of the theoretical deliberations explored here, but, as a poet and an exile, he certainly displayed the traits of a destabilised identity, intense political activism

\textsuperscript{737} Venuti, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{738} Ibid., p. 11.
\textsuperscript{739} See Chapter 3 in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, \textit{Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature}, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986). This is also followed up by Venuti in his introduction to his edition of \textit{Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology}.
and acute social awareness. As a socially aware and politically very actively engaged individual, he could have grasped various opportunities to produce subversive translations in which his voice as a translator was undoubtedly discernible. Angelika Heimann’s thesis which explores Fried’s translatorial enterprise does not find significant deviations for the sake of either ideological or personal disagreement that Fried may have felt while performing his task as a translator.\textsuperscript{740} The analysis of Fried’s translation of \textit{The Merchant of Venice} does not bear out her findings. In the case of \textit{The Jew of Malta} however, Fried’s strategy indicates an attempt to maintain formal faithfulness to the original. The efforts to allow as much of the original meaning as possible to permeate his target text are ostensible. However, this also indicates, or allows for a certain intervention, mostly lexical in nature. In the case of \textit{The Jew of Malta}, is Fried’s explicitness a secret weapon by which he is allowing Barabas to shine through?

Generally speaking, there are various positions in \textit{The Jew of Malta} where Fried does not veer from the original greatly. In fact, it appears that he applies a sound method to his translation—he follows the original in form and content closely. It is only on more in-depth inspection, or when compared to other translations that the subtle difference in his choice of words and metre become more perceptible. In the original play by Marlowe the reader detects subtle changes between blank verse and prose. Fried later mirrors the same approach in his translation. This contributes to the overall feeling of variant rhythm and may point to the fact that Marlowe, and subsequently Fried, used this technique to differentiate between different characters and their background, although this of course, cannot be fully substantiated, since there are also divergences in metre within speeches of the same characters in the play.

\textsuperscript{740} See Heimann’s thesis, ‘Bless Thee! Thou Art translated!’
Marlowe:
Barabas. Alas my lord, we are no soldiers;
And what’s our aid against so great a prince?
First Knight: Tut, Jew, we know thou art no
soldier;
Thou art a merchant, and a moneyd man,
And 'tis thy money, Barabas, we seek.
Barabas. How, my lord, my money?
Ferneze. Thine and the rest.
For, to be short, amongst you ‘t must be had.
First Jew. Alas, my lord, the most of us are
poor!
Ferneze. Then let the rich increase your
portions.
Barabas. Are strangers with your tribute to be
taxed?
Second Knight. Have strangers leave with us to
get their wealth?
Then let them with us contribute.
Barabas. How, equally?
Ferneze. No, Jew, like infidels.
For through our sufferance of your hateful
lives,
Who stand accursed in the sight of heaven,
These taxes and afflictions are befall’n
And therefore thus we are determined:
Read there the articles of our decrees.  

Fried:
Barabas: Doch leider, Herr, sind wir keine
Soldaten.
Wie helfen wir gegen so große Fürsten?
1. Ritter: Still Jud. Wir wissen, daß du kein
Soldat bist.
Du bist ein Kaufmann, einer, der viel Geld hat.
Dein Geld ists, was wir wollen, Barabas.
Barabas: Wie, Herr? Mein Geld?
Ferneze: Deins und der anderen Geld.
Denn, kurz und gut, von euch muß das Geld
kommen.
1. Jude: Ach, Herr, die meisten von uns sind ja
arm.
Ferneze: So laßt die Reichen euren Anteil
zahlen.
Barabas: Solln Fremde den Tribut für euch
zahln müssen?
2. Ritter: Wenn Fremde sich bei uns bereichern
dürfen,
Dann solln sie auch mit uns Tribut bezahln.
Barabas: Wie? Grad wie ihr?
Ferneze: Nein, Jud. Wie Ungläubige.
Denn, weil wir euer schändliches Leben
dulden,
Die ihr verflucht steht vor des Himmels
Augen,
Hat diese Not und Steuer uns befallen,
Und darum faßten wir unsern Entschluß...
Verleset die Artikel unserer Satzung!

In this scene, where the Governor of Malta is negotiating funds from Barabas in order to meet
the demands of the blackmailing Turks, Marlowe, or rather the Governor Fernese, consistently
calls Barabas a Jew not applying any further descriptor throughout the scene. Fried, as seen
above, in addition to preserving the rhythm of the line, renders this Jew as Jud to ensure that the
pejorative connotation is not lost upon the audience. Fried renders the original ‘Thou art a
merchant’ inserting an ‘ein’ before the ‘Kaufmann’ as if intending to emphasise the profession of

the Jew, and the fact that the Jew, Barabas, is separated from the rest of the players in this scene, precisely because of his wealth. The mercantile dimension is thus emphasised over the religious one, whereas in original, it is a simple statement of fact.

In the German edition of *Der Jude von Malta* by the 19th-century author Eduard von Bülow, ‘Tut, Jew’ is not translated at all, although it appears in Marlowe’s original:

Von Bülow:
Daß du kein Krieger, Jude, wissen wir
Du bist ein Kaufmann und ein reicher Mann.\(^{743}\)

Although it may be argued that von Bülow translated the above excerpt considering metre as much as the meaning, he does the opposite of Fried, i.e. obscures a part of the orginal, rather than explicating it, thus partly robbing the scene of its general air of malice. There are two other scenes where the emotional charge within Barabas’s speech or emotional connotations in the context of his scene are emphasised by Fried. In the first example:

Marlowe:
Barabas: What, Abigail become a nun again?
False and unkind! What, hast thou lost thy father,
And, all unknown and unconstrained of me,
Art thou again got to the nunnery?
Now here she writes, and wills me to repent,
Repentance? *Spurca!* What pretendeth this?\(^{744}\)

Fried:
Barabas: Was? Abigail ist wieder Nonne?
Falsche!
Entartete! Hast du denn keinen Vater?
Und ohne mein Gebot, ohne ein Wort
bist du schon wieder in dem Kloster dort?
Jetzt schreibt sie mir und mahnt mich, zu bereuen.
Bereuen? – Scheisse! – Was bedeutet das?\(^{745}\)

Fried’s rendering emphasises the emotional aspect of the scene, above all syntactically—the sentences are short and in relation to Marlowe’s original, broken up. This structural change intensifies the breathless manner in which Barabas, beside himself with anger, poses rhetorical

\(^{743}\) *Der Jude von Malta*, trans. E. von Bülow, p. 299.  
\(^{744}\) Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, pp. 72–73.  
\(^{745}\) *Der Jude von Malta*, trans. Erich Fried, p. 53.
questions. The original does not pose such an emotionally charged challenge to an actor, offering longer, calmer sentences. The voice of the translator is apparent in this section of the play. The voice is also reminiscent of short breathless poetry in Fried’s Höre, Israel! poetry collection.

In Act 1, Scene 2, Barabas resents the call for restraint and patience by other Jews, and comments:

Marlowe:
No, Barabas is born to better chance
And framed of finer mould than common men,
That measure naught but by the present time.
A reaching thought will search his deepest wits
And cast with cunning for the time to come,
For evils are apt to happen every day.  

Fried:
Nein: Barabas ist da zu etwas besserm [sic],
feiner gefügt als der gemeine Mann,
der nichts ermißt als nach des Augenblicks Maß.
Wer denken will, der muß tief in sich suchen
Und schlau schon angeln nach der Zeit, die kommt:
Denn Unglück kann uns jeden Tag begegnen – [

Where Marlowe hesitates between the individual and the impersonal, or omniscient, thought, Fried is quick to emphasise agency (‘A reaching thought will search his deepest wits’ compared to ‘Wer denken will, der muß tief in sich suchen’), as if grasping and executing the authorial intent which is never explicitly given in the original, thus ‘tightening up’ the structure of the section. Fried here as a translator emphasises the individual’s action, or more specifically, Barabas’s action, over the air of more general musing indicated in the original. Fried’s rendering by the explicit negative ‘nichts ermißt’ serves to emphasise the ‘überhaupt nichts’ connotation inherent in such a negation. Another reworking of this section is presented in Eduard von Bülow’s translation:

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746 Marlowe, The Jew of Malta, p. 36.
Von Bülow:
Der alles nach der Gegenwart ermißt.
Den tiefsten Geist regt sein Gedanke auf [...] 748

This rendering has more positive connotations. It would appear that Fried is overtly following
Marlowe’s original whilst endowing the target text with subtle nuances which signal a Barabas
who is more individual, more emotional and most importantly far more understandable to the
translator’s contemporaries.

In Act 2, Scene 3 where Barabas is truly performing his Jewishness before his slave Ithamore, as
if taking every stereotype out of a manual for Jew-haters, the action in the original takes place in
the simple past tense:

Marlowe:
Being young, I studied physic, and began
To practise first upon the Italian;
There I enriched the priests with burials,
And always kept the sexton’s arms in ure
With digging graves and ringing dead men’s
knells [...] 749

Fried:
Als junger Mann studiert ich Medizin,
da rafft ich ein paar Italiener hin.
Ich machte Priester reich durch Leichenreden
und hielt die Küster immerzu in Trab
mit Gräberschaufeln und mit Glockenläuten. 750

Fried drops the verb endings in order to facilitate a quick rendering of the verses on the stage.
Although it could be argued that Fried wants to preserve the metre, with ‘rafft’ he endeavours to
add currency to the dramatic action,751 indicating that Barabas wants to preserve the momentum
in his speech, as if his deeds and his ideas, however falsely presented, are very close to him. It is

749 Marlowe, The Jew of Malta, p. 57.
751 It might be possible to assume that Fried’s intention in this instance was to make the stage character of Barabas
as explicit as possible for his imagined audience, i.e. that in the process of translation he was giving clues as to how
he would have expected the dynamics with regards to Barabas’s Jewishness to unravel on stage verbally, i.e. swiftly
and almost breathlessly.
as if he is standing before us, wringing his hands in delight and sniggering like the veritable bottle-nosed stereotypical Jew.

8.5. Translatorial identity

This chapter has attempted to convey the extent to which Fried allowed his identity as a persecuted and exiled Jew to penetrate his translation work. Additionally, his personal background as a child-performer must have helped him facilitate successful stagings of his translations. His presence at the rehearsals for some of the plays and his technique of explicitation when translating gave quite clear indications to all participants regarding Fried’s own understanding of the plays. It can be argued that thus his reading of the plot and characters was enforced and his identity was allowed to shine through the work. His technique of patinisation facilitated the ‘marking out’ of Jewish characters apart from other protagonists in the plays. Fried’s meticulous attention to speakability and performability of lines enabled the theatre audiences to note Shylock’s solitude and unjust persecution as clearly as the characters’ otherworldliness. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, some German theatre critics at the time of the staging of The Merchant of Venice alluded to Fried’s Jewish identity as an aid in translating Shakespearean punning. As shown, this appears not to have been the case in the examples taken from the translation of The Merchant of Venice. However, his Barabas may have appeared more grotesque, thus less real and more an instrument of social critique than a target of religious and ethnic loathing. Fried’s Shylock was in places more hesitant and as a consequence of the artificially grafted epilogue, a more well-rounded representation of a victim of cruel persecution. As a consequence of the epilogue, Fried’s Launcelot Gobbo also appeared less clownish than in the original and more prophetic. By representing Shylock as a victim of persecution, Fried additionally reduced the reading of the play to the only possible one in his eyes—tainted by the
history of National Socialism in Germany and Austria. It could be argued that with this reading in Fried’s translation there are distant echoes of Adorno’s postulate about the impossibility of poetry in the shadow of Auschwitz.\textsuperscript{752}

Fried’s identity cannot but impinge on his translations of plays with themes of Jewish persecution and Jewish characters. His own statements, particularly relating to his translation of Shakespeare, testify to this fact. Fried allowed his Jewishness to appear in his work, however guardedly, and this played a decisive role in his approach to the translation of The Merchant of Venice, for instance. Fried’s great skill as a translator enabled him to manipulate the language syntactically and semantically until he achieved a desired effect on the theatre audience. In The Jew of Malta Fried enhanced Barabas’s stage presence by explicitation. Barabas’s language reflected the identity of a Jew as an outsider, a victim and simultaneously preserved Marlowe’s original doubling technique, satirising Barabas into the worst possible anti-Semitic stereotype. These interventions are, however, minimal. Fried’s translation of The Jew of Malta is in some ways a counter-example to the translation of The Merchant of Venice. His translation approach in the Marlowe play provides examples of minor interference although the historical and socio-political context of the two literary works is comparable and should have produced the same sense of outrage in Fried as the Shakespeare play. In the case of The Jew of Malta, the extracts from the original and the translations were chosen not because they were typical of Fried’s interventionist translation strategy, such as was found in The Merchant of Venice, but because they represented instances in the translated play in which Fried’s agency as a translator was discernible.

An attempt has been made in the course of the chapter to show that on the surface Fried’s work as a translator perhaps seems less encumbered by his complex identity than his literary oeuvre. However, it would appear that Fried approached his inspiration as a literary translator along similar lines to an engaged poet. The two processes, translation and poetic creation, ran parallel, complementing each other, in Fried’s life. Whilst as an author Fried had the freedom to follow his inspiration and beliefs far more freely, his identity is far more surreptitiously, but ingeniously, conveyed in some of his translation work.
Conclusion

The present thesis has set out to analyse the presentation of Fried’s identity in his oeuvre by following the expression of his sense of self and its multiple aspects as reflected in his life and work. Firstly, it has examined his biography and has attempted to show that Fried’s identity was deeply affected by his experiences in the period preceding the Second World War and during the exile years in wartime London. The frequent use of geographical references and the tradition of ‘naming’, i.e. the extensive use of proper names and locations in his early poetry has indicated an individual attempting to find a stable anchor. Secondly, the development of Fried’s political consciousness in relation to his identity has been traced during an evaluative consideration of his poetry in collections such as Deutschland and Österreich, the poetry devoted to the Vietnam War and the collection of poems on the conflict in the Middle East. Thirdly, the socio-humanist component has been investigated in Fried’s prose writings from the late 1940s and 1950s. The political background has also provided the context for the analysis of Jewishness in Fried’s poetry devoted to the treatment of Palestinian refugees by the state of Israel. The expression, discrete or overt, of Fried’s identity in his translation work has been the fourth and final element in the investigation of his identity. The research has demonstrated that all of the above elements together present a unique mixture of an authentic and kaleidoscopic identity as expressed in Fried’s oeuvre.

Fried’s complex identity has also been observed in instances where the choice of his politics reflected his social and professional alliances, or vice versa. As the chapter on Fried’s biography shows, Fried’s political awareness was galvanised from an early age partly due to his upbringing and partly due to the historical circumstances in Austria between the two wars. His early contact with and close reading of the writings of Karl Marx marked his perception of the social relations
and of the world in which he lived. Fried’s distinction between Marx, a socio-economic theorist, and his Marxists followers came from his ability to observe blind dogmatism when he encountered it. Fried’s political being formed a significant part of his identity and his passion as a socialist but also as a humanist at times seemed almost to occlude other faces of his Vexierbild. Fried’s identity as a socialist came from his ability to recognise and distinguish in practical terms what other contemporary socialists only theorised about. This is particularly documented by his lifelong fight to expose alienation in everyday life and to reveal its workings on a global geopolitical level. The fact that Fried had witnessed, albeit from British soil, Stalin’s elimination of his political opponents, the ensuing purges and their consequences for the satellite states of the Soviet Union, such as the GDR, had long term consequences for the manner in which he positioned himself within his social environment and how he perceived himself as an active member of that environment. Fried’s early association with the Communist Party in wartime London had far reaching ramifications for his perception of himself as a socialist, but also as a humanist. It may be said that as part of his atonement for the mistakes of the youthful zeal, he became a particular kind of humanist, able to recognize a human being in everyone, political opponents, dictators and neo-Nazis.

Fried adopted the view that socialism, rather than being a necessary and unavoidable step in the development of society and eventually a stage leading towards communism, was actually a more just and morally acceptable way of arranging human relations and ultimately life. During his working life with the BBC, Fried was in a position to be a metaphorical bystander to the colossal errors of judgement made by the Soviet Union’s Communist Party leadership which affirmed the ignominious and ethically corrupt social order. The analysis of Fried’s private papers held in the

753 An example of the geopolitical dimension in Fried’s fight against alienation is his poetry collection Höre, Israel!
Nachlass in Vienna has shown that he did not consider himself an innocent bystander. Letters from various periods of his life available from the Nachlass and included in the analysis of Fried’s identity during the 1950s support this angle in the study of his identity as a socialist, but also an author with outspoken humanist views. Fried’s later engagement with his communist past has also helped put his Jewish identity into perspective. It has been shown that his identity as a socialist is strongly present in his poetry devoted to the conflict in the Middle East. The analysis of Fried’s political affiliations has also shown that during the 1970s, his Vexierbild identity was simultaneously reflected in two images, that of a tribune, almost a fully-fledged political activist, speaking on behalf of people whose own expression Fried had found too muted, and that of a ‘modern-day Moses’ warning his own people of perceived errors in judgement. The relationship between these two images and their ultimate conflation lie in Fried’s ability to metamorphose from one identity to another within his verses. His apologias for the early aberrations as a communist reflect his inability to fully embrace socialist beliefs and also constrain his ability to fully consent to his, already tentative, Jewishness.

At the time when many in the former Eastern bloc thought that they were well on the way to developing the new social order, Fried, their contemporary, had a much clearer view of the deep-seated contradictions in the very philosophy which underpinned the state and party apparatus, otherwise perceived as flawless and infallible. Fried recognised that this apparatus was filled with men who through their sycophancy and absence of critical thought, or simply for fear of losing their lives, were dehumanising the very system which was conceived as bringing the human dimension back into social relations. The present thesis demonstrates that as a tireless defender of those he perceived as downtrodden, oppressed and suffering any form of injustice, Fried in his writings hoped to counterbalance the excesses of what he perceived as militant
imperialist conflicts by the Western states and fight for a more just and ethical social order. Chapters focusing on Fried’s protest against the Vietnam War and on his critical reading of the conflict in the Middle East particularly demonstrate the international character of Fried’s literary struggle for ethics and humanity. The present study establishes that Fried’s identity narrative, whilst geographically located beyond the confines of Europe, also shares a link with the aspects of his selfhood firmly anchored within the European political discourse. Fried’s protest against the Zionist enterprise is associated with the humanist aspects of his identity and his socialist views against what he perceived as an imperialist venture rather than with his Jewish identity.

Yet in Fried’s translation work connections have been established between his humanist identity and his Jewishness. It has not been possible to demonstrate that Fried’s minimally interventionist approach to the translation of Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* was a reflection of a utilitarian dimension in work ethic as a translator and an attempt to actively subdue his identity. One might have expected that Fried would have intervened more in *The Jew of Malta*, since extracts of his early translations of the play appeared as early in Fried’s opus as *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen*, with the desk translation appearing in print only after Fried’s death. In contrast to *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Jew of Malta* did not seem to entice the same feeling of outrage at the persecution of its central character, which provoked such a unique ending to *The Merchant of Venice*, although in both Elizabethan plays characterisation and narrative moved along similar lines. Fried’s overt and radical intervention in the translation of *The Merchant of Venice* has been used to seek traces of another hidden face of Fried’s identity. The hypothesis that there was a correlation between Fried’s beliefs expressed in his writings and replicated in his translation work has been stated in the Introduction. This idea has been tested in the analysis of Fried’s work and it has been demonstrated that the humanist concerns which inspired the engaged writings
after the Second World War remained as current and as authentic during Fried’s translation commissions produced in the late 1970s. Additionally, the combination of Fried’s literary and translation work in the current thesis provides fertile ground for further studies in Fried’s work and that of other poets and translators.

There has been a renewed interest in Fried’s literary legacy in the last decade. A number of articles and theses have been published both in the German and English language that deal with various aspects of Fried’s work, for instance Gerrit-Jan Berendse’s *Vom Aushalten der Extreme*, on which the present thesis draws in Chapter Seven. Fried’s widow, Catherine, continues to promote his work. Her recently published book, from which this thesis has also drawn, describes her life with Fried. It is hoped that the present thesis will make a contribution to the growing body of work dealing with Fried’s life and work and that ideas developed here will aid future research in literary, exile and translation studies.

The temporal distance between his early experiences and the moment in which Fried decided to commit them to paper could have had a corrosive effect. Memories included or more importantly, communicated by his essays and short stories, as in the short story ‘Läzchen’ and some of his poetry, for instance in the collection *Höre, Israel!*, have attracted or lost a part of their message in the process of memory narration. This suggests a further conclusion—that the self-reflexive content of Fried’s literary oeuvre contains genuine as well as simulated, or performed, elements of his identity. Notions of outrage and hopelessness created an impulse which drove Fried to employ a familiar image, for instance that of Jews as victims of a pogrom, and destabilise it by placing it within the anti-Zionist narrative and using it as a parallel to the suffering of the Palestinian refugees. This approach productively upsets the ‘accepted’

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interpretations in order to produce a dynamic multiplicity of identities, socialist, Jewish, humanist, which remain irreducible to any individual version, but rather a combination of ‘selves’.\(^{755}\) In the act of cognitive triumph for the author as well as for the reader, it has been demonstrated that Fried, for instance in his anti-Zionist poetry, realised and produced an image of moral and ethical dystopia stimulating and altering the reader’s sensibility to injustice and repression, perceived to be taking place in the Middle East. The epiphanic insight into the moral decline and alienation of the global society, ultimately related to the reader for instance in his anti-Vietnam War and in his anti-Zionist poetry, had already been experienced by Fried himself, in the sense that his self-reflexivity during the creative process stimulated his self-knowledge. It has been found that in his later politically engaged poetry, Fried simultaneously deconstructs his identity and sets about creating the identity he intends to inhabit. Moreover, the kaleidoscope of Fried’s identities is constructed not only of selves made up of references objectively found in Fried’s life and work, but also made up of Fried’s agency, i.e. his consent to be represented by his actions as an engaged author.

Fried’s later politically overt poetry has also been evaluated from the perspective of human potential to reinterpret historical events and enlighten/be enlightened in the process of re-interpretation. The idea of enlightenment in Fried’s work might at the same time hint at messianic tendencies, present in Fried’s Jewish cultural heritage. The *Vexierbild* image here reflects a mixture of socialist (political) and Jewish (religious) features. Fried transfers the fruits of this enlightenment, i.e. of his self-understanding, back into the semantic content of his writings. In his letters elucidating and defending his anti-Zionist writings, Fried notes the chimera of rights and responsibilities which form the dominant discourse in the Jewish

contemporary world. Moreover, he perceives the harsh improbability of producing ‘radical alterity’\textsuperscript{756} within contemporary mainstream public opinion relating to the conflict in the Middle East or relating to the alternatives to the political reality in Europe and world-wide.\textsuperscript{757}

As this thesis has attempted to demonstrate, there were many faces of Fried apparent at different times of his professional and private life. Their appearances and reappearances in his writings are similar to a picture puzzle, with seemingly disparate elements coming together to offer aspects of Fried’s identity. The richness inherent in the main concept used in the title of the current research—\textit{Vexierbild}—points to the fact that there is not one, but that there are many ‘Frieds’ and that while the present thesis may not have captured all of the ‘hidden faces’ it has attempted to capture the dynamic with which they combine in Fried’s literary work.

\textsuperscript{756} Keith Ansell Pearson, ibid., pp. 180–211.
\textsuperscript{757} The narrowing divide between the socio-liberal and conservative trends.
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The following bibliography lists primary material which was used in the writing of this thesis by date of publication.

For ease of reference, Erich Fried’s translation work is grouped together in a separate section together with related originals, and listed by author and date of publication.

Other primary material is subdivided into sections with regards to the nature of the material (anthologies, archival material, exile periodicals, recorded speeches, etc.). Each group lists material by author/editor in alphabetical order and date of publication, unless otherwise stated.

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