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**THE "REALITY" OF CULTURAL VIOLENCE
IN THE NOVELS OF HEINRICH BÖLL**

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I offer a different perspective on the works of the acclaimed German author Heinrich Böll. I propose that a form of violence called cultural violence accurately reflects the "reality" ("Wirklichkeit") that Böll strove to convey in his novels and that this expression of violence is a theme that unifies the author's body of works. Extensive research of existing literature corroborates the originality of this interpretation.

Cultural violence was identified by the Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung. He defines it as violence involving aspects of culture, such as ideologies and doctrines, that incite and legitimise the harm individuals or institutions cause (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 291, 295). Galtung's recognition of this form of violence came about through his research on violence and its different expressions, which is an integral component of his quest to promote peace (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 291).

While Böll passed away before Galtung developed his concept of cultural violence, he too recognised that violence could result from the covert influence of societal and structural forces (Böll, "Drei Tage" 406). Böll was particularly aware of the potential for unseen societal forces, especially ideologies, to give rise to violence, as he spent his formative years in the political turmoil of the Third Reich. He attributed the cause of these unprecedented twelve years in German history to the "idiotic blindness" of Germans to "political realities" that facilitated Hitler's rise to power (Böll, "Erinnerung" 518-519). To counter this ignorance and prevent a repetition of its violent consequences, Böll sought to draw attention to and foster an understanding of these "realities" through the concepts of the "topical" ("das Aktuelle") and the "reality" ("die Wirklichkeit"). Here, the "topical" represents the readily observable contemporary events and issues of everyday life, and it is these topics that he centred his novels on (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse und die Wirklichkeit" 71). But Böll's narratives are not just shallow reflections of current issues (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse und die Wirklichkeit" 74). To him, the "topical" was a façade that must be penetrated in order to reveal to his readers the "reality" of the hidden influences that serve to manipulate and shape it (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 71). While the origins of Böll's concepts related to the covert influence of the ideology of fascism, he later identified a number of invisible societal

forces, such as the capitalist political ideology and doctrine, religious ideology and language, as being integral to understanding the "reality". But aspects of culture are of course abstract concepts that require an agency through which to exert their influence. For Böll, this involved the second covert force that he identified as having the potential to lead to violence – structures, namely institutions (Böll, "Drei Tage" 406). It is the interaction between the cultural and institutional forces that shapes topical events and represents "reality". Examination of Böll's major works reveals the author's depiction of this interplay between the two covert forces as the incitement and legitimisation by ideologies and doctrines of the violence of institutions. Among the institutions Böll drew particular attention to are the German government and military, the church and the press.

I argue that Böll's "reality" of the shaping of the "topical" through a process in which aspects of culture are the source of the violence and institutions are the agents through which it is exerted, encapsulates Galtung's concept of cultural violence. I propose that Böll's portrayal of this "reality" serves as a unifying element in his oeuvre through its consistent presence in his novels.

INTRODUCTION

Heinrich Böll was a pre-eminent German writer, who enjoyed both critical and public success. In the course of his four-decade career he won the Nobel Prize for Literature and has more than thirty-five million books in print, translated into forty-five languages (Zachau 1; Reid, *Withdrawal* 9). Böll is not only the most popular of all modern German writers of fiction, he was also a prominent figure in the cultural and intellectual life of his country (Zachau 1; Conard, *Understanding Böll* 15). As an author, Böll used his broad literary platform to share his analysis of events and issues in contemporary West German society (Böll, "Drei Tage im März" 401, "Deutsche Meisterschaft" 338). Hence, Böll's novels are more than simply interesting, readable and poignant stories (Ziolkowski 214). They also reflect his opinion on a wide range of social themes and political issues. Böll's writing career encompassed many turbulent stages in Germany's history. Such periods of upheaval included the aftermath of the ravages of WWII, the post-war economic recovery, and in later years, left-wing terrorism. As a writer, Böll "gained his impetus from obvious injustice", and each of these issues, and more, finds a place in his narratives (Görtz 8).

Yet seemingly at odds with Böll's life-long commitment to the social criticism he expressed in his fictional works, is his statement that basically only two themes interested him as an author: "love and religion" (Böll, "Kein Schreihals vom Dienst sein" 68). Indeed love, both romantic and family-centred, is an integral element of every novel, as is religion, particularly Catholicism, as a faith and as an institution (Butler, "Conservative Moralism" 2). The constant presence of love and religion in Böll's writings is undeniable, however the significance and prominence of these themes in the author's narratives varies, with scholars and reviewers often interpreting this role as falling to other subjects. While there are conflicting opinions expressed in the large number of scholarly studies of Böll's work as to a recurring theme in his oeuvre, one is frequently remarked on. This is the author's antagonism towards institutions, especially the institutions he described as the "trinity of the State, the Army and the Church" (Böll, "Schwierigkeiten mit der Brüderlichkeit" 469). Böll is, as Michael Butler notes, astonishingly consistent in his depiction "of a society in which its political, social and religious institutions are in drastic need of correction" (Butler, "The Conservative

Moralist" 2). Similarly, the works of Karsten Schlotmann and Lawrence F. Glatz highlight the frequent portrayal of the adverse effects of institutions on society in the author's novels.¹

Insight into the seeming disparity between Böll's opinion as to the overarching themes of his novels and that cited by literary scholars can be gained through consideration of the influences that shaped the author as a writer and a man. According to Böll, "the elements of human life" experienced in the "innocent and naïve state" of youthfulness are crucial in the development of a writer (Böll, "Werkstattgespräch mit Horst Bienek" 15). For him, this formative period was the economically, socially and politically turbulent Germany of the 1920s and 30s (Butler, "Wir wollen abschwören allem Irrsinn" 8). At first glance, the turmoil of these two decades could be attributed to the actions of the institutions that scholars such as Michael Butler comment on (Butler, "The Conservative Moralists" 2). The Weimar government contributed to the economic and social chaos of the 1920s, and the Nazi government and its military were responsible for the political upheaval that prevailed from 1933 (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 5; Butler, "The Conservative Moralists" 4). Similarly, Böll's experiences of growing up during this period also explain his perception that love and religion are the dominant themes of his novels. It was the love, strength and solidarity of his family, and their devotion to Catholicism that sustained him through this time (Reid, *A German* 19). But a closer examination of Böll's early years reveals a common thread between the author's and the scholars' interpretations of a recurrent theme in his works. Ideologies connect the harm associated with institutions during this chaotic period. The capitalist political ideology and economic doctrine shaped the economic policies of the Weimar government that exacerbated the economic turmoil of the Great Depression in Germany (Zimmerman and Saafeld 309-310). The political ideology of fascism justified the violence of the National Socialist government and its military. Similarly, an ideology links religion and love. It was a religious ideology that focusses on biblical teachings that emphasise the "Zärtlichkeit" ("tenderness/ affection") between individuals and the importance of

¹ Karsten Schlotmann. *Recht und Gerechtigkeit im Werk Heinrich Bölls*. Nomos, 2008. Lawrence F. Glatz. *Heinrich Böll als Moralist: die Funktion von Verbrechen und Gewalt in seinen Prosawerken*. P. Lang, 1999.

family that offered Böll solace during the economic upheaval and the time of the Third Reich (Böll, "Drei Tage" 393; Conard, *Heinrich Böll*, 17-18).

The significance of ideologies in Böll's life is further supported by the concepts of the "topical" ("das Aktuelle") and the "reality" ("die Wirklichkeit") that governed the author's depiction of contemporary issues in his novels and formed the basis of his social criticism. Böll described himself as a "leidenschaftlicher Zeitgenosse" ("passionate contemporary") and centred his narratives on contemporary events (Böll, "Drei Tage" 401). But he recognised that the superficial façade of topical issues did not provide an adequate picture and understanding of the "reality" of the at times dangerous influences that had manipulated and shaped them. He believed that as a writer he was obligated to reveal this "reality" (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse und die Wirklichkeit" 73).

The origin of Böll's concepts of the "topical" and the "reality" can be traced back to the political turmoil of his youth. He attributed the rise of fascism in the early 1930s to Germans' "blindness" to the political realities of the ideology that lay hidden behind the façade of Germany's economic recovery and restoration of national pride (Böll, "Eine deutsche Erinnerung" 518-519). After experiencing and witnessing the fascist horror that he believed had been facilitated by ignorance of the "reality", Böll dedicated himself to raising awareness of what the superficiality of the "topical" obscures (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 75). Examination of Böll's novels shows that the author's concern was not restricted to the "reality" associated with fascism. He recognised other ideologies and doctrines as having the potential to cause harm to German individuals and society. Notable amongst these aspects of culture are the capitalist political ideology and economic doctrine, religious ideology, and language. This leads to the question of how these abstract concepts can influence issues and adversely impact people's lives. The Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung provides an answer.

In 1990 Galtung identified a complex form of violence that is embedded in the very fabric of society, which involves aspects of culture, such as ideologies and doctrines, that incite and legitimise the harm individuals or institutions cause (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 291, 295). He named this expression of harm cultural violence. Although Böll had died before Galtung developed his concept of cultural violence, there is a close correlation between the author's understanding of the way ideologies and

doctrines impact the "topical", and Galtung's violence taxonomy.² Böll too recognised that the covert influences that could lead to violence were not restricted to societal forces, such as ideologies. He also identified structural agents as potential sources of harm (Böll, "Drei Tage" 406). It is the interaction between these two covert forces that he draws attention to in his novels as the unseen "reality" that is hidden by and shapes topical issues. In a process that closely aligns with Galtung's concept of cultural violence, Böll's works portray the "reality" as the influence of ideologies and doctrines to incite and justify the violence of institutions, specifically the government, the military, the church and the press.

It is perhaps no surprise that existing scholarship on Böll's novels does not afford cultural violence the significant role proposed in this thesis. The majority of the extensive reviews and critiques of Böll's work occurred prior to Galtung's completion of his classification of violence's different forms. Nevertheless, some critics remark in passing on this expression of violence in the context of aspects of culture such as the political ideology of fascism, that serve to justify instances of the institutional harm depicted in individual narratives. Understandably, such descriptions of violence do not reference the term cultural violence. But reviews published after 1990 that highlight violence in Böll's novels still focus on institutions as the source of the harm, rather than aspects of culture.³ While Böll and many of his critics were ignorant of Galtung's formal identification and classification of the concept of cultural violence, this does not belie its presence and significance in the author's literary works.

Chapter 1 clarifies the meaning of the word violence and lays the foundation for the interpretation and contextualisation of the concepts of Böll's "reality" and Galtung's cultural violence in the author's novels. Here, I explain that while there are many opinions as to what the term violence describes, the different schools of thought can be broadly categorised into groups. Each category provides an appreciation of the position of Galtung's theories in the interpretive spectrum of violence. Integral to the discussion of violence is Böll's understanding of the concept. I address this topic and draw parallels between Böll and Galtung's interpretations of the term violence and

² Böll passed away 5 years prior to Galtung's formal classification of cultural violence.

³ Examples include Glatz's book, *Heinrich Böll als Moralist: die Funktion von Verbrechen und Gewalt in seinen Prosawerken*, which was published in 1999 and Schlotmann's 2008 work *Recht und Gerechtigkeit im Werk Heinrich Bölls*.

demonstrate their mutual appreciation of its many different expressions. I detail the alignment of their opinions on one form in particular, Böll's recognition of the violence societal and structural forces cause and Galtung's concept of cultural violence. I explain the author's concept of the "reality" in the context of this expression of violence and underline the striking similarity between the "reality" and cultural violence.

The remainder of the thesis analyses the presence and significance of a "reality" reflecting cultural violence in the themes of Böll's major works. I selected the novels examined to reflect the forty-year span of Böll's literary career and to include all his most critically acclaimed novels. To fulfill these criteria, I included two works, *Ende einer Dienstfahrt* (*End of a Mission*) and *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* (*The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*), which are usually referred to as novellas.

The novels are:

- *Der Zug war pünktlich* (*The Train was on Time*). 1949⁴
- *Wo warst du Adam?* (*Where Were You Adam?*). 1949
- *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* (*And Never Said a Word*). 1953
- *Haus ohne Hüter* (*The Unguarded House*). 1954
- *Billard um halb zehn* (*Billiards at Half Past Nine*). 1959
- *Ansichten eines Clowns* (*The Clown*). 1963
- *Ende einer Dienstfahrt* (*The End of a Mission*). 1966
- *Gruppenbild mit Dame* (*Group Portrait with a Lady*). 1971
- *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* (*The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum*). 1974
- *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* (*The Safety Net*). 1979
- *Frauen vor Flußlandschaft* (*Women in a River Landscape*). 1985

Chapters 2-6 each examine the influence of one aspect of culture on the "reality" behind the façade of the "topical" or contemporary issues Böll drew attention to in his novels. Using Galtung's violence theories as an interpretive framework, I begin each chapter with an explanation of the cultural violence associated with the relevant ideology or doctrine. I go on to describe the historical context and the impact on Böll personally of this violence. I then explain Böll's understanding of how each aspect of

⁴ Date the novel was first published.

culture serves to incite and justify the violent actions of one or more institutions, the nature of the harm inflicted and the victims of this violence. Against this general background, I turn to Böll's novels. I examine the presence and significance in his works of the "reality" of the covert influence of an ideology or doctrine exerted through the agency of institutions, in the context of the relevant topical issue. Chapter 2 looks at the influence of language-based cultural violence on the lexicon Böll employed in writing his novels. Chapters 3 and 4 detail the political ideologies of fascism and capitalism and the violence they legitimise, while chapter 5 examines the suffering the capitalist economic doctrine sanctions. The final chapter deals with the violence emanating from religious ideology.

The conclusion of the thesis underlines and draws together the points made in support of the proposal that Böll's concept of the "reality" closely aligns with Galtung's concept of cultural violence, and that this expression of violence is a theme that unites Böll's oeuvre.

CHAPTER 1. THE CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE

In 1975 Böll asked "What is violence?" (Böll, "Drei Tage" 405). Had he asked this question today, there would still be no consensus in the replies he received (Böll, "Drei Tage" 405; R. Wolff 602). Universal in the various definitions of violence is the essential element of causing harm. But opinions diverge as to whether the harm can be psychological as well as physical in nature, if individuals are the only source of violence and whether violence describes an action or a process.

For the most part the harm is understood to be only physical. This interpretation is evident in dictionaries, such as the *Australian Oxford Dictionary*, which commonly define "violence" as acts of physical force.⁵ Similarly, most violence scholars restrict their interpretation of violence to its physical expression. As to the source of the violence, and whether the term represents an action or a process, there are two schools of thought.

One group of theorists regards violence as arising from the single definitive act of an individual which harms another individual (Keane 35). They hold the view that "violence is an action" (Keane 35). Some scholars then add further layers of complexity through caveats. Such provisions include the exclusion of the "use of force" stemming from a legitimate authority such as a government (Wolff 606). Others discount the unintentional infliction of injury or suffering (J.Harris 19). Nevertheless, not everyone who views violence as an action restricts their interpretation to physical acts. In 2002, the World Health Organisation declared violence a major and growing global health problem and adopted a single action-based definition of the concept of violence that included psychological as well as physical violence.⁶

The second cohort of theorists considers the context of the violence and instead of one agent, they emphasise the role of multiple agents, which while not readily

⁵ Violence: "Behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage or kill". *Australian Oxford Dictionary* (1443).

⁶ The World Health Organisation's definition of violence is "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, ... that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (Rutherford 676).

apparent, can incite an individual to act violently. These scholars identify an ever-widening arc of sources, from political and religious institutions to societal influences and culture, whose influence can lead to violence (Swidler 273; Martin et al. 116-117). This school of thought holds violence as a process. Here again, there is a focus on violence in its physical form.

As these diverse and "inherently confused" opinions illustrate, restrictive interpretations that limit the nature and source of violence preclude a universally accepted definition of the term (Wolff 602). In contrast, Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung, offers what he calls "an extended concept of violence", which he developed over two decades in his quest to understand violence and promote peace (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 291). His broad concept not only brings together the different natures of violence but also seeks to demonstrate its many sources.

The foundation of Galtung's "extended concept" is his definition of the word "violence". According to Galtung, violence can be both physical and psychological in nature, as "violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (Galtung, "Violence" 168).⁷

Similarly, Galtung recognises that violence can be an action or a process (Galtung, "Violence" 170). He classifies violence as an action as direct violence, and that of a process as indirect violence (Galtung, "Violence" 170). He describes direct violence as the action of an individual, who, on his own initiative, harms someone else, resulting in the physical or psychological impairment of their victim (Galtung, "Violence" 170). Thus, direct violence is overt, as its source is readily visible as a person. Indirect violence is a less obvious form of violence than its "direct" counterpart. Its source is a structure, which can range in size from entire nations to institutions and even smaller organisations (Galtung, "Violence" 175-76). As the violence is still exerted by an individual, who is acting as the structure's agent, its original source may not be readily

⁷ "Potential" is determined by the contemporary resources available (Galtung, "Violence" 169). He gives the example of life expectancy (Galtung, "Violence" 169). In his opinion a thirty-year lifespan in the Neolithic period is not an expression of violence, but in a contemporary society it would constitute violence, regardless of the cause (Galtung, "Violence" 169).

identifiable (Galtung, "Violence" 170, 177). Galtung also classifies indirect violence as institutional or structural violence (Galtung, "Violence" 176).

As Galtung looked more deeply into the sources and causes of violence, he became aware of a variety of cultural elements that enable and justify violence in its many forms. He classed this type of violence as cultural violence. He describes it as violence involving aspects of culture that incite or legitimise direct or structural [institutional] violence" (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 291, 295).⁸ The cultural elements Galtung cites as having the potential to lead to cultural violence are religion and ideology, language and art, empirical and formal science [such as economic doctrine and mathematics] (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 291).

Galtung identified two mechanisms through which the aspects of culture can sanction the other forms of violence. The first is through reframing the morality of the violence to make it "look, even feel right – or at least not wrong" (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 291). Here Galtung cites the example of cultural violence based on religious ideology. Religious writings, authorities and teachings engender the concept of the "Chosen", those closer to a faith's God, and the "Unchosen" (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 295-6). The faithfuls' perception of being chosen by God has the potential to be translated into a "vicious" expression of cultural violence through the ideological incitement and justification of direct and indirect institutional violence toward the "Unchosen" (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 297). The other mechanism through which cultural aspects can legitimise violence is by "obscuring" the violence by "making it less visible and diminishing the focus on it" or rendering it "opaque" (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 292). To clarify this second mechanism, Galtung refers to language. He cites the use of euphemisms, or "pale words", such as "killing" for "genocide" and "Holocaust", to cloud the image of the violence it refers to (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 292).

Cultural violence completed Galtung's "extended concept of violence", but his study of violence continued. He turned to the interaction between cultural, indirect and direct violence. He recognised that each type of violence interacts with the other two forms through causation and enhancement of violence to form a single comprehensive

⁸ Galtung was at pains to point out that cultural violence refers only to aspects of culture, rather than entire cultures (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 291).

violence entity (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 295). It is through his identification of this complex interplay between the three forms of violence that he explains the potential of aspects of culture to instigate the violence of institutions and individuals (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 295). While Galtung's interpretation of violence is still one of many, it is "widely uncontested" in the academic sphere of peace studies, in which an understanding of the term is pivotal (Confortini 333).

Böll was unaware of Galtung's theories but he was no stranger to violence.⁹ The author's lifespan (1917-1985) encompassed many violent events in German history. His early years were spent in the milieu of the privation, hunger, social unrest and violence integral to the hyperinflation of the 1920s, the Great Depression and the rise of fascism, Hitler and the Third Reich. As a young man Böll experienced the horrors of WWII as an enlisted soldier in the Wehrmacht. Later in life he was embroiled in the political unrest and terrorist violence in West Germany during the late 1960s and early 70s (N.Harris 200). Through these events Böll developed a clear understanding of physical violence. But like Galtung, he also recognised that violence was not restricted to harm that resulted in somatic injuries (Böll, "Drei Tage" 405). The psychological trauma he experienced in response to the brutality of the fascist ideology, had made him aware that the term also applied to the impairment of mental health (Böll, "Drei Tage" 407, 368-372). Böll's appreciation of psychological violence was out of step with German society's "tacit agreement that the only form of violence that is acceptable to consider is visible [physical] violence" (Böll, "Gewalten, die auf der Bank liegen" 605). Böll was also aware that psychological violence and physical violence are not always discrete entities but could interact to incite or enhance each other. This interplay between the two expressions of violence is a major theme in his 1974 novel *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum*.¹⁰

Böll's view that violence could be both physical and psychological in nature was not the only point of congruence between his beliefs and Galtung's. The author recognised that there are different sources and hence different types of violence. Böll

⁹ In 1975 Böll lamented that "Regrettably as yet there isn't a basic definition" of the term violence (Böll, "Drei Tage" 407).

¹⁰ The 1974 *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum*, depicts how psychological violence leads a young woman to commit physical violence, in this instance, murder.

was aware that violence is not only the readily visible act in which an individual inflicts harm, but that it often involves a more complex process. He realised that there are unseen factors, such as systemic and structural influences that have the potential to incite people to harm others (Böll, "Drei Tage" 406). Böll underlined the importance of the recognition of the less visible forms of violence in his essay, "Der Zeitgenosse und die Wirklichkeit". In this paper, he distinguishes between the superficial "topical" or "das Aktuelle", that describes the readily visible issues of day-to-day life, and the deeper level of the "reality" or "die Wirklichkeit" that impacts our lives, (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse und die Wirklichkeit" 71-72). The "reality" is the influence of unseen forces to manipulate and shape the observable current events (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 71-72). Böll was adamant that "active engagement" with the "topical" was the key to "decipher" the "reality" that lay behind it (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 71). But he believed that many found the effort of this too much of a burden or were tormented by the thought that what they discovered would be unpleasant (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 74). To him, however, this task was essential, as he was convinced that the "reality" of the present determines that of the future (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 72-74). He likened those that accept the façade of the "topical" with no thought as to its origins or consequences to children who are oblivious to the threats they face now and that lie ahead (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 71-72).

The origins of Böll's steadfast belief in the importance of recognising the "reality" came to light in a 1976 interview. In this discussion he describes the concepts of the "Aktuelle" and the "Wirklichkeit" as his response to counter a repetition of what he regarded as the circumstances that led to the violence and suffering in Germany and Europe between 1933 and 1945. He was convinced that "the idiotic blindness of the bourgeoisie" to "political realities and developments" had facilitated the fascist government's rise to power in the early 1930s (Böll, "Eine deutsche Erinnerung" 518-519). Böll is arguing that Germans had accepted the façade of their country's economic recovery and surging national pride. They were reluctant to cast doubt on this reassuring superficial image and gain insight into the "reality" of the dangers posed by the covert influence of the fascist ideology that had shaped it. As a result of the enormous suffering that Böll attributed to Germans' ignorance of the "reality", he saw it as his duty as a writer to reveal the "reality" to those unable or unwilling to take on this task and raise awareness of present and future threats to man and mankind (Böll,

"Der Zeitgenosse" 72-74, "Drei Tage" 405). The "topical" formed the starting point from which Böll crafted his novels (Böll, "Werkstattgespräch mit Bienek" 23). All his works are set in contemporary Germany and centred on topical issues (Reid, "Time" 477). Böll then engaged with the "topical" through the skills he was endowed with as a writer to tease out the "facts" and build a picture of the "reality" hidden behind the façade of the "topical" (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 72-73). To fulfill what he regarded as his obligation, Böll wove this "reality" into his narratives so that it shines through their complicated storylines (Böll, *Querschnitte* 92).

The principles of the "topical" and the "reality" dominated Böll's life as he sought to actively engage with and analyse current issues that affected the lives of Germans (Van der Will, "Embattled Intellectual" 41-42; Böll, "Drei Tage" 401). While his original motive for the portrayal of what the "topical" concealed was to prevent a resurgence of fascism, examination of his works reveals that he did not stop there. Perceiving both society and mankind as being "constantly threatened by prevailing doctrines and ideologies", Böll underlined the influence on current events and issues of other aspects of culture (*Aachener Volkszeitung*; Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 71-72). Language, economic doctrine, religious ideology and the political ideology of capitalism, and the violence they sanction, all play a significant role in the themes of his works. But ideologies are abstract concepts. They require an intermediary to influence contemporary events. Here, the second covert force that Böll identified as a potential source of violence, namely institutions, comes into play (Böll, "Drei Tage" 406). In his novels, Böll portrays the "reality" as the covert influence of ideologies and doctrines on the "topical" in terms of the institutional violence they incite and sanction (Böll, "Der Zeitgenosse" 71-72). These institutions are the government, the military, the church and the press.

I argue that the "reality" Böll depicts in his works closely parallels Galtung's concept of cultural violence. Both concepts describe comparable processes of violence, with aspects of culture as the source of the violence and institutions as the agency exerting it.

CHAPTER 2. LANGUAGE

Cultural violence involving language is a subtler process than that associated with other aspects of culture, such as political and religious ideologies. In the absence of tangible teachings and writings to sanction or incite violence, language's role in cultural violence is more abstract. It legitimises violence through terms that minimise or misrepresent the harm individuals and institutions inflict, to make their actions "look right, even feel right – or at least not wrong" (Galtung, "Cultural Violence" 292, 291). Some words understate the violence they represent, such as the Nazis' term "racial cleansing" for their policy that led to the near annihilation of European Jewry ("Nazi Racial Science"). Other terms are euphemisms that obscure the violence they refer to by using words that are unrelated to harm. One instance is the Nazis' term "Reichssicherheitshauptamt" which, translated, is the "Reich's Head Office for Safety", but in reality was the Nazi department that was the administration hub for the "racial cleansing" (Conard, *Heinrich Böll*, 29). Unlike the other expressions of cultural violence discussed in this thesis, Böll's primary concern with linguistic cultural violence was not warning others of its "reality" but overcoming it himself. Hence, the impact of language and the violence it legitimises is most evident in the literary style and lexicon of Böll's works, rather than their themes.

When Böll began his career as an author in the aftermath of WWII, he faced the challenge of developing a lexicon that did not perpetuate the Nazis' linguistic violence. He had to craft his literary works while being ever mindful of the everyday terms the fascists had used to conceal the extent and brutality of their violence and which now evoked memories of the horror of the preceding twelve years (Conard, *Heinrich Böll* 28). Some examples are the official Nazi public communiques that included the terms "Umsiedlung" ("resettlement") for deportation to "Lager" ("camps") and "Heilerziehungsanstalten" ("health facilities"), which were sites of mass murder (Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*; Conard, *Heinrich Böll* 28). Similarly, within the fascist bureaucracy, "Endlösung" ("final solution") and "Sonderbehandlung" ("special treatment") replaced the words "extermination" and "liquidation" (Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*). Such was the degradation of German, that Böll went so far as to advocate that one word, "anständig" ("decent/respectable"), should be removed from the

German dictionary, as he believed that the fascists had immutably debased the term (Böll, "Wo ist dein Bruder" 172).¹¹

As a result of the Nazis' linguistic cultural violence, in the immediate post-war years Böll and other German writers had to find a way to overcome the "depravity and untruthfulness" of their native tongue (Böll, "Jahrgang 1922" 340). To circumvent this significant obstacle, they cast aside German literary traditions and began afresh with a linguistic "clean slate" or literary "Kahlschlag" ("clearing") (Hewitt and Wasserman 173; Reid, *A German* 53).¹² For Böll, the search for a humane and "habitable" language was a dilemma, yet he believed that writers of conscience could not only succeed in this search but had an obligation to do so (Böll, "Die Sprache" 301-305). The solution to this quandary for him and many other authors of this period was to write in short, simple sentences couched in colloquial, elemental German (Conard, *Heinrich Böll* 31, 34). Scholar James H. Reid describes the unadorned lexicon and literary style of the era as "economical to the point of understatement" (Reid, *A German* 52). Böll's choice of the simple vernacular of everyday Germans enabled him to push through the linguistic barriers of the past (Nägele and Silberman 58). Ever mindful of the power and potential of individual terms to be both divisive and destructive, he continued to use this "communicable anti-elitist language" throughout his career (Böll, "Die Sprache als Hort der Freiheit" 301-302).

¹¹ One instance of the fascists' corruption of "anständig" was Heinrich Himmler's use of the term to describe the behaviour of the S.S. men while killing a thousand civilians (Reid, *A German* 128)

¹² "Kahlschlag" is a term coined by German author Wolfgang Weyrauch and refers to the requisite clearing of a forest before it can be regenerated (Hewitt and Wasserman 173).

CHAPTER 3. THE POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF FASCISM

Relevant to any discussion of Böll and cultural violence, is the consideration of fascism, the political ideology that gave rise to his concepts of the "topical" and the "reality" and their significance in his works and his life.

Among the countries that have based their system of governance on fascism, substantial interpretive differences have led to various national versions of the ideology (Stackelberg 24). But of all the different expressions of fascism, Historian Roderick Stackelberg describes the National Socialists' as the "most extreme and virulent" (25). The Nazis' fascist ideology focused on the interrelated tenets of nationalism, racism, and militarism (Caplan 28; N. Wolff 86). Nationalism is a concept that emphasises loyalty to a nation that outweighs other individual or group interests (Kohn). But the brand of nationalism the National Socialists promoted clearly defined nationhood along racial rather than geographical lines (Kohn; N.Wolff 86). The race was the ill-defined but "inherently superior" Aryan race (Stackelberg 19, 54). The National Socialists' tenet on racism legitimised the elimination of those who did not fit the Aryan ethnic profile (Stackelberg 19).¹³ Jews were specific targets, along with Roma, Sinti and Slavs (Kershaw, "Hitler and the Uniqueness of Nazism" 250).¹⁴ The third core tenet of the National Socialists' fascist ideology was aggressive militarism. Militarism describes a country's "inclination toward military action to settle or initiate conflict" (Galtung, "Cultural" 296). The Nazis' confrontational military stance was linked to their ideological emphasis on nationalism and racism. Justified by the conviction that they belonged to a superior race, the fascists regarded their nation's interests as paramount, regardless of the cost to others (Stackelberg 54; N. Wolff 86). One of these interests was to extend the Reich and ensure adequate "Lebensraum" ("living space") for its citizens to secure Germany's independence and economic success (Buchheim 25).

¹³ Racism is a belief that a particular race or ethnicity is inferior or superior to others ("Racism: Definition, Research and Laws" 1)

¹⁴ Until the last days of the war, the "destruction of the Jews remained a centrepiece of [Hitler's] thinking" (Kershaw, *Hitler* 188).

Böll and his family saw through the façade of the Nazis' stated objectives of the creation of a culturally and racially uniform, militant Germany that strived for national reconstruction following the economic turmoil and record unemployment of the Weimar government (Stackelberg 119). For the young Böll, the "reality" behind the Nazis' promises was living under the fascists' terrorisation of his hometown of Cologne and the threat of war, which he believed was the inevitable consequence of the ideology (Böll, "Im grisenden Swinegel-Land" 185; Reid, *A German* 22). The brutality that fascism justified during the twelve years of the Third Reich had such a profound effect on the author that he described it as "a trauma from which I could not recover" (Böll "Im grisenden Swinegel-Land" 185). Even four years before his death he still spoke of his insurmountable fear of fascism. He described his ongoing "unconquerable aversion" to the fascists, who repelled him on "every level...conscious and instinctive, aesthetic and political" (Böll, *Was soll aus dem Jungen werden* 8). Afraid of a resurgence of the ideology, throughout the four decades of his writing career Böll constantly reminded older Germans and informed younger generations of the violent repercussions that "blindness" to what lays behind the "topical" had led to in the past and could lead to in the future (Böll, "Erinnerung" 518-519). There is scarcely a short story, interview or novel in which the author does not address the "reality" of the violence associated with the ideology of fascism.

Böll's first two published novels, *Der Zug war pünktlich* (*The Train was on Time*) and *Wo warst du Adam?*, (*Where were You Adam?*) are classified as the author's war novels (Reid, *Withdrawal* 26-27). Both are set during the last two years of the conflict, when the tide of the war had turned against Germany. In contrast to other contemporary German authors, Böll does not glorify battle or describe acts of heroism (Nahrgang 50). The sparsely depicted scenes of combat describe confusion rather than organised conflict (Nahrgang 54). The narratives' settings are mostly far from the front, in the barracks, trains and hospitals where much of the soldiers' time was spent (Nahrgang 50). Yet within this framework of passivity Böll is still able to convey the brutality of the violence that fascism incited and legitimised. The violence that he draws attention to does not involve clashes with foreign armies but that meted out by the German Government and military toward their own citizens - Germany's troops and the nation's Jewry.

Der Zug war pünktlich conveys what lies behind the image of fearless German troops fighting for the Fatherland on the Eastern battlefield, which German propaganda propagated and other contemporary fictional works by German authors perpetuated. From its opening pages, the novel pierces the façade created by Goebbels, which was designed to regain the nation's support and enthusiasm for the war after Germany's defeat in Stalingrad.¹⁵ The Reich Minister for Propaganda exhorted Germans to emulate the "faith, bravery and unchanging conviction" of German soldiers ("German Propaganda Archive"). The novel shatters this image through its depiction of what Böll believed to be the prevailing sentiment of the country's troops: utter passivity, hopelessness and desolation (Nahrgang 50, 51). Their "unchanging conviction" is the certainty of their imminent demise (Böll, *Der Zug* 5, 20). The main setting of *Der Zug war pünktlich* is a troop train (Nahrgang 50-51). But this train is no longer just a means of transport, it also represents death's waiting room.

Like Böll, protagonist Andreas's ardent opposition to the government's ideology of fascism does not confer him exemption from the violence the ideology sanctions (Böll, *Der Zug* 14; Yuill 142).¹⁶ As he boards the train, Andreas is overwhelmed by the belief that he is beginning his final journey in life, a view that he re-iterates throughout the narrative (Böll, *Der Zug* 5). Many of Andreas's comrades share his opinion and are silent: "It was the silence of those who knew that all was lost" (20). The soldiers' inertia is in stark contrast to the unstoppable momentum of the fascist war machine, which has the troops firmly within its grasp as it speeds through town after town, counting down the stops to their inevitable fate. The quietness of the carriages is shattered by the "sonorous" voices of the announcers at every station on the journey (14,5). To Andreas, the strident voices are those of "the divine brute"

¹⁵ Joseph Goebbels was the Reich Minister for People's Enlightenment and Propaganda (Tyrell 40).

¹⁶ Böll's abhorrence of fascism did not spare him from conscription and six years of life as a private in the Wehrmacht (Nahrgang 58; Reid, *A German* 29; Böll, *Querschnitte* 39; Conard, *Heinrich Böll* 20-21). During the war Böll experienced the horror of life at the front and was wounded four times (Conard, *Heinrich Böll* 20-21). His refuge from the fascist engendered mayhem was to distance himself mentally, as a form of "innere Migration" ("internal migration") (Böll, "Drei Tage" 369). On two occasions he also distanced himself physically, deserting twice towards the end of the war (Conard, *Heinrich Böll* 20-21). For Böll, the declaration of peace on May 8, 1945 represented liberation from the terror of fascism and the institutional violence it had sanctioned, rather than defeat (Reid *A German* 35).

Hitler and "might just as well be saying: the next ten thousand into the slaughterhouse please" (12, 21). To him, the slaughterhouse is the battlefield in which he cowered in fear, with nowhere to hide from the horrible mockery of the indescribably horrific war (135). The final paragraph of *Der Zug war pünktlich* describes Andreas and his friends' arrival at their final destination - death (137).

Böll viewed the war with contempt (Böll, "Ansichten eines Autors" 39). In *Der Zug war pünktlich*, he reveals to contemporary and future readers what Germany's troops recognised and experienced: the "reality" of despair and death, which the ideology's tenets of nationalism and aggressive militarism legitimised. *Der Zug war pünktlich* is so different to other German fictional portrayals of WWII that two prominent authors, Alfred Andersch and Ingeborg Bachmann denied its classification as a war novel (Nahrgang 50). But others view the novel differently. Philosopher Jochen Schubert describes the work as the depiction of the "cruel, absurd and senseless" violence of WWII" (Schubert 91).

Böll continues the portrayal of the Nazi government's violence toward their own troops in *Wo warst du Adam?*. But the novel's most significant theme addresses the fascism's third tenet: racism. *Wo warst du Adam?* depicts what the façade of the creation of a racially uniform Germany concealed: the fascist legitimised murder of over six million Jews by the country's government at the hands of its military. The novel was one of the first works of German fiction to describe the Holocaust and arguably helped to foster the cultural shift evident after 1955, when the crimes committed under the banner of National Socialism and the guilt of Germans "became matters of free speech" (Morgan 95; Sackett 337). *Wo warst du Adam?* addresses two aspects of the Holocaust: the complex and controversial issue of accountability for the genocide and the brutality of this unprecedented expression of cultural violence.

Böll stated that during WWII he was unaware of the "incomprehensible... madness" of the Jewish genocide (Böll, "Weil dieses Volk" 243, "Erinnerung" 635).¹⁷ After the

¹⁷ Böll says he never witnessed mass Jewish transport, and while he knew of the existence of concentration camps, he thought they were solely for the Nazi regime's political opponents (Böll "Erinnerung" 635). But his claim of ignorance of the Jewish genocide is disputed by some, who point out that studies of the Wehrmacht in the East, where Böll served, leave no doubt of the army's heavy involvement in Jewish atrocities, of which, the allege, Böll probably had some knowledge (Sackett 341).

war, when he learnt of the Holocaust, he believed he was not alone in his ignorance. Böll was convinced that "very little was known about the ... terrible, bureaucratic way of killing millions of people" (Böll, "Weil dieses Volk" 243).¹⁸ But he was determined that this crime against humanity would not be forgotten by his peers or unknown to posterity (Böll, "Weil dieses Volk" 243). Böll discounted the inherent shame of Germans and the political emphasis on the future rather than the past as grounds to restore the German "blindness" that had facilitated the genocide (Böll, "Erinnerung" 518-519).

The title of *Wo warst du Adam?* ("Where were You Adam?") raises the issue of whether the cultural violence grounded in the "odious supremacist ideology" that sanctioned the Holocaust absolves the guilt of the individuals who implemented the slaughter (Stackelberg 253). "Wo warst du Adam?" is a quote from the war diaries of German philosopher and writer Theodor Haecker, who like Böll, was a devout Catholic and harsh critic of the fascist regime (Keith-Smith 1022).¹⁹ During the war, Haecker was "grief stricken over Nazi crimes" and the only things that sustained him were his faith in God and the solace he found in writing his diaries (Gibian 404). The diary excerpt in the novel concerns these fascist crimes, but mindful of his past arrest for writing anti-Nazi literature, Haecker does not directly reference the National Socialists.²⁰ The full quote is "A world catastrophe can serve many purposes. One is to find an alibi when in front of God: 'Where were you Adam?', 'I was in the World War'" (trans. Conard, *Understanding Böll* 32). Haecker's choice of the name "Adam", immediately casts the man standing before God on Judgement Day as a sinner, in keeping with his biblical namesake.²¹ In the Bible, Adam denies his guilt by assigning it to another party, Eve (Gen. 3:12). The Adam in the quote replicates this defence. He ascribes his sins to the milieu in which they were committed – the World War. In an international conflict, the violence of millions is commonly held to be legitimate violence that the political ideologies of the many nations involved sanction. Adam is claiming that the responsibility for his actions lies not with him but with his country and its ideology. As

¹⁸ Böll's conviction is in keeping with the 1995 statement of the German Federal President, Richard von Weizsäcker, who stated that "the annihilation" was shielded from the eyes of the public" (Watson 44).

¹⁹ *Tag- und Nachtbücher*. Kösel, 1947.

²⁰ Haecker was arrested in 1933 for an anti-Nazi essay (Tomko 42).

²¹ According to the Old Testament, Adam was the original sinner (Rom. 5:12).

God does not respond to Adam's reply in Haecker's account, the reader is left to consider whether a nation's ideology absolves its citizens from accountability for their actions. But in the Bible, God did answer Adam. He did not accept Adam's excuse and drove him out of the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:23). Importantly, God went on to say that as a consequence of Adam's sin, man "can now tell the difference between good and evil" (Gen. 3:22). It could be argued that through "Adam", Haecker expresses his conviction that what he called the "anti-Christian political ideology" of an "apostate Nazi government" does not rescind an individual's accountability for the actions that God has endowed you with the ability to recognise as evil (Gibian 403, 404). Böll makes clear that he shares Haecker's opinion on an individual's culpability for the war crimes they commit, through the prominence he gives this quote as the title of his novel.

Wo warst du Adam? describes the violence of those who must one day face public or Divine judgement for their involvement in the Holocaust (Böll, "Weil dieses Volk" 243). The narrative focusses on representatives of the Wehrmacht and the S.S., the two government institutions tasked with carrying out the Jewish genocide.²² The contrasting depiction of two Wehrmacht soldiers as ordinary Germans whose duties lead to their peripheral involvement in the genocide, and an S.S. commandant as an ardent fascist who actively participates in the Holocaust's implementation, offers different perspectives but the same conclusion on the question of culpability.

The novel's account of these three individuals' actions begins with the Wehrmacht soldiers and their transportation of sixty-seven Jewish men, women, and children in a small moving van to a concentration camp (Böll, *Adam* 110, 116). The soldiers are not described as callous men, but caring husbands and fathers, who share photos of their families (106). Yet the men are indifferent to hysterical screams that emanate from the van. They don't investigate the cause of these cries, just sing to block out the noise

²² The Wehrmacht was "deeply complicit" in the Holocaust, providing security, logistics, transport and in some instances killing squads (Prescott et al 4). But the extent of the participation of individual units varied from non-involvement to engaging in executions of Jews (Prescott et al 4).

The S.S (Schutzstaffel, "Protection Squad") was a select paramilitary organisation headed by Heinrich Himmler (Evans 318). Their responsibilities were the enforcement and implementation of the Government's racist directives, including the running of the death camps (Evans 318).

(106, 108). Unlike the soldiers, their "cargo" receives neither food nor water during their ten-hour confinement in the crowded van (105,109,116). The journey takes its toll. On arrival at the camp six Jews are dead (116, 118-19). When an S.S lieutenant informs the drivers that most of the camp's inmates, including their "passengers", would be dead by nightfall, they are surprised but accepting and turn the imminent slaughter into a joke (111).

The soldiers portray what Hannah Arendt describes as the "banality of evil" (Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*). At first glance, they are ordinary people carrying out their everyday transport duties. But looking beyond this unremarkable image reveals they are actually active participants in the racism that sanctioned the genocide (Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*). The soldiers dehumanise the men, women and children in their van through their choice to disregard their victims' screams, deny them water and laugh at their imminent demise. Can an ideology reframe the morality of their iniquity so that it assumes the mundane hue of their task? The novel's title answers this question. While the theoretical concept of cultural violence defines and explains the process of fascist legitimised violence, the "reality" is that it an ideology does not and cannot validate or excuse actions that God furnished us with the capacity to know are evil.

The surviving Jews' release from the van is not a reprieve. As they stumble from the vehicle they are surrounded by rows of stark buildings blanketed in silence (Böll, *Adam* 111). Nothing moves, bar the smoke that pours from the crematorium chimney (111, 110). Here they fall prey to the S.S.. In charge of the camp is Commandant Filskeit, a devoted fascist to whom orders are "sacred", including those concerning racial cleansing (114, 116). He controls the fate of the new arrivals: immediate death in the gas chambers or the slower demise of incarceration in the camp (118). Age and fitness to work play a role in his selection process, leading to the merciless forced separation of condemned Jewish children from their relatives (122). In this facility, due to Filskeit's passion for choral music, a fine singing voice is also included in the selection criteria and affords a stay of execution (118).²³ That is, until the Commandant hears the Catholic All-Saints' Litany flawlessly and fearlessly sung by one of the van's

²³ Böll's depiction of an ardent music lover in charge of a death camp references the passionate amateur violinist and architect of the Holocaust, Heinrich Himmler (Reid, *A German* 88).

passengers, Ilona, a young woman who has converted to Catholicism (123-24). This blonde Jewess, whom Filskeit and fascism class as sub-human, embodies the beauty, nobility and racial perfection he yearns for and that the ideology he is devoted to champions (123). As Ilona sings the Litany he knows so well, Filskeit is initially dazed, then filled with rage, disbelief and denial of the dichotomy she symbolises – Aryan Jews. (123). With the fraudulence of the concept of the mythical Aryan race exposed, and with it his authority, status and identity as a member of a superior race that transcends his humble origins, Filskeit acts to expunge the evidence and restore the shattered structure of his life and its guiding ideology. He empties his gun into Ilona and orders the immediate annihilation of all the Jews in the camp (123-24).

Commandant Filskeit's portrayal in *Wo warst du Adam?* chronicles, condemns, and memorialises the violence of his non-fictional peers as the indefensible barbarism of individuals that no ideology can legitimise. Similarly, the novel emphasises the inhumanity of the fascist tenet on racism that incited a genocide whose scale and brutality may well be unique (N. Wolff 104). Ilona's depiction as symbolic of an Aryan Jew highlights the artifice of this tenet that was based on the manipulation and radicalisation of the term "Aryan", which never referred to a racial category but to the linguistic grouping of Indo-European languages (Dunlap 206). Filskeit's depth of devotion to the barbaric ideology compounds rather than absolves his guilt for the violence he commits in its name. *Wo warst du Adam?* conveys Böll's conviction that "every death is a murder for which someone is responsible" (Böll, *Der Zug* 106).

Böll was at pains to point out that while the brutality inherent in the cultural violence associated with fascism led to the suffering of German soldiers and Jews, the ideology was also a source of harm for many German civilians whose racial heritage was ideologically condoned. The National Socialists "imperiously demand[ed]...the complete transformation of the whole of public life according to [their] views" (Hitler 506). Not all Germans were sympathetic to these views. Opponents of fascism came from all social and political strata, professions and trades (P. Hoffmann 57). But they were not a cohesive group and were easily suppressed by the fascists (P. Hoffmann 57). The result was the death of thousands of individuals "on guillotines, gallows and ... in concentration camps" (P Hoffmann 57). Böll's 1959 novel, *Billard um halb zehn*, depicts this violence. The work's prominent use of religious symbols also highlights Böll's condemnation of the Catholic Church's covert influence that facilitated the Nazis'

rise to power (Böll, "Nachwort zu Carl Amery" 541). It was the Catholic politician Franz von Papen who persuaded Hindenburg to accept Hitler and it was the Vatican that was the first state to recognize his Reich, through the 1933 Concordat (Reid, *A German* 22).

In *Billard um halb zehn*, the symbols of the "Buffalos", "Lambs" and "Shepherds" represent the conflicting political factions in contemporary German society leading up to, during and immediately after WWII. The novel portrays the consequences of the Nazis' nationalist tenet that the Fatherland must be a politically cohesive society. The "Buffalos" are the ardent supporters of fascism. Their victims are the "Lambs", referencing the biblical sacrificial lamb.²⁴ Members of this group are German citizens who see through the superficial image of an ideology that promises to ensure Germany's survival through national solidarity, centrality of race, and restoration of the country's pride and economy (Chamberlain). The "Lambs" recognise the inherent dangers of the ideology's basic premises (Chamberlain). They refuse to swear allegiance to the fascists through the rite of "tasting the Sacrament of the Buffalos" (40).²⁵ The "Buffalos" Sacrament ritual links the Church to the fascist's violence. The "Shepherds" are sympathetic to the "Lambs'" anti-fascist stance. The novel describes the "Shepherds" as those who "do not forsake their flock", which reflects a passage in John 21:15 and implies that the church did abandon its flock in 1933 and the "Lambs" during the war (Böll, *Billard* 39). The "Shepherds" attempt to shield the "Lambs" from the danger their ideological non-complicity poses but are no match for the violent rampaging fascist "Buffalos" (39). Two "Lambs" are whipped with barbed wire and forced into exile, while another is guillotined (45, 52, 80). The "Buffalos" round the "Shepherds" up for aiding the "politically unreasonable" "Lambs", with many "vanishing" to concentration camps (Böll, *Billard* 111). The "Shepherds'" fate alludes to that of the "Good Shepherd", Jesus Christ, who laid down his life for his sheep and is a further rebuke of the church (John 10:1-21).

Billard um halb zehn is not only a stark portrayal of the violence that a country's political ideology can sanction toward its own citizens. The novel is also a damning

²⁴ The symbol of the Lamb is one of the most important symbols in Christian iconography and refers to Christ (John 1:29). The white lamb represents innocence and purity. Jesus, the sacrificial lamb, died for the sins of humanity ("The Meaning of the Lamb Symbol").

²⁵ The Sacraments are "efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us" (*Catechism* 1131).

indictment of the church, as an institution that failed "to live up to its professed standards of moral responsibility" during the time of the Third Reich (Dietrich 1).

Böll uses one further religious symbol in *Billard um halb zehn*, an abbey, that is arguably the most significant motif in the novel. The cycle of destruction and construction of St Anton's Abbey represents the essence of the message Böll hoped to convey in *Billard um halb zehn* (Böll, "Wo ist dein Bruder" 167). This cycle symbolises the past, present and potential future impact of fascist legitimised violence on the fabric of German society. Böll's choice of a religious structure in the context of fascism's future impact of fascism reflects his contemporary criticism of the church's support for the CDU party's facilitation of the re-integration of former Nazis into positions of political influence (Böll, *Querschnitte* 138). The narrative describes in detail the abbey's pre-war construction, its destruction under the fascist regime, and reconstruction in the economic boom after the war (Böll, *Querschnitte* 113). The closing paragraph of *Billard um halb zehn* adds one last phase to this cycle, when the abbey is destroyed once more, but in effigy (Böll, *Billard* 236).

Through the abbey, Böll shares his belief that unless Germans recall and acknowledge the violent milieu fascism shaped, the "reality" of the future may be a mirror image of what has gone before (Böll, "Wo ist dein Bruder" 167). Throughout his life, Böll was fearful that the history of the Abbey of St Anton would be that of West Germany, through a resurgence of fascism and the violence it legitimises (Böll "Auferstehung des Gewissens" 133). In his later years, despite declining health, Böll was ever mindful of this possibility and retained a keen interest in political developments (Butler, "*Frauen vor Flußlandschaft*" 239). In his final novel, he portrays the realisation of his fears: the presence of the now "smarter... subtler" "Buffalos" in positions of political power (Böll, *Querschnitte* 113-114).

Frauen vor Flußlandschaft is set in the political arena of Bonn in the mid-1980s. The novel describes the political power of Nazi war criminals and "former" fascists. Some hold political office and legitimately "regieren" ("rule"), while others covertly "herrschen" ("dominate/control") through blackmail, intrigue and violence from behind the scenes (Böll, *Frauen* 120). Among those who "rule" is Blaukrämer, a former officer in charge of a machine-gun unit, who ordered his men to open fire on concentration camp survivors during the war. He is now a Federal Minister (174). Another "ex" Nazi

is Wubler, who disposed of evidence incriminating the politically influential in war crimes and is a Federal Member (24). But it is one of Hitler's youngest generals, the "bloodhound", whose presence in the political arena poses "a greater threat [to West German democracy] than the rest of them put together" (221, 236,159). He "controls" the political scene and demands obedience (160). Set against the fascist political faction is Federal member of Parliament and Ministerial Advisor, Ernest Grobsch (116). Politically left-wing and a devoted antifascist, he is serious and incorruptible (184, 94,180). Too young to be tainted by the war, he joined the fascists' political party, the loosely veiled Christian Democratic Party, to redress the faction's dialectic of hatred and to hunt down and wrest the State from the "bloodhound's" "control" (Butler, "*Frauen*" 242; Böll, *Frauen* 180, 120, 94). But Grobsch is now imbued with a cynicism born out of sadness and is almost at the point of collapse, as the fascist mayhem of guilty secrets, blackmail, political manoeuvres, and suicide continues unchecked around him (Böll, *Frauen* 125-142,180).

Böll's portrayal of this "rotteness in the state of the Federal Republic of Germany", is a theme his contemporaries for the most part avoided (Reid, *A German* 214). *Frauen vor Flußlandschaft* was the first novel to focus on the political sphere in the country's contemporary capital since Wolfgang Treppen's loosely fictionalised depiction in his 1953 novel *Das Treibhaus* (Bullivant, "Heinrich Böll" 243). The closing pages of Böll's novel encourages those whom the narrative may have helped to see through the façade of the country's bastion of democracy, to effect change to ensure "our present masters will not remain our masters forever" (Böll, *Frauen* 236). Grobsch rallies and continues his efforts to counter the fascists' influence in government. He declares that "this is the only state that we have; there's no other" (234).

Böll was adamant that "pain has not become wisdom" and that Germans had not learnt to distrust the superficial façade of the "topical", despite the consequences of their blindness in the early 1930s (Böll, *Querschnitte* 138). He was convinced that the door lay open to a resurgence of fascism and the violence it justified. Through his novels Böll leaves a legacy that informs and reminds Germans of the importance of engaging with, probing and questioning everyday events.

CAPITALISM

The term "capitalism" refers to two related concepts, a political ideology and an economic doctrine. The capitalist political ideology is, like other political ideologies such as socialism or communism, the foundation of a country's system of governance.²⁶ In the case of capitalism, the ideology creates an economic framework that facilitates, but is not essential for, the implementation of the capitalist economic doctrine (Scott).²⁷ As with any economic doctrine, the capitalist version shapes a country's economic policies. The capitalist political ideology and doctrine both have the potential to sanction the harm of institutions and individuals. The casualties of this harm may be individuals, a particular sector of the population or an entire society. The separate contribution of the ideology and doctrine to the violence that capitalism justifies is a complex issue and beyond the scope of this thesis. But in Böll's novels, two distinct threads are evident. One addresses the harm inflicted on individuals and society in the defence of the political ideology, while the other concerns the human toll of the tiered social model the economic doctrine creates. While the separation of the two themes is not absolute, it is sufficient to allow Böll's criticism of the capitalist ideology and doctrine, and the violence they legitimise to be examined and discussed separately.

CHAPTER 4. THE POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF CAPITALISM

Böll held the political ideology of capitalism responsible for the economic instability and injustices in Germany in the two decades preceding WWII (Reid, *A German* 41).

²⁶ The core tenets of the capitalist ideology are the use of markets to co-ordinate economic activity, the protection of private property rights, including the private ownership of the means of production, and the primacy of the individual (Kornai 29-30; Hernández 28).

²⁷ One example of the implementation of a capitalist economy but not through the capitalist political doctrine, occurred in Italy in the early 1920s, under Mussolini's fascist government (Schmidt 115).

He regarded the post war restoration of the economy as an opportunity to redress these issues (Balzer, *Anarchie und Zärtlichkeit* 116). His vision was to build on the contemporary unique degree of socio-economic equality of Germany's citizens to create a society that was based on Christian Socialism (Balzer, *Anarchie und Zärtlichkeit* 116; Reid, *A German* 41). But the Occupying Forces in the Western Zones of post-war Germany re-instituted the capitalist political system. While his dream of socialism was shattered, Böll did not emigrate to the east.²⁸ Instead, he committed himself to raising awareness of the "reality" shaped by the ideology of capitalism. In his novels, the majority of the harm he portrays is through the inequities of the economic doctrine whose implementation the ideology facilitated. But three works of the late 1960s and 1970s, *Ende einer Dienstfahrt*, *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* and *Fürsorgliche Belagerung*, directly criticise capitalism through themes that underline the ideology's unseen influence on artistic, political and personal freedom, and the print media (Kirchich 5).

Böll was adamant that "art is freedom" and should not be constrained by the state, the church or society (Böll, "Die Freiheit der Kunst" 228). On the contrary, he saw art's role as "breaking the taboos" by "going too far" (Böll, "Die Freiheit der Kunst" 231, 228). The founding fathers of West Germany agreed with Böll, with the country's constitution guaranteeing the freedom of all genres of expression ("German Constitution" 8).²⁹ But Böll believed that society and its institutions had violated this statute through their imposition of barriers on artistic expression (Böll, "Einführung in *Dienstfahrt*" 283). He likened these restraints to a figurative "padded cell", which denied artists their right to artistic liberty (Böll, "Einführung in *Dienstfahrt*" 283). Böll's concerns came to a head in the 1960s. He became increasingly aware of the threat to artists' freedom of expression through the government's "ominous" and largely invisible strategies to defend its political interests (Dodd 164). Böll's response was his 1966 novel *Ende einer Dienstfahrt*, which he described as a "call for action" to "blow-

²⁸ Among Böll's many reasons for not emigrating were his four-hundred-year ancestral ties to the Rhineland, the brutality of Stalin's communist regime and his belief that the West German constitution was "probably the best possible constitution a state can have in the twentieth century" (Reid, *A German* 14; Böll, "Kein Schreihals" 62, "Die Würde des Menschen" 575).

²⁹ Article 5:1 states: "every person shall have the right to freely express and disseminate their opinions in speech, writing and pictures ("German Constitution" 8)

up" the government's figurative gaol (Böll, "Im Gespräch mit Arnold" 155, "Einführung in *Dienstfahrt*" 283).

Ende einer Dienstfahrt reveals the government's unconstitutional, politically influenced restrictions on artistic expression through the work's portrayal of the institution's suppression of an innovative art form called "Happenings". This expression of art emerged in West Germany in the early 1960s and was associated with the anti-capitalist, left-wing Fluxus Movement ("Happenings").³⁰ "Happenings" are a "stunning... bewildering form of art", that represents an "entirely ... new form of self-expression" based on destruction rather than creation (Böll, "Einführung in *Dienstfahrt*" 283, 284).

The "Happening" in *Ende einer Dienstfahrt* combines all genres of art. It involves the visual spectacle of the conflagration of a military jeep doused in petrol, accompanied by the music of exploding confectionary and the rhythmic tapping of tobacco pipes, and the recitation of the All-Saints litany (Böll, *Dienstfahrt* 130, 44). The government reacts swiftly, with the immediate arrest of the offending artists, Gruhl senior and his soldier son (25). The novel then describes the government's covert actions, which it calls a "subtle game", to protect its political interests by unobtrusively transferring the offenders from an actual prison to its figurative gaol (Böll, *Dienstfahrt* 9, "Zwischen Gefängnis und Museum" 393). The State's judiciary downplays the "incident" by categorising the "Happening" as a minor criminal offence. To simplify the case, the army deems the soldier to have been a civilian at the time of the crime (Böll, *Dienstfahrt* 49). The matter is expedited and assigned to a provincial court with a handpicked judge, to be heard in the absence of a jury (9). To suppress public awareness of the "offence" and discourage others from seeking artistic liberty, the State subverts another article of the constitution, this time concerning the freedom of the press.³¹ Political pressure is brought to bear on the editors of the county's three

³⁰ The Fluxus movement had its roots in conceptual art derived largely from exponents of Dada ("Happenings"). Dada was a group of Swiss artists who were anti-capitalist, anti-bourgeois and were proponents of left-wing politics (Oren 4; Dumett 317). Their goal was to "destroy traditional values in art" as a consequence of their questioning of every aspect of a society capable of initiating and prolonging the horror of WWI ("Happenings"). The Fluxus movement shared the political sympathies of the Dada group it was founded on ("Happenings"). One of the German movement's leaders was Joseph Beuys, whom Böll knew personally (Reid, *A German* 151).

³¹ Article 5:1 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of West Germany guarantees the freedom of the press (Ludwig 83).

newspapers who publish brief identical accounts, which describe the defendants' "behaviour" as "inexplicable" (7 -13). Art is not mentioned in the articles. The Gruhls' plea of innocence, backed by the testimony of a renowned art expert that their actions constituted an internationally recognised expression of art rather than the execution of a crime, bears no weight (25, 20). The outcome of the judicial process aligns with the government's interests, with the judge finding the pair guilty of the misdemeanour of a "public nuisance" (238). The father and son are released from their physical incarceration to re-join their fellow artists in the State's metaphorical gaol (238).

Ende einer Dienstfahrt highlights the "reality" of the unseen influence of capitalism to sanction the State's right to be the gatekeeper of artistic liberty. Böll hoped that the novel would raise awareness of the government's "padded cell" and encourage artists to actively counter the constraints placed on them (Böll "Im Gespräch mit Arnold" 155). He viewed such barriers as denying artists the freedom of artistic expression that is not only inherently theirs but also serves as the litmus paper for civil liberties in general (Böll, "Die Freiheit der Kunst" 228; Reid, *A German* 6). In *Ende einer Dienstfahrt* Böll demonstrates that art, in this case literature, can be a vehicle to challenge covert politically imposed barriers, rather than the object of political restraint, as highlighted in the novel (Böll "Im Gespräch mit Arnold" 155).

In the following decades, Böll continued to take a stand against the use of political ideologies by his and other countries' governments to justify the suppression of artists of all genres and nationalities (Reid, *A German* 163). He remained true to his beliefs that art and freedom were inseparable and convinced of the necessity for this freedom as a vehicle for social action (Böll, "Die Freiheit" 228, "Im Gespräch mit Arnold" 155"). Böll's refusal to be restrained by aligning his social criticism with West Germany's political interest of capitalism came at a great personal cost.

In the politically turbulent 1970s, Böll became the victim of a "veritable witch hunt" by the right-wing press and the Bundestag for his condemnation of the covert political influence on German individuals and society of the media magnate Axel Springer (Butler, "The Conservative Moralists" 1). Springer was a staunch advocate of conservative, pro-capitalist and anti-socialist political beliefs (Schwarz 10 – 11). He used his newspapers as a vehicle to promote his own capitalist sympathies. Springer's influence in Germany was profound, as his papers enjoyed a market share of 70% of

the nation's newspaper sales (Altenmüller 6).³² In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the pro-socialist student activists and the militant terrorist splinter groups clashed with the government forces, Springer used his publications to attack the dissidents and distort his vast readership's perception of the threat to society the political protestors posed.³³ Politically biased sensationalist journalism usurped traditional factual reporting through articles that vilified the activists' behaviour, ridiculed their political sympathies and misrepresented the ideological basis and objectives of their protests (Vogt 15; Reid *A German* 163, 143).³⁴ Along with other German authors, Böll railed against Springer.³⁵ In a 1972 speech he attempted to shift society's focus from the visible violence of the terrorists' guns and bombs to the invisible "massive journalistic violence of some press concerns" (Böll "Gewalten" 605). In the same year, he wrote a newspaper article: "Will Ulrike Gnade oder freies Geleit?" ("Does Ulrike Want Clemency or Safe Conduct?") to underline the impossibility that the alleged terrorist could receive a fair trial due to the hostile atmosphere the pro-capitalist media had engendered (Sedlmaier 194). In this article, Böll described the coverage of events by Springer's publishing house, especially in its best-selling *Bild-Zeitung* as "blatant fascism, inflammatory lies, rubbish" (Böll, "Will Ulrike Meinhof Gnade" 545).³⁶ The article was interpreted as sympathetic to the anti-capitalist cause and unleashed a storm of violence directed at Böll. The Springer led pro-capitalist media denounced

³² Springer's influence was so great that it prompted novelist Gunther Grass to describe him in 1968 as a "co-Chancellor", but one who "is accountable to no Parliament, [and] ... cannot be voted out" (Kirchich 5).

³³ The student protests against the capitalist ideology were initially peaceful. But the violence escalated following the fatal shooting of protestor Rudi Dutschke by a policeman and the attack on the student leader Benno Ohnesorg, which was later shown to be a direct response to the Springer press's hostile reporting (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 114; Reid, *A German* 143). In 1970, a small radical cohort of the activists, who despaired of effecting political change through demonstrations formed splinter groups, such as the Baader-Meinhof faction (Reid, *A German* 162; Conard, *Understanding Böll* 114-16). While the violence of these groups was initially directed at property, the increasing use of guns and bombs led to six incidents in which thirty-four people were injured and five killed (Reid, *A German* 162).

³⁴ Press narratives, particularly those that are emotive, are often classed as "sensational", and it is this form of journalism, with its potential to be influenced by ideology, that is the source of the linguistic violence of the press (Davis and McLeod 208; Dearden). Springer newspaper headlines included demands to "Stop the Terror of the Young Reds Now!" and "Eliminate the Troublemakers" (Vogt 15).

³⁵ See *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, Adorno, Theodor. W. and Max Horkheimer, Fischer Verlag, 1969.

³⁶ The *Bild-Zeitung* was Springer's most popular tabloid and has been described as a political "campaign leaflet" (Haftendorn 664).

him as sympathetic to the terrorist cause, members of the public, swayed by this coverage, told him to emigrate, the police repeatedly searched his home for weapons, and his name was mentioned in a parliamentary debate on security (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 117; Böll, "Ich habe die Nase voll" 172; Reid, *A German* 165). But Böll's own suffering was of less concern to him than that of others. He was especially troubled by the catastrophic consequences of the vitriolic media campaign targeting psychology professor Peter Brückner (N. Harris 200).³⁷ Böll was so incensed by the escalating press violence Springer orchestrated, that he wrote "the most directly polemic of all [his] major works", *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* (Reid, *A German* 180).

Through the work's motto, subtitle and title, Böll boldly defines the novel's purpose: to reveal the violence associated with the "reality" of the covert political influence that Springer exerts through his tabloid. The motto is a parody on a traditional disclaimer:

"The characters and action in this story are purely fictitious. Should the description of certain journalistic practices result in a resemblance to the practices of the *Bild-Zeitung*, such resemblance is neither intentional nor fortuitous, but unavoidable" (trans. Vennewitz).

The explicit reference to the *Bild-Zeitung* leaves the reader in no doubt that while the novel is fiction, it is based on fact and centred on Springer and his tabloid. The subtitle is "How violence can arise and where it can lead".³⁸ "How violence can arise" links the media magnate and his publication to violence, and underlines that like the terrorists' guns and bombs, biased press coverage can also be a weapon used in the exertion of violence. "Where it can lead" conveys the concept that press violence is not a discrete action but a process that has further consequences. The title details the specifics of the violence. It names the tabloid's primary victim and the harm she suffers – the infringement of her constitutionally enshrined "right of personal honour".³⁹ Together, the motto, subtitle and title are a damning indictment of Springer and the

³⁷ Peter Brückner's professional and personal life was shattered when he innocently allowed Ulrike Meinhof to stay one night at his home (N. Harris 200).

³⁸ "Wie Gewalt entstehen und wohin sie führen kann".

³⁹ Article 5:1 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of West Germany guarantees the freedom of the press, but places boundaries on this freedom where the "right of personal honour" is concerned (Ludwig 83).

largely unrecognised politically sanctioned violence he exerted through the medium of his tabloid.

The violence Katharina Blum experiences is through a newspaper called the *Zeitung*, which is an open reference to Springer's *Bild-Zeitung* and serves as a constant reminder of the "reality" hidden behind the tabloid's façade. Katharina falls victim to the newspaper through a chance one-night liaison with a common criminal, whom the *Zeitung* falsely describes as a terrorist (Böll, *Katharina Blum* 18, 109, 114).⁴⁰ Katharina's association with the supposed political activist and the right-wing political bias of the *Zeitung* provides the explanation for "how violence can arise" (114). The novel describes this violence in detail.

Over four days, the unremarkable twenty-seven-year-old domestic assistant is the subject of front-page stories based on falsehoods, misquotations, and distortions, which echo Böll's "inflammatory lies, rubbish" description of Springer's *Bild-Zeitung*. The tabloid's headlines describe Katharina as a "murderer's moll" and "robber's sweetheart" (Böll, *Katharina Blum* 39, 36). The use of the terms "murderer" and "robber" link the fictional *Zeitung* to the contemporary inaccurate coverage of acts of terrorism in the *Bild-Zeitung* (Nägele and Silberman 54).⁴¹ An article accuses her of being responsible for the premature death of her ailing mother, "who didn't survive the shock from her daughter's activities" (Böll, *Katharina Blum* 113). Katharina describes this unfounded vilification as "character assassination... [that] deprive[s] the innocent of their honour, reputation and health" (106). The devastation Katharina suffers at the hands of the *Zeitung* is a further instance of the blurring of fiction and fact, as her experience was later proven to be an accurate reflection of the "multiple personal tragedies" Springer's *Bild-Zeitung* caused (Burns and Van der Will 278).⁴²

⁴⁰ This misconception is continued in reviews of *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* by many representatives of politics' right-wing, including the future Federal President, Karl Carstens (Reid, *A German* 183).

⁴¹ "Baader-Meinhof continues its Murders" was the banner headline in the 12 December 1972 edition and was accompanied by the front-page story falsely attributing a policeman's death during a bank robbery to the terrorist group (Nägele and Silberman 54). At the time of the tabloid's publication the perpetrators had not been identified⁴¹ (Nägele and Silberman 54).

⁴² The German documentarist Günter Waldruff worked undercover at the tabloid prior to writing his trilogy of books that reveal the reporting practices of the Springer's tabloid. See *Der Aufmacher* (1977), *Zeugen der Anklage* (1979) and *BILD-Handbuch bis zum Bildausfall* (1981) by Günter Waldruff.

The government's reluctance to place boundaries on the *Zeitung* despite the tabloid's infringement of Katharina's constitutional right to dignity and honour is evident when she seeks help from one of its representatives.⁴³ She flourishes copies of the *Zeitung* at the public prosecutor and asks in vain "whether the State ... could not do something to protect her from this filth and restore her lost honour" (Böll, *Katharina Blum* 60). The prosecutor avoids a clash with the press. He shrugs off Katharina's plea with the excuse that due to her association with the "activist" she is now a "figure of justifiable public interest" (60). The prosecutor's stance reflects that of the contemporary West German Government that allowed Springer's press violence to continue unchecked. It could be argued that a contributing factor to the government's inaction to protect its citizens' rights was because it too had fallen victim to Springer's violence. The Federal elections were imminent. Pro-capitalist Springer opposed Chancellor Willi Brandt's Ostpolitik of détente with the Eastern Bloc countries and hoped to prevent his re-election (Reid, *A German* 166). The government's disinclination to incite further hostile media coverage may have contributed to its reticence to uphold the constitution.

The novel fulfills the subtitle's promise of the portrayal of "where [violence] can lead" through the depiction of the ripple effect of the harm inflicted when political bias shapes newspaper narratives that are presented as factual accounts of the "topical". While Katharina Blum is the *Zeitung's* primary target, those close to her and the community are collateral victims. The death of Katharina's poorly mother is hastened, not by her daughter's actions as heralded in the newspaper but by the intrusive and unauthorised hospital bedside interview of Tötges, the lead reporter of the tabloid's offensive articles (Böll, *Katharina Blum* 117). Katharina's employers, the Blornas, also become casualties of the tabloid's violence due to their close association with her, and are left psychologically and professionally devastated (115, 122, 25,123). In the community, some consumers of Springer's paper who accept the *Zeitung's* accounts of events as unbiased, accurate reports, add to the violence directed at Katharina.

⁴³ Article 1, paragraph 1 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of West Germany stated that the "the dignity of man is inviolable" (Böll "Die Würde des Menschens" 575). Article 5:1 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of West Germany guarantees the freedom of the press, but places boundaries on this freedom where the "right of personal honour" is concerned (Ludwig 83).

They send her abusive mail, make obscene phone calls and socially shun her (76,77). The nature of the violence then changes. After she views and farewells her dead mother and discovers the true circumstances of her untimely death, Katharina meets with Tötges (135). During this encounter, she shoots and kills the visible representative of the source of the violence which has led to the "destruction of [her] young life" (135, 106, 62, 9).

Through *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* Böll conveys to his readers that Springer's tabloid is not merely a banal daily source of news presented in an engaging style. He reveals that behind this superficiality lies a "reality" of the influence of the capitalist political ideology and violence affecting German individuals and society that most have failed to recognise.

Böll continues his condemnation of the political ideology's influence in his next novel, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung*, which he described as a "Fortschreibung" ("continuation or further development") of the theme of *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* (Böll, *Materialien* 35). The focus of this later work is on the societal consequences of the government's response to the media inflamed political turmoil of the 1970s.

During this decade, the right-wing media's biased coverage had shaped "a new reality which only tangentially related to actual occurrences", leading to the escalation of the West German public's alarm to a level that approached "national paranoia" (Kirchich 5; Bullivant and Rice 242). Prominent German theologian and political activist Dorothee Sölle describes the creation of this "new reality" as representative of a "realistic 1984", where the press controls the mindset of individuals (Sölle 886).⁴⁴ The West German government's response to its citizens' anxiety and the dissidents' violence was to mandate security laws that increased the power of the police and imposed harsh judicial penalties on those causing the civil unrest (Aust 51). But these measures did not quell a small radical cohort of activists, whose isolated acts of terrorism the right-wing media exploited, leading to the escalation of the public's anxiety (Reid, *A German* 162). The State then enacted further repressive security initiatives that enabled increased police presence, intensified visual and auditory surveillance, and in 1972, the "Radikalenerlaß", ("Radicals Decree") (Aust 452;

⁴⁴ Referring to George Orwell's novel *1984*.

Conard, *Understanding Böll* 129). This decree banned advocates of left-wing political ideologies from the civil service ("Der Radikalenerlaß"). Böll opposed each of these measures. He believed that they would not ameliorate the contemporary political violence and hence the public's anxiety (Böll, "Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland" 718). On the contrary, he was adamant that the government's security legislation was itself a source of harm (Zillingen 16). Böll dedicated *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* to the portrayal of the social and psychological violence these restrictive and alienating laws inflicted on West German society.

Set in 1978, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* reveals the "reality" beyond the comforting façade of the State's security shield as the State's violence that the defence of its capitalist political ideology sanctioned. Böll described the shield as a "Sicherheitsnetz" ("security net") and the novel reflects his interpretation of the security measures as a form of predatory entrapment rather than protection (Böll, "Einführung in die *Fürsorgliche Belagerung*" 74). To emphasise the breadth and diversity of the "net's" victim demographic, the ensnared citizens are divided into four groups: the "Überwachten" ("the monitored"), the "Bewachten" ("the guarded"), the "Sicherheitsgeschädigten" ("the casualties of security") and the "Bewacher" ("the guards") (Böll, "Einführung in die *Fürsorgliche Belagerung*" 74).

The "Überwachten" ("monitored") are West Germans whom the government regards as a threat to their country and its system of governance due to their left-wing political sympathies. Numbering in their "thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands", they are drawn from the general community and the halls of academia (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 147). Through the government's security measures, the "Überwachten" suffer the loss of their personal and professional liberty. Members of this group are subjected to the State's "permanent, routine, dragnet surveillance", involving constant, intrusive, auditory and visual monitoring, the results of which are compiled into lists of the politically suspect and dossiers on individuals (Aust 452; Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 263, 267). But the government's victimisation of political non-conformers had reached new heights through the Radical's Decree. This legislation was the most controversial of all the security laws introduced during this period and infringed the constitutional right to freedom of conscience (Reid, *A German* 166).⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Article 4 of the German Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience as an inviolable right ("The German Constitution, the Basic Law").

Through the Decree, the "Überwachten" form "a phantom army" comprised of banned teachers, social workers and other ousted public servants (*Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 268, 150). Society is a further victim of this "Orwellian" legislation as they are deprived the benefit of the "army's" "education, intelligence, [and] strength" (Böll, "Anwälte der Freiheit" 383, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 268).

Through the depiction of the State's persecution of political non-conformers, Böll draws a parallel between the violence of the West German Government in its defence of capitalism and that of another government 20 years earlier. During the McCarthy era in the USA, infamous political witch hunts infringed the rights of individuals even vaguely associated with left-wing ideologies (Reid, *A German* 188). Böll enlarged upon this point the following year in *Berichte zur Gesinnungslage der Nation*.⁴⁶ In this satirical short story, he attacks the contemporary McCarthyism in West Germany that infringed the rights of individuals even remotely connected to left-wing radicalism (Reid, *A German* 188).

But the government is not the sole source of capitalist sanctioned violence for the "Überwachten". Rolf, a prominent member of this group, comments on the right-wing press's contribution to both the instigation of the security measures impacting them and the ongoing violence within German society. Rolf points out the press's role in the burgeoning radicalism of the activist splinter groups. He tells how, in his opinion, the "powerlessness" of the activists with their "leaflets and banners" to have their message heard above the hostile press barrage had led to the martyrdom of the radical few (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 150). Rolf goes on to remark on the media's aggravation of the turbulent milieu. He tells how the press's outright falsehoods that equate political non-conformism to terrorism heightens the public's anxiety and the consequent persecution and ostracization of the "Überwachten" (267) He underlines the baselessness of these untruths, declaring that he and his fellow members "don't even think of violence in any shape or form" (264). On the contrary, they too regard terrorists as "criminals", whose crimes unfortunately serve to "enhance the power of the media" by providing the press's sensationalised reports with "victims and martyrs" (150). But as with the early protestors, the media's strident voices mute Rolf's

⁴⁶ *Berichte zur Gesinnungslage der Nation*. See Heinrich Böll, *Romane und Erzählungen 1971-1976, Werke 5*, pp.474-499.

message (150). His comments highlight the government's focus on treating the symptoms of the public's alarm with their security "net", rather than addressing the cause of their distress by curbing the media's sensationalist journalistic practices.

The "Bewachten" ("guarded") are prominent capitalists whose high public profile predicates their status as potential targets of the "Überwachten". The harm this group suffers underlines a point which Böll regarded as "the most important and real phenomenon and problem of the contemporary situation": the congruence between the adverse effects of the measures designed to protect the "Bewachten" and those devised to monitor the "Überwachten" (*Materialien* 16). As with the "Überwachten", the "Bewachten" suffer the loss of their personal freedom. One member of this cohort likens being constantly surrounded by "swarms" of guards to "rigorous imprisonment", as spontaneous outings and social interactions are now things of the past (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 146, 34, 26 139). This group also endures the intrusion of intense surveillance, as a "safeguard" for their well-being (26, 27, 147, 294). While the trauma of the Radicals Decree does not impact on the "Bewachten", the "net" substitutes it with a different form of suffering. The intense, continual physical and virtual security measures lead to paranoid delusions (139, 114). One of the "Bewachten" tells how he views even close family members and his guards as potential terrorists (114, 139). Böll called this paranoia "Berührungängste" (fear of contact") and considered it to be another threat to the lives of the "Bewachten", in addition to that the terrorists posed (Böll, "Schriftsteller und Bürger dieses Landes" 708).

The "Sicherheitsgeschädigten" are the casualties enveloped in the security net through the mischance of being related to or living near those the net was designed to safeguard or monitor. Spouses of the "Bewachten" must "come to terms ... with the prison that is [their] home" and a grandchild is forced to withdraw from kindergarten, as the presence of his police guards is perceived as psychologically damaging to the other children (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 26, 75). A school-girl neighbour of a "Bewachten" member has a nervous breakdown and ends her life through the effect of the intensity of the 24-hour police activity in the adjacent property (236). As well as its adverse effect on individuals, the heavy police presence impacts the entire community, though the disruption of everyday life (65). Through the "Sicherheitsgeschädigten", Böll conveys just "how many people suffer simply by

getting caught" in a security net that instead of providing protection engenders potentially dangerous "fear and tension" ("Einführung in die *Fürsorgliche Belagerung*" 74: Stauffer 28).

The fourth group of victims of the State's security net are those tasked to maintain its integrity, the "Bewacher" ("guards"). While the guards' categorisation as casualties may seem contradictory, it reflects Böll's belief that everyone touched by the security net becomes its victims (Zillingen 16). *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* depicts the guards as traditional policemen, "custodian[s] of order", in the "chaos and disintegration" of the contemporary society, rather than ardent enforcers of the government's security shield (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 165, 179). The novel tells of the "crises [and] overtaxed nerves" the police suffer through their implementation of the government's intense surveillance measures (181-82). The hostility from those they protect and monitor and the communities in which they work adds to this toll (181-82). The police hierarchy enlists professional psychological help to care for and regularly assess the guards' mental health (157, 26). Böll "had every sympathy" with the police during this politically turbulent period and laid the blame for any consequences of their actions firmly at the feet of the government and the legislation it mandated to counter the threat to capitalism and the public's alarm (Reid, *A German* 194; Böll, "Die BRD" 718).

The characterisation of the "Bewacher" as victims completes the picture of the influence of the capitalist political ideology, exerted through the government and the press, to shape the social and political "reality" behind the government's security shield. The novel's title encapsulates the dichotomy between the "topical" – the State's security shield, and the "reality" of the security net. The English translation of "Fürsorgliche" is "caring", which reflects the comforting façade of a security shield whose implementation is justified through the reassuring terms of protection, monitoring and the alleviation of public anxiety. The English equivalent of "Belagerung" is the term "siege", with its inherent connotation of a community that is surrounded and entrapped by a force that is exerting harm towards them rather than repelling it. The term "Siege" implies that the main source of the contemporary violence in West Germany and threat to the fabric of society is the government's "security net", rather than the radical terrorists.

Böll's opposition to the political ideology of capitalism and his criticism of the injustices to German individuals and society it sanctioned was lifelong. He never relinquished the dream conceived in the rubble of post-war Germany, that the nation that arose from the fascist mayhem should be founded on the socialist system of governance (Butler, "Conservative Moralists" 5). He voiced this wish through the work's main character, disillusioned capitalist Fritz Tolm: "socialism must come, must win" (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 358).

CHAPTER 5. THE ECONOMIC DOCTRINE OF CAPITALISM

The early decades of the twentieth century saw the suffering of millions in Germany due to a succession of economic catastrophes. Hyperinflation, the 1929 Stock Market collapse, and the Great Depression between 1929 and 1939 all took an enormous toll on the population. But not all Germans suffered equally during this time of economic turmoil, with fortunes amassed by some and a life of hardship for many (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 5). Similarly, in the restoration of West Germany's capitalist economy after its collapse in the aftermath of WWII, not every citizen prospered, with many languishing in poverty. This economic disparity between citizens in Germany, and later West Germany, reflects the socio-economic stratification of society common to countries whose economic policies are predicated on the capitalist economic doctrine. A society whose economic doctrine legitimises a hierarchic social model in which millions struggle to survive while others flourish, is a society under the influence of economic cultural violence. Böll was acutely aware of the violence associated with what he termed the "uncaring" capitalist economic doctrine, as in his early years he was one of its victims (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 5).

The Böll family suffered the total loss of their assets and were forced to live "hand to mouth" as a consequence of the economic events of the 1920s and 30s (Böll, "Drei Tage" 379, 377; C. Hoffmann 20). But Böll's concern for others overshadowed his own hardship, and the "daily social misery" that so many endured made a deep and lasting impression on him (Böll, "Heinrich Böll, l'homme" 81). After the war, Böll's hope for a more just society was destroyed with the reinstatement of the capitalist political ideology and with it a return to government economic strategies based on the economic doctrine of capitalism (Balzer, *Anarchie und Zärtlichkeit* 116). Foremost amongst these economic policies was the 1948 Currency Reform, which laid the foundation for modern West German industrial capitalism and a return to the hierarchic capitalist social model of pre-war Germany (Berghahn 184). Böll condemned the Currency

Reform legislation, which favoured wealthy property owners over wage earners.⁴⁷ He viewed it as unjust and a greater cause for collective German guilt than the 1933 instatement of Hitler as Chancellor or the events of WWII (Böll, "Wo ist dein Bruder?" 177). In his opinion, this policy, along with the many others mandated to restore the capitalist economy, "deformed and falsified human values" (Böll, "Gewalten" 606). While the State's capitalist fiscal policies stimulated the West German economy to such an extent that the term "Wirtschaftswunder" ("Economic Miracle") was coined, once more the distribution of this new-found wealth was not uniform (Berghahn 202). Individuals in the upper strata of the capitalist social structure benefitted from the "miracle", but many of those in its lower ranks missed out (Reid, *Withdrawal* 14). Populating the underclass were wage earners, agricultural workers, the unemployed, and war widows and aged pensioners on meagre benefits (Berghahn 202). It is these victims of the capitalist economic doctrine, those who society rejects as "Abfall" or "refuse", that Böll highlights in his novels (Reid, *A German* 148).

Böll's censure of the capitalist economic doctrine is especially prominent in his works of the 1950s and early 1960s, when the "Restoration" of West Germany's economy and the "Economic Miracle" was at its height. The novels of this period reveal the "reality" that the façade of West Germany's economic success obscured – the suffering of millions of the country's most vulnerable citizens through the influence of the capitalist economic doctrine. Those depicted as the victims of this violence subsist at the lowest echelons of the tiered social structure. The interpretation of these novels in the context of Böll's belief that the humanity of a country is recognised by the way it treats its "refuse", underlines the depth of his criticism of both the economic doctrine of capitalism and the contemporary West German society (Böll, "Frankfurter Vorlesungen" 177).

The 1953 *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* ("And never said a word") reveals the violence of a capitalist government focussed on materialism and economic prosperity, and the institution and society's moral blindness to the "reality" for those mired in the depths of the stratified social model (Böll, "Wo ist dein Bruder" 177).

⁴⁷ While the Currency Reform policy appeared egalitarian, it was actually elitist, wiping out the meagre savings of the lower classes but preserving the wealth of the upper-class property owners (Reid, *A German* 42-43).

The novel tells the story of the Bognors, an impoverished family of five. Breadwinner Fred is unskilled and in common with other unqualified workers, his present employment is poorly paid (Böll, *Wort* 87).⁴⁸ But the State does not support blue-collar workers and their families in their struggle to survive. This abandonment of those who have become one more disposable commodity in the materialistic world of the capitalist economic "miracle" is reflected in the novel's title. "And never said a word" is phrase from the lyrics of an African-American hymn and refers to Jesus suffering in silence during His crucifixion (Reid, *Withdrawal* 44). To the Bognors, the economic "miracle" is an egregious burden to be borne in silence rather than a wondrous event. Who would heed or even hear their voices? Not the State. After 1948, the debates about the introduction of a more egalitarian welfare state soon subsided and the government's main social policy tasks were centred on economic stimulation through the construction of houses and the integration of the over three million essential skilled migrant workers (Leiserung 9, 3). Children were also left by the wayside, as at the time in which the novel is set, the social security system did not include a family allowance (*The Emergence of the Welfare State in Britain and Germany* 315). Similarly, the church offered little assistance. The institution's charity work had diminished and through its involvement in the Christian Democratic Party, the politically active church was steering the government's welfare strategies in the direction of economic recovery (Ruff, "Integrating Religion" 312, 326; Leiserung 3). As a result, the Bognor family's struggle to survive in the hostile world of capitalism echoes the "daily misery" of millions in the Germany of Böll's youth (Böll, "Heinrich Böll, 'l'homme'" 81).

Poverty impacts all aspects of the Bognors' lives. It leads to the death of their twin babies due to the squalor of their one room tenement, and mother Käte's despair akin to "a physical pain" that her three surviving children still endure these same conditions (Böll, *Wort*, 39, 100). Food, the most basic and essential material of all, is often beyond the family's means, which is a cruel irony in a country whose government actively encourages consumerism (Böll, *Wort* 47, 99; Payne 4). The family's lowly social station also impacts their mental health. In the increasingly prosperous society in which an individual's value is aligned with their socio-economic rank, Käte feels

⁴⁸ Wages in West Germany were below the international level until 1958 (Payne 4).

worthless, scared and helpless (Böll, "Jenseits der Literatur" 53). She endures the terror engendered by her powerlessness to protect her children "from anything", including "the callousness of humanity" (Böll, *Wort* 38). The family's misery is compounded by the loss of the one social structure that Fred, Käte and the children are valued members of, when their family unit becomes a casualty of capitalism. Fred leaves his family after the psychological torment of his struggle and failure to provide for his family leads him to physically abuse his children (50).

The Bognor family's plight reflects that of Böll's, and countless other families, decades earlier, which had fostered the author's advocacy for a socialist society (Böll, "Heinrich Böll, 'l'homme'" 81). Through the family, Böll portrays the "reality" behind the capitalist Economic Miracle. It is a far cry from that which he had hoped would arise out of the ruins of WWII a few short years before: an egalitarian society in which everyone has "broadly equal access to the necessary material and social means to live flourishing lives" (Gilabert et al).

But despite the Bognors' wretchedness, more suffering awaits them. A new capitalist phenomenon magnifies the family's disconnect from the materialist society they live in but are not members of. Commercial advertising began in West Germany when the Currency Reform was introduced (Böll, "Ich habe nichts" 59). A chemists' convention conveys the intensity of the contemporary advertising bombardment. A prominent illuminated flashing sign avows to pharmacists' ability to provide solutions to problems through their products (Böll, *Wort* 119). The hypocrisy of this claim is underlined by the family's twin babies' deaths, which were hastened by the poor-quality medicine they received (39). Religious banners for the procession that has just passed by make way for the those that feature the slogans of the Association of German Druggists, reflecting the "deification" of economic success and materialism (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 163; Böll, *Wort* 52). Another form of marketing emphasises economic success as the future and the war as the past. "The drone of air-craft, [and] the bark of explosions" replicates "the whole war", as planes release parachuted advertising material (Böll, *Wort* 111). With the wounds of the past re-opened to add to those of the present, Käte flees indoors (112). Her misery and that of her family underlines what lies behind the superficiality of the Economic Miracle: an economic doctrine that fosters the creation of a society Böll described as a "jungle" which only the "strong" can successfully traverse (Böll, "Wo ist dein Bruder" 177). The

"weak", like the Bognors, are cast aside by their government, church and society, and left behind to suffer in silence.

Böll continues to highlight the plight of those in the lowest tier of the capitalist hierarchic society in the 1954 *Haus ohne Hüter*. This work offers a different perspective of the "reality" behind the façade of the restoration of the capitalist economy. It relates the iniquities of the deep socio-economic divisions in West Germany in the 1950s through the eyes of children.

Haus ohne Hüter juxtaposes the lives of two eleven-year-old boys whose soldier fathers died in WWII. Martin Bach's family represent those who have thrived in the capitalist milieu. As owners of a profitable jam factory, they are comfortably and securely ensconced in the middle ranks of the tiered social model (Böll, *Haus* 83). They live in a large home and their larder is fully stocked (116). In contrast, Heinrich Brielach's family embody the "refuse" in the structure's lowest ranks. The Brielachs' struggle to survive on an inadequate State widow's pension, which a series of de-facto "uncles" intermittently supplement (16, 185, 15,17).

Poverty has swept away any sense of security in Heinrich's life. He likens the quest for survival to walking "on thin ice over a pond whose depth would not be known until it broke" (Böll, *Haus* 60). Money, or rather the lack of it, controls his life. Poverty has robbed him of the childhood Martin still enjoys (179). As "the man of the house" he is in charge of the household finances, trying to eke out every pfennig to pay for food and the rent for the one room in which the family subsists (175, 200, 203). At the age of eleven, he describes feeling "old and experienced, wise and tired" (175). Heinrich feels that his wealthy friend Martin lives "in quite another world", in which "MONEY plays no part" (179).⁴⁹ When Martin realises that Heinrich's total weekly allocation for food for his family of four is only marginally more than his grandmother paid for a restaurant meal for two, he prays for him: "let things be better for Brielach ... life is too difficult for him" (183, 182). But adult society is not as benevolent in its attitude to those in the lower socio-economic ranks as young Martin. When the Brielachs' few ramshackle possessions are on view as the family moves "apartments", their neighbours envelope the family in a chorus of a German proverb "as is the tree, so is

⁴⁹ "Money" is capitalised in the novel to convey its prominence in and influence on the boys' lives.

the fruit"(206-08).⁵⁰ Their litany echoes Karl Marx's belief that in a capitalist society an individual is not judged by who he is but by what he possesses (Böll, "Karl Marx" 86). Time stands still for Heinrich, as it does for the "DAMNED" (Böll, *Haus* 206; Josh. 10:12-13). He feels as if "at last the ice has broken and it was a good thing that it had" (Böll, *Haus* 206).

Through Heinrich, Böll draws attention to the intrinsically inequitable hierarchic social model shaped by the capitalist economic doctrine. The novel underlines that for adults and children alike, being mired in the lowest echelon of the socio-economic social structure involves more than the physical consequences of impoverishment such as inadequate housing and nutrition. The work emphasises that such a ranking also means a lifetime of the insecurity of "walking on thin ice" to survive (Böll, *Haus* 200). But most importantly, it means the shame of bearing the label "perpetually damned" and with it the loss of respect and dignity that Böll believed was the fundamental right of every citizen (Böll, *Haus* 206; Macpherson 37).

The following decade saw Böll turn his attention to a further expression of the covert influence of the capitalist economic doctrine, through the harm the government causes through the tax laws that the doctrine sanctioned. The revision of the Tax Laws in West Germany in 1963 was particularly apposite to Böll, as in his opinion they discriminated against artists of all genres, and craftsmen (Böll, "Vom Mehrwert bearbeiten Papiers" 557-560). In *Ende einer Dienstfahrt*, he draws attention to the artisans' suffering. A craftsman alleges that through the Tax Law Revision, the State is guilty of causing him grievous harm. The case "goes to trial" as an adjunct to another legal matter. The charges against the State are presented to the court through a detailed description of the government's revised Tax Laws, including the numerous categories of tax they refer to (Böll, *Dienstfahrt*, 65, 164-165, 239). The plaintiff gives evidence of the violence he accuses the revised legislation of committing. He tells how the taxes have led to ten years of hardship, the result of which was the seizure of all his assets, including his home and furniture, due to tax arrears (174). An expert witness for the defence, a Professor of Political Economics, voices Böll's condemnation of the Tax Reform legislation. He testifies that the new laws are an economic strategy "belonging to an antediluvian era of economics", "devoid of moral

⁵⁰ "Wie der Herr, so's Gescherr".

aspects" and "murderous to the middle-classes" (164-165). The presiding judge finds the State guilty as charged and his judgement of the laws as an integral element of a "relentless and remorseless economic process" echoes that of Böll (239).

Böll regarded the capitalist economic doctrine as guilty of other crimes, with the environment as well as people numbering among its victims. *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* raises the issue of an additional expression of the doctrine's covert influence: the degradation of the landscape and pollution of the air. Energy was necessary to sustain the country's capitalist drive and much of this fuel was derived through exploitation - not only of poorly paid workers, but also of the environment through coal mining. Coal was the backbone of the country's power supply after the war and enabled the Economic Miracle (Herpich et al 7). From the war's end, the underground mining of coal steadily rose to its peak in 1958 (Herpich et al 9). While coal mining declined in the following decades, it continued until 2018 (Herpich et al 9). The environmental and human toll of the mining was a cause of concern to Böll. In a 1972 essay he questioned the future quality of living due the contemporary "suicidal civilisation's" poisoning of the air, water and land (Böll, "Luft in Büchsen" 610). In this paper Böll specifically noted the contribution of coal mining to the environmental devastation (Böll, "Luft in Büchsen" 610). In 1979 Böll re-iterated these views in *Fürsorgliche Belagerung*.

The novel's main character, Fritz Tolm, underlines the harm the pursuit of powering the capitalist economy caused to the environment, and to people through their loss of two things that Böll held dear, *Gemeinschaft* ("community") and *Heimat* ("home") (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 141). Fritz has already surrendered two homes to the search for the "brown gold" (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 32, 86). He laments the purpose of this quest: to fuel "yet another cloud-forming power station" that renders the sky a continual grey through the plumes of dirt, dense smoke, and foul air it emits (35, 98, 70). Fritz now watches anxiously as the "gigantic dredges" approach his present home with their shovels that "pitilessly ... inexorably" devour everything in their way (81, 31). He knows that soon in his village "not a thing will remain, not one stone upon another", just "dredges, a gigantic hole, conveyor belts and pumps" (31, 35). Fritz wonders where he and the other villagers will go (31, 32, 38). But as an industrialist explained to him "nothing, nothing" will stop the extraction of the coal right to the country's borders (36).

Böll regarded this unbridled proliferation of coal mining in West Germany as irresponsible (Böll, *Weil die Stadt so fremd geworden ist* 12). He laid the blame for both the mining and the consequent human and environmental havoc it wrought firmly at the feet of the government and its economic policies. He likened the institution's unrestrained expansion of the burgeoning economy to the growth of cancer (Böll, *Weil die Stadt* 12). The significance Böll places on the human and environmental harm the capitalist economic doctrine sanctions reflects the importance he placed on preserving the world as a humane place for future generations (Reid, *A German* 210).

The inhumanity of a society structured around the economic doctrine of capitalism was a lifelong cause of concern for Böll. His drive to reveal the malign influence of the capitalist economic system to shape a society that at "all times [was] essentially unjust" did not falter (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 5). But his dream of a West Germany that treated all individuals and the environment that they shared with respect, remained illusory.

CHAPTER 6. THE IDEOLOGY OF RELIGION

6.1 CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY

Cultural violence and religion are common companions. Down the millennia religious ideology has justified the violence of ruling bodies, religious institutions, and individuals toward those who follow a different faith or worship a different Deity. But the ideology can also legitimise the violence of religious institutions toward members of their own faith, and it is against this expression of religious cultural violence that Böll railed.

The Böll family had been devout Catholics since at least the time of Henry VIII (Böll, "Über mich selbst" 396). The young Heinrich was raised to respect biblical teachings as symbolised by the Sermon on the Mount, while maintaining a critical attitude toward the institution of the church (Conard, *Heinrich Boll*, 17-18; Matt. 5). Through his parents' and ancestors' piety, Böll regarded Catholicism as an integral part of his being, the material from which he was made (Böll, *Querschnitte* 162 - 63). His novels reflect this deep spirituality. Throughout his oeuvre Böll conveys the fundamental value of each and every individual, which is the basis of Christianity (Butler, "Conservative Moralists" 11). His works also impart what was to him the essence of the New Testament: the "Zärtlichkeit" ("tenderness/ affection") between individuals (Böll, "Drei Tage" 393). But throughout his career Böll rejected the label of a Catholic writer, due to his wish to dissociate himself from the institution of the Catholic Church (Böll, *Querschnitte* 162). Böll's stance is evident in his novels. He portrays a perspective of organised Catholicism which emphasises his view that the spiritual majesty of the powerful Catholic Church is a façade that obscures the "reality" of the psychological and physical harm the institution causes to the faithful and their faith.

Böll believed the source of the church's harm was the contemporary Catholicism that is an amalgam of the "true" faith and the church's dogmas, doctrines, decrees and

Papal writings.⁵¹ For the devout Böll, the Scriptures were the only valid source of religious ideology (Conard, *Heinrich Böll*, 17-18). He was adamant that a melded ideology forged from the fusion of biblical and institutional tenets had led to a "degenerate" form of Catholicism (Böll, *"Erinnerung"* 393). Böll believed that the church's strident dogmas and dogmatic principles had overwhelmed God's words and that the melded ideology conveyed neither the solace nor the tenderness inherent in the New Testament (Böll, *"Drei Tage"* 393). In his eyes, God's message had become barely discernible and that the contemporary Catholic ideology was a "completely lost cause" (Böll, *Querschnitte* 194, 177).

Böll regarded the church's "corruption" of Catholic ideology through the addition of its dogmas and principles as an expression of "arrogance" from the "dogmatic" bureaucratic institution ("Amtskirche"), which "desired, achieved and exerted" its authority over the Faith and the faithful (Böll, *"Drei Tage"* 392, *Querschnitte* 176, *"Rede zur Verleihung"* 661-662). To Böll, the institution was the antithesis of his biblically grounded concept of a church: "where two or three people gather in My name, I am amongst you" (Böll, *Querschnitte* 193; Matt. 18:20). Scrutiny of the church's articles of faith incorporated into Catholic ideology makes clear the way they afford the institution its authority over the religion and its followers. One precept states that the Church Council's decrees, and the writings of the Popes have "the same importance as the word of God in the scriptures" and includes the admonition that all Catholics are "undoubtedly ...obliged to obey the Church" (Hagan 108, 99). Another dogma declares: "the Pope possesses full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the whole Church" including "matters of faith and morals" (Byrd). Other institutional precepts appended to religious ideology, such as the doctrines concerning morality and marriage, allow the church to enforce not only religious control but also social and moral authority over the faithful. In Böll's opinion, the church's "aggressive authority"

⁵¹ The 255 dogmas of the Catholic Church are "divinely revealed truths", decided upon by the Church Magisterium and binding on all the faithful as incontrovertibly true (Byrd; Lawler and Salzman 8; Akin 5-6). Doctrines mainly deal with morality and the faith and are issued by the same clerical authority and while they are not classed as "infallibly true", they should still be complied with (Akin 7-8). The dogmas, doctrine, decrees, and writings are documented in the Roman Catechism, which is a "compendium of all Catholic doctrine regarding both faith and morals" (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, II.10). The version of the Catechism relevant to Böll for the majority of his life was the antiquated 1880 St. Pope Pius X Catechism (Hagan 1).

over Catholics had given rise to the formation of an historically "defensive", "apologetic" congregation and turned Catholicism into a religion of "obedience" (Böll, *Querschnitte* 177).

To counter the harm the melded ideology caused to the faithful and the Faith, Böll's focus was on turning Catholics' attention away from the contemporary Catholicism that he believed was beyond repair and toward the Bible (Böll, *Querschnitte* 177). He wanted fellow Catholics to recognise and appreciate the power and strength of the Scriptures once the Gospel was "liberated" from the church's encumbering "garbage" (Böll, *Querschnitte* 195). He was adamant that "we must completely separate the church and religion" (Böll, "Im Gespräch mit Arnold" 145). Reflecting this stance, in his novels Böll questions the legitimacy of the church's right to contribute to religious ideology and therefore the spiritual worth of the resulting version of Catholicism. His works also underline the "reality" of the adverse influence on Catholics of the contemporary Catholicism by contrasting it with benevolence of the Scriptures (Böll, *Querschnitte* 194).

Böll introduces these themes in *Und sagte kein einziges Wort*. This 1953 work is arguably the first reflection in German literature of the influence of the French "Catholic Renewal" literary movement, which was critical of the church (Reid, *A German*, 92-93). In *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* Böll questions the religious merit of an ideology whose teachings are influenced by a church that fails to fulfill its spiritual remit. He goes on to draw attention to the harm the church's interventions cause (Böll, *Querschnitte* 194).

From the early 1950s, Böll was of the belief that the contemporary West German Catholic Church was no longer a theological institution and a source of religious succour. Instead, he regarded the church as a political pressure group due to its integration into the political arena, through the institution's close association with the Christian Democratic Party (Böll, "Nachwort zu Carl Amery" 542; Yuill 154).⁵² *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* portrays the church's disengagement from its pastoral duties in favour of political involvement and its disconnection from those it ostensibly serves

⁵² This was not the church's first foray into politics. Böll never forgave the Catholic Church for its role in the rise of Hitler, culminating in the 1933 Concordat through which the Vatican became the first state to recognise the Nazi regime (Böll, "Nachwort zu Carl Amery" 541).

– God and the faithful. At a time when most of the congregation were experiencing the physical and psychological privation of the aftermath of WWII, the work tells how, in their time of need, the faithful turn to the church as a source of spiritual solace. They "crowd around the altar" inside a cathedral and overflow to the outside of the church (Böll, *Wort* 60). But the clerics fail to provide comfort for all and wipe away every tear, as promised in the Bible, through their distraction by non-pastoral duties (Böll, *Wort*, 75; John 3:16, 2 Cor. 1:3-4). Visiting, well-groomed priests, on their way to or from conferences, deliver perfunctory 10-minute sermons full of "clichés and half-truths" (Böll, *Wort* 75, 60-61). The hypocrisy of the clerics' claim to be God's earthly representatives serving His flock is underlined by the juxtaposition of their spiritual deficit with the piety of Käte, one of the novel's main characters (125). Throughout the day, Käte communes with God through prayer (111, 125).

Through the novel's depiction of the church's preference of its status as a politically powerful "Amtskirche" ("bureaucracy") over its role as a source of spirituality and succour, Böll challenges the validity of both the Church's right to intervene in Scripture based Catholicism and the resulting ideology (Böll, *Querschnitte* 176).

Und sagte kein einziges Wort continues its attack on Catholicism and the church through its portrayal of the harm caused by one of the institution's ideologically incorporated articles of faith – the marriage doctrine. This precept demands that "each and every marriage remains ordered... to the procreation of human life", thereby denying Catholic women the right to contraception (*Catechism* 2366). There is nothing in the Scriptures that prohibits birth control (McClain). But early Christian theologians tied contraception to marriage, characterising sex between spouses as "immoral self-indulgence" if the couple tried to prevent conception (McClain). It was not until the 1930s that the church effectively banned all forms of birth control except abstinence (McClain). Through its institutional edict that prohibits contraception, the church disregards the economic and social circumstances of Catholic women and their families, and the psychological and physical harm this didactic tenet causes. Böll regarded the church's "despicable" "taboo" on family planning as another medium through which the institution exerted its control over Catholics (Böll, "Erinnerung" 541). Käte relates the trauma this addition to Catholic ideology inflicts. Having lost two babies through poverty, she experiences "a flood of terror engulfing" her when she fears she may be pregnant again to her estranged husband (Böll, *Wort* 110). The novel

contrasts the harm Käte suffers through the church's ideologically incorporated tenet with the beneficence of scripturally based Catholicism. Käte dreams of the life that Jesus promises awaits all in heaven: a "life without marriage", where she can enjoy the company of men with whom she has no doctrinally enshrined marital duty of unprotected intimacy to fulfill (Böll, *Wort* 132; Luke 20:34-6; *Catechism* 2360). Through Käte, Böll juxtaposes the restrictive and oppressive contemporary Catholic religious ideology with what he described as the "tenderness" of the New Testament (Böll *Querschnitte* 191-192). In his view, the church had rendered God's voice "inaudible" (Böll, *Querschnitte* 194-195).

As arguably the first example of censure of the Catholic Church in a major German work of fiction *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* came as a "terrible shock" in some German Catholic circles (Böll, "Im Gespräch mit Arnold" 140, 151). As a result, the novel met a stormy reception. Böll received letters that were strongly critical of the work and "even threats" from the "angry or astonished Catholic milieu", in response to this new form of censure (Böll, "Im Gespräch mit Arnold" 140). Their surprise at and reflex denial of Böll's criticisms underlines the validity of the author's characterisation of Catholicism as a religion of "obedience" and the importance of raising fellow Catholics' awareness of the "reality" of the influence of the contemporary "corrupt" ideology (Böll, *Querschnitte* 177, 194).

Böll continued to draw attention to the ideology's influence in his next novel, *Ansichten eines Clowns*. This 1963 work is Böll's contribution to what was a controversial year for the Catholic Church. The institution became the focus of public attention with the opening of Rolf Hochhuth's play, *Der Stellvertreter* (*The Deputy*), which was critical of the Church's ambivalence toward Jews under the Fascist regime (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 79). Carl Amery's book, *Die Kapitulation oder deutscher Katholikizismus heute* (*The Capitulation or German Catholicism Today*), further intensified the public's scrutiny of the church. In his work Amery continued Hochhuth's condemnation of the institution through his critical analysis of the Vatican's recognition of the Third Reich in 1933 through the Concordat and the church's "abject capitulation to post-war opportunism" (Conard, *Understanding Böll* 79).⁵³ 1963 was also the year of increasing "complaints and indictments" of the ongoing "unholy alliance" between

⁵³ Through the Concordat the Vatican became the first State to recognise the Third Reich (Reid, *A German* 22)

the Catholic Church and the ruling Christian Democrats (CDU) (Nägele and Silberman 51). Böll added his voice to the litany of censure through *Ansichten eines Clowns*.

In *Ansichten eines Clowns*, Böll continues his endeavour to separate the church and the Faith and draw attention to the contrast between the harm the doctrinal interventions cause and the benevolence of biblical teachings. The novel drives a wedge between the institution and Catholicism from its opening page. The work's motto challenges the premise that Christianity and the church are indivisible elements, bound by the institution's role as the essential spiritual conduit between God and man. The motto cites Roman XV: 21: "those to whom he has not spoken shall see, and those who haven't heard will understand".⁵⁴ The quote is part of apostle Paul's epistles to the Romans, where he tells of his inability to visit Rome to preach to its citizens (Smith 136). Paul's pledge in this verse is that those untouched by the church's ministering, those to whom he (Paul) hasn't spoken, may still live in conformity with the spirit of the Gospel (Klieneberger 36).

Romans XV: 21 reflects Böll's conviction that the church does not endow spirituality, it is attained instead through the conscience of the individual (Böll, *Querschnitte* 194).⁵⁵ The quote provides biblical support for what Böll regarded as the church's mistaken belief that Christianity is teachable and transferable, with the church as an essential steppingstone on the pathway to Christianity (Böll, *Querschnitte* 194). Through Romans XV: 21, Böll severs another of the institution's ties to the Faith.

The novel's narrative also references the Bible. It argues that the church's marriage doctrine contradicts the word of God in the Scriptures, through the precept's interpretation of what constitutes a valid union (Böll, *Querschnitte* 194). A non-religious "outsider" to Catholicism, Hans Schnier, presents the argument (Böll, *Ansichten* 9). Hans attributes the loss of his beloved partner, the Catholic Marie, to the church's doctrine (9). He rejects the institution's article of faith that deems that the only true union between a man and a woman is one that is consecrated in a church (100-101). Hans is adamant that biblical writings do not support this tenet. He notes that according

⁵⁴ The lower case "he" implies the pronoun does not refer to God.

⁵⁵ Böll's next novel, *Ende einer Dienstfahrt* further reinforces this interpretation of *Ansichten eines Clowns'* motto. In this work a priest declares that being a Christian is neither defined by nor restricted to adherence to the institutionally dictated "matters of religion" (Böll, *Ende einer Dienstfahrt* 159).

to the Bible, clerical involvement is not a requirement for marriage, as Holy matrimony is the one sacrament a priest cannot offer (87). Instead, the Sacrament of Marriage is endowed through a couple's mutual consent to marry, an agreement that "is sealed by God himself" (Böll, *Ansichten* 87; Mark10:9). Hans views his 5-year de facto relationship with Marie as a valid marriage in the eyes of God, through their mutual vow to remain together "until death us do part" (Böll, *Ansichten* 62).⁵⁶ He points out that it was the biblically based interpretation of marriage that both the church and society had accepted until the relatively recent ideological inclusion of the institutional marriage doctrine (100).⁵⁷ Not content with his censure of those who purport to be God's servants but override His wishes, Hans continues his criticism of the church by underlining further consequences of the institution's irreverence.

Hans chronicles the church's use of its ideologically enabled authority to enforce spiritual and temporal retribution of those whose marriage is invalid according to the institution's doctrine. For the Catholic Marie, the church does not view her intimacy with Hans as the consummation of their union but as pre-marital sex under the institution's doctrinally defined moral code. Such intimacy outside of marriage is considered a grave offense against the promise of immortality that chastity offers (*Catechism* 2347). But the powerful church's sphere of influence extends beyond the church and into society, leading to Marie's alienation from the main contemporary sources of social interaction for young Catholics – youth groups and school. Catholic youth groups played a significant role in the lives of the younger members of the congregation and the church encouraged participation in these groups to ensure the complaisance of the next generation (Harvey 478). Marie feels that she "can't show her face anymore" in her girl's church group that is devoted to the Virgin Mary (Böll, *Ansichten* 51). She also ceases to attend school after the consummation of her relationship with Hans, which is just prior to her graduation (58). Hans also draws attention to the religious hypocrisy when, through what he terms the church's "ideological pressure", Marie later marries another man in a church approved wedding.

⁵⁶ Hans's status as a lapsed Catholic (as the recipient of a Catholic education he presumably was baptized as a Catholic) and now not affiliated with any religion, does not preclude his marriage to Marie in the eyes of the church, as this "disparity of cult" can be put aside by ecclesiastical dispensation (*Catechism* 1635).

⁵⁷ The ruling formed part of the doctrinal statements of the Council of Trent in 1562-3 (Schillebeeckx 394).

Viewing Marie as his wife through their biblically sanctioned marriage, he points out that the devout Marie has now committed the mortal sin of disobeying the Bible's Sixth Commandment concerning adultery (Böll, *Ansichten* 70, 101; Ex 20:14; Deut 5:18).⁵⁸

Hans's account of the spiritual and social toll of the Church's sixteenth century ideological intervention highlights how marriage is no longer the "communion of souls ordained in heaven" but a union that is rigidly defined by the institution and enforced through its authority, both of which are consequences of the melded ideology (Yuill 155).

While *Ansichten eines Clowns* and *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* depict the suffering of adults through the melded religious ideology, Böll was at pains to point out that Catholic children are also victims. The 1954 novel *Haus ohne Hüter* addresses the psychological harm the church inflicts on its young parishioners through the auspices of the institution's ideologically incorporated rigid moral code. Prior to the 1962 Second Vatican Council, this code was the work of the Catholic Church's moral theologians and was based on four hundred years of Church Tradition (Lawler 2). *Haus ohne Hüter* depicts an example of the adverse effects this unmodernised moral framework has on the mental health and lives of young Catholics.

For eleven-year-old Martin Bach, the meaning of the terms "*immoral*" and "*immodest*" in the moral code are a source of torment (Böll, *Haus* 51-52).⁵⁹ As a devout Catholic, Martin recognises the words' gravity and significance, as he is aware that the subject of "*immorality*" will be addressed on Judgement Day (91). But he struggles to clarify what they mean (90, 91). When a priest raises the question of Martin's own mother's morality through the categorisation of his best friend's mother as "*immoral*", he becomes even more distressed by these words that he doesn't understand and the dire consequences they may have for his own mother (179, 53).

Martin recognises that these terms also have earthly ramifications for children due to the church's contemporary significant role in education. He comes to the "painful and inexplicable" realisation after "many years observation" that the "*morality*" of his classmates' mothers who are war widows plays a significant role in the way the teachers treat the widows' sons (91). The least favoured are the illegitimate children

⁵⁸ "Thou shalt not commit adultery".

⁵⁹ The significance of these two words is stressed by their italicization in the novel.

of women in a new relationship, as their mother is apparently *immoral* (91). The most privileged pupils and "completely indulg[ed]", are those whose mother remains true to her dead war hero or has remarried "as everything is clearly in order and there is no *immorality*" (91).

Through the anxiety and prejudice the vulnerable young suffer at the hands of the institution's moral code, Böll again contrasts the influence of the melded ideology and that of the teachings in the Bible. The novel emphasises that the church's manipulative and controlling principles "are far removed from the message of a humane society contained in the Sermon on the Mount" (Findlay 131).

The 1959 work *Billard um halb zehn* provides a glimpse of an even more damning expression of the violence Catholic children suffer at the hands of Catholic ideology and the church, through its portrayal of the clerical sexual abuse of minors. The aetiology of sexual abuse by the clergy is a complex and controversial issue but attributable in part to religious ideology. While it can be argued that the priests who commit the abuse are acting independently, the ideologically enshrined authority of the church plays a role, as acknowledged by the current Pope. Pope Francis conceded that the Church had protected the clerical perpetrators of sexual abuse, by "ignor[ing], keep[ing] quiet or silenc[ing] the victims" (Pope Francis). He accepted that in doing so the institution had enabled and perpetuated the "abuse of [the] power" afforded to the offending clergy through their position as representatives of the authoritarian institution (Pope Francis). Böll identified a further factor that implicates the church in the sexual abuse its representatives commit as the institution's ideologically ratified insistence on clerical celibacy (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 46-47; *Catechism* 1579). Clerical sexual abuse is a compelling example of the importance of recognising the "reality" of the "corrupt" religious ideology that enables and sanctions the church's authority (Böll, *Querschnitte* 194). The novel reveals what the superficial dignity, pomp and solemnity of the church obscures - an institution that not only refused to acknowledge and redress the unjustifiable acts committed by its representatives but actively enabled them.

Heinrich Fähmel, in *Billard um halb zehn* tells of being an eyewitness to "the transgressions of the hypocritical priests in their seduction of 'fallen' girls" (Böll, *Billard* 97). In keeping with the contemporary wall of silence that encloses this form of

violence, he merely notes the brutality of the clerics' abuse, but takes no further action and continues to attend church and receive the clergy's ministering (97, 70). Böll's inclusion of the theme of clerical sexual abuse in *Billard um halb zehn* was in an era when the power imbalance between the acquiescent laity and the authoritarian church resulted in sexual abuse being largely unacknowledged by either the institution, the victims, the witnesses or society. Arguably, Böll's defiance of the contemporary religious and social constraints through his use of the novel as a platform to draw attention to the moral and spiritual deficit of an institution that moulds the Faith, reflects his conviction of the imperative to dissociate the church and the Faith.

Böll's depiction in his novels of the adversity children and adults suffer through the melded religious ideology gradually changed with time, in keeping with the changes in society. The acquiescence of West Germans of the 1950s and early 1960s was replaced by a more critical and less compliant attitude toward institutions and authority over the course of the following decades. Many factors drove this cultural shift, including the modernization of society, economic prosperity, increased mobility, and enhanced educational opportunities (Harvey 478; "Germany: History and Background"). For Catholics, one further factor played a key role in their adoption of a more questioning stance toward institutions, especially the church. The 1959-65 "Vatican II" Council advised that the formulation of the institution's doctrines should not be the sole premise of the Pope and Cardinals (Lawler and Salzman 9). Instead, the laity's opinion, as well as that of theologians and bishops should also be sought (Lawler and Salzman 9).⁶⁰ While Vatican II did not result in immediate doctrinal procedural changes, it did increase the faithful's awareness of "that which *is* and that which *ought to be*" (Lawler and Salzman 76).

One consequence of the attitudinal adjustment of Catholics in the later years of the twentieth century was their more active response to the clergy's ongoing sexual abuse of the laity. During the 1970s and 80s, the contemporary power of the church, while waning, still shielded the perpetrators from legal, religious and social retribution

⁶⁰ Bishops attending the Council, and theologians believed that while the Magisterium spoke *for* the church, it also spoke *from* the church and that the church also included the laity, theologians and bishops (Lawler and Salzman 8). They successfully argued that as the Spirit of God is gifted to the whole church (a concept called *sensus fidei*), it is the whole church, including the laity, that should determine church doctrine and dogmas (Lawler and Salzman 9).

through the institution's ability to silence its victims. Hence, when Böll next broached this topic in the 1979 *Fürsorgliche Belagerung*, the novel does not depict the public and judicial condemnation of today. But reflective of the attitudinal shift in society, the work portrays the active opposition to and censure of clerical sexual violence, which is in stark contrast to Catholics' passive acceptance of sexual abuse portrayed 20 years earlier in *Billard um halb zehn*. *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* also condemns the melded religious ideology as having a role in inciting the abuse through its ruling on clerical celibacy.

Fritz Holm, in the 1979 *Fürsorgliche Belagerung*, recalls what he now recognises as his psychological sexual abuse as a youth (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 25, 111). He remembers the insufferable questions about masturbation the priests "spat at him" during confession for their own sexual gratification, and his acceptance of this abuse (19). Fritz then recounts the contemporary abuse of the "indecent behaviour [of clerics] with minors" (47). He is resolute in his condemnation of the clergy's actions, describing them as a form of "inhumanity" that contravenes both ecclesiastical and secular laws (46- 47). While not excusing the abusers' violence, Fritz draws attention to another aspect of the church's complicity aside from the exploitation of its authority. He regards the priests' actions as an expression of the "decay and rot" "inherent" in the church system that stems from the institution's ruling on celibacy (46-47).⁶¹ Fritz reflects that when the priests' "virility and lust are ... at their peak", they are not permitted to marry, and must satisfy their desires through other means (23). The canon law obligation of celibacy for those "in the divine service of the sacraments" was introduced in the fourth century ("The Biblical Foundation of Priestly Celibacy"). Whether this law was based on biblically grounded apostolic precedent or merely ecclesiastical tradition is a source of ongoing debate ("The Biblical Foundation of Priestly Celibacy"). But Böll's opinion, as evidenced through Fritz, is that the church's ruling on celibacy is yet another piece of evidence that condemns the blended institutional and scriptural religious ideology. Fritz now takes a stand against the sexual abuse he witnessed, by no longer attending church (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 25, 111).

⁶¹ *Catechism* 1579 tells how the men chosen as ordained ministers of the Latin Church (with the exception of permanent deacons), have historically lived a celibate life and intend to remain celibate "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (*Catechism*).

Fürsorgliche Belagerung provides insight into Böll's vision in which the "reality" of the melded ideology that enables the brutality so many suffer and shields those committing the abuse is recognised and addressed. The novel tells how the act of the abuser and the voices of the abused are no longer suppressed. Cleric Kohlschröder loses his job after "this time" going "too far" by forcing "schoolgirls and others" to "expose themselves" (Böll, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* 246).

Böll's depiction of the clerical sexual abuse of children pushes the contemporary social and literary boundaries by affording prominence to this "taboo" subject and directly attributing blame to the religious ideology the church "corrupted" (Böll, *Querschnitte* 194). It is arguably one of Böll's most significant portrayals in his endeavours to separate the Catholic Church from the faith of Catholicism.

While society had changed as the twentieth century drew to a close, the church and its ideologically enshrined precepts that sanctioned the institution's religious and moral control of the laity did not follow suit. Neither did Böll, who continued to use his novels as a vehicle to separate and segregate the church from Catholicism. His final novel, *Frauen vor Flußlandschaft*, is no exception. Herman Wubler attends a cathedral requiem mass (Böll, *Frauen* 35, 209). As he listens to the officiating Cardinal, Herman is disturbed by the thought that he and his family and friends aren't true Christians (209). He says how "it struck me that in reality *they* [the church] were the ones who always decided what Christianity should be – all the time, everywhere – and that the rest of us were wrong" (209). Herman's wife reassures him: "I don't think they have the truth, and we are in error. I don't believe it." (C.Hoffmann 30; Böll, *Frauen* 211). Böll's return to a topic he first raised twenty-five years earlier in *Ansichten eines Clowns* illustrates his belief that while the church's authority may have waned, the melded ideology was still intact, and the institution remained a formidable force.

Throughout his forty-year career Böll used his writings as vehicle to challenge a religious ideology that he was convinced was harmful to both Catholics and their faith. He practiced his religion and wrote his novels in accordance with his belief that "the Christian Faith has nothing to do with the institution of the Church" (C.Hoffmann 30). But Böll's dream of a return to a Catholicism stripped of institutional ideological inclusions and a church that reflected its biblical description remained just that.

While the harm resulting from the fusion of church precepts into religious ideology lay at the heart of the author's lifelong personal and professional conflict with organised Catholicism and the Catholic Church, Böll had another point of contention with religious ideology. He was strongly critical of religious ideology's potential to incite and condone harm to people regardless of their religious persuasion, through sexism that targeted females.

6.2 RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY AND SEXISM

The origins of sexism can be traced back through the centuries to at least the early Christian writers who promulgated their patristic interpretation of God as a man, and their belief that females are subordinate to males (Ruether 87, 83).⁶² The New Testament reinforces this concept of male dominance. Timothy asserts that females' inferior status correlates with their second place in God's order of creation (1 Tim. 2:13). Timothy further rationalises females' submissive role in terms of a penance to be observed on their path to salvation, after a woman was the first to sin (1 Tim. 2:13 - 15). As the Christian Church grew in power throughout the Western world, the church's views tended to be incorporated into the laws of the land (Wilson and McEachern 90). In Germany, where religion and politics have been so closely entwined, the influential church's gender-biased stance legalised and socialised the concepts of male privilege and entitlement, and the subjugation of females (Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 176). If we consider violence as a force that prevents an individual from fulfilling his or her spiritual, emotional and physical potential, then a society with an historical prejudice against females that is engendered and promoted through its religious values can be viewed as expressing religious cultural violence (Galtung, "Violence" 168).

Böll was resolute in his conviction that "women are at least as important as men", regardless of their roles in society (Böll, "Erinnerung" 534). In his novels, he raises awareness of the "reality" of the influence of religious ideology to instigate and justify the many different forms of gender-based harm females experience at the hands of

⁶² Notable among the early influencers was Aristotle, who shaped early Christian views on the inherent inferiority of females and their dependence on males (Ruether 84).

institutions and individuals. In Böll's early works we encounter employment discrimination against females, the limitation of educational opportunities for girls, and sexual harassment. In later novels, the suppression of female voices in literature and the institutional opposition to women fighting for a more equal gender paradigm come to the fore.

Böll began addressing the impact of the religiously influenced gender bias on the status and rights of females in West German society in his novels of the 1950s. In these works, he draws attention to the injustices females suffer in the spheres of employment and education. The religious social paradigm of the male breadwinner and female homemaker had been incorporated into West German legislation through pressure from the politically active and influential Catholic and Protestant Churches (Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 176). The institutions' lobbying was in response to the war-time occupation of women in traditional male jobs (Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 189). The churches feared this contravention of the religious social model would "destabilize gender hierarchies both within the family and society as a whole" (Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 189). The Basic Law of 1949 that guaranteed gender equality reinforced the churches' anxiety (Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 189).⁶³ The religious bodies' political intervention led to laws that legally endorsed the male breadwinner religious paradigm. Such legislation included the "housewife marriage" ruling under which women could only seek employment if it did not interfere with their duties as wives and mothers (Rueschemeyer and Schissler 74). Another law mandated a man's right to fill a job vacancy ahead of a female (Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 182).

Religion's categorisation of females as destined for the role of housewife had consequences aside from the issue of employment and economic independence. It led to the restriction of their educational opportunities. Apart from the period of government of the National Socialists, churches had oversight of local schools and higher education facilities from the introduction of German public education in 1763

⁶³ The Basic Law was not fully implemented due to many factors, but foremost was the belief that women's role in society was beyond state control, the latter being a sensitive issue after the Nazi period (Rueschemeyer and Schissler 73).

until the 1960s and had historically placed limits on the scholastic attainments of girls ("Germany: History and Background").⁶⁴

Böll's 1954 novel, *Haus ohne Hüter*, draws attention to the consequences for females of these employment and educational constraints through the depiction of the impediments war widows faced in their struggle for survival. Frau Brielach is a teenage bride, whose soldier husband was killed during WWII (Böll, *Haus* 13-14). The loss of her spouse in the conflict has robbed Frau Brielach of the ability to conform to the female housewife and male wage-earner religious social model. In common with the majority of her peers, she is unskilled and there is little demand for untrained workers (Becker 400; Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 178). She is excluded from any of the few suitable full-time jobs where there are male applicants (Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 182). A further hindrance to the full-time employment of women are child-care responsibilities. Like many widows, Frau Brielach has children, whose care restricts the number of hours she can work. But the few available part-time jobs are allocated to disabled war veterans (Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 182). With most women unable to secure employment, Frau Brielach and her fellow widows are forced to rely on the State to fulfill the role of breadwinner. After a series of different government benefits, in 1951 the government offered these women pensions, which were generally held to be impossible to survive on (Von Oertzen and Rietzschel 178, 181, 182).

Frau Brielach's desperation to augment her sparse government support forces her to trade on the only commodities available to her, her looks and her body. Putting aside her antipathy toward men, over the course of five years, she enters into four loveless de facto relationships to supplement her family's income (Böll, *Haus* 16, 185, 15,17). The threat of the loss of the cornerstone of her financial viability, her appearance, then forces Frau Brielach to make one final degrading decision (184-185). Suffering from the repellent gum disease of pyorrhoea, she cannot afford the necessary dental treatment (35).⁶⁵ In desperation her thoughts turn to her employer in

⁶⁴ The churches' educational prejudice toward females was particularly apposite to Böll. He was resentful of the experience of his own mother, Maria, whose formal education was limited by the church to a standard that would allow a girl to "fill the place in the home that God will allot to her" (C. Hoffmann, 126; Albisette 14).

⁶⁵ Pyorrhoea is an advanced form a gum disease characterised by a discharge of pus from the tooth sockets ("Pyorrhoea").

the poorly paid part-time "women's work" (cake decoration) that she had eventually secured (185).⁶⁶ She has rebuffed his advances and suggestions they live together in the past but now ponders how much he would pay to satisfy his desire for her (185). It is enough, and she sells herself once more (206-08). Frau Brielach's forced "prostitution" is a paradoxical consequence of a religion that condemns intimacy outside of marriage as a grave offence.⁶⁷ Her fate is also a damning indictment of the ideology's covert influence to incite and condone the violence of society's most powerful institutions, the church and the government, toward its most vulnerable citizens

In the decade following *Haus ohne Hüter*, West Germany remained a patriarchy (Reid, *A German* 186). But the late 1960s saw the beginnings of the feminist movement. These women were a part of feminism's second wave and campaigned for legal and social equality for females (Srivastava 112).⁶⁸ The activists identified women's voices in literature as being instrumental in their drive to change the religiously embedded perception of females' status, potential and role in society (Shafi 119). Historically, the cultural domain of literature had been dominated by patriarchal literary institutions, and male authors whose works portrayed men as the principal characters and heroes, in stories imbued with a masculine perspective (Shafi 119). The biased depiction of females in these works reinforced society's perception of the traditional gender hierarchy. Böll used his stature and pre-eminence as an author to further the feminists' challenge to the sexism of literature through *Gruppenbild mit Dame*. The novel is the fictional biography of a German woman over five decades from WWI.

To usurp the traditional role men occupied in novels, the narrative's protagonist is a middle-aged woman named Leni, "around, over and through" whom the narrative is centred (Böll, *Querschnitte* 122, 123). But Böll did not want to merely substitute a

⁶⁶ Women received less pay for the same job as men at this time (Rueschemeyer and Schissler 75).

⁶⁷ See Catechism 2347.

⁶⁸ The modern feminist movement can be divided into four waves: the first started with the right to vote by the "Women's Suffragette Movement" in 1848; the second began in the 1960s with campaigns for legal and social equality; the third in the 1990s advocating sexual freedom and liberal and radical feminism; and the fourth wave from 2012 targets sexual harassment and sexism in the online and traditional media (Srivastava et al 112).

woman for a man in the clichéd depiction of a literary hero (Böll, *Querschnitte* 123). Instead, he characterises Leni as a woman imbued with the "charity, love, equality, faith and imagination" he regarded as the essence of a humanity that only a woman could portray (Perraudin 179; Böll, "Schreiben und Lesen" 254).

Böll depicts these qualities in Leni through her generosity, her unconditional love of her friends and her family, her non-judgemental attitude toward others' income, religion, race or political affiliation, and her deep spirituality and imagination. The narrative relates that even the most sceptical of observers would have to approve of the adjective "generous" to describe Leni (Böll, *Gruppenbild* 221). A shining instance is her donation of her deceased husband's expensive warm clothing to the needy rather than selling them for considerable reward on the post-war black market (221). Leni's unprejudiced acceptance of others is evident during the war. She openly defies the classification of a Russian POW as "subhuman" because he is a communist and a "racially inferior" Slav and offers the shivering emaciated man a cup of hot coffee (174). Leni has many friends, including prostitute Margret to whom she is "a friend for life" (48). She was devoted to her late teacher, Sister Rahel, who was a Catholic nun who converted from Judaism (303). Leni is a devoted mother to her only child whom she raises alone (17). Her spirituality and imagination are jointly expressed by her "intimate" relationship with the Virgin Mary, whom she receives nearly every day on her TV screen (17). Böll believed that Leni's humanity is not a female trait but a human one that men also have the potential to express, as in his opinion, aside from biological imperatives, the difference between men and women is blurred (Böll, "Schreiben und Lesen" 253). To him, however, this humanity is present in women but deficient in men, German literature and society (Böll, "Schreiben und Lesen" 254; Perraudin 179).

A narrator relates Leni's memoir, but he is not the typical storyteller of Böll's past novels. Instead, he is a biographer, or "Verfasser" ("author/writer"), whose voice is feminised by his rejection of the "essentially male way of seeing things" (Perraudin 178). The "Verfasser" not only researches and chronicles Leni's life, he is sympathetic toward it. He actively intervenes to improve the lives of some of the women he meets as he compiles his story, including Leni (Böll, *Gruppenbild* 339). Through his biography, the "Verfasser" provides the reader with a female perspective of learning, living, and suffering through fifty years of German history from 1922 to 1970 (Böll, "Schreiben und Lesen" 253, *Gruppenbild*, Interview mit Wellerschoff" 120).

Through *Gruppenbild mit Dame*, which many say was instrumental in Böll winning the Nobel Prize for Literature, the author succeeded in advancing the role of women in literature (Zachau 83). He continued with this task in his next novel, the 1974 novel *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum*. The work is set in a decade in which women who had embraced the gains of greater legal and social equality the feminist movement had achieved, were the victims of the hostility of patriarchal institutions and conservative sections of society (Srivastava et al 112).⁶⁹ In this novel, Böll once again challenges the gender-bias of the literary patriarchy, through the work's female main character. But in *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* he also draws attention to two other male dominated institutions that were bastions of the continuing legally mandated religious based sexism: the media and the judiciary.⁷⁰

Katharina Blum does not conform to religion's stereotype of females. She is neither subordinate to nor dependent on a man, and her life is not centred around her "Kinder, Kirche und Küche" ("children, church and kitchen"). Instead, Katharina is a financially independent divorcee who owns her own apartment, is childless and does not attend church. But Katharina is not the target of sexist violence because she is perceived as a radical activist for the feminist cause, rather through her brief association with a man who is (falsely) alleged to be a terrorist (Böll, *Katharina Blum* 114). While the press and the judiciary's interest in Katharina is the threat she poses through her purported political non-conformism, the manner of the retribution she suffers is grounded in sexism. Both institutions repudiate the characteristics of personal and financial self-determination that set Katharina apart from religious ideology's traditional female paradigm. The (exclusively male) representatives of the judiciary accuse Katharina of being in a relationship with their suspect, rather than having had a one-night encounter with him (32).⁷¹ Vilifying newspaper headlines define her through a man by describing

⁶⁹ One instance was the ongoing sexism was the "housewife marriage" ruling that was mandated through the strong political influence of the Catholic Church, under which women could only seek employment if it did not interfere with their duties as wives and mothers (Rueschemeyer and Schissler 74). It was not until 1977 that this law was replaced with that of the "partnership marriage" (Rueschemeyer and Schissler 74).

⁷⁰ The media is a pervasive and powerful influence on the perception of women's status and role in society through its stereotypical depictions of men and women (Wood 31 -32). The editorial stance of Springer's newspaper's is described as "overtly misogynistic and sexist in its framing of women" (Becker)..

⁷¹ The Chief Crime Commissioner, his assistant and two public prosecutors.

her as a "murderer's moll" and "outlaw's sweetheart" (39, 36). The institutions refute Katharina's claims of financial independence. The judiciary implies her income and assets are not due to her own industry and thrift but due to the proceeds of her alleged lover's criminal activity (53). The press follows suit, with its attribution of Katharina's assets to the proceeds of illegal "bounty" (37).

Through their vilification of Katharina, the media not only impugns her image and that of other "liberated" women, but also acts as a conduit for society to voice its condemnation of those who defy the role and status of females that religion defines and sanctions. Accounts from sexist witnesses embellish the media's depiction of Katharina and those she represents. In a statement to the press, her ex-husband, Wilhelm, attests to the rightful position of men as the dominant gender. He rejects Katharina's explanation for their divorce as her response to his repeated aggressive sexual harassment (Böll, *Katharina Blum* 29).⁷² Instead, he lays the blame at the feet of the two contemporary movements that were threatening the fabric of the patriarchal society – feminism and terrorism. Wilhelm describes Katharina as an ambitious woman with radical political views, whose hostility to the church and dissatisfaction with the rewards of a traditional marriage led to their divorce on the grounds of desertion (40-41).⁷³ Members of the community respond with sexual harassment in the form of anonymous postcards with "crude" sexual propositions (Böll, *Katharina Blum* 39, 77). Others attempt to lure Katharina back to the religious fold and its historical paradigm of women, through letters that exhorted her to pray and "kneel down and confess" (77-78).

One last expression of sexism proves too much for Katharina. She meets with the lead reporter of the tabloid responsible for the vilifying articles, who, perhaps believing his own description of her as a "moll", crudely suggests they have sex (Böll, *Katharina Blum* 39, 135). As he grabs at her dress she shoots and kills him (135). Katharina's young life as a liberated woman is shattered, as the violence she commits is against

⁷² Sexual harassment is a legal term that refers to unsolicited and unwanted verbal or physical behaviour. It is an expression of sexism ("Forms of Gender Discrimination").

⁷³ This description of Katharina as a feminist and political activist, mirrors that of the contemporary female political radicals such as Ulrike Meinhof and Gudrun Ensslin, who left their families and terrorised the public (Ghurye 67).

the law, while that of the institutions and individuals she is a victim of is legitimised by society through religious ideology's influence.

As the twentieth century drew to a close, the feminist movement and an increasingly secular society had made some inroads into addressing the gender imbalance in West Germany (Rueschemeyer and Schissler 79). But the socialised religious concept of male superiority remained an integral element of the system of values and beliefs that shaped the outlook and structure of society (Stackelberg 45). Hence, Böll continued his censure of the gender biased culture.

Frauen vor Flußlandschaft ("Women in a River Landscape") is set in the political arena of the contemporary West German capital of Bonn, in the early 1980s. The river in the work's title refers to the Rhine, which runs through the erstwhile capital, while the women are the wives and mistresses of politicians. The title conveys the status of these women in the political landscape: they are merely a part of the scenery in the eyes of those who control them and their country. Goethe's poem "Wanderers Gemütsruhe" prefaces the narrative and encapsulates the novel's title and theme. The two stanzas quoted convey a helplessness in the face of power, reflecting the struggle of women against the sexism inherent in the West German political sphere and the nation's society (Butler, "Frauen" 251).

Frauen vor Flußlandschaft underlines the ongoing gender-bias against females through its depiction of the West German Federal Parliament as an exclusively male domain. Not only are all the politicians men, but also those on the fringes who exert political influence. This description reflects the gender disparity of the Bundestag since its inception, as between 1949 and the end of the 1970s, the number of women representatives did not exceed 10% (Coka et. al. 367).⁷⁴ With this bastion of society's patriarchal institutions unbroached, females are denied a voice and the power to address and effect real change to their religiously enshrined inferior status (Rueschemeyer and Schissler 79). But in the novel, the lack of a political platform does not prevent some women from challenging their subordinate position in the contemporary patriarchal society. The narrative portrays the violence these women

⁷⁴ The number of female representatives only began to rise in 1983 by an average of 3% per year, primarily through the entry into parliament of the Greens Party with their prescribed female quota of 50% (Coka et. al. 367).

confront when they challenge the dominance of influential men in the political sphere, men whose perception of the role and status of females aligns with that of their counterparts down the centuries.

The principal female characters in *Frauen vor Flußlandschaft* are mainly older women who rebel against a lifetime of male domination. The narrative opens with Erika Wubler, the wife of a prominent politician. She takes a stand against her religiously and socially mandated role of a decorative adjunct to her husband (Böll, *Frauen* 34 - 36). The threats of her husband's colleague, Federal Minister Blaukrämer, of "repercussions" for her non-conformism do not intimidate Erika (19, 40). She is aware that these "repercussions" could include internment in Kuhlollen spa, a facility that is a cross between a luxury hotel and a psychiatric institution (21). It is to this high-class prison that politically powerful men with nefarious war-time pasts send their wives who refuse to obey them and maintain their silence about the past (40, 119). Blaukrämer's first wife, Elisabeth, has suffered this fate. As a Prussian noble, she had been used as an exotic attraction at Blaukrämer's political functions and "put at the disposal" of a sexually predatory, political powerbroker by her husband, to further his political career (152, 158, 24). In her mid-50s, Elisabeth finally rebels against her spouse's sexist violence. She refuses to comply with his insistence to continue to deny what she knows is the truth – that Nazi war criminals are alive and active in contemporary West German politics (155, 159). Blaukrämer sends her to Kuhlollen, where she takes her own life rather than yield to his dominance (170). The wife of another former Nazi, the politically influential Plottger, also ends her life, when her story of the present day politically powerful men's past Nazi crimes is dismissed as the mere rantings of a hysterical woman (18).

Through the toll these courageous older women pay for their defiance of contemporary society's gender bias, Böll portrays the hurdles women face in their quest for equality. But his choice of the poem that introduces *Frauen vor Flußlandschaft* offers hope to future generations of females that the historical religious paradigms will not always oppress them. The third stanza of "Wanderers Gemütsruhe", which is not included in the novel, conveys the message that any omnipotent, oppressive force is transient (Butler, "*Frauen*" 251). The novel provides a glimpse of this promised new world in which males no longer dominate and subjugate females. Katharina Richter is a university graduate who is undertaking a

PhD in economics (42). She is in a relationship with the father of her 4-year-old son but lives in her own home, refuses to marry him and is financially independent (13, 80, 69). Freed from religious ideology's paradigm of the poorly educated, subordinate housewife, Katharina symbolises what females down the ages have yearned for - gender equality, a right that for the most part still remains elusive.

A culture in which an individual's value and status are predicated on their gender was anathema to Böll. It was at odds with his lifelong utopian vision of society in which every individual could "fulfill his or her spiritual, emotional and physical potential" (Butler, "The Conservative Moralists" 16). Böll was ardent in his condemnation of gender-bias prejudice based on the influence of religious ideology and he raised awareness of the "reality" of the iniquities it resulted in throughout his literary career (Böll, "Erinnerung" 541-543; Compton 20).

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have endeavoured to demonstrate that Galtung's concept of cultural violence accurately captures the "reality" ("Wirklichkeit") that Heinrich Böll strove to convey in his novels and that this form of violence serves as a unifying theme in the author's body of works.

Cultural violence merits consideration as a reflection of Böll's concept of the "reality" for several compelling reasons. Johan Galtung and Heinrich Böll shared a common understanding of the meaning of the term violence, through their mutual recognition of violence's dual natures and different forms. Importantly, they were both cognizant of a variety of cultural elements hidden in the fabric of society that can instigate and condone violence.

Galtung classed this violence as cultural and described it as the influence of aspects of culture to incite and legitimise the violence of individuals or institutions (Galtung, "Cultural" 291, 295). Böll too recognised that violence could be a complex process involving covert forces such as systemic and structural influences (Böll, "Drei Tage" 406). His understanding of the processes at work in this form of violence, which he describes through his concepts of the "topical" and the "reality", closely parallels Galtung's description of cultural violence. For Böll, the primary sources of the violence related to his concepts were systemic forces, and it was ignorance of these unseen cultural influences that he was trying to counter (Böll, "Drei Tage" 406). While his initial focus was on the ideology of fascism, he was also deeply concerned by the adverse effects of the capitalist political ideology and economic doctrine, religious ideology and language (Böll, "Erinnerung" 518-519). Böll describes the way these abstract aspects of culture exert their influence as through the agency of the second covert force he had identified as a source of violence, structures, in the form of institutions. He describes the interaction of these unseen forces as a process in which ideologies and doctrines instigate and condone the harm that institutions cause to individuals and society. His description is strikingly similar to Galtung's concept of cultural violence. Böll and Galtung share one further common ground. Their concepts of the "topical" and "the "reality", and cultural violence came about through their mutual desire to draw

attention to and counter this expression of violence (Böll, "Drei Tage" 406; Galtung, "Cultural" 291).

An examination of Böll's novels lends support to the argument that the author consistently seeks to reveal the "reality" of the covert forces in society that lead to violence through a process mirroring cultural violence. To this end, Böll centred all his works on contemporary issues. In each novel, he raises awareness that behind the relevant superficial topical issue lies the "reality" of the unseen influence of an ideology or doctrine to incite and justify the violence of one or more institutions. An overview of Böll's major works highlights the consistent depiction of this interpretation of "reality".

WWII is the focus of *Der Zug war pünktlich*, *Wo warst du Adam?*, and *Billard um halb zehn*. In these early novels, Böll underlines the fascist instigated and sanctioned horror of the brutality that the German Government and military exerted toward those of Jewish heritage, their own troops and general civilian population.

In the post-war period, the novels *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* and *Haus ohne Hüter* draw attention to the "reality" hidden behind the superficial façade of the West German Economic Miracle. Böll seeks to highlight the harm the capitalist economic doctrine incites and condones through government policies that cause the socio-economic misery of those in the lowest ranks of the hierarchic capitalist society. These novels also introduce Böll's condemnation of the biblical and institutional melded religious ideology that gives rise to and legitimises what he regarded as the Catholic Church's violence toward its own parishioners.

In his novels of the 1960s, Böll escalates his criticism of what he viewed as the church's violence toward Catholics. *Ansichten eines Clowns* raises awareness of the superficiality of the church's image of benevolence and spirituality. The work underlines the "reality" of the harm the church causes through its rigid social and moral control of the faithful through the covert influence of the institution's ideologically enshrined dogmas and doctrines. In the same decade Böll also addresses the contemporary issue of the constraints the government placed on all genres of art in West Germany. *Ende einer Dienstreise* raises awareness of the capitalist political ideology's justification of the West German Government's role as the gatekeeper of artistic expression, through the depiction of the government's suppression of an innovative art form linked to an anti-capitalist art movement.

In the following decade, Böll's novels clearly reflect the burgeoning feminist movement and the political turmoil in West Germany. In *Gruppenbild mit Dame* Böll adds his voice to the feminists' cause. He draws attention to the religiously embedded sexism of the patriarchal German society by challenging the historical literary gender bias. *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* continues Böll's challenge to literature's discrimination against females, but the primary focus of this novel and that of *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* is on the political turbulence of the early 1970s. These works look beyond the image of West Germany's economic success to reveal the human and environmental toll of the violence the political ideology of capitalism causes and justifies. They depict the perpetrators of this harm as the West German Government and the right-wing press magnate Axel Springer. *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* also attacks the church's façade as the embodiment of Christian values. The novel broaches the subject of the historical and ongoing clerical sexual abuse of the laity, which religious ideology facilitates.

Böll's final novel, the 1985 *Frauen vor Flußlandschaft*, also addresses sexism, this time at the heart of the West Germany's democracy. The novel highlights the harm that millennia of religiously influenced prejudice against females has inflicted through the dearth of women in politics, thereby denying them a platform to redress their country's gender bias. The work portrays the Bundestag as a bastion of male power and control and describes the adverse consequences, including death, for females who challenge this patriarchal paradigm. *Frauen vor Flußlandschaft* also draws attention to the political influence of former Nazis to emphasise Böll's belief in and fear of the ongoing threat of the violence fascism sanctions when "reality" is not recognised.

Böll's major works illustrate that over the forty-year span of his literary career, he remained steadfast in his commitment to reveal a "reality" behind the façade of the "topical" that mirrors cultural violence and that this theme unifies the author's oeuvre. On Böll's death, the President of the Federal Republic of Germany eulogised that Böll's "courageous, committed, aware and constantly warning voice" will be missed. The conclusion of this thesis is that the author's "constantly warning voice" advised of the dangers of a "reality" that encapsulates Galtung's concept of cultural violence and echoes in each of his novels.

The significance this thesis attributes to cultural violence in Böll's novels represents an original concept that opens the door to further research evaluating the theme in the context of the author's works. As many of the critiques of Böll's narratives were written before Galtung identified this expression of violence, its consideration in the analysis of Böll's novels could extend the contemporary interpretation of his oeuvre.

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