

THE MUCKER WAR

10

A History of Violence and Silence

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We colonists want to let Your Majesty know how much we have suffered, not just from our neighbors who are rowdy and conniving, but also from the very authorities of this district who have been protecting the wicked. . . . And so they insult us wherever they meet us, directing obscene words to ward us off, whipping some, throwing stones at others without any reason. . . . They cut to pieces the white clothes belonging to the peasant Nicolau Barth, which were hanging in the yard. And they cut the tails and manes of five horses.

Letter from the so-called Mucker to Brazilian emperor Dom Pedro II, December 1873

The indignation against the Mucker is so immense that the officers couldn't hinder the corpses' mutilations by colonists and soldiers. Someone cut off the head of Robinson and brought it to São Leopoldo in a bag. Another man carried the ear of a Mucker in his hands. The persecution of the Mucker continues until all have been hunted down.

Karl von Koseritz, *Deutsche Zeitung*, July 1874

In heaven there is no more suffering, perishing and death, there our desires are dried up into an eternal reencounter.

Tombstone, cemetery of Linha Nova, ca. 1870

CULTURAL CATACLYSM

The body of a beheaded woman was found in May 1993 in the woods near São Leopoldo, the first German colony founded in 1824 in the southern province of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. As if the brutal killing wasn't bizarre enough, the stories that explained her death were equally strange—they speak to a history of violence in that region.

Local newspapers reported that very little was known about the beheaded woman's identity, aside from her dark skin, her scar from a caesarean section, and her age of roughly thirty years. No fingerprint matches could be made, and her head was not found. The local police chief, in a peculiar move, ordered a dummy to be dressed in the victim's clothes "so as to rouse the memory of the people." Someone might recall having seen a woman dressed similarly, he reasoned, and "might then contact us" (*Jornal NH* 1993).¹

This story was also mentioned in *Zero Hora*, the province's main newspaper, in a report on the increasing number of homicides in that relatively prosperous region (ZH 1993). The report stated that the violence originated in metropolitan-area slums now occupied by the legions of unemployed migrants looking for work in local shoe factories, and that middle-class citizens were now building walls around their homes and arming themselves. One reporter went so far as to associate that "migrant violence" with a phantasmatic reoccurrence. A headline read, "Violence Is Resurrected in the Land of the Mucker." For over a century, the word "Mucker" has signified sectarian fanaticism, communal breakdown, and murderous violence in the region.

Following independence from Portugal, the new imperial authorities founded the colony of São Leopoldo for two thousand German immigrants (Hunsche 1975; Delhaes-Gunther 1980; Roche 1969; Frobel 1858; Seyferth 1990).² Given external market demands and the urgency to feed a growing urban population, the country needed to find alternatives to slavery and to diversify its agricultural production (Petroni 1982). Then and in the following decades, thousands of German peasants, *Lumpenproletariat*, and former prisoners were recruited with promises of land, full-fledged citizenship, and religious rights, none of which would be fully granted. In this Catholic land, Protestant baptisms and marriages were not recognized and had no legal significance; the colonists also had no rights to participate in local administrations (Hillebrand 1924; Hunsche 1979). Neither free nor enslaved, the immigrants had to invent their own means of survival, and many enlisted as soldiers in wars against Argentina and Paraguay. Available statistics say that some five million immigrants entered Brazil between 1819 and 1947 (Seyferth 1990: 11).³

Until the 1840s, the colonists were subsistence farmers, but that would change as agricultural products began to find their way into the thriving markets of Porto Alegre as well as those of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (following a coffee plantation boom). By the late 1860s, the region was prospering, attracting investments from Britain (for railroad construction) and imports from Germany (a range of industrialized goods, from nails to textiles to champagne). Lutheran and Jesuit missionaries came as well.

In its coverage of the 1993 beheading story, *Zero Hora* reported that around 1872 a group of second-generation German-speaking colonists, from various social ranks, began to be singled out as "Mucker" (meaning very religious, stubborn, and hypocritical people) by their neighbors and local authorities. For several years they had been meeting peacefully around the words of Jacobina Mentz Maurer and the herbal medicine prepared by her husband, João Jorge Maurer. According to the newspaper, the Mucker were led by "a woman suffering from psychological disturbances." Local clergy prohibited people from witnessing her trances, as she was said to be interpreting the Bible in a messianic way and engaging in adultery and civil disobedience. According to the newspaper, the ostracized Mucker sought revenge by ambushing local authorities and by burning down neighboring homes and trading posts. The report noted that the army was justifiably called in to respond to the Mucker's deadly actions and to restore order.

Military records show that the Maurers' house was attacked and set on fire on July 19, 1874. Dozens of men, women and children died in the attack, as did Colonel Genuíno Sampaio, who led the provincial and imperial troops, aided by locals. Several Mucker survived and were taken to prison. Seventeen of them, including thirty-three year-old Jacobina and her newborn child, escaped and hid in the nearby woods. Two weeks later, the group was found and killed. Soldiers and colonists mutilated the dead bodies—Jacobina's mouth was slit—and placed them in a common grave in the woods. The body of João Jorge Maurer was never found. "Mucker" became a curse word and a heuristic for violence and impunity—a continuous legend of the present (Biehl 1991, 1996a).

Omitted from the *Zero Hora* report is the fact that the military action against the Mucker was sponsored by the Germanist upper class living in the capital Porto Alegre (then Brazil's fourth-largest city) and was silently supported by the religious authorities, newly arrived in the region. Karl von Koseritz, a Freemason philosopher and politician who also directed the influential newspaper *Deutsche Zeitung* (DZ), spearheaded the anti-Mucker campaign. In reference to the Mucker, Koseritz wrote, "These swindlers don't deserve citizenship. They adore as Christ a woman who with good reason should be considered a Babylonian whore. For this band there is room either in the penitentiary or in the mad house. They have spread over society like a deadly poison. If the government does not liberate society from this monster, the inhabitants of the colonies will themselves seek justice by lynching. Deaths will come" (DZ 12/10/1873).

At the peak of the armed conflict, the *Deutsche Zeitung's* editorial read, "The Mucker have to be banished to a land where there are still cannibals. We have to treat them humanly: at deportation we should give the Mucker guns and

ammunition. They would then have the opportunity to satiate their death instinct while killing cannibals, and the cannibals would have the pleasure of having Mucker for breakfast. In this way, we would help the Mucker as well as the cannibals" (DZ 7/22/1874). Meanwhile, members of the local German Society for Gymnastics and Hunting had taken over the civic guard of Porto Alegre: "We want to prove to the Brazilian government as well as to the other nations that we by no means share the sentiments of those [criminals] who call themselves our compatriots. On the contrary, we desire to contribute to their extermination."⁴

Immediately after the war, Koseritz (under the pseudonym C. M. S.) published a report in the German magazine *Die Gartenlaube* entitled, "Jacobina Maurer, the Feminine Christ, amidst the Germans in Brazil" (reprinted in Hunsche 1974: 255–62). The Mucker events should interest the *aufgeklärte Deutschen* (enlightened Germans), he wrote:

How could a noncultured and libertine woman as Jacobina—who does not read anything which is handwritten and only reads with difficulty what is printed—have gained so much influence over a high number of honored and hard-working men? One is tempted to believe in a certain form of mental alienation, as we can find reference in the reports of the horrendous times of the trials against the witches. . . . It is unfortunate that in spite of all the progress of humanity, an individual can still fall so deeply into the superstition of backward times. We deplore the fact that what the poet Schiller wrote still survives today: "The worst of all horrors is man in his illusion."

This chapter is concerned with the savagery of these enlightened men. Based on archival research I carried out in Brazil and in Germany, I explore the following: (1) how stories about the Mucker as mad, criminal, and bestial were choreographed; (2) how Koseritz's sensationalist master narrative informed public opinion and military action; (3) how Jacobina and João Jorge's followers managed their ordinary life problems and articulated their theological ideas; and (4) how, in the end, these colonists embodied the alterity "Mucker" into which they had been classified and learned to kill too. What were the implications of this war for ethnic identity formation and local governance?

The Mucker events form the basis of my understanding of the mobility of nineteenth-century European notions of rationality and progress: how they migrated and became culturally ingrained in the peripheries, contributing to political violence and to the redefinition of common sense. The social, religious, philosophical and political conflicts of the period were dramatized around the Mucker. Koseritz and associates used science, institutionalized religion, and the media to stigmatize ordinary pious and healing practices as fanatic and sectar-

ian. Amid cultural cataclysm, independent colonists were remade as criminal Mucker characters. Their subsequent murder as politically dangerous, I argue, was part of the dynamic installation of a local Germanist order and of the constitution of an enlightened, albeit transplanted, German Self in the South. In this context, for reason to rule, life representations had to literally become truth in the flesh of the Other. With the violent encroachment of a German identity also emerged a sense that things could have been otherwise, that a certain way of knowing oneself and the world was now a devalued currency. Interviews with local historians and with elderly people who have knowledge of the war's aftermath helped me to sketch the ways in which the massacre lives on in the contemporary political imaginary.

"A TRIBE THAT THINKS AND TRADES IN GERMAN"

By 1875, the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce praised São Leopoldo as an exemplary settlement to be reproduced everywhere if the country were to modernize its economy and society: "There, the German race has been working for the Empire. The Brazilian organism must continue to be lightened with new European blood, intelligence, and the fever of progress. With the ending of slavery and the generation of a free labor force, a *beneficial moral revolution* is taking place in the country. In this great laboratory of the present . . . the state's strong hand must continue to be wielded" (Souza 1875: 420, my emphasis).

For Germany, which had little success in the colonial practice of territorial annexation, the nineteenth-century settlements in South America and Africa became a testing ground for a different kind of cultural and economic imperialism (Frobel 1858; Fabian 2000; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; Steinmetz 2004). By fostering German communities in isolated enclaves that were somewhat independent of the host country, Germany was generating specific sites from which raw materials and food could be imported, and through which markets for the export of consumer goods, technologies, and other investments could be created.

An 1874 report by the German Society for Protestants in Southern Brazil made the goals of its mission clear: "It is indeed important to have a tribe overseas that thinks and trades in German, sympathizes with us in terms of business and politics, and represents our interests in all matters. This common sense shall become obvious to all enlightened men" (Auftrag 1874: 45). We live in a world of compensations, stated Koseritz, "if Germany has the power, Brazil has the natural resources" (1897: 47). By 1903, the province of Rio Grande do Sul was importing 45 percent of its goods from Germany, accounting for 19 percent of Germany's total yearly exports (Schrader 1980: 205; see also Oberacker 1985).

While a local form of Kultur was being painfully inscribed in the flesh of the Mucker, in Germany Friedrich Nietzsche was publishing *The Use and Abuse of History*. In 1874, Nietzsche wrote about how the embodiment of a particular German Enlightenment presupposed the forgetfulness of one's lived experience. Imposed by the "gravediggers of the present," this forgetfulness induced a generalized moral blindness: "Men are to be fashioned to the needs of the time, that they may soon take their place in the machine. . . . Some birds are blinded that they may sing better; I do not think men sing today better than their grandfathers, though I am sure they are blinded early" (1957: 7, 44).

The Mucker events were an extension of such German experiments in the south, I argue, and the war grotesquely realized some of the very aims and cultural productions of this form of Enlightenment (Biehl 1996a). In the process, a scientifically informed history became itself a phantasm, a modern substitute for reality that even today informs public perception. On August 1, 1874, the *Deutsche Zeitung's* editorial read, "The Mucker must be hunted like dogs and killed so that no trace of them remains. The entire population holds this opinion. The head of each one of them must be cut off without exception. Even though the band can hardly read and sign their names, these fanatics want to reform today's world according to their visions." Here we are not speaking of colonial violence, but of colonist violence, which was based on rural/urban and primitive/enlightened distinctions and their enforcements.

Before following the footprints of the hunters and makers of history so to speak, I want to relate a human encounter that has profoundly framed my understanding of the Mucker matters as a historical Real that both resists symbolization and gives occasion to what anthropologist Michael Fischer (1999) calls "ethical moments." I am a descendant of German immigrants who settled in southern Brazil circa 1860. I grew up in the colony of Kaffee Schneitz (Picada Café), speaking *ecke Deutsch* (not high German, but an oral dialect "grown in the bushes") and hearing stories about the Mucker: how they came in the middle of the night to steal animals and goods and how people slept in fear next to their rifles.

Sometime in 1991, I visited Vó Minda, my maternal grandmother (born in 1910), in the nursing home where she lived out the final days of her life. I prompted her to inquire about the Mucker from her acquaintances there. In my next visit she had something to tell me:

"João, the Mucker did not cut the tails of their horses."

"What does this mean?" I asked.

Vó Minda's answer could not have been more compelling, revealing the matter-of-factness of the story of the cut tails that, for her, held a mirror to her current isolated existence: "That is something we don't do to what is ours."

As I heard it, in Vó Minda's speech, the word "Mucker" circulated loneliness, a remembered tie, and the presence of inconceivable violence—the voice of a body that is denied a home.

And to my surprise, when I began reading the personal letters, official petitions and police files of the times when the word "Mucker" for the first time appeared in history, I discovered a curious detail: Jacobina and her friends had complained to no avail that the tails of their horses had been mysteriously cut. The cutting of the horses' tails signifies the beginnings of the expulsion of these men and women from everyday life. Vó Minda and others kept circulating such traces as a measure of oneself in the face of dying.

KULTUR

In Germany, the revolutionary unrest of the 1840s, allied to demographic pressures ensuing from the end of feudalism and the country's rapid industrialization, resulted in very high emigrant outflows.⁵ In spite of Brazil's still-precious colonization infrastructure and increasing sense of outrage against that "most tentative experiment" by European governments (Assu 1873: 7), a second wave of immigration brought to the São Leopoldo colony freedom fighters and intellectuals such as Karl von Koseritz, the future leader of the anti-Mucker campaign.

Karl von Koseritz was born in 1830 in Dessau, the son of a Prussian major. By the age of fifteen, he was already taking part in local revolutionary activities. In 1851, he quit the Wittenberg Gymnasium and traveled to northeastern Brazil—"a disenchantment," he later wrote. "I lost my fortune in the thoughtlessness of my youth and with it I lost the paternal house and my fatherland" (quoted in Oberacker 1961: 21). He returned to Brazil in 1852 as part of the German Legion (nineteen hundred soldiers and fifty-three officers) contracted to aid the Brazilian Army in the war against Argentina, which had taken over Uruguay. Like Koseritz, the majority deserted and settled down in the southern region. These men became known as Brummer and took up key positions in the colonies (Dickie 1989; Sudhaus 1962).

By 1855, Koseritz was married to Zeferina Vasconcelos, the daughter of a large landowner in the city of Pelotas. In the following years, he worked as a bookkeeper, teacher, and school director and also contributed to local newspapers. In 1857, he published his *Summary of the Universal History* and the female character plays *Inês* and *Nini*. In Koseritz's view, "The Brummer brought with them a new and independent spirit, stimulating what existed of German identity at that time, tuning it up, so to speak, into the leaven which made local Germanism rise" (quoted in Oberacker 1961: 17). And as the Brummer spread their

democratic, scientific and moral ideals, they became catalysts for an emergent Germanist bourgeoisie that understood itself as "cultured" and "politicized" in contrast to the backward colonist descendants of the first immigration wave (Oberacker 1961: 17; see also Elias 1978).

By the mid-1860s, 15 percent of Porto Alegre's twenty thousand inhabitants were Germans or German Brazilians. Approximately two-thirds of them had come directly from Germany and were economically well-off (Gans 2004: 26). As naturalist Robert Avé-Lallement wrote in 1858, "I met many Germans of honorable heart and loyal sentiments in Porto Alegre. It seems that the majority of them live well, very well. Hard-working men can make a fortune here, infinitely more than in Germany under the same circumstances. If they saw the affliction people experience in Germany they would thank God for their tranquil and half-Germanized existence in Porto Alegre" (quoted in Gans 2004: 32).

In 1867 congressman José Joaquim Rodrigues Lopes wrote his "General Considerations on the ex-Colony of São Leopoldo" (the colony had recently become a municipality and was now administered by German physician Dr. Hillebrand), in response to the emperor's concern about the possible formation of an independent Germanic state in Rio Grande do Sul: "The population of the ex-Colony is almost entirely made up of Germans and their children . . . they amount to sixteen thousand to eighteen thousand souls. They do not show any desire to be naturalized. . . . One can say that their heart and soul belong completely to the German deity. . . . Does what I saw turn me into a visionary? So, does the current state of affairs pose a great threat for the integrity of the Empire in the future?"⁶

The press played a formative role in installing the image of a cohesive Germanist society in the south. In 1862, a consortium of businessmen founded the *Deutsche Zeitung* and two years later they hired Koseritz as the director. Correspondents, generally teachers, were hired in almost every colony, and their reports were usually published next to news from Germany and from Porto Alegre. Newspapers were distributed and commented upon at the trading posts; it was common to read them after Sunday worship services. As Germanist historian Hans Gehse argues, "Objective reporting replaced primitive gossiping, and a critical perception of and stance toward political events of interest to the German immigrant emerged" (1931: 121). These men ardently denied allegations of separatism. They were thoroughly invested in the development of an ethnic collective, "a fraternal Germanism" (as Koseritz called it), independent of German institutions and fully participating in Brazil's legal and political system (Gehse 1931; Pinsdorf 1990; Porto 1934).

This is how Koseritz defined himself circa 1870: "I am a straight adherent of Materialism and Darwinism, and I have the courage to express my opinions in

a land that is essentially Catholic and metaphysical. . . . In Brazil, we do not live under a German flag. We are part of Germany through language and habits. We are linked to our fatherland with all the fibers of our heart. Politically, however, we must become full Brazilian citizens" (quoted in Oberacker 1961: 26, 53). A fierce adept of Bismark's *kulturkampf* and a spokesman of a Brazilian pro-German and anti-French intellectual movement, Koseritz published several books: *Rome in the Trial of the Century* (1870); *The Church and the State* (1873); *Earth and Man in Light of Modern Science* (1878); *Images of Brazil* (1884). In the 1880s, following changes in the electoral system, Koseritz was twice elected to the province's legislature.

Beyond centralized politics, what legitimized this Germanist bourgeoisie was the expansion of its self-image. The concept of German *Kultur* was vital for the assertion of the "spiritual" segregation of German descendants from other Brazilians, and for the assertion of moral values and obligations regarding individual conduct and the organization of family lives (Elias 1978). Local historian Carlos Oberacker states, "Koseritz was able to congregate . . . political forces for the good of a collective of German culture" (1961: 18). The purely spiritual (*das rein Geistige*) aspect of *Kultur* was transmitted through the press and the Freemason educators and newly arrived German-educated clergy. This Germanist breakthrough was also dependent on the establishment of a network of productive sites (*Gemeinde*, "communities") where new individual truths and public order could be surveyed as well as, later, on the production and extermination of a "primitive" colonist's worldview.

"THERE WAS ENLIGHTENMENT FOR ALL KINDS OF ILLNESS, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR NAMES WERE"

I stumbled on a collection of the *Deutsche Zeitung* and other writings by Koseritz in the archive of the Mentz family in 1991. The Mentzes played an important and controversial role in the constitution of *Deutschtum* in the south. According to historian Carlos Hunsche, "Liborio Mentz would be the great-grandfather of Frederico Mentz, a renowned businessman in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, and on the other side, the grandfather of the infamous Jacobina Mentz Maurer, most important protagonist of the Mucker" (1975: 21). Professor René Gertz told me that UFRGS, the province's most prestigious public university, had acquired the Mentz archive. It had never been inventoried or studied before. I found the archive dumped in an unused classroom, consisting of old library cabinets packed with books, newspapers, and magazines.

According to local historians, the Mentzes participated in a dissident religious movement in the town of Tambach, and they fled to Brazil because of religious persecution.⁷ The fact that the family received Lot Number 1 in the

settlement of Hamburger Berg of the new colony of São Leopoldo led some historians to speculate that Libório Mentz, a farmer and carpenter, had been favored by Empress Leopoldina (the colony's namesake, originally from Austria). In H. Schüller's imaginary-sounding account (1954: 390), Libório meets the empress upon his arrival in Rio de Janeiro, the capital of newly independent Brazil. Goethe, so the story goes, advised Liborio and his two adult sons to go to Brazil. The simple man also delivered a letter from Goethe to the empress. This letter has never been found.

The oldest son was called André and he married Maria Elizabeth Müller, who immigrated in 1825. The couple lived in Hamburger Berg and they would have eight children (Jacobina, born in 1842, was the second youngest). The couple helped to build the village's Lutheran wooden chapel and held Bible group readings in their home—the children made up a choir, which sang at worship services and funerals. The Mentzes built up a considerable patrimony and, after André's death in 1853, all children inherited land.

The Mentz children were then put under the legal protection of Frederico Schreiner, a maternal uncle and father of the future chief of police, Lúcio Schreiner, who would become one of the Mucker's fiercest persecutors (Domingues 1977: 35). As Jacobina prepared for confirmation in the local Lutheran church, she learned how to read the Bible in German. Jacobina helped her mother with domestic duties until she married João Jorge Maurer in 1866, soon after he returned from the Paraguayan war. The couple lived on the land she had inherited in the settlement of Padre Eterno (Eternal Father). In 1867, besides working with carpentry and agriculture, João Jorge started to make herbal medicine (a process he learned from the itinerant healer Buchhorn).⁸ Soon he became known as the *Wunderdoktor* (miraculous doctor). After her first child was born in 1867, Jacobina started to lose consciousness from time to time. Ill health was not new to her; at the age of twelve, she had been taken to Dr. Hillebrand in São Leopoldo, who recommended that she be married as soon as possible (Domingues 1977: 39). The couple had six children, and the family participated in the local Lutheran church.

In the beginning, there was no Mucker. Around 1868, neighbors started to meet at the Maurers' house. They sang, prayed, and read the Bible together. They prepared communal meals, rested, and returned to homes. Many left with medicines. Miguel Noé, a Mucker survivor, left a report highlighting the therapeutic genesis of the movement. During Jacobina's trances, "her body abandoned all senses and reasoning. In this way, everything she spoke was communicated through her spirit. . . . There was enlightenment for all kinds of illness, no matter what their names were. Herbal infusions were made, depending on the illness's location, for rubbing as well as for drinking" (Noé 1977:

383). After three years "in perfect order," as Noé put it, "these healing practices were spoken about in other regions and sick people flowed in from everywhere." In this form of enlightenment, "there was no religion, no sacredness. There were no secondary things, only a safe and calm existence aimed at the health of everyone" (384).

"There is no true religiosity in Brazil," wrote Pastor Günther Borchard upon his arrival in São Leopoldo in 1864. Borchard and his successors fiercely campaigned to eliminate the common practice of lay priesthood and to gather congregations into a synod (see Dreher 1984). According to Borchard, "Faithless books like the Gospel of Nature and vile novels and writings on Materialism have found their way here across the ocean. Romances are more widely read than the Bible; the dance halls attract more people than the churches; the rest on Sunday is not observed." Yet "that savage disbelief found in the United States doesn't reign here . . . this battlefield is very promising for the German Protestant Church; there is no better in any other Catholic land. Here it is possible to found pure German colonies."⁹

Like the Protestants, the Jesuits also interpreted the colonists' religious practices as a deviation and dysfunction to be corrected: "The long absence of a regular healer of souls produced a sort of brutishness among the Catholic population. And since they were missing a priest, they themselves organized lay worship services. This people who had more pious feelings than common sense foolishly departed from the path of order. . . . Nobody can command him to do anything. The peasant is independent. He feels equal to every other peasant. Any words used against his family or his belongings irritates him very much . . . he uses the rudest expressions" (Schupp quoted in Rabuske n.d.: 141; see also Schupp 1912).

The practices around Jacobina's unconscious words and João Jorge's medicines emerged alongside the Germanist Kultur efforts. Geographic and Freemason societies, rifle clubs, church councils and choirs, and urban congregational schools—they all supported the claims of legitimacy of a *hiesiges Deutschtum* (local Germanism). Transplanted moral prescriptions were presented as the living proof of a German natural history at work: the memorialization of an ethnic past, a nonlibidinal life, hard work from childhood until old age, group separation according to religious affiliation, unconditional obedience to the foreign clergy and to the economic and legal authorities of the Germanist bourgeoisie, and racial superiority. "Outlawing" and dismantling lay priesthoods, local healing practices, and Catholic-Lutheran "mixed marriages" proved to be powerful means to institutionally ground this Germanist evolution already described as

"truth" in idyllic narratives left behind by illustrious travelers.¹⁰ As Michael Mulhall, a British journalist wrote, "Imagine yourself, reader, a country nearly as large as Belgium or Holland cut out of these Brazilian forests, where the inhabitants are exclusively German, and speak no other language . . . where individuals' happiness and the welfare of the commonwealth go hand-in-hand" (1873: 105).

While increasingly involved in the region's commerce, the Germanist elite learned that upward social mobility and political power depended upon high status within the larger society, not within the ethnic and "backward" subgroups (Luebcke 1987: 29; Porto 1934). As I have been arguing, the elite's social and political evolution was also contingent on the fabrication and, later, elimination of a group of "primitive" and "mad" colonists. In the end, the "demonic" Mucker worked as an instrument for the purification of the German Spirit that was to inform the work ethic of these colonists, and as a venue for the German bourgeoisie to further integrate itself into the region's social and political status quo.¹¹

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Johann Fichte had actually envisioned such strategies of self-formation linked to Germany's nation building: "The dawn of the new world is already past its breaking. . . . I wish . . . to catch the rays of this dawn and weave them into a mirror, in which our grief-stricken age must see itself; so that it may believe in its own existence, may perceive its real self, and, as in prophetic vision, may see its own development, its coming forms pass by. In the contemplation of this, the picture of its former life will doubtless sink and vanish; and the dead body may be born to its resting place without undue lamenting" (1923: 15).

"LEAVE THE TUMULT OF THE WORLD AND COME BACK"

Large segments of the colonists did not readily accept the new forms of control embedded in the teachings and administrative practices of the Germanist elite and missionaries. For many, Germanism was neither a myth of origin nor an inexorable destiny. They claimed existence on their own terms. These colonists, far from apolitical, openly expressed their concerns about corruption among public officers and about the unjust distribution of wealth, an effect of the region's modernization. The colonists who visited Jacobina and João Jorge's home held this belief particularly strongly.

Consider João Jorge Klein, Jacobina's brother-in-law, a former lay pastor and self-taught intellectual to whom Jacobina dictated several letters. In a public statement written in early 1873, Klein cited instances of public corruption: communal bridges left unfinished, public moneys misused and privately

diverted—"There is need of many reforms" (Klein 1957). Later in 1873, the *Deutsche Zeitung* refused to print texts sent by Klein in which he criticized the taxation system and the cumbersome bureaucracy, which hampered wealth transfers among the colonists: "so the poor end up paying the taxes for the rich" (quoted in Sperb 1987: 243-45).

As of 1872, some of the friends of Jacobina and João Jorge started to abandon their congregational memberships, stopped selling and consuming goods at neighborhood trading posts, began to bury their dead on their own land, and assumed responsibility for educating their children. The Lutheran clergy began to berate Jacobina, João Jorge and their friends as fanatic Mucker (Domingues 1977: 78-81), and they became subject to bizarre incidents—the tails of their horses were cut. Wherever they rode, these colonists were now identified as Mucker through their mutilated animals. This literally marked the beginning of their animalization, so to speak.

I did not find the letters or personal diaries I was hoping to find at the Mentz archive. Yet the Germanist materials I encountered have dramatically changed the way I saw the civil war the Mucker had reportedly occasioned. I studied all issues of Koseritz's *Deutsche Zeitung* from 1868 to 1875 and of his *Deutsche Volkskalender für die Provinz Rio Grande do Sul* (the first yearly almanac carried the essay, "The Mucker Swindle in the German Colonies: A Contribution to the Cultural History of Local Germanism"). The Germanist elite and media had been altogether omitted from the Mucker war's history books. Yet, in reading these reports, I could not avoid the conclusion that Koseritz and associates had actively shaped the conflict through fantastic accounts, support for police raids, anti-Mucker petitions, and so forth.¹²

The *Deutsche Zeitung* also reprinted incendiary reports against the Mucker published by Jesuit and Lutheran authorities in their own newspapers (*Volksblatt* and *Der Bote*—the issues of that time are nowhere to be found). On May 17, 1873, Koseritz published news from *Der Bote* saying that several Lutheran families were leaving their congregations to found a new religion around the "prophet of the Ferrabraz"—"the Bible, newspapers and books of any sort are prohibited to them." These ex-members were comparing German pastors to the Pharisees: "They say that they don't want anything to do with Pharisees and wolves in sheep's clothing." As reported by Koseritz, the Jesuit's *Volksblatt* mentioned that Maurer was "a false Christ" and that undue lay interpretation of the Bible was a cause of that "religious madness." An anti-Mucker ecumenism had been launched. As Koseritz put it, "We are also of the opinion that the Bible can be put to dangerous use. The misreading of the Bible causes more misfortune than wars and pestilence. Instead of the Bible, people should be given natural history books."

Mucker survivor Miguel Noé described those days: "In their sermons, the clergy tried to inculcate a strong aversion towards Jacobina, saying, 'She is a witch, a sorcerer! She is a prostitute, a seducer of men, an unruly woman, a liar'" (1977: 384). In her first known letter, February 1873, Jacobina wrote to her oldest brother who was associating with people who slandered her, particularly Lúcio Schreiner, a cousin and São Leopoldo's new police chief (Schreiner's father had been the fraudulent executor of the Mentzes state): "Your charity has vanished. Where is your faith? What are your deeds? . . . The hands of men have grown tired and their hearts coward. . . . But in the name of the heavenly father I ask you: leave the tumult of the world and come back, for you wounded me in the heart which bleeds drop by drop. And what will our good mother say when she will know about it? She will then say: my heart hurts so much." In the letter, Jacobina denounced "the scribes who make unjust laws and utter iniquitous sentences, so as to twist the cause of the poor and to oppress the rights of the unhappy, judging that the widows ought to be their prey and the orphans their victims. . . . But I endure" (quoted in Domingues 1977: 86).

In a suggestive statement, Noé implies that the Mucker were aware of the powerful "shadows" that determined those events, but were unable to fight them: "At that time the government of Brazil and of the province was in a difficult situation because of the infiltration of dim shadows which wanted to interfere in governmental measures or were setting up a parallel government . . . to then seize power" (1977: 391).

Absence of documentation makes it very difficult to know the exact number of people who routinely assembled at Jacobina and João Jorge's house. Historian Janáina Amado scrutinized police reports and identified by name at least "249 rebels" (1978: 127-36). She suggested that at the peak of the conflict there were about 1,000 people directly or indirectly participating in the meetings (which at that time represented approximately 10 percent of the population of the São Leopoldo colony). Taking these 249 rebels as a matrix, Amado produced a statistical portrait of a possible Mucker constituency. Children up to thirteen years of age represented 30 percent of the total number of participants. Seventy percent of the adult Mucker were married. Nine percent of the Mucker were elderly (over fifty-nine years old). Sixty-four percent of the known Mucker were born in Brazil. The majority of the Mucker spoke only German: 57 percent were illiterate; 23 percent were semiliterate in German. Most of the Mucker were not property owners; 39.2 percent worked on lands owned by relatives. Sixty-nine percent of the adult men were peasants, 13 percent were artisans and peasants, 11.5 percent worked only as artisans or small business-

men. Regarding religious affiliation: 85 percent were Lutheran and 15 percent were Catholic.

THE ELITE'S IMAGINARY WORLD AND FREE-SPIRITED PEOPLE

Reading Koseritz's reports led me to reconsider the ways the Mucker entered social science: as a millennial movement, nostalgically responding to the disintegration of kinship-based communities (Queiróz 1976) and acting as counter-capitalist crusaders (Amado 1978). Yet, as I saw in letters and testimonies the so-called Mucker gave to the police, they always referred to themselves by their names, denied that Jacobina was Christ and that she had named apostles, and spoke of the ordinariness of their lives and the concreteness of the circumstances and frames they were caught in. Yet their claims to truth and dignity were met by silence from authorities at all levels. While Lutheran and Jesuit missionaries portrayed the Mucker as nonreligious and amoral, as being averse to religious authority and to family values, Koseritz and associates framed the colonists as messianic and inspired by ideas of communism.

The Germanist elite was indeed concerned in constructing an imaginary world. Their denunciations of the Mucker as delirious and fraudulent were coupled with references to the life in the colonies as an Arcadian paradise, where hard work and the maintenance of the German cultural values ensured general economic well-being and public order. The Mucker became the past, so to speak, of a morbid Germanist project of social evolution and political and economic integration.

If the peasants had learned something of the Natural Sciences and had been brought up according to some of the principles of *Aufklärung* they would certainly laugh at the Mucker's prophecies. (DZ 5/17/1873)

One cannot be precise about the objectives of this society; but the gossip is that the whole band has bad intentions. They want to be the sole dwellers of this place. One also hears that much lead, gunpowder and brimstone is being bought. . . . The prophetic couple is very silly, but there are even more stupid people who let themselves be manipulated by them. What is worst, they destroy families . . . encouraging divorce. For this destruction they find replacement in the Mucker association, because for them everything is communism. What a beautiful moral. (DZ 6/28/1873)

It is essential to neutralize the influence of this bunch of fanatics over thousands of families, to bring back the lost peace. . . . All this cannot and ought

not be tolerated by the state if it does not want to destroy its very existence.
(DZ 5/9/1874)

The *Deutsche Zeitung* unleashed its anti-Mucker campaign in March 1873, associating this pious group first with unreason and prophecy (due to Jesuit influence) and then later with Indian black magic and African witchcraft—friends of the Maurers were “white niggers” (DZ 5/17/1873). By mentioning the figure of the Indian, Koseritz was evoking that primal immigrant fear of having family killed and property overtaken by natives living in the woods. By equating the Mucker with slaves, Koseritz (who owned slaves, like several of his fellow Germanists) was also beginning to frame them as divested of any legal rights. In the following months, Koseritz and his correspondents consistently disseminated sensationalistic news about the practices at the Maurers, creating an all too strategic epistemic murk (see Taussig 1986).

Consider this report from May 10, 1873, published by Koseritz under the pseudonym Y. Z.:

Last Sunday, a large meeting took place around the “miraculous doctor.” Some say that two hundred people of all creeds assembled there, others say five hundred. If the police does not take adequate measures, terrible things might happen in the future. Some say that Maurer was crowned Savior and that he chose twelve apostles among his followers. Others say that his wife considers herself the Savior; she mentions this while asleep, and then she prophesies the end of the world and all kinds of possible and impossible absurdities that only God knows. Last Friday, the end of the world was supposed to have taken place, but since this has not happened she rescheduled it for Pentecost’s day. The Maurers’ followers have been making an ark like Noah’s; they butcher cattle and pigs and salt them so that they might be fried when history reestablishes itself. From time to time, the miraculous doctor climbs the Ferrabraz mountain (probably because the Sinai is too far away), where—like a second Moses—he talks to God in person. Maurer asked his followers not to go to any church, Protestant or Catholic; not to dance on Sunday and not to play cards.

Mucker Noé characterized the participation in the meetings at the Ferrabraz as an option of free-spirited people: “Why did the withdrawal from the church take place? In order for us to reach clarity and not go on wandering in darkness. Spiritually, people were kept at a lower level, subject to the constant negative judgment of the Church and having to work for the despotic clergy. If freedom of thought had been allowed in the churches then each person could have said freely whether Jacobina’s enlightenments were for or against them, and whether her

healing practices were moved by great financial ambition, which was not the case" (1977: 384, my emphasis).

On May 22, 1873, Jacobina was arrested and taken to São Leopoldo in order to testify before the province's police chief. The *Deutsche Zeitung* reported what the police produced as evidence: "Their fortress is built of mysterious illusions. The rooms are contiguous; it is not necessary to get out of one in order to get into another. We inspected the dark room where Miss Christ makes her experiments . . . we found pistols, knives and the images of Christ, Pastor Borchard and Jesuit Ignatius Loyola" (DZ 6/28/1873). Later, in a plea to Emperor Dom Pedro II, the Mucker mentioned that "even though Jacobina was in an unconscious state, eight soldiers put her on an oxcart and escorted her to the city. The trip took nine hours and along the road she was constantly insulted. She was still ill when they placed her in the City Hall and exhibited her to the public."¹³

Jacobina was then submitted to a medical examination coordinated by the same doctor who had seen her as a teenager (Dr. Hillebrand was now the general administrator of São Leopoldo and surrounding colonies). In order to confirm suspicions that she was dissimulating, they "pinched her skin, pierced her body with needles and knives, and tried many other medical applications to wake her up" (DZ 6/28/1873). Police reports say that around 7:00 P.M., her head perspired and she began to murmur with her eyes still closed. Only after some of her friends chanted and kissed her she opened her eyes and asked for some water. "I have never before in my whole life heard such a cat howling," ridiculed Koseritz, who was there (quoted in Domingues 1977: 41).

Jacobina testified that meetings were held in her house during which she explained the Bible "according to inspiration from above" (DZ 6/14/1873). She kept her narrative within her conception of the legal limits of official inquiry, stressing her right as a Protestant to lay priesthood as well as the group's legal right to assembly. Her testimony was matched with that of her husband, who had been previously interrogated by the police: "Maurer said that reunions take place in his house, but with the only purpose of explaining the true meaning of the Scriptures; and that he has even invited clergy of several beliefs to attend them" (DZ 6/11/1873).

Since those religious meetings couldn't be legally prohibited, Germanist administrators and the police created, in the name of order and safety, exceptional practices. "Mr. and Mrs. Christ signed a 'vow of good behavior' and were placed under police custody" (DZ 7/5/1873). In spite of not being charged with any crime or diagnosed with any illness, the authorities kept the healer imprisoned at the headquarters of the Imperial Army and the dreamer confined

to a psychiatric ward in Porto Alegre. The authorities alleged that they had done so in order to protect "the treacherous couple" from the wrath of neighboring peasants (DZ 6/18/1873).

This confinement had the effect of publicizing the Mucker as mad and delinquent. These interventions also unleashed a mechanism of self-reporting within a new matrix of what good behavior meant, legitimizing the interventions of public officers and the police when fellow colonists reported breaks in the vows. Through these laws of exception, the colonists' domestic spaces and private lives became open to frequent inspection. This framing of reality became a technology, one used frequently and effectively to gather support against the Mucker from local authorities as well as from large segments of the colonist population.

In a letter dated December 27, 1873, Carolina Mentz, Jacobina's youngest sister, used the events involving domestic animals to challenge the ways her cousin Lúcio Schreiner, chief of police, used his public office: "Don't be bothered by the familial bond which ties you to us; don't give yourself reasons to blame your modest and nowadays, often insulted relatives for your failure to obtain a higher office. We were to expect that people who live in the civilized world and consider themselves as belonging to the enlightened classes . . . would have behaved as educated men and not as savages when going into homes and meeting human beings. I requested information about Maurer's horse, injured by the men of your guard, and you replied that Maurer had loaned the horse to one of those men. Now everybody knows that you have lied" (quoted in Petry 1957: 155).¹⁴

In a letter to another cousin, Jacobina referred to Schreiner as in fact the "anti-Christ," as a colonist who had already lost his mind: "Lúcio, the anti-Christ, also tried to falsely influence your mind by saying that I had dishonored all the relatives and had slandered the name of your dead father. . . Why does he so arbitrarily search for *our head*? I suppose that he does so because he himself doesn't have one any longer, he has already given proof of this" (my emphasis).¹⁵

As polemics grew and violence against the Mucker escalated, Freemasons, Jesuits, and Protestants engaged in a fierce debate: each party blamed the other as the Ur-cause of Muckerei. The truth about incidents involving the so-called Mucker and the legality of the maneuvers that led to the war were not addressed. The enemy Mucker united these parties. Through the Mucker, each party claimed institutionality and authority, thus crystallizing their ideas of religion, Kultur, and public order. Here, one could argue, the privileged Germanist class and priesthood did not merely recognize "the usefulness of popular belief systems in controlling people," as Max Weber would have framed such matters (1963: 89). Rather, they were profoundly dependent on the devel-

opment of an “irrational religion” as a means of guaranteeing their social and psychological legitimacy.¹⁶

THE UNCANNY MUCKER

Sigmund Freud’s essay *Das Unheimlich*, “The Uncanny” (1955), is helpful in thinking about the manufacture of the Mucker as a bestial double of the Germanist ideal ego (Biehl 1999). The uncanny, writes Freud, is a particular feeling related to something so dreadful, a shadow, trace, or a nuance, that it calls forth repulsion and distress. The etiology of the word *Unheimlich* shows that the meaning of *heimlich* (familiar) developed ambivalently, passing through the negation *Un*, until it finally coincided with its opposite: “the factor of repression enables us . . . to understand Schelling’s definition of the uncanny as something which ought to have remained hidden but has come to light” (Freud 1955: 241).

Of particular interest here is Freud’s emphasis on the experience of the uncanny as not being derived from revelations or apparitions, but coming about through literary artifices that produce a “double.” For example, a living person to whom one ascribes evil intentions can be taken as uncanny. In this case, the harmful intentions must be perceived and carried out with the constructed help of special powers. Freud explores how fantastic narratives leave readers uncertain as to whether the characters are human beings or automatons, and as to whether one is witnessing deliriums or a succession of events that could be regarded as real. “The quality of uncanniness can only come from the fact of the ‘double’ being a creation dating back to a very early mental stage, long since surmounted—a stage, incidentally, at which it wore a more friendly aspect. The ‘double’ has become a thing of terror, just as, after the collapse of their religion, the gods turned into demons” (Freud 1955: 236; see also Freud 1961).

The reconstruction of the Mucker events challenges Freud’s view that “fiction presents more opportunities for creating uncanny feelings than are possible in real life” (Freud 1955: 251; see Hacking 1999 and Greenblatt 2000). In fact, Koseritz and his associates were capable of socially manufacturing Mucker doubles. Through fantastic discursive practices, backed by the authority of natural history, media and pastoral power, and disciplinary strategies, the Mucker were carved out of simple and pious colonists who had handled matters of illness and dying on their own terms. Koseritz and fellow Germanists used a fantastic rationalism to deconstruct that culture, turning it into the negative form of a Germanist interiority understood as second nature. The “deadly magical powers” of Jacobina, a “necromancer,” were to be surpassed by the media-based and paralegal powers of enlightened leaders, physicians, and professional clergy.

The Mucker worked as social technology, that is, they became the catalysts of the way free individuals were to "truly" understand themselves and relate to each other. Through the Mucker events we see the unmaking of time-honored value systems and the emergence of new forms of control and subjectivity. Here the conflicts between Self and Other were not exclusively transposed to an imaginary plane (Lacan 1991: 282). The adversaries went beyond exhibiting and bearing each other's image; they did not avoid a real struggle. In fact, they acted out a war to end each other or each other's representatives or absent enemies. This is the crucial dimension of the Mucker events: the construction and the embodiment of the Mucker is not just literary but literal. In order for there to be the possibility of Germanist subjects rediscovering the power of the truth in themselves, that truth must not have been first discovered or veiled, but made, inscribed, and transferred as a violent dependency.

While studying Koseritz's anti-Mucker reports, I also realized that the war's main reference books (which had informed the *Zero Hora* report on the beheaded woman) had all been, directly or indirectly, informed by this Germanist master narrative. A comparative analysis revealed that authors had either taken reports from *Deutsche Zeitung* at face value or had plagiarized Koseritz's interpretations of the events, without reference to him.

Let me give a few examples. Jesuit Ambrosio Schupp wrote *Die Mucker* (The Mucker) in 1878 (it was first published in Brazil in 1901). It remains the core bibliographic reference of the Mucker war. After a close rereading of *Die Mucker*, I found that Schupp basically emulated Koseritz's core arguments, fleshing them out with reports from local adversaries of the Mucker as well as from legal procedures that anteceded and preceded the war. For the Mucker, reasoned Schupp, "there were no sacred ties . . . relations were marked by passion" (1901: 209). Jacobina had untied "men's passions" and given crimes "the stamp of religion and piety." Further, "In the hands of a woman [the Bible] became a weapon with two edges, which would bring first the ruin of those who had been obsessed by her and, second, her own ruin" (339).

Leopoldo Petry, a historian born in the colonies, wrote the apologetic *O Episódio do Ferrabraz* (The Episode at the Ferrabraz) in 1957 "so that the name of respectful families will no longer continue to suffer the dishonor of being associated with criminals" (1957: 31). He drew from policy documents, testimonies of Mucker descendents, and a report by João Jorge Klein (according to many, including Koseritz, the "mastermind" manipulating Jacobina and the "simple-minded" colonists). According to Petry, local authorities should be blamed for unleashing the armed conflict, while colonists had been the naive prey of Jacobina's intrigues. There is no mention of Koseritz and his associates. Yet, in the end Petry concedes that he has not found a satisfactory explanation for "the

mysterious force that, acting backstage, infused such a tenacious hatred against the Mucker among laborious, peaceful and orderly colonists . . . they could not rest until they exterminated the poor victims of Jacobina Maurer" (115).

Moacyr Domingues published *A Nova Face dos Muckers* (The New Face of the Mucker) in 1977. The retired colonel aimed to remove from the Mucker events "the thick veil that until today surrounds its causes and objectives" (9). In various public archives, he discovered previously unpublished governmental documents as well as letters the Mucker exchanged among themselves and with local authorities. Domingues's detailed chronology of the Mucker events are a corrective to Schupp's and Petry's "either incomplete or merely probable accounts" (9)—yet his account too remains obsessed with Jacobina's psychology: "Jacobina was victim of an inexorable process of psychological deterioration; it began in her early childhood due to a congeries of factors unleashed by an extremely rigorous education. Out of necessity she learned—without having consciousness of this—to hypnotize herself or to influence herself by suggestion: it was the crowning of a constant exercise of self-control, which has powerfully contributed to strengthen her stoicism and will" (44).

CIVIL WAR

In May 1874, amid accusations that the Mucker had ambushed a local inspector and killed an orphan in the center of São Leopoldo (crimes for which nobody was ever convicted), the *Deutsche Zeitung* increased its campaign for a military intervention against them: "Never before has the social order been so profoundly ripped apart. It is urgent to neutralize the influence of this bunch of fanatics over thousands of families. All this cannot and ought not be tolerated by the state if it does not want to destroy its very existence. A despotic state would certainly have the means to end this disorder" (DZ 5/9/1874).

There was no way out of that new reality. According to survivor Noé, throughout the colonies, even children were brandishing their knives, ready to slaughter the animal: "They heard everything from their parents. When they were holding a knife they proudly said: 'with this knife we will make sausage out of Jacobina'" (1977: 391). After the imprisonment of some of their leaders, the Mucker knew that they were facing their death and decided to take an active part in the form it took. "For now a heated struggle of life and death would take place and all were supposed to show up at the Maurers on June 24. The Mucker would not let this inhuman fraud be blamed on them. They would have been cowards if they had not defended the honor of their names" (392).

While fighting for their honor, these colonists ended up embodying the alterity they had been made into and murdered those living nearby who had

conspired against them: "That night, on all paths, they went to the barbarian instruments of darkness, to the ones who had hurt them the most and . . . made a bloody ending" (392). The Mucker set fire to several neighboring households and trading posts. Fourteen persons died. "The Mucker responded to the challenge put to them and made their response real," wrote Noé. "They returned to Maurer's house and waited for the last battle to take place" (392). The official celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the German Immigration, scheduled for the next day, were canceled.

In fact, Jacobina had announced a "final judgment" in a letter sent a few weeks before to Schreiner, her cousin and São Leopoldo's chief of police: "Soon the situation of each of us is going to be defined. Keep on feeding your instincts in your own flesh and in your blood, i.e., in your relatives. However, beware, for the Judgment Day will not tarry. And does Your Excellency not know that each day that passes can in fact be the last day of life?" (quoted in Domingues 1977: 242). Thus, before their vanquishment, the Mucker "transcended wild animals in madness and ferocity and turned that place into an image of terror," wrote Koseritz (DZ 6/27/1874). "They should be devoured by dogs, so that the honored man would not have to foul his hands" (DZ 7/15/1874).

Killing was woven into the political fabric. The railroad was now carrying the police forces and the Imperial Army to the colonies. Throughout the colonies, people who had in one way or the other associated with the Mucker had their properties invaded and destroyed, domestic animals were butchered, bodies were left unburied along the roads. "More than one thousand people gathered at São Leopoldo's train station to see the [Mucker] prisoners. . . . A mass of people rolled through the streets with shouts of joy and threats of lynching" (DZ 7/1/1874).

On July 19, 1874, after several weeks of battles and severe casualties on both sides, the president of the province wrote a telegram to the minister of justice announcing the attack on Maurer's house: "The Mucker offered tenacious resistance. Sixty to eighty of them were killed. Thirty of our soldiers were killed. Only two officers were wounded. The city of São Leopoldo is celebrating."¹⁷ Soon, however, it would be known that Jacobina and her closest friends had escaped into the woods. Other news from the war zone mentioned that Mucker corpses were being mutilated. "The persecution of the Mucker continues until all have been hunted down" (DZ 7/22/1874).

A few weeks later, the end of the war was announced. As Koseritz wrote, the Mucker had embraced a primitive, immoral, and criminal vision of life that had to be done away with so that historical men could act. The forces of reason and law woke the Mucker up from the world of dreams and from the forms the dreamers see: "The remaining Mucker were sleeping in the arms of Morpheus

inside a hut made of skinned animals and of tree bark. . . . Their slaughter was quick, even though they still offered one last and desperate resistance. Jacobina died in the arms of Rodolfo Sehn, who covered her with his body, both were penetrated by bayonets. . . . The curtain went down, the bloody drama ended. Damaged justice is restored and the citizen can calmly go back to his peaceful daily work" (DZ 8/4/1874). And in his 1875 essay on the Mucker swindle Koseritz rewrote this last scene, adding that, while dying, Jacobina "exhaled her dark soul."

The recollection of the Mucker Noé affirms autonomy till the end: "As in the last battle almost everything was over, Jacobina said that the survivors should try to take good care of themselves, that her things would have an ending, but that she would not allow them to take her life. She herself would make the ending. These were the last words she delivered" (1977: 396).

While trying to affirm their own ways of thinking and exchanging, the Mucker became a cursed object, were killed as bestial Other; their memory became the primitive nature to be forgotten and part of an evolving local German Spirit and modern political economy. The Germanist elite then created Relief Committees to reconstruct the colonies. Life had to be remade through the building of schools and cultural societies, where the natural sciences would be taught. In the words of Koseritz, "We have to introduce the children at a young age to the perennial and eternally active laws of nature . . . so that the memory of a mad and hysterical woman like Jacobina will be simply left behind" (1875: 126).

In 1878, Koseritz wrote a travel book aiming to recruit hard-working, frugal, and orderly colonists, and to attract new foreign investments for the region. The book was published by the Geographical Society Fostering German Interests Overseas.¹⁸ He now depicted the colonies as a sanitized and nonhybridized extension of German Kultur. In the colonies, the true German Self could be sensed: "Language, morals and religious manners of the old fatherland were so truly preserved in the South, that upon arrival the new immigrant breathes an almost pure German air" (Koseritz 1897: 38).

DISAPPEARANCE

By inquiring into how Jacobina's spirituality and those colonists' struggles for survival entered history as the past of a morbid Germanist project of social evolution and economic integration, one tastes the truth drop by drop, like a bitter powerful medicine, as Friedrich Nietzsche envisioned it: "I mean the power of specifically growing out of one's self, of making the past and the strange one body with the near and the present" (1957: 68, 7). As I learned growing up in southern Brazil and later through this memory-building work, anyone related

to the Mucker or to the thoughts, rituals, and values they were associated with—which actually meant rebellion against the monopolizers of God, science, and capital and the affirmation of an autonomous symbolic order—became socially known as *nichts*, a nothing worthy of disappearance, then and in the century that followed the war.

As reflected in today's media, the Mucker are a continuous legend of the present. Other wars for survival and for social exclusion/inclusion, and the need to explain and contain the surplus of daily violence in that society as well as the dying out of familial ties, keep giving occasion to the Mucker's phantasmatic-like return. And interestingly, while the media evoke the Mucker as the interpretive reservoir of today's events, fundamental questions such as racism and moral blindness, as well as enduring patterns of economic exploitation and the patriarchal physical capture of the other's body, remain publicly unaddressed.

The woman in the beginning of this chapter, without a head, without an identity, without anyone claiming her body, was finally buried as a nameless indigent in the local public cemetery—the aura with which the media left her was that of a licentious woman on the run, a victim but also the potential inducer of a crime of passion. To kill the Other with impunity is in the structure of this modern Brazilian scene.

NOTES

1. Serrano (1999) discusses this report.
2. In 1808, the ruling house of Portugal escaped the Napoleonic wars and moved to Brazil. After centuries of plundering, the colony was to quickly experience a modernizing makeover—particularly Rio de Janeiro, the new capital. Upon arrival in Brazil, King Dom João VI immediately signed a decree opening the ports to free economic exchange with England (Portugal's new economic and political mentor) and a law that allowed foreigners to own land in Brazil (Luebcke 1987).
3. Meanwhile, the imperial administration continued to be trapped between Britain's pressures to develop a free labor force and create a consumer demand on the one hand, and the demands of the powerful territorial aristocracies to maintain slavery on the other (Brazil was the last country in the Western Hemisphere to abolish slavery in 1888). Overall, the history of the São Leopoldo colony epitomizes the makeshift and contingent ways in which the plans for Brazil's modernization and future have again and again been structured. They are attempts to follow external models—Brazil as a “failed” American model of emigrant settlement and integration—and coexist with oligarchic modes of control and patterns of illegality. These experiments are only partially carried out, and Brazilians have to invent structures parallel to the state in order to guarantee their survival.

4. Letter from the Sociedade de Ginásticos e Atiradores Alemães to the president of the province of Rio Grande do Sul, July 2, 1874, Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.
5. In order to compete for those immigrants with other host countries, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, Brazil decided to make colonization a responsibility of local provincial governments and private companies. The province of Rio Grande do Sul, for example, adopted plans that British colonizer Edward Gibbon Wakefield had designed for Australia and New Zealand. Wakefield advocated making small properties available to immigrants at very low prices and the creation of common funds for agricultural development—in southern Brazil the plan faced fierce opposition by the large landowners (Nogueira and Hutter 1975: 31).
6. "Considerações Gerais sobre a ex-Colônia de São Leopoldo em 1867—Exposição do Comissário do Governo em São Leopoldo, José Joaquim Rodrigues Lopes," Código 807, Vol. 16, Imigração: Coleção Memórias, Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.
7. According to Moacyr Domingues, "There were two alleged causes for the dissidence: the fact that the official Lutherdom negated the divinity of Christ and that the doctrine's books were against the freedom of teaching" (1977: 32). Leopoldo Petry writes that "they practiced their religious acts in their homes" (1957: 44; see also Amado 1978: 116–20).
8. Domingues (1977: 69–71) suggests that Maurer and Buchhorn met in an attempt to address Jacobina's deep sleep.
9. *Die Mission unter den Evangelischen Deutschen in Südbrasilien*, January 1, 1865, Evangelisches Zentralarchiv, Berlin, 01/01/1865.
10. See Avé-Lallemant (1980) and Tschudi (1868).
11. Deviltries are at once "social symptoms and transitional solutions," argues Michel de Certeau in *The Possession at Loudon* (2000: 2; see also Freud 1961). In seventeenth-century France, deviltries signaled the end of a religious modus operandi that couldn't be spoken yet and the emergence of a new scientific discursivity, a rationalizing of state power, and a novel way of medically knowing the body.
12. In *The Cunning of Recognition*, Elizabeth Povinelli examines the role of the colonial archive in the crystallization of the liberal subject and the Australian nation-state. She writes: "Only by experiencing the horror of moral alterity could the science of man sketch a sociology of morality itself, the real of human(e) society. . . . It was in this hypermorally animated scene that reason was forced to—and writers promised reason could—discover a 'convergence,' a 'horizon' . . . a synthetic a priori where a universal idea resided connecting these human orders into human being[s]" (2002: 85).
13. Código 605, Questão Maurer, Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.
14. Schreiner resented the colonists for not having endorsed him in a recent vote for the administrative council (the 1867 law that gave immigrants this specific right was the first step toward universal voting rights granted in the 1880s).

15. Letter from Jacobina Maurer to Mathias Schröder, May 29, 1874, Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro. This letter is mentioned by Petry (1957: 152). See also Domingues (1977: 244).
16. Nineteenth-century imperialism has largely rested on the authority of science. Historian Gyan Prakash (1999: 6, 14) shows that a Western-educated elite played a key role in the translation of science into governance in the British-Indian context and that the identification of irrational religious and social practices was central to the project of reordering history and values according to a modern Indian self-conception.
17. Telegram from the president of the province to the minister of justice, July 20, 1874, Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.
18. The third edition of the book was dedicated to the memory of Koseritz, "The Pioneer of the Workings of German Culture in the South and the Loyal Son of His New Fatherland."

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