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I, Meaghann Dynes, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Germanic Languages & Literature.

It is entitled:

**Hybridity of Genre and Ecologism in Carl Amery's Der Untergang der Stadt
Passau as Tools for Environmental Discussion**

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Hybridity of Genre and Ecologism in Carl Amery's *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* as Tools for Environmental Discussion

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Abstract

Carl Amery wrote profusely on the topic of environmentalism in newspaper articles and critical essay. He also often interweaving environmental themes and warnings into his literature. In many ways the novel *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* (1975) was his “break-out hit” that propelled him into the limelight in his home state of Bavaria. In this novel, Amery lays out a dystopian future caused by the lack of concern towards the environment by human. In this future only those that abandon civilization, as the reader knows it, will humanity survive. The society Amery creates is one that is based on the ideologies of ecologism, and not simply mainstream environmentalism. The choice to create such a scenario is less for the reader to agree with the underpinnings of ecologism and more for the reader to critically think about and bring environmental issues to the forefront in both society and in politics. In many ways, Amery was ahead of his time by writing on environmental degradation and starting a discussion around preventing such. Amery achieved initiating a discussion by creating a novel that is both a dystopian fiction text and a city chronicle, based on the medieval tradition.

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1. Introduction

In the 1970s, the Student Movement in Germany began to break apart into different grass-root movements. This included the Anti-Nuclear Movement and other green groups.¹ Around the same time, the United Nations *Biosphere Conference* in 1968 was the first of its kind and was followed by the United Nations conference on the *Human Environment* in 1972 both of which influenced these grassroots movements in Germany.² It was also the time of the 1973 Oil Crisis. All of these cultural and political intersection came together and eventually produced the political Die Grünen (currently Bündis 90/Die Grünen) in the following decade in 1983.

These events became the backdrop for one of the prominent members of the environmental movement, Carl Amery (born Christian Anton Mayer). Amery was born in Munich, Bavaria, Germany in 1922. He was a member of the influential writing group, *Gruppe 47* along with contemporaries like Heinrich Böll and Günter Grass. Unlike others of the writing group, however, Amery was not and still is not as widely known or read. One possible explanation is that Amery, his novels, and his politics tended to lean much more conservative than that of others in the group. The group was often known for being radical leftist, so to have such a conservative voice as Amery did could have pushed him to the background.

¹ Daniel Johnson, "Why Germany said no to nuclear power," *The Telegraph*, May 30, 2011.

² Anthony Le Duc, "Ecological Concerns," in *Missionary Discipleship in Glocal Contexts*, ed. Lazar T. Stanislaus (Siegburg: Franz Schmidt Verlag, 2018), 103.

While he did not share the same fame and widespread success as others in the group, Amery nonetheless wrote profusely on the topic of environmentalism be it in the form of critical essays, newspaper articles, or novels. Due to his prolific writings and involvement in politics, he was known as one of the fathers of the Green Movement in Germany.³ As such, Amery's *Natur als Politik: Die ökologische Chancen für Menschen* became one of the cornerstones of Green Policy.

Amery's environmental agenda can be illustrated by a simple quote. "Unsere Enkel werden überhaupt nicht daran interessiert sein, ob sie aufgrund der Freiheit oder aufgrund des Sozialismus verheizt werden, für sie wird es um Brot, um Luft, um Wasser gehen—und um die anständigste Art, diese unabdingbaren Lebensgüter sicherzustellen."⁴ This quote, exemplifies Amery's view of politics and the environment. That is to say, it is irrelevant to which political stance you belong if the world is in ecological turmoil and that society progresses at the expense of nature.⁵ His political life exemplifies this, as he has worked with the CDU/CSU, he was a member of the SPD, and a founding member of the Die Grünen (in West Germany). This idea that an environmentalism discussion and environmental policies regardless of political affiliation or preference, drives the plot of his novel *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau*.

To briefly summarize the main points of *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau*: There are two main factions or communities in the novel—the citizens of Rosenheim and

³ David Childs, "Carl Amery: Writer and eco-thinker," *Independent*, Aug. 13, 2005.

⁴ Silke Mende, "Auf der Such nach der verlorenen Orientierung—Carl Amery: Ein grüner Bewegungsinтеллектуeller zwischen konservativer Bewahrung und progressiver Veränerung," *Revue d'Allemagne et des pays de langue allemande* 46 (2), 375.

⁵ Christian Link, *Schöpfung: Ein theologischer Entwurf im Gegenüber von Naturwissenschaft und Ökologie* (Göttingen: Neukirchener Verlag, 2012): 105.

citizens of Passau, and the relationship between the two groups was strained and only deteriorates further throughout the novel. This is due to how diametrically opposed to each other they are in terms of structure, politics, and priorities of the people. A third group is introduced in the final chapter, Salzreich (with the capital being Salzburg, Austria), which seems destined to relive the mistakes of both Passau and the previous society.

The novel is played out in a dystopian, post-apocalyptic future after a pandemic swept across the world with only 50,000 people surviving between North Cape, Norway and Timbuktu, Mali.⁶ The reason for why the pandemic happened is unknown to the reader. It is only in a short dialog between Marte and Addi, two of the main protagonists in the novel, possible reasons are played out. Marte said, “‘Der Kaplan sagt, es war eine Strafe Gottes. Glaubst du das auch?’” While Addi said, “‘Es war, Der Verrückte Wissenschaftler’, das weiß doch jeder.’”⁷ This dialog illustrates that, while the exact cause of the pandemic is unknown, it can be inferred that humans and human activities were the root causes of it.

In terms of narrative structure, the novel alternates between two time periods. One is set in 2013 the other in 2112. Chapters set in 2013 are written from an omniscient narrative voice that details the events as they unfold. The chapters that are set in 2112 are written as a historic chronical of what occurred in 2013 as well as what steps and precautions the Dritte Marte (leader of Rosenheim during that time) is taking

⁶ Carl Amery, *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* (Regenstauf: SüdOst Verlag: 2015) back cover synopsis.

⁷ Amery, 41

to keep the people of Rosenheim safe. The final chapter of the novel is one of the chronical chapters, and it is here that the Salzreich and their path to destruction is mentioned. Interspersed throughout the novel are also chapters that are short biographies for a few of the characters. These chapters simply give information on how that character attained his/her current position. The genres that Amery employs in the novel are important as they frame the issues and add weight to his arguments.

For Amery, the issue of environmental crises, exploitation of resources, were the shortcomings that he highlighted. The reason being is that during the time he wrote the book, there were a number of ecological catastrophes that occurred involving the extraction of resources. To reveal some of the environmental crises at the time, in the 1970s there were over 24 oil spills that leaked more than 700 metric tons by volume.⁸ With so many oil spills wreaking havoc on the environment, those like Amery were bound to use them as a basis for their critiques of society. In addition, the innate desire of contemporary society to constantly be growing and consuming finite resources combined with the damaging effects of procuring said resources, it the fault that Amery sets out to critique. The complexity of the story, in terms of narrative structure and the political message, urge the reader to continue reading as well as question the historical event (the 1973 Oil Crisis) that led to it being written. Furthermore, the use of an apocalyptic scenario is able to shock the readers out of a sense of stability and apathy to the environmental issues that are being faced. Thus, Amery's political message becomes apparent.

⁸ Max Roser, "Oil Spills," *Our World Data*, (2019).

For the sake of getting his point across, Amery takes the stance of ecologism rather than more mainstream environmental thinking. Even though Amery uses ecologism in his novel, he was more of an environmentalist. He did have some leanings toward ecologism, but by-and-large he uses ecologist ideologies as a narrative tool. It is nonetheless important to distinguish between ecologism and environmentalism. Ecologism (also referred to as deep ecology) is distinguished from mainstream environmentalism in several ways. Ecologism has a distinct moral component as part of its ideology.⁹ That is to say that environmentalism is seen as anthropocentric while ecologism is non-anthropocentric; therefore, there does not exist a hierarchy in which humans are above all other life, but instead humans and nature are of equal value.¹⁰ Amery, himself, was strongly opposed to an anthropocentric view of the world, for the exact reason that it creates a hierarchy in which humans are superior in all aspects.¹¹ To this point, Amery, in an article on quality of life, wrote that as long as there exists a hierarchy among humans and between humans and nature, exploitation will continue.¹² This also means that nature is not something to be exploited and controlled solely for human benefit and progress.¹³ A second difference is that environmentalism believes that action can be taken and policies can be made in the current political system.¹⁴

⁹ Andrew Heywood, "Ecologism and the Politics of Sensibilities," 2016.

¹⁰ Colin Riordan, "Green Ideas in Germany: A Historical Survey," in *Green Thought in German Culture*, ed. Colin Riordan (Wales: University of Wales Press, 1997) 22.

¹¹ Hans J. Münk, "Umweltkrise—Folge und Erbe des Christentums," *Jahrbuch für Christliche Sozialwissenschaft* 28 (1987): 139.

¹² Carl Amery, "Lebensqualität—Leerformel oder konkrete Utopie?," in *Lebensqualität: Konkrete Vorschläge zu einem abstrakten Begriff*, ed. Uwe Schultz (Frankfurt am Main: Aspekte Verlag, 1975): 20.

¹³ Kevin Harrison and Tony Boyd, "Environmentalism and ecologism," in *Understanding Political Ideas and Movements* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003) 282.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 275.

Environmentalists want to make sustainability changes without decreasing economic development or technological progress.¹⁵ On the other hand, ecologism calls for a restructuring of society, because that is the only way to “...achieve a solution”.¹⁶ Ecologism and its proponents call for society to be structured in tribes/bands as opposed to current state level societies that rely on industry and exploitation of the Earth’s natural resources.¹⁷ The result would then be a society that is more egalitarian and includes future generations in the form of a government as “stakeholders”.¹⁸ In addition to policy and societal changes, ecologism also is skeptical, or at the very least wary, of technology.¹⁹ These are the cruxes of ecologism that are integral to the narrative in *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau*. However, it should be noted that Amery is employing ecologism to start a discussion about environmentalism and not to drastically change the structuring of society. While Amery was anti-materialistic and anti-consumerist, he was still a proponent of creating policies that would prevent environmental degradation and not a complete restructuring of societal organization.

In his *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* it is clear that some type of catastrophic event occurred, an event caused—Amery asserts—by the negligence of humans. Carl Amery’s *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* is a work of ecologism, that serves two purposes. The first is to warn the reader that the path humans are on will only lead to ecological disaster. The second it is to open a political discussion around environmentalism and

¹⁵ le Duc, 108.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Heywood.

¹⁸ Harrison and Boyd, 283.

¹⁹ Riordan, 6-7.

change fundamental behaviors (such as materialism). This paper will show how Amery's use of ecologist ideology framed by the genres of dystopian fiction and the city chronicle was used to start an environmental discussion not just at the political level, but also at the societal level as well.

3. Reception and Author's Opinions

Reception

Der Untergang der Stadt Passau never gained much readership despite being Amery's most successful novel. Most of the readership was in Amery's home state of Bavaria. Part of the reason that readership stayed in Bavaria could be attributed to the dialect that much of the book is written in. Many readers want to read something in language they are familiar with, even if the language is just a difference in region not another tongue completely.

Another important factor is that many who have read, especially since the advent of the internet, don't know what the message of the book is. One reader made the comment, "Ich weiß nicht recht, was der Autor mir sagen wollte. Dass die Menschen auch nach einer Katastrophe und nach dem Aufbau der Zivilisation in ihre unvoreilhaften Verhaltensmuster zurückfallen würden?"²⁰ So while readers understood the concept of the book the message was ultimately lost. If the reader doesn't understand or misses the message that the other is trying to convey, there is a chance that they will feel cheated or that they wasted the time in reading the text. This is one of the many

²⁰ Alien, "Der Untergang Der Stadt Passau by Carl Amery," Goodreads, Accessed March 21, 2019. https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6170378-der-untergang-der-stadt-passau#other_reviews.

reasons that the book never garnered the attention that novels at the time did. Even those that wrote not-so-scathing reviews were not impressed with the book, particularly given the current political and environmental discussion in Germany. Reader often said the book deals with old themes, is too quick of a read, or is too similar to other novels and texts that they have read.²¹

However, that does not mean that the novel has had no impact on cultural artifacts. In recent years *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* has been the inspiration for a theater piece and heavy metal band. The theater group Comoedia Mundi is based in Bavaria and tours around the state putting on their season's performances. In 2011, they created the piece *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Passau*.²² It was mainly performed in Bavaria with the exception of three performances in Frankfurt.²³ However, the script does differ from the novel in two major ways. The first is the title. The novel speaks only to the downfall of the city of Passau and not how it rekindled the ways of the past. The play, however, speaks to both the rise and the fall of the city. More important is the second difference. When the pandemic sweeps across the globe is almost ten years apart. In the novel, it occurs in 1983. However, in the play, the pandemic happens in 1991.²⁴ The difference may have occurred in order to make the events feel more contemporary or

²¹ "Der Untergang Der Stadt Passau › Kundenrezensionen," Amazon.de:Kundenrezensionen: Der Untergang Der Stadt Passau, accessed March 22, 2019, https://www.amazon.de/Untergang-Stadt-Passau-Carl-Amery/product-reviews/3896820869/ref=cm_cr_ar_p_d_hist_4?ie=UTF8&filterByStar=four_star&reviewerType=all_reviews&pageNumber=1#reviews-filter-bar.

²² "Aufstieg & Fall der Stadt Passau," Comoedia Mundi, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://www.comoedia-mundi.de/theater/aufstieg-fall-der-stadt-passau/>.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

pertinent to the audience. Unfortunately, Comoedia Mundi did not give a reason for why the difference exists.

Der Untergang der Stadt Passau was also the inspiration for a song by the heavy metal band Atlantean Kodex. As with Comoedia Mundi, the band is based in Bavaria.²⁵ The song has the same title as the novel. There are many interesting points about the song. The first is that in an interview with Manuel Trummer (guitarist for the band), he states that the pandemic that occurs before the book was, in fact, caused by careless scientist, even though the book does not definitively state that.²⁶ The song itself is just under two minutes in length. It is entirely instrumental with the beginning starting off with the sound of crashing waves, wind blowing, and guitar. Around 40 seconds into the song, the tone broken. It changes with a subtle fading of the previous sounds into heavy drums and a guitar rift that create a tense atmosphere. After only 10 seconds there is the final fade into light, almost far-off drumming and chanting. These breaks in the sounds and general tone of the song create an uncanny, eerie feeling. The reason that the band chose to use the novel as inspiration and then composed the song as they did is because of how it fit with the album. Trummer stated,

It's an apocalyptic story about the downfall of Europa and its rebirth after a plague unleashed by scientists. It discusses different ways how to 're-start' society. For example, by clinging to traditions or by going back to nature and starting something completely new. Its apocalyptic undertone fit

²⁵ "Atlantean Kodex," Atlantean Kodex, ccessed March 26, 2019, <http://www.atlanteankodex.de/>.

²⁶ "Interview with Manuel Trummer (Guitars)," interview by Sargon the Terrible, Metal Crypt. September 8, 2013, accessed March 24, 2019.

perfectly as the intro to "Enthroned in Clouds and Fire", the big end-times-anthem on the album.²⁷

While the novel does not have a cult following or a place in the German literary canon, it still has managed to influence culture, even if the influence is very subtle

2. Dystopian Fiction and Medieval City Chronicle as Genres

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines genre as: "a category of artistic, musical, or literary composition characterized by a particular style, form, or content."²⁸ Dystopian fiction as well as the city chronicle relate to the latter part of the definition in that they have a fairly uniformed set of content that is embellished by a given author. Genre plays a significant role in how a message is conveyed or how it is developed throughout a narrative. Genres are similar to the idea of social institutions in sociology in that they "provide the conditions that make textual activity possible and even meaningful."²⁹ Therefore, readers know how to work through the discourse, based on the genre of the text.³⁰ Genres are also highly adaptable to be able to fit the needs of the author especially when the central issue of the text has never been, or at least not widely, been addressed.³¹ Amery was one of the first to use genres to address the issue of environmental degradation and possible ecological crisis; therefore, he used the guidelines of the dystopian fiction and the city chronical to do so.

²⁷ "Interview."

²⁸ "Genre," *Merriam-Webster*, accessed February 20, 2018, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/genre>.

²⁹ Anis Bawarshi, "Genre Function," *National Council of Teachers of English* 62, no.2 (2000): 345.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 336.

³¹ *Ibid*, 342.

It is rare that elements are solely related to a singular genre.³² In *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau*, Carl Amery mixed different genres. On the one hand, the novel is a dystopian fiction novel. On the other hand, the novel is written as a city chronicle that was popular in the Medieval Period. The genres are not mixed within the same chapters, but instead each genre has its own set of chapters that are interspersed with the other genre. The dystopian and city chronicle chapters are delineated from one another by not only the title of the chapters, but also the typeface of them is different. The mixing of genre was a specific stylistic choice by Amery in order to appeal to more than a single audience. In doing so, it allowed the message of the book to be much more widely disseminated. By mixing genres, Amery was able to create an atmosphere of fear and dread that had different origins: one being based in science and the other in religion. Amery hoped that this atmosphere would then be the catalyst needed to create and maintain discussion related to environmental protections.

2.1 Dystopian Fiction

Dystopian fiction, has been used as method of political commentary since the 19th century; however, as it is defined today, started with Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* in 1921.³³ The genre is characterized by a future that is unhappy or inhospitable to humans—the idea being that it was the antithesis to a utopia.³⁴ Two of the other main pillars of this genre, the background of the story is based around a dramatic, abrupt end to the

³² “Overview: Hybrid Genre,” *Oxford Reference*, accessed Feb. 25, 2019, <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20111108103413377>

³³ Philip Stoner, “Dystopian Literature: Evolution of Dystopian Literature from *We* to the Hunger Games,” *Merge* 1, Spring 2017.

³⁴ Jill Lepore, “A Golden Age for Dystopian Fiction,” *New Yorker* June 5 & 12 Issue, 2017.

previous society whether by natural disaster, war, or overpopulation and the extrapolation of current trends and how they will affect the future.³⁵ The reason for the extrapolation and for crisis event is to show a world a society vastly different the readers' own world, but still rooted in a similar history.³⁶ In addition dystopic novels often end with bleak outlooks for the future.³⁷ There are also other points of dystopian fiction that tie into the two pillars. are an oppressive government that often uses propaganda to control citizens, there is illusion that the society is perfect or even a utopia, and through the protagonist the reader understands the faults of the dystopian society. These narrative tools in the genre have the same purpose: they serve as way to critique the faults that exist in the contemporary society.³⁸ This, too, means that the reader is then able to correlate the flaws of the dystopian society with that of the society in which the reader lives. Often these futures are often apocalyptic or post-apocalyptic and are a result of human actions, but it is nor a requirement of the genre.³⁹ One comprehensive definition and view of dystopian fiction is:

The most popular definition of dystopian literature is that it is anti-Utopian. The genre challenges utopia's fundamental assumption of human perfectibility, arguing humanity's inherent flaws negate the possibility of constructing perfect societies. Dystopian literature is

³⁵ "Dystopian Fiction,"

³⁶ Geir Finnsson, "The Unexpected Popularity of Dystopian Literature: From Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four and Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* to Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* Trilogy," *University of Iceland*, Sept. 2016.

³⁷ Stoner.

³⁸ "Dystopias: Definition and Characteristics," *Read, Write, Think*, accessed Feb. 21, 2019, http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson926/DefinitionCharacteristics.pdf.

³⁹ Lepore.

deliberately written to frighten the reader. Works of dystopian literature must walk a fine line between evoking the sensations of fear and inducing a sense of futility.⁴⁰

While being set in a post-apocalyptic world is not a requirement of dystopian fiction, it is often used in the genre. Such events are able to captivate audiences and give an author narrative distance to criticize the state of the world. Rowland Hughes and Pat Wheeler sum up the idea by arguing, “Apocalyptic visions have the power to transfix their audience with horror, to command attention and shock people out of the position of comfortable apathy, in a way that strict adherence to the data cannot, even if long-term implications of that data is terrifying enough in themselves.”⁴¹

While there are some that believe the exaggeration of events is not conducive to changing people’s views on how to deal with environmental issues, using such hyperboles can be more effective than cold data. Since hyperboles provides a similar psychological push that the use of religion does. In addition, the story is not just pessimistic about the current situation and the path that it leads to, but it must also have “Angstlust,” because of people’s fascination with terrible events.⁴² While the reader is captivated by negative or bleak events, novels, such as *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau*, i creates a sense of fear and urgency in the reader. This fear is used to create a sense of

⁴⁰ “Dystopian Literature,” *Questia*, accessed Feb. 27, 2019, <https://www.questia.com/library/literature/literary-themes-and-topics/dystopian-literature>.

⁴¹ Rowland Hughes and Pat Wheeler, “Introduction Eco-dystopias: Nature and the Dystopian Imagination,” *Critical Survey* 25, no. 2 (2013): 2.

⁴² Stefan Neuhaus, “Konsequenzen der Biopolitik: Verhältnis von Subjekt und Umwelt in Literarischen Dystopien,” in *Umwelt—sozial, kulturell, ökologisch* ed. Martin Hellström, Linda Karlsson Hammarfelt, and Edgar Platen (Munich: IUDICIUM Verlag, 2016): 110.

urgency that the issues being discussed in the novel need immediate attention, so the future does not look as bleak as the text posits.

Therefore, Amery's use of dystopian fiction was a way to conjure enough fear in the minds of readers to change their behaviors relating to the environment and prevent future damage to the natural world. Amery would not be the last either, many other authors such as Max Frisch (*Der Mensch erscheint im Holozän* 1979) have used dystopian fiction to tackle the issue of environmental degradation.

2.2 City Chronicle Genre

The city chronicle was a genre popular during the medieval period in Germany. Chronicles were written by the town scribe, who was often a clergyman, the chronicle was, first and foremost, a history of the world from the moment of creation by God. Once the scribe had gone through the biblical events of history, they would then recount the history of the city. The purpose was to create a comprehensive history of the world and city alike. The most famous example of a city chronicle is the *Liber chronicarum* (also known as the *Weltchronik* and *Nuremburg Chronicles*) by Dr. Hartmann Schedel. Like most other chronicles, the *Liber chronicarum* was written in Latin, which was the state language for most principalities at the time. In the section of final section of the chronicle, titled "Final Colophon," Schedel wrote, "HERE IS FINALLY CONCLUDED the Book of Chronicles and memorable histories, from the beginning of the world to our own time..."⁴³

⁴³ Hartmann Schedel, *Liber chronicarum*, trans. Walter W. Schmauch and Kosta Hadavas (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Digital Collections Center, 2010): Final Colophon.

The use of a chronicle has a specific Christian overtone due to its history and is tied to Christian morality (ecologism having a large moral component to it). The use of religion can be a very powerful tool of persuasion. The use of religion as a catalyst for change is not without reason. Religion is such an integral part of life for many people, that it can be a tool to change behavior of the masses. Religions play a role in addressing the environmental crisis due to the fact that it can change how people view themselves in relation to the world around them.⁴⁴ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, one of the most well-known scholars combining ecological thought and religion, argues:

The fact remains that the vast majority of people in the world do not accept any ethics which does not have a religious foundation. This means in practical terms that if a religious figure, let us say, a mulla or a brahmin in India or Pakistan, goes to a village and tells villagers that from the point of view of the Shari'ah or Law of Manu they are forbidden to cut this tree, many people would accept it. But if some graduate from the University of Dehli or Karachi, who is a government official, comes and says, for rational reasons, philosophical and scientific reasons, that it is better not to cut this tree, few would heed his advice.⁴⁵

No matter the amount of hard facts and data people are presented with, these figures do not wield the same power to change people and their beliefs just by being known and available.

⁴⁴ Le Duc, 110.

⁴⁵ S. H. Nasr, "Religion and the Environmental Crisis," in *The Essential Seyyed Hossein Nasr*, ed. W.C. Chittick (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2007), 31.

As proof of the power of religion, the Catholic Church now uses its power and influence in people's lives as a tool for societal change in order to preserve the environment. Pope John Paul wrote, "den Auftrag des Menschen gegenüber der Natur gemäß dem Schöpferwillen Gottes darin, dass er der Natur als 'Herr' und besonnener und weiser 'Hüter' und nicht als 'Ausbeuter' und skrupelloser 'Zerstörer' gegenübertritt." In June 2015, Pope Francis, announced a similar message in the *Laudato Si'* in which he, and by Proxy the Church, advocated environmental protections.⁴⁶ The Orthodox Church has also been celebrating the *World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation* since 1989.⁴⁷ This day is to celebrate all of God's creation and to prevent humans from prioritizing their needs above that of the environment. Thus, religion can and should be used to usher in a change in the mindset of people to one that places them not as the master over nature, but to be an equal with nature.

The power of religion to change the how people view the environment, shows how strategic Amery was in choosing to use a chronicle to convey his message. It also utilizes a different type of fear and shock that dystopian fiction does not, thereby making the message all that more powerful

3. *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau*

The novel utilizes the hallmarks of its genres in order to instill fear and create a political discussion centered on the topic of environmentalism including the need to

⁴⁶ le Duc, 112.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 115.

change materialistic behaviors. These discussions and changes in perception of how society is affecting the planet is, in Amery's opinion, a necessity in order to allow for the survival of the environment and of humans.

3.1 Rosenheim

As previously mentioned, one of the tenants of ecologism is to create a society that is based on the tribe or band system. By doing so, humans will be less likely to exploit the Earth for all of its resources and, instead, have a symbiotic relationship. In the novel, the citizens of Rosenheim are organized in a tribal system. They are also the protagonists in the novel as they are unwillingly to fold to the Scheff's demands and conform to the rigid oppressive society of Passau. It is in Rosenheim, that they are able to create a society that goes back to a more 'natural' way of life in which they are self-sustainable, correlating with the tenants of ecologism.⁴⁸ Amery makes clear at the beginning of the novel that Rosenheim is structured in this way. Case-in-point being when der Scheff (leader of Passau) examined a dossier about the Rosenheim that read:

Stabilisierte sich durch Übergang zu autarker Lebensweise: Jagd, Fallenstellen, gelegentliche Bodenbewirtschaftung; Anwachsen durch Zuzug und natürlicher Vermehrung auf approx. Sechzig Köpfe. Gut integriert, positiv Zukunftsentwicklung auf halbnomadischer oder nomadischer Basis wahrscheinlich. Führende Persönlichkeiten nicht bekannt. Verfassung: nicht

⁴⁸ Axel Goodbody, "Writing Environmental Crisis: the Example of Carl Amery," in *The Culture of German Environmentalism: Anxieties, Visions, Realities*, ed. Axel Goodbody (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 134.

bekannt, vermutlich Erarbeitung von Gemeinschafts-Entschlüssen durch informelle Diskussion.⁴⁹

In addition, the Scheff asks Lois multiple times how the people of Rosenheim manage to survive and what their plan for the future is. Lois always says, “Mir jagen. Mir fischen. Gemüs bau’ma auch noch an, grad genug is da zum Essen.”⁵⁰

This illustrates that Rosenheim has no desire or need to change from their current way of life. However, what is even more important about this response is that it demonstrates Lois’ desire to distance Rosenheim from Passau in terms of politics and general world view.

The concept of living a ‘natural’ life is often associated with the organizational characteristics of a tribe level society.⁵¹ Tribe level society, in an anthropological sense, is one that relies on horticulture, foraging for subsistence, and, in some cases, pastoralism.⁵² In Rosenheim they citizen hunt and fish for meat and grow vegetables to supplement their diet. Furthermore, these societies are often small in population size, for Rosenheim, about 60 people.

The idea that sedentary societies being the root of the ecological crisis is not new. There are scholars that point out that the shift from being nomadic to sedentary society is at the root of our current environmental crisis, because it created a snowball effect that led to the Industrial Revolution.⁵³ The argument being, that with the development of

⁴⁹ Amery, 17

⁵⁰ Ibid, 65.

⁵¹ Philip Carl Salzman, "Tribal Organization and Subsistence: A Response to Emanuel Marx," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 81 no. 1 (1979): 122.

⁵² Salzman, 121.

⁵³ le Duc, 98.

the industrial age, and insatiable need for raw materials was created. The lust for natural resources led to overworking of agricultural lands and destruction of forests. Based on these ideas, many ecologists believe that reverting to a nomadic lifestyle is the best solution to stop further degradation of nature. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, capitalist society is organized so that there is a constant drive to grow economically. This constant grow leads to destruction of nature.⁵⁴ Scholarship such as this fuels the ecologist's determination to go back to a nomadic, close knit community as the ideal society.

In tribe societies, there is not a central, all powerful authority figure. Instead the leader exists more as a binding agent to hold the community together, instead of an authoritarian leader or powerful government body. It is also noted in the dossier that there is no central leader and that the decisions are not made from a constitution or other political entity, but instead through informal discussions that involve all of the people of Rosenheim.

In Rosenheim, Lois acts as the binding agent to keep the community together and is grooming Marte to take over for him. When der Scheff calls the Rosnemers "Herren Retzers Gruppe," Lois quickly becomes annoyed at the implication that there is a single, authoritarian leader for the Rosnemers.⁵⁵ Lois tries to correct the Scheff, but is quickly cut off as the Scheff continues babbling.

⁵⁴ Mohamed El-Kamel Bakari, "Sustainability and Contemporary Man-Nature Divide Aspects of Conflict, Alienation, and Beyond," *Consilience*, no. 13 (2015): 197.

⁵⁵ Amery, 69.

During the conversation between Lois and the Scheff, Marte is taken into the midst of the festival that Passau has put on to greet Lois and Marte. During this time of the Scheff's children, Hasso, with the help of others, restrains a drunk Marte and begin to shout and torment him. While trying to escape, Marte kills Hasso. Lois hears the commotion and immediately get their horse so they can flee. Lois and Marte must flee and while doing so Lois falls ill. It is only when Lois is on death's doorstep that he tells Marte he must exert more authority over the community and moves them as far east as possible.⁵⁶ With Marte exerting more authority over the group, they do not deter from their lifestyle at first. However, during the time of the chronicle and the Dritte Marte Rosenheim breaks from their former nomadic lifestyle.

In addition, it is in Rosenheim that the genre of the city chronicle presents itself. The Chronicle is written by the city chaplain of Rosenheim, Egid. The footnote on the the first page of the book reads, "Diese Chronik des Egid ist in einem verwegenen Latein verfasst, welches die Geschichtsschreiber der fränkischen Merowinger (7. Jahrhundert) erinnert."⁵⁷ The novel is quick to point out that this is to be read as a city chronicle. However, what is even more interesting about this footnote is that it states the chronicle was published (within the literary universe of the novel) in Latin. While it is supposed to be written in Latin, the language actually used in the chronicle completely is high German. What is significant about this is that, the rest of the novel, particularly the dialog, has a Bavarian dialect. This use of formal language lends itself to the feeling of a

⁵⁶ Amery, 96.

⁵⁷ Amery, 5.

chronicle as well, since the language of city chronicles was meant to have a formal overtone.

In addition, the chapters that are set as chronicles have the Dritte Marte speaking about that it is the will of God that will be driving the actions of Rosenheim. “‘Dies,’ sagte er (Dritte Marte), ‘hatte uns, den Vollziehern des Grimmes des Herrn, wohl gestanden, jetzt ein Bündnis einzugehen mit den Lastern der Stadt Passau--eben jenen Lastern, um derentwillen sie Lois den Gründer und den Ersten Marte so grausam behandelt.’”⁵⁸ This adds yet another layer of Christian morality to the novel.

As previously mentioned, there is also a distinct moral component to ecogism. Ecologists believe that humans placing themselves above all other life and the needs of the Earth is immoral and must be changed. This ties in with the fact that humans should also not exploit other humans and the environment. In *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* this manifests itself with a distinct Christian twist. The explanation for the pandemic that Marte was told by Rosenheim’s chaplain, is that it was divine punishment from God. Given Amery’s Catholic background, it is no surprise that morality would manifest in such a way. It is also labeled as “ein Zukunftsroman aus Bayern,” and the Bavarian state has a very conservative Christian population.⁵⁹

It is through the actions of Rosenheim, particularly Lois and Marte, that Passau is seen as the oppressive society that will only bring destruction and disaster along with it. This is especially true for Lois as he plays politics with the Scheff. Lois often acts dumb to

⁵⁸ Amery, 63.

⁵⁹ Amery, front cover.

what is going on, which is part of the reason Lois repeats himself when asked about Rosenheim's plan for the future.

3.2 Passau and the Salzreich

Both Passau and the Salzreich have a similar state-level organizational structure. In Passau, not only are politics highly centralized but distinct social strata exist two of the markers for state-level societies. Der Scheff and his family are at the top of the hierarchy; the military and der Scheff's assistant are below in the second highest echelon; specialist (scientist and those who care for technology) are in the middle; all other citizens are at the bottom of the hierarchy. It is alluded to that the Salzreich has a very similar structure as well; however, the novel does not go into great detail on the matter.

3.2.1 Passau

Passau is vastly different from Rosenheim in terms of structure, desires, and general outlooks. Passau fits the bill of a typical government in a dystopian fiction novel. That is to say, it is a highly oppressive and regulated society. The citizens of Passau must conform and adhere to all of the rules that the Scheff gives. As part of the militarization and colonial tendencies of Passau, the Scheff has a regiment of spies that gather information on areas that they will conquer next. This society is the antithesis of what a utopia should be and is used to illustrate how Rosenheim is a more stable and generally better form of society to ensure human survival.

Passau is trying to recreate Western-civilization as the reader knows it and is an oppressive, controlling government typical for dystopian fiction texts. The Scheff

attempts to accomplish this recreation through his plans of “Äussere Politik”; the dossier on Rosenheim being some of the documents collected for the plan. As part of this political agenda, Passau forcibly colonizes other areas and cities. In order to recreate his idea of civilization the Scheff states that conquering Italy is one of his main objectives, because it is the cradle of civilization with the birth of the Roman Legions and the cultural center of Florence.⁶⁰ The reasoning that the Scheff gives is that after he survived the pandemic, he and the other survivors took on the “Bürde der Zivilisation (Lois scoffs at this calling it the “white man’s burden” a reference that the Scheff does not pick up on).”⁶¹

It is also under his Äussere Politik that the Scheff invites Lois and Marte to Passau in order to convince them (and the whole of Rosenheim) to join the ranks of Passau, as it would be better for them. When Marte kills Hasso, the Scheff says that he wants more than just for Marte to be killed. He says “‘Ich will mehr,’ sagte der Scheff...‘Ich will die endgültige Lösung, Gert. Verfolgt sie nicht. Schneidet ab. So gerade nach Rosenheim wie es geht. Ich will die endgültige Lösung.’”⁶² The Scheff is ordering a regiment to not only track down and kill Marte for what he has done, but also orders Rosenheim as a whole to be wiped out. This would thus give the Scheff control over Rosenheim’s former territory.

Another example of how Passau is the typical oppressive government is the Scheff’s goal to colonize further south into the mountains to have easy access to salt. The

⁶⁰ Amery, 67.

⁶¹ Ibid, 66.

⁶² Ibid, 82.

salt will then be used to preserve food. Thus, supplies will last longer when Passau can continue its colonization of surrounding territory and exploitation of both humans and nature.

Together with exploiting the Earth for all that it has, Passau attempts to use technology to fuel their society and conquer neighboring areas. Skepticism centered around the use of technology is another tenant of ecologism. In Passau, the Scheff has electricity that he uses as propaganda. He says, “‘Das Licht,’ sagte er abrupt und bleib stehen, ‘ist natürlich nur eine Propagandasache.’”⁶³ The use of lights as being propaganda not only lends itself to skepticism of technology central to ecologist ideology, but also to the use of propaganda by oppressive governments in dystopian fiction. In addition, Passau possess tractors that they use for transportation of goods and supplies throughout its territory. The tractors are also used for military purposes, as it is the tractors that the regiment, sent to kill Marte and deal with Rosenheim, use.

In connection with the technology that Passau uses, the city, and especially the Scheff are highly materialistic. When speaking with Lois, der Scheff mentions how Passau needs more of any given resource—be it energy, salt, or rubber. The city needs more to fuel itself and its plans to colonize neighboring areas for said resources. There have been studies that show that materialism and the consumer culture as exhibited by Passau can “undermine social cohesion”, and by forgoing a consumerist culture, as

⁶³ Amery, 66.

Rosenheim did, leads to higher satisfaction with life and personal happiness as well as better health.⁶⁴

3.2.2 The Salzreich

While the Salzreich doesn't come into play until the last five pages of the book, it is nonetheless important to the dystopian nature of the book. The scene is set as the Dritte Marte is at odds with a former ally. He eventually allies with the salt workers in the south to form the Salzreich. With the little information that the novel gives, it shows that, much like Passau, the Salzreich is determined to bring back the world and civilization as we know it. With this revelation, the miss-steps of the past seem bound to repeat themselves. Ending the novel in such a fashion issues a grave warning to the readers that all attempts should be made to prevent such a disaster before it can even begin.

The naming of the large empire "das Salzreich" has two implications. On the one hand it is an allusion to the materialistic nature of the society through the spice trade and on the other hand it is an allusion to the three German Empires. The spice trade, particularly between the 1400s and 1800s, is often cited as the first capitalistic endeavor. The spice trade exemplifies materialistic tendencies, because of the European desire to have spices. Spices were a status symbol and a marker of wealth. As the demand for spices grew so did the exploitation of land and of workers to fuel the desires in Europe.

⁶⁴ Monika A. Bauer, James E. B. Wilkie, Jung K. Kim, and Galen V. Bodenhausen, "Cuing Consumerism: Situational Materialism Undermines Personal and Social Well-Being," *Psychological Science*, Vol. 23, No. 5 (2012): 522.

The inclusion of the word “Reich” has significance in Germany, because of the three German Empires: Holy Roman Empire (800-1806), Deutsches Reich (1871-1918), and Third Reich (1933-1945). All three empires experienced abrupt ends after wars and cultural upheavals. With this history “Reich” has become a loaded word that has a negative connotation. Thus, its use by Amery is to foreshadow the fate of das Salzreich. It is at this point that the reader is left with a grim outlook for the future. While Rosenheim has managed to survive, it is likely that the events that happened in Passau, or a least similar events, will transpire again as another oppressive, colonial power tries to sweep across Europe. It leaves the reader wondering how the situations could be altered or prevented altogether for a more positive solution.

4. Conclusions

The final chapter reveals that Passau was in the midst of its downfall and, since, the Salzreich is following the same path of Passau (on a much larger scale). That is to say, they have created a society based around colonization and exploitation of the Earth and one in which a rigid hierarchy is in place. The novel alludes to how this will cause the downfall of the Salzreich, as it did Passau and as society did in 1983. This correlates with ecologism ideology is so far that it shows the exploitative core features of state-level societies. It champions a restructuring of society, so that the desires and needs of current and future generations are part of the decision-making process and power is redistributed from the few to the many. However, the point of the novel is not for society to do a 180, but instead to seriously consider the effects on nature that the current

societal paradigm was having and to take action to prevent an environmental catastrophe.

In addition to simply changing the perception of the environment, a change in the construction of self is also needed. As long as humans view themselves as separate and different from the rest of the world, no further or meaningful steps can be taken to stop an ecological crisis. Mohamed El-Kamel Bakari states that the current paradigm is one in which nature is only useful when there are natural resources to reap, otherwise nature becomes the dumping ground for industrial and chemical waste.⁶⁵ This break from how the environment was perceived in 1975 is evident in *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau*. When the Rosenheim community was created, Lois and the original members were quick to break away from anthropocentric view of self and society. They created a self-sustaining community where they need not exploit the Earth. In order for a change in viewpoint, there is a need for a dialog between the individual and all of humankind to effectively transform the prevailing model.⁶⁶

Amery himself did not champion for a restructuring of society as ecologist would, and is, instead, used tenants ecologism to make a statement and create a discussion about environmental issues. However, Amery felt strongly about the need to end materialistic and consumerist culture and the need for humans to change how they view themselves in connection with nature. He called for an end to the over production of good and to the end of object oriented and physical wealth centered views. In his own

⁶⁵ Ibid, 196.

⁶⁶ Neuhaus, 110.

words, Amery wrote, “say no to the omniscient system, the destruction of the world from the spirit of overproduction.”⁶⁷ These overly materialistic, object-oriented tendencies are alluded to being part of the reason why Passau cannot sustain itself as Rosenheim does. The novel points out how much der Scheff loves the Rococo style of décor and material goods that surround him. “Er [der Scheff] liebte diesen Platz: die italienisierenden Fassaden, den Brunnen mit der Rokokomadonna, den mächtigen spätgotischen Sandsteinchor zur Linken...”⁶⁸ Often when the Scheff is present in the novel, passages like this appear. He also attempts (and ultimately fails) to use goods (vodka, electricity, etc.) that Passau has as a way to convince Rosenheim to join them. In one such instances, the Scheff has servants bring a “alten Wodka,” as a bribe. However, Lois says that the vodka is too good for him and he will stick with the beer that Rosenheim brews. This passage from the novel exemplifies the materialistic views of Passau as well as acts as a gateway to the past. This reminds der Scheff of the society that he dreams of recreating.

However, this, in reality, is not a recreation of the past, but instead a performance of the past. Richard Schechner’s work on performance theory and studies describes this as “restored behavior.”⁶⁹ That is to say that the style of dress, the organization of politics, and imperialism exhibited by Passau, is not the first time that these behaviors have been exhibited. They are piecemeal construction of what was left after the catastrophe. This is

⁶⁷ Peter H. Merkl, “How New the Brave New World: New Social Movements in West Germany,” *German Studies Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1987): 127.

⁶⁸ Amery, 17.

⁶⁹ Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2002), 22. (Schechner 2002)

less a recreation of the past and more a theatrical performance, as the past (according to Amery) can never fully be recreated again.

All of Passau's actions, be it the desire to colonize or their performance of the past paint a picture of a society that values material wealth. This ties in with Amery's highly anti-materialistic views which are also in keeping with ecologism which sees "materialism as being a form of intellectual and spiritual corruption"⁷⁰ that will lead to an ever-worsening environmental crisis. The foundation for an anti-object-oriented world was laid out in 1972, with the publication of *The Limits to Growth*. The essay laid out that the overconsumption and the obsession with economic growth will lead to disaster within one hundred years.⁷¹ Humans live in a world where resources are finite, and society must therefore tread lightly with how much of the resources are consumed in a short time frame. The question then becomes how to change society.

Many scholars write on how dystopian fiction and apocalyptic writings can be used to change society's thinking and general attitudes. Stefan Neuhaus wrote, "[D]ie literarischen Texte inszenieren diese krisenhafte Weltsicht vielleicht nicht aus didaktischen Gründen, aber doch wohl, um vor den Folgen beobachtbarer Entwicklungen zu warnen, sie alle stehen (immer noch) damit in der Tradition einer durch die reflexive, moderne gegangenen Aufklärung."⁷² So, while dystopian novels may not be written to educate people on the issue, they are designed to warn them of what is to come if society does not reconsider and change itself. Literature is able to piece

⁷⁰ Heywood.

⁷¹ Bakari, 196.

⁷² Neuhaus, 129.

together the results of hard data and imbue it with emotions. In turn, this aids in changing how people and society perceive the issue of environmental degradation. By accomplishing this change, effective environmental and ecological measures are possible.

Der Untergang der Stadt Passau is Amery's most widely acclaimed novel.⁷³ In part because of the captivating story that it portrays. However, it is also a warning that if society doesn't change, and soon, then humanity will fall into a crisis. The plot does not revolve around the cause of the catastrophe, but how humans react to it in the following years. The citizens of Passau believe that the humans can once again find comfort and success in a materialistic, colonial society that was present before the crisis. On the other hand, Rosenheim wants to avoid the mistakes of the past and only use what they must. The literary use of a dystopian future is an effective tool to warn people of a situation and, at the very least, shock them into reevaluating the status quo.

The novel details how materialism and colonization lead to ecological catastrophe. Therefore, there must be a shift away from the current thinking of society to one that is more amiable to the Earth, otherwise our downfall is eminent. Since, Amery has been hailed as a one of the German Greens "Bewegungsintellektueller,"⁷⁴ it is no wonder that *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* would lay out such in a novel that is accessible to the masses of the German public. As Silke Mende noted, Amery and his literary works should be used to analyze the relationship between human and the

⁷³ Axel Goodbody, "Lianas in the Jungle," in *The Culture of German Environmentalism: Anxieties, Visions, Realities*, ed. Axel Goodbody (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 20.

⁷⁴ Mende, 366.

environment.⁷⁵ The reason being that while many activists choose to separate their lives between their activism and their careers, Amery himself did not. He wrote politically motivated texts whether fiction, critical essays, or newspaper articles. The dialog that Amery created between his writings and his work in politics should therefore be explored. In doing so, readers can understand the challenges that society faces when it is on the verge of environmental emergency.

5. Autor's Opinions

There is a wide breath of literature that I could have used in order to analyze environmental thinking in Germany. However, Amery as an author and *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* were of special interest. Amery, given that he was a member of *Gruppe 47* and was a founding member of the German Green Party, should be a common name in German Studies; however, that is not the case. Many scholars are unaware of his writings, and those that are familiar with him typically only know his works that concern the Catholic Church. By and large, Amery's other writings have been pushed aside and forgotten. So as an author, Amery is rather fascinating, because he was so prolific, but is rarely mentioned

As for the novel, it has both its strong and weak points that make it intriguing. In terms of weak points there are many. Firstly, what actually occurred during the pandemic, what caused it, and why it was so devastating is never clearly defined. Thus, as a reader, I'm unable to ground myself in terms of how the characters entered their

⁷⁵ Ibid, 377.

current situation or why that situation even occurred in the first place. In addition, the structure of the novel can be jarring as one goes between time periods, perspectives, and background information. It does not have a seamless flow as readers would expect. Instead it forces the reader to compartmentalize what is happening in what timeline and how it is all interconnected. What is, perhaps most disappointing, is that the novel also gives the impression that nothing humans do will be able to keep us from destroying ourselves. With an existential feeling of dread, people can become paralyzed with fear and be unable to fight for change.

However, even with all of its flaws, the novel is not unimportant. The time period in which it was written shows how intertwined history and literature can be. Events such as the collapse of the student movement, the creation of grass-root environmentalism, and the 1973 Oil Crisis all occurred in close enough succession that Amery felt compelled to write on the subject. Even before the German Green Party came into being, Amery was already constructing the foundation of the party's ideology in a fictional setting. While the novel illustrates the bleakness of the future, the reader can turn that around and use it as a spring board to champion for change.

6. Carl Amery and the German Green Movement

During his lifetime Amery earned a number of awards. One of the most prestigious was der Naturschutzpreis des Bundes Naturschutz from the state of Bavaria.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ "Straßenneubenennung Carl-Amery-Platz," *Landeshauptstadt München*, accessed March 6, 2019, https://www.muenchen.de/rathaus/Stadtverwaltung/Kommunalreferat/geodatenservice/strassennamen/2018/carl_amery_platz.html

This award was bestowed upon Amery for his work on and dedication to environmental topic. Amery died in 2005 after years of working on environmental issues both through his writings and political presence. He was also the president of E-F-Schumacher-Gesellschaft für Politische Ökologie located in Munich.⁷⁷ This organization focuses on changing the mainstream anthropocentric view of nature and their slogan is “Small is Beautiful”.⁷⁸ Therefore, it is an organization that encompasses Amery’s ideals. His impact on the literary world has not been forgotten, particularly in Munich, Germany, where the author was born. The city honored the writer with a memorial, Carl-Amery-Platz, in the Au district in September 2018.⁷⁹ His achievements in many ways can be credited to this novel as he was able to make a name for himself. The success of *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* was only the beginning for the literary world in terms of environmental and ecological literature.

Amery’s *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* was the first in a series of narratives, from not only Amery himself, but others as well, that focused on dystopian futures as a way to push for environment. *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* was just the beginning of fiction (both in literature and other forms of media) critiquing the environmental paradigm. In 1979, Max Frisch published *der Mensch erscheint im Holozän*, which too had dystopian elements in its plot. Films that portrayed dystopian scenarios or the destructive qualities of society also picked up in popularity and continue to be created in the German-

⁷⁷ “Stadt beschließt Carl-Amery-Platz: Benennung ehrt Schriftsteller und Aktivisten aus der Au,” *Münchener Wochen Anzeiger* Sept. 24, 2018.

⁷⁸ “E. F. Schumacher-Gesellschaft Für Politische Ökologie E.V,” E. F. Schumacher-Gesellschaft Für Politische Ökologie E.V, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://schumacher-gesellschaft.de/>.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

speaking world. One example being films, *Wo die grünen Ameisen träumen* (1984) and *Salt and Fire* (2016), by German filmmaker Werner Herzog often revolve around environmental miss-steps. These films feature ecological catastrophes as brought on by humans (particularly large corporations). Works such as Herzog's films have added another layer to the environmental movement. Other social issues have been incorporated feminism justice.

Since the novel was published, environmentalism has become a major topic in Germany, whether in the form of political discussions or in other dystopian scenarios. Between 1998 and 2005 Bündis 90/Die Grünen formed a coalition with SDP to run the Federal Government.⁸⁰ This was the first major win for the green party and was just the beginning of their successes in the years to come. During the coalition with the SDP in 2002, Bündis 90/Die Grünen were able to pass a law banning new nuclear power plants in Germany.⁸¹ This law also mandated that the last of the already established nuclear plants would be shut down by 2022.⁸² In 2011 in the state of Baden-Württemberg, the Greens won the majority of votes thus ushering in the first ever state premier from their party.⁸³ In addition, an opinion poll from Forschungsgruppe Wahlen conducted in

⁸⁰ "Welcome to the Website of the Green Parliamentary Group in the German Bundestag," Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.gruene-bundestag.de/service-navigation/english.html>.

⁸¹ "Straßenneubenennung."

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Rina Goldenberg, "German Green Party: How it evolved," *Deutsche Welle*, Aug. 24, 2017, accessed Feb. 28, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/germanys-green-party-how-it-evolved/a-40586834>

November 2018 showed that the Green party was second only to the CDU in terms of popularity.⁸⁴

In many ways the German Green Party served as guide for other Green Parties to come to the stage global. This is due to the fact that they focus on green policies such as renewable energy will not hurt the economy or decrease the number of jobs, and, in some case, even have the opposite effect.⁸⁵ The party has also become a reliably centrist, and in the wake of the *Alternativ für Deutschland*, has attracted the attention of many voters that feel ostracized by extremist politics.⁸⁶ Thus their portion of votes and popularity has dramatically increased, as mentioned earlier. The Greens advocate on the grounds that, “They are pro-environment, pro-Europe and unapologetically pro-immigration.”⁸⁷ This correlate to the incorporation of other social issues into their platform.

In terms of policies and lasting political changes, activist have been able to make great strides. In 1975 activist involved in anti-nuclear protest successfully forced the German government to scrap its plan for the Wyhl power station.⁸⁸ More recently Germany has been at the forefront of green policies worldwide. In part the policies that have been enacted and those politicians are perusing are more than just bandage

⁸⁴ Stephan Pope, “Germany’s Greens Appear Attractive; European Enthusiasm is Catching Up,” *Forbes*, Nov. 11, 2018, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/stephenpope/2018/11/11/germanys-greens-appear-attractive-european-enthusiasm-is-catching-up/#5b190daa1a44>.

⁸⁵ Nicholas Kulish, “Greens Gain in Germany, and the World Takes Notice,” *The New York Times*, Sept. 1, 2011.

⁸⁶ Katrin Bennhold, “Greens Thrive in Germany as the ‘Alternative’ to Far-Right Populism,” *The New York Times*, Nov. 27, 2018.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ “Germany’s anti-nuclear movement: Still going strong after four decades of activism,” *Deutsche Welle*, June 30, 2017, accessed Feb. 28, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/germanys-anti-nuclear-movement-still-going-strong-after-four-decades-of-activism/a-39494549>.

solutions to the problem. A key example being when the Kyoto Protocol was first devised and the idea of carbon trading was introduced. Angela Merkel (at the time Germany's environment minister) stated, "The aim cannot be for industrialized nations to satisfy their obligations solely through emissions trading and profit."⁸⁹ Germany, and many other European Countries saw this strategy as a cheap ploy to quell the fears of major corporations while put up the appearance of being environmentally conscious. The country plans to cut emission level by 40 percent (as compared to 1990 levels) by 2020 and by 80 percent by 2050.⁹⁰

Germany was among the first nations to significantly cut carbon emissions and to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources.⁹¹ One of the forces that has driven the shift to renewable energy is the move away from privatization of utilities to public utilities and in some cases co-ops.⁹² By allowing the utilities, in particular electricity, and to be in public hands has permitted the desires and wishes of citizens take precedence over those of companies. Examples of this are Munich and Frankfurt, both of which have public utilities, who plan to transition solely to renewable energy by 2025 and 2050.⁹³ Part of the success of these movements, by activist and citizens, was due to the fact that they didn't just oppose the use of fossil fuels and nuclear power but gave options on how

⁸⁹ Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs the Climate* (New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2014): 218.

⁹⁰ Ben Goossen, "What the US can Learn from Germany's Stunning Environmental Movement," *Ecology*, Dec. 2, 2013.

⁹¹ Klein, 138.

⁹² *Ibid*, 97.

⁹³ *Ibid*, 131-132.

to generate clean power.⁹⁴ Such success can be attributed to the fact that activists have a solution in place.

The policies that Bündis 90/Die Grünen have been able to enact, the trajectory of the party as a whole, and the continued activism of citizens to bring awareness and support to environmental issues all have been major do justice to the memory of Carl Amery. As one of the first heavy-hitting advocates for environmental change, Amery was able to bring awareness to the issues that humans and the planet faced. After his death, the political party that he helped found has continued to make strides towards creating a society in which the environment and its protection are put center-stage rather than being put on the back burner. However, there are still many flaws in the current system in terms of environmental protection as well as individual and corporate accountability. Writers and filmmakers, such as Werner Herzog, are stepping in where Amery and others left off, by using similar narrative tools (dystopia, bleak futures) to critique and hope to fix.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 398.

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