

# Memory Matters: Generational Responses to Germany's Nazi Past in Recent Women's Literature (Interdisciplinary German Cultural Studies)

Schaumann, Caroline

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Memory Matters juxtaposes in tripartite structure texts by a child of German bystanders (Wolf), an Austrian-Jewish child-survivor (Klüger), a daughter of Jewish émigrés (Honigmann), a daughter of an officer involved in the German resistance (Bruhns), a granddaughter of a baptized Polish Jew (Maron), and a granddaughter of German refuges from East Prussia (Dückers). Placed outside of the distorting victim-perpetrator, Jewish-German, man-woman, and war-postwar binary, it becomes visible that the texts neither complete nor contradict each other, but respond to one another by means of inspiration, reverberation, refraction, incongruity, and ambiguity. Focusing on genealogies of women, the book delineates a different cultural memory than the counting of (male-inflected) generations and a male-dominated Holocaust and postwar literature canon. It examines intergenerational conflicts and the negotiation of memories against the backdrop of a complicated mother-daughter relationship that follows unpredictable patterns and provokes both discord and empathy. Schaumanns approach questions the assumption that German-gentile and German-Jewish postwar experiences are necessarily diametrically opposed (i.e. respond to a negative symbiosis) and uncovers intersections and continuities in addition to conflicts.



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