

Ruge 2011, with the example of the decline of a SED family in the former GDR), or takes an Islamic perspective (as Lehr 2010 and the German-Kurdish writer Fatah 2008). As political consequences, such as the War on Terrorism or the highly controversial Afghanistan mission of the German armed forces, are of no concern in the novel, it is finally as well a long way from so-called *Betroffenheitsliteratur*⁴³ – an adaptation mode which characterizes the (early) American literary reaction much more than the European discourse that was distinctly determined by issues of aesthetic representation.⁴⁴

Instead of providing a (medial postulated and inflationary served) ‘crisis management narrative’, which literature ought to accomplish, Magnusson pays a homage to the epic storytelling by opposing with the example of Stock Market Crash a kind of ‘counter-crisis’. Replacing one crisis by another, his treatment approaches a paradigm of terrorism and assassination research, according to which violent attacks do not affect the course of history in the long term. Nevertheless, it is not the novel’s intention to marginalize the events. Rather, Magnusson’s example shows the historical genesis and variability of literary crisis management, which with increasing time has to devise alternative modes of coping with 9/11.

That Magnusson has chosen a deviant literary treatment of the formative world event of his own generation, doesn’t diminish the value of his interpretation. *Das war ich nicht* is rather part of a whole series of alternative adaptations in German-speaking literature⁴⁵ marking the so-called third phase of literary reactions (2010–2012)⁴⁶ significantly characterized by an attitude of distance (Hennigfeld/Packard): it does not mark the endpoint of the cultural coping with the attacks, but rather represents an attempt by reactivating the narrative potential of literary heritage in order to relieve from the mimetic dominance of 9/11 and to transfer it into a common memorial process.

¹ For the German 9/11 literature see the anthology of Poppe/Schüller/Seiler, the first section of Irsigler/Jürgensen, the theses of Reinhäkel and under the wider perspective of narratives of terror in general König 2015; for the European perspective see in addition Hennigfeld and Hennigfeld/Packard.

² Magnusson, Kristof. *Das war ich nicht*. Roman. Munich: Kunstmann, 2010. The novel’s title could be translated *mutatis mutandis* as ‘It was not my fault’ (literal: ‘It was not me’). Despite the story’s complaisance and several objections against its style, the novel gained wide attention, reached five editions during a period of several months, was ranked on the bestseller list of the weekly *Der Spiegel* and placed on the Longlist for the German Book Prize, the most important annual award to aspiring young authors. An audiobook read by well-known German actors (2010) and theatre adaptations staged in Basel (2011) and Cologne (2012) among others followed. At the time the present volume was passing for press an English translation of the novel was not available. Hence, all cited translations are my own.

³ Though having been engaged intensively in Scandinavian and in particular Icelandic culture through writing (Zuhause, 2005), translation (a. o. Þórbergur Þórðarson Auður Jónsdóttir or Einar Kárason) and popular mediation (Gebrauchsanweisung für Island, 2011), in *Das war ich nicht* Magnusson largely excludes his home country as a literary topic apart from an inconspicuous reminiscence of letting his protagonist Jasper overfly the island on his way from the US back to Germany. And not at least, the novel refers to the author’s heritage by its overall topic, the Global Financial Crisis which first hit Iceland in 2008, what Magnusson also discussed in an extraliterary context: Magnusson, “Einfallinsel”. On Iceland see: Rühle/[Magnusson].

⁴ For further information about see the entry in Internationales Biographisches Archiv and the author’s website:

- ¹⁶ See 40: “Henry LaMarck hatte die National Medal of Arts bekommen, den National Book Award, den PEN/Faulkner Award, den PEN/Nabokov Award und den PEN/Saul Bellow Award. Und natürlich den Pulitzerpreis.”
- ¹⁷ Apart from that, Henry’s homosexuality is mainly narratively motivated and fulfills a central function as a dynamic plot element within the triangle story.
- ¹⁸ An idol with whom Henry – despite ironic distance– even identifies with. See 252, 267.
- ¹⁹ Against various medial expectations most of the early 9/11-novels like those by Paul Auster (*The Brooklyn Follies*, 2005), Jonathan Safran Foer (*Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, 2005) and even the later by Don DeLillo (*Falling Man*, 2007) were not honoured with literary awards – though they gained critical praise and high public interest. It was *Netherland* (2008) of the hitherto unknown Irish-Dutch-Turkish author Joseph O’Neill that marked a change and was awarded (among others the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction 2009). What is striking, however, is that the favorite for the Man Booker Prize, was less extolled for being the long awaited 9/11 novel than having found a new vital and realistic style. See e. g. Dwight Garner. “The Ashes”, *New York Times*, 18.5.2008.
- ²⁰ E. g. Frédéric Beigbeder’s novel *Windows on the World* (2003) not only received much public attention in France, but was also awarded the Prix Interallié in the same year; the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize for the English translation followed in 2005. In Germany, the situation is comparable: In 2006, the jury of the Deutscher Buchpreis elected Katharina Hackers novel *Die Habenichtse*. And Thomas Lehr’s *September. Fata Morgana*, perhaps until now the most ambitious approach in German literature, was shortlisted in 2010 and finally honored with the Marie-Luise-Kaschnitz-Preis (2012).
- ²¹ As the critic Andrea Köhler had suspected in the journal *Merkur*. Quotation follows Christoph Deupmann, who also points out the discrepancy or rather the ironic refraction in Magnusson’s novel: Deupmann 2009 109, note 307.
- ²² Lehr has started researching for *September. Fata Morgana* in 2004 and has further collected material for over three years before he began writing (with success). For Lehr see the recently published analyzes of Jennifer Clare and Silke Horstkotte: J. C. “Fata Morgana. Formen der Erfahrung und Wahrnehmung von 9/11 in deutschsprachigen literarischen Texten”. *Die Welt nach 9/11. Auswirkungen des Terrorismus auf Staatenwelt und Gesellschaft*. Ed. Thomas Jäger. Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2011 (*Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik. Sonderheft 2*). 843–858; S. H. “Transcending trauma. Thomas Lehr’s 9/11 novel *September. Fata Morgana*” *Image & Narrative* 14, 1 (2013), 35–46.
- ²³ As Magnusson explains in an interview with the German weekly *Die Zeit*: “Ja, immer verzweifelte Spekulanten vor fallenden Aktienkurven. Viele davon habe ich mir ausgeschnitten, ein paar hingen an meinem Kühlschrank. Sie helfen, Abstraktes zu visualisieren, mich haben sie inspiriert.” (Haeming/[Magnusson]).
- ²⁴ See Magnusson 70: “In diesem Gesicht lag alles, wonach ich seit einem Jahr gesucht hatte. Ein verzweifelter Banker – was für ein perfektes Symbol der Welt, die am 11. September attackiert worden war! So musste ich meinen Jahrhundertroman schreiben: aus der Innensicht des Systems.”
- ²⁵ This interpretation still influences the later self-description of the characters, such as when Jaspers calls traders the bank’s “rock stars” or when Meike speaks of “revoluzzers”.
- ²⁶ For the affair of Jérôme Kerviel see the former media reporting, for the German perspective e. g. Kröger or Schubert. The obvious parallels to the ‘case Kerviel’ were also mentioned by several critics, i. a. Löhner and Schulte.

- ²⁷ Theodore Dreiser. *Sister Carrie*, (New York: Doubleday, 1900) [First Edition]. Quotations are taken from the last edition of Dreiser's works: Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.
- ²⁸ Magnusson explicated his relationship with Dreiser in an interview with Essen's *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* and responded to the question whether he was related to the American author or not, as follows: "Ich glaube jedenfalls gerne, dass er [Dreiser, J. I.] mein Ur-ur-ur-Onkel ist, in diesem Glauben bin ich aufgewachsen – und überprüfe das sicherheitshalber nicht. Tatsächlich stammt er aus der Eifel, so wie meine Großmutter. Die Familie Dreiser ist weit verzweigt, und beinahe jeder hat die Romane von Theodore Dreiser im Regal stehen. Auch die, die sonst kein Buch besitzen." Quote follows: Heidemann/[Magnusson].
- ²⁹ Dreiser, *Sister Carrie* 180: "He was evidently a light among them, reflecting in his personality the ambitions of those who greeted him. He was acknowledged, fawned upon, in a way lionized. Through it all one could see the standing of the man. It was greatness in a way, small as it was."
- ³⁰ For Chicago as literary setting in Dreiser's work see Schöpp, "Babylon".
- ³¹ The referentially treated linecard ranges from simple consumer durables to exclusive luxury goods and characterize both the novel's action time and its characters: from the IKEA dining table *Premmö*, over Jasper's Blackberry and Henry's iPhone to the *Comme des Garçons* handbag belonging to Henry's publishing agent Gracy Welsh.
- ³² Kumpfmüller's political novel, a portrayal of the western post 9/11 crisis society, opens with a death scene in absentia, in which the home secretary Selden received a text message from his daughter, who is passenger of a crashing airplane. See M. K. *Nachricht an alle*. Roman. Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2008.
- ³³ O'Neill, Joseph. *Netherland*. London: Fourth Estate, 2008. In contrast to its reception in the English speaking world, the German news coverage was ambivalent – as in the case of Magnusson's novel. While Georg Diez from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and Andrea Köhler from the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* recommended *Netherland* enthusiastically, the reviews of the more conservative papers (Felicitas von Lovenberg in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Christoph Schröder in *Frankfurter Rundschau*) were at least cautious: G. D. "Zieh dich weiß an, um dich schwarz zu fühlen". *SZ*, 10.3.2009; A. K. "Die Jahre danach. Joseph O'Neills hochgelobter Roman über die Folgen von 9/11". *NZZ*, 6.9.2008; F. v. L. "Die letzten Bürger von Pompeji leben in New York", *FAZ*, 6.3.2009; C. S., "Niederland: Der schwere Hammer der Langeweile", *FR*, 6.5.2009.
- ³⁴ In general the hotel occupies a specific role as a transitory place within the novel. During the course of the story more or less all figures pass this status. Even Henry's escape from the public leads him into the anonymity of a huge Chicago hotel where he appears under a false identity.
- ³⁵ Above all else, there was the loss of employees. Yet, worldwide, the stock market reacted instantaneously to the attacks with a drastic decrease in prices. On the very day the DAX fell by almost 400 points, after the reopening of the U. S. market the Dow Jones followed with a loss of 685 points.
- ³⁶ See also the autobiographical dimension of the novel as both settings are linked with Magnusson's own vita. While Hamburg is the author's birthplace, it was New York City, where he worked with Holocaust survivors in his early 20s.
- ³⁷ Referring to Zelter, esp. 248–268, who analyzes the figure of Atta in the context of terrorist narratives. Atta, the alleged deathpilot and leader of the Hamburg terror cell has studied and lived for several years in the Hanseatic city. The group's role within planning and executing the attacks was intensively discussed in the German news coverage of 9/11.
- ³⁸ Durs Grünbein. „September-Elegien“. *D. G. Erklärte Nacht*. Gedichte. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2002. 50–52; D.

