Contents

List of Illustrations	хi
Acknowledgements	xiii
Chapter 1 Village Idyll (1912–1924) – Bad Ischl and the Magic of the Forest Hohenems: certificate of citizenship and ostensible homeland • The family • Early years in Vienna • Hans and Ernst Mayer: friends in life and death • Bad Ischl • Who or what is a Jew? • A divided heart • Winter world versus summer world • The tribulations of the young grammar-school boy	1
Chapter 2 Zirkusgasse (1924–1935) – The Enticements of Reason Leopold Langhammer, Mayer's mentor • Red Vienna • First encounters: Broch, Canetti and the Austrian literary scene • Hans Mayer's personal revolution • Approaches to the Wiener Kreis [Vienna Circle] • The future writer • Die Brücke	15
Chapter 3 Die Schiffbrüchigen [The Shipwrecked] (1935–1945) – Hans Mayer as a Writer of Fiction 1935: Préludes • The first novel • Autobiography as historical writing • Althager – an alter ego? • The relationship to 'the Other' • Genophobia • 'Art should not describe life, but create life' • 1945: To be or not to be • Auschwitz – a mass fate? • The Auschwitz discourse then and now	29
Chapter 4 Years of Wandering (1938–1945) – The Mind Knows No Limits Vienna before and after the Anschluss • Antwerp (1938–1940) • St. Cyprien – Gurs (1940–1941) • Flight to occupied Belgium	4 7

• Resistance in Brussels • Breendonck (1943) • Torture in the novel (1945) • Torture in the essay (1965) • Auschwitz – Dora-Mittelbau – Bergen Belsen (1944–1945) • Jean Améry / Primo Levi – an excursus

• Friends strange to each other • Coming home to no home

Chapter 5

Living On – but How and Where? (1945–1955) – The original theme of suicide

73

Love's Crown of Thorns: variation 1 • Heinrich Greyt: variation 2
• Die Selbstmörder: variation 3 • Kleist: variation 4 • Die Eingemauerten
[The Immured]: variation 5 • Existentialism in France: Revolution
of the mind? Fashion? Or the twilight of the 'esprit français'? • 'On
the Psychology of the German People': revenge? • Neither guilt nor
atonement • Deranged criminals • Work will not make you free • Letter
of farewell to Knut Hamsun • Where now? His fixed point: Maria Leitner
• Vienna? Bad Ischl? The 'indissoluble boyhood friendship' • Cologne?

Comrade Heinz Kühn • Dangerous games with identity • Lore's London? • Sartre's Paris? • Zürich and the Dukas press agency? • Brussels old and new • The Adelboden sanatorium • Journalistic confectionery

Chapter 6

Jean Améry the Journalist (1955-1965)

103

Portraits of famous contemporaries • Vive la science! • Jazz – heightened emotion • Stars of the 1950s • Revelations • Gerhart Hauptmann, especially the negative aspects • *Preface to the Future* • Inventory

- Alternative memory The 'engine' of a culture? France's cultural mission to the world Jean-Paul Sartre First excursus Sartre the writer of the Resistance Sartre the teacher of life
- Sartre the teacher of thinking The first idea for Charles Bovary
- Sartre the mouthpiece of the wartime generation 'Le faux, c'est la mort' 'The God that failed' America's political sense of mission In the name of the Cold War The abolition of death, the glorification of sex America's cultural contribution: sociology England between Europe and America? England's not so splendid isolation Germany an upswing through anaesthetization First visit: Hitler never existed
- Germany 1945, Germany 1952 A cultural miracle? No revocation of history German thinkers after 1945 German writers after 1945
- A break with emigration No pact between reader and author Hope and the second generation

Contents ix

Chapter 7

Drama of the Mind in Three Acts – The Autobiographical Trilogy
Prologue • Heissenbüttel and the consequences • Who brings whom to
the meeting? • If not now, when? • The Auschwitz trial • A star is born
• Act I: At the Mind's Limits (1966) • The single useful starting point:
the 'I' • Less than welcome approval • At the body's limits • Welcome
approval • Merkur to the end • Adorno – friend or foe? • No 'republic
of intellectuals' • Canonized by Ingeborg Bachmann • The eternal
exile of writers • Longing for 'redemption' • Waiting for requited
love • The opposite of symbiosis • The psychoanalysis of being a Jew

- Jean-Paul Sartre second excursus Dis-similation, not as-similation
- A fundamental document of our time A spectacular effect Elias Canetti and Ernst Fischer have their say Act II: On Aging (1968)
- Influences Autobiography Part 2? Between profit and loss to the self
- Revolt and resignation Aging and being a Jew Aging and torture
- Torture from outside torture from within Death comes as the end
- The darling of the media Heart attack Act III: Years of Wandering (1971) 'Survey of a period' A Bildungsroman turned upside down
- An artist of transformation Homo absconditus No place anywhere
- A forced relationship with Israel: 'I came, I saw, I lost' The circle is closed

Chapter 8

Jean Améry as a Writer of Fiction

Snapshots • Honours • Everyday life in Brussels • Mens sana in corpore insano • Young Törless and his years of wandering (1971)

- The 'aesthetics of barbarity' No rationalism without sympathy
- Venturing into literary fiction Who is Erich Schmid? A novel about an artist, with evocative images The essayist as novelist Feuermann
- Feuerreiter [Fire-Rider] The truer truth of the emotive Lefeu oder Der Abbruch 'a summary of his own life'? Faith in language versus the dissolution of language The 'demolition' of Jean Améry The way to un-freedom The Baader-Meinhof débacle Albert Speer's lucrative remorse A Werther of the 1970s 'Lessing's first brother' Testament
- Sartre in search of Flaubert, Améry in search of Charles A plea for Charles, the intellectual proletarian Ethical defence = aesthetic defence
- C'est la faute de Flaubert In the name of the bourgeois subject
- Charles the representative of liberté, égalalité, fraternité Short Letter, Long Farewell • Monsieur Bovary, c'est moi • 'Wait to hear the sound

133

187

of the echo. Is it hollow? Does it ring clear?' • No more *Rendezvous in Oudenaarde* • Final declarations of love • Unio mystica • Passions of the mind and the body

Cha	pter	9
Last	Thin	gs

235

The unnatural nature of natural death • Suicide – an inalienable human right • To whom does a human being belong? • How free is the way to freedom? • 'Life and death: two unknown quantities' • Art as life, life as art • 'Man thinks, multi-causality guides' • No necessity • Why? On the necessity and impossibility of being a writer • The Left without a home • 'A man and his body' • 'Yes, love does exist' • When? • Where? • How? • Afterwards

Appendix

259

List of abbreviations: titles of works List of abbreviations: initials of persons and institutions

Notes

261

Picture Credits

289

Index of Works

291

Index of Names

295