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Into the Imagined Forest: A 2000-Year Retrospective of the German Woods

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First, several disclaimers: My family name "Hacken" is also the German infinitive, hacken, meaning "to chop." In the course of discussing 2000 years of interdisciplinary forest phenomena in less than an hour, I will necessarily chop, simplify and synthesize. As with most retrospectives, some important works and milestones must be left out. In the interest of time, and to keep boredom to a minimum, I will not go into rigorous discussions of theory. Except for one excerpt, the translations are my own. A bibliography of works cited and consulted follows the text.

And now:

**Into the Imagined Forest:**
**A 2000-Year Retrospective of the German Woods**

Just as the Bayeux Tapestry is more than a large piece of textile, just as the Gutenberg Bible is more than a printed object, likewise, the German forest has, for at least 2,000 years, been much more than a botanical phenomenon. In a 1983 interview, Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl said: “Mythology, Germans and the forest – they all belong together.” [1]
Germination of the German Nation

Today I’d like to go beyond the trees into the imagination of a people, to see how that people has mythologized, symbolized, anthropomorphized or otherwise imagined their forest. The central object of study is not the forest itself, but the history of an idea, the reflection of the forest in the German psyche. Certainly, some of the thematic elements of the Teutonic forest are also found in other cultures, or even universally. But today I direct attention to those aspects of the “imagined forest” that seem to me typically German.

Through the centuries, forest motifs have evolved to support various social, political and cultural themes and counter-themes. The imagined forest is a contradictory forest. To early Germanic tribes, the forest was an object of worship – a temple of holiness – while to others it was the home of evil and danger. For later thinkers it stood as a model of immortality and regeneration; for others it perfectly illustrated the Darwinian struggle for survival. It has marked the germination of the German nation – as a symbol for national unity – and yet supporters of various ideologies from communism to fascism have seized upon the model of the forest as proof absolute of the correctness of their wildly different tenets. Culturally, the forest has formed the context for heroic quests; it has been a backdrop for sorrow (especially in the vicinity of fir, willow and cypress trees).
It has been the asocial haunt of wild men, sociopaths and thieves, but it has also been the stage for social justice. It has been a moral exemplar but also a place to avoid. The woodlands have been seen as a source of industrial materials; or they have been a place of rest and recreation. The forest has been a source of food and medicine on one hand, and a venue of death on the other.

The structure of a tree has been the well-rooted inspiration for branching charts such as family trees, grammar trees and hierarchies. German anthologies have been literally called “forests.” And most recently, in echoing the famous claim of Thoreau that “in wildness is the preservation of the world,” Germans, and not only the German Green Party, have increasingly seen the forest as both barometer and fount of ecological salvation.

We often say that we can’t see the forest for the individual trees. Yet a forest is more than any given number of trees. It is a collective noun, a landscape that subsumes every fern, butterfly, tree, rock, soil type, underground ore deposit, clump of lichen, fallen branch, shrub, insect and wild animal within it. Woodlands provide potent and vivid symbols of life, death, regeneration, social process and collective identity.

A large number of German geographical and family names have forest origins. Why is there such a German preoccupation with its woods? To what degree does the physical landscape determine the cultural landscape?

Battle site located by archaeologists in 21st century
The year 2009, now just over a month away, marks the 2,000th anniversary of the German victory over the Roman army of occupation at the battle of the Teutoburger Wald (Teutoburg Forest, in present-day North Rhine-Westphalia). In the year 9 AD the German Field General Arminius (or Hermann in German, which means literally “army man”) set a successful ambush for three legions of the Roman Army under General Quinctilius Varus, about 25,000 soldiers, in a narrow corridor between impassable swamps on one side and hilly, thicketed forest on the other.

![Arminius / Hermann](image)

It was a major turning point in history, as Rome was transformed, in the words of one historian, "from an empire to a limited liability company." It left a major cultural (not to mention linguistic) divide between northern Europe and the Romanized south that would continue to appear throughout European history. And the victory gave the woodland warriors, having overcome the greatest military power on earth, a symbol of invincibility in the forest. Not only victors write the history. Tacitus, the Roman writer of the late first century, gave Germans their own superhero, Arminius, the Roman citizen who rediscovered his blood roots in the forests of the North. An image of German tribes clad in the skins of wild beasts, or, according to the first-century geographer Pomponius Mela, in garments made from tree bark,
virtually defined the Latin understanding of "uncivilized." On the other hand, Tacitus saw in Germania a land of “timbered virtue.”

Two millennia ago, Germany was densely forested (perhaps more than 90 percent woodland, compared to 20 percent now). Paleo-botanic investigations and historical records show that an original preponderance of native deciduous hardwood trees (such as the oak and beech) were later replaced with faster growing evergreens. The sustenance of Germanic tribes focused on their sacred common forests. In the melodramatic but indicative words of one writer: "Then came a time of fulfillment when man understood it was time to pray when the treetops rustled in the wind. That was the hour when the German soul was born." The nobility of German man, he suggested, was rooted in the forest.

Tree cult practitioners among the Germanic tribes equated man with plant. Early medicinal superstitions held that a tree could remove or call back diseases; a specific living tree, spiritually conjoined with a person, could serve as a Doppelgänger to share, forecast, or even determine that person’s fate. Today there is still a German figurative usage of Lebensbaum (tree of life): "the tree of my life is growing, blossoming, withering, dying..."

Geographic differences (between Hessen, Baden, and other regions) developed in the forms and functions of forest spirits and wood sprites. Some were imagined to be anthropomorphic vegetation demons, such as the Rain Girl, the Wild Leaf Man, or one of many May Tree totems, later attached to the May Pole as guarantors of tree-like health and vitality. Hansel and Gretel, centuries before the Brothers Grimm, made mythological appearances as stuffed effigies atop the May Tree.
Another early tree custom that continues to this day is the German *Richtfest* or "Topping Out" ceremony of placing a tree on the top beam of a newly completed housing structure. What the buffalo hunt was to Native Americans, tree cutting had been to early Germanic tribes; the unused topmost part of the tree would be prayerfully attached atop the new shelter so the tree spirit would not be homeless. German immigrants to North America brought the custom with them, and now, ironically, it is mostly ironworkers who perform the "topping out" ritual on iron and glass skyscrapers.

A less wholesome and bloodier ritual was the practice of human sacrifice within the limbs of trees, possibly patterned after the Teutonic god Wotan and designed to bring about rebirth and sustenance.
Incipient forms of Christian worship in the first millennium were heavily dependent on heathen remnants of tree symbolism. Even today, certain totemic elements found in or on wooden crucifixes, wayside shrines, forest chapels and pilgrimage churches from Bavaria to the Rhineland may indicate a relationship to earlier tree worship.[21]

Christianity was able to refer to the German tree cult during conversion: the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life were seen as central features in the Garden of Eden; Christ compared a just man to a fruitful tree (Matthew 7:17) and cursed an unfruitful tree (Matthew 3:10). It resonated in the conversion process that Jesus had been a carpenter. Perhaps of top relevance for Germanic converts was the crucifixion, the most important sacrifice on a tree in human history, and it involved regeneration. Wooden splinters from the cross became sacred relics. Efforts were made to “root out” heathen beliefs, literally. In the year 723 St. Boniface, the so-called “Apostle of the Germans,” felled the sacred Oak tree dedicated to Thor in Northern Hessen. The people converted to Christianity when Thor failed to intervene, and Boniface used the wood to construct a chapel. After felling a second sacred Oak at Geismar, Boniface pointed to a fir tree at its roots and compared the latter to Christ – humble, overcoming seasonal death, and pointing toward heaven. This is one plausible origin for the Christmas Tannenbaum tradition.
There is a folk belief that Gothic architecture owes its form to the forest, the columns simulating trees with branches reaching up in imitation of the vaulted arch we see between trees from below. There are, of course, architectonic and engineering reasons that seem to outweigh this belief. 

Despite veneration of individual trees, the forest as a whole was seen, at least through the Middle Ages, as problematic. It was difficult to travel in, and it was seen as a nuisance, occupying ground that might otherwise have been used for farming. Groves and individual stands of timber were carved out for use and cultivation, but the deep, unending primitive forest was a danger. The German language developed two different words to make a distinction: the Wald (not cognate to English “wood,” but to the antiquated “wold”) was natural forest, while the Forst (cognate to English “forest”) was the managed, cultivated forest, the wilderness domesticated. Thus was born the profession of forester to protect demarcated woodlands, usually belonging to a sovereign or noble family.
In the 12th century, Hildegard von Bingen, a true renaissance woman well before the Renaissance, advocated the use of native German plants as proto-pharmaceuticals. In her *Liber de causis et curis*, she recommended an extract of oak bark, foreshadowing aspirin, to assist in cases of rheumatism; and the use of mistletoe as what has since been recognized as a potential parasite-on-parasite carcinostatic against cancer.[9]

The forest was the cultural context for the medieval quest, a place where life had to be wrenched from the dark, foreboding wood with bravery and effort. Forest darkness was not just an absence of light; it was an absence of humanity, friendship and morality. The inventory of dangers imagined in the forest grew from mythical wild men in league with the devil to include dragons and monsters. In black and white terms, the court was good and the forest was evil. This was fictional, of course, since the dichotomy ignored any treason, intrigue or violence found at court.
The medieval duality between traits of the forest and demands of the court is found in the Arthurian epic of Parzival, written in Middle High German by Wolfram von Eschenbach (whose family name includes the word for ash trees). The epic was later set to opera by Richard Wagner. Parzival, raised by his mother in a secluded forest to keep him ignorant of the ways of chivalry that had led to his father’s death, leaves the forest in fool’s clothing. Nonetheless, his innate qualities of compassion and spirituality guide him through a long series of adventures and seeming coincidences that lead to his recognition as the new king of the Grail. Magical guidance over the life of Parzival became the type of enchantment that would later appear in fairy tales.

The Northern Renaissance forged strong parallels between the German people, scattered as they were, and their forest.
It was near the time of Reformation, when proof was being sought of an imagined superiority over Catholic Rome. Conrad Celtis, a professor at Ingolstadt, broke the monopoly of Roman interpretation regarding the ancient Germans. Calling on the Volk to investigate their own identity, Celtis pointed in particular to the forests. In a speech at the university in 1492, a quarter-century before Luther’s theses in Wittenberg, he contrasted the diseased south with the free and natural arboreal nobility of the north, opining that "...it would have been far more holy and reverent for us to practice that rude and rustic life of old...."

This was a prime time for distinguishing the German “self” from the Latin “other.” A later scholar, Ulrich Hutten, referred to Arminius as the father of the German nation, and it was around this time that it became popular to call Arminius by his German name "Hermann."

Eight centuries after St. Boniface, Luther is said to have added candles to the fir tree at Christmas time, reminiscent of stars shining through the tree by night. Then the Tannenbaum made its way into other countries, such as our own, where neither Boniface nor Luther presumably could have imagined that the Christmas tree would ever be constructed of plastic or lit with electricity.

In art it became natural that woodcuts and wood carvings should be prime media used to portray the sacred. Albrecht Dürer, considered the greatest artist of the Northern Renaissance, made a series of woodcuts of the “Holy Family” that feature as backdrop – rather than the unknown Holy Land – German trees, German houses and German forests.
In this woodcut from 1496 Mary is seated on what is evidently an outdoor wooden manger, while Joseph pensively ponders.

The genre of the landscape was jolted around 1510 when Albrecht Altdorfer turned the dense German forest itself into a grand protagonist that stood in clear contrast to stylized Italian art of the day. In St. George in the Wood, the title character, dwarfed by the vaulted tabernacle of green growth, seems in conversation rather than combat with a miniaturized dragon. But the woodland is the true hero of the piece, conventionalized somewhat to provide sacredness, but also providing staggering, twisting heights of naturalistic foliage to suggest wild grandeur and natural nobility.

There was to be no unified German nation for centuries, and gradually the citizens of scattered principalities began to lose sight of their commonality, but not of the woods. In the Baroque period, during and after the prolonged devastation of the Thirty Years’ War, contemplation often turned inward and upward toward personal and spiritual pursuits rather than national ones. One example is seen in a verse by the Baroque hymn writer, Paul Gerhardt, as he addresses God:
Make room for your spirit in me
That for you I become a great tree,
Sinking my roots deep in the earth.
Allow me, solely for your praise
Within your garden to raise
Myself from sapling in rebirth.
Gerhardt also wrote “Now All the Woods are Resting,” a hymn set to music by composers from Bach to Liszt and beyond.

The 18th century was a time of many German natural utopias featuring "forest brothers" who lived in modest leaf-covered huts in the woods. By the next century, by the time of Goethe, however, the native stands had become so scarce that his 1821 novel Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship describes a Utopian community forced to move overseas to America for a more abundant wilderness.[11]

A high point in reconnecting German national identity with the forest was reached at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. The first strong impetus came when Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, in his epic of 1769, “Hermann’s Battle,” set the founding struggle of the nation in a stately oak forest. [12] Envisioned by artists such as Kolbe, the oak established itself as the heroic German species.

The poet Friedrich Hölderlin, who spoke of the “holy wilderness,” envisioned the oak tree in ways that have come to stand for national qualities of the Fatherland. The downside, however, is that certain of the following Hölderlin images would come to be used by Nazi apologists of the 20th century to justify military intervention for expanded Lebensraum (room to live and grow).
Speaking of the oaks, he said:

But you, you glorious beings! stand, as a nation of Titans...
And you force your way up from your powerful roots, happy and free,
In the company of one another, seizing space with your mighty arms
As an eagle seizes prey...

Johann Gottlieb Fichte, whose surname means “spruce tree,” is considered by many to be the philosophical father of German nationalism through his *Addresses to the German Nation*. He was also demonstrably anti-Semitic.

In the time of Napoleonic wars after 1800, the forest became one of the expressive symbols of resistance to the French, who were by now mainly a deforested people, a Latinate “other” equated with Varus’s Roman legions. The German forest has become the banner of victory over the defeated French chasseur (or “hunter”) in Caspar David Friedrich’s painting of 1814, following the decisive year of German liberation from Napoleon. The French chasseur could as easily be a Roman legionary dwarfed in a clearing surrounded by dark conifer trees – his shoulders slumped in defeat, his sword drooping to the ground. Current critics believe that the raven on a tree stump represents fallen German warriors in the Napoleonic wars, and that the forest itself stands as the invincible defender.[13]
Goethe, who was as enthusiastic about his work on plant morphology as he was about his literary work, formed, with Schiller, the nucleus of Weimar classicism. For the Classical and Romantic periods in Germany the forest fulfilled two of the aesthetic ideals: "unity in variety" (a botanical “e pluribus unum” if you will) and "harmony in chaos." Unlike formal French gardens, forest beauty was not imposed but came about organically. [44]

Joseph von Eichendorff, whose family name means “oak village,” was a Romantic whose poetry was often set to music as folksongs:

I stand in forested shadows  
As on the margins of life;
The land becomes darkening meadows,  
The river a ribbon of silver.
From far off, bells are ringing  
And their sound carries into the woods,  
A deer lifts up its head in alarm  
And quickly falls back asleep.  
But the forest stirs the treetops  
In a dream of solid rock,  
For the Lord is passing across the peaks  
To bless the silent land.

Ludwig Richter, *St. Genevieve in the Forest*, 1841

Romantic composers, such as Schumann in his Forest Scenes collection, successfully united music with poetry. The philosopher Kant had recently rendered rationality suspect, and the centrality of feeling over reasoning was a key Romantic contribution to the imagined German forest. In the same spirit, another Romantic writer, Novalis, in his *Novices of Sais*, projected a Utopia of wilderness to be tamed, of nature to be domesticated, where companionable souls:
...sought to awaken the spent and lost tones in the air and in the forests... tamed unruly streams... dammed the forest floods and cultivated the nobler flowers and herbs... taught wood and meadow, springs and crags to join together in pleasant gardens... and cleansed the woods of savage monsters, the misbegotten creatures of a degenerate fantasy. [15]

Novalis’s dream of cleansing the woods led easily into the 19th century concept of an “enchanted” forest. Ludwig Richter's St. Genevieve in the Forest could be, after Parsifal, another prototype of the fairy tale, where the wronged heroine – abandoned in the forest and condemned to death – finds herself spotlighted by the sun and communing with animals as a natural segue into Cinderella or Little Red Riding Hood.


It is in the forest that fairy-tale characters often lose their way and then find themselves again as their life’s purpose becomes clear. The forest in question is not a small tract of woodland. It is always immense, unbounded and unknowable. The fairy tale forest of Germany has power to change hearts and destinies. It is a meritocracy that distributes justice without regard to social class. Hansel and Gretel are not the only ones to get lost in the forest and then to return wiser and fulfilled. They are not the only ones who need more than bread crumbs to find their way, socially and morally as much as geographically. [16] Menacing brambles and undergrowth through which the heroes have to pass could symbolize a deep-rooted psychological past that has to be cut through. [17]
Frequent protagonists in the Grimm tales are forest-compatible social types: woodcutters such as the savior of Little Red Riding Hood, shepherds, fishermen, foundlings, hunters, elves, hermits, princes, princesses and talking animals. Many of them are underprivileged individuals who can distinguish themselves in the fairy tale forest with magical help if they are good at heart and wise.

Fairy tales are as popular in America as they are in Germany, perhaps because we, with a borrowed Angst visible in such popular culture as, say, the Blair Witch Project, prefer order and predictability in our own imagined woods. But the German woods are more than a Disney forest with twittering animated bluebirds. With violent frontier justice – as in the mythical American West – the imagined German forest requires its heroes to tame the wilderness both within and without. Into the Woods, the musical by Stephen Sondheim, collocates, synthesizes, and updates the fairy tales by exploring motivations and consequences.
The Brothers Grimm, besides compiling the German equivalent of the Oxford English Dictionary, also published a journal they called *Altdeutsche Wälder* (Ancient German Forests). They began it at a time when German principalities were divided and occupied by Napoleonic forces. One main goal of the journal, inspired by Johann Gottfried Herder’s earlier *Kritische Wälder* (Critical Forests), was the imagined entry of the *Volk* into the forests of German law, customs and culture in order to awaken their national consciousness.

A political thinker of the time, Wilhelm Riehl, said that an openly available forest where dead wood could be gleaned was "the root of genuine German social conditions."[18] Six years before publishing the Communist Manifesto, Karl Marx was shaping and refining his own ideas with a series of newspaper articles on 1842 forest legislation in the Rhineland. Satirically suggesting that even the poorest of human beings were worth more than berries or dead branches, he had an impact on subsequent German forestry reform.[19]
Tree poaching (which in German roughly translates as “sacrilege against wood”) appears as a subplot in a novella by Annette von Droste-Hülshoff from the same year, 1842. In the novella – entitled Jew Beech, A Portrait of Morals from Hilly Westphalia – the Jewish community calls upon a great beech tree to take revenge when one of its members is found murdered at its trunk. The forest stands as witness in the novella until the equilibrium between nature and man reestablishes itself. The novella could be seen in terms of post-fairytale darkness, since in these woods “supernatural interventions allow natural justice to prevail…” [go]
As a nationalist fervor accompanied the establishment of the Wilhelmine Empire (The Second Reich), the forest-centric legend of Arminius grew to monumental proportions. The Hermann Monument was completed in 1875, near the supposed site of the battle.

In the first decade of the 20th century, Franz Kafka wrote that:

"...we are all like tree trunks in the snow. It appears that we can be easily kicked aside. But no, we are rooted to the ground. Yet even that apparent rootedness is deceptive and misleading."

A rare color photograph from World War I

A decade later, German defeat in World War I set up horrendous preconditions for another world war two decades later. Culture of the Weimar Republic flourished between the wars, particularly in areas of art, architecture, music and poetry. For Rilke’s metaphysics, trees were a poetic bridge between the depths of earth and the heights of heaven, while branches mirrored the scaffolding of existence. [21]

In the 1920s and 30s, before going into exile, German-born Max Ernst imagined the forest from a Dadaist and surrealist perspective. His “Pataphysical Forest,” “Great Forest” and “Last Forest,” explorations of the physical and metaphysical, were branded as degenerate by the
Nazis. An iconic image for this lecture, *Forest Interior*, was painted in 1937 by a German Expressionist, Ernst Kirchner, who was also declared a “degenerate artist” and who committed suicide shortly after. In the same year, 1937, Bertolt Brecht was in Danish exile, where he complained: “What kind of times are these, where a discussion about trees is itself almost a crime, because it involves keeping silent about so many misdeeds!”

The dark night for German culture followed, as a land of musicians became a land of munitions. Literal and figurative misappropriations of the forest were common. A predominant visual feature of the gigantic rallies at Nuremberg was the “Fahnenwald,” that is, the “forest of banners.” Mass murder of the European Jews had programmatic origins in a so-called “Jewish Conspiracy” belief, depicted in one metaphor as parasites choking out harmonious woodlands. [22] Innocent-sounding traces of the forest were present in the names of death camps: Buchenwald means, literally, “beech forest” and Birkenau, the German name given to the extermination camp at Auschwitz, translates as “birch meadow.”

For a number of reasons, the Third Reich took a highly ecological approach to its forests. Sustainable forestry became a propaganda model of the national community, an eternally regenerating collective in which the disposable individual worked for the common good. [23] *Naturschutz* (protection of nature) was a state priority. [24] The Hitler Youth, armed only with shovels and guitars in many cases, were often trained in forest lands.
In the spring of 1945, the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht had plans to repel the Soviet troops nearing Berlin by setting gigantic forest fires. For whatever reason, the strategy was abandoned. [25]

After World War II was lost, there were a number of possible German reactions to dealing with the immediate past. Denial and avoidance of the topic were common. Because restoration of the economy took first precedence, most Germans placed little priority on protection of the woods. Within two decades after the war, the trees themselves were physically dying. Acid rain and other factors of pollution contributed to “Waldsterben,” the dying of the forests.

7,000 Oaks: "An idea takes root..."
Two German artists of the 20th century, more acclaimed in America than in their own country, Joseph Beuys and Anselm Kiefer, attempted to initiate a healing process, which first required awareness and confrontation. Beuys is known for his 7000 Oaks Project. Over a period of five years in the 1980s, he began planting 7000 oaks in Kassel (hometown of the Brothers Grimm), and at his death the project was completed by his son. The enterprise had numerous objectives for urban renewal, social and environmental change, but mainly he saw it as an act of redemption.
Contemporary artist Anselm Kiefer was a student of Beuys. His family name means “pine tree.” Addressing the dark, guilty side of forest adulation has made him controversial. One of his large-format installations is entitled Varus. It references the founding battle of the German nation, augmenting the mock holiness by inscribing against the trees the names of such cultural heroes as Klopstock, Hölderlin and Fichte, plus a general or two. At the same time, Kiefer places a pattern of blood stains on the Teutoburg Forest floor, some of which are literally mixed with his own blood. Four years later, his “Ways of Worldly Wisdom” reprised some of the same cultural heroes, but now in a woodcut he shows them intertwined with the roots of the forest. Logs for an unspecified bonfire are gathered in the center. When Kiefer conceived of Germany’s “Spiritual Heroes,” he did so within a large chamber where beams and timbers have replaced the forest and reddened fire has taken the place of blood.
In the realm of angry illustrated books, Günter Grass (or “grass”) is one of the best-known activists addressing physical death of the German forest from acid rain and other environmental contaminants. His “Totes Holz” (“Dead Wood”) consists of pen and ink drawings with satirical, terse commentary. It is, he says, an obituary for Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, and by extension, for fairytale characters and dying woodlands. Grass lampoons the limits between fiction and reality, between mythology and geography, as he illustrates the very spot where Hansel and Gretel lost their way. Only the bitterly ironic epitaph over dead trees remains: "This is where the fairytale path leads." [26] Is it conceivable that the forest will live on only as a constructed landscape of the mind, taking the place of the remembered woods?
I have more questions than answers as I regard the idea of the German forest. For instance, Germany was divided into two states for 40 years. What if the wall, a symbol of oppression and disconnection, had been constructed of sturdy German wood instead of concrete? Disregarding questions of flammability for the hypothetical moment, how would citizens on both sides of the wall have regarded the disjunction between them if it had been physically enforced by a symbol of German unity, the oak?

I saw bright green hope for the future this past spring when I strolled in the woods outside Essen in the formerly industrialized Ruhr Valley. Where a coal mine had once stood, spewing smoke until the 1960s, now the forest is reestablishing itself. The only trace of industry left is a historical marker.
In summary, from my current research I would posit five major forest themes that have been used, and sometimes abused, by Germans imagining their own German woods:

(1) taming the external and internal wilderness,
(2) establishing social justice,
(3) advocating national unity,
(4) maintaining a sense of the sacred,
and (5) encouraging ecological awareness.

In short: dreaming of wholeness, holiness and healing.

Thank You.
References

8. ↑ Oberle, 148
23. ↑ Imort, 72.
24. ↑ Schama, 82.
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[1945 Wehrmacht plans to use forest fires in defense of Berlin]

[The forest in German literature]

[Using the legendary German forest in the national and cultural search for identity]

[The forest miracle (from a botanical perspective)]

[Involving both revelatory and concealment aspects of the forest in Droste-Hülshoff’s work]


[Interdisciplinary discussions about the forest]
[Comparative historical study of the French forests and the German forests]

[German forestry during the Fascist period]


[The forest in the Germanic, Nordic and Slavic regions]

[Final version of the fairy tales as edited by the Brothers Grimm]

[collection: ,,Ancient German Woods"]


 [Discusses literary depictions of Arminius from Hutten through Grabbe]

 [Numerous articles on the forest as a mythic theme in German culture]

 [Numerous articles straddling science and the humanities]

 [The German forest as battleground of political ideas]

 [The tree cult of Germanic and neighboring tribes]
[For We Are Like Tree Trunks in the Snow..." On the Role of the Tree in Literature]


[Heathen Germanic cultural remnants in Christianity]


[See esp. chapters one and four]


[Highly recommended reading]


Schweizer, Harald, ed. “...Bäume braucht man doch!” *Das Symbol des Baumes zwischen Hoffnung und Zerstörung*. Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1986. [Articles on the tree symbol „between hope and destruction“]


[Karl Marx and the Rhineland forestry legislation of 1842]


Woodcut of the Black Forest