



Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>xvii</i>
Note on Sources and Translations	<i>xix</i>
Acknowledgments	<i>xx</i>
1 Introducing the Smoking Gun	1
Geological Context	5
Early Research on the Ries Basin	9
Elevation and Subsidence	12
Central Explosion	14
Rocks and Minerals	21
Early Ideas on the Genesis of the Steinheim Basin	22
Outside the Mainstream	23
2 Early Impactists and their Sources	27
Julius Osvald Kaljuvee	28
Excursion to Arizona	32
Importing the Impact Scenario to Germany	35
Herbert P.T. Rohleder	41
Otto Stutzer	46
3 Dismissing Impact I	53
Why?	59
Isolation: Politically, Linguistically and Scientifically	60
Artificial Boundaries and their Influence on	
Geological Research	62
Actualism – Method Confused as Fact	75
Mineralogy and Volcanology	82
4 A Letter from Berlin	99
The Quiring–Kranz Correspondence	101
5 Kaalijärv Crater and Köfels Landslide	115
Walter Kranz as Impactist	120
Franz Eduard Sueß and the Köfels Landslide	122

6	Impact Physics – Beyond Human Imagination	131
	Ernst Julius Öpik	134
	Fritz Heide	138
	It Cannot Be	142
7	‘German Geology’	145
	German Geology in the Romantic Period	145
	Geology in Nazi Germany	147
	Defining ‘German Geology’	155
	German Geology ‘Down the Drain’	163
8	Setting the Stage	171
	Visit by a ‘Crazy’ American	173
	Coesite	178
	Meanwhile in Germany	182
9	The Tide is Turning	191
	Impact in Tübingen	196
10	Dismissing Impact II	205
	Walter H. Bucher and the Sceptics of Tübingen	213
	Scepticism and Apologetics in Munich	222
	From Scepticism to Chauvinism	230
	Rivalry Between Geology and Mineralogy	234
11	Testing an Old Theory	247
	No Volcanic Vent at <i>Altenbürg</i> Quarry	257
	Gerold Wagner’s Tragic Death at Rochechouart	261
	The Problem of Visualisation	268
	The Ries Working Group	273
	Drilling the Ries Crater	279
	Research Drilling at Nördlingen	285
	The Steinheim Basin	290
12	Ries Crater – A Terrestrial Proxy for the Moon	297
	Shock Metamorphism	299
	Suevite Samples From the Moon	307
	Astronauts at the Ries Crater	310
	Georg Wagner Finally Convinced	319
	A New Routine	324
	Little Green Prussians	329

13	From Local Patriotism to a Planetary Perspective	335
	<i>Glossary</i>	<i>343</i>
	<i>References</i>	<i>347</i>
	<i>Index</i>	<i>373</i>