

NC 0020295 9



TRACING A TRADITION

- A GERMAN VIEW ON GERMAN ART

MARCH, 1993

by BIRGIT RASCHER

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	p. 5
20th CENTURY GERMAN ART IN ITS SOCIAL & POLITICAL CONTEXT.....	p. 9
DEALING WITH A NATIONAL TRADITION THE ART OF THE 1980s.....	p.35
THE "VOICE" OF A VISUAL LANGUAGE - ASPECTS OF KIEFERS WORK.....	p.68
CONCLUSION.....	p.88

INTRODUCTION

At a time when Europe melts its nations under the veil of unity, the time seems to have come for me to come to terms with my identity in the context of my national origin.

Being born german to german parents in the small industrial town of Schweinfurt, Franconia in Norhtern Bavaria, I have lived almost twenty years of my life happily beside "Gastarbeiter", known to be called "Auslander" by some racist Germans.

I have also worked with people of other ethnic origins in the local industry. And I have had nothing but good experiences with these people, mainly from Turkey, Italy and Yugoslavia, who have been attracted by the economical wealth of Germany, and the job-offers in the World-capital of Ballbearing manufactures Schweinfurt in particular.

Also part of my life was the presence of American soldiers, based in the American Army barracks in town, part of what was known as the "American Sector" after World War II.

Yet the Americans very successfully distanced themselves from German society and economy, and have their own village within the barracks, protected by barbed wire.

As I said "quite happy myself", I was still very critical of Germany's social and political situation (including the abuse of cheap labour of foreigners). So in 1989 I decided to leave Germany to go to Ireland and study in Sligo for a year.

It's been more than three years now that I have stuck to this country and spoken its language.

While I have been experiencing a good time with very few problems in Ireland, in Germany problems have been growing. Great political changes, like the fall of the Berlin-Wall in October 1990, have created social and economic problems. With unemployment, neofascism is on the rise amongst a young generation.

Three years of physical distance from my home country however, seem to have only proved a mental bond with "german" trademarks.

I have been labelled "typical german" in situations where I have taken strong opinions on e.g. environmental issues like refusing plastic bags in shops and insisting on bin separation in a shared household.

For more than three years now I have been a "european" foreigner in Ireland. Here I found myself already in the middle of investigating the value of the label "Made in Germany", when I decided to investigate german tradition in the context of art.

However - they say "Europe" will change the labels in the future, when the importance of identification with a particular national origin will be questioned.

Being an artist - and some call it "german" - I feel a responsibility towards society. And I believe it is this attitude which holds together a German art tradition.

I intend to trace this in my first chapter, concentrating on the 20th Century. I would like to show some cases in German history where politics and art development are directly linked. As one of the most obvious examples I am going to look at the Nazi period of World War II, when art was used for propaganda and therefore supported by the leadership, whereas art outside this interest was being strongly repressed. I want to show how constant breaks in the chronological development of art history reinforced new, fresh starts in a sense of social conscience.

I would like to reason the importance of the break from "painterly" traditions with conceptual art in the 1970's especially through the work of Beuys to then lead into the 1980's towards the end of my first chapter. The eighties embody a return to painterly traditions including a return of objects into an abstract field of the ongoing painting practises of the internationally respected New York School of Art since the 40's.

The subject of the 80's - a reflection of german tradition and the question of identity itself in the field of art - art which has the ability to cross borders through a 'universal' language - I would like to discuss in more detail in my second chapter.

I want to look at the artists of the post war generation ie Kiefer, Baselitz, Rupert, Immendorff, Penck...and their role in society, and responsibility towards it, including the media reaction and its importance in connection with the subject matter of the new german painting. I want to investigate the influence of criticism on art and its role in ascribing social values to art objects.

In chapter three I consider the "real" value of a painting in itself, beside its social function using Anselm Kiefer and his work as an example. I want to pick up some of Kiefer's themes and look at them in a german context. I would like to emphasise the visual impact of the artworks instead of giving an intellectual analysis, I would like to emphasis the visual impact of the art works, which I believe construct this abstract language.

In this thesis I wish to place the two values 'artwork' and 'social function' on a kind of weighing scales. The result of which will be in the angle one is looking at it.

20th CENTURY GERMAN ART IN ITS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

German artists always had difficulties dealing with their fixed position in society. A review of German history shows how the artist's independent development in style is constantly being repressed or interfered with. In the struggle of the artist and in the variety of new attempts after some complete wipe outs of art as constructive part and independent mechanism of society, lies the very german tradition itself, the contradictory fact of continuity in rapture. In the following I would like to trace this phenonema in german art tradition specifically in the 20th Century.

This german art tradition parallels the politics of the country. The war years are the gaps in the development of art history. The ruins of the wars bury the trail of a tradition that was split into two by a wall and remained so for nearly five decades.

The struggle of the German artist, however, had reached its peak during World War 11 under Hitler's Nazi regime. Art was being split into "good" and "bad" and the term "degenerate art" was introduced.

"I now began to examine carefully
the names of all creators of unclean
products in public artistic life"
- Hitler (1)

On July the 18th in 1937, the "House of German Art", built in Munich under Hitler's instructions, opened with the exhibition "Entartete Kunst" - "Degenerate Art".

For the show, 200 works from 25 museums all over Germany had been collected ie. confiscated, including works from Dix, Kirchner, Ernst, Nolde, the Dadaists etc. (Fig. 1)

The main importance of this exhibition was the victory in the field of art rather than the display of artworks, which was being ridiculed by writing over and around it on cluttered walls (2) (fig.2).

This example shows how the power of a corrupt regime put contemporary art into a 'bad light'. But not only was the light bad, but art and artist were also compared with mentally handicapped in the accompanying catalogue.

The introduction explains Germany's cultural and therefore political decline through "so-called art". Art that was distorting form and misusing colour. (3) (Fig.1)

The artists were also accused of disrespect to leadership and race.

This was making a powerful statement about aesthetics and the ability of the painters involved.

On the other hand or in a "good light" the regime praised the skill of representational "realistic" painters like Aro Breher, Joseph Therah, Richard Klein, Ziegler, emphasising beauty and glorifying the German race. (Fig.3)

The "bad art" had to be burnt, beautiful art was being encouraged for a beautiful society. The "bad" artist had to leave the country in fear of his life.

One of them was Hans Hoffman who emigrated to America where he helped to develop the abstract expressionism at the N.Y. school of art. N.Y. became the centre of art. From there Abstract Expressionist ideas were promoted all over Europe with the support of the American Government. The expression of senses through shape and colour freed the abstract expressionist movement from national boundaries, making it transferable into every situation and language. The painting now was a painting in itself and for itself and it seemed—at least in the eyes of the inventors and promoting critics — that art had reached its final purity.

"Yet not all the consequences of the disaster were negative: the visual arts, for example, suffered a decisive transformation, and were at the same time given completely new opportunities, New York (...) what happened there during the war was to set the tone of the post war epoch." Lucie Smith, Edward (4)

At about the same time the german Hans Hartung and Wols (Alfred Otto Wolfgang Schulze) were painting in Paris under the "Ecole de Paris" of Jean Bazine and Roger Bissier. The ideas emanating from Paris were an emphasis on gestural and spontaneous translation of psychological experience into painting. Wols' work from 1946 - 1951 shows a nervous sensibility in watercolours and drawings, revealing Angst and depression (5). (Fig.4)

His abstract lines, shadings, splashes and forms almost represent objects and seem to express neurotic forces and existential fear.

One of the artists who remained in Germany was Emil Nolde. As a victim of censorship he suffered the confiscation of 1,052 pieces and was stamped "decadent artist". His secret sketches and watercolours—"Ungemalte Bilder" ("pictures I did not paint") (Fig.5) - from 1933-1945 witness the repression of painterly expression in fearful respect for the regime.

Maybe the end of the war in 1945 made an official end to the repression, yet Hitler was kept alive for the German population.

German society suffered under the weight of the past which it had consciously made a taboo. The post war generations were brought up in guilt, overfed with war movies from America.

But some painters in West Germany were working in private, behind the back of society, almost as if they were developing a strategy to then erupt in the 1960's and shock with the conceptual art of artists like Joseph Beuys. Art became an around event - A "social sculpture" (Beuys). Happenings and installations took over and pushed painting into the background. The idea was to move the art out of the galleries in order to confront the public.

Changing the meaning meant changing the means-grease and honey were the matrix of Beuys's sculptures. (Fig.6, Fig. 7). Art became political, aware of social and environmental issues. It was making statements, aiming for international goals. Practically the only reason for art was to be critical. Being loud seemed to be the only way to survive. The conceptual art of the 1960's and 1970's (re-) acted like a vast explosion almost in revenge for what art and artist~~y~~ had to suffer under the Nazi era.

It was ^{at} the same time that alternative political parties were formed. On the continent and in America minority groups claimed their political right to participate in the democratic system. In 1967 Beuys founded an organisation for democracy "Organisation fur direkte Demokratie durch Volksabstimmung" which he promoted at "Documenta 5".

Beuys embodied revolutionary power. The artist himself took on the image of a leader. American Youth liked Beuys. As a guru he fitted into their cult of the 1970's. "I like America and America likes me" (7) - a statement which Beuys did not have to make, if it was not for a strong anti-american feeling among the German population after the war. American critics liked Joseph Beuys for his critical approach ^{to} of the German past. Beuys, who was born in 1921 and had experienced World War 2 as a pilot, dealt with the past as a reason for his activities. Joseph Beuys addressed his complaints about social circumstances directly to the public. This outspoken attitude, showing confidence and criticising Germany from within was admired in America as a liberating movement for the rights of minorities. Beuys' individual appeal - away from the painting market - did not set any danger to painterly activity still centered in N.Y.

Out of this provocation ^{to} of aesthetics and attack on society and international politics, and out of the gap in German cultural tradition after the war, grew a new national awareness. It now seemed to be the duty of the artists of the post war generation to raise the question about their position in society, about the value of their tradition. To question and to find reason (as in images), the "new painters", which are Kiefer, Rupertz, Fetting (west) Penk and Baselitz (east) to name just a few, had to go back in time to follow up the track.

They had to reconstruct their history, and this not just in the painting tradition, but also in politics which parallel and affect the painterly tradition. It also meant a return to paint and adapting the achievements of abstraction, yet reintroducing the representational object. Literary imagery was used from myths for universal understanding, partly words were included for their readability and suggestive quality. (Fig.8). The intention was not so much the use of intellectual background as the attempt to create a new reality. One of predicting quality. This was to lie in between abstract senses and real life issues.

The new painters are painting themselves into a position within society by painting about painting that seemed to have lost meaning and tradition. They are searching for their identity through their art and historical development. This means the artists exclude themselves from an international movement. Their concerns are more local. They question their national identity and the lack of confidence in the German tradition. They rewind history and follow up tradition by opening up taboos, thus stating their independence.

Strong objections grow out of a neglected past of the German culture (Fig.9).

Images of the Nazi-past in the new painting insult not only the eye of the conscious German society, but also spark off international media attention.

The international media attention as a result of general mistrust makes the German new spirit in painting appear more "nationalistic" than any other movement.

Art and Artist partly were considered fascist for their source - the German past. But nevertheless painting partly has to be judged on its historical development for constructive criticism. And who could therefore blame an american art critic like Kuspit for relating the swastika to the past it comes from? Or even accuse him of being over-imaginative in his interpretation, or being prone to false suspicions?

"It is not just nationalism that this exhibition (Documenta 7, 1982) is proclaiming as the new dogma of artistic understanding, but German nationalism - a constellation of ideas usually associated with German culture (...)." (8)

But beside the readability of the "new" German images, there is also the american point of criticism to consider. This is from a point of view of its own tradition, a very new one (given the short existence of the United States and the freshly gained status as art centre in the 1950's).

Emerging from World War II as victor and saviour of Europe from German Dictatorship, America can look at the past with the pride of a hero. The american government is full of mistrust and fears the competition in its status as the western art centre.

"The reference to expressionism in contemporary West German art is the natural move to make at a time where the myth of cultural identity is to be established specifically against the dominance of American art during the entire period of reconstruction". Buchloh (9)

Meanwhile however, the international movement seems to be the return to national interests. A common search for identity independently based on national cultures and ethnic origins.

Selfexpression and individual experiences are the general motives within an international "national" movement.

To the same extent "nationalistic" as the German art - in the pure sense of the word - is the italian "arte cifra" and the american "new image painting". Yet obviously based on different "national" tradition and therefore less likely to be interpreted as "nationalistic" as in "fascist".

For the Italian painters it was almost a farce to return back to painting with all that historical evidence around them.

The most radical example for the return to easel and paint in Italy is probably Salvo, who previously had been active as a conceptual artist (Fig. 10). The artists of the younger, Italian generation include Francesco Clemente, Enzo Cucchi, Mimmo Paladina, Sandro Chia.

The main difference from the Italian new painting to the German is a mediteranean light and the joy of colour. Artists likewise work in a variety of styles, finding identity in individual ways. Some of the Italian painters now pick up the themes of old masters again, sometimes even composition, yet add a new dreamlike demension. It is a very new personal approach of the old masterpieces which in their multiplicity provide multiple inspiration.

The artists now want to say something; the figure becomes a symbol for contemporary life replacing an icon of religious significance. (Fig. 11)

In America there is not strictly a group of painters committed to the "new spirit" as there is in Germany or Italy, rather concerned individuals. Julian Schnabel is considered one of the main representatives, who had actually been accused of being "too european" by American art critics. (Fig.12/Fig 13)

"I think it is more a generational than a national issue". (10)

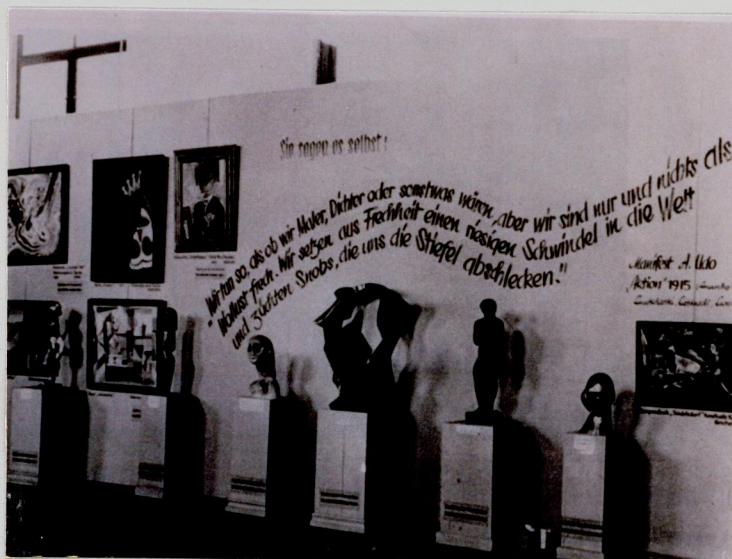
says Schnabel in a 1986 interview with Mathew Collings in the Sept./Oct. issue of Artscribe, and further referring to Kiefer and Clemente:

"(...) Our work is very different in many ways but in all of it there's a feeling that these things were in the world already and that they were deformed". (11)

- (1) Grosshans, Henry, "Hitler and the Artists"
1983, Holmer and Meier Publishers, Ltd.,
131 Trafalgar Rd, Greenwich,
London SE 10 GTX, p.31
- (2) IBID, p.101
- (3) IBID, p.101
- (4) Lucie Smith, Edward, "Cultural Calender of the 20th Century".
1979, Phaidon Press Limited, USA, p.97
- (5) Wolfgang Max Faust/Gerd de Vries,
"Hunger nach Bildern - deutsche malerei der gegenwart"
1982, Du Mont (Du Mont - Dokumente)
Köln, Germany, p.11.
- (6) Grosshans Henry, IBID p.105
- (7) Interview, "Documenta 6".
Paul Dietrichs KG & Co, Kassel, W. Germany,
p.156
- (8) Kuspit, Donald B.,
"The Night Mind", Artforum Sept 1982, p.64
- (9) Buchloh Benjamin H.D.,
"Figures of Authority, Ciphers of Regression"
Spring, Oct 1981 p.62
- (10) Collings, Mathew, in conversation with
Julian Schnabel, Artscribe, Sept/Oct 1986 issue
reprinted 1986, White Chapel Art Gallery,
London, p.9011) IBID, p.90



1. Exhibition installation "Entartete Kunst" including works of Baum, Belling, Campendonk, Dexel, Felixmuller, Eugen Hoffmann, Klee and Emil Nolde, "Last Supper", 1909.



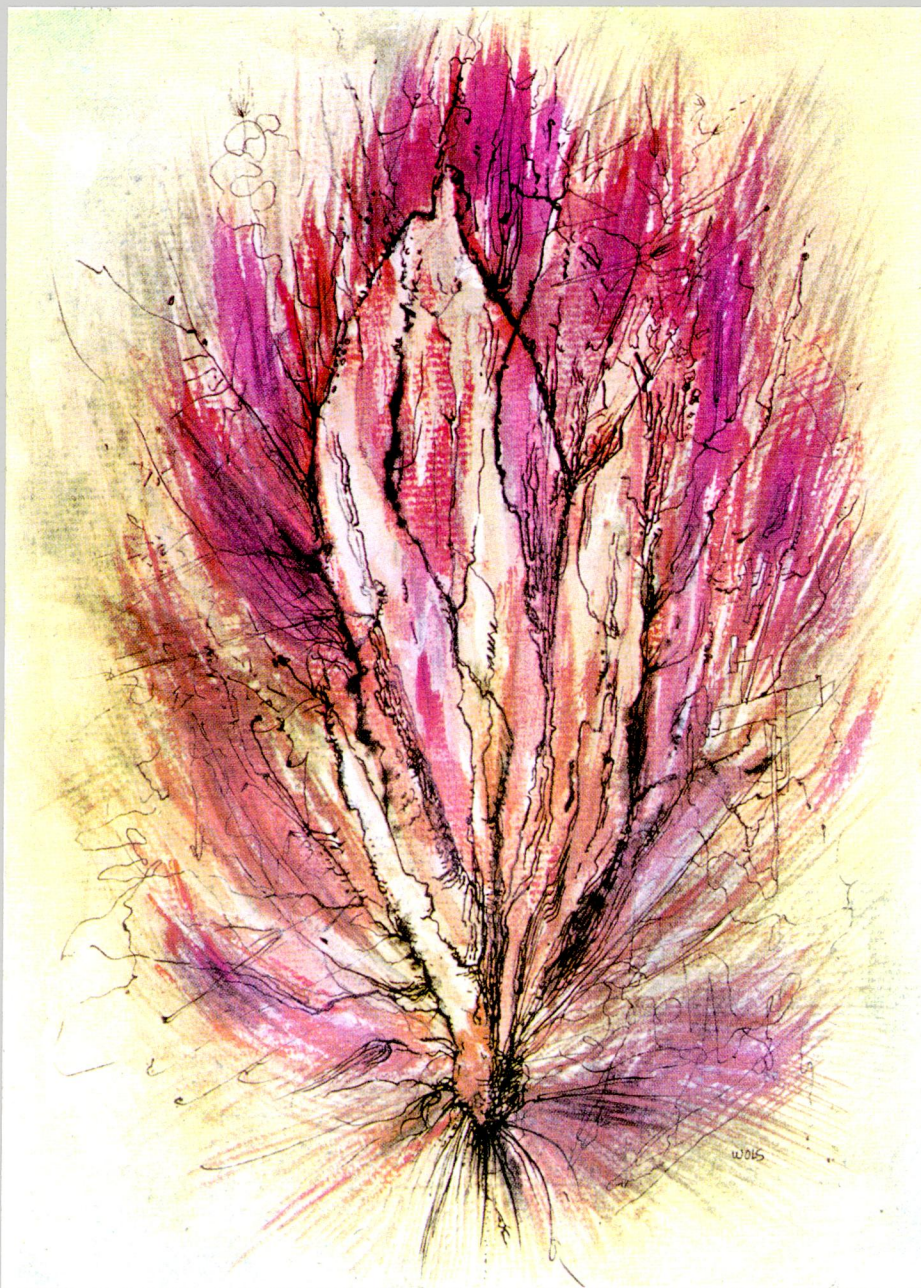


2. Exhibition installation
"Entartete Kunst" - the Dadaists

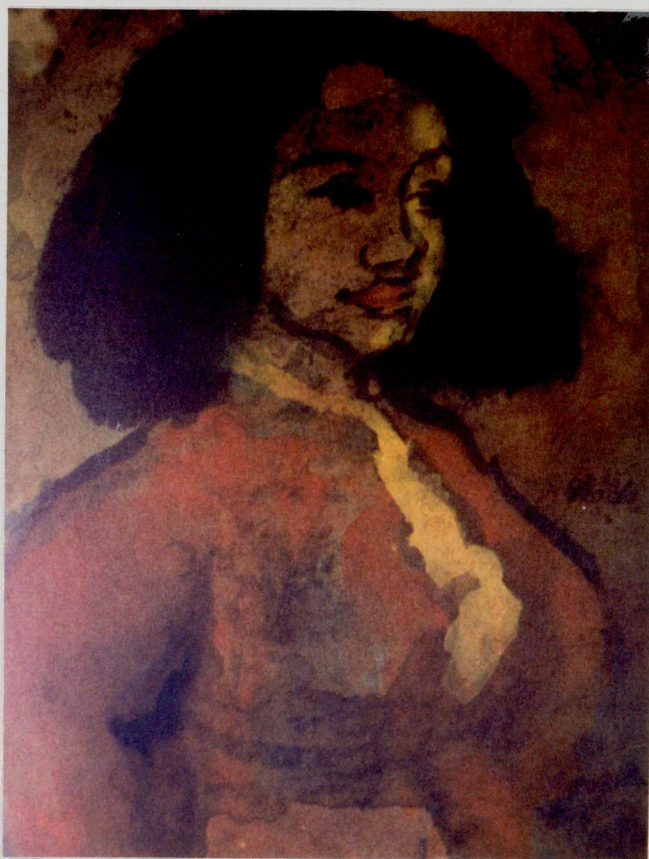


3. Exhibition installation
 "Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung"
 (Great German Art Exhibition),
 Hitler visiting, Kunstführer.





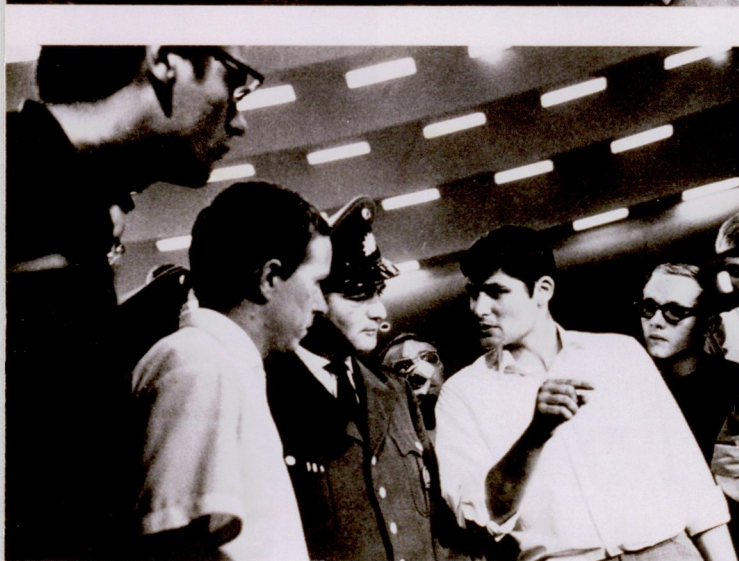
4. Wols,
Composition, 1950



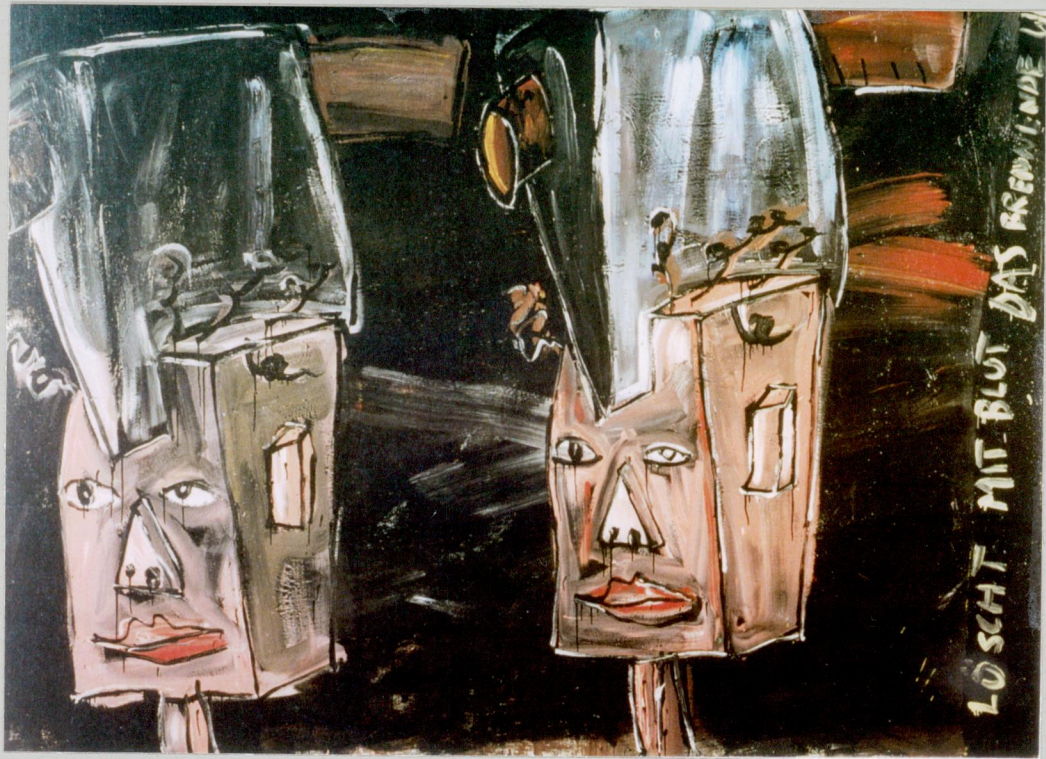
5. Emil Nolde,
Ungemalte Bilder
"The Spanish Woman".



6. Joseph Beuys,
Fat felt sculptures, 1963.



7. Beuys action
disrupted by right-wing students,
Aachen, July 1964.



8. Walter Dahn,
Double Self "The new image", 1982



9. JIRI GEORG DOKOUPIL
"2 Harrisburger", 1982.



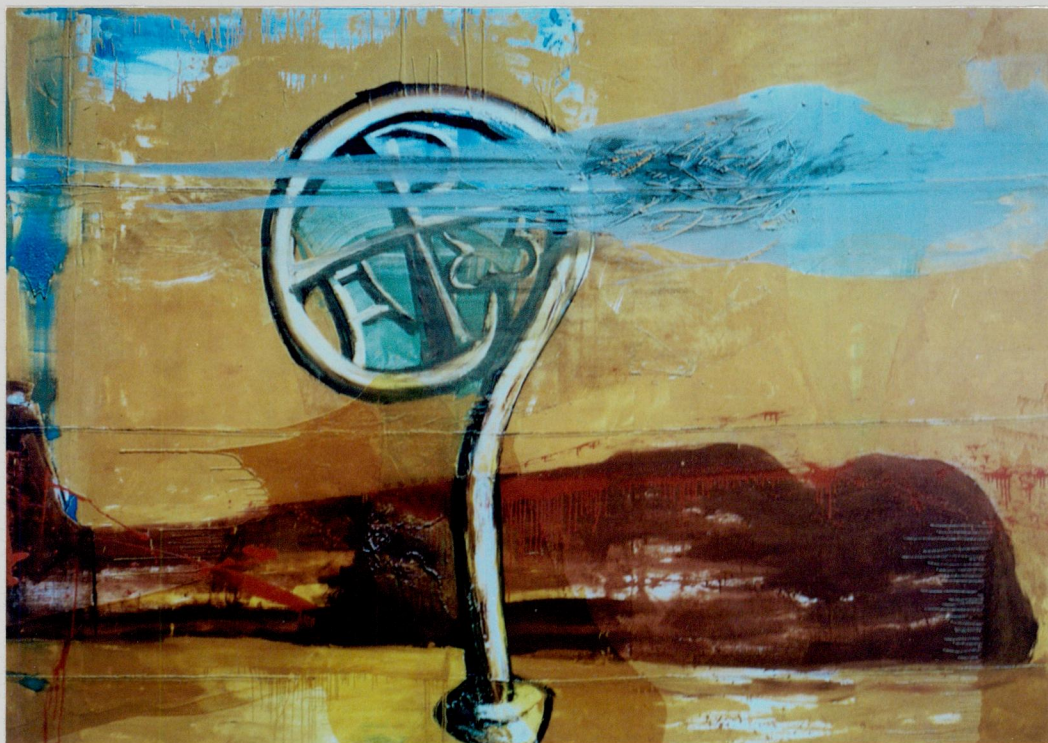
10. Salvo,
"Factory", 1981



11. Mimmo Paladino,
"Crib", 1982



12. Julian Schnabel
"Portrait of J.S. in Hakodate, Japan,
1934", 1983.



13. Julian Schnabel,
"St. Patrick", 1983.

DEALING WITH A NATIONAL TRADITION

THE ART OF THE 1980's

I
Let's take the quote of the American contemporary Julian Schnabel as a starting point for my investigation of the German "new" images of the 1980's.

"(...) our work is very different in many ways but in all of it there's a feeling that these things were in the work already and that they were deformed". (1)

Julian Schnabel is making a valuable statement about common issues in the painting of national movements considering some American critics could only spot the differences in national histories at the time.

Schnabel is talking about "things were deformed". What are these "things" that the paintings of different nations have in common, according to Schnabel, or even more interesting: What does he mean by "deformed?" Point of discussion is: "Deformation" by man, which the artist paints about or "Deformation" by the artist.
(Fig. 14)

I doubt whether "deformed" is the right word to use in connection with art And applied to German art:

To me this brings up dark memories of the "degenerate art" (Fig.1/Fig.2) or is that where we are? Back in Nazi-Germany?

Who is responsible for a painting like "Sulamith"? Kiefer or Hitler? To what kind of reality do these fields," ploughed by tanks" belong? (2) (Fig 16). Is it the historical past haunting us in pictures or is it present? Have Nazi times caught up with us?

Admittedly the spirit of my question is itself characteristically 'German'. Perhaps an over-sensitive reaction to the unpleasant confrontation with a taboo-zone. About German art criticism the American art critic Bazon Brock in 1981 noted that:

"There is a gradually increasing awareness that the campaigns against "degenerate art" did not cease with the end of the third Reich, nor are they limited to obscure circles (...)
This attitude about "degenerate art" has, in actual fact, been kept alive". (3)

At this occasion I would like to describe an experience that I had at school in 1988:

When my art teacher came to cover the time of the Nazi Regime in art history, he spent an hour getting really excited about censorship of art under Hitler.

He was showing slides, giving examples of what was considered "good" and "bad" art at the time - and with the occasional ironical remark, he had us all convinced in the end:

Good was bad and bad was good!

This is when I first discovered the influence of "taste" in art through education. A most absurd awakening. An example - "german" in its origin, but possibly not uniquely German.

Back to Schnabel:

As Schnabel says "things were in the world", this is where different national movements connect, this is the common element within painting, or even common to the "races"....; and I would like to push this point: there is a black sheep in every family.

And there is indeed this element of "black" throughout the German history of painting: the interest in the negative, the truth behind the mask of beauty. German artists have been concentrating on criticising disorders in society whilst they found themselves again and again in positions that were rather "outside" society.

Under Dictatorship they were pointed at as creators of such negative images whereas they saw themselves as reflectors of existing problems.

"I am not like Mastisse or Delacioix (...), German painting is far more concerned with light and dark values". - Kiefer (4)

Such is the character of the myth that Kiefer deals with: black or white, good or evil, Sulamith and Margarethe. (Fig. 14 & 15)

One thing has always been the task of the German painter: to expose the weak sides of a "strong nation". To confront society with its ugliness. Dix and Grosz for example, part of the social realism after World War I, blacken the black. (Fig. 17) A reflection of society in ~~char~~icatures.

Their attempt can be compared with Immendorf's who in the early 1980's attacks the war-taboos of German society. Cafe Deutschland (Fig. 18) - a series on the theme. The search for the truth this time seems to lie in the search for a tradition, a german identity.

Consistently painting "black" herein lies the tradition. Playing such a negative role, traditionally, shows responsibility in the activity of the German painter within society.

Social awareness, come dedication to paint in order to socially change, was cause for artistic defeat at a time when there were no other powers to influence the thinking patterns of German society but the one: the master of speech himself - Adolf Hitler.

Yet there is no defeat of such a strong German tradition that is indeed fed by its downfalls, yes even gains strength within for a new outbreak.

The new start in painting through the young painters of the "new spirit" in the eighties - delivering a healthy variation in individual styles - therefore must not be dismissed as a revival of past painterly traditions contradicting the end and logical conclusion of all painting with ~~the~~ abstract expressionism, but should be given credit as a fresh approach. (Fig. 3).

"...the reinvention of the role of the naive or primitive artist (Penck) (Fig. 19); an improvisational technique intended to produce the impression of spontaneity (Baselitz); apocalyptic imagery (Immendorff); an obsession with death as redemption (Lupertz); a melodramatic working through of what is over and done with (Kiefer)... - the German Romantic heritage. Yet irony is primarily an alibi for overindulgence and complacency, and for an undisguised nostalgia for when the Germans were German..." (5)

Craig Owens here accuses the "new" German painting of being a revival in a lot of different aspects.

He reads painting that refers to the past in painting style and imagery as "revival of the past"; to put it bluntly, his views might be re-stated as the equation of neo-expressionism with neo-fascism.

I agreed earlier on judging an art movement on grounds of art development/art history. A movement may also be informed by social and political circumstances at the time. Chronologically movements in art surely lead to new movements. Political and social forces influence movements too. Yet at their present time not from the past. The use of images from ~~the~~ German history in the new painting is not a reaction to German history, but informed by contemporary society's problem with a past, that has become taboo. The German art of the eighties is a reaction to the existence of the taboo, not its content, its origin in the past. At the same time this reaction to the circumstances in the eighties is the character of German painting tradition - its proof, its survival!

"Baselitz, Kiefer, Immendorf, Penck, Rupertz and their colleagues are not looking back; they are not neo-expressionists, neo-fauves or neo-anything. Their work makes us discover aspects in the Expressionists or Fauves that could not have been perceived before their work began to exercise its effect on us". (6)

Now I would like to further look at Italy - an aspect of European criticism.

Italy which has a long and smooth painting tradition which is carried by the heritage of skill. And also Italy which has had a fascist past like Germany, yet quite a different attitude towards it. Painting in Italy never really has been a social or political issue but rather means of creating beauty. The Italian painting of the 1980's is therefore more in the sense of reapplying such skill.

"(...) it's possible to look at paintings again (...): A painting is not just an object. It has an aura again. There is a light around the work. It is a miracle, in a way. A total, concrete, physical miracle. Painting is made with heavy things - stretchers, canvas, paint - heavy things - stretchers, canvas, paint - heavy dirty things. But they become light". - Sandro Chia (7) (Fig.20)

The Italian art critic Achille Bonito Oliva writes about contemporary Italian art:

"The trans-avantgarde spins like a fan with a torsion of a sensitivity that allows art to move in all directions, including the past." (8)

Oliva there is backing up the present movement in the Italian art scene. But can we still apply a statement like this to international contemporary art in the 1980's?

Or is "freedom of direction" a bonus for Italian art only? Oliva's criticism lacks comparison with other national movements.

His attempt at criticism is not to put Italian art into an international context.

His book "The Italian Transavantgarde" from which the quote is taken, acts purely as a taste guide for the new Italian art. Still he is relying on the international reputation of Italian tradition.

The presence of cultural treasures displayed in Italy's historical buildings surrounds Italian painters. With such rich physical evidence a spiritual return to the skills seems naturally reasoned, justification a piece of cake.

Nevertheless, it seems to be a different piece of cake for the German artist, whose new generation has lost faith in German culture. A "black forest" in which the German art (presumably) lost track. (Fig. 21)

A new start with old images or a new method? All these motifs that are so familiar: Swastica and Hitler Salute, Cafe Deutschland and Schwarz-Rot-Gold... (Figs. 9/18/21 & 22) We know where these come from - it does not need any explanation. Or is that judging too quickly once again? This time (again) to the disadvantage of the creators.

Creators of an imaginary reality that lies somewhere in between abstract planes and recognisable objects (Figs.) some spiced with the treasures of real life: straw, earth, lead... All that prejudice.

But all these images! Or in the end: have they no meaning at all?

"The object expresses nothing. Painting is not a means to an end. On the contrary, painting is autonomous. I said to myself if this is so, I must take what is traditional painting - on the level of motif - that is to say a landscape, a portrait, a nude, and turn them round and paint them upside down. It is the best way round and paint them upside down. It is the best way of emptying what one pains of its content". - Baselitz (9) (Fig. 23)

Is prejudice really to the disadvantage of the painters? They are well aware of what they painted themselves into. (Figs 24-26) They now carry a great social responsibility by stepping out into the limelight, screaming for attention with appauling painting styles and images. The echo of the media has them selfconsciously receiving the volume of their voices. Where lies the intention? Is their intention an honest critical approach and a confrontation with taboos, society and general prejudice in their personal search for national identity, or is it just another gimmick of controversial artists for the sake of media attention?

"The reference to expressionism in contemporary West German art is the natural move to make at a time when the myth of cultural identity is to be established specifically against the dominance of American art during the entire period of reconstruction". (10)

Maybe some critics did not see as much in common amongst the artists of different nationalities as Schnabel did.

Some of them rather concentrated on the nationalities to find a difference in the outlook and use of motifs, but also their origin and therefore mainly in their past.

American criticism in defence of New York's ownership of the "western art center" - status clashes with German Anti-Americanism, associated with the desire of the german artist to free himself from the weight of the past and the generally accepted American predominance in the art world.

A german art rebellion for any price? Even if it is an insult to german society?

As I have mentioned earlier, the german people have suffered for a long time - and still do - from the "Don't mention the war" - Syndrom. Anywhere abroad the german citizen tends to call himself maybe "Bavarian" or "Franconian" (like myself) or else "from Germany". As if these places just happened to be part of Germany, i.e. the person accidently and "unfortunately" was born there.

There is in fact not much pride there amongst the german population (ignoring the minority of recently fashionable neo-fashists) and in a rather unhealthy way, Germans are not just mistrusted by other Europeans and Americans for

their past, but far more dissapointing is - they mistrust each other. This shows for example in German anti fascist movements, which are in fact stronger in organisation than neo-fashist movements.

This is worth crediting since these movements don't underlie any specific political ideals in themselves, and are purely based on the common aim of their participants to counteract other's frightening strong ideals.

Quite obviously however the majority of the german population suffers from bad memories of the historical past. The result is a lost identity rooted in guilt.

Now the suspicious German always asks questions: Why? Is it not over yet? Won't they let us forget?

The reaction to the shocking images of a taboo, revealed by a group of rebellious young German artists.

Shock is one "Method" to ensure an "Effect". In connection I would like to place the contemporary artist into modern society:

In reference to Hilton Kramer's essay "Sign of Passion" in Zeitgeist (11) I am going to use "divorce" and "re-

marriage" as possible definitions to describe the fast moving modern culture. Thus reflect it onto modern/post-modern art. A culture of short attention that lives in sudden changes needs to part from one idea, condition to remarry another.

Applied to "neo-expressionism" - if you like: it provides the association with divorce in several aspects. The first one is the aspect of style: a divorce from abstract expressionism to remarry with a 'new' figuration; Parting from conceptual art with the introduction of a variety of materials into painting. Further from the taboos of the past: contemporary political and social issues unite with images of nazi past and myth. And last ⁴⁸not least: Divorce from America as leader in international culture.

America's idea of its position in the art world is one kind of nationalism - German past another one. A few years later now it is possible to look at european and american art simultaneously, spot uniting ideas instead of splitting differences. (Figs. 8-29)

"Yet finally, if only in the last few years, New York has suddenly become so receptive to looking at European artists, that a German or Italian passport is almost a guarantee of success rather than failure in the New York scene". (12)

A new fashion - successful as long as controversial?

Culture forms myths like Sulamith, images like swastikas, beliefs like America's and taste - as a subjective reaction. Your own preferences along with the trends of a tradition.

"If one were to call upon the nations of the earth to choose the most excellent customs from all that exists, each would give the matter careful thought and then choose its own in preference to all the others, so convinced is every nation that its ways of life is the best".

If I, as a German, personally do appreciate the German spirit more than maybe an American critic would in the first place, and therefore am defensive about it, is this so because of my own tradition. And in the end surely it's only a matter of taste.

And sometimes too, a matter of "selling" - German culture sold to America, if you wish.

"Kiefer" nowadays is a best seller label in America and (not) surprisingly half of Kiefers work is in possession of Jewish collectors. Did the myth of alchemy change lead into gold?

Yet it is only since America "bought" it (neo-expressionism) that I can appreciate it as a product of a nation rather than a work of art? At last being educated in taste through a German tradition in which non-existence I tended to believe.

Remains the question:

Where is the artist in all that discussion? It seems now that art is purely an event in the media, restricted by criticism.

Where within the social function of the artist lies his freedom?

"relation between self and the world is not merely one of affinity, but one of identity"_____

Have those young artists of the "new spirit" found their identity in the battle with the media? Kiefer as Hitler or Nero? (Fig. 30)

"Something may be legitimate in art which would not be so elsewhere, something which occasionally approaches madness and crime". (15)

- (1) Collings, Matthew, In Conversation with Julian Schnabel
Artscribe, Sept/Oct 1986 issue. Reprinted 1986,
Whitechapel Art Gallery, London Page 90
- (2) Kipphoff, Petra, Das Bleierne Land
July 1989, Die Zeit Page 35
- (3) Brock, Bazon, The end of the Avant-garde? and so the
end of tradition. Artforum, Summer 1981 Page 63
- (4) Kipphoff, Petra, IBID, Page 35
- (5) Fowler, Joan, Nationalism, History and
Interpretation of Art
Quote by Craig Owens Circa page 10
- (6) Brock, Bazon, IBID, page 66
- (7) Godfrey, Tony, The new image - the painting in the
1980's
Quote by Sandro Chia page 69 1986 Phaidon Press Ltd
- (8) Godfrey, Tony, IBID page 70
- (9) ROSC '84, Quote by Georg Baselitz page 60
- (10) Fowler, Joan IBID Quote by Benjamin H.D. Buchloh
page 8
- (11) Joachmides, Cristos M/Rosenthal, Norman, Zeitgeist
Kramer, Hilton, Signs of Passion
1983, Albert Hentrich OHG, Berlin p. 15
- (13) Joachmides, Cristos M. IBID

(14) Cardinal, Roger, German Romantics in Context

Studio Vista, Cassell & Collier Macmillan

Publishers Ltd, 35 Lion Square London WC1R 4SG p. 35

(15) Joachmides, Cristos M. IBID

Quote by Bohrer, Karl Heinz "Schein an Chock" p. 29



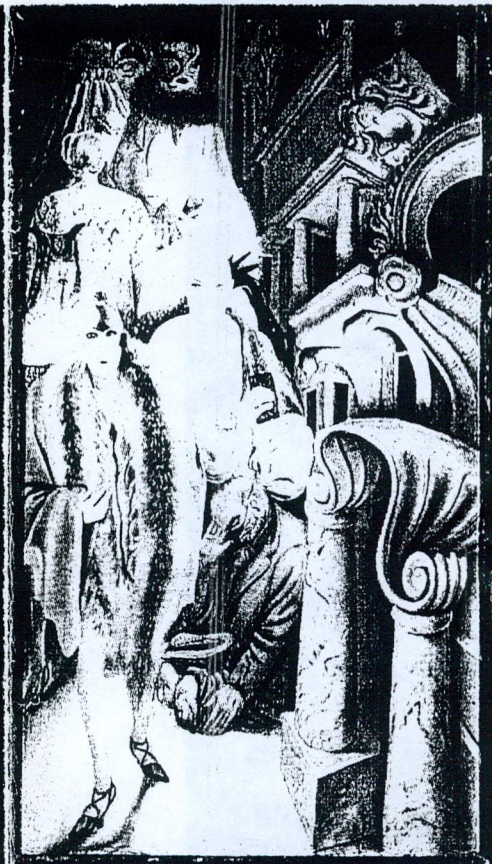
14. Anselm Kiefer
"Your Ashen Hair, Sulamith", 1981



15. Anselm Kiefer
"Your golden Hair, Margarethe", 1981.



16. Anselm Kiefer
"Nürnberg", 1982.



17. Otto Dix,
Metropolis, 1928





18. Jörg Immendorff,
"Cafe Deutschland, shake/raise", 1984



19. A.R. Penck,
"DIS D(#)", 1982



20. Sandro Chia,
"Two Painters at Work", 1982.



21. Walter Dahn/Georg Jiri Dokoupil,
"Deutscher Wald", 1981



22. Markus Lüpertz,
"Schwarz-Rot-Gold dityrambisch"
(Black-Red-Gold), 1974.



23. Georg Baselitz,
"The Brücke Choir", 1983



24. Helmut Middendorf
"Im Malen"
(While Painting) 1982.



25. Gerhard Richter,
"Vermalung" 1972



26. Anselm Kiefer,
"Resumptio", 1974.



27. Malcom Morley,
"Out Dark Spot", 1978



28. Julian Schabel,
"Ethnic Tpyes No. 15 and No. 72" 1984



29. Enzo Cucchi,
"A painting that barely touched the Sea", 1983

Montpellier



30. Anselm Kiefer,
"Besetzungen"
(Occupations), 1969

THE "VOICE" OF A VISUAL LANGUAGE

- ASPECTS OF KIEFER'S WORK

To look at the approach to a subject, which is within the works of art, I would like to further concentrate on just one artist - Anselm Kiefer. One style amongst a variety of styles as different means of interpretation within a common spirit - the "New Spirit" in painting.

One side of a story, one example to try and come close, closer to a point in terms of my personal investigation, which is the relationship of artwork, artist and society based on a tradition. Closer also to the artist, in his investigation of German past, his traditional part in society and his identification as such. How is this realised in the actual paintings? I want to look at the importance of the painting itself in its value of reflecting personal identity beside its social function.

"I do not identify with Nero or Hitler, but I have to reenact what they did just a little bit in order to understand the madness" - Kiefer (1) (Fig. 30)

The artist first of all takes his personal choice of subject matter. Thus the painting roots in personal concerns. The subjectivity of choice in theme then interacts with the readability of the chosen images, based on historical facts and narrative myth.

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

"To choose a style, a reality, a form of truth - together with criteria for reality and rationality - is to choose something man-made. It is a social art and depends on a historical situation"
Feyerabend. (2)

Kiefer's inspiration does not come a long way: living in Buchen near the "Odenwald" Kiefer is physically close to the Nibelungen-Strasse; the mythical path the Kingbrothers went to see their sister Kriemhild, widow of Siegfried, to never return from a death-bringing event. It is in the forest nearby Kiefer's home where a leaf fell from a tree to land on Siegfried leaving his body vulnerable for death in the one place. And in that place he then was stabbed by Hagen.

Nearby also - Bayreuth: associated with Wagner, celebrated with the "Wagner-Festspiele" every year. And the "Walhalla" - the Victory Hall, where Ludwig II put up torsi of famous Germans. (3) (Fig. 31)

All these names and places seem to need more explanation:

"bad off are they who do not know or want to know"
(4),

according to the responsible exhibitor of the National Gallery in Berlin about Kiefer's work.

Yet - do we have to learn about German myth and history before we can look at Kiefer's paintings? Does their visual language depend on literary devices?

I have looked at Kiefer's paintings first: - and read them my way. Still I felt the urge to find out about all these characters and images Kiefer uses. I did the necessary research and I found out:

There was no need to find out - the characters are symbolic, transfereable images which describe just one viewpoint at a time, tools to construct a set. Add the physicality of paint, canvas, straw, hair etc:

A new creation, not just in its originality as a painting, but in a spiritual sense! (Fig. 16)

Based on this experience I decided not to recall the long list of matter of fact information.

But to reach the spiritual level, the painting needs interpretation, it needs a personal approach.

Kiefer gives the still of a set. The "characters" are part of a narrative outlook. Yet, the painting has to come alive. And this is where the viewer has to act: associations - line of thought - possible conclusion, sparked off by the artist.

The four elements - painter (as creator), painting (as set), characters (as narrators), viewer (as director) - create a new reality. It is up to the viewer to give a painting spiritual dimension.

If I am to act as a director now, I want to make sure, that this can only be understood as my personal point of view. A very subjective approach which is not to be generalised, not to be taken as final and certainly not as "German".

The artist gives his side of the story:

"All the painting, but also all the literature and everything associated with this is merely an attempt at describing something inexpressible, like a 'black hole' or a crater, the centre of which cannot be reached. And whichever theme is seized upon will only ever have the character of a little stone at the foot of the crater - or road markings in a circle which I trust is continuously approaching the centre" - Kiefer (5)

Here is my side of the story:

Sticking to the German aspect, yet concentrating on the individual - How does Kiefer identify with his pictures? What is his intention and in how far does he succeed? Kiefer - who is making "these attempts to become a fascist". (6)

"There are basically two methods: You can proceed from the general to the precise, or you can proceed from the precise to the general; and this is what I do. I usually adopt a very trivial or even vulgar point of departure". - Kiefer (7)

To travel around the "crater", I have chosen Kiefer's early work as a vehicle and I would like to stress again: my choice of starting point is out of the infinity of points on a circle...

Let's follow up Kiefer's procedure in the making of the painting, follow with him the history and German tradition into contemporary art. Let the work be a narrative example, a myth almost in itself.

"Occupations" (Fig. 30)

A sequence of photographs, holding memories of past times, half a century ago - the Hitler salute, re-enacted in 1969 by the artist Anselm Kiefer. Posing in front of various war monuments on a tour around Europe. And last but not least in the series: on high rocks, facing out to the sea, looking out to a future. Yet we know this constellation. Quite familiar seems the set - an imitation/interpretation of Caspar David Friedrich's "Wanderer above the misty sea". (Fig. 33)

Romantic nostalgia for the German past, nostalgia associated with the medium of the photograph?

The three stations of our journey are obvious, three stations in time... early nineteenth century, the "Romantic" in art history within the reconstruction of Friedrich's painting, the Nazi past in German history, embodied in Kiefer himself, taking on Hitler-identity, linked with Kiefer as creator of the artwork in contemporary context.

I would like to look at Kiefer's relation to the three stations in history in chronological order. Starting off with the early nineteenth century and the Romantic painter:

"Close your physical eye so that you may first see your picture with the spiritual eye. Then bring to the light of day that which you have seen in the darkness so that it may react upon others from the outside inwards".

- Caspar David Friedrich (8)

The German Romantic painter dreams of a better future, a "golden age" as a result of his social environment. The citizens of Dresden (which has been occupied by the French army in 1813) are in despair. Romantic painters who believe in liberation and German unification are optimistic.

The Romantic painter wants to be included in the community in his act of being a painter. He has realized his importance and wants to be as such: a "part of the whole".

As a Romantic painter, Caspar David Friedrich takes on an individual approach to landscape painting. With the brush he creates dreamlike dramatic sceneries. Nature is of great importance as it beholds the patterns of life, according to Goethe:

"Protean forms derive from a small number of primary shapes".

Man beholds the vain idea as a creator in himself, the drive to rule over nature and others, the obsession to rise. ...to climb up high onto the rocks - symbol of faith, transcend the horizon - the border between real life and dream, the wanderer come viewer - looking out into a future, over the sea - the romantic expression of yearning...

Creating a spiritual world like this, hinting at the "goldenage", Friedrich stills the yearning a little for himself.

The viewer of the painting is witness as he is encouraged to look, to identify with the viewer on the rocks, the painter himself.

The view over a landscape into a spiritual world is translated into Kiefer's photograph. The basic idea carries on, the personification in the viewer changes, the viewpoint remains the same. Man wants to rise, man wants to rule, man wants to change.

Hitler incorporates such an example in history. Kiefer "incorporates" Hitler - he adopts an identity, plays a role, "in order to understand the madness".

This is where Kiefer brings the past back to us, into the present and encourages us to have a look. A look back?

He asks us to identify - as he shows us - with the viewer in the picture, in order to understand:

The urge of man to rise is within his nature and therefore within ourselves.

This is where the viewer takes objection: Identify with Hitler?

This is where the German observer would deny any common grounds, for they could be identified as "specifically German".

Denying the universal drive of man to rise (in a material world) - a characteristic Friedrich acknowledged long before Hitler - dismissing it in association with German past, means not just to dismiss "German" identity but identity as man, part of nature, part of the whole.

Kiefer like Friedrich is creating a new reality by transcending the horizon. Friedrich's spiritual reality lies along a horizon which is dissolved in mist, the mist of the dawn between day and night.

The security of reality in daylight on one side, the mysterious night on the other - in between a vague line - suggestive contact with another world.

The landscape, nature, is where we are closest to a spiritual world.

Kiefer continues the use of landscape. Nature is scenery for his performances. He recognises the environment as condition for and of human life. (Fig. 34)

Patterns in nature are echoed in patterns of man's nature. Nature is the source for all life. But the rules of nature man wants to overcome, tearing fields with tanks, invading space with planes, challenging gravity, challenging the sciences. Man wants to rise, man wants to rule, man wants to change. (Fig. 16/Fig. 35)

Kiefer wants to change. Not facts, not the past, but our (non-) perception of it. Kiefer wants to break with a taboo. He wants to free from the guilt over the past, through which German society hopes to reduce the impact.

"Will - that is what the liberator and the bringer of joy is called thus I have taught you, my friends! But now learn this as well: the will itself is still a prisoner. Willing liberates: but what is it that fastens in fetters even the liberator? 'It was': that is what the will's teethgnashing and most lonely affliction is called. Powerless against that which has been done, the will is an angry spectator of all things past. The will cannot will backwards; that it cannot break time and time's desire - that is the will's most lonely affliction".

- Nietzsche's Zarathustra (10)

As Nietzsche lets speak Zarathustra, Kiefer lets speak his paintings.

Icons of the past serve as patterns for the future. Yet even in their failure, things cannot be changed in the past, but reused (as examples) in the future, ^{and} they may liberate us.

Kiefer's symbolic use of icons may have the power to liberate German society from a past. Not by distinguishing it, but by confronting a taboo, identifying with a problematic past and accepting it.

Kiefer - as does Friedrich - identifies as a liberator from earthly restriction by opening a new world, opening up taboos. Juxtaposition of past and present, abstract and real life, create a spiritual reality in which we are free to identify.

"Kiefer eliminates (the German psyche's) arrogant structures by decomposing them, turning them against themselves, so that a fresh start can be made toward the creation of a new human self".

- Donald Kuspit (11)

From here I want to move on to part II of my story: therefore I would like to introduce "Icarus". (Fig. 36)

"Looking up at the mighty sky and feeling a dual awe before; on the one hand the infinity of starry space and on the other the moral law".

- Kant (12)

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The myth of Icarus, who wants to rise, who wants to fly high up in the sky - against the nature of his creation, against the law of his physicalities. Icarus makes wings of feathers and wax. He flies, flies too high, too near the sun. The wax melts and Icarus has to fall.

- Another image in Kiefer's work. Again, man's rise ...to fall. Out of disrespect for the nature of things, the law of gravity, Icarus had to fall. And so did Hitler, in his selfish goal to make this world a German one, disrespecting all except the favoured Aryan race.

We associate Kiefer's use of 'Icarus' with Hitler's rise and fall. This we may do. For Kiefer choses to 'set' the spectacle on German grounds, on "Markische Sand" (so the inscription in the painting). But at the same time this choice of set for a performance of mythical origin, proves an independence in location.

The show can travel, the metaphor can be applied to other situations. And again applied to the spectators: Anyone in a capitalist society who denys the existence of one's desire to "fly" and otherwise /the laws and patterns of nature, anyone to deny the past, which can serve as a worthwhile example within a repeating pattern, will fail in the construction of a future. Man must identify with nature, acknowledge the patterns. Hitler is a prime example, an example Kiefer uses in search as his identity

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

1009 5th Ave. New York, N.Y. 10028

- a german example in search for a german identity.
Identity results from prior experience. Kiefer believes
the truth lies within us. Its roots are in a deeper
ground, a pattern of nature within us.

Kiefer creates cruel realities to serve himself and us as
an imaginary stage. His pictures have a dream like
quality.

"Actually, a person who is awake only realises that
he is awake through the rigid and regular web of
concepts, and hence on occasion, if the conceptual
web is torn, he may come to think he is dreaming".
- Nietzsche (13)

Kiefer is tearing thinking patterns, suggesting a new
reality: the "unreal" combination of abstract senses and
real life issues. The outlook is a reality, defined on a
spiritual level by the viewer. These realities, or even
'nightmares', are created to question. They challenge,
trigger imagination. They do not solve anything and they
do not want to solve.

Maybe Kiefer helped save a tradition, but surely he is
not the saviour of the world or society. His part is to
set the stage on which we may act to our own perception.
A set designer in a world of new realities, composed by
images of myth and historical past.

Our tradition may condition us, but the role we are given
we are free to perform upon our own beliefs, considering
ourselves part of the whole, the set that surrounds us.
Kiefer as a painter decided to perform in public:

"Paintings have never been created in order to
change things in a social sense. They do indeed
succeed in bringing this about, but not in a
programmed manner". - Kiefer (19)

- (1) Hecht, Axel/Kruger, Werner, "Venedig 1980: Aktuelle Kunst Made in Germany"
Das Kunstmagazin, June 1989, p.52
- (2) Feyerabend, Paul "Science as Art" Zeitgeist, 1983,
Albert Hentrich OHG, Berlin, p.47
- (3) Kipphoff, Petra "Das bleierne Land"
July 1989, Die Zeit, p.35
- (4) Honisch, Dieter in "Der Alchemist, der Erloser"
by Hans Joachim Muller, March 1991, Die Zeit.
- (5) Kiefer, Anselm, interview by Axel Hecht, "Anselm Kiefer" Jan. 1990, Das Kunstmagazin.
- (6) Hecht, Axel, IBID, p.52
- (7) Kiefer, Anselm, IBID
- (8) Cardinal, Roger, "German Romantics in context"
1975, Studio Vista, p.70
- (9) IBID, p.35
- (10) Gilmour, John C. "Fire on earth", Anselm Kiefer and the postmodern world", 1990 by Temple University Press, Philadelphia, p.43
- (11) Kuspit, Donald B., Documenta 7
essay from Artforum, Sept 1982, p.3
- (12) Cardinal, Roger IBID, p.31
- (13) Feyerabend, Paul, IBID, p.38
- (14) Kiefer, Anselm, IBID.



31. Anselm Kiefer,
"Wege der Weltweisheit",
(Ways of Worldly Wisdom) 1976/77



32. Anselm Kiefer,
"Operation Seelöwe"



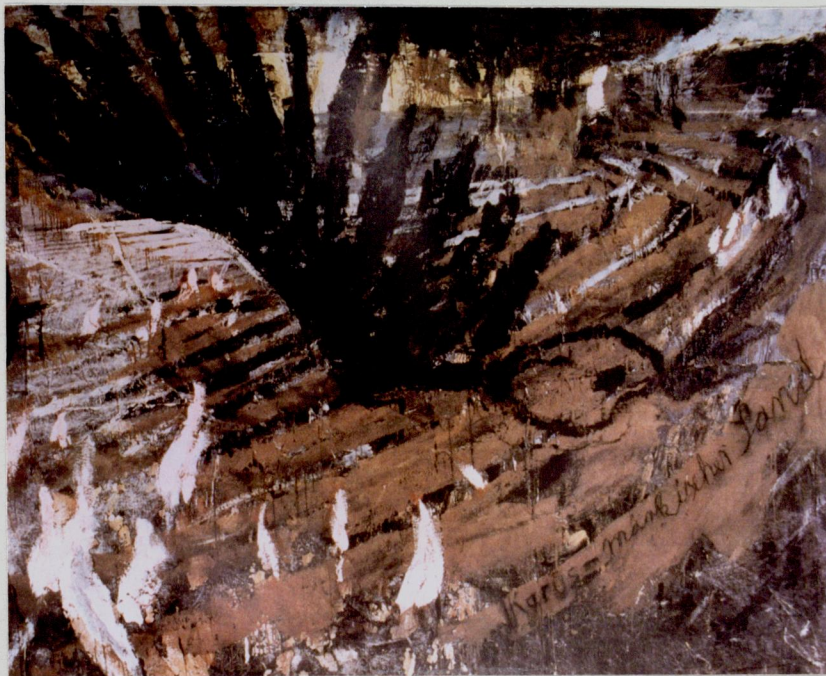
33. Caspar David Friedrich,
"Wanderer above the misty sea", 1826



34. Anselm Kiefer,
"Hochspannungsmast"
(Telegraph pole), 1984/85



35. Anselm Kiefer,
"Jason", 1989/0



36. Anselm Kiefer,
"Icarus-Markischer Sand", 1981.

CONCLUSION

After all my research, where I came across various subjective views on art in general and on the "New Spirit in Painting" in more specific, I want the reader of my essay to bear in mind:

Mine, as no many others, is just a personal approach, set to fulfil my own intentions. None of my suggestions intend to be taken as THE truth.

Looking at the recent german art history of the 20th Century there is a repeating feature within a rather rupture development: the german artist is traditionally social^{ly} conscious, politically aware and reactive. Having established this criteria on the basis of the 20th Century german art, it has also proved part of early german art, like the Romantic which I have researched in context with Kiefer, who gains knowledge and inspiration from Kasper David Friedrichs work in particular.

At a later point in German history, the "new spirit" of the eighties, german tradition has become a subject itself for a post-war generation of artists. When dealing with the subject, german painters recognised the impact of censorship of art during World War II as a turning point for traditional values. With the fatal

loss of german identity not only the art has suffered a gap in its historical development, but german people have been suffering from a guilt complex that was trying to deal with the past by apologising for personal national origin.

To heal the wound that has scared society, artists in the 80's ripped it open to get to its cause. They confronted Germany with its past. The international media played an important part to the outcome. Intense criticism brought art to the attention of a broader audience. Media acted as a megaphone. Both the artist and critic have used each other in order to evoke changes in social and political conceptions.

Yet the very abstract idea of art - which ^{is} defines for me as a spiritual language that cannot be put into logical terms of intellectualism - seems to be contradicted in the interaction of painterly values with media reality.

Under this aspect I feel that public criticism can be dangerous as it may intend to and succed in convincing. Arguments may be treated as logical facts in the mind of the thinker. Thus art criticism is in danger of manipulating the spiritual value of art. For one as to influence the artist in his work through materialistic values, secondly to shift the meaning of the work to suit

national politics, interpreted through publication in media. Today the establishment of values within western democracy lies no more in the power of government but in the hands of the media.

"denying the necessity of the critic, he (the artist) denies his own necessity. The nothingness of art and the artist without the glance of critical consciousness to make them truly self conscious becomes evident". - Donald Kuspit (1)

I do not object to criticism. I would on the contrary encourage to be more critical towards media criticism as it may be abused to defend or promote personal ideals.

As we can see at the example of the "New Spirit in Painting", criticism, i.e. mis-interpretation had its effect: The "New Spirit" got vast media attention. Critics accused the artist of being fascist. But never mind misinterpretation: Sensationalism is an old recipe for fame!

After the battle with the media the painters of the "New Spirit" emerged as victors. Paintings sold for large sums - millions in Kiefer's case - thus put the artists into a new social context. They are now holding a privileged position. But somehow I doubt that this 'privileged' position keeps painters in touch with society, reality, ^{as} yes even their own beliefs. Isn't it

just too easy at this stage to paint 'for' the media and the market maintaining the image and the money-flow?

This now is the other side of the coin: No matter how honest or 'true' a painting is in itself, it wants to be sold. "FOR SALE" a painting needs to go out into the public and any painter who denies this, acts outside society, dismisses his 'part of the whole'. Making art for art's sake has so far always been sold out.

One has to identify with his picture, and therefore with his nature. To identify means not only with one's nationality but with man's desire to rise. This means to acknowledge the possibilities of money as part of a materialistic society.

And this does not only apply to the free market of a capitalist society. Government-employed artists in former East Germany demonstrated against a reunification in fear of insecurity in their "materialistic" future in a competitive West.

Whether pro or contra the value of painterly ideals, the personal use or abuse of this knowledge however is, up to the individual painter himself.

No matter who has the power of social influence, artist or critic - we still have a painting and our own

tastebuds to analyse the skill of the cook. We are society.

If a painting is constructed to reflect us, I believe the true 'Spirit' lies within ourselves.

Throughout my third chapter I have tried the impossible to give a visual impression of Anselm Kiefers work through literal guidelines. The illustrations I consider a vital part of my research, as the answers lie within their spiritual power. I have not found a way yet to describe how and why I identify with Kiefer's work in a german sense.

Kiefer's work has evoked emotions in me. Its reconstruction and the reasoning of motifs has only fractured the visual images. Illustrations therefore are important to complete the subject.

Still - it is very hard to judge or conclude, even personally, on values as they are in themselves personal. Values are result of interpretation. Anyone who believes his own interpretation as the only truth will have to fall. Man has to realise his subjectivity and leave others room for their own interpretation. No judgement can be final or unique. And this I want to say again: My investigation is as personal as any artist's investigation of a subject matter - a choice *from* in a multiplicity of ways.

Different identities are all on the way of search for a truth. A painting - like myth - can only show one aspect at a time and has to leave room for other views on the point.

Finally ~~this~~ my research only fulfils its intention if I use it to reflect my own personal outcome: In this (re-) search... if nothing else, I have found identity. I can now adopt my German background as reason for the outlook of my paintings.

As it happened someone asked me recently whether I was painting "about concentration camps", having just glanced at a 'blackness' in my work. If this person had visually studied my work and come to this conclusion - I would be open to accept this as a personal interpretation and I would answer: yes - if it is to you. But if a judgement like this (again) is purely based on a 'glance' combined with the knowledge of my nationality - I don't know. I will probably just be very disappointed about the lack of use of one's visual senses...

- (1) Kuspit, Donald B, "Civil War - Artist contra critic", Oct 1980, Artforum.

REFERENCES:

Ruetz, Michael, "Beuys"

1986 by Greno, Verlagsgesellschaft mbh D-8860 Nordlingen

Schnabel, Julian, "Julian Schnabel Paintings 1975-1986"

Whitechapel Art Gallery, London.

Godfrey, Tony, "The New Image, Painting in the 1980's"

1986, Phaidon Press Limited.

Wolfgang Max Faust/Gerd de Vries, "Hunger nach Bildern -
deutsche malerei der gegenwart"

1982, Du Mont (Du Mont - Dokumente), D - Koln.

Buchloh Benjamin/Franzke, Andreas, "German Art Now",

1989 the Academy Group, London.

Lupertz, Markus, "Markus Lupertz: Gemalde und Skulpturen"

1985, Prestel - Verlag, Munchen, W-Germany.

Fetting, Rainer, "Rainer Fetting, Museum Folkwang Essen,
Kunsthalle Basel", 1986

Tisdall, Caroline, "Joseph Beuys",

1979, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York.

Joachimides, Christos et al, "A New Spirit in Painting",
1981 Royal Academy of Arts, by George Weidenfeld and
Nicholson Ltd., 91 Clapham High Street, London SW4

Cardinal, Roger, "German Romantics in context"
Studio Vista 1975, Cassell & Collier Macmillan Publishers
Ltd. 35 Red Lion Square, London WC., R4SG

Huyssen, Andreas, "After the great divide: modernism,
mass culture, post modernism (language, discourse,
society)" 1988, the Macmillan Press Ltd., Houndsmill,
Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 2XS and London.

Lucie-Smith, Edward, "Art of the 1930's"
1985, George Weidenfeld and Nicholson Ltd.,
91 Clapham High Street, London SW4.

Vaughan, William (et al) "Romantic Landscape Painting in
Dresden"
1972, The Tate Gallery Publications Dept. Millbank,
London SW1P 4RG.

Kipphoff, Petra/Muller, Hans-Joachim, "Das Mysterium weis
man nie"
1992, 17 Januar, Nr. 4, Die Zeit, Germany.

Kipphoff, Petra, "Das bleierne Land"
1989, 28 Juli, Nr. 31, Die Zeit.

Muller, Hans-Joachim, "Der Alchemist, der Erloser -
Ausstellung in Berlin: Anselm Kiefer"

191, 22 Marz, Nr. 13, Die Zeit

Kipphoff, Petra, "Hinter dem Knochen wird gezahlt",

1991, 6 December, Nr. 50, Die Zeit.

Fowler, Joan, "Nationalism, History and Interpretation of
Art", 1987, CIRCA

Rosenthal, Mark, "Anselm Kiefer, Chicago and
Philadelphia", 1987, Prestel Verlag, Philadelphia Museum
of Art, USA.

Barron, Stephanie, "Degenerate Art - The fate of the
Avant - Garde in Nazi - Germany",

Los Angeles County Museum of Art Harry N. Abrams INC.
Publisher, N.Y.

"Expressions - new art from Germany"

Joachmides, Cristos M./Rosenthal, Norman "Zeitgeist:
International Art Exhibition Berlin 1982" (Martin-
Gropius-Bau) 1983, Albert/Hentrich OHG, Berlin.

Kuspit, Donald B., "Civil War - Artist Contra Critic",
Artforum, Oct 1980.

Brock, Bazon, "The end of the avant-garde? and so the end of a tradition", Artforum Summer 1981.

Faust, Wolfgang Max, "Du hast keine Chance - Nutze Sie! With and against it - Tendencies in recent German Art", Artforum, Sept. 1981.

Gilmour, John C., "Fire on Earth", 1990, Temple University Press, Philadelphia 19122, USA.

Kiefer, Anselm, "Jason", exhibition catalogue, 1990, The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin.

Selz Peter, "Degenerate Art Reconstructed", Sept 1991, Arts Magazine.

Brock, Bazon, "The end of Avant-Garde? And so the end of tradition", Summer 1981, Artforum.

Kuspit, Donald B., "The New (?) Expressionism: Art as damaged goods", Nov 1981, Artforum.

Morgan Stuart, "Cold Turkey", April 1981, Artforum.

Morgan Stuart, "Art and Language",

Oct. 1982, Artforum.

Maenz, Paul/De Vries, Gerd, "Anselm Kiefer",

1986 Anselm Kiefer at Galerie Paul Maenz, Koln.

Gombrich, E.H., "The Story of Art",

1972, Phaidon Press Limited, Musterlin House,

Jordan Hill Road, Oxford OX2 8DP

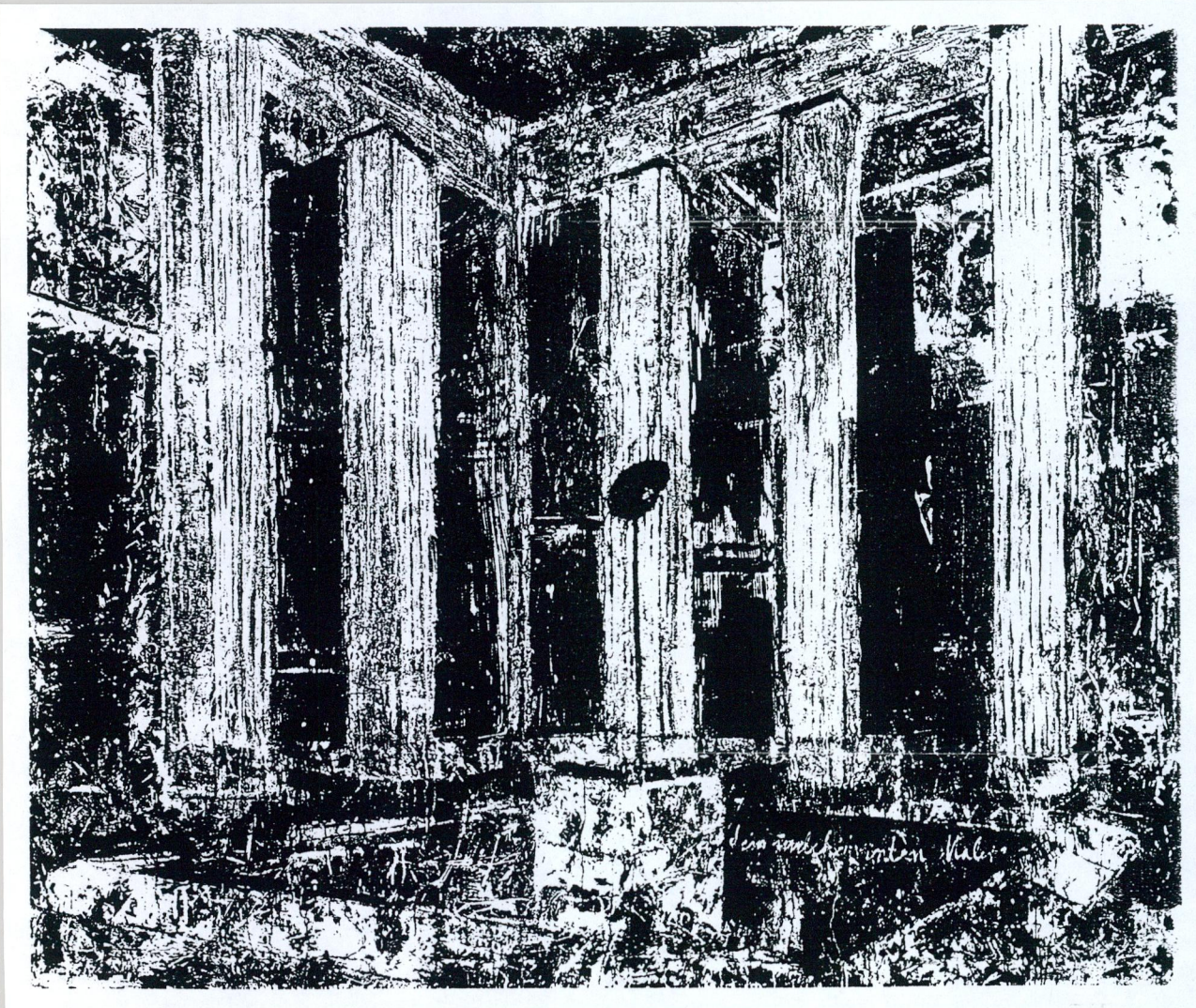
1. Exhibition installation "Entartete Kunst"
including works of Baum, Belling,
Campendonk, Dexel, Felixmuller,
Eugen Hoffmann, Klee and
Emil Nolde, "Last Supper", 1909.
2. Exhibition installation
"Entartete Kunst" - the Dadaists
3. Exhibition installation
"Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung"
(Great German Art Exhibition),
Hitler visiting, Kunstfuhrer.
4. Wols.
5. Emil Nolde,
Ungemalte Bilder
"The Spanish Woman".
6. Joseph Beuys,
Fat felt sculptures, 1963.
7. Beuys action
disrupted by right-wing students,
Aachen, July 1964.

8. Walter Dahn,
Double Self "The new image", 1982
9. JIRI GEORG DOKOUPIL
"2 Harrisburger", 1982.
10. Salvo,
"Factory", 1981.
11. Mimmo Paladino,
"Crib" 1982.
12. Julian Schnabel
"Portrait of J.S. in Hakodate, Japan,
1934", 1983.
13. Julian Schnabel,
"St. Patrick", 1983.
14. Anselm Kiefer
"Your Ashen Hair, Sulamith", 1981
15. Anselm Kiefer
"Your golden Hair, Margarethe", 1981.
16. Anselm Kiefer
"Nurnberg", 1982.

17. Otto Dix,
Metropolis, 1928.
18. Jorg Immendorff,
"Cafe Deutschland, shake/raise", 1984.
19. A.R. Penck,
"DIS D(£)", 1982.
20. Sandro Chia,
"Two Painters at Work", 1982.
21. Walter Dahn/Georg Jiri Dokoupil,
"Deutscher Wald", 1981.
22. Markus Lupertz,
"Schwarz-Rot-Gold dityrambisch",
(Black-Red-Gold), 1974.
23. Georg Baselitz,
"The Brucke Choir", 1983.
24. Helmut Middendorf
"Im Malen"
(While Painting) 1982.25.
25. Gerhard Richter,
"Vermalung" 1972.

26. Anselm Kiefer,
"Resumptio", 1974.
27. Malcolm Morley,
"Out Dark Spot", 1978.
28. Julian Schabel,
"Ethnic Types No. 15 and No. 72" 1984.
29. Enzo Cucchi,
"A painting that barely touched the Sea", 1983.
30. Anselm Kiefer,
"Besetzungen"
(Occupations), 1969.
31. Anselm Kiefer,
"Wege der Weltweisheit",
(Ways of Worldly Wisdom) 1976/77.
32. Anselm Kiefer,
"Operation Seelowe"
33. Caspar David Friedrich,
"Wanderer above the misty sea", 1826.

34. Anselm Kiefer,
"Hochspannungsmast"
(Telegraph pole), 1984/85.
35. Anselm Kiefer,
"Jason", 1989/90.
36. Anselm Kiefer,
"Icarus-Markischer Sand", 1981.
37. Anselm Kiefer,
"Dem unbekannten Maler"
(To the Unknown Painter), 1982.



Rig 37

