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WAR ON ART II

Degree in Fine Art Printmaking
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This thesis is submitted by the undersigned to the National College of Art and Design for the degree in Fine Art Printmaking, it is entirely the authors own work and has not been previously submitted as an exercise for an award from the National College of Art and Design or any other institution.

SIOBHAN HYDE.



My research into the art of the Holocaust has been greatly aided by the response from the museums and memorial centres all over the world, to whom I owe much gratitude and appreciation.

SIOBHAN HYDE.

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible tells us that there will be wars and rumours of wars until the end of time. It seems that this prophecy is borne out through history unto the present day as no part of the earth's surface on which men live or travel has not been fought over at sometime or other. It may be inferred then that the precedence and recurrence of war results from one groups' or individuals desire and need to prey upon the land or wealth of another. This is evident from what we know through primitive documentation of the earliest type of warfare and undeniably present in our modern society of apartheid and violence. War serves many purposes, retribution and demonstration, religion and ideology; as well as cupidity and unlawful patrimony. For some societies it is a last resort undertaken with reluctance and distaste; for others it shapes and informs their whole character and is embarked upon in anticipation of great glory and triumph. The richest and most powerful states are often the most warlike, while the poorer nations are too meek to resist even the slightest threat to their independence. The fact that all societies are ultimately based on a military foundation further endorses the view that war is and will be a prevalent condition of the human race. However honourable a society may present itself they have not been able to banish war, even through intense and rational communication.

Warfare has made a profound impression on the arts. Poets, writers, sculptors and painters have been drawn to it by a powerful fascination. They have explored, documented and even glorified it. To avoid making immense generalisations and an itinerary of wars, dates and paintings over a vast period of time and space my concern is this Thesis is the artwork produced during World War Two. Specifically, the art made in the extreme conditions of the Nazi labour and death camps. During this time the governments of all the combatants commissioned practising artists to work at the front and record their visions of the scheme. In my opinion many of these commissioned works of art remain aloof and objective in their execution. As Paul Nash commented;

"I very frequently hear the complaint that the war pictures are too detached, too decorative, too quaint and amusing". 1.

and Ardizzone confessed in his wartime diary;

"Must try and make some drawings of the horrors but don't want to". 2.

The artwork from this period can be broken down into five separate categories:

1. National socialism, the prescribed art form of Fascism.
2. The artists that remained in occupied Europe and continued to paint. In the eyes of the Third Reich this was a punishable subversive activity.
3. The artists that fled to America and Britain.
4. The commissioned war artists.
5. The interned artists in concentration camps, ghettos and in hiding.

All but one of these categories have been studied and documented at length in both social and art history books. Omitted from these studies are the interned artists who produced a substantial body of work which related directly to their lives, hopes, suffering. For example the Oxford Dictionary of art, 3 makes no reference to this work. In the contents of Herbert Read's *A Concise History of Modern Painting* "the origins and development of an art of internal necessity" explore the realm of expressionism then proceeds to "after abstract expressionism". 4.

Indeed the social and political atmosphere of Germany in the Twenties and Thirties called for an expressionist artist revolution that vehemently reflected and screamed indignation. Janet Blatter author of "Art of the Holocaust" states that:

"It seemed almost as if expressionism had been developed specifically for the visual realisation of the Holocaust". 5.

We know that the expressionists work was a direct reflection of society created from an objective frenzied energy. The heightened level of subjective reality for the interned artist led to an anguished documentation of their gut wrenching experiences. This work mirrors the conceptual idea behind expressionism but stretches it to

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its extremities. So why is this work not included? Is it because of the tremendous weight artistic judgement may bear on the historians conscience or is it a shyness to approach the symbolic, sociological, historical and spiritual content of the work?

The art from the Holocaust with its highly charged emotional content lacked magnetism for the post war critics. This dismissal of the subject stemmed from all incredulous shock and sense of guilt. It could be argued that the work lacked a physical presence both in relation to colour and size. Obviously it was confined by material considerations. The presentation of stark reality has not been given the credit of documentation or artistic achievement and as yet falls into an unlabelled sphere. The documentary validity increased the shame and thus conveniently moved it into limbo. Blatter remarks that:

"We are more concerned here with the works as artistic creations than as historical documents, we see no contradiction in the two approaches". 6.

Its omission in present day texts accentuates that we have condoned the continued ostracism of Jewish culture. The world of art does not accept these works as being of great importance due to the old stigma.

Yehuda Bauer, professor of Holocaust studies, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, warns of:

"The growing tendency of immersing tears and suffering in oceans of footnotes, of coming up with a remote quasi scientific approach which would be as inhuman as that of those who committed the crime or those who stood by and watched indifferently. 7.

On a par with this warning is Irving Howes concern that:

"The Holocaust has become popular, the mass media are into it; reducing the most terrible event in history to a soap opera. Those of us who used to fear that the Holocaust might be forgotten must now confront that it could suffer a worse fate". 8.

The over exposure by the media will lessen the enormity of the crime by having an inoculating effect on those audiences who were otherwise convinced of its barbarity, but now, may feel over saturated by its prosecution. Another deleterious effect to the case was the actions of Mossad, the Israeli secret service, in kidnapping Adolf Eichmann.9. (A principle perpetrator of the Holocaust) from Argentina and endangering their cause from an act of justice, to an act of lawless revenge.

"The proceedings were intended to be a grand summation of the persecution and murder of European Jews, along with the indictment of a principal perpetrator. We want the nations of the world to know", said David Ben Gurion, then the Israeli Prime Minister. 'It is necessary that our youth remember what happened to the Jewish people'. The trial was not concerned with revenge, he insisted, but it was certainly preoccupied with establishing a place for the Holocaust in history". 10.

"Write and Record".11. were Simon Dubmows last words, a famous Jewish historian shot in 1941 by the Nazis. This sentiment echoes through to the art of the Holocaust, but it is best to stay away from the wailing wall in order to have a greater impact on the youth of today. My compassionate journey herein stems from a respect and admiration for these artists whose heroic struggle was promulgated by an altruism unknown before in art annals. Their productions are available to mankind and bring to light the terrible fact that such diabolical persecutions actually happened. The artists fervent hope was that it should never recur. Most of the art was destroyed with those who created it, but it is estimated that over 100,000 paintings and drawings were produced, incredibly 30,000 survived intact.

"Whose power is undeniable and whose overall impression is one of strange beauty". 12.

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CHILDREN OF THE HOLOCAUST

THROUGHOUT JEWISH HISTORY there has always been persecution, suffering and resentment visited unto them. It seems curious that they were subject to such attitudes, it may be because their religion and politics were unitary and predated the christian attitude and as such gave rise to jealousy and prejudices. The most harrowing and destructive period in Jewish history was the holocaust. The expression Holocaust mainly used since the 1960's to distinguish it from other historical massacres. "Holokaustos, comes from the third century B.C. Greek translation of the old testament signifying the burnt sacrificial offering dedicated exclusively to God. The aftermath of the final "Jewish Solution " in Nazi terminology was six million dead and thousands of Jewish societies left desolate. The destruction of these communities by the Nazis annihilated an inveterate sense of culture and artistic expression which had been ubiquitous in European medieval ghettos. The term ghetto evolved from a Yiddish word meaning apartheid. Originally the Jewish people were forced to set these up in order to structure a semi autonomous state and avoid the perpetual judgement and persecution during the 17th and 18th centuries.

However, during the holocaust Jewish artists continued to work in ghettos, camps and in hiding. Knowing extermination was imminent they urgently reacted with poetry, fiction, paintings and drawings, leaving a testimony of life, anticipation, conviction and revelation. This work is an enlightening but shocking expression of the indestructible creative human spirit.

The Nazis tried to whitewash their track record of cruelty and crime in an attempt to eradicate this period in time. However these artists dedicated their short lives to recording and proclaiming their experiences. Astonishingly, some of their works have survived, to serve as a reminder of the past, and as a warning for the future. They represent a Jewish society that was, and the barbarity that pulverized it. In a letter to Jean Samuel a concentration camp survivor primo levi the famous Italian Jewish writer wrote:

It happened therefore it can happen again. This is the core of what we have to say whether we like it or not we are witnesses and we must bear the burden. I have vowed never to forget this I repeat it every day like a prayer". 1.

The questions raised concerning these works are:

What was it like to be an artist working where death was a constant threat?

In an environment where there was no freedom of speech or action?

Where hunger, pain brutality and cruelty were the norm?

What was it like to be the chronicler of such beastly horrors?

For many interned artists their work became a form of salvation, a refuge from the terrors of reality, and as a way to preserve ones sanity. Some became disillusioned and disheartened and ceased to paint, others, who had no previous artistic inclinations were compelled to document what they witnessed.

These artists defied Nazi regulations in the knowledge that if they were caught, death would surely follow. Diligently they transformed anger and terror into pictorial documentation. The circumstances and events in the camps and ghettos inspired the subject matter yet the execution of these works bear the personal style of each artist.

The Nazis constructed concentration camps promptly after their assumptions of power in 1933. Once the war proper was launched on September 1, 1939 millions of Europeans were displaced into camps and ghettos and forced to work as slave labourers for their German oppressors. Almost nine million Jews from twenty different countries came under the German occupied territories. Wherever they lived they were assembled together marked with the yellow badge and star of David. They were mocked, humiliated, starved and beaten, denied medical attention, while their possessions and property were confiscated and plundered. They were deported to transit camps and then to the death camps: Dachau, Auschwitz, Belzec, Chelmo Majdanet, Sobibor and Treblinka. From all walks of life, merchants, businessmen, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, their fates

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were sealed, all destined for obliteration. Only a few were exempt, those who could be made use of in the labour camps and special departments. Few survived the tribulations of the camps and many gave in to hunger, disease, exhaustion and despair.

In some of the camps, for example Buchenwald and Theresienstadt, the Jews reacted with an obstinate resolution and determination in the face of terrifying conditions, in order to survive, by enduring hunger, ignominies and the constant fear of death. At the slightest opportunity they tried to gather former semblances of their past cultural structures, and unite small groups with an aim to establish some hope in an insane environment. These camps had supervised schools for the children and lectures for adults, with religious services, even music with theatre occasionally.

The camp authorities permitted these activities provided they carried no political overtones. The inmates of these institutions risked their lives by virtue of the fact that they showed through their works the Jewish way of life in defiance of camp orders. These actions of disobedience helped keep the morale of the community at a reasonable level. Jewish councils were elected in the large ghettos of Warsaw, Vilna, Lodz and Bialystok, in order to transact orders from the Germans. The councils were known as the Judenrat but were limited as to their power. The artists scholars and writers, were held in esteem by the Judenrat. In the Lodz ghetto artists were put to work in the graphics department which opened up to them a wealth of treasures. In Warsaw the Judenrat gave subsidies to lessen their artists hunger.

In the Theresienstadt ghetto the Germans tolerated an active cultural programme of theatre, music and art. This ghetto was initially conceived as a model by Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the security policy and SS security service to accommodate eminent Jewish people too important to disappear without trace. Hence, there was a high concentration of artists, writers, professionals and intellectuals.

Still more horrific was Heydrich's plan to use the camp and deceive foreign agencies and the Red Cross concerned about the fate of the Jews. On one occasion a suspicious red cross official produced some drawings he had received from an art dealer called Frautisek Strass who had previously smuggled the drawings out of the camp. The artists concerned were reprimanded for their "quel propaganda" (atrocity propaganda) then were deported to die in Auschwitz.

In Theresienstadt several artists were employed in the drafting office of the German administrations construction department. There with use of materials and paper they documented the bitter truth of this "model" camp. When the artists realised in the summer of 1944 that the end of the war was near, they concealed a substantial portion of their work underground. For the most part, the heritage of Holocaust art is fragmentary, the largest surviving single collection comes from Theresienstadt.

Of the 140,000 Jews interned in Theresienstadt 15,000 were children. These children and the elderly were in the highest risk group as the Nazis had no time or purpose for them. At least the lives of adults could be extended due to their ability to work, but children could not be exploited in the same way. Initially families were segregated, girls with their mothers, boys with their fathers, contact between their prospective dwellings was forbidden. After 1942, in a cruel and inhumane act the children were completely severed from both parents and sent to live in separate supervised barracks. "The one hour of each day they were allowed to spend with their parents only aggravated their sense of being abandoned for the rest of the time".² The adult Jews who supervised the homes were often progressive educationalists. They wanted the children to have access to stimulating and wide-ranging lessons even though lessons of any kind were officially forbidden by the Nazis. Secretly, dramatic evenings, concerts and recitations were arranged for the children to perform. These were held in the attics of the barracks so as to avoid detection. Helen Lewis, a survivor from Theresienstaat, whose memoirs "A Time to Speak" was recently published by the Blackstaff Press recalls working with the children.

"It was up to us to provide a programme of useful, stimulating and interesting activities, but proper teaching was strictly forbidden, on the principle that Jewish children were to be kept uneducated as a punishment for being Jewish. If the weather was good, I would take my charges up onto the ramparts, where we danced to the accompaniment of our own voices. All of us who lived and worked with the children deliberately and actively disobeyed the "no schooling" orders. Most teaching was done by word of mouth. It was too risky to



entrust little hands with paper and pencil except for drawing and painting". 3. (Figure 1)

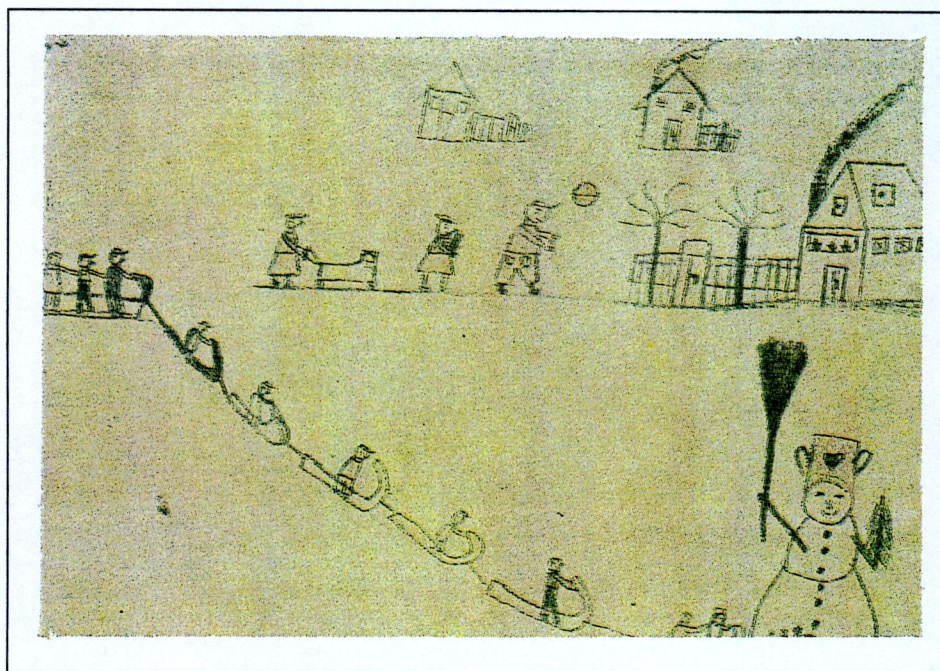


Figure 1. JULIE OGULAROVA. Jewish State Museum, Prague.

The children also produced their own magazine called "Vedem" meaning "we lead". The magazine included poetry, reviews and translations. In a poem entitled "Terezin", which was the original name of Theresienstaat, Hanus Hachenburg aged fifteen writes

"Expelled from the collective of people by violent hatred we will not, however, harden our hearts with hatred and anger. The love for our fellow men, the contempt for racial, religious and national antagonism will be our highest law now and in any future!". 4.

The general theme throughout the magazine bears the hopes and spiritual attitudes of these forsaken children. But more immediate and touching are the pictures painted by the children. (Figure 2) The Jewish State Museum in Prague have many exhibits of the magazines and up to 4,000 drawings in watercolour, crayons, pen and ink, pastels and simple collages. These drawings cover a variety of themes. Most stem from the lost and happy childhood which was their life before their internment. Thus there are colourful pictures of parents, farms, flowers, animals and imaginative fairy tale scenes. (Figure 3) There are also many, pictures portraying the children's life and preoccupations of the camp, motifs include guards, barracks, funerals and executions. These pictures are stark in their simplicity, and are usually drawn in pen and ink or pastels. The subjects are small stick figures with frozen faces and large stars of David on their chests. The ten to fifteen year olds were given drawing lessons by a Jewish graphic artist Friedi Dicker Brandejsova. She not only taught them the fundamentals of drawing but also gave them themes to illustrate and afterwards studied their work as a means of understanding their state of mind. (Figure 4) In October 1944 most of these children and their parents were deported to Auschwitz where they perished.



Figure 3. HANA GRUN FELDOVA.
Jewish State Museum, Prague.

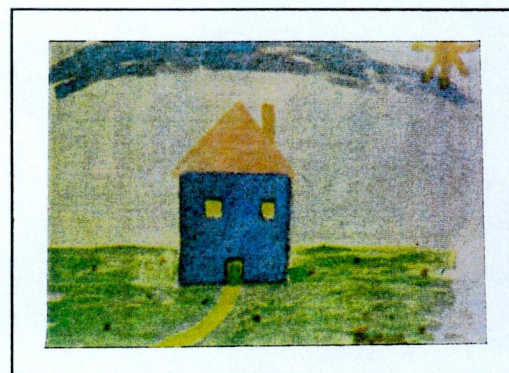
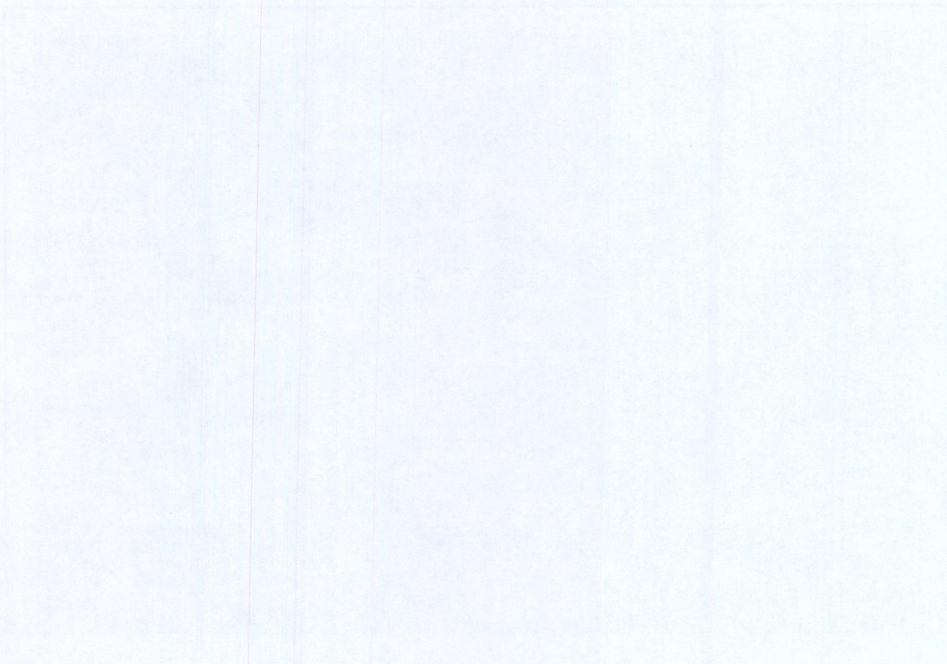
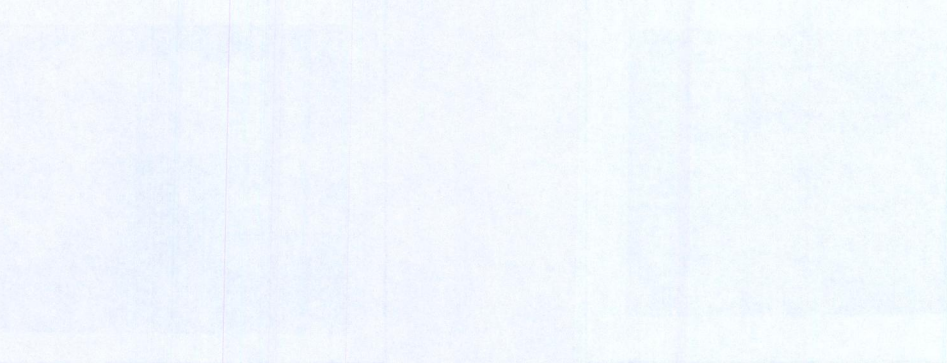


Figure 4. TOMAS KAUDERS.
Jewish State Museum, Prague.



The following text is extremely faint and illegible. It appears to be a multi-paragraph document, possibly a report or a letter, but the content cannot be discerned due to the low contrast and blurriness of the scan. The text is arranged in several paragraphs, with some lines appearing as thin blue streaks against the white background.



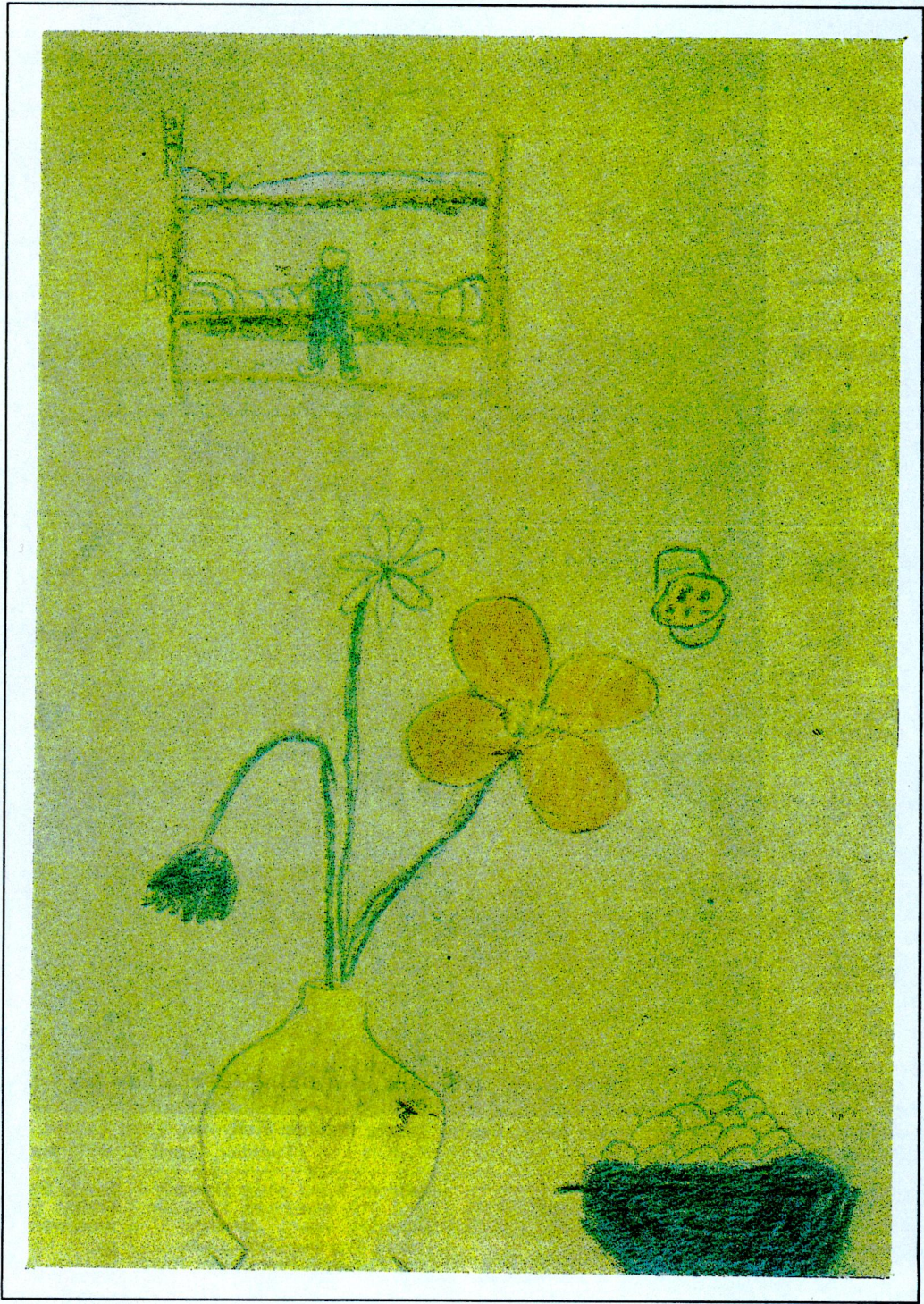
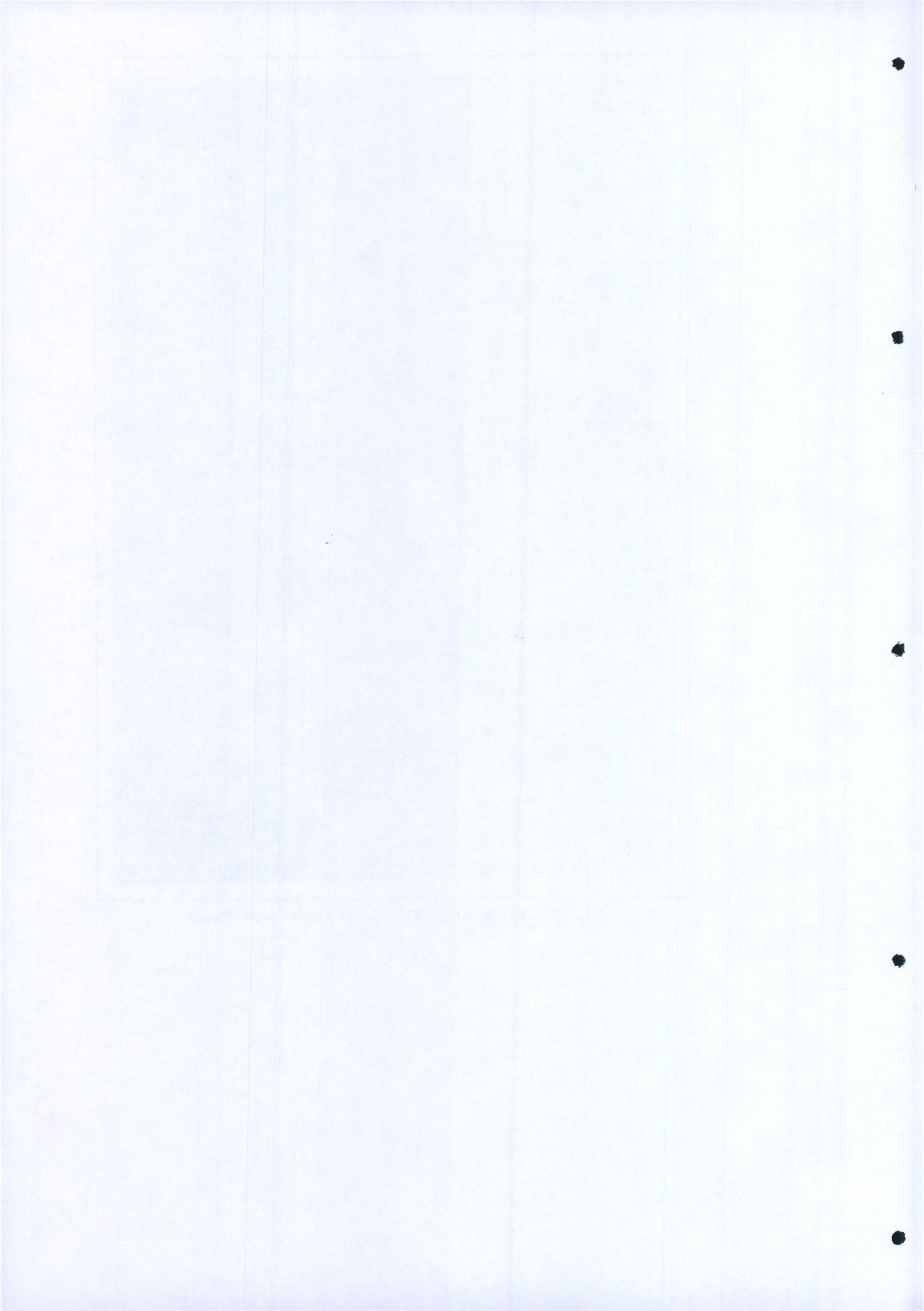


Figure 2. ERIKA TAUSSIGOVA. Jewish State Museum, Prague.



AN ARTIST IN ST. CYPRIEN, GURS AND AUSCHWITZ

IN THE BIALYSTOK ghetto the SS ordered Jewish artists to manufacture counterfeit copies of masterpieces which were destined for sale abroad. In Sachsenhausen they operated a large counterfeiting business of currency postage, passports and documents, specializing in American and English currency and postage.

For the artists their secret art served three fundamental functions. "It provided a powerful link to a former identity: It was a bridge to the future - one of the few means available to convey the suffering to those who came after: It was a way to transcend the present by transforming the victims experience into art". 1. The primary concern and problem the artists had was the compilation of materials. The desperate struggle to obtain materials led to the dangerous occupation of pilfering and barter. Material considerations were paramount, driven by a necessity to create the artists were extremely resourceful and utilized whatever materials were available, postcards, scraps of paper, graph paper, flour sacks, pencils and improvised charcoal. The preservation of work was also a problem hence the majority of the work from the concentration camps were executed in miniature.

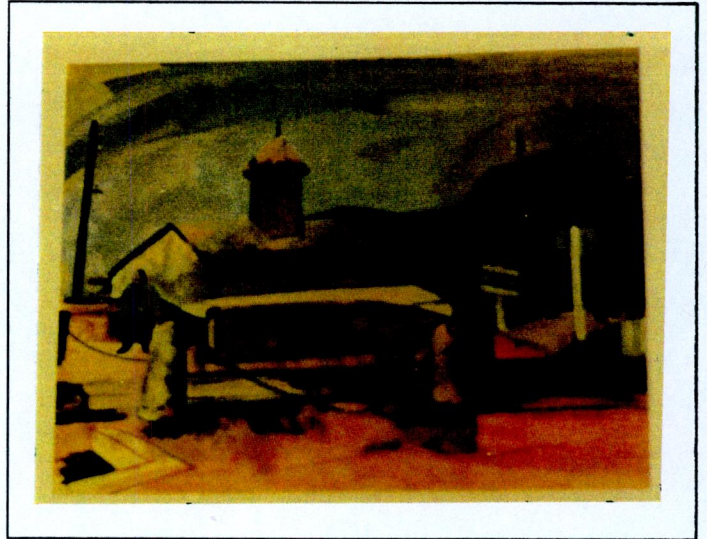


Figure 5. FELIX NUSSBAUM .
" Train Station at Allasio" 1933. *Gouache on Paper*,
49.5 × 65.5 cm. *The Fishman Collection*.

The actions and ethos in the Nazi concentration camps and ghettos can only be described as irredeemable, deprived vicious and inhuman. The horrendous atrocities, maltreatment and savagery that dominated social and political conditions is both difficult and intangible for us in a modern society to conceive or understand today. Once again it becomes clear to us, that the artists were compelled to leave a record of their harrowing experiences. Most of the visual art that they left is a terrifying portfolio of historic documentation.

"If I perish, don't let my works die show them to the public". 2.

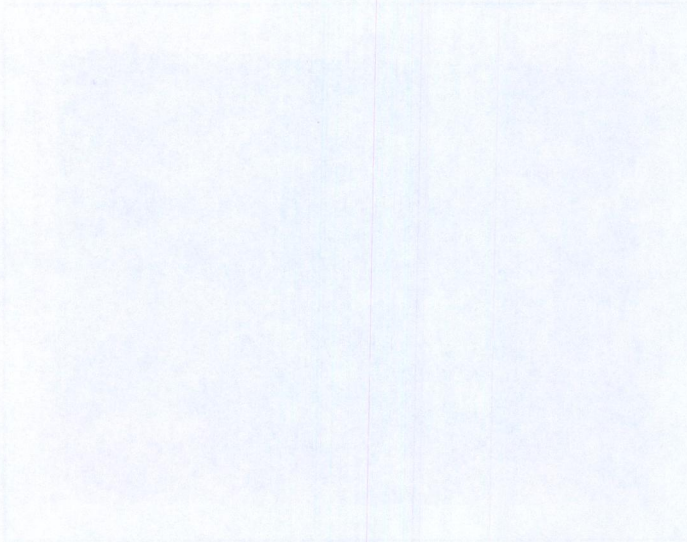
A desperate cry from Felix Nussbaum, a well established Jewish artist with European professional acknowledgement before the war. He studied painting in Hamburg and Berlin, then held his first solo exhibition in 1927 at the Casper Gallery in Berlin. He received immediate critical acclaim for his delightful humorous style. In March 1932 he received an award from the Prussian Ministry of Science Art and Education to work at the prosperous Vilna Massimo College in Rome. Then, on January 30, 1933 Hitler was sanctioned Chancellor of the Reich. Without warning his dictatorial prohibition became obvious at the Prussian Academy's Roman annex. Nussbaum being the only Jewish artist there brusquely took flight to Alassio, never to return to Germany again. In spite of this, he continued to paint steadily, using his immediate surroundings as subject matter, illustrated by "Train Station at Alassio (Figure 5) yet "Zerstörung" (Figure 6) indicates an awareness of both political destruction and personal anxiety.

He remained in Italy for two years then in 1935 moved to Belgium. In an interview with Emile Langui, a critic for the Belgian Workers Party newspaper Nussbaum reflected;

"Afraid and aimless I wandered along the Italian Riviera for sometime, all my time was occupied by my constant search for rest and a new Fatherland. Living nowhere, I roamed around with hastily sketched watercolours rolled up as my baggage. Switzerland, France, Paris until finally the Belgian border opened up to offer salvation. In Ostende I began to work again drew and painted valiantly. I resist and do not grow tired. I'm alright between having to earn money and other daily worries and disruptions that we uprooted ones have to hear, I do not lose my will for good work. 3.

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

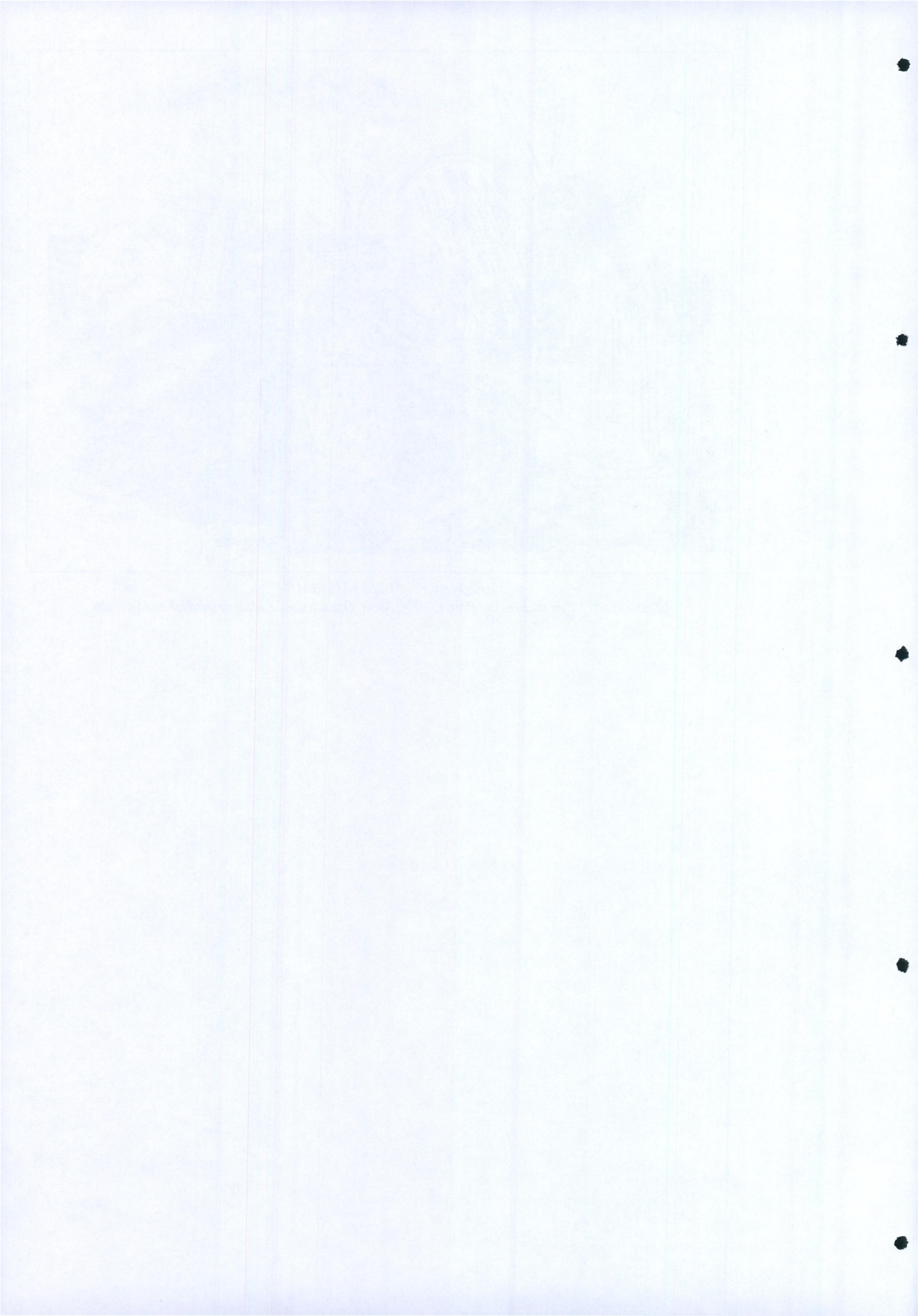
The history of the United States is a complex and multifaceted story that spans centuries. It is a story of exploration, discovery, and the struggle for freedom and independence. The early years of the nation were marked by the arrival of European settlers and the subsequent conflict with Native Americans. The American Revolution was a pivotal moment in the nation's history, leading to the birth of a new country. The years following the Revolution were a period of growth and expansion, as the United States spread across the continent. The Civil War was a defining moment in the nation's history, leading to the abolition of slavery and the preservation of the Union. The years following the Civil War were a period of reconstruction and progress, as the United States emerged as a world power. The 20th century was a period of great change and challenge, as the United States faced the challenges of the Cold War and the Vietnam War. The 21st century has been a period of rapid technological advancement and global interconnectedness, as the United States continues to shape the world.



The history of the United States is a complex and multifaceted story that spans centuries. It is a story of exploration, discovery, and the struggle for freedom and independence. The early years of the nation were marked by the arrival of European settlers and the subsequent conflict with Native Americans. The American Revolution was a pivotal moment in the nation's history, leading to the birth of a new country. The years following the Revolution were a period of growth and expansion, as the United States spread across the continent. The Civil War was a defining moment in the nation's history, leading to the abolition of slavery and the preservation of the Union. The years following the Civil War were a period of reconstruction and progress, as the United States emerged as a world power. The 20th century was a period of great change and challenge, as the United States faced the challenges of the Cold War and the Vietnam War. The 21st century has been a period of rapid technological advancement and global interconnectedness, as the United States continues to shape the world.



Figure 6. FELIX NUSSBAUM.
"Zerstörung". Pen and Ink on Paper, 50 X 70cm. Osnabrück, Kulturgeschichtliches Museum.



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N° du dossier S. P. *A 446-119*
N° van het dossier O. V.

Nom *Nussbaum*
Naam

Prénoms *Felix*
Voornamen

Né à *Osnabrück (Hanovre)*
Geboren te *Allemagne*

Le *11 décembre, 1904*
Den

Nationalité *allemande*
Nationaliteit

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Felix Nussbaum

Signature du titulaire - Handtekening des houders.



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Figure 7. FELIX NUSSBAUM.
"Belgischer Fremdenpaß Nr. 412". Osnabrück, Kulturgeschliches Museum.



In Belgium, Nussbaum began to realise the trauma of his unsettled predicament which presented a deep crisis in his artistic confidence. "Belgischer Fremdenpaß UR412" (Figure 7) is indicative of this lack of security and search for identity. It is also curious to note that while most of his earlier works make no reference to Jewish imagery, under the Nazi oppressive regime he turned to Jewish motifs to enhance a personal sense of identity and belonging.

By 1939 Nussbaum found new stability and inspiration through his political attitude and social situation. He sought new means and new pictorial motifs to express this. The intensity and constant fear of discovery and arrest compelled the artist to document a pictorial diary of those Jews living in hiding "Das Geheimnis (Figure 8) illustrates this threat and fear.

In 1940 Nussbaum was captured and deported to St Cyprien. There seems to be some debate about his deportation to Gurs, also in the south of France. Miraculously he escaped and returned to his wife in hiding in Brussels. The brutality and desolation in the concentration camps, the closeness and threat of death, released a fear in him which became the theme and motivation for his paintings. While interned he experienced the sharpening hatred for the Jews and the mute helplessness of his Jewish fellowmen. "Prisoners at St. Cyprien (Figure 9) and "Organman" (Figure 10) gave vent to these feelings of deprivation and resignation. In his "Self portrait with Star of David" (Figure 11) Nussbaum holds his passport with nervous trepidation, knowing he will not escape the deadly machinery of destruction. Aware that he is under threat of death, as he, is a Jew according to race and creed in the eyes of the Nazis. In the portrait he excludes his birthplace and nationality demonstrating his expulsion and rejection. Acutely conscious of the "final solution", "Deathdance" (Figure 12) dramatizes the Jewish fate, a work encompassing death, destruction, drudgery and broken dreams. It also depicts the oppressors mockery of their contributions to music, art and science. The foreground represents this culture destroyed, music notes, sculptures, a reel of film, paint, paintings, mathematical instruments and other objects are scattered, broken on the ground. In the face of the angel of death their indomitable spirit survives in an anthem through martyrdom.

In 1944, Nussbaum was recaptured with his wife. Both were deported on the last train from Belgium to Auschwitz. Nussbaum's endeavours to fabricate a conceptual art, which in itself, represented determination and salvation, perished in the gas chambers.



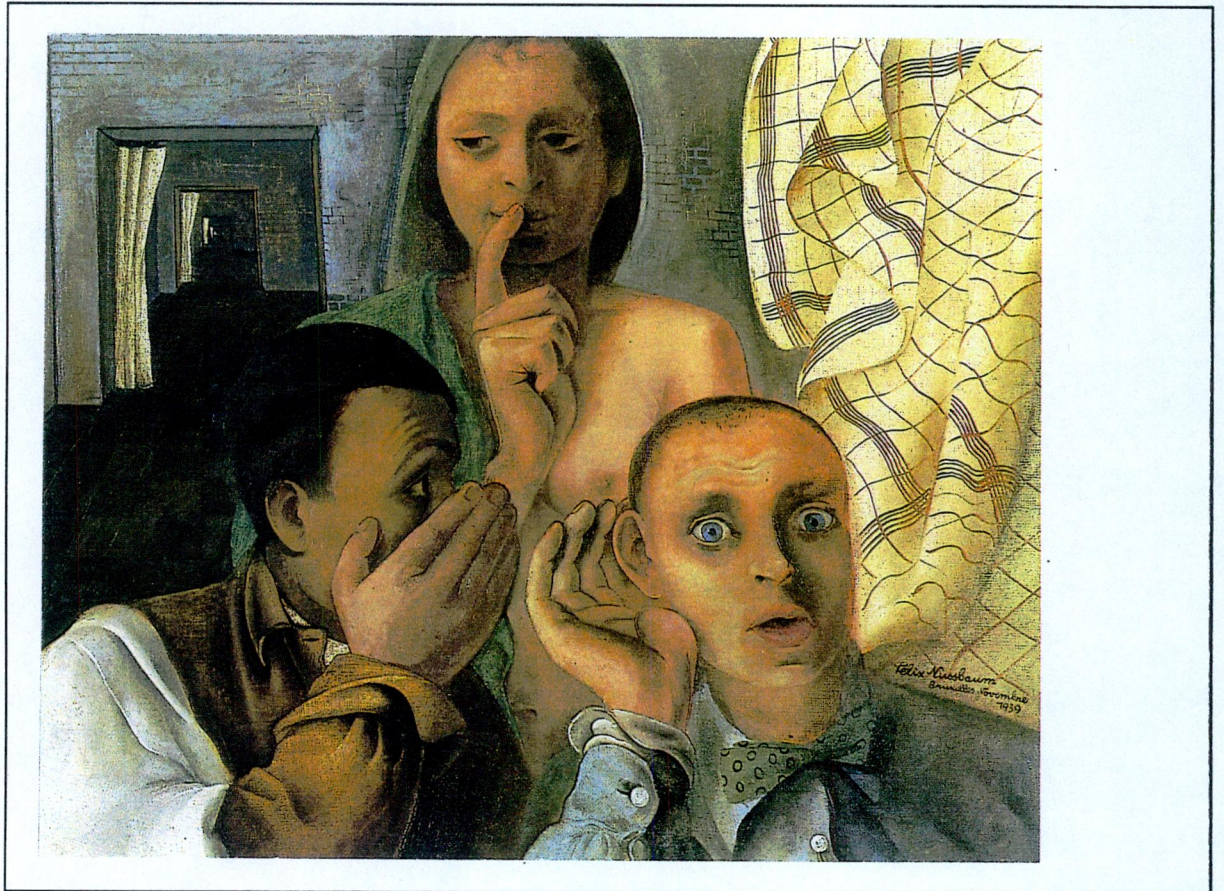


Figure 8. FELIX NUSSBAUM.
"Das Geheimnis" 1939. Oil on Canvas, 61 × 74.5cm.

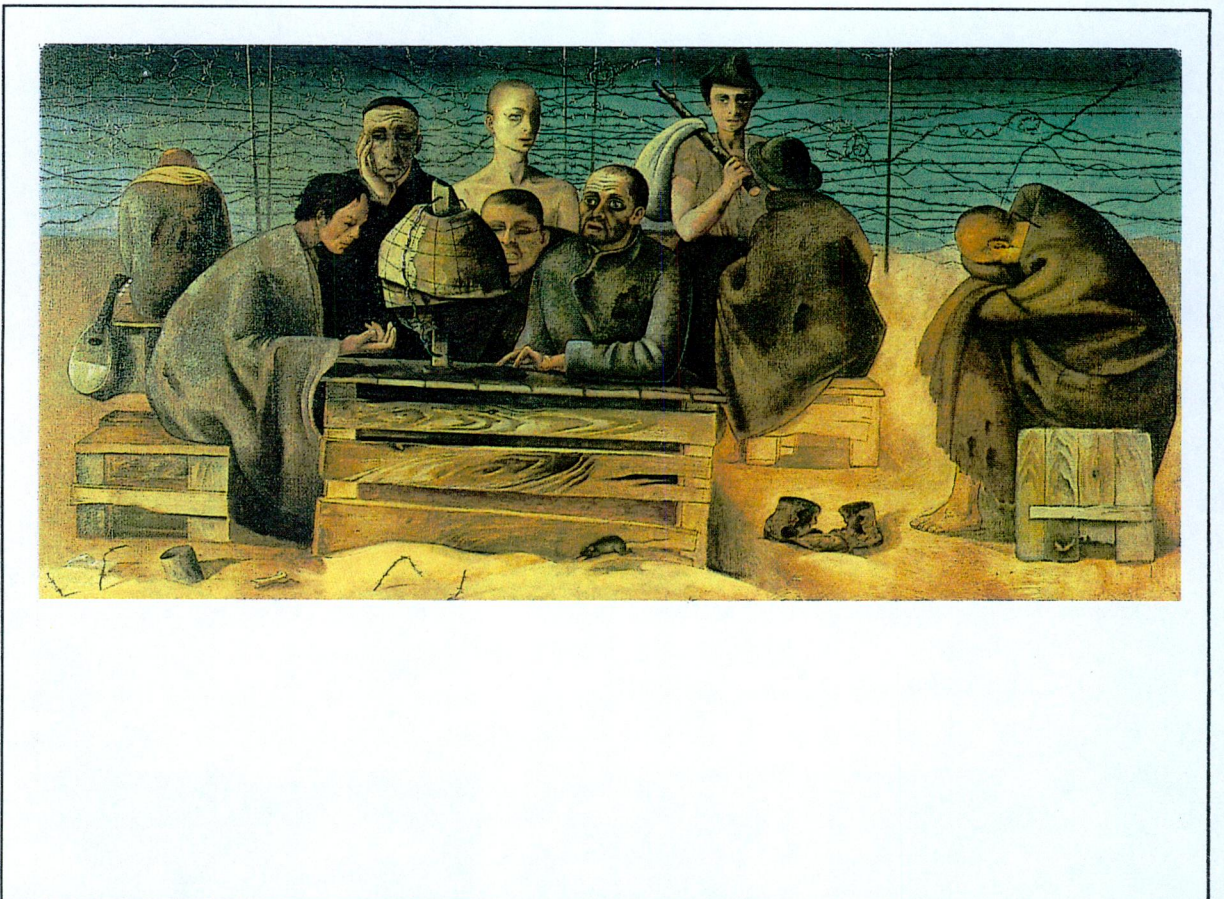
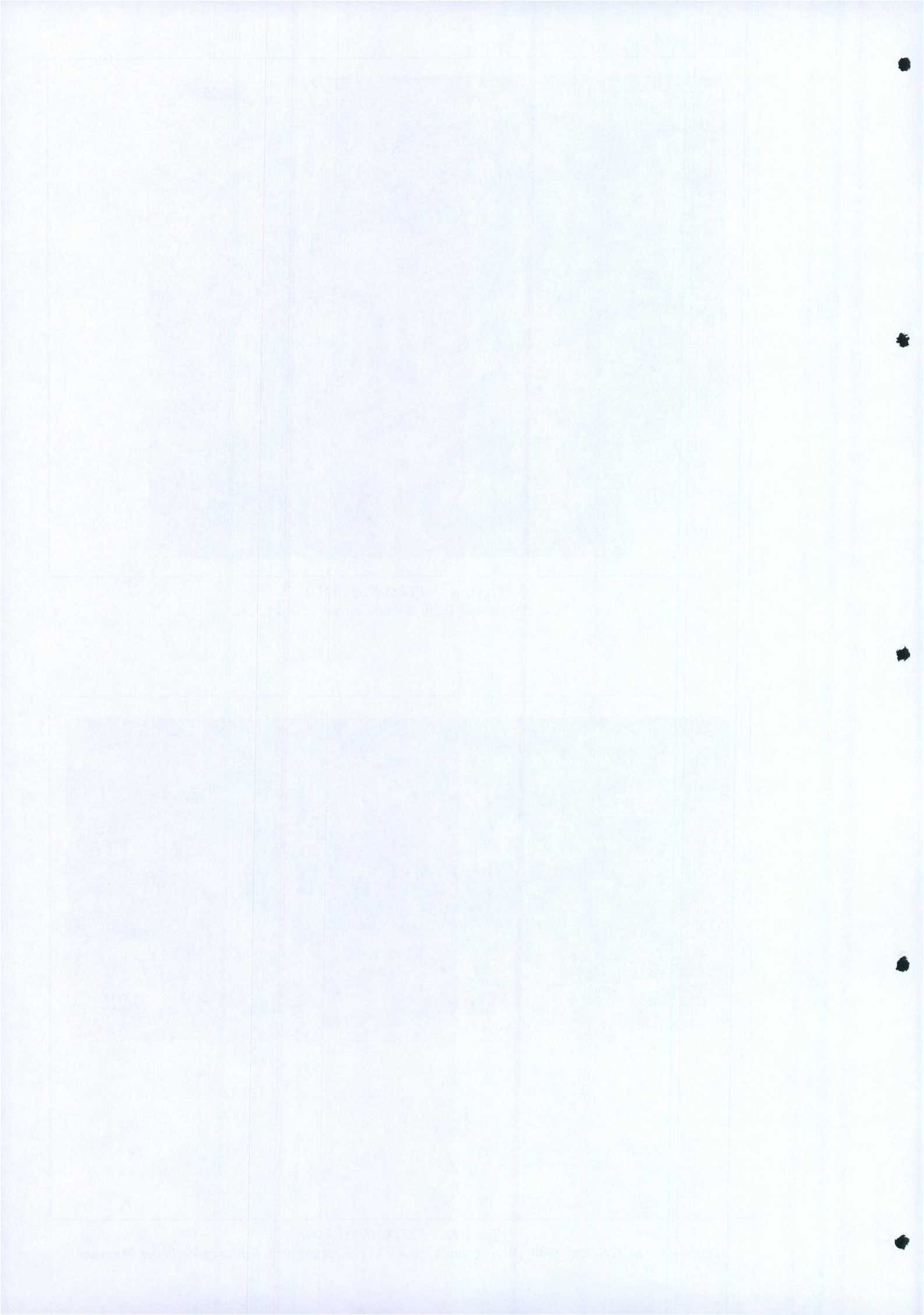


Figure 9. FELIX NUSSBAUM.
"Prisoners at St. Cyprien" 1942. Oil on Canvas, 68 × 138 cm. Osnabrück, Kulturgeschiliches Museum.



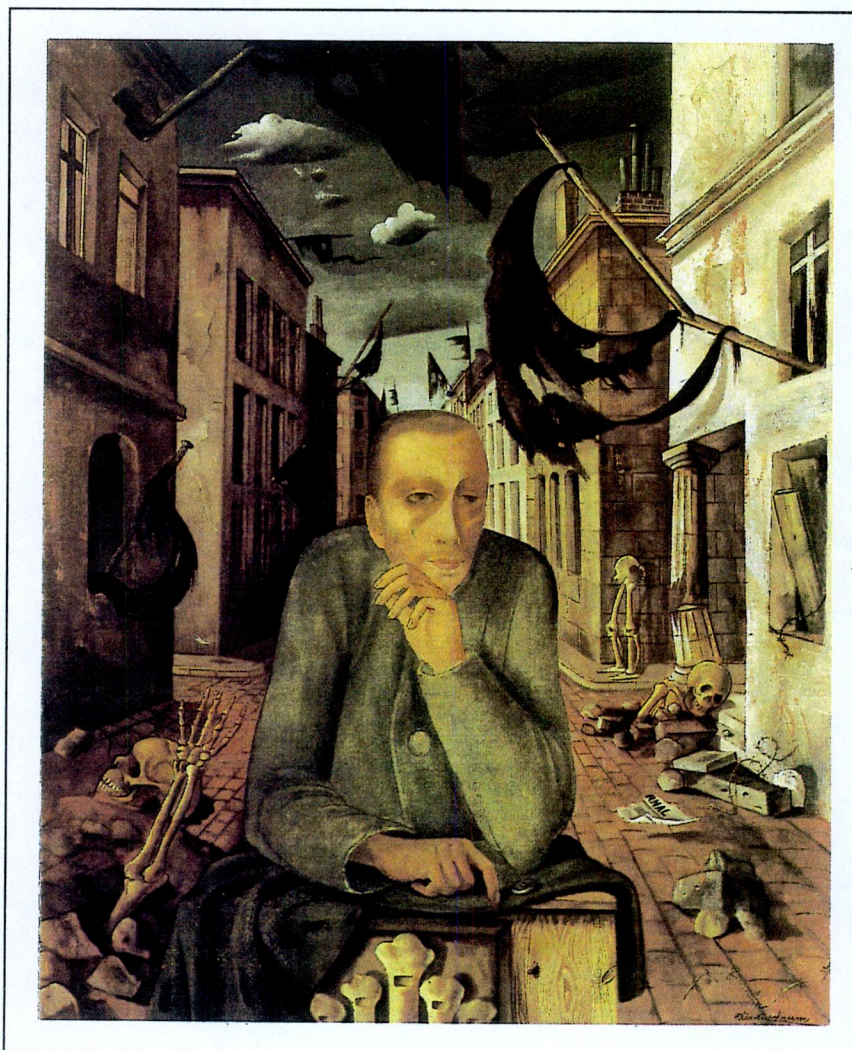
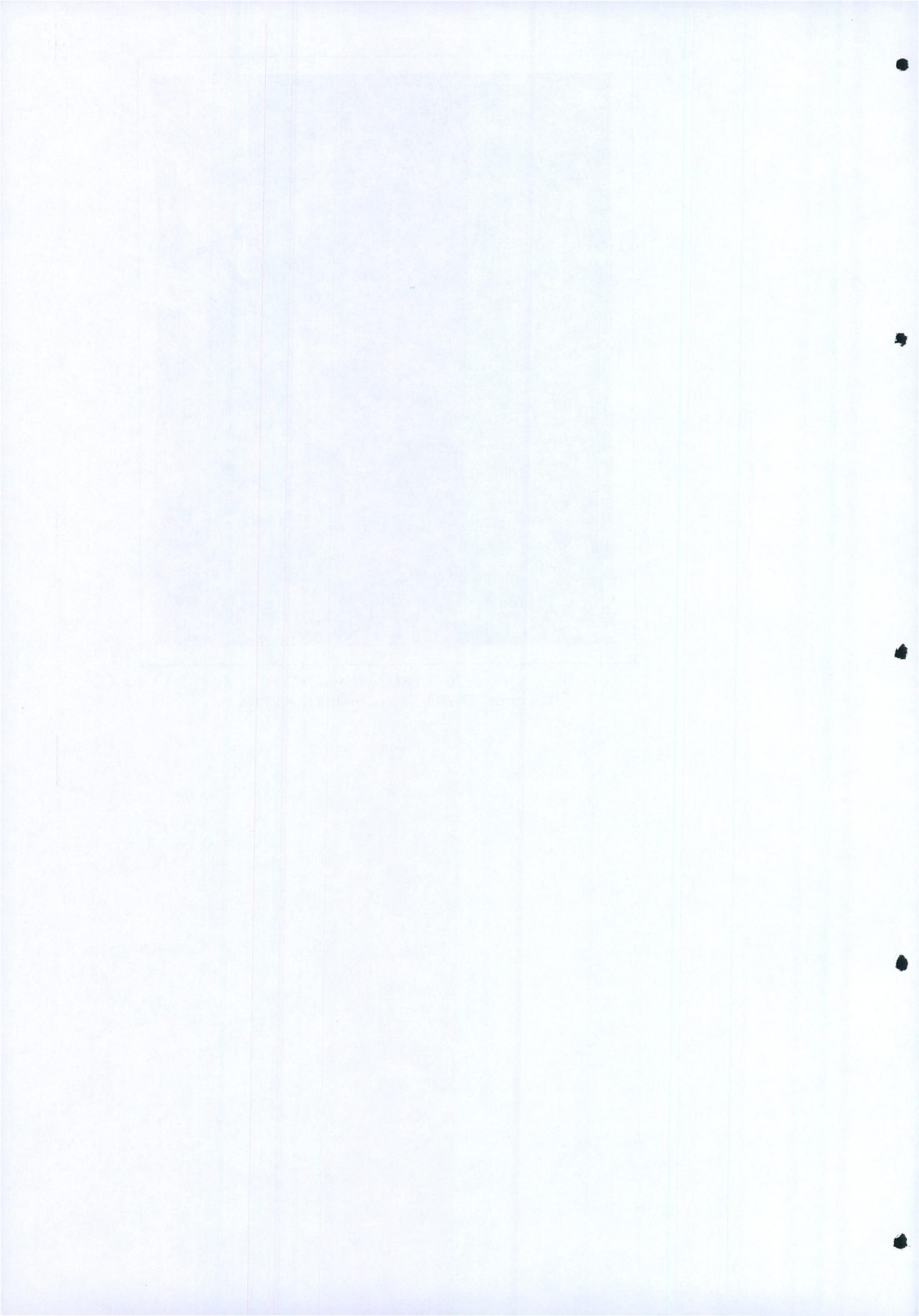


Figure 10. FELIX NUSSBAUM.
"Organman" 1942/43. Oil on Canvas, 112 × 92 cm.



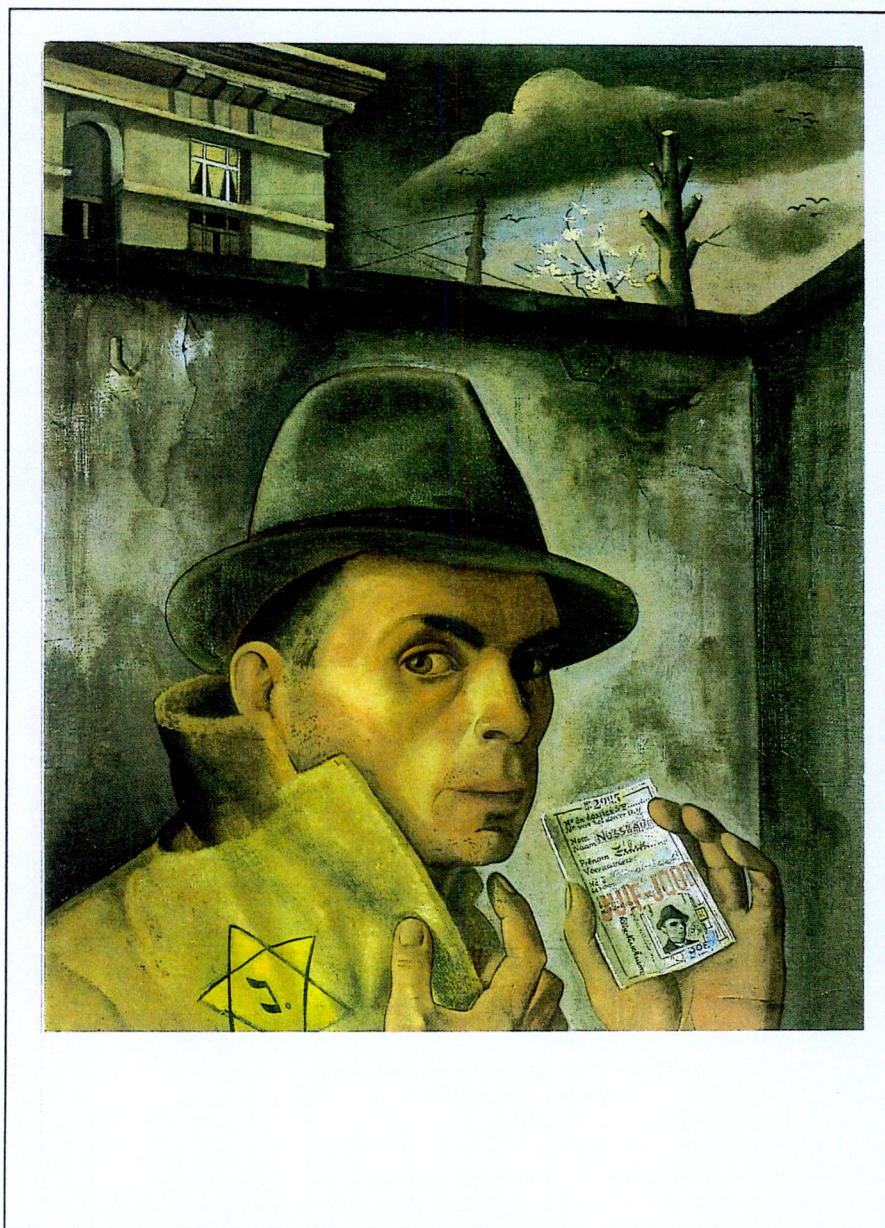


Figure 11. *FELIX NUSSBAUM.*
"Self Portrait with Star of David". Oil on Canvas, 56 × 49 cm.
Osnabrück, Kulturgeschichtliches Museum.

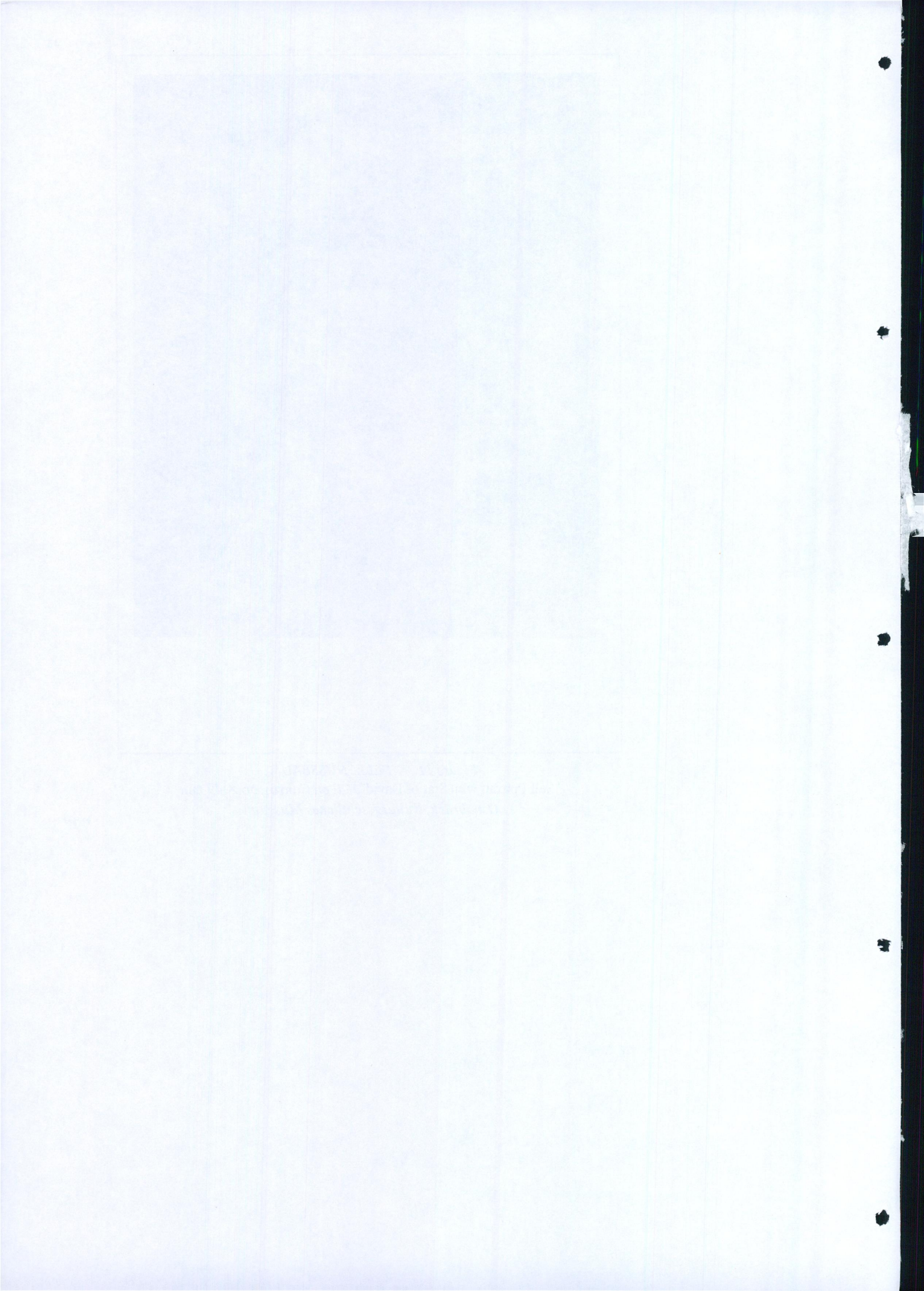
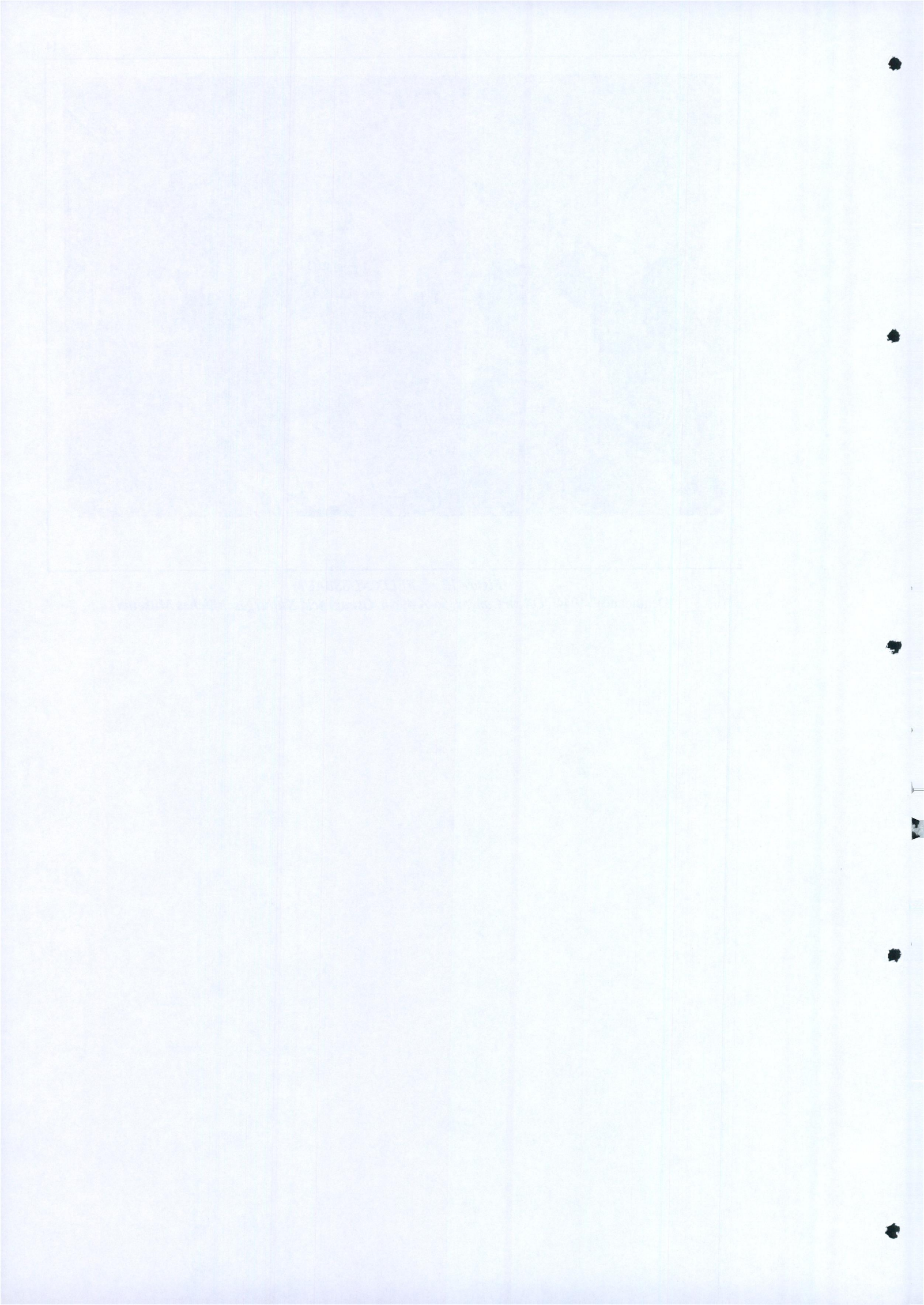




Figure 12. FELIX NUSSBAUM.
"Deathdance" 1944. Oil on Canvas, 56 × 49cm. Osnabrück, Kulturgeschichtliches Museum.



"Farewell to the year 1940. We are not sorry to see the old year pass, since it was a year of captivity, pain and sorrow for much of the world. We hope that the new year will bring us lasting peace, freedom and the uplifting labour of reconstruction. 4. Gurs Dec 1940 (Figure 13)

A note of optimism by Max Lingner while interned at Camp Gurs. Lingner came from an artistic background. His father was an engraver printer influenced by Albrecht Durer. Lingner attended the Leipzig Academy for graphics by night and studied as an apprentice printer by day. He was accepted into the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts and excelled in his field. After the first World War Lingner returned to his work as artist, producing watercolours, portraits, landscapes, oil paintings and experimented with sculpture in the new objectivity contemporary style. During this period he worked as an illustrator and had his drawings published in the French Communist press: Le Monde, the L'Avante Garde and others.

Arrested for being a "dangerous international communist agitator" Lingner spent five years interned in different camps and prisons: Roland Garries, Villerbon, Cepoy, St. Nicolas, Les Milles and finally Camp Gurs. Gurs and other transit camps were privileged in that they were brought relief packages containing materials by organisations such as the Swiss Red Cross, and other French, Swiss and American humanitarian organisations.

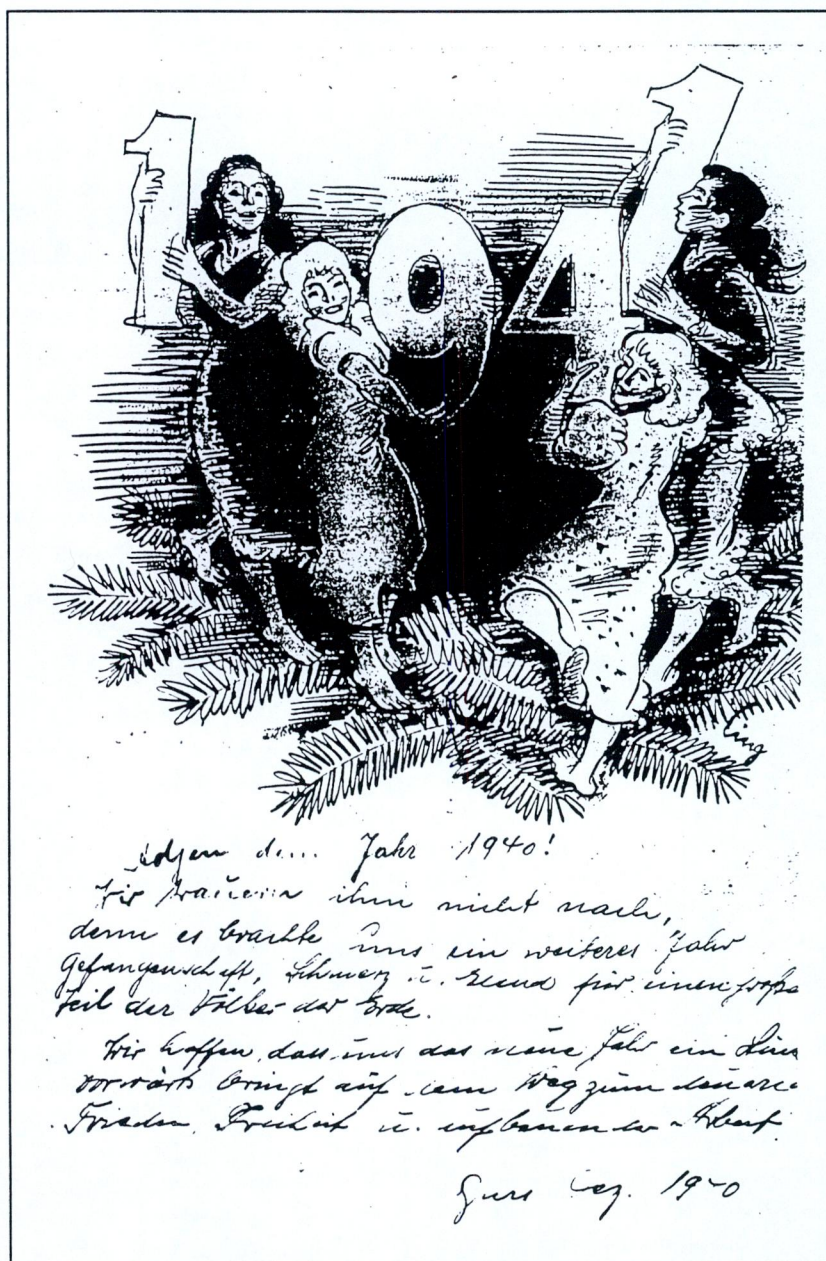


Figure 13. MAX LINGNER.

"New Years Card" Gurs, 1941. Ink Pencil, Watercolour, 10.5 X 8.5". Private Collection, Berlin.



These were also responsible for smuggling hundreds of drawings out of the camps. Here with the availability of materials supplied by the communists and international relief organisations. Lingner began to record and draw, "Three women behind barbed wire" (Figure 14) "Prisoners eating" (Figure 15) and "the distribution of soup" (Figure 16) are some of the drawings he produced depicting conditions in the camp. He also spent time teaching the children art from a makeshift school and began to write his memoirs "In Search of the Present". These were smuggled out of the camp, but were never found.

Due to the disappearance of Lingner's file he was released under house arrest and sent to Chansaye in Poule, here he wrote his second memoirs including his ideas on the purpose of art. In 1944 Lingner narrowly escaped re-arrest and fled to Paris. He returned to Germany in 1949, and received a professorship from the Academy of Painting and Applied Arts in Berlin. Up until his death in 1959 he continued to document his experiences of internment and other substantive themes and motifs.

From an early age Peter Edel was in contact with many famous German artists in particular Kathe Kollwitz and Max Liebermann. His grandfather was a prominent contemporary illustrator who moved in these circles, he taught and encouraged Edel to study art. Horrified by the denunciation and aggression towards the Jewish community, Edel became involved with the communist resistance which automatically brought misfortune upon himself. He was arrested and interned at Grossbeeren, Auschwitz, Sachsenhausen, Mauthausen and Ebensee. In Grossbeeren he began to sketch, his output consisted mainly of portraits of his fellow prisoners. He set up a barter system whereby he could exchange his drawings for food and materials. On arrival at Auschwitz, Edel, with a high command of the German language, declared himself as an artist, which insured his escape from the gas chambers. "Self portrait" (Figure 17) portrays his pugnacity and agitation of his personal predicament. In the background lightly scrawled is "ARBEIT MACHT FREI" which is a recurring motif used in the art from the concentration camps. It means 'WORK MAKES YOU FREE', this was on billboards at the entrance of many of the camps and was another deceptive ploy by the Nazis. During 1944, Edel was deported to Sachsenhausen where he completed a sequence of drawings depicting the people and social conditions of this camp (Figures 18, 19, 20) the conditions of which became deplorable towards the end of the war. Many of his drawings survived and now hang in the Sachsenhausen Memorial Museum.



Figure 14. MAX LINGNER.
 "Three Women behind Barbed Wire" Gurs, 1941. Ink Wash, 7.5 X 9".
 Private Collection, Paris.



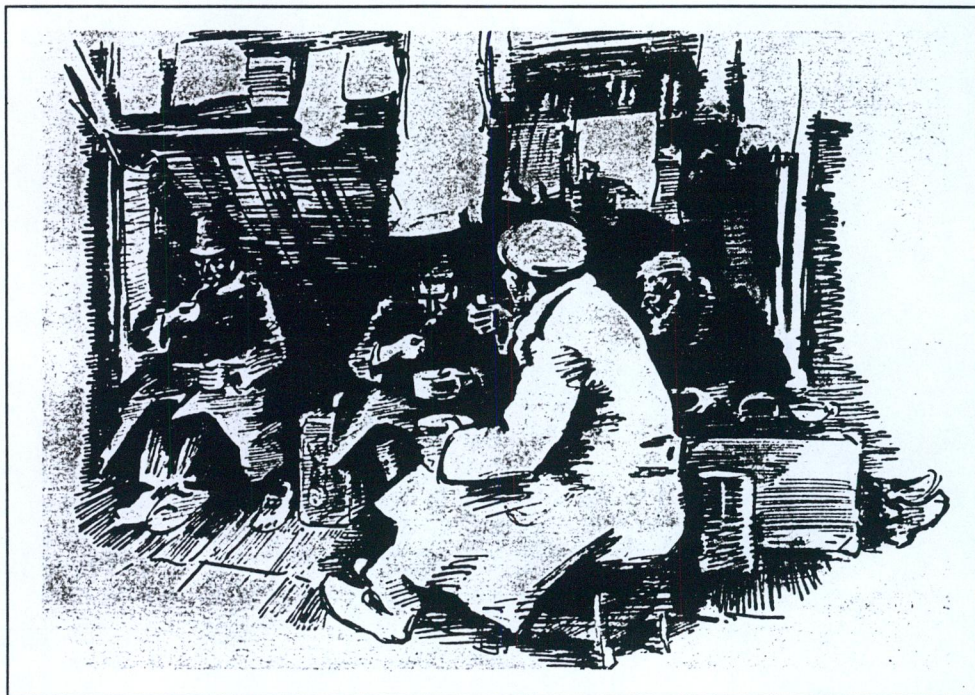


Figure 15. MAX LINGNER.
 "Prisoners Eating" Gurs, 1941. Ink Wash, 7.5 × 9.5".
 Private Collection, Paris.



Figure 16. MAX LINGNER.
 "The Distribution of Soup" Gurs, 1941. Ink and Colour Chalk, 7 × 13".
 Private Collection, Paris.

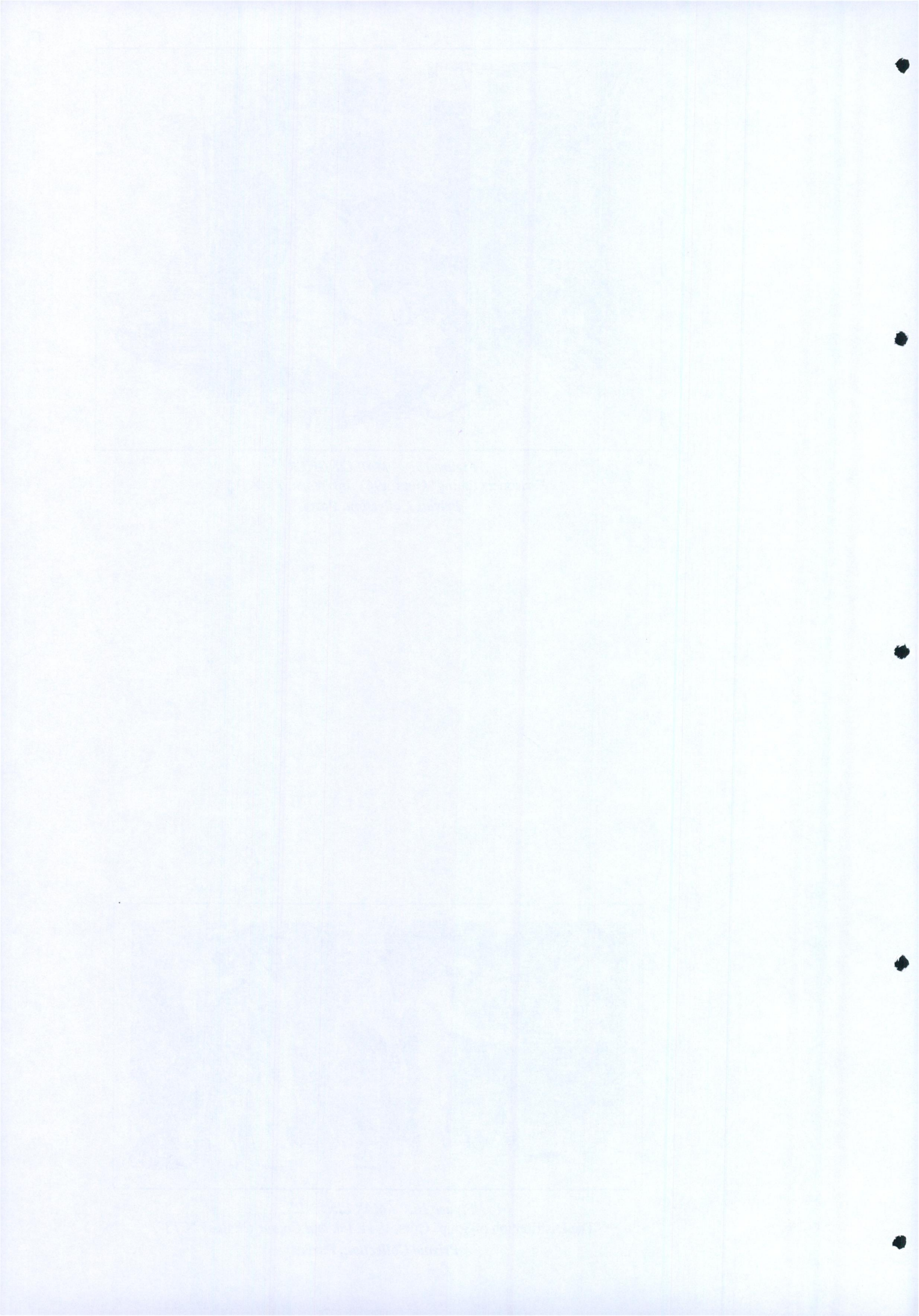
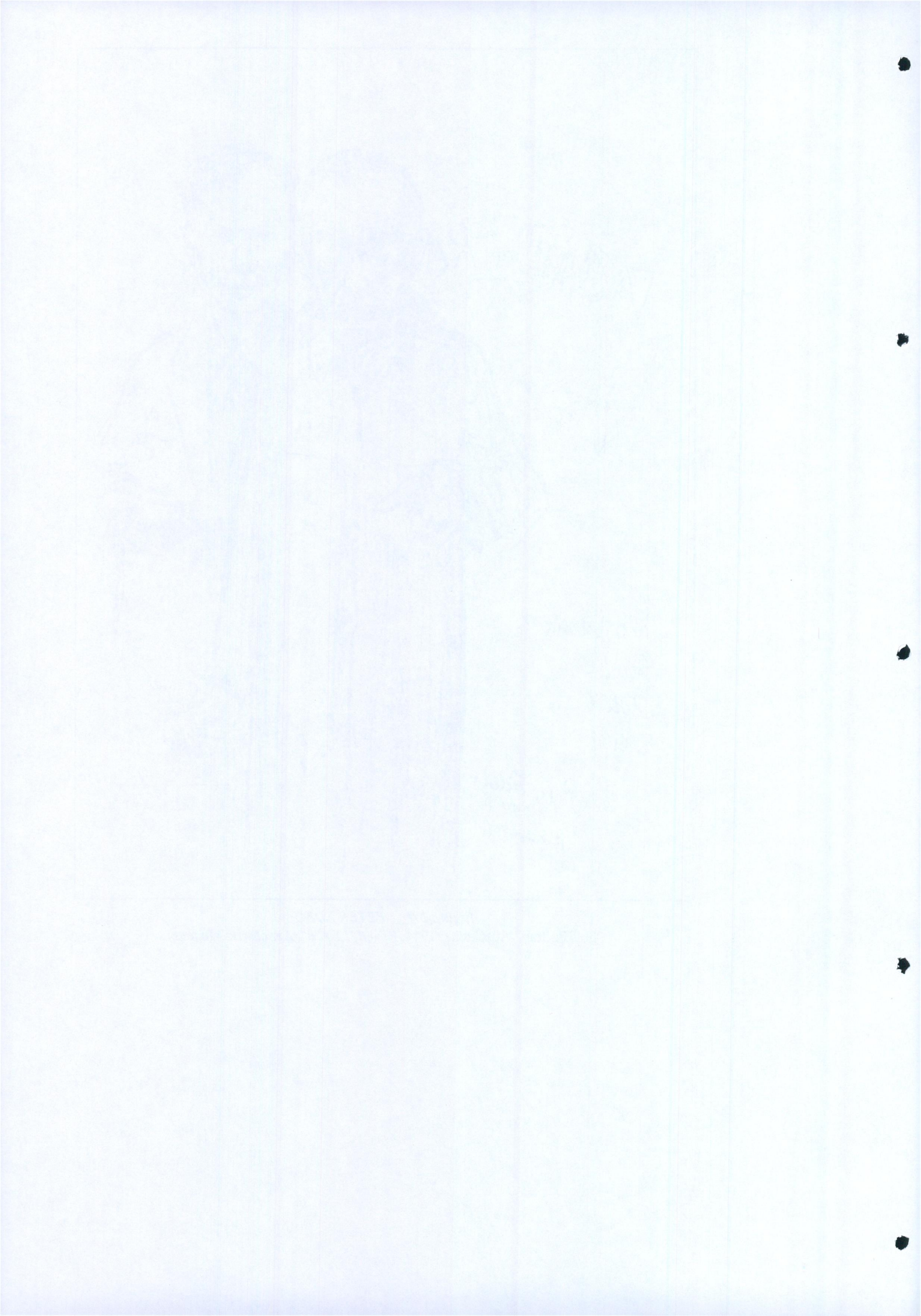




Figure 17. PETER EDEL.
"Self Portrait" Auschwitz, 1944. Pencil, 12 X 8". Auschwitz Museum.



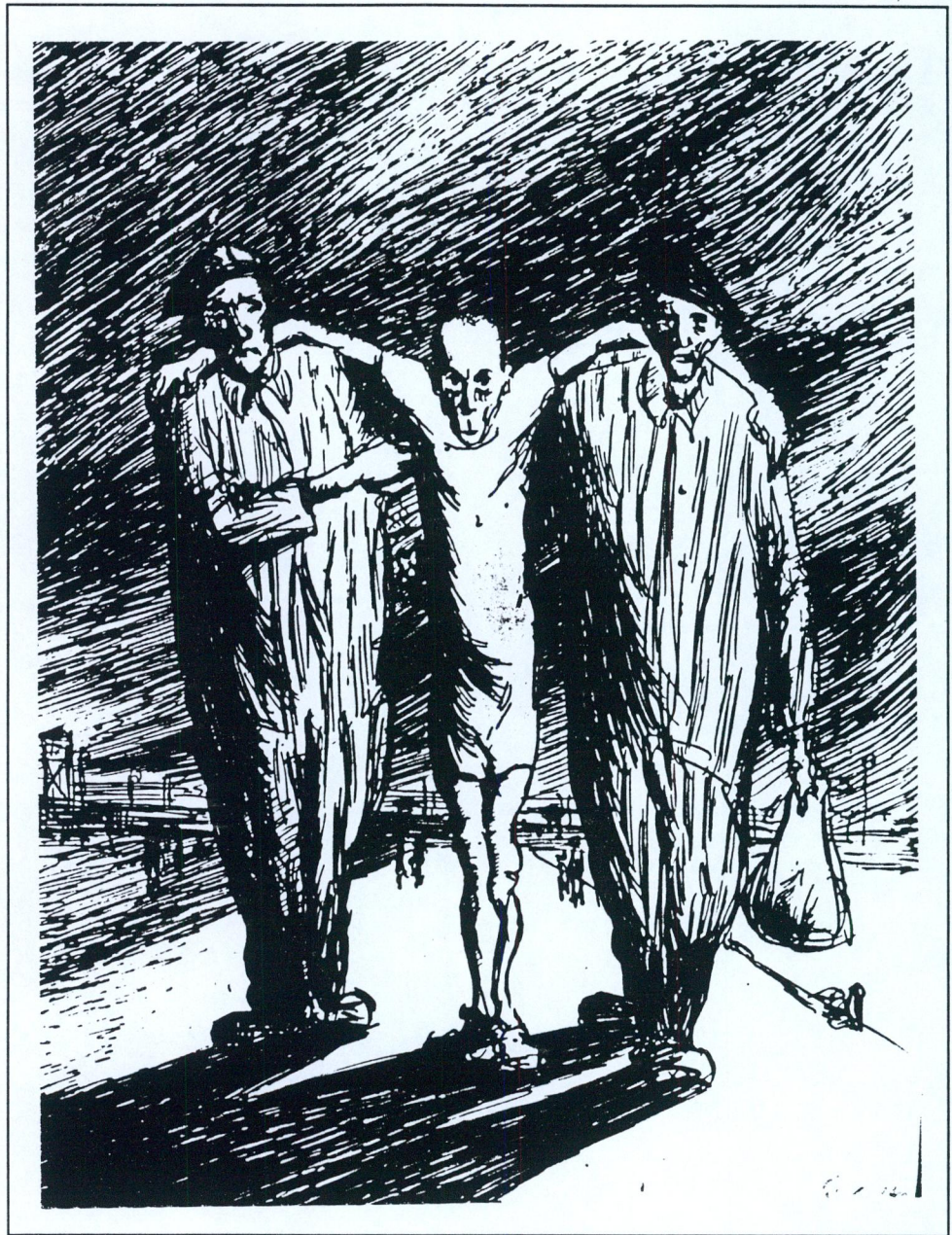


Figure 18. PETER EDEL.
"Prisoners" . Pen and Ink. Nationale Mahn-Und Gedenkstätte Sachsenhausen Archives.

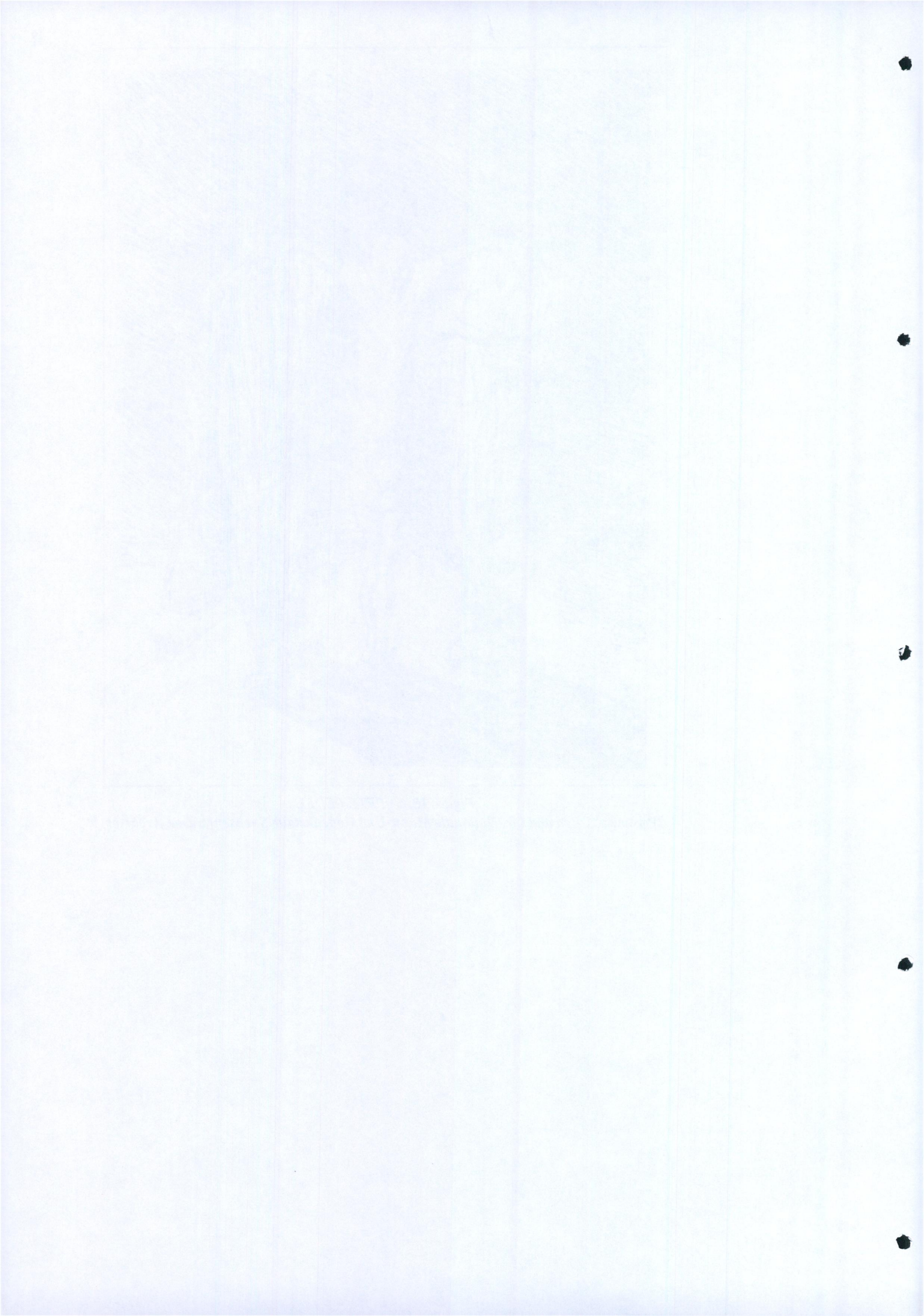
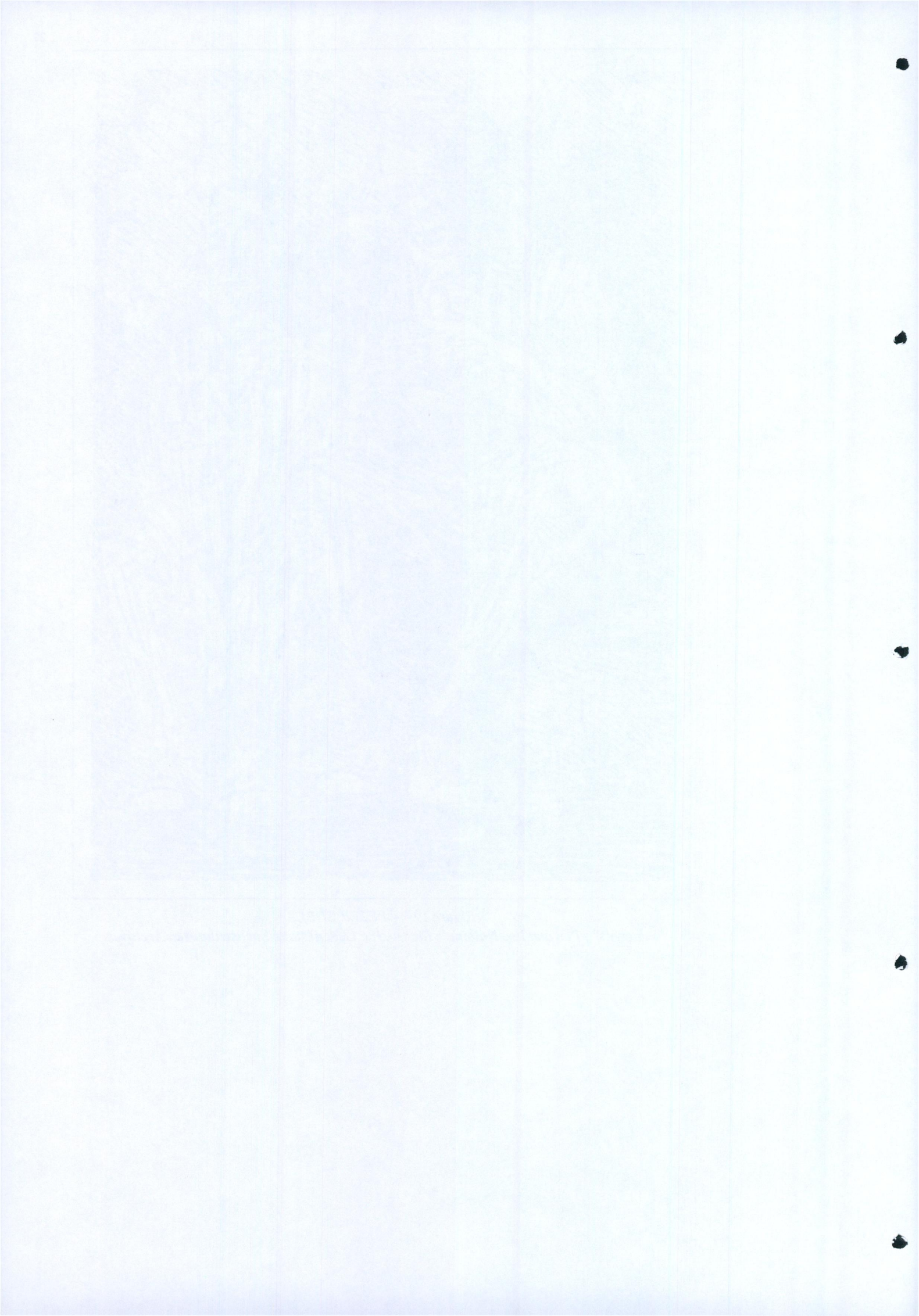




Figure 19. PETER EDEL.

"Prisoners" . Pen and Ink. Nationale Mahn-Und Gedenkstätte Sachsenhausen Archives.



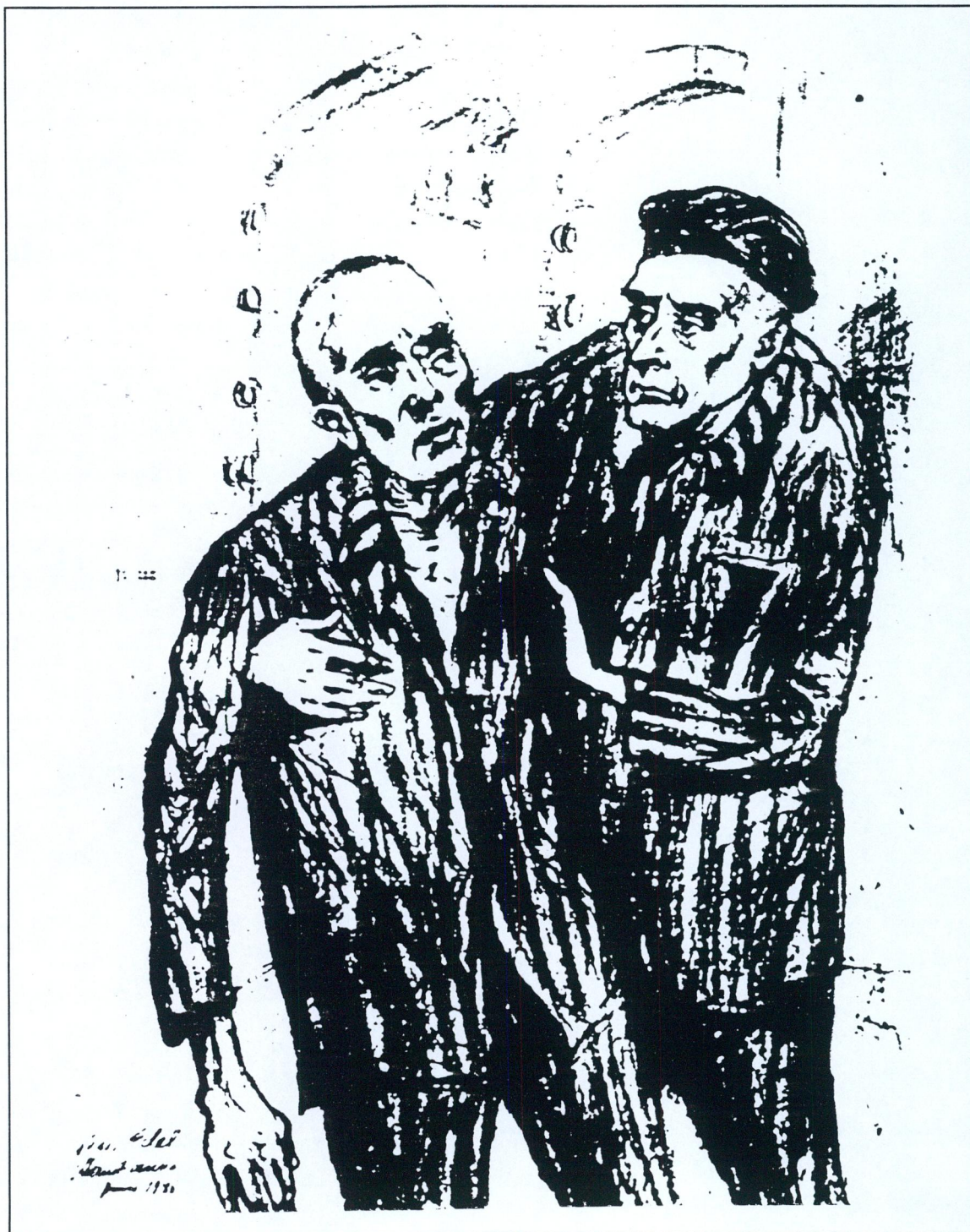
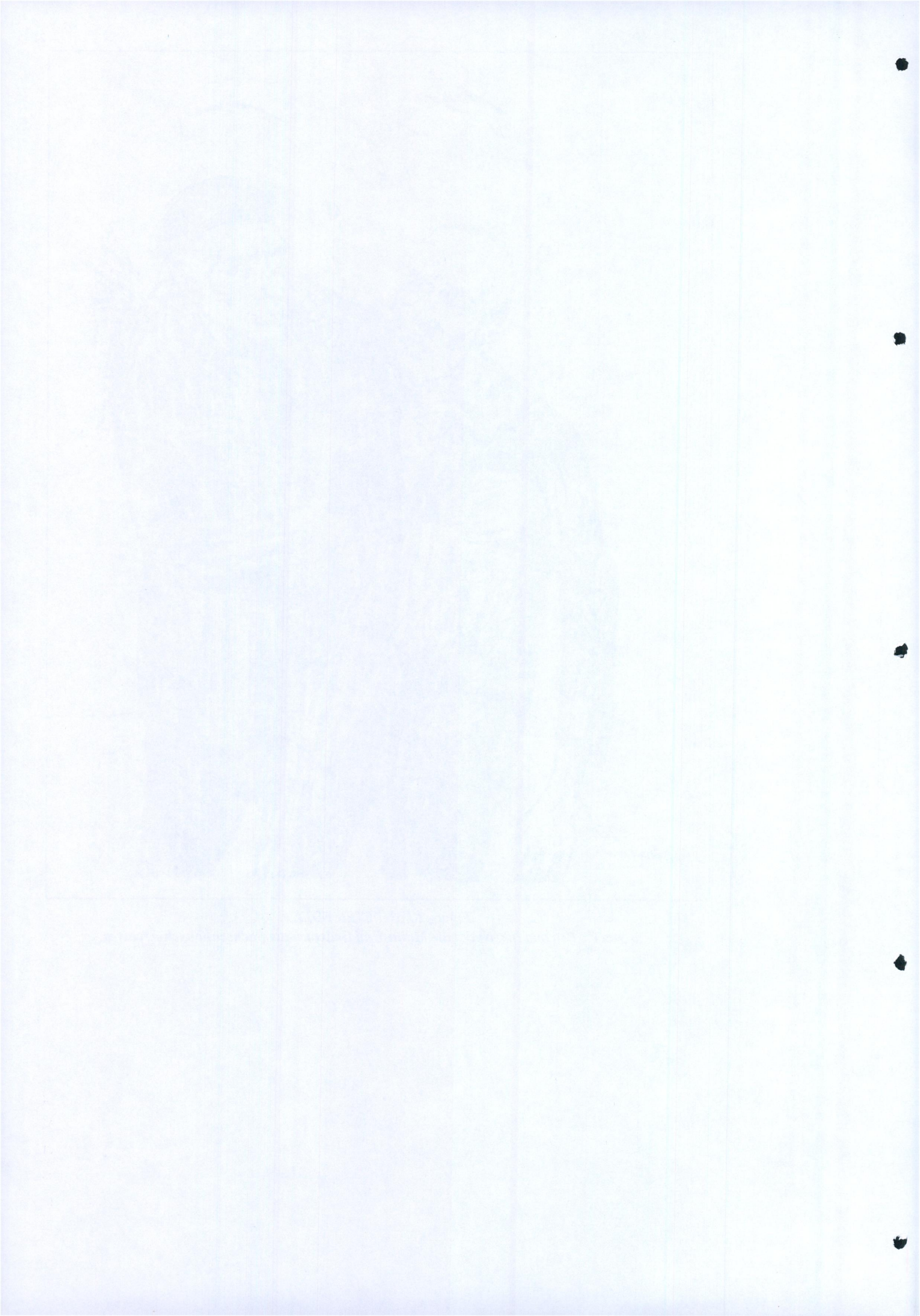


Figure 20. PETER EDEL.
"Prisoners". Pen and Ink. Nationale Mahn-Und Gedenkstätte Sachsenhausen Archives.



ARTISTS IN BUCHENWALD

THE AVAILABILITY of written literature on the artists interned is limited. An invaluable source has been "The Art of the Holocaust" by Janet Blatter and information sought out through museums and memorial centres all over the world. The main body of this work resides in museums and therefore is not readily available to the general public. Buchenwald has been preserved in its original condition where the following artists executed their work.

Herbert Sandberg survived the holocaust, having been interned from 1934 up until June 12th 1945. Prior to his arrest he had studied under the German Expressionist Otto Muller at the Breslau Academy of fine arts. He then became an active member of the communist party, a member of the Revolutionary German Artist Association and chairperson of a groups named the Association of the Left for Creative and Free Professions. He pursued his career as a press illustrator being influenced by the contemporary theatre and cabaret circuit. His works, mainly portraits, sketches and caricatures were published in many of the modern newspapers and pamphlets.

Sandberg was imprisoned for three years at the Brandenburg Gordon penitentiary, accused and found guilty of "preparations to commit high treason". 1. In 1939 he was transferred to Buchenwald. This concentration camp established in 1937 to facilitate men was somewhat unusual in that the prisoners eventually began to control the camps administration. On April 11, 1945, shortly before the liberation by the US Army the prisoners seized total control of the camp. Sandberg was set to work as a stonemason, which saved his life during the mass deportations to Auschwitz in 1943. In a postwar interview Sandberg states:

"I dislike to talk about the time of my imprisonment.

The question most often asked. How did you

manage to survive? Only he can understand who is familiar with the workers solidarity. The solidarity carried me and lifted me up from the first moment to the last, united materially and spiritually to similarly minded people. We were enriched because our time had a purpose we knew why we were interned and daily we tried to renew our purpose. What mattered most was the possibility of discussion and debate. These were fed by the constant arrival of new comrades from all surroundings countries, many were of the Intelligencia. Spiritually poor is really only he, who sees no purpose in living. There was for us a definite purpose in living. There was a definite purpose to fight against the murdering system by sabotage. To sabotage their intentions by saving as many people from death as possible. In the Spring of 1944 during a short illness which interrupted my work as a bricklayer I sketched eighteen drawings with coal smut and diluted chalk which were smuggled out to Erfurt by a political friend. I picked them up after my release. At the beginning of my penal servitude I drew some caricatures for my amusement which I continued at Buchenwald. If my work today is acclaimed, it is surely only because it was done from the heart. Besides that, it is a piece of proof that the political prisoners at that time and in that situation continued resistance to the regime. I delighted most in the work I did in April 1944, exactly a year later it became reality". 2. (Figures 21, 27).



Figure 21. HERBERT SANDBERG.
"New Impressions" Buchenwald, 1944/45.
Rust, Pencil, Blackwash, 7 × 4.5".
Museum for German History.

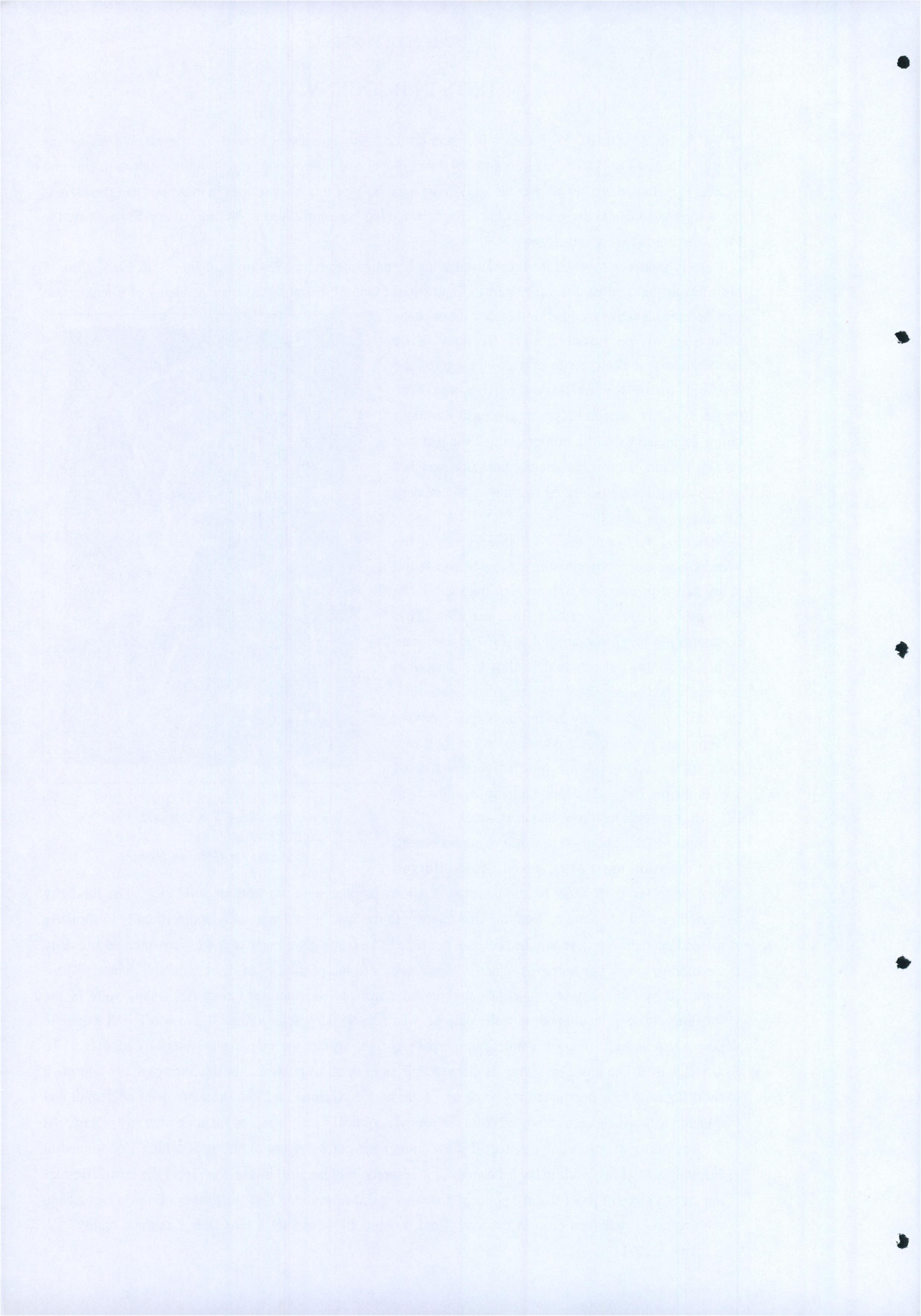




Figure 22. HERBERT SANDBERG.
"A Friend is Ill". Buchenwald, 1944/45.
Rust, Pencil, Blackwash, 7 × 4.5".
Museum for German History.



Figure 23. HERBERT SANDBERG.
"Labor". Buchenwald, 1944/45.
Rust, Pencil, Blackwash, 7 × 4.5".
Museum for German History.

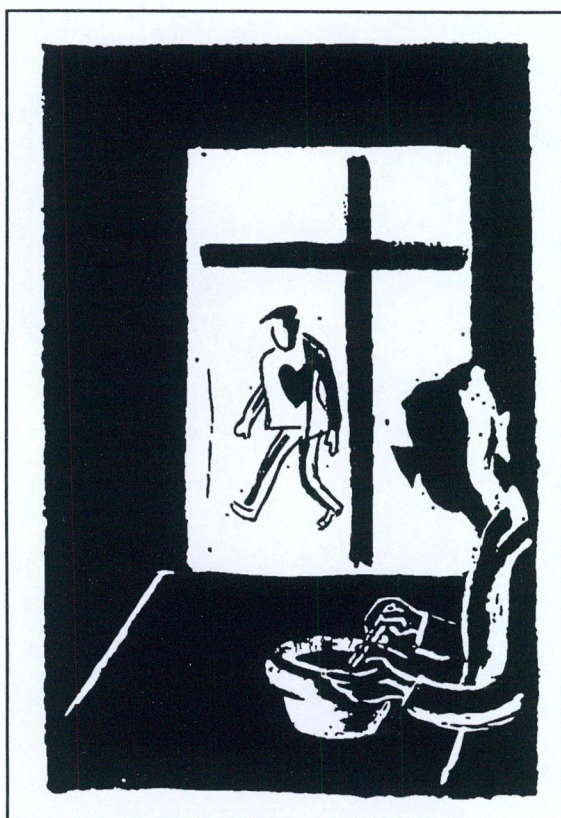


Figure 24. HERBERT SANDBERG.
"The Friend". Buchenwald, 1944/45.
Rust, Pencil, Blackwash, 7 × 4.5".
Museum for German History.

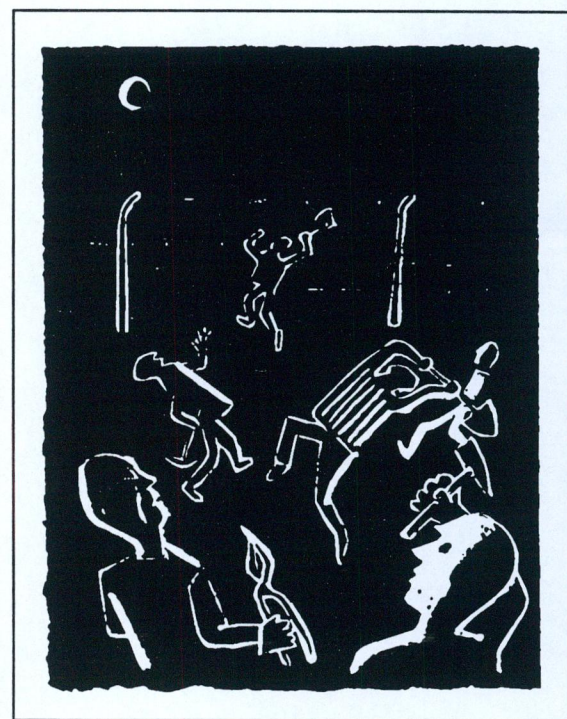


Figure 25. HERBERT SANDBERG.
"The Wire". Buchenwald, 1944/45.
Rust, Pencil, Blackwash, 7 × 4.5".
Museum for German History.



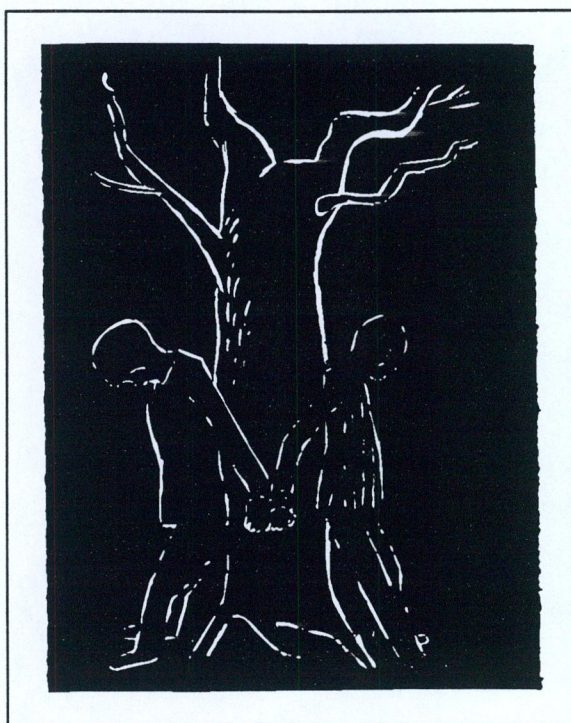


Figure 26. HERBERT SANDBERG.
"The Last Night". Buchenwald, 1944/45.
Rust, Pencil, Blackwash, 7 × 4.5".
Museum for German History.

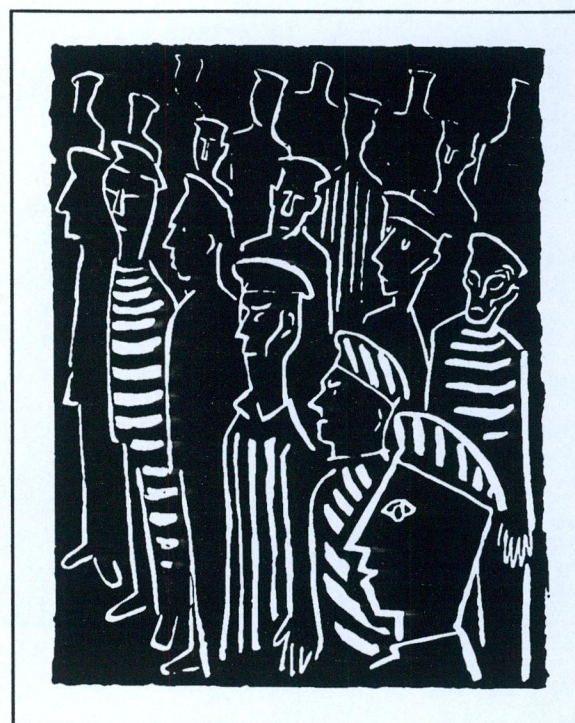


Figure 27. HERBERT SANDBERG.
"First Roll Call". Buchenwald, 1944/45.
Rust, Pencil, Blackwash, 7 × 4.5".
Museum for German History.

This artwork is similar in execution to Frans Masereels *Passionate journey*. It is a depiction of conditions relationships and brutalities of daily life documented in chronological order like a story board.

After his liberation Sandberg continued to work in this fashion working from his drawings from Buchenwald, produced "Eire Freundschaft", a cycle of thirty woodblocks. Later he was approached to portray his experiences for the Buchenwald museum. This led to a second major cycle of seventy etchings (Figure 28) entitled "Der Wag". The themes include post war experience, internment, resistance, persecution and survival in a post war Germany.

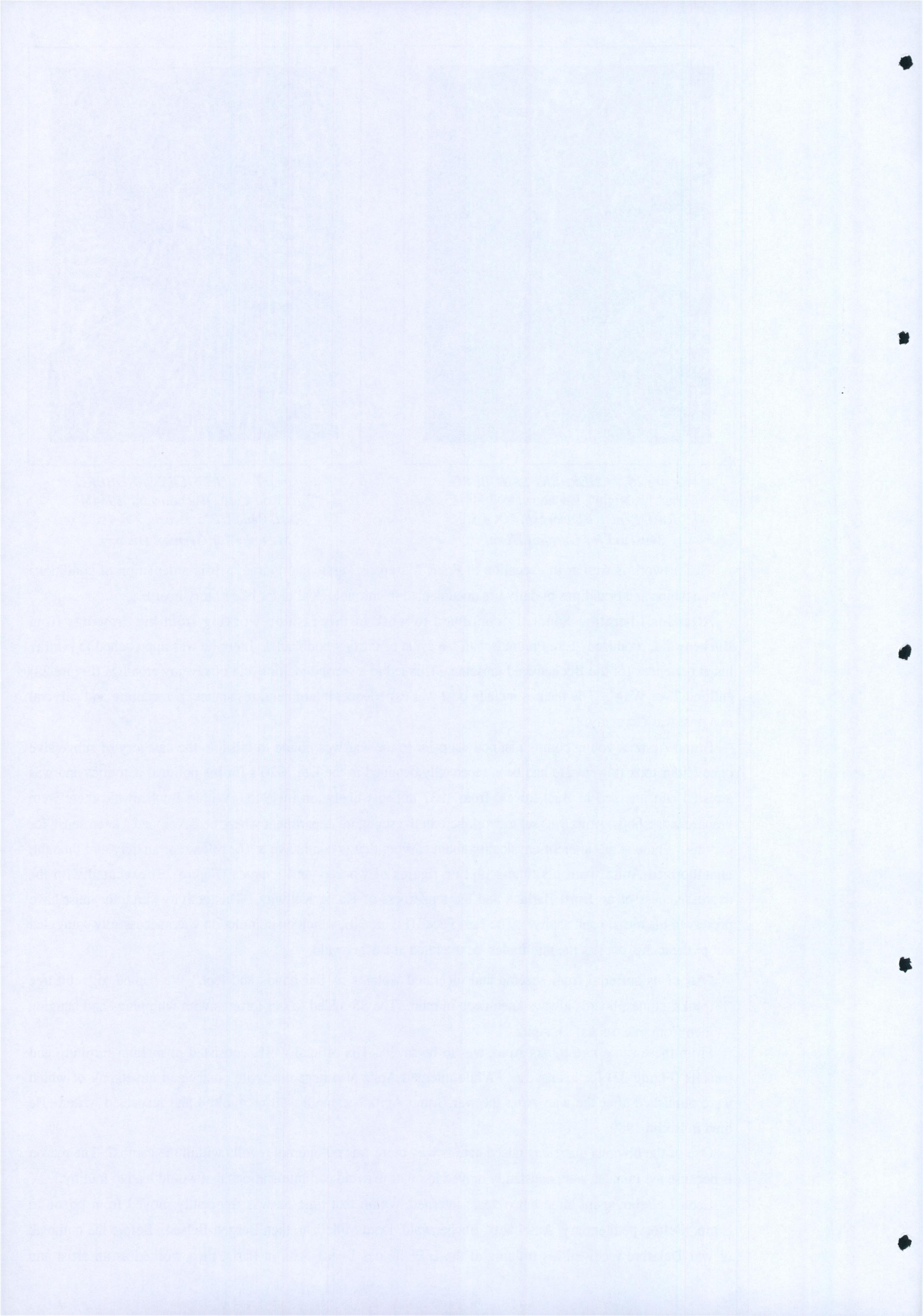
Bruno Apitz, a young communist activist prior to the war was bound to fall into the category of subversive once Hitler took power. He had been repeatedly detained in the late 1920's for his political activities and was arrested and interned in Buchenwald from 1937 until its liberation in 1945. Within Buchenwald there were graphic workshops, Apitz was set to work here in the sculpture department where he developed a keen sense for carving. There is an inherent physicality about carving that is conducive to the release of anxiety and thought, unauthorized Apitz spent his time sculpting figures of workers and inmates (Figure 29) executed with the expressiveness of an Ernst Barlach and the tenderness of Kathe Kollwitz. This activity certainly must have preserved his morale and sanity. "The Last Face" (Figure 30), which on completion was successfully smuggled out of the camp, depicts the multitudes incarcerated at Buchenwald.

"All of us suffered from eczema and ulcerated wounds on our hands and feet. We hauled gigantic tree trunks, stones, boards always knee-deep in mud. The SS added to our tortures with whippings and hanging men from tree trunks". 3. Apitz.

From these same tree trunks Apitz was to be saved. His official work, consisted of making furniture and trinkets (Figure 31) for his captors. While interned Apitz also began to write poetry and novels, all of which were published after the war. After the war Bruno Apitz became a well recognised and respected writer. He died in Berlin 1980.

One of the obvious questions raised here is why there was no internal revolts within the camps? The reason is because the inmates were constantly moved in order to avoid communications that would lead to mutiny.

Leon Delarbre spent almost two years interned, within that time he was frequently moved from prison to camp. Belfort penitentiary, Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dora Millelbau, then Bergen-Belsen. Before the outbreak of war Delarbre received his training at the L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, then worked as an artist and



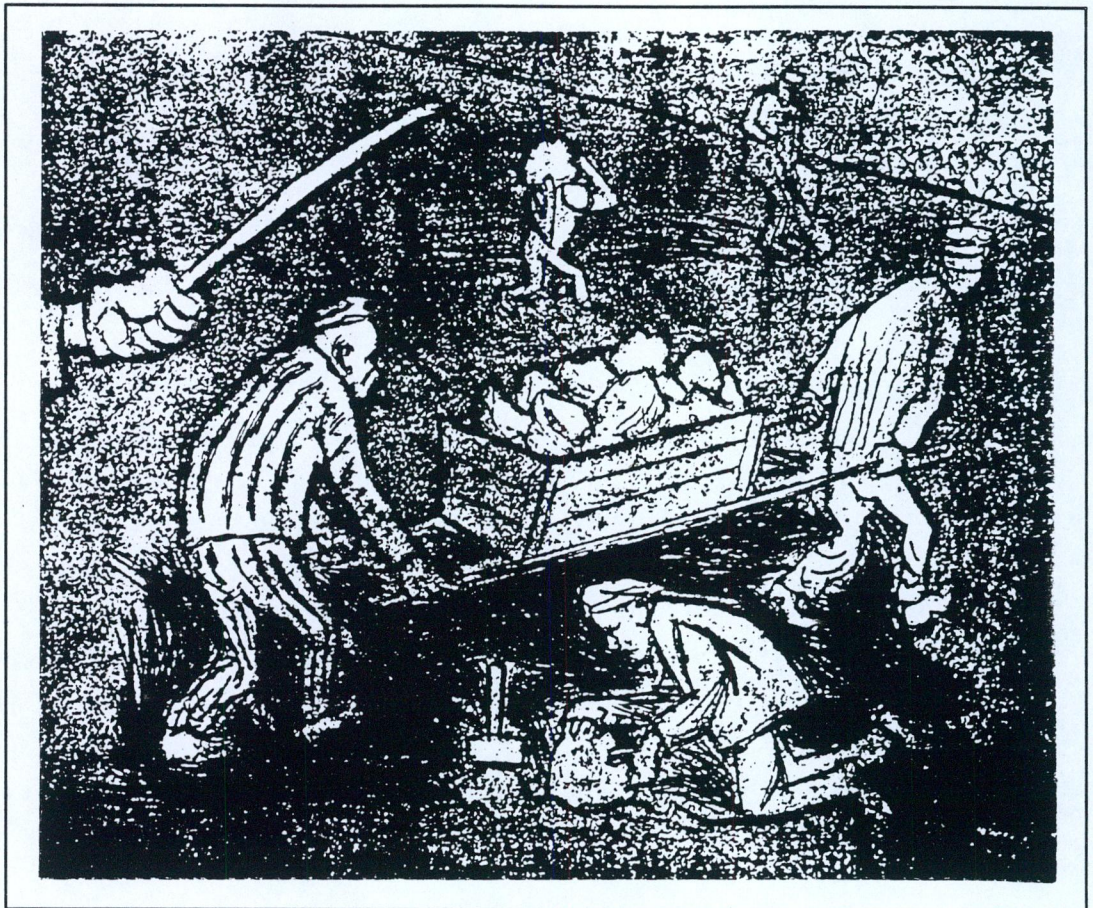


Figure 28. HERBERT SANDBERG.

"The Stone Age # 47 of the Cycle Der Weg". Berlin, 1958/65. Etching, 8 X 10". Buchenwald Museum.

curator for the Museum of fine arts in Belfort. He joined the resistance in 1941 and became an active member of an independent resistance movement. In the guise of a group connected to the Museum they would rendezvous to conduct their business. A spy penetrated this gathering and Delarbre was arrested in January 1943.

Once in Buchenwald he began to draw with pencil on scraps of paper. He did a sketch of "The Goethe Oak" (Figure 32) before it was bombed in a raid by the allied forces. "The Last Face" (Figure 30) by Apitz was carved from a stolen piece of this monumental tree. In Dora Millelbau Delarbre secretly worked by night depicting the atrocious brutalities and murders that were rampant throughout. "Hanged Left - The Clerk of Block 132" (Figure 33) "Misery" (Figure 34) and "The Daily Corpse Wagon" (Figure 35) are depictions of the regular atrocities. "Twenty nine Russian Prisoners Hanged at Roll Call" (Figure 36) illustrates the cruel sense of amusement and coldness the SS had towards human life and death.

In Bergsen - Belsen, Delarbre witnessed the same scenes of deprivation and death, over and over. "A Comrade dies along the way" (Figure 37) and "The day after liberation too late" (Figure 38) are both charged with regret, angst and hopelessness. After his liberation Delarbre returned to Belfort where he continued to draw from his experience. In an attempt to work through and reconcile himself to what had been witnessed.

There is little known about Pierre Mania. The only information about him is that he was a French artist before the war. A rather substantial quantity of his work remains intact, these alone speak of his existence and labours. Mania was incarcerated in Buchenwald for two years where he recorded the anguished portraits of the prisoners and the barbaric behaviour of the SS commandants. In "Infirmary Barracks of the little camp" (Figure 39) he depicts the squalid cramped conditions of the living quarters, the depressed wounded features of the inmates, the claustrophobic sleeping arrangements and a prevailing atmosphere of fatality and gloom. "The transport" (Figure 40) almost sings with agony, pain and uncontainable grief. Once again we encounter "Goethes Tree" (Figure 41) which emanates a frenzied cry for its own destruction. "Block Concert" (Figure 42) on first inspection may appear to be an innocent evening of musical entertainment, but, looking closer at the faces of the men, the pain, bewilderment and sadness, the tune becomes sour. Mania has a very distinctive,

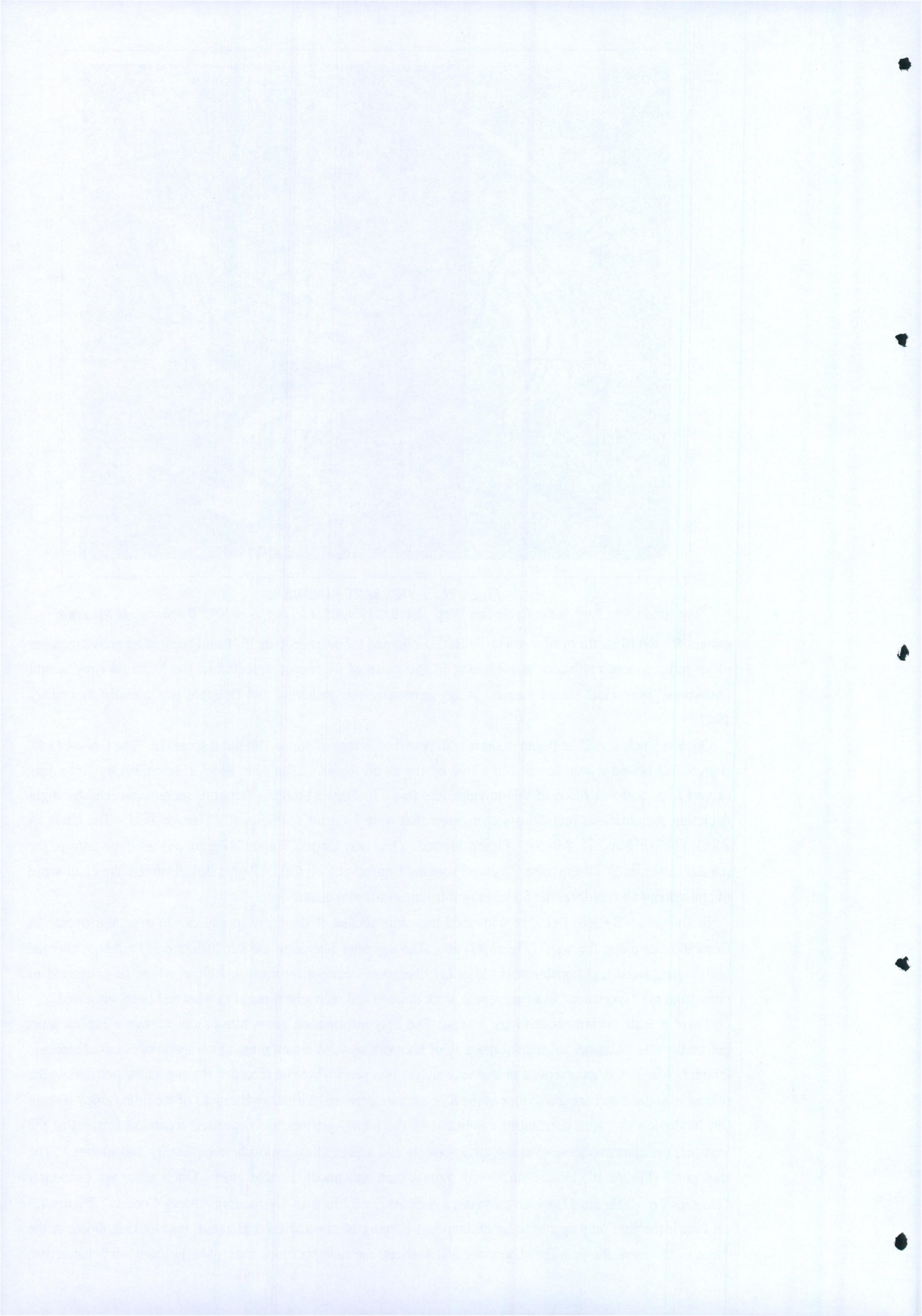




Figure 29. BRUNO APITZ.
"Worker". Wood Sculpture. Buchenwald Museum.





Figure 30. BRUNO APITZ.
"The Last Face". 1944/45. Wood Sculpture, 12 × 8 × 3". Buchenwald Museum.

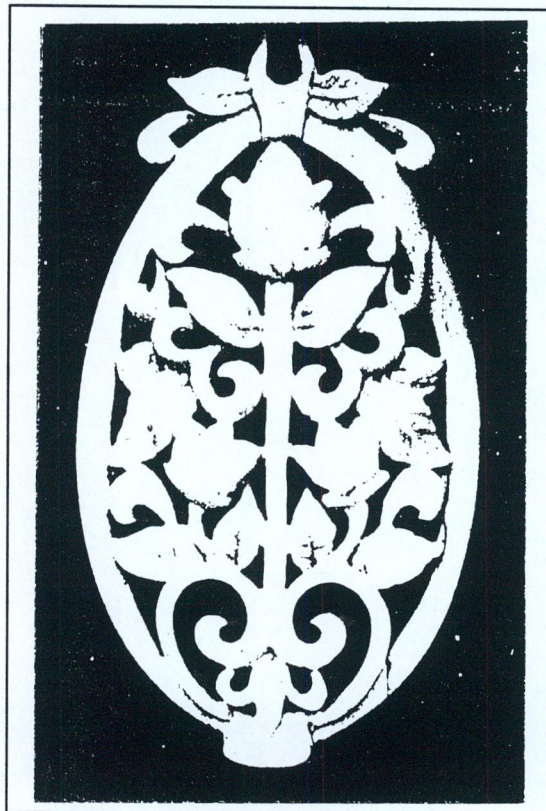
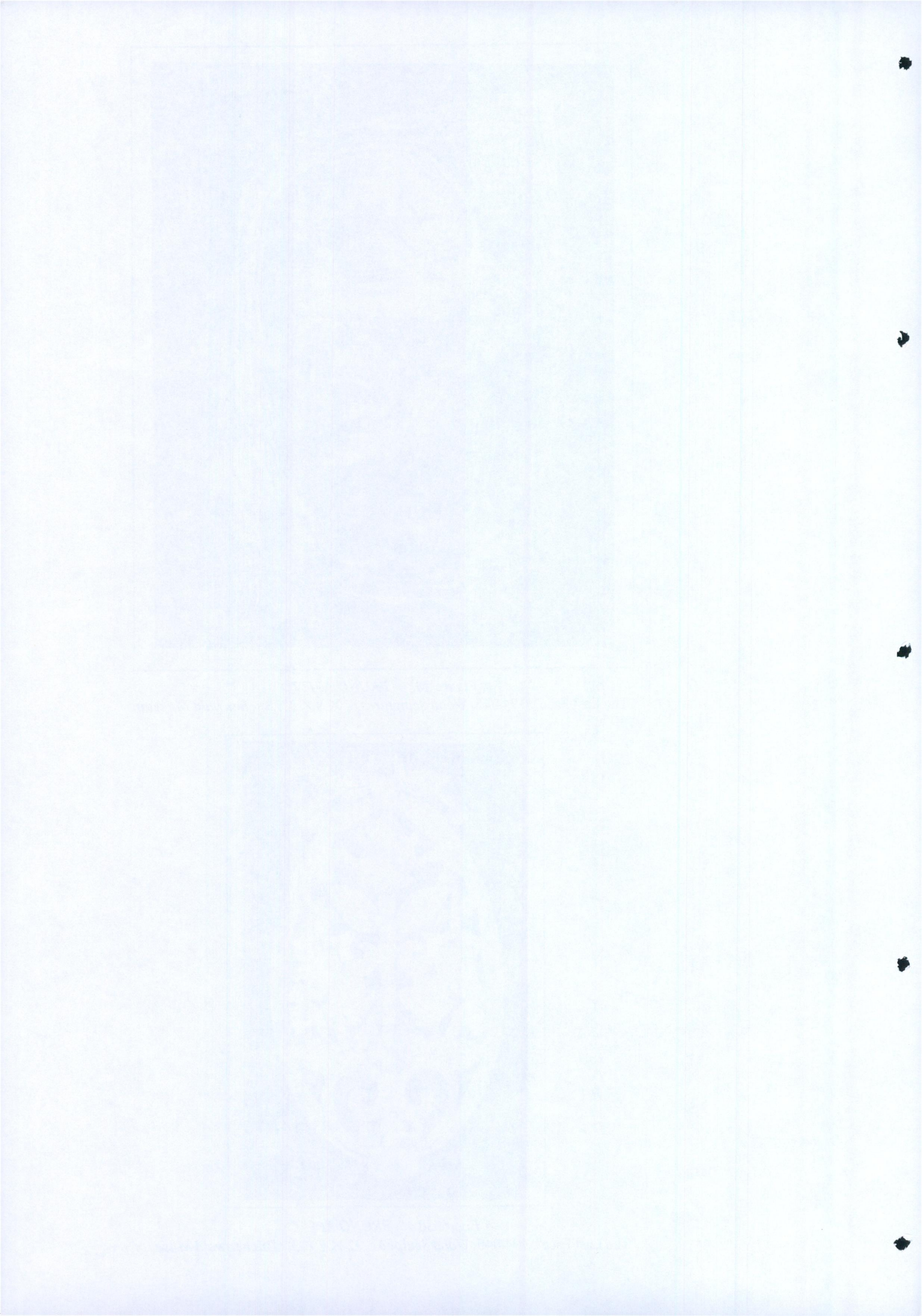


Figure 30. BRUNO APITZ.
"The Last Face". 1944/45. Wood Sculpture, 12 × 8 × 3". Buchenwald Museum.



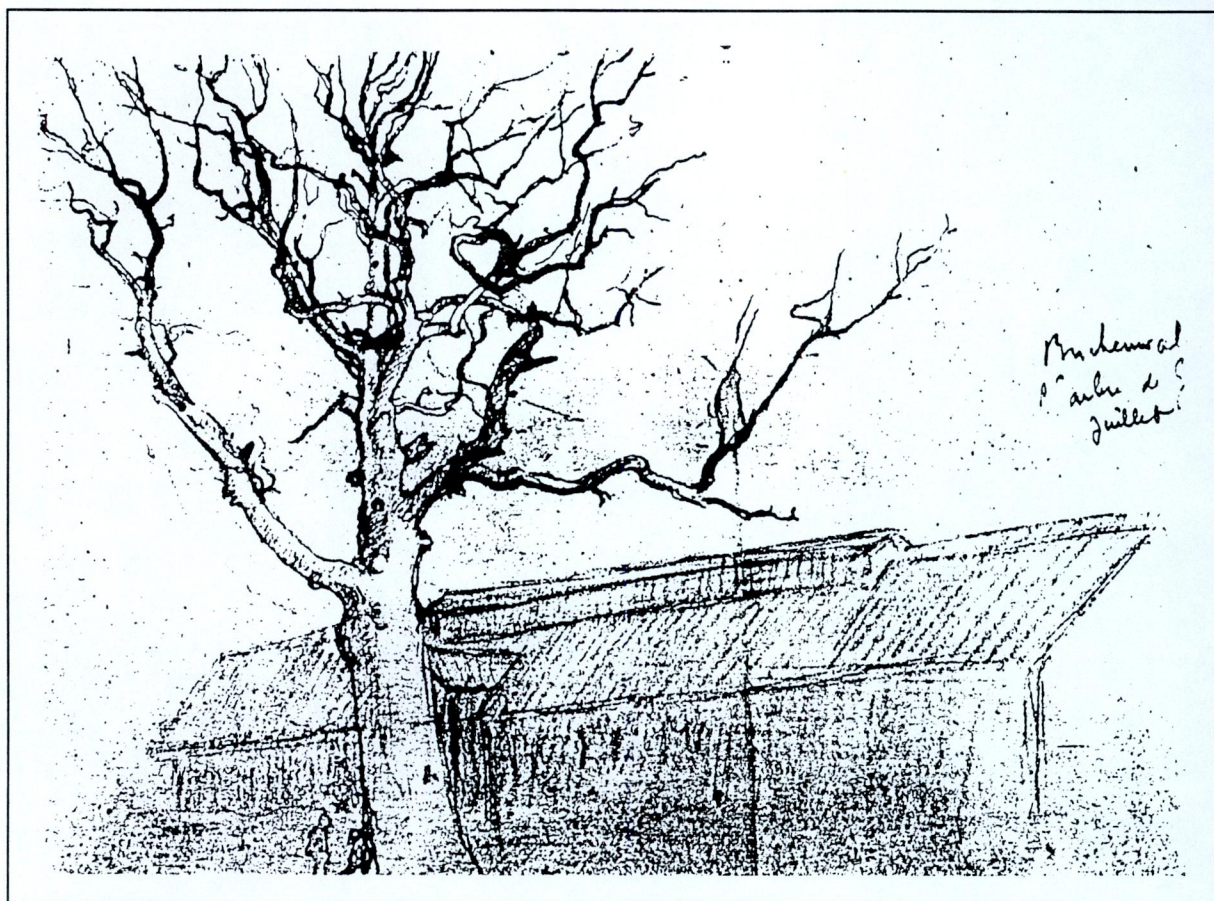


Figure 32. LEON DELARBRE.
 "The Goethe Oak". Buchenwald, 1944/45. Pencil, 6 × 11". Renee Billot, Belfort France.

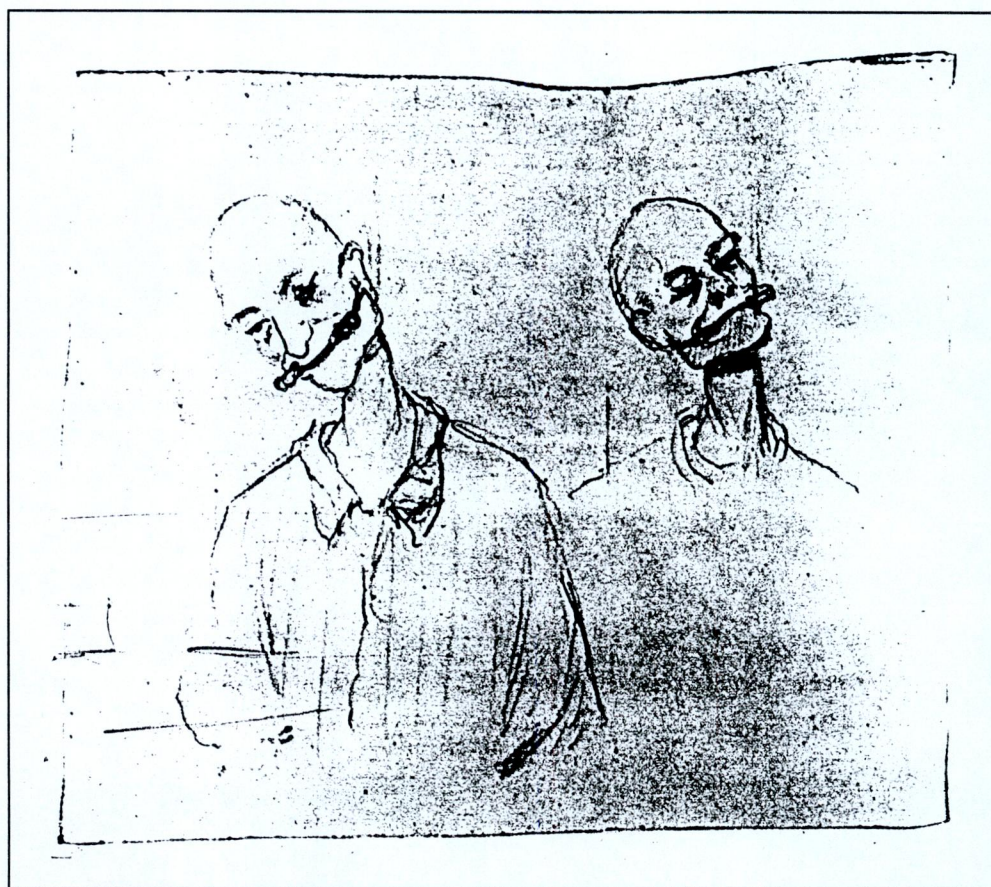


Figure 33. LEON DELARBRE.
 "Hanged Left - The Clerk of Block 132". Dora 1945. Pencil, 6 × 6". Renee Billot, Belfort France.

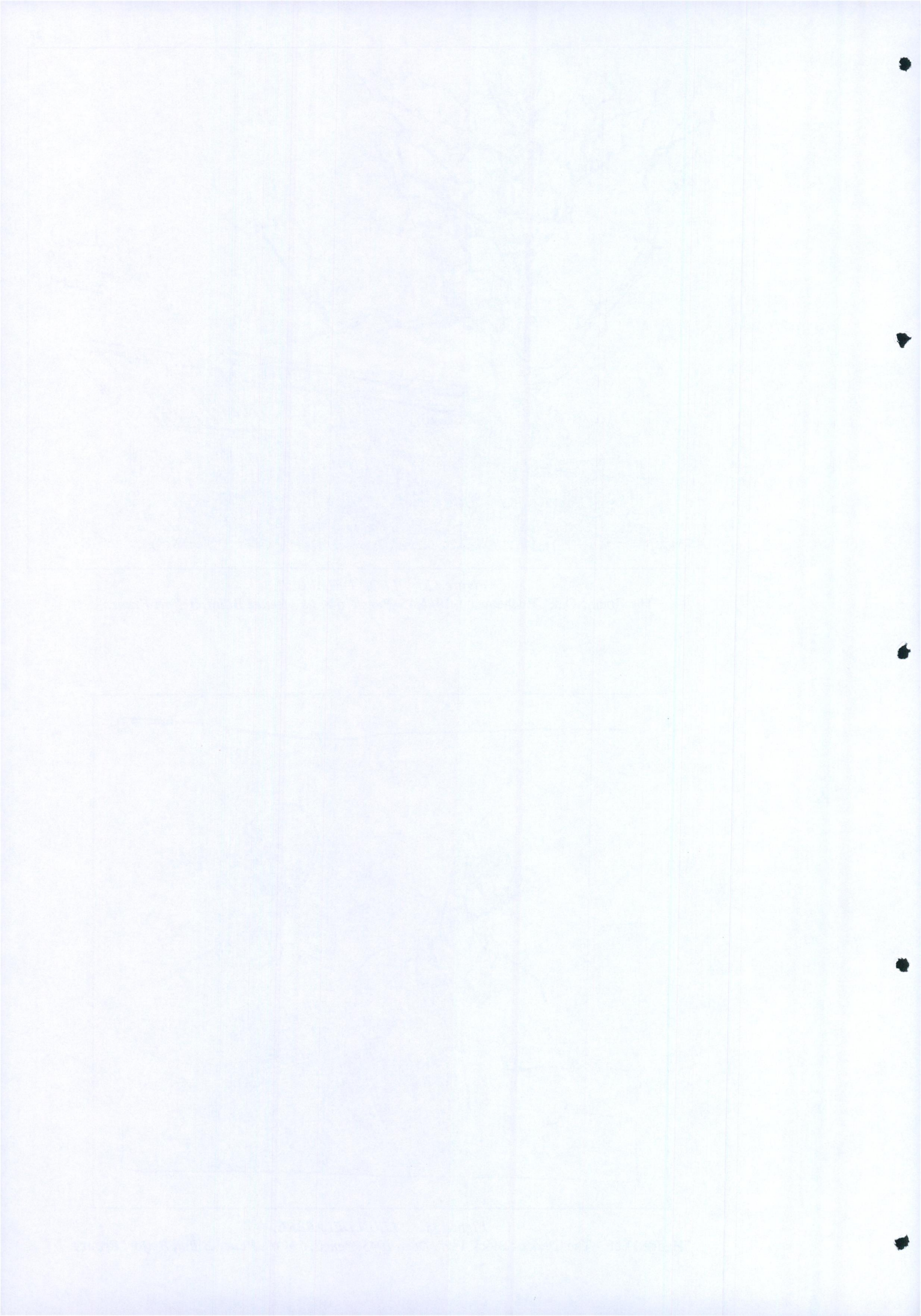


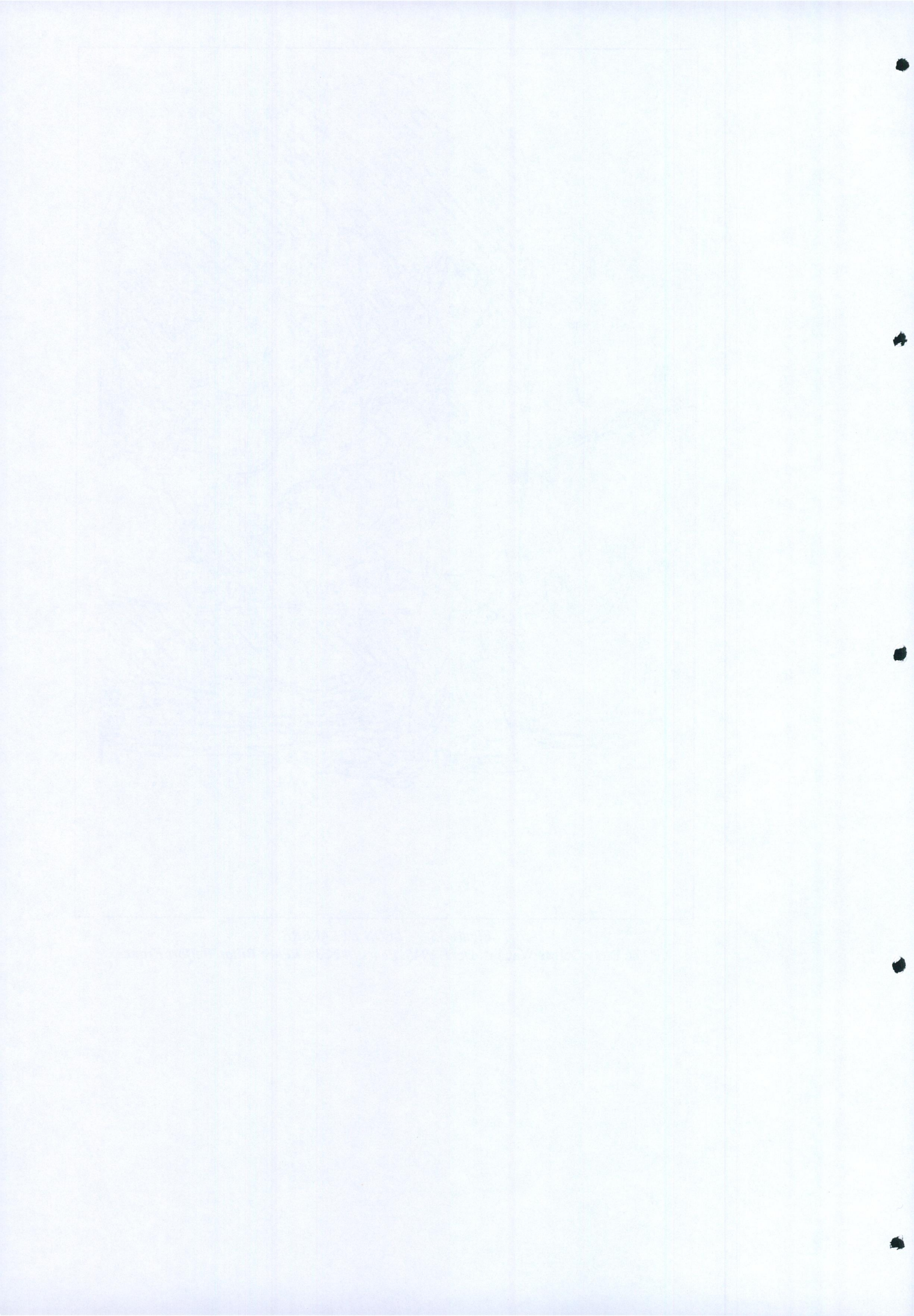


Figure 34. LEON DELARBRE.
"Misery". Dora, 1945. Pencil, 5 × 6". Renee Billot, Belfort France.





Figure 35. LEON DELARBRE.
"The Daily Corpse Wagon". Dora, 1945. Pencil, 4 × 3". Renee Billot, Belfort France.



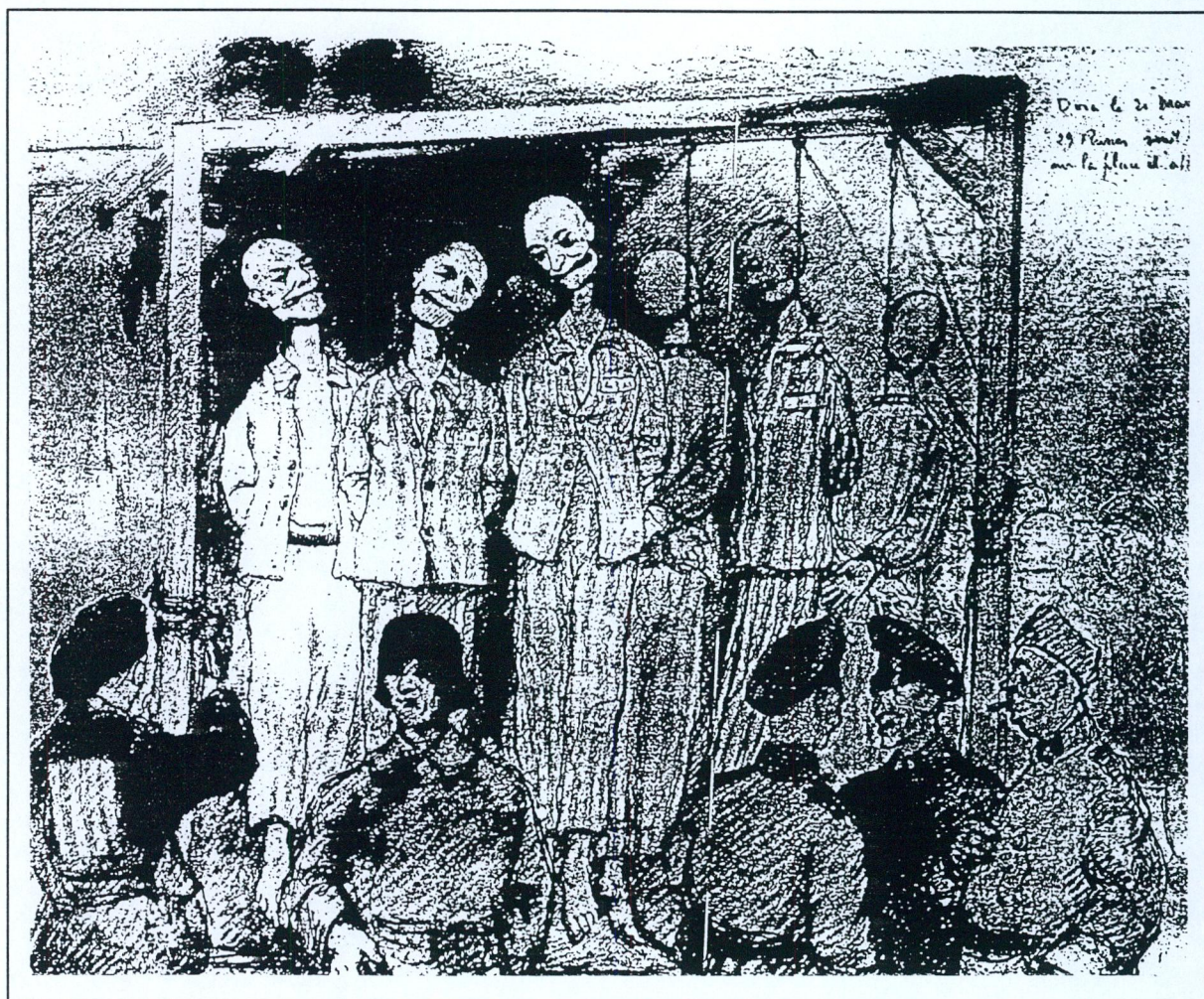


Figure 36. LEON DELARBRE.
 "29 Russian Prisoners Hanged at Roll Call". Dora, 1945. Pencil, 6 × 7.5". Renee Billot, Belfort France.

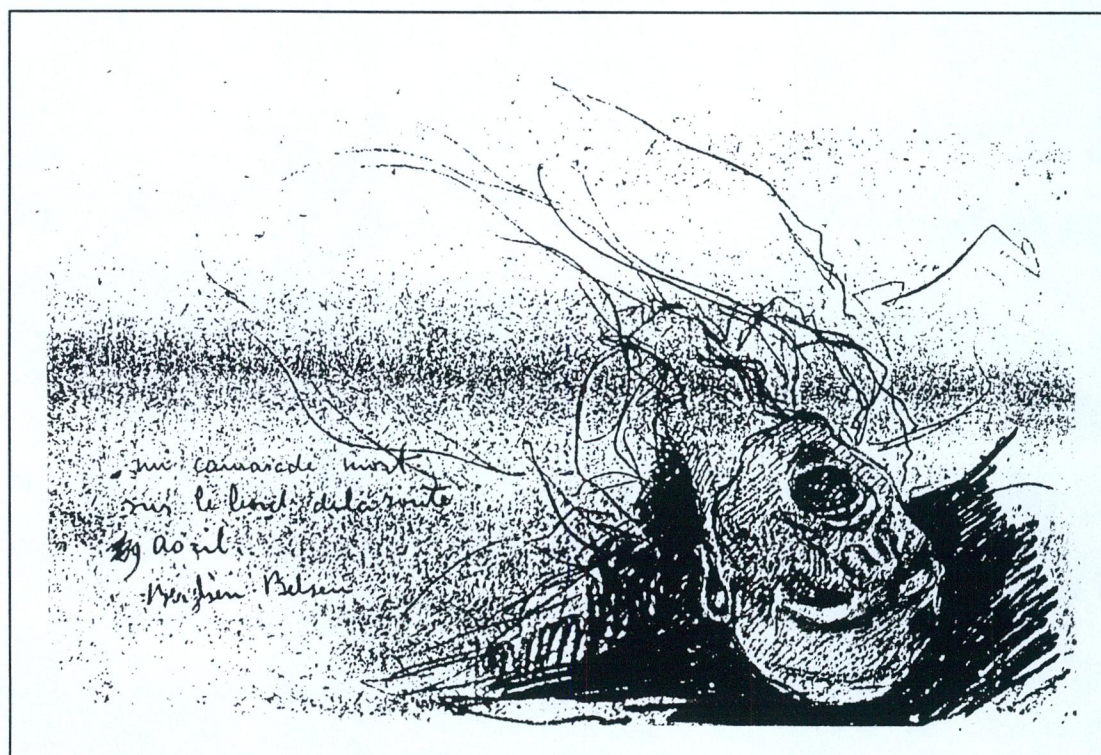


Figure 37. LEON DELARBRE.
 "A Comrade Dies Along the Way". Bergen - Belsen, 1945. Pencil, 6 × 7.5". Renee Billot, Belfort France.

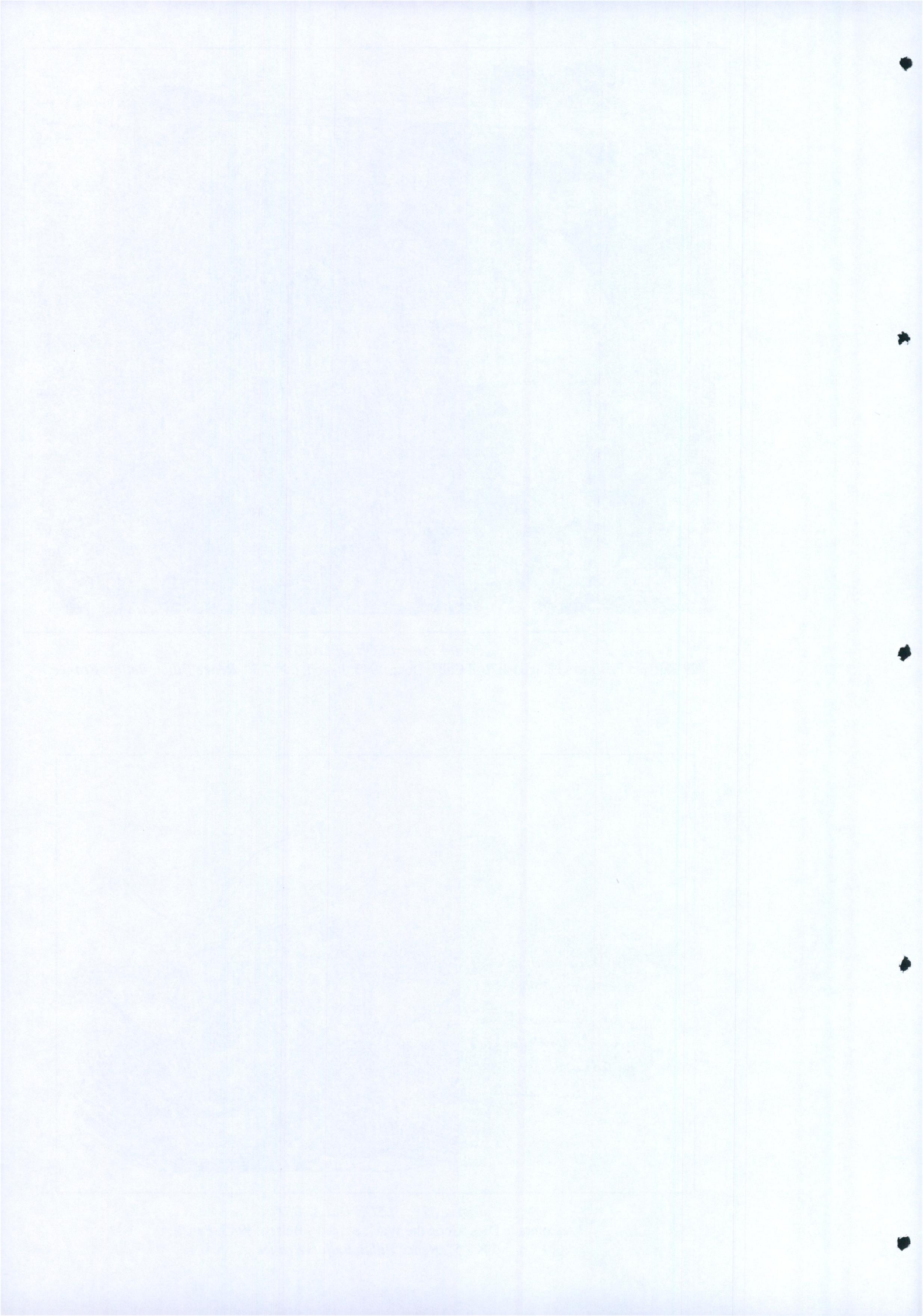




Figure 38. LEON DELARBRE.
 "The Day After Liberation - Too Late". Bergen - Belsen, 1945.
 Pencil, 11.5 X 11". Renee Billot, Belfort France.

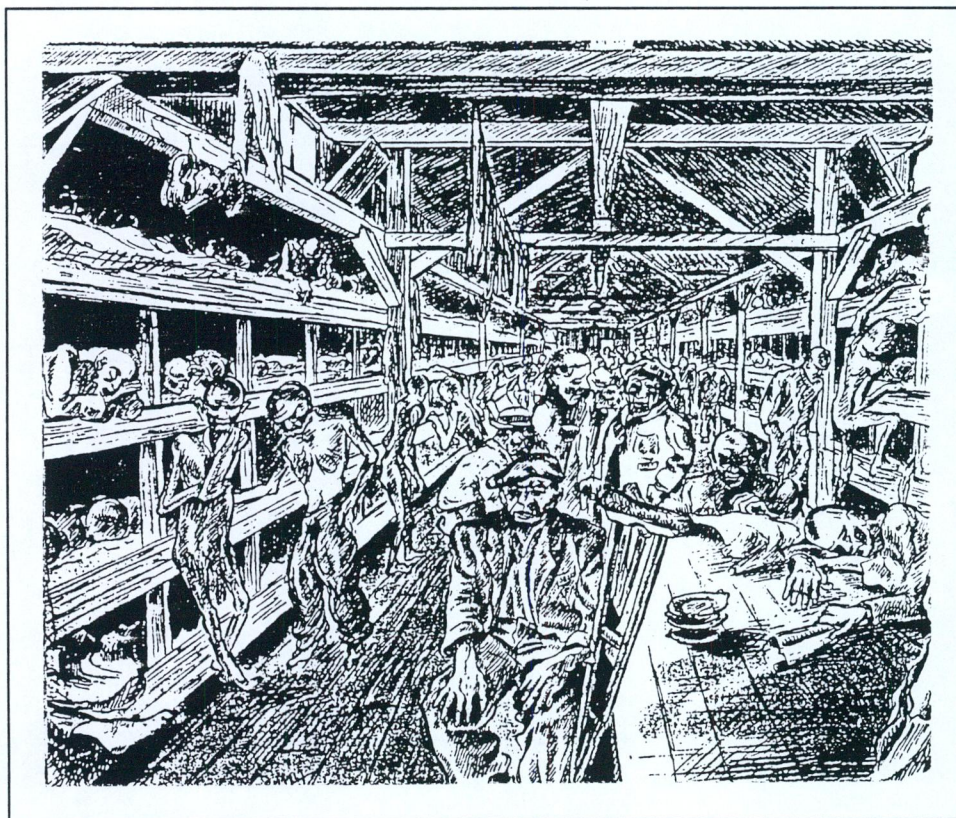


Figure 39. PIERRE MANIA.
 "Infirmary Barracks of the Little Camp". Buchenwald, 1943. Ink, size unknown. Rolien, France.





Figure 40. *PIERRE MANIA.*
"The Transport". Buchenwald, 1943. *Charcoal, size unknown. Rolien, France.*

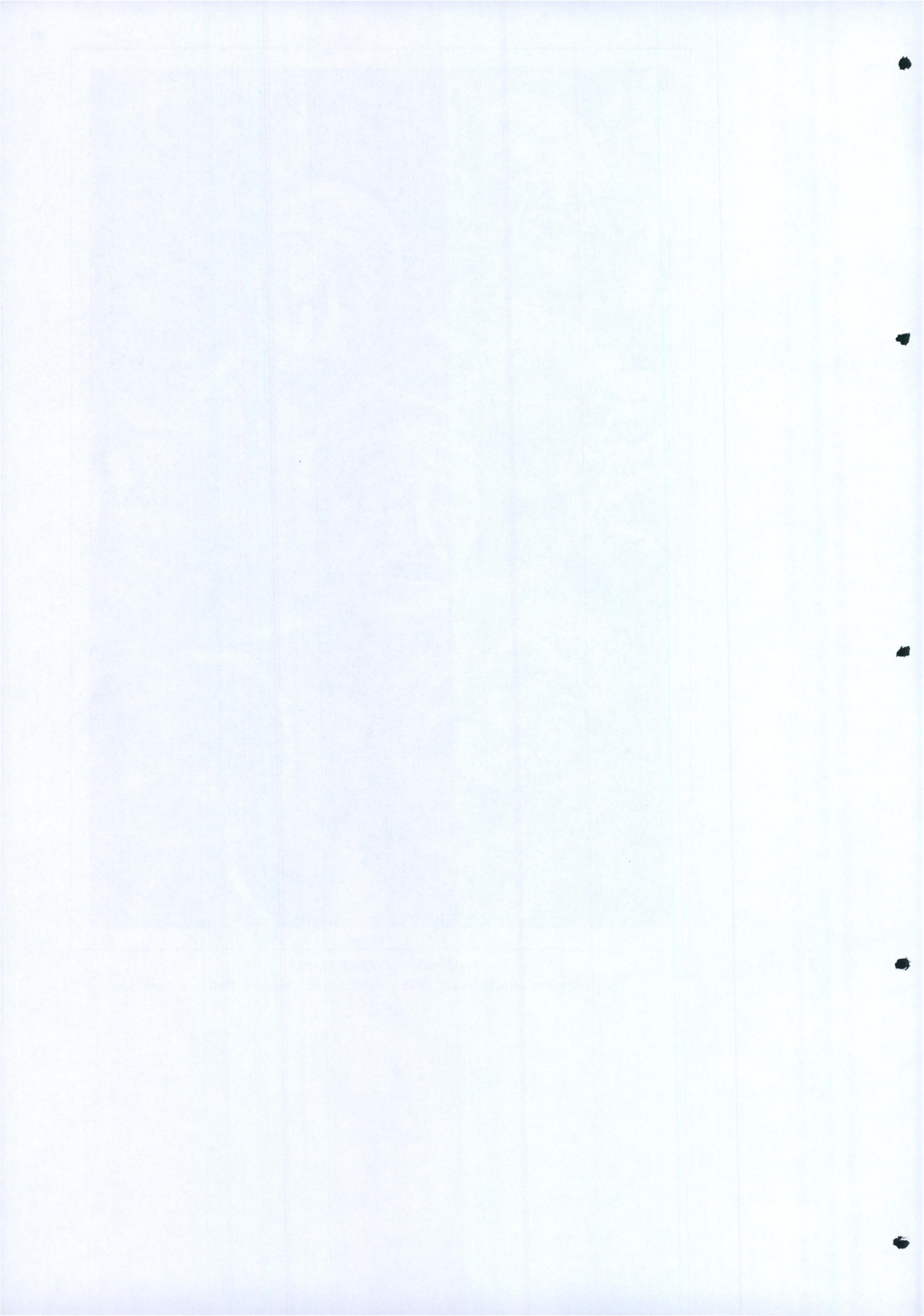




Figure 41. *PIERRE MANIA.*
"Goethe Tree". *Buchenwald Museum.*

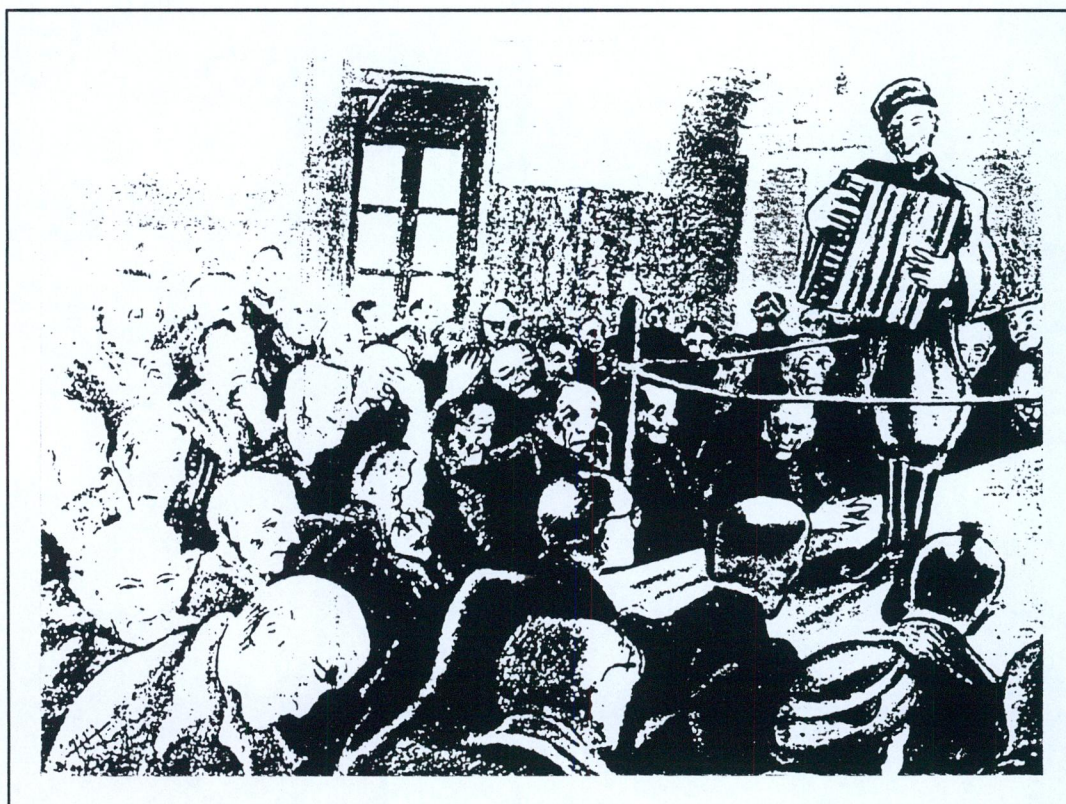
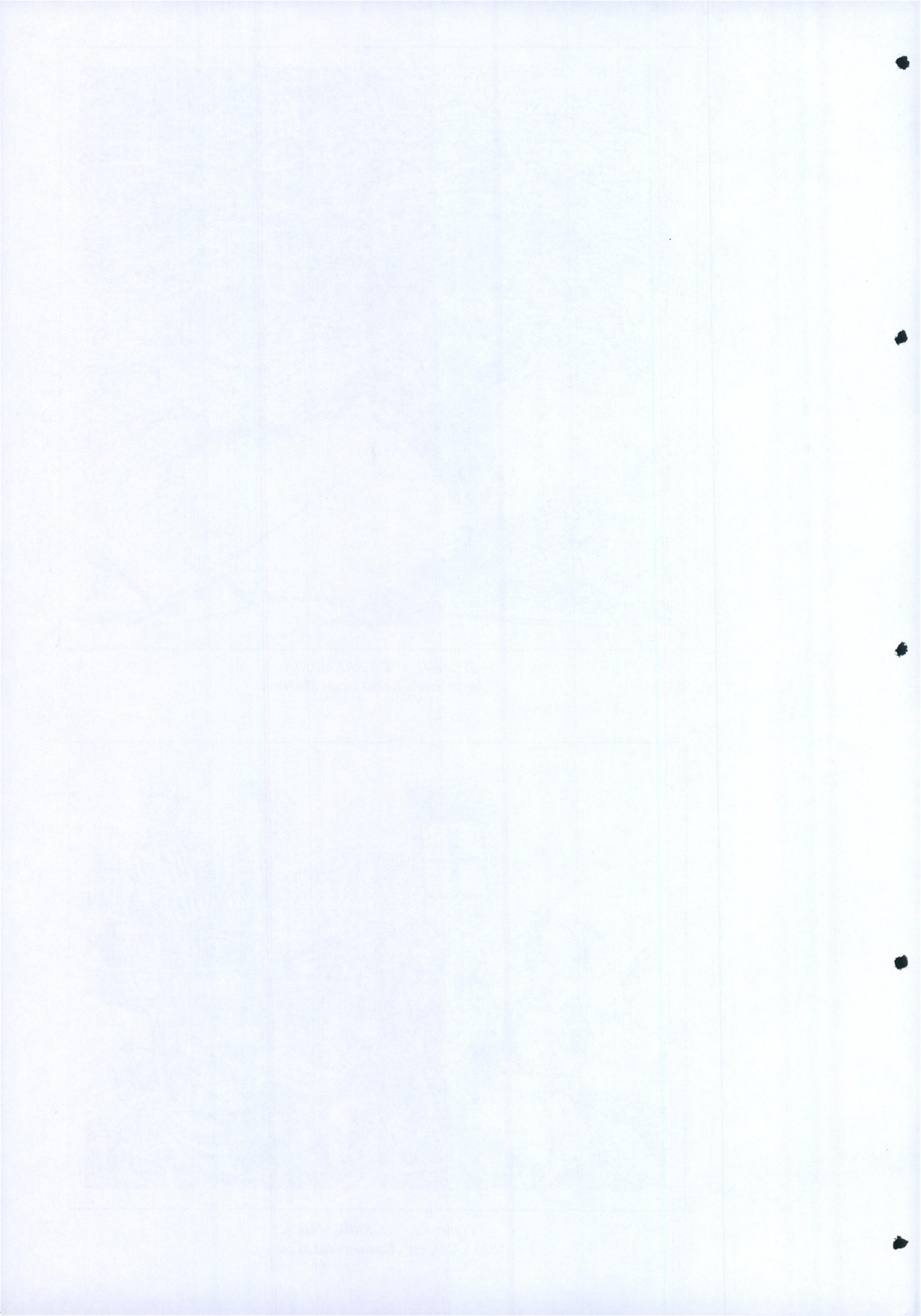


Figure 42. *PIERRE MANIA.*
"Block Concert". *Buchenwald Museum.*



urgent style, using a soft ground he creates a shocking impression of terror calamity and suffering as in "Angeketteten Französischer Häftling". (Figure 43)

"Der Beruchtigte Steinbruch (The Notorious Quarry) (Figure 44) depicts the task of hauling. Laboriously the men struggle in unison under threat of the whip, a wave of energy abounds as they pull for their lives. "Totschlag" (Killer) (Figure 45) the document of a savage murder it is both chilling and terrifying. "March and Work Commando" (Figure 46) illustrates labour, brutality and death, yet the most horrific expression of terror is "Ankunft, Caracho-Weg" (Arrival at Caracho). (Figure 47) Resorting to dogs and rifle butts, this cruel and savage act of dehumanisation is depicted by Mania through agitated rapid lines and dramatic contrasts of light and shade. Mania survived the Holocaust.

Josef Capek was one of the ardent innovators of what was termed cubo-expressionism in Czechoslovakia in the early nineteen hundreds. He spent six years at the school of decorative arts studying painting, graphics illustration and art history. Capek travelled to Paris, then brought back to Prague the influence of Expressionism and Cubism. A number of progressive young Czech architects, artists and theoreticians founded a group called the Independent Plastic Artists. Capek was a prominent member and editor of their "Arts Monthly" magazine. He participated in many of their major group exhibitions. The group were artistically and intellectually active, hence they split in 1912 due to varying artistic opinions, Capek continued to exhibit in Prague with well known contemporary names such as Filla, Derain, Kichner and Picasso. Capek was particularly influenced by Picasso, as *Head* (Figure 48) is executed in a typically cubistic style. By 1914, Capek was the leader of the new group called the Stiffheads. The influence of Cubism and awareness of neo-primitivism shaped the development of Modern art in Czechoslovakia. With forceful energy, and dedication to their work, these artists excelled in the field of artistic progress, and became the platform of Prague Cubism. Capek was also actively involved in cultural and literary activities, writing books, plays and editing magazines. He also produced illustrations and posters for exhibitions. (Figure 49)

When the political climate in Europe began to change in the thirties so too did social and artistic attitudes. Capek began to work on anti-fascist motifs and caricatures. Between 1938 and 1939 he painted two major cycles entitled "Fire" and "Longing" (Figure 50). As the first wave of deportations began in 1939, Capek was among the first to be arrested and sent to Dachau. Three weeks later he was transported to Buchenwald where he spent nearly three years. Here, he continued to draw and write, producing a series of pencil drawings of inmates and female prisoners, similar in style to the "fire" and "longing" cycle. Prisoners in Buchenwald (Figure 51) may appear like a simple figurative study, but on closer inspection there is an austerity of line and form indicative of anger, longing desperation and pleading.

Capek was then transported to the dungeons of the Alexanderplatz prison in Berlin, he remained there for several weeks and arrived in Sachsenhausen weak and vulnerable. After another long period of brutal isolation he was put to work in the art department, painting scenery, and was then assigned to the sanatorium, sketching medical tables and plans. Capek continued to produce his own work completing another series of drawings. "Untitled" (Figure 52) this lacks the urgency of his previous sketches and appears objective and melancholic, indicating fatigue on behalf of the artist. He also continued his literary pursuits and composed a series of over eight fairy tale poems in Sachsenhausen. Just before the end of the war Capek was once more deported, this time to Bergen-Belsen, only days before the liberation of the camp, Capek died, the cause and time of death remains unknown. It is presumed that he was buried in one of the mass graves there.

Today Capek is heralded as one of the most important Czechoslovakian artists. Since the war, many major exhibitions have been held throughout Czechoslovakia in honour and appreciation of his work.





Figure 43. *PIERRE MANIA.*
 "Angeketteten Französischer Halfting". *Buchenwald Museum.*



Figure 44. *PIERRE MANIA.*
 "Der Beruchtigtr Steinbruch". *Buchenwald Museum.*

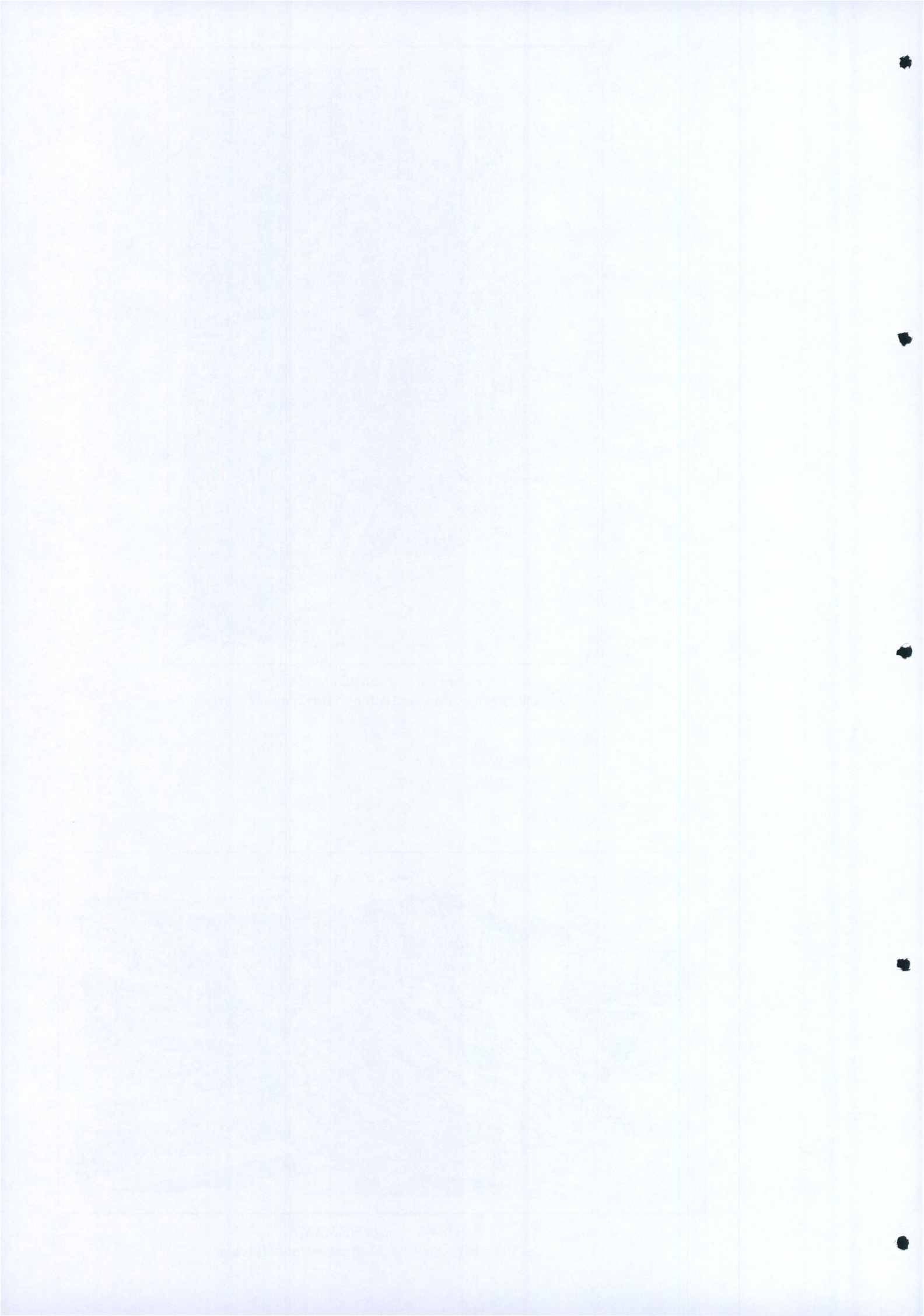




Figure 45. PIERRE MANIA.
"Totschlag". Buchenwald Museum.



Figure 46. PIERRE MANIA.
"March and Work Commando". Buchenwald Museum.

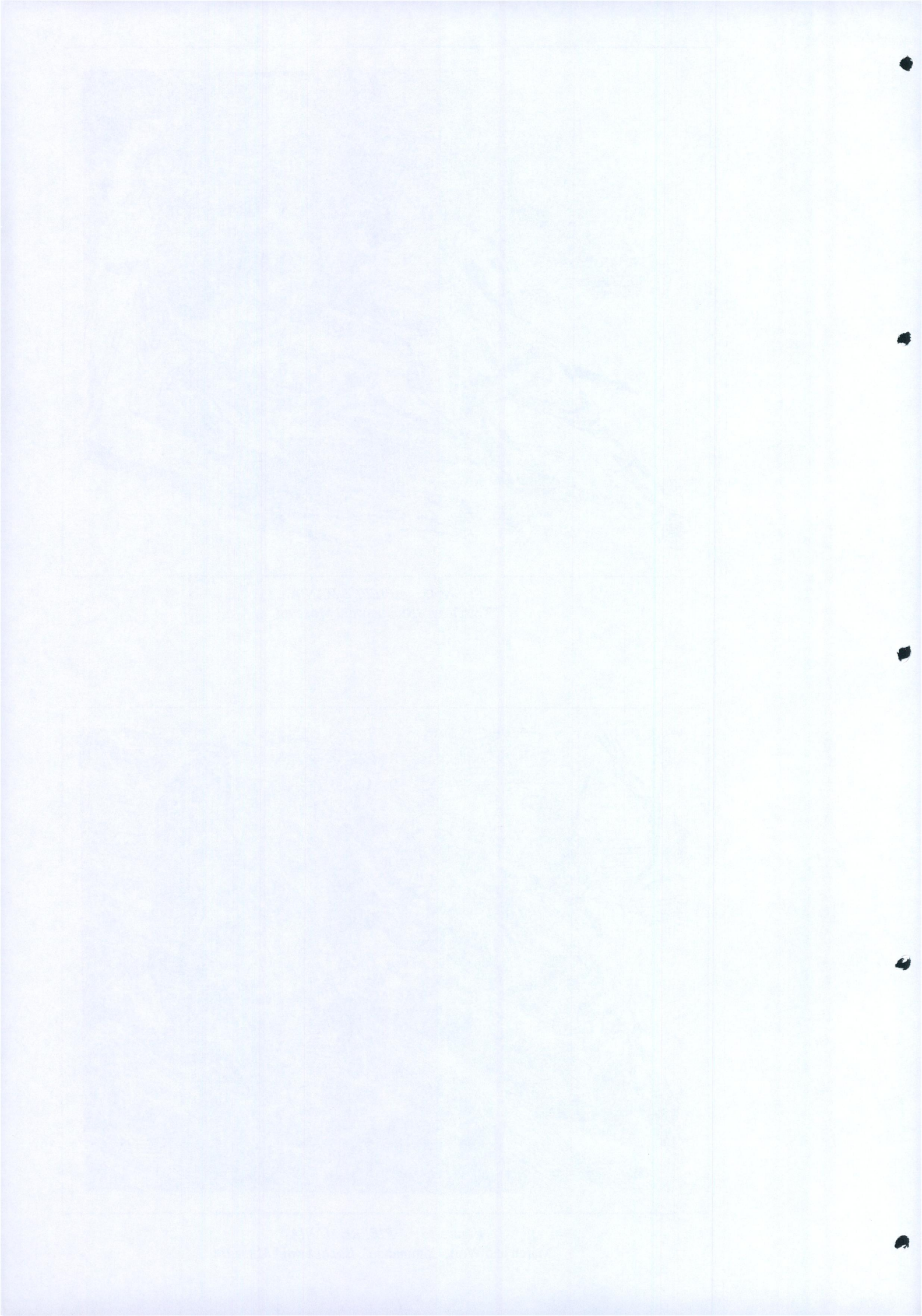




Figure 47. *PIERRE MANIA.*
"Amfumft, Caracho - Weg". *Buchenwald Museum.*



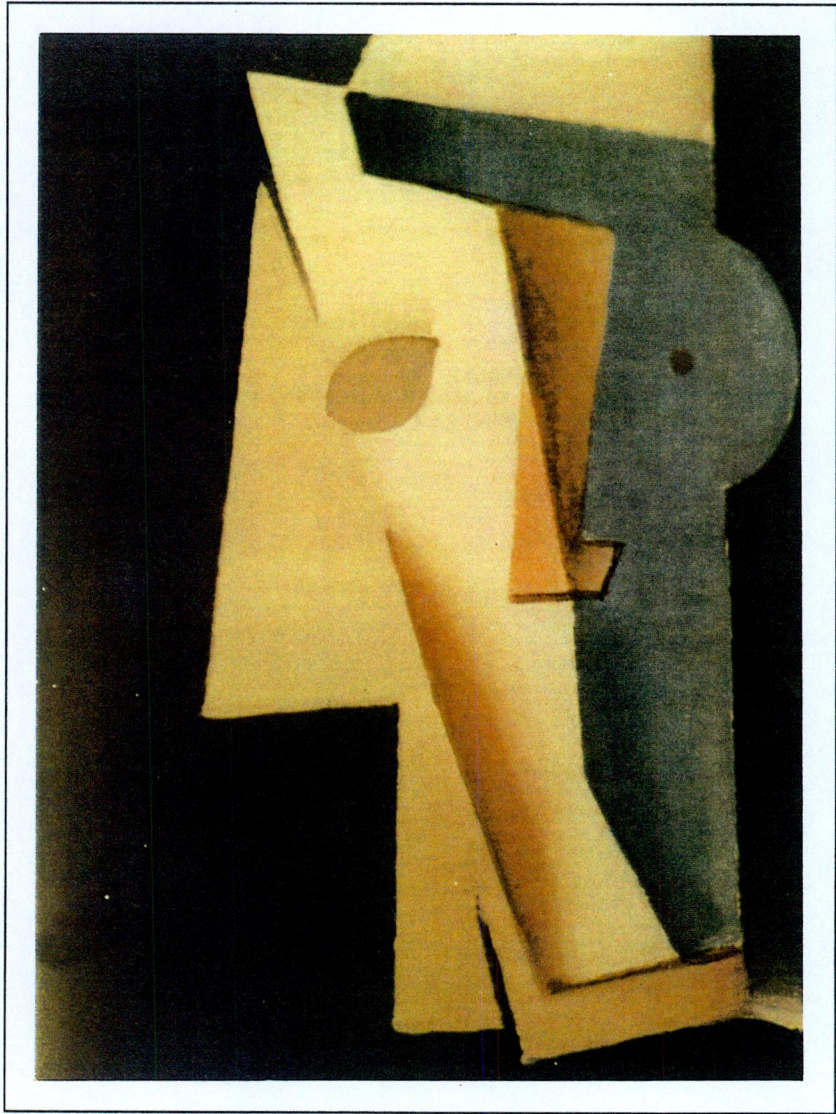


Figure 48. JOSEF CAPEK.
"Head". 1914. Oil on Canvas, 46.5. X 37cm. National Gallery, Prague.



Figure 49. JOSEF CAPEK.
Illustration, Lazone 1919.





Figure 50. JOSEF CAPEK.
From the Cycle "Longing". Prague, 1938. Oil, 20 × 34cm. Dr. Jaroslav Dostal, Prague.

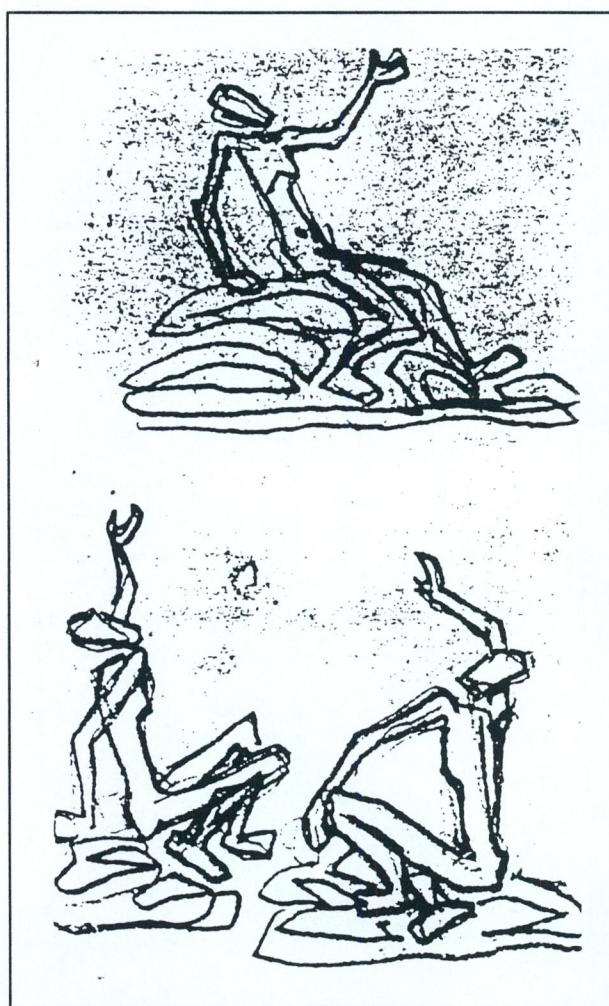


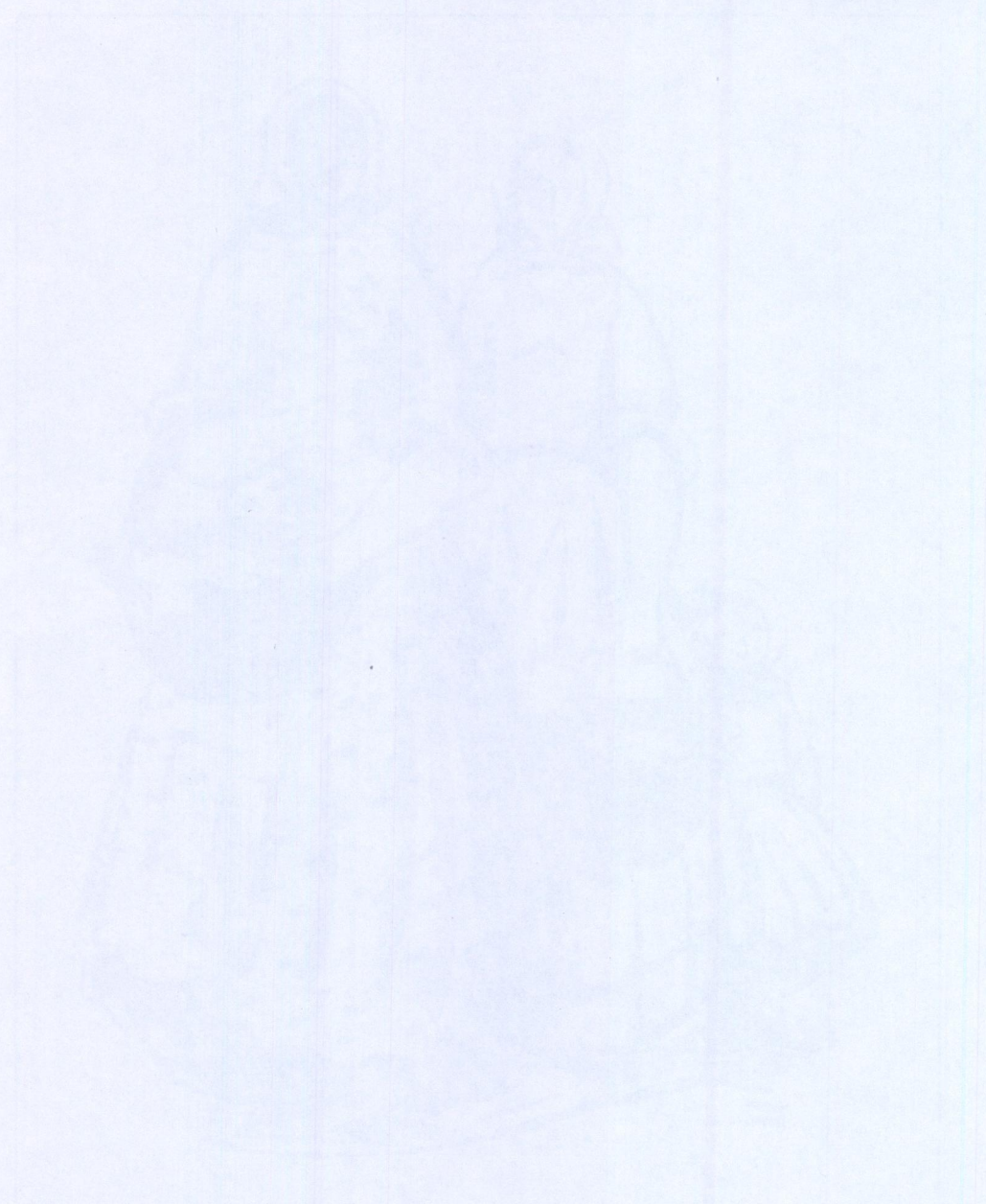
Figure 51. JOSEF CAPEK.
"Prisoners in Buchenwald". Buchenwald, 1944. Pencil, 10 × 7". Dr. Jaroslav Dostal, Prague.





Figure 52. JOSEF CAPEK.
Untitled, 1944. *Nationale Mahn - Und Gedenkstätte, Sachsenhausen Archive.*

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CONCLUSION

ART CRITIC ROSSENBLUM states that "Art Historians should be flexible, various and comprehensive as possible in their approaches and be willing to consider anything from the history of technology to the abiding mysteries of genius and psychology as potentially illuminating their ever vast subject. Works of art, after all are made by people, and, like people should not be forced into a single perspective that views them only as functions, of say, aesthetic or economic or psychoanalytical systems". 1.

The opprobrious system which the prisoners found themselves was irrefutably extraordinary, and shocking. Thus, the artwork produced exemplified these terrible conditions. Holocaust studies have concentrated mainly on the political history of Hitler's "Final Solution" but there is only now a gradual awakening of interest in art produced by its victims. Thus the art history has yet to be written and any comments made herein cannot be seen as definitive judgments. Nora Levin, author of a survey on the Holocaust states that:

"The Holocaust refuses to go the way of most history, because the events surrounding it are in a very real sense incomprehensible". 2. coupled with the emotional reactions one has in confronting the history of the Holocaust.

A special awareness of irony appears. This is no less true when dealing with the art produced in that era, even if art appears to be a relatively obscure facet of a history in which inhumanity and death are the most pervasive aspects. It reminds us that the artist remains an artist in spite of all. It is an extraordinary testimony to the vitality of creative energy that even incarceration cannot stifle. This art individualizes and isolates a subject that has become generalized and lost in the accumulated data that surrounds all of history. The artists who created these works in the midst of unspeakable tragedy remind us of that fact and of the incredible ability of people to retain their humanity. That is not a new role for art, even if it attains new meaning here.

Integrating this work into history may cause some fundamental problems. Does it belong in the social history books as documentary evidence? or placed after the expressionist movement filling the appalling gap this war created in the history of art?

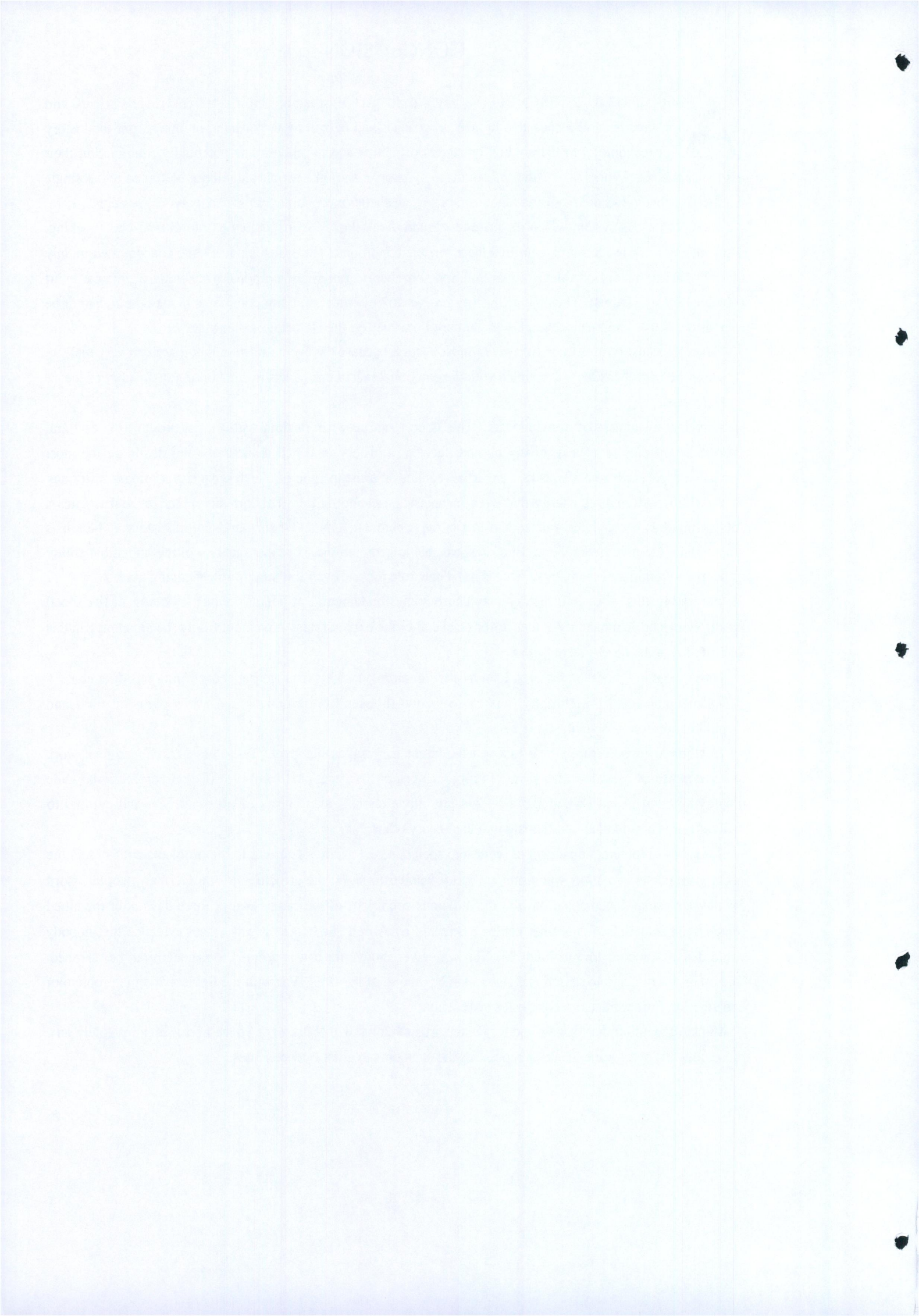
Throughout my thorough research I am faced with more questions than answers concerning this dilemma.

"A recent select bibliography lists close to two thousand book entries and notes over ten thousand publications on Auschwitz alone". 3.

This artwork would surely help as a visual documentary aid at this level. These artists produced their work under conditions of arduousness where no other exemplifiers executed examples of their professions while displaying such unselfish dedication. This fact alone should open doors of art historians and authors to welcome it as a triumphant participant into the history of art.

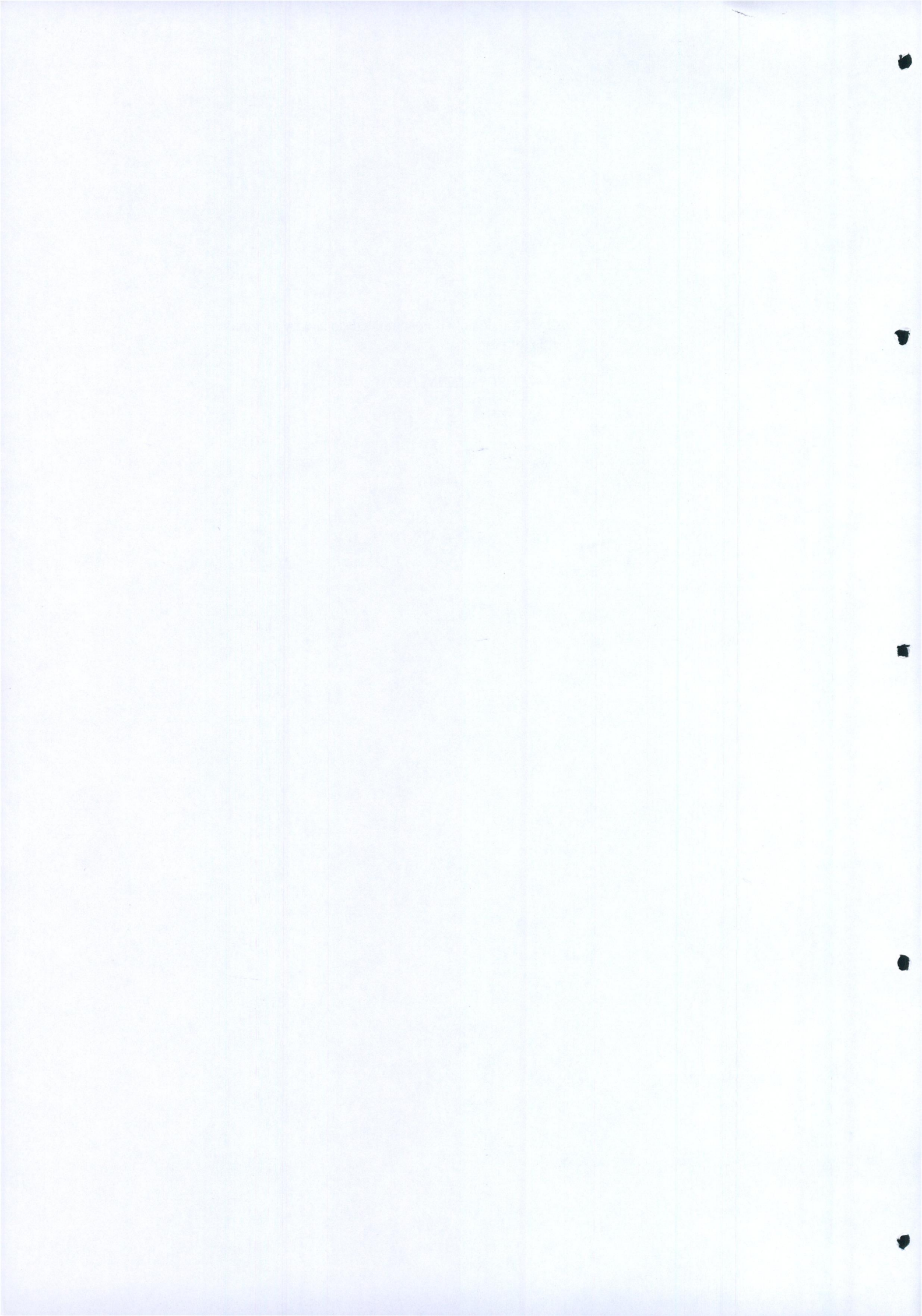
But to try to integrate this form of work into social and art history is similar to the problems confronting the occupying powers in 1945 when one authority wanted to show the atrocities to the German people. Lord Sydney Bernstein documented on film the atrocious conditions of the camps two or three days after the allied troops went into Belsen and other camps. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock, it was visual evidence that nobody could deny. A record for mankind, this film was never shown, for it was deemed too shocking to be screened. The other, more tangible reason was due to the beginning of the Cold War with the Soviets and the problem of endangering further alienation of the former enemy.

Mankind would rather forgive and forget and artists seldom depict horrors. So the horror remains solely on museum walls and for the historian represents the anathema to artistic propensities.



All we can do now is honour the dead and try to win the
battle for peace.

SYDNEY BERNSTEIN, 1985.



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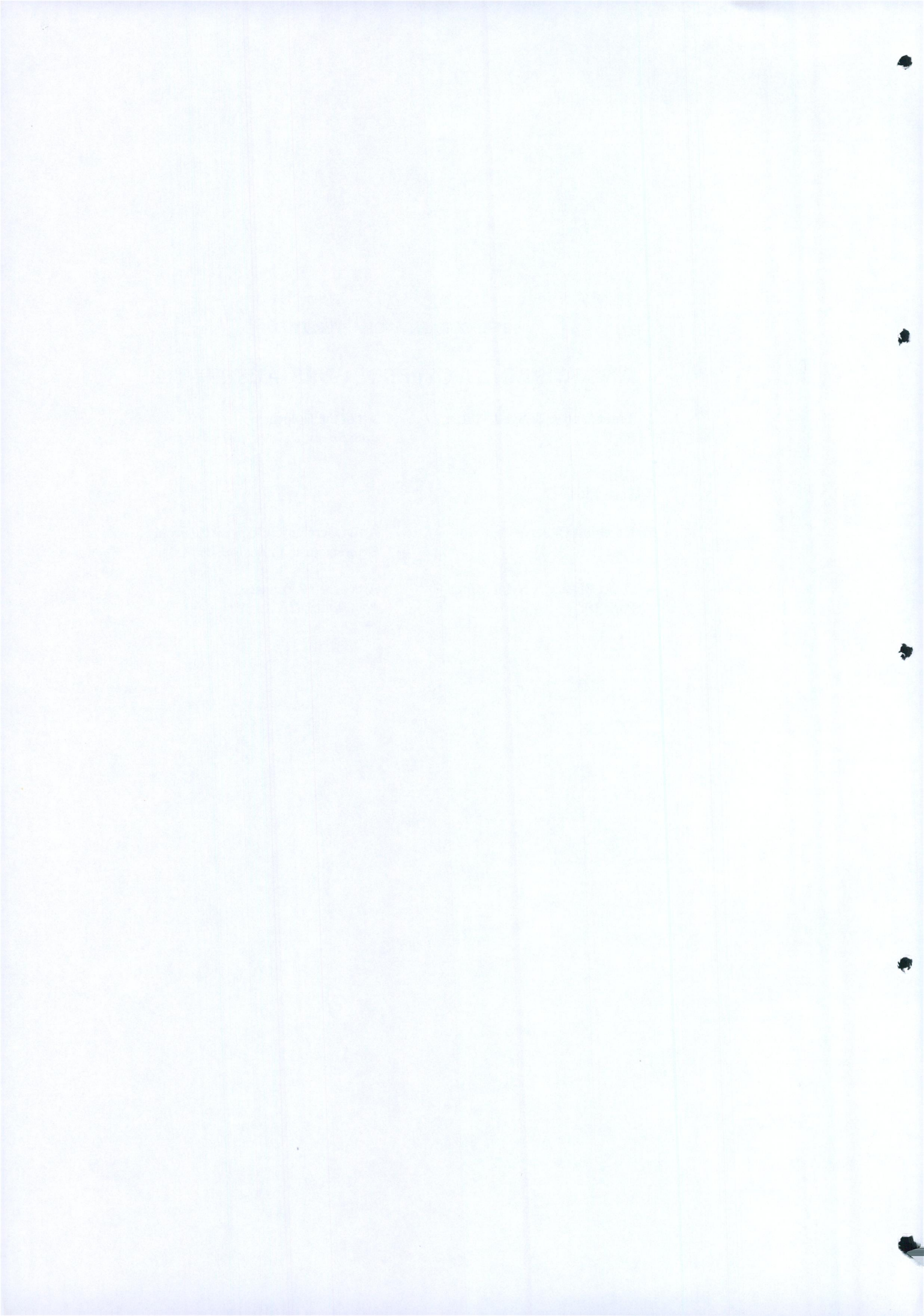
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