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INTRODUCTION

In this study, I have tried to demonstrate how art can be
used as a means of propagating political ideas.   Although
this seems like an over generalized theme, perhaps it should
be further defined as a discussion of imagery used in politic-
ally motivated art - where this imagery comes from, and the
uses it can be put to.

As the reader can imagine it is a very expansive and all
prevading theme, and surely deserves a broader and more
extensive treatment.   Therefore, I have tried to concentrate
on a specific time and place, that of Germany between the
years 1925-45. A time of enormous emotional and political
upheaveal in the affairs of man and, I believe a prime example
of the continual struggle for dominance on the one hand, and
freedom from that dominance on the other.

Its manifestation then, in art as a politics, can be defined
thus: protest and propaganda.

Spawned by fear and insecurity, many artists were faced with
quite a major decision.   Whether to continue making their
revolutions in form and aesthetics from a self-referential
artistic viewpoint, for example, the formal revolutions of
Fauvism, Cubism and Dada.   Where the political references
were inspired from within, rather than directed by a strong
external political belief.   Or, looking to broader issues,
to respond threats in a directly symbolic, anti-political
manner, using any of the formal devices necessary to express
a protest against the dominant political ideologies of the
time i.e. Nazism.

It is always in debate that social commentary in art such
as this, stands on the fringes of most modern art movements.

that it is spawned by philosophies outside the mainstream
aesthetic influences and is therefore not worthy of con-
sideration in the same way as a formal art movement.

That is not to say that formalism does not have its own
political motivation.   Even total abstraction is, I believe,
in some way political, in that it says something about the
nature of art, and this is enough to suggest some political
implication.   However, whether this is applicable or not
is somewhat beyond the scope of this study.

In Part I, I have tried to define Protest Art in the Nazi
period through the life and work of John Heartfield and one
major work by Pablo Picasso, that of "Guernica", without
entering into the other generalized forms of expression that
Protest takes, such as posters and graffitti.   It is an
illustration of how this communication of leftist political
ideas can manifest in art, sometimes by directly confronting
us with images of power only to undermine this power by the use
of devices such as allegory, symbolism and cynicism.   Then to
condense this broad subject into two examples with relevent
background, commentary and analysis.

The second part of this treatise deals with another facet of
art during war-time, - no less powerful in motivation, yet
somewhat the antithesis of protest, that of propaganda.   The
example I have chosen is a painting by Schmitz-Wiedenbruck,
himself a member of the National Socialist Party - and a
contemporary of John Heartfield.

In order to treat this subject of art as a weapon, conclusively,
in such a short space, I felt it necessary to contrast one theme
with its opposite, as I believe that only by doing this can
one grasp a deeper understanding of such a complex subject.

Finally, the third part is more general in emphasis - not
attempting to define the artists role as either left or
right in motivation, but rather as agents of change,
assuming that at time of revolution the artist is often
in a position of power, as a reflector of social irregular-
ities and unrest. So, rather than attempting to focus on
particular places or events, it is a discussion of the
social role of the artist in a period of political or social
instability.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PART I — PROTEST ART

CHAPTER I — A study in the life and work of John Heartfield

Introduction

Amongst only a small number of artists in the last two
centuries who have dealt with direct relevant political
themes in their work, John Heartfield (1891-1968), along
with Francisco Goya (1746-1828), George Grosz(1893-1959)
and Kathe Kollwitz (1867-1945), occupy a particularly eminant
position.   Each artist in his/her own way have adopted
systems of communication/codification according to their own
abilities or effectiveness.   Heartfield, like Kollwitz and
Daumier employed as their medium a picture/text sign system
in order to react to political developments and shifts of
dominant social ideologies.

The first part of the following chapter is an attempt to
analyse the effectiveness of John Heartfield's Photomontages,
his choice of photographs as picture material, their related
texts, and his intentions in using it.   The second part is
an examination of one photomontage, how the artistic means
and political intention relate to one another in this one piece.
This one montage is not conceived of as a work of art with its
own internal frame of reference; the technical and artistic
effort that went into it is somewhat of lesser concern to the
task of making a political statement to be comprehended among
the masses.   However, in order to gain a greater understanding
of Heartfield's work and its relevance in its particular
historical location, perhaps we should first examine the political
predicament of his time, i.e. Germany from 1923-1933.

Political Background

After World War I thousands of soldiers failed to find their
way back into civilian life. Depressed by the outcome of the
war and socially uprooted from their class, many of them formed
themselves into "Wehrverbaende" defence associations, whose
military, national and anti-democratic attitudes laid the ground
for the National Socialists.   In the post war period, millions

of peasants, workers and petty-bourgeois were reduced to
misery and disillusionment by the economic crisis of the
time. As a result, these associations registered a huge
increase in membership. It was a characteristic strategy
of the NS (National Socialists) propaganda to give the
different groups in the population exactly the promises that
they wanted to hear - despite the fact that it was objectively
impossible in practice to keep all these completely contrad-
ictory assurances. This strategy was primarily directed at
the labour force which was the strongest social class in terms
of numbers and at the same time had been exposed to the great-
est misery by the economic crisis.

In this situation, Hitler's party presented itself to the workers
as a revolutionary organisation of the working classes. They
expressed hope and strength in a new Germany. They called
themselves the "National Socialist German Workers Party"(NSDAP)
and assembled under a red flag to declare war on International
Finance Capitalism, the Stock Exchange and Entrepreners in
trade and finance. It became the answer to the national
hatred for capitalism and swept the country with great speed.
Again, Germany could pull itself out of social inequality and
economic disaster with the power of the NSDAP.

The petty bourgeoise and the peasants were promised the
'abolition of interest slavery', the small and somewhat
independent middle classe was assured of a fight against
financial monopolies and chain department stores. With these
promises, National Socialism was able to obtain a secure and
strong hold among the masses who had been unsettled by economic
crisis which was eventually to lead to a majority in the
parlimentary voting. Thus, the winds of change were rapidly
shaping the future of German politics - in a country whose
spirit was weakened by defeat in World War I, the conditions
were ripe for a strong, willing and hopeful leader to emerge,
brandishing weapons of righteousness and idealism.

As Germany was poised on the brink of Fascism, John Heartfield's art increasingly showed an aggressively political nature and he "consciously placed photography in the service of political agitation" (1).

Photomontage

His weapon became photomontage - a photographic cut-up technique supposedly invented by George Grosz and Heartfield, whether this is strictly true or not is hardly relevant. Originally it seems that soldiers on the Western Front, unable to get their reports of butchery past the sensors, turned to$\frac{7}{8}$ pasting together photographs and cut-outs from newspapers to tell their tale of horror to families and friends back home. This technique combined with that of the Cubists, who used collage for reasons of texture and spacial manipulation in their work, gave exactly the stimulus needed for Heartfield and his close friend Grosz to use this new medium to express a new conviction.   A dozen years later George Grosz recalled to Erwin Piscator:-

"When John Heartfield and I invented photomontage in my South End studio at five o'clock on a May morning in 1916, neither of us had any inkling of its great possibilities nor of the thorny yet successful road it was to take. As so often happens in life, we had stumbled accross a vein of gold without knowing it" (2)

It is possible that Grosz took too much credit in the matter. Max Ernst had used it in a large port-folio, as did Rodchenko in Moscow and Hausmann in Berlin. However, Heartfield had a surprising versatility in this new medium and it gradually became central to his work. He, who had little understanding of painting, developed it into a major art form. As Daumier had done a century earlier with lithography, John Heartfield turned to the newest, the least encumbered medium to express bitter social protest and political propaganda, with powerful anger, and great artistic talent.

Heartfield always considered his photomontages as artistic achievements despite the fact that in the eyes of many

contemporary critics, the work was graphic, and not to be
confused with art.   The realm of art was very much involved
with formal movements such as Dada.   Since the works he
created were to be disseminated in editions of half a million
through a Communist magazine called AIZ, (3) he had very little
interest to bourgeois art collectors or dealers.   Every week
however, the next edition of AIZ would carry Heartfields
latest argument.   The workers, for whom he intended his
photomontages, understood their revolutionary content, but
assigned no artistic judgement to them.

In the early part of his career, Heartfield had been making
his living in Berlin as a designer and book illustrator - he
had also contributed to various publications, some of which
were somewhat radical and usually underground.   At this time,
most of his colleagues and fellow artists saw themselves as
revolutionaries also, not as political or social commentators,
however, rather as Dadaists and as such their revolution was
more formal.

In 1917, George Grosz and Heartfield were collaborating on
several publications together and were widely considered to
be Dada.   There are, however, some important distinctions
to be made between the collective work of Heartfield and Grosz
and that of the mainstream Dada movement.

Dada and Politics

Dada was founded in the Spring of 1916 by a group of writers
and artists. All were homeless, were refugees, idealistic
exiles, conscientious objectors or anarchists.   The movement
started in Zurich where intellectuals from all countries
gathered during the war.   Dada was not a style, it was the
culmination of a state of mind. Following on from the
experimentation of previous art movements, i.e. from Les Fauves,
which was in turn followed by the Cubists, and to a lesser

extent the Futurists, artists who finally fractured a mode
of thought which had dominated painting for centuries. It
was against this background that Dada made its appearance.
although at first, little more than a collection of avant-
garde writers and artists, who were revolted by the war, and
suspicious of the role which art and literature had come to
play, the Dadists, gradually assumed a consciously subversive
role. They ridiculed conventional taste and deliberatly set
out to dismantle the arts. Its means were both frivolous
and serious. As Hugo Ball explained "what we call Dada is
foolery, foolery extracted from the emptiness in which the
higher problems are wrapped, a gladiator's gesture, a game
played with the shabby remnants of a public execution of
false morality" (4). Tristan Tzara's definition, too, seems
to me to be particularly apt: "Dada is a virginal microbe,
which, with the insistance of air, penetrates into all places
that reason cannot fill up with words or conventions" (5).

In the years 1917 to 1919, the Dada movement had grown
considerably through the publication of periodicalls and a
new gallery which was opened by Hugo Ball, Tristan Tzara, and
Hand Ricter. Although Dada constantly threatened to spill
over from the cabaret stage and art gallery into public life,
it never really made that connection with revolutionary act-
ivity on a political and social plane which was to typify its
role in Germany. False and provocative statements were
released to the press, subversive ideas were nurtured in
Manifestoes, but political reaction seemed to imply public
responsibility and moral involvement of a kind unrelated to
a formalistic Dadaist viewpoint.

The Dada ideas and reactionary thoughts were brought to
Germany by Huelsenbeck where it rapidly became radicalized.
In New York and Zurich, the political scene had been stable,
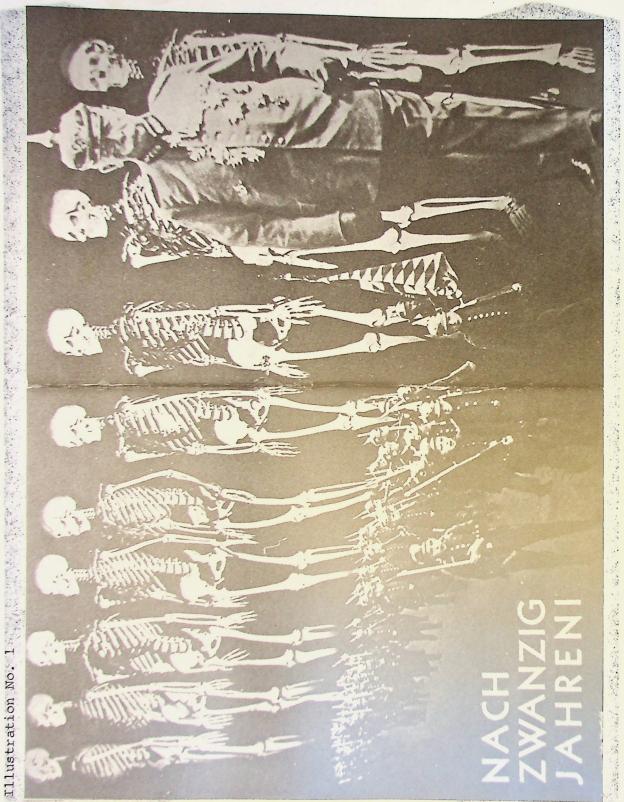whereas in a country like Germany, zapped by war and torn by

social divisions and general post war malaise. The
revolutionary stance of Dada took on a political purpose.
Johannes Baader, a Dadaist from Berlin scattered pamphlets
nominating himself for president of a local German republican
party, and Wieland Hertzfeld (brother of John Heartfield)
joined the party. This gradual coming together of Dada and
political activism was further strengthened when in 1920 in
the First (and only) International Dada Fair in Berlin. Both
George Grosz and John Heartfield exhibited, among other things,
the weekly editions of their leftist magazine "Neue Jugend"
of 1917.

However, despite all of this political activity relating to a
conceptual art movement, to some degree, the political element
had less to do with the essence of Dada itself than with the
interaction between a revolutionary artistic movement and an
insecure political structure that was the condition of Germany
at that volatile and tortured moment in History. Thus, act-
ivists which would have been regarded as harmless pranks in
Switzerland, became rather dangerous and political subversive
acts of sedition in Berlin. One of the major publications
of the Dadaists, "Every Man his Own Football" (a harmless
satire on what could be termed the Big-Brother Syndrome) was
banned, along with several other publications.

Method, Style, Materials

Heartfield's graphic and typographic work was never completely
superseeded by his photomontages. He had worked as artistic
director for a theatre company in 1920-23, and had occasionally
collaborated on films. Unfortunately, there is little surviving
documentation of his work for the Communist Party events or even
his stage work for Erwin Piscator's proletarian theatre company
in Berlin.

When Heartfield started to make book jackets using photographs

Illustration No. 1

NACH ZWANZIG JAHREN!

for "Malik Verlag" (6), he did not do so as a Dadaist, nor
did he think of photomontages. He wanted to communicate
the image of the author or the theme of the book, that any-
one could understand. His style quickly developed from
these commercial book jackets, magazine covers and illust-
rations into stronger statements on topical, political events.
His first work of this sort was a poster exhibited in the
window of Malik Bookshop (7) to commerate the outbreak of war
in 1914,   It was a warning against the increased influence
of creative forces that were preparing for a war of revenge.
(See illustration 1).
The caption reads "Twenty Years Later" (vertical text from
bottom to top) "Even-three-year-old children playing at war
must be taught how to handle weapons and sabers and be
instilled with the feeling that war is both welcome and
lovable" (8).

From that first photomontage, John Heartfield became a
revolutionary, whereas in his earlier work he had been involved
in producing drawings, watercolours and oil paintings in Wies-
baden. Actually, his encounter in Berlin with George Grosz, who
was two years his junior, prompted him to destroy all of his
previous work. It had been conventionally academic in character
and in no way expressed his anger against the social issues and
the military establishment, and bore no comparison with the
active and somewhat revolutionary work of his good friend, Grosz.

Their friendship was mutual, and was to last a lifetime. Both
anglicised their names in 1916. Grosz transformed Georg in
George and henceforth spelled his surname with'sz' instead of
'ss' so that it was pronounced with a short vowel as in the
English "boss".   Helmut Hertzfeld called himself John Heartfield
to express his protest against the way German chauvinists greeted
one another: "God Punish England".

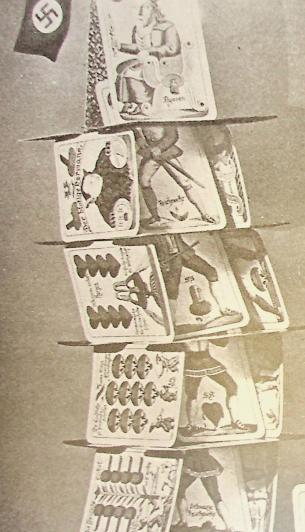The rebel Hertzfeld became the revolutionary Heartfield and

Das tausendjährige Reich

and thereafter worked to find an easily comprehensible pictorial
speech that would need no interpretation, His idea was to
reject any subjective personal nuances in his work, to renounce
a definite recognisable 'handwriting' and to curtail the sub-
juective artistic qualities which is the goal of the hard-line
fine artist. The style of the camers is not only modern and
objective, but it addressed everyone in the same manner. It
was, however, not until the late 1920's that Heartfield's work
was being printed in copperplate in the AIZ, (Workers Illustrated
Paper).

Heartfield soon became proficient at this new medium. Just as
Durer with the woodcut, and Rembrandt with etching, Heartfield's
proficiency developed into a masterly handling of materials.

Artistic quality for Heartfield was synonymous with the clear
solution of a concept. Purpose was his driving force, and in
his eyes, a piece of work was to succeed or fail on whether or
not the idea was clearly defined by the mutual and exclusive
relationship between form and substance. The distribution of
space, the proportions, the choice of lettering, the tonal quality
or the colour of the photograph were subordinate to the idea
being expressed. Every detail was a part of the expression.

He had an enormous picture archive made up from magazine photo-
graphs, clippings from newspapers and posed photographs and when
he could not find what he needed in his own library, he would
search in picture agencies. Historical photo material could
always stimulate him to new ideas. With photographic tricks in
the darkroom, and painting, he arranged the various parts of the
picture to fit together perfectly. The printing process used
by the publishing company was copperplate photogravure, so
sensitive that any slight error would also print as well as what
the artist intended.

An example of the high quality that Heartfield demanded is to be
found in a photomontage called "The Thousand Year Reich" (see
illustration 2)(1934). For two days, he built houses of cards

until one of them collapsed satisfactorially. Then in the
photograph he modified the figures and put in the lettering and
swastika (9). The text at the right hand side can be translated
thus:

> The German lifestyle is definitevely fixed for the
> next millennium. "In the next thousand years, no
> revolution will occur in Germany" —   Adolph Hitler
>
> (Nurenberg Party Congress)

In Heartfield's house of cards, each of which is a separate
photomontage, the industrial magnate, Fritz Thyssen is at the
top and Hitler, as a drummer, is at the bottom.

Heinrich Mann described AIZ as early as 1926 as follows:

> "The Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung" is one of the best
> of current picture newspapers. It is full in its coverage,
> technically good and above all unusual and new. It brings
> the proletarian world to view, other illustrated weeklies,
> strangely enough, don't seem to have the means to do this,
> although that world is the larger one. Aspects of daily
> life are seen here through the eyes of the worker, and it
> is time that this happened. The pictures express comp-
> laints and threats reflecting the attitude of the pro-
> letariat, but at the same time, this proves their self-
> confidence and their energetic activity to help them-
> selves. The self-confidence of the proletariat in this
> weary part of the world is most heartening". (10)

Analysis of Heartfield's Work

This section investigates the ways in which Heartfield uses
picture material, his intentions in using it, and the effects he
achieves with it.   In the analysis of one photomontage I will
attempt to show how artistic concerns and political motivations
come together to express his overall intention.

Therefore, analyses of aesthetic qualities and function must take

DER SINN DES HITLERGRUSSES:

Motto:
MILLIONEN
STEHEN
HINTER MIR!

Kleiner Mann bittet um große Gabe

equal importance, but for the purpose of the following study,
the emphasis will be on technical conditions of the photomontage.
I will try to show that Heartfield, who considered himself a
"proletarian artist" felt that political agitation and the
artistic technical means must be mutually interdependent.

The front cover of AIZ, October 1932 (see illustration 3) shows
a picture of Hitler facing to the right side in front of a
"grossly out of proportioned" figure, also looking the same
direction albeit with a slightly downward gesture. There is a
very strong compositional diagonal from top left to bottom right
which stretches from the financial backers collar and the swelling
of his chest to Hitler's hand and nose. The middle of the
diagonal is marked by a bundle of money. This simplicity of
composition serves to make the images much stronger. There is
not even a background; it is not that the background remains
empty, but it actually does not exist at all. The bodies,
though light falls on them, do not produce any visible shadows.
A mantle of light surrounds both figures and changes into dark parts
at the upper and lower regions between the two bodies. This
device further describes the figures. As distinct from the soft
background, the contours of the bodies appear hard, and the inner
structure of the figures is highly defined. Both figures are
brought into a close relation to each other which is strengthened
by the way the bottom corner of the jacket on the financial backer
sticks out.

The larger figure on the left of the picture (financial backer)
has an aura of the 'capitalist' 'employer' or 'rich man' about
him. This is subtly suggested by the collar, double-chin, suit,
diamond ring and bundle of money; he is also obviously very well
fed. These distinctive marks, however, were not persued consist-
ently; the tie is missing, the jacket is a bad fit, and the
crease is poor; the shirt cuff has disappeared into the sleeve.
These are indications that Heartfield is not trying to give a
stylized image of the industrialist.

The head of the financier is cut off above the mouth by the upper edge of the picture, so he remains anonymous. He does not represent a certain person, but rather a specific social class. Also, the movement of the arm with which he hands over the money is somewhat discrete; he does not want to attract any special attention.

The figure on the right, that of Adolph Hitler, receiving the money, is identified primarily by the side view of the face, with its small black moustache, and by the hand opened above the shoulder in a salute. Unlike the hidden backer, the Fuehrer is wearing a military uniform, brown shirt, shoulder belt and gun belt, together with the trousers of the uniform.

Tie and moustache, well known psychological symbols for penis and pubic hair seem only to be suggested, as the moustache is well trimmed and the tie disappears into the shirt at the height of his chest. Hitler's clothes emphasise action, his gestures concentration. The salute almost seems to be religious, or to have some sort of religious implication. In isolation, it is seen as getting in touch with the masses assembled around him. Even with the financial backer behind him however, substantially changes the context of the salute, he is now the recipient of a sum of money from behind, - the implication is one of bribery.

The lighting in the picture is somewhat unusual; it casts an unreal, illogical mood into the figures. The light which falls diagonally downward onto Hitler could be expected to strike the financiers front, instead, he is shrouded in darkness (by re-touching) The political meaning for this is clear. Hitler's forehead is lit up as if he was inspired from above - some superior heavenly power - whereas the financier has to stay in the darkness, especially if he is to be seen from the direction of the Fuehrer's audience.

The verbal components of the montage are divided into three

distinct areas. The purpose of these statements is to locate, substantiate and comment on the pictorial material in the picture. The first and biggest caption at the top of the picture reads "Der sinn des Hitlergrusses" (The meaning of the Hitler salute). This gives the motivation for the examination, to clarify the social meaning of the salute.

The sentence "Millionen stehen hinter mir" (Millions stand behind me) is a phrase which Hitler frequently used in a more or less varied form. It means, in Hitler's sense, "(millions) Support me", "(millions) are in agreement with my struggle". This statement is primarily directed to those who still hesitate to join the army, its function is to strengthen the followers and to intimidate the doubters. And again, in the sub-title at the base of the montage the words say "Kleiner Mann bittet um grosse gaben" (Little man asks for great gifts). If the 'Motto' is read along with the sub-title, there is a subtle change of meaning becoming apparent, i.e. the words 'grosse gaben' (great gifts) change the meaning of the word 'millionen' (millions). Through the sub-title Hitler is made to declare involuntarily that capital stands behind him. So, Hitler's credibility seems to be robbed from him by the last sub-title.

It seems obvious that the three verbal parts of the montage are meant for different speakers. Heartfield and Hitler. Although Heartfield is not present in the montage, his presence is felt 'off screen'. Hitler, however, is visibly perceptible but not as a speaker. His expression "Millions stand behind me" is not accompanied by the outward appearance of talk, but by a dumb gesture of salute, and in the context it is used here, it suggests that the interpretation of the salute ritual is connected with the left hand figure, the financier.

In the sub-title, "Little man asks for great gifts", "Little man" refers to Hitler and "great gifts" corresponds to the banknotes which are as oversize to Hitler as the financier, this makes the Fuehrer look even smaller.

Hitler's sentence "Millionen stehen hinter mir" "Millions" stand behind me" is a good example of a metaphor. Heartfield takes Hitler at his word, that is, that he neglects the meaning that Hitler had intended and shows that there really are millions behind him. These millions however are different to what Hitler had meant to express.

This montage is a very good example of how such a complex and detailed message can be communicated in such an outwardly simple manner. It is really only in an objective analysis that certain facts which (by virtue of their obviousness) would to most people remain un-noticed. suddenly spring to light. It is my belief that the artist Heartfield was fully aware of everything that has been discussed here. The simplicity of his use of words is seen as tremendously effective when for example, one realizes that this iconic-verbal system is used all the time in advertising.

Wieland Hertzfeld was the first to point out simalarities between his brother's photomontages and advertising. He writes:-
"The joining of photograph and text became the prefected
    means of commercial advertising in the 1920's, and so it
    has remained in film and television advertising too.
    Such commercial graphics in advertising and Heartfield's
    works have one thing in common (despite important differences)
    namely that both of them are totally "aimed". They ask
    something definite of the viewer; to buy a book or a
    magazine, to visit a meeting or a rally, to support an
    action or to fight against unpopular laws and regulations...
    Heartfield learnt pure as well as commercial painting and
    drawing in Berlin and Munich" (11)

It is, I believe, plain to see that Heartfield knew the techniques of consumer advertising before he used his artistic talents for political ends. His use of photography and text in his montages should certainly be taken in relation to his advertising experience. The "main differences" that his brother Wieland talks about are his altered function of the meaning; the information that is communicated goes much further than just the retina, or the

immediate understanding of the message. Rather it operates on a very subconscious level, (on which advertising strategies are based to a very large degree). Whereas advertising uses these techniques to influence (subliminally) Heartfield uses them to convince (subliminally as well as consciously).

Conclusion

Heartfield's photomontages reached a very high degree of professionalism and effectiveness, as an anti-fascist struggle. He was more hated by the Fascists than virtually any artist. The reason why he was seen as a threat is quite obvious - he was attempting to render ineffective the myths and ideologies of the Fuehrer and his National Socialist Party by quoting the world of images which it employs, and by turning them against their authors through the addition of certain other pictorial elements which only serve to make the distinction between the appearance and reality obvious.

Heartfield's intention was to train and practice the ability not to accept the dominant social facts as they are unquestionably, but rather to recognise the centres of power in that society, according to whose frames of reference reality is defined.

In the next chapter, we shall see how the themes of protest was expressed in quite a different manner. Whereas Heartfield utilised direct photographic references to the person or attitude under attack, along with superimposition of imagery, text and commentary. Pable Picasso used a different weapon, no less effective but different in implication, that of allegory, and universal symbolism. Also, his theme was specific, that of a certain occurance located in a particular time and location, the bombing of Guernica - a small Basque town in the year 1937.

Illustration No. 4

CHAPTER II - Picasso's 'Guernica'

Background

"The bombardment of this open town, far behind the lines, occupied precisely three and one-quarter hours. During that time a powerful fleet of airplanes, consisting of three types—Junkers and Heinkel bombers and Heinkel fighters—did not cease unloading bombs weighing up to one thousand pounds and two-pound aluminum incendiary projectiles. It is estimated that more than three thousand of these projectiles were dropped.

"Virtually the whole of Guernica was soon in flames. . . . At 2:00 A.M. today, when the writer visited the town, the whole of it was a horrible sight, flaming from end to end. The reflection of the flames could be seen in the clouds of smoke above in the mountains ten miles away. Throughout the night houses were falling, until the streets were long heaps of red, impenetrable ruins."

The above statement was reported by a correspondent for the London Times on April 27th, 1937. The town of Guernica was not just damaged, it came closest to what could be described as total devastation of a complete peaceful human community.

This ancient town situated on the western slopes of the Pyrenees was not only a cultural centre, but a sacred place of the Basques since the Middle Ages. Guernica represented the very spirit of pride and freedom in the hearts of all Spaniards not just Basques. This monstrous brutality was more than just a vicious attack by an overpowerful General, it was a murderous manifestation of the evils of Fascism in its universal sense, and a symbol of the insanity of modern war.

Picasso's commission was not merely to decorate the interior of the Spanish Pavilion, but rather to express in a pictorial statement the plight of his homeland ravished by a foreign aggressor - Fascism.

Subject Matter

Picasso's handling of the subject matter in Guernica is not apparently political. There is no distinct battle being waged in front of us nor is there any reference to a powerful aggressive enemy in symbol or allegory. The implications of violence are

rather more objective in effect (see illustration 4).
Picasso's images are symbols, rich and powerful in content.
Because they are used in this way, the moment, i.e. the
obliteration of a town, is somewhat subordinate to a more
generalised statement on the nature and effect of war.
Although (by virtue of its title), the painting is a ref-
erence to Guernica, its lattitudes somehow suggest a broader,
more universal meaning.

This is perhaps the strongest underlying forces in Picasso's
use of imagery.   At the commencement of this work he was aged
fifty six year, his eyes so far, had seen perhaps the most
varied and aggressively vital transformations in the visual arts
than any other period. The reality of the actual event was of
sufficient power and meaning to furnish him with innumerable
facts - political, strategic, statistical - of photographs
depicting burning buildings, images of heroism and death, and
countless descriptions of events related by eye witnesses.
Undoubtedly, the facts were all there, too numerous and compelling
to handle realistically as perhaps in a film or play. Picasso
condenced them in time and space, embracing and expressing a
reality way beyond just that of Guernica.   His choice of subject
matter does not in the strictest sense corroborate or exemplify
the facts. Rather, it takes the painting out of historical
documentation and into the realm of tradedy. This is undoubt-
edly the power of his symbolism - to extend far beyond the occasion
and express universal human experience, transcending actual
historical facts.

This, I believe, was the artists most important concern in the
actual carrying out of the painting - to locate and define a
certain style in order that there would simultaneously exist,
a faithful portrayal of an historical episode on the one hand,
and a true expression of certain ideas somewhat less accessible,
general and delicate than the immediate appearance of the work.

Before embarking on a study of the symbolism used in Guernica,
it would be better perhaps to attempt some description of the
painting as it is now, in its completed stage.

Illustration No. 4 (a)

Guernica is a huge painting - 11½ feet by 25½ feet - an imposing and arresting dimension.   Perhaps the most surprising initial feeling is the vast amount of emotional power being expressed and somehow, the monochrome effect of the grey, black and white further enhances this power. It is un-natural, this grey, but one feels that to charge such emotion with furious colour may somehow seduce the spectator away from the strength of the gestures used, instead, it speaks of a silence of extreme grief and disaster.

In the middle of this picture, high up and dominating, is a blazing light bulb, like an eye peering down on the drama below. Beneath it a horse staggers gaunt and in agony with a lance through its torso (see illustration 4(b)), under its hoofs lies the body of a man, broken and shattered like a statue made of china, arms flung in different directions. On the right, a broken sword and touching a small flower. To the right of the horse a woman's horrified head stretches from a window on the second floor and her long arm holds out an oil-lamp which lights up a single sharply defined area - the horse's chest and the upper part of another woman partly naked and moving painfully toward the centre (see illustration 4(c)). From the darkness to the extreme left os the picture and on another plane, the dangerous head, shoulders and leg of a great bull emerge into the light

(see illustration 4(a)). while below the bull, and to the left, a screaming women squats holding a dead child at her feet.

Symbols

In much of Picasso's work preceeding Guernica there are constant references and intrepretations associated to various symbols. For example, the "Cast" of characters used in Guernica - the Bull, then a disembowelled horse in agony, combined with a dead soldier holding a sword, then a female figure uplifting a light, and the motif of women looking out from a high window. Most of these images had previously been used in other works. In 'Minotauromancy" an etching of 1935, they had almost all been used together but with

Illustration No. 4 (b)

slight and sometimes major shifts of emphasis or meaning.
Picasso's way of drawing an eye or a hand anywhere in the
picture determined whether a bull would appear as a domestic
animal in a Spanish town, as an apperation, a miracle, an
allegory or as a figure meant to represent hope or suffering
in a war episode.   This brief comparison was used to illust-
rate to what an astonishing extent an artist's images are
independent of the meaning he makes them carry in any particular
instance lest we may think that the same pictorial motif re-
presents the same meaning in different contexts.

Take, for example, the Bull. This symbol has been used by the
artist throughout his whole career to represent strength, honor
nobility, stability and also the dark side- that of an adversary,
a threat to mans indominable power.   It has a long and virtuous
history in the culture of Mediterranean peoples, a fierce bull-
man or man-bull as in the 1935 Minotauromancy etching. As in
the etching however, all eyes are upon him. The outcry of the
mother is directed toward him, and so is the face of the dead
child. the warrior and the horse look at him and the running
woman moves and stares in the same direction.   Somehow, the
Bull looks sideways in a gesture of detachment, he is being
appealed to by the woman and child, but remains unaffected.

For some people, the full represents Fascism, who looks with
impassivity at the chaos that he has caused and is supposed to
be repelled by the woman holding the light.   However, if one looks
back to Picasso's earlier work, to elucidate his signs, in
particular to his many bull ring scenes, we can see a strange
ambivalence in the numerous representations of the bull and the
minotaur - they can either be a hero or a villain. However, in
Guernica, the bull is almost certainly the manifestation of
brutality - of Fascism, only indirectly. Its meaning comprises
a wider and deeper significance. The crime is no longer committed
by Fascists in a given incident in the Spanish war, but by all
brutal, evil stupidity in power and the painting is a huge protest

against the universal suffering that it causes. It can also be read not as a moral definition, but as a desparing statement that there can be no victory, that both sides inevitably loose, leaving only a brutish aggressor in a bloodbath, a battlefield of hate and devoid of any humanity.

Although, throughout his working life Picasso had been pre-occupied with themes such as love, eroticism, relationships and tragedy, in this picture, he was able to recall any or all of his powers of visualisation to realize his aim.

His medium was paint and his tools - symbols and allegory. Whereas in the case of Heartfield it was direct reference, a reaction in a given time and place, therefore the protest had a termpral location, in the case of Guernica, the subject is handled more poetically and generalized. There is no question of which approach is more effective, as I believe that both forms are as powerful, suffice it to say that they are just different.

PART II - PROPAGANDA ART

CHAPTER III - Toward a Definition

Whether the Propaganda content of art reduces its aesthetic
value in terms of fine art is much in debate among historians
and critics and somewhat beyond the scope of this study.
However, the value of art in propaganda is quite another story.
The visual image can help to make abstract political ideologies
more understandable. In posters, this is usually done by an
association of visual symbols with a script or text message.
When used exclusively, images can suggest allegories, i.e. the
description of a subject under guise of another suggestively
similiar, for example, The triumph of Good over Evil, and in
this context, it becomes a universal language. Further, if an
audience is persuaded to equate (or confuse) the thing repres-
ented in design, with the actual reality behind it, then prop-
aganda has succeeded in both its artistic and its political
sense in becoming an effective mans of arousal and persuasion.

Propaganda in its broadest sense, is the systematic spreading
or propagating of particular ideas. "The Organized scheme for
propagation of a doctrine or practice" (Concise Oxford Dictionary)
Today, however, the word is often used in a misrepresented sense,
connotating desception or distortion, but this is not its
original meaning.   The word 'propaganda' also has a broader
meaning than just 'political' which means in its pure sense,
engaging in or taking sides in a debate. Many forms of art put
into general circulation, are more propaganda than political,
because they present an idea without necessarily associating it
with a bid for office or a programme of reform, yet still carry
on activities to influence public opinion.

Propaganda in an art context, means the use of symbols in pictures
to influence the attitudes of the audience. Every political group
makes propaganda, indeed, all groups that communicate with an
audience must be, in some way, propagandistic.

Propaganda then, has a unique function - to spread controversial

ideas to a broad mass of people. The method is to redefine
popular concepts of political and social issues using relevant
visual elements. Or to rearrange accepted graphic symbols with
other design elements to produce new meanings.

An artist concerned with revolution creates a crisis or up-
heavel of conscience by attacking established symbols and
substituting new ones. This stance would usually come under the
heading of left wing activism. On the other hand, however, the
reformer or election campaigner can often preserve the central
symbols intact, using familiar images for example, flag, star,
swastick, to represent new solutions to old problems.

All forms of propaganda art make appeals,   These appeals can
be used by the artist/designer almost unconsciously, as a means
of public manipulation.

The Media

These methods (or weapons) used by the dominant ideology can
actually sometimes be produced for export to all parts of the
world. For example, in the use of some political posters, i.e.
Polish Solidarity have been very effective in transcending
geographic borders and reached world audiences via international
news magazines and television, thus other media, pick up these
messages and project it world wide, also.

It is a matter for debate whether radio and television have
replaced the role or effectiveness of posters in modern election
campaigns, reducing its role to that of a back-up of the already
existing mass media. We could also look at this from another
viewpoint, that unlike television and radio, a poster can leave
a very powerful and lasting image, and that instead of competing
with the poster, television has given a new importance to it, by
making people less conscious of the printed word, and more image
conscious than ever before.

This argument is particularly relevant in the Western world as radio and television are perhaps more widespread here than in China or India, for example, where it is propably more relied upon, also, these Eastern countries have a much higher r rate of illiteracy than in America or Europe. So this leaves the political poster in the dominant position as a vehicle for political propaganda.

Television, Radio and sometimes newspapers are, in many parts of the world state controlled, as in France, so their reliability of expressing the voice of minorities is drastically reduced. In places such as these, at such times as political upheavels, the poster comes into its own as a weapon for the suppressed opposition against the dominant ideology. For example, the Russian Supreme Command issued very little or no propaganda; the oppressed Czechoslovakian nation none the less succeeded in expressing their fear and hate by communicating to the world via posters and television the satirical and critical view of invading troops which was seen around the world.

Methodology

Propably the most effective weapon used through this form of propaganda art is that of the appeal to, or touching on the emotions. Adolph Hitler pointed out in his book 'Mein Kampf' that the specific function of the poster is "to attract the attention of the crowd, not to educate those who are already educated or who are striving for education and knowledge. Its effect for the most part must be aimed at the emotions, and only in a limited way at the so called intellect" (12) It is however, not unreasonable to suggest that people are more moved to support the war effort by emotion than reason.

Whether emotions or intellect are used in art as an ideological weapon is really only a fine distinction. The overall purpose of this sort of right wing propaganda is the gain of a broad

support by minimizing ideological arguments, appealing to
attitudes and concentrating on special issues. The audience
can thus be defined in three wyas:- the opponents, the
sympethizers, and the uncommitted. The Formula is to firstly
appeal to the uncommitted, second to guard against the opponents
arguments, and then to reinforce support for the cause.

Art Propaganda

For this subtlety of meaning and perhaps more durable protest,
we must focus more on the domain of fine art. For although
posters and its mass circulation of intentions is perhaps the
most directly effective weapon of change, the voice of artists
who operate in a different sphere is no less effective. For
although direct appeals for action are rare in painting, and
sculpture, the messages communicatdd work more as calls to
attention to events and situations about which something should
be, or should have been done. An example of this is Picasso's
'Guernica' (see Part I - Protest Art), or Rodin's 'The Burghers
of Calais',where our attention is called to focus on social
but the political decision of how to remedy them is not indicated.
In many cases, artists of this caliber almost assume a role of
a catalyst, consciously or unconsciously, i.e. political change
does not come about by the direct influence of art, but rather
art can plant the seed of change by undermining the strength of
such ideologies, an example of this revolutionary stance is
in the work of Daumier, or Goya, with their satirical drawings
commenting on current social attitudes.

This type of art is the voice of the left, that of protest.
In this section however, it is our purpose to examine the
attitude of the right wing to such art. This attitude towards
contemporary art has more far-reaching implications than just
the surface value of appearance. Because it is here,that the
conservative sensibilities of government and their conviction
that innovations or agents of change must be supported, conflict.

The mettle of progressive politics is tested when confronted with radical changes of form in modern life.

An example of this 'conflict' (that I shall use to illustrate this point) is that of Nazi Germany and their contemporary Expressionism.   Although both the Nazi Regime and Expressionism stemed from the same root, that of emotional upheaval and self-abandonment, expressionism was at this time termed 'Desperate' and banned by the Nazis, nevertheless, despite this decree, the publicity propagated (propaganda) by them was by its very nature expressionistic. This only goes to prove that political ideologies also have opinions on, and preferences for certain aesthetics and will attempt to convert to its own purposes whatever style accords with its dominant mood.

Thus, art as a political weapon is like other social powers, taken out of the hands of the individual and made part of a collectively controlled machine.

CHAPTER IV - NAZI ART

Genre Painting

The legitimate art produced under National Socialism is a
particularly interesting example of this "propaganda machine".
They type of art that was cultivated and encouraged was
primarily Genre Painting i.e. the depiction of the artists'
appreciation of everyday life (see illustration 5), "interiors,
scenes from private life, the world of plants and animals
observed with loving care to detail, romantic and typical
motifs, the world of fairytale - these are the subjects of
genre painting. Landscape conintues to have a nearly religious
significance ... And finally, the importance of portraits
remains unquestioned, one task of genre painting is the port-
raying of types, the rendering of German individuals rep-
resentative of their tribes and callings". (13)

This form of genre painting is by its nature almost entirely
static, that is, there is no room for innovation or change.
Once the artist has explored everything that he may call his
own, he tries to hold on tight to this constraint, he is not
free to open up new vistas. The artists' subject had to remain
constant enough in appearance that any painting by that artist
could be recognised as his work, so this situation hardly puts
a premium on a new departure in style or innovation.

In fact, the nature of genre painting is such that it has no
inherent style. This is so because it lacks progressiveness.
This is quite the opposite to the emphasis of modern art, which
is oriented completely around the concept of style, and has a
strong inbuilt temporal quality. With genre painting we must
speak in terms of realism or naturalism, which really only
means its straightforwardness or recognizability of its subject.
This inherent 'style' was evidently made subordinate to making
art as an entertainment - for the viewer to peer into the

surrounding world depicted in the paintings, and not to encourage active involvement. As a rule, they do not depict the work or organization of society, they do not illustrate the creation of wealth, but wealth that has already been created.
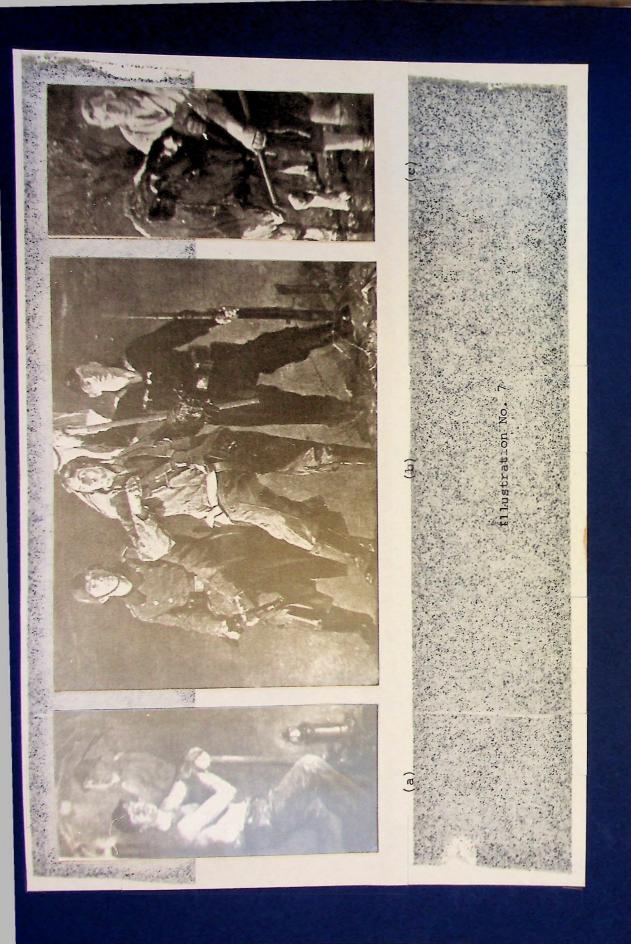
The subject matter chosen by these right wing propaganda artists did, however, usually remain loyal to traditional themes - the farmer, the hunter, the landscape, the craftsman, the mother and child, fruitbaskets, bouquets of flowers, the domestic animal, the young girl etc. But whereas earlier traditional genre painting emphasizes observation and crafts-manship, this new form was weighed down with the task of proclaiming essential truths and attributing a lasting spiritual significance to its content. Unlike the Nazi's every child and every cow had to embody the sacred mysteries of inner existence. In fact, they became masks, and displayed the pityfull fascades of the ideology that spawned them - Fascism. This can be seen by the titles given to most of these works. For example, a painting of a female nude might be titled - "Awakening", "The Quiet Hour", "Danae". "Lost in Thought" or "Peasant Venus" (see illustration 6). This suggesting that the girls individuality was of lesser importance than her idealization.

Iconography of Work

Now, having established some of the general characteristics of how art was used as a means of propagating National Socialist ideology, we must turn to another, no less intrinsic element of this ethic - that of work. To this end, I will attempt to show by example and anlaysis how the selection of 'loaded' subjectmatter was used as propaganda and how such themes as heroism, sentimentality and emotion can be exploited in a direct symbolist yet sublime political manner.

Analysis of Work

The example that I shall use to illustrate this is a painting

(a)

(b)

(c)

Illustration No. 7.

by a German artist, Hans Schmitz-Wiedenbruck called "Workers, Farmers, Soldiers" (see illustration 7). Painted in 1941, it is a Tryptich in canvas measuring 3 feet by 7½ feet. The centre panel (the largest) shows members of all three military branches, the army, the airforce and the navy, and the side panels show figures of a farmer and of a worker.

This triad of worker, soldier and farmer as equals is a frequent theme in NS ideology.
"In the factories and shipyards the artist sees the same national will to life that in other settings animates the soldier in battle and the farmer behind the plow". (14)

This idea is expressed very clearly in Schmitz-Wiedenbruck's painting albeit a visual not verbal language. The community of interests that unites the three groups. These groups make equal contributions to the same common task even though they work in different realms.

The artist tries to demonstrate this equality of production and status by several apparent visual means for example, by making all the figures the same size and by placing them on approx-imately the same level, thus, their heads are more or less on the same height. Also, by virtue of the triptych formation, which is borrowed from a long tradition of religious painting, and associated with salvation and redemption, lends a feeling of spiritual strength and unity.

This group then, have been entrusted with the task of rep-resenting the total German Race, in a sublime yet direct sym-bolism of nobility, fraternity and brotherhood. Anyone who identifies with this "Supreme Race" can thus partake in the same nobility regardless of social status, be he a farmer, soldier or worker. To be German is enough. This belief seems to suggest that other, non-Germanic types are inferior and must surely have made the German people arrogant and conceited

toward other races and incapable of solidarity with other
nations.

At the same time that Schmitz-Wiedenbruck's picture emphasizes
unity and solidarity, it also speaks of a social hierarchy within
the community. The central panel being in the dominant position,
obviously must convey the strongest elements. The strength
of the military power, represented by the soldiers is further
emphasized by another pictorial device - the view from below
(see illustration 7(b)). This has the subliminal effect of
arousing deep feelings of desire for leadership and triumph
or invincibility of the subjects.

This view from below does have still further implications. The
figures do not pose in a realistic or believable way, rather
than being influenced by external forces acting upon them,
they seem to suggest that they are themselves the active,
determining factors of those circumstances, i.e. they speak
of an inborn superiority and act according to their own will
by virtue of this divine calling.

Still another fascinating aspect to this suggested hierarchy
is the apparent differences in racial characteristics. The
soldiers in the middle panel seem to be shown as purely
"Nordic" i.e. light complexion and sharp facial features, the
worker and farmer however, show a passivness or obedience in
their physical type. These differences in racial types seems
to suggest that the farmer and worker are better suited to work
whereas the Nordic type are cut out for leadership.

On a still deeper analysis of the painting, we can see a further
relationship revealed between the domineering soldiers on the
one hand, and the common worker and farmer on the other. That
of the props attributed to each. The soldier, pilot and sailor
have been described in paint very accurately, down to the last
detail - their clothes, their weapons, and other paraphernalia
have been closely observed. The farmer and worker, however,

seem timeless and somewhat removed from reality (see illustration
7 (a), (c)). Farmers in the 1940's had the use of modern
machinery i.e. tractors, plows etc., they did not walk around
in barefoot herding cattle by hand, just as the worker would
have been using jackhammers rather than picks. The full
extent of the workers and farmers production capacity was not
shown, but the extent of the military's destructive capacity is.
Thus, the underlying conclusion one must draw from this is that
the conditions under which the worker lives are permanent and un-
changing, and that he can produce more by working longer, not
differently. One could also say that in this context, the
military exists because of the workers and farmers, and that
it uses up all their production and effort. The worker was
taught to be contented with the enjoyment that work provided
him, thus work was elevated to a high stature of achievement,
beyond that of creating or accumulating capital.

The handbook of the National Socialists states:-

"The fact that a worker in a community works for Germany
without being paid for this work teaches thim that the true
meaning of work does not lie in the wages that it brings him,
but in the spirit in which it was done.... work is not a
curse but an honor.... the main elements of education for the
Work Corps are a military bearing, a closeness to the soil,
a positive attitude toward work, and a communal spirit". (15)

My reason for using Schmitz-Wiedenbruck's painting as an
example of right-wing propaganda was to show how imagery of
this type could be used as an effective means of arousal and
persuasion. to further the ideologies of the dominant political
movement at the time.

It has (I hope) now become clear that the choice of imagery
and the use that it was put to, in this painting, was far from
naieve, rather it came from a very complex and sophisticated
visual vocabulary. Plainly its intention was to activate a

strong compelling nationalism in the mind of the observer.
(This was of primary importance as it made it possible for
countless inequalities, betrayals and exploitation to exist
under this same aegis that called for a new German Solidarity).
And then to present to the people these rather dubious, rest-
ricting ideologies outlined above.

It is interesting to note at this point how art such as this
was taken so seriously by the Nazis, and to what extent they
fought against prevailing international art movements. Nothing
was more abhorrent to them than an art which could exist
formerly that is, for its sake alone.

CHAPTER V - DEGENERATE ART

Nazi Polity

The National Socialist policy regarding art started out to
b e highly moralistic, they believed that the cultivation of
the arts was of greater and more lasting interest to the
people than the "satisfaction of their daily needs" (16).
This sweeping sentiment must be seen in the context of the
thousand year Reich as the Nazi Party beli4ved that the arts
must be focused not on temporal issues, but rather in a more
pluralistic, universal and timeless sense.

Their method was the elevation of culture and aesthetics
to a high plane in the consciousness of the people. Art was
seen as an indispensible part of modern culture, but it had to
be contained, or somehow guided, to prevent it from straying
from the new ideology ie.e. the National Socialist ideology.

Needless to say most forms of art (including expressionism)
already in existence had to be seen as a threat.

So strong were their convictions, so powerful in the
consciousness of the masses, that they rejected and attacked
just about everything that had existed on the art scene before
1933, whether it was abstract or representational, from the
shamelessly beautiful Franz Marc to the Social Criticism of
Max Peckman. It almost seemed as though out of an urgent sense
of paranoia, rather than a sincere desire to enrich the
collective consciousness of a nation, that many severe blows
were struck against modern art. Without attempting to define
it, the National Socialists sought to redifine their own
existence as an unreckonable power by an uninformed and
dogmatic view on modern culture as it was.

Implementation

The cultural policy was quite clearly defined by Hitler, and

and put into effect by the Generals elected to implement
the cultural policy set out by Hitler and his advisers on art,-
Troost. As an example of this new cultural policy, the world
famous Bauhaus, set up by Walter Gropious in Weimar, was taken
over by the Nazis' and virtually turned into a craft centre.

Gropious moved the Bauhaus to Dessau and them Berlin in an
attempt to achieve his aim of international architecture and
modern design but now under its new command a programme of
re-orientation and re-indoctrination was implemented. In this
process all twenty nine of the faculty including Paul Klee,
Oscar Schlemmer, Moholy Nagy and Emile Nolde, were dismissed.
A decree issued on May 4th, 1930 banned films by Eisenstein and
Barthold Brect. Erwin Piscator's Proletarian Theatre Company
in Berlin was shunned as disloyal. Music by Hindenberg and
Stravinsky was also forced to move underground. The arrogance
of the NS was total and their policies regarding culture,
ruthless.

One of the first major injuries on culture occured in October
of 1930 when Oscar Schlemmer's Frescoes in the stairwell of
the Bauhaus were destroyed and soon afterward, seventy works
by artists like Otto Dix, Lyonel Feininger, Kindinsky, Franz
Marc, Emile Nolde, and Paul Klee were deemed to be subversive
and were confiscated by the Reich chamber of the Visual Arts (34)

Outlined below is an extract from a five point manifesto entitled
"What German Artists Expect from the New Government". Published
in 1933, this pamphlet was crucial in setting the tone for
future policy:-

1.   That all products of a cosmopolitan or Bolshevist
      nature will be removed from public museums and coll-
      ections, then only one use remains for these works of
      non-art... They can serve as fuel for heating public
      buildings.

2.   That museum directors who sinned against a needy nation

by wasting public funds be suspended and never
again can hold office.

3. No artist suscribing to Marxism or Bolshevism may
    have their name in print.

4. That we true Germans shall not have to endure the
    ridiculous architecture built by criminals who grew
    rich penetrating such insults against our native
    culture.

5. That sculptures that are offensive to the national
    sensibility and yet still desecrate public squares and
    buildings even if they were created by "geniuses" must
    disappear as soon as possible, this will free us from
    the nightmare of the past years.

The general tone of this manifesto is that of purification –
to rid the ideal, Aryian, thousands year Reich, utopian society
of certain evils and "crimes against culture*. And strangly, it
succeeded, on a national level because it had the becking of
private interests behind the approval of official circles. By
1933 most of the opposition, i.e. Leftist elements and democratic
tendencies had almost been totally eliminated.

The number of permanent dismissals increased considerably, and
some artists and scholars were imprisoned in hurredly constructed
concentration camps that many would never leave again. The
great majority emigrated to London, Moscow, Paris, Stockholm,
Zurich and New York.

The NS plundered museums and galleries, conficating artworks deemed
to be 'degenerate' and without any compensation. A lot of this
art would finally end up decorating the private houses of the
members of the Supreme command.

In 1937, Professor Carl Ziegler was given the position of

President of the Reich Chamber of the Visual Arts, and the task of selecting German Degenerate Art since 1910, both painting and Sculpture for an exhibition in Munich. This ignorant fanatic visited every museum in Germany and confiscated practieally all the modern art in Germany.

Confiscations

When we break this down to individual artist and only the most famous will be listed:
Max Beckman, 509 works, Kirchner, 639works, Paul Klee, 102 works, Emile Nolde (himself a national Socialist) 1,052 works etc. The campaign against 'degenerate art' took in 1,400 artists in all. Works by 112 artists were selected to be shown to the public. In his speech opening the exhibition, Ziegler spoke of the "monstrosities, the madness, insolence, incompetence and degeneracy of modern art"

In the exhibition the paintings and sculptures were crowded together in long narrow rooms that were made seem more claustrophic with the use of partitions. The manner of display was deliberately detremental to the works and the lighting was weak, the paintings were hung askew and stuck in wherever they would fit, and the works were provided with inflamatory labels, commentaries and obscene jokes. It was Hitler himself who stated that "The artists who created such works either had faulty vision, in which case, it was the responsibility of the Reich to spare future generations from such dreadful visual effects, or they did not believe the reality of what they depicted, but have other reasons for imposing such a hoaz on the nation, in this case, they are liable to prosecution under criminal law".

A huge quantity of the modern art confiscated by the NS was sold abraod by Aryan art dealers who sensed a chance for profit while the rest was deemed the "dregs of degenerate art" and stored in Berlin - or burned in public. On March 20th, 1939, a public

demonstration of National Socialist Cultural Policy was
carried out in Berlin, where 1,0004, oil painting and
sculptures as well as 3,825 watercolours, drawings and prints
were destroyed.

That was for the time being the end of modern art in Germany.
After the war, attempts were made to recover some of the work
lost or exiled, but unfortunately that which had not been
destroyed was now in the collections of people who had valid
claim to ownership. Only a fraction was actually recovered and
at great expense and effort.

"Degenerate Art" was not by its very nature an art of Protest,
rather it worked the other way round. The dominant ideology
of the time, i.e. National Socialism, was responsible for seeing
anything that was not spawned and generated by its own presence
as "degenerate". So total and conclusive was this regime,
that in order for art to be the "only truely enduring investment
of human behaviour" (17), a total regression and revision
had to be made in order to substitute a purer (propaganda)
art instead of the radical (demoralist) art already in existence.

PART III - THE ARTIST IN A PERIOD OF CHANGE

CHAPTER VI - Social Realism or Socialist Realism

Withoug engaging in the whole question of realism, it is
necessary to arrive at some understanding of "Social Realism",
a major countercurrent to abstraction and un-engaging art
throughout history and especially at a time of social change -
the 1920-40's, for example.

Propably the term "Social Realism" is especially tied to the
twentieth century, and the appearance in 1917 of the first
socialist nation - the Soviet Union. In the mid thirties
Stalinist thought demanded of the artist a truthful, historical,
concrete representation of reality, and that their aims be
directed toward an ideological transformation and education
of the workers, to the spirit of socialism. Actually, this
belief was quite rigidly enforced through rules governing
literature and the arts.

Realism has recurred throughout the history of art in the
sense that certain artists (for example, Courbet, late Goya
and Millet) have tried to depict the actual conditions of life
and not its idealization.   However, realist artists have often
tried to express the hidden meanings of things so they allow
themselves the licence to exaggerate the facts and expose these
underlying truths. In a historical context, realism should
refer to the content of art and not its form. Although the
"Social Realism" and "Socialist Realism" are loosly used in
common references, there is actually a sharp distinction which
depends on the social context in which they appear.

In the traditional sense, a socialist nation is one in which
the working class has taken control of the state and the means
of production. The socialist realist artist is one whose work
expresses the ideals of the new ruling classes (i.e. the
working people) to help the change to a socialist society, as
happened in Russia for a short time, with the Russian
Constructivists.

The Constructivists wanted to achieve a complete social change through art and design. Their aim was not merely another style, but a new kind of human being, Art would be a direct manifestation of thought, a way to make life more organized and efficient. The means of their survival and realization of these aims was to join very closely with current political ideas. The reason for its success as an avant-garde movement was that the work of the 'Moderns' outside Russia were avidly sought after in Russia and the collectors were well primed. Also, perhaps a contributory factor was the fact that illitracy was widespread at the time so the masses were more likely to look to art for information.

As time went on its aspirations to transform life were not realised.   It succumbed to the vindictive Stalinist attacks, because it seemed to be too purist to be a popular art. And gradually the attitudes to this artistic freedom changed to the point that artists were expected to portray only positive and heroic aspects of life without allowing any objectivity. In other words it was a form of idealism rather than realism. So it became almost the antithesis to present success without struggle, achievement without mistake.

A situation somewhat similar happened in England during World War II when the "War Artists Advisery Committee" was established. This committee was given the task of selecting artists for the express purpose of recording the war, they were commissioned to show what war looks like, not what it was about. For the most part, war artists were a race apart, non combatants, so the fact is that the bulk of art produced during this time was official, not private. It was produced to order.

The major artists involved with this scheme were:
Henry Moore, Graham Sutherland, John Piper, and Paul Nash.
Note: This seems to have been almost exclusively an
        English Phenomenon, the French began to paint
        the war only after it was over, the Italians

had virtually no war art and the Americans
employed mainly commercial artists.

Social Realists, on the other hand, operated within class-
structured capitalist societies and see their role as that
of opposition to the owning classes who represent a minority
of the total population. These artists are usually individuals
rather than groups of reformers. Social Realist art in America
in the 1930's dealt with the negative aspects of life during
the depression, strikes, poverty, lack of food, injustice,
police brutality and recism. These artists, (for example,
Ben Shann, Edward Hopper, and Grant Wood) expressed a struggle
against these conditions, but selfom suggested socialist
alternatives and when they did, their work was often censored
or destroyed.

It is interesting to see how this dichotomy of attitudes to
realism accured in Mexico, in the work of the Mexican muralists -
Orozco, Siqueiros and Rivera, being the three main protagonists.

The work of this movement, or more specifically these individuals,
seemed to fall somewhere between socialist realism and social
realism. Propably the reason for this was that although the
Mexican Revolution in the mid to late thirties was primarily
motivated by the bourgeois, socialist theory certainly was
introduced at special times. The realive freedom of expression
that Mexico offered its social realists became apparent when
Diego Rivera was able to re-create his 1933 Mural which had
been destroyed in the Rockerfeller Centre in New York, a year
later in Mexico City. (The Mural was destroyed by an extreme
right-wing capitalist sentiment because part of the design of
the mural had a portrait of Lenin included). However, since all
of this social activity and the huge number of murals produced
in this fertile stage in Mexican history, the content of more
recent work has become increasingly more innocuous and un-
critical, propably because of the rising interest in art as a

consumer product, i.e. public to private art.

In the early days of the Mexican revolution the social and
nationalist ideas were established by David Sigueiros in a
1923 Manifesto. The content of this document deals more with
political and social issues rather than aesthetic ones. He
does, however, define quite definitely his view of his own work
in a biography by Rachel Tibol when he says that with a
revolutionary proletarian conviction, his works would produce
"transcendental aesthetic effects (social and intrinsic as in
absolute works of art) that correspond to the present state of
struggle of the enraged classes, to the epoch of imperialism,
last stage of capitalist rule and to the affirmative stages of
the new society which is very near".

Sigueiros, as one of the leading members of the Mexican
Communist Party, not unlike the European Communist artist,Picasso
and Leger, he felt free to voice his criticism of Soviet Socialist
Realism and restate his independent role. He believed that if
socialist realism was an agent of change, then the pictorial
practices of the artists working in the Soviet Union, didmnot
correspond to their theories. In Mexico, he said the major
theoretical and pictorial battles were between abstraction and
the new realism.

Diego Rivers's turn to social realism occured on his return
from Europe in 1921,   He chose to break from "modernist art"
and instead distilled influences from Cubism, Italian pre-
Renaissance and Mexican Folk art to form his own powerful brand
of social commentary.

He concieved of an art with all the technical improvement of
the age and an art simple, clear and cohesive. He was opposed
to dispensing with subject matter, as he thought that a painters
career would suffer as a result.

However, despite this clarity of vision that he sought, Rivera's work is not as easily understood as we might think. The density of his figures and formal devices need to be examined carefully and his use of allegory and symbolism demand a high degree of sophistication.

CONCLUSION

"Arts true mission is subversive. Its true nature is such
that it would make sense to ban it and harness it"

The above is a statement of how one artist sees his role in
making art, that of attacker. Where the purist aesthetic
intent assumes prevalence over other lesser important concerns.

Revolutionary artists such as Dubuffet (above) sees the very
nature of art as rebellion, a search for new modes of vision
at the price of brutal re-jection and constant questioning.
This can, however, be seen as rather an outdated idea in terms
of how (as Tom Wolfe so aptly call it) 'le monde' responds to
innovations in art is an intrinsic quality of the avant-garde.

Not many people actually behieve that subversion is still
being carried on and that it has any real effect on society.

Todays' avant-garde is being generously helped along by state
sponsorship, by museums and by industrial and banking assoc-
iations. The avant-garde is gradually becoming institutionalized.

Society, or broader, culture has its own methods of dealing
with forms of art which do not strictly fit into the product/
commodity bracket, it buys and sells works of art and justifies
their economic value by their aesthetic value and vice-versa.
It utilizes whatsoever attacks it in order to prove its liberal-
ism. It diffuses it in order to diminish the power of the
scandal. It keeps subversive art for the elite.

In most societies, the artist is integrated into a system by
giving him the role of a great organizer of sensibility - the
engineer of vision. And he who wants to make his political
conviction, and his art coincides, tries to use the latter as a
means for, as Picasso put it, attack or defence against the enemy.

In this study, I have attempted to demonstrate how art
of this caliber functions - its imagery, smybolism and
breadth of implications.

It is however, in the final analysis up to you, the reader,
to discover if this weapon is an artistic act, and if this
act is an effective weapon.

END

Index to Footnotes

No. 1   "John Heartfield, Lieben und Werk" by Wieland Hertzfeld, Dresden 1921

No. 2   "Sinn und Form", Wieland Hertzfeld, Berlin 1964

No. 3   "Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung" (Workers Illustrated Paper)

No. 4   "Dada, Art and Anti Art", Hans Richter, London 1965

No. 5   IBID. Quote by Tristan Tzara

No. 6   Malik Verlag was a publishing house headed by his brother Wieland Hertzfeld, which published the best of the world's left-wing literature, from Upton Sinclair to Maxim Groky as well as portofolios of lithographs by George Grosz.

No. 7   Berlin, 4th August, 1924

No. 8   AIZ XIII, 37, 13th September, 1934. A reprint with revised text of Heartfield's "10 years later" (1924)

No. 9   The swastika is most generally thought to be a sun symbol since it appears with solar gods, fire and thunder gods, but there are two forms of the figure, one revolving clockwise and the other counterclockwise. In China, the two swastikas are definately yin and yang. Traditionally wed together, i.e. in interlocking shapes, on cermonial robes and decorated interiors, they symbolized the mysteries of the universe, inscrutability and infinity.
The yang, male, clockwise swastika could however stand alone and remain lucky, but the yin, female, and counter-clockwise swastika took on the dark aspect if alone,

and became unlucky.

The Nazi swastike was the unlucky form

No. 10   Heinrich Mann from Arbeiter Fotografie, Frankfurt, 1973

No. 11   "Sinn und Form", Wieland Hertzfeld, Berlin, 1964

No. 12   "Mein Kampf" Adolph Hitler, Munich, 1926

No. 13   "Das Bild", E. Schindler, Berlin 1926

No. 14   "Kunst und Technik", W. Horn, 1942

No. 15   Organisationbuch der NSDAP, 1936

No. 16   Signale Der Neven Zeit Goebbles, Munich, 1938

No. 17   Hitler, Neurenberg, 1936

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