**Artistic compliance in National Socialist Germany:**
**The case of architectural and technical subjects painting**

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## Abstract / Résumé

This thesis focuses on artistic production in Germany during the National Socialist period (1933-1945). It is concerned with two main topics: first, the complex relationship between the German artists and the National Socialist state, a relationship defined by the dialectics of induction and compliance; and second, the ways in which this relationship came into play in the development of architectural and technical subjects painting.

It calls into question the rigid and oversimplifying "totalitarian" approach to cultural production in the Third Reich that denies individual artists all creative agency, thereby absolving them of personal responsibility for their professional choices. Instead, it accounts for the opportunities available to compliant German artists specializing in representations of technology and built environment to participate in the National Socialist cultural discourse and the ways in which they tapped into them.

My analysis of artistic compliance, inspired by social-psychological theories of authority relations, is based primarily on observable behaviors, rather than on alleged internal beliefs, and considers the effects of the conflicted cultural climate in Hitler's Germany on their formation. It furthers our understanding of the process by looking at a case study of an industrial landscape and construction site painter Richard Gessner (1894-1989) and state-approved artworks featuring the National Socialist Party Rally Grounds.

La présente thèse de doctorat porte sur la production artistique en Allemagne pendant la période nationale-socialiste (1933-1945). Elle traite de deux sujets principaux. Premièrement, la relation complexe entre les artistes allemands et l'État national-socialiste, une relation définie par la dialectique d'influence et de conformisme. Et deuxièmement, le rôle de cette relation dans le développement de la peinture d'architecture et des sujets techniques.

Elle remet en question l'approche "totalitaire" rigide et simpliste de la production culturelle sous le Troisième Reich qui refuse aux artistes individuels toute agentivité créative, les déchargeant ainsi de toute responsabilité personnelle pour leurs choix professionnels. Elle tient plutôt compte des possibilités offertes aux artistes allemands qui se spécialisaient dans la représentation de la technologie et de l'environnement bâti de participer au discours culturel national-socialiste et de la manière dont ils y ont eu recours.

Mon analyse de la conformité artistique, inspirée par les théories socio-psychologiques des relations d'autorité, se fonde exclusivement sur des comportements observables, plutôt que sur de prétendues croyances internes, et examine les effets du climat culturel conflictuel de l'Allemagne hitlérienne sur leur formation. Elle approfondit notre compréhension du processus en examinant une étude de cas sur un peintre de paysages industriels et chantiers de construction, Richard Gessner (1894-1989), et des œuvres d'art approuvées par l'État représentant le Terrain du Congrès du Parti du Reich (le *Reichsparteitagsgelände*).

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## Introduction

This study focuses on artistic production in Germany during the National Socialist era or the "Third Reich," a period that spanned the years from Adolf Hitler's coming to power in 1933 until the end of World War II in 1945. It is concerned with two main topics. First, the complex relationship between the German artists and the National Socialist state, a relationship defined by the dialectics of induction and compliance, command and concession, alignment, and compromise. And second, the ways in which this relationship came into play in the development of architectural and technical subjects painting.[1] It proceeds from a theoretical position that takes issue with the uncompromising rigidity of the so-called "totalitarian paradigm," a paradigm that up until recently constituted the dominant approach to the study of culture under National Socialism.[2] The totalitarian paradigm rests on the assumption that the Third Reich was a monolithic dictatorship with a coherent central ideology and an extremely efficient state bureaucracy to enforce this doctrine in all areas of private and public life. As far as the cultural sphere is concerned, this means, on the one hand, the acceptance that the National Socialist state institutions, such as the Reich Culture Chambers, had brought all artistic activity in Germany in line with a unified system of professional regulations; and on the other, the belief that the National Socialist political leaders succeeded in formulating and enforcing a unified system of aesthetic standards for desirable German art. Giving excessive credit for all cultural production in the Third Reich to National Socialist institutions and political leaders, the totalitarian view often downplays the role of individual artists and architects in bringing about and sustaining the regime. Were all members of creative professions devoid of personal ambitions and agency? Were they mere mouthpieces for the state, regurgitating the tenets of the National Socialist ideology? Or is there more to artistic compliance than passive accommodation of state demands?

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[1] The category of architectural subjects includes representations of single buildings (exteriors or interiors), groups of buildings and built environment. The category of technical subjects applies to images of various work processes, sites and equipment, including industrial production and construction work. Paintings and drawings of technical subjects often feature man-made structures and can therefore overlap with architectural representation. A more detailed discussion of these concepts will follow.

[2] Pamela M. Potter, *Art of Suppression: Confronting the Nazi Past in Histories of the Visual and Performing Arts* (Orlando: University of California Press, 2016). In her 2016 historiographic review of scholarship on National Socialist culture, a historian Pamela Potter demonstrates the dominance of the totalitarian paradigm and points to the fact that it remains extremely compelling for many scholars concerned with the visual arts, architecture, theater and music in the Third Reich. Among the precursors of this approach to cultural production in the Third Reich she lists Paul Ortwin Rave, Hellmut Lehmann Haupt, Henry Grosshans, and Peter Adam.

Several previous scholarly attempts to answer these questions produced results that undermined the totalitarian paradigm. As early as 1963, a German literary scholar Hildegard Brenner shed light on the competitive nature of National Socialist cultural administration and the resulting gulf "between practice and ideology, reality and program."[3] Her thorough and carefully researched study *Art Policy of National Socialism* (Die Kunstpolitik des Nationalsozialismus, 1963) is also one of the first scholarly attempts to investigate the competition between the Minister of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda Joseph Goebbels and the National Socialist ideologue Alfred Rosenberg as well as its implications for artistic modernisms in the Third Reich. Among authors who have recently expanded on Brenner's ideas of administrative chaos and aesthetic inconsistencies, Jonathan Petropoulos has probably made the most important contribution to the topic. In his own nuanced and comprehensive study of arts administration in the Third Reich – *Art as Politics in the Third Reich* (1996), Petropoulos explored how the decentralized, improvised, and polycratic nature of National Socialist administration affected the development of cultural bureaucracy over the twelve-years run of the regime.[4] He identified several chronological stages in this process, starting with its establishment to its contraction, paying particular attention to the shifts and transitions in-between.

The specific impact of conflicted cultural bureaucracy on aesthetics has been brought to light in the 1970s by Berthold Hinz (1974) and Robert Taylor (1974). In their seminal books on the visual arts and architecture under Hitler, Hinz and Taylor claim that despite concerted efforts made by the National Socialist state to control all cultural production in the Third Reich, internal power struggles prevented it from developing a unitary style of its own and imparting a set of coherent aesthetic demands onto the creative professionals.[5] Accounting for the "failures" and "inefficiencies" of official institutions is crucial because they define the boundaries of creative

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[3] Hildegard Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle," in *Die Kunstpolitik des Nationalsozialismus* (Reinbek b. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1963), 398; Reinhard Merker, *Die bildenden Künste im Nationalsozialismus: Kulturideologie, Kulturpolitik, Kulturproduktion* (Köln: DuMont, 1983), 61–64, 107.

[4] Jonathan Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996). More recent studies that examined the impact of internal rivalries on the administration of arts under Hitler include Jonathan Huener and Francis R. Nicosia eds., *The Arts in Nazi Germany: Continuity, Conformity, Change* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006); and Uwe Fleckner ed., *Angriff auf die Avantgarde : Kunst und Kunstpolitik im Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2007). Organizations and state officials that competed for influence specifically in the sphere of architecture have been discussed by Paul B. Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression. The SS, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy* (London: Routledge, 2000).

[5] Berthold Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, trans. Robert and Rita Kimber (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974); Robert Taylor, *The Word in Stone. The Role of Architecture in the National Socialist Ideology* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1974).

freedom in the Third Reich and the agency space available to compliant German artists. It is this space of agency – however limited and constricted! – that this thesis seeks to explore.

One of the most important consequences of conflicted cultural bureaucracy for the development of National Socialist aesthetics has been the persistence of cultural modernism in the Third Reich. In *Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918–1945* (1968), for example, American art historian Barbara Miller-Lane draws attention to the fact that former members of the Bauhaus pitched projects to National Socialist state officials, such as Joseph Goebbels, emphasizing the "Germanness" of their work.[6] Similarly, in *Neue Sachlichkeit und Nationalsozialismus: Affirmation und Kritik 1931-1947* (1998), German art historian Olaf Petersen demonstrates that compliant New Objectivity artists like Werner Peiner, Adolf Ziegler, and Alexander Kanoldt came to exert significant influence over official National Socialist art.[7] In *Artists under Hitler. Collaboration and Survival in Nazi Germany* (2014), Jonathan Petropoulos discusses both successful (e.g., Arno Brecker and Albert Speer) and unsuccessful (e.g., Walter Gropius, Ernst Barlach, Emil Nolde) attempts by major modernist artists and architects to achieve professional recognition in the Third Reich. Another extensive survey of modernist artists who pursued accommodation under National Socialism has been provided in *Anpassung, Überleben, Wiederstand. Künstler im Nationalsozialismus* (2013).[8] Contributing authors to this edited volume discuss painters and graphic artists who worked in the genres of architectural and technical subjects painting: Fritz Duda, Karl Baumann, and Friedrich G. Einhoff.[9]

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[6] Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918–1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985).

[7] Olaf Peters, *Neue Sachlichkeit und Nationalsozialismus: Affirmation und Kritik 1931-1947* (Berlin: Reimer, 1998), 147, trans. Steve Plumb and reproduced in Steve Plumb, *Neue Sachlichkeit 1918-33: Unity and Diversity of an Art Movement* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2006), 148.

[8] Klaus Kösters ed., *Anpassung, Überleben, Wiederstand. Künstler im Nationalsozialismus* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2012).

[9] While Duda was a KPD member and Baumann emigrated to the US before Hitler came to power, Einhoff presents an interesting case of artistic compliance. Just like Richard Gessner discussed in Chapter 3, Friedrich Gustav Heinrich Einhoff (1901-1988) grew up in the Ruhr area and was a modernist artist associated with Expressionism, "expressive realism" and the Berlin Secession. His watercolors, charcoal drawings and woodcuts featuring industrial landscapes and built environment were noteably exhibited at the 1928 "Art and Technology" exhibition at the Museum Folkwang in Essen. After some of his artworks were removed from display in Frankfurt am Main in 1933, he distanced himself from his work to find a common ground with the National Socialist regime. In 1935, Einhoff was appointed director of the Magdeburg School of Applied Arts and Crafts, which speaks to his successful accomodation with the National Socialist regime. From 1939, he also acted as a leader of the Magdeburg NSDAP section. (Rainer Zimmermann, *Expressive Realism. Painting of the lost generation* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag 1994); *Online:* http://www15.ovgu.de/mbl/Biografien/1464.htm)

An in-depth and detailed examination of another artist who has also made a significant contribution to this genre under National Socialism, Franz Radziwill, has been provided by James A. Van Dyke in his historical monograph, *Franz Radziwill and the Contradictions of German Art History* (2011).[10] Van Dyke's account of Radzwill's bumpy artistic career demonstrates that "what is now often called 'Art in the Third Reich' and 'Nazi Art' were no unchanging, monolithic entities but rather dynamic processes and fragmented fields fraught with tension, struggles over the assertions of competing definitions of authentically German art."[11] In the same order of ideas, contribution authors to the catalogue of the most recent exhibition on compliant art that took place in Regensburg in 2016 – *Artige Kunst. Kunst und Politik im Nationalsozialismus* – agree that German artists under Hitler played an active role in this process. The artists were expected to *interpret* the vague and conflicted official discourse on the visual arts on their own (Karen van den Berg, 2016), often *going beyond* anything demanded by the authorities when formulating the aesthetic standards for the National Socialist art (Silke von Berswordt-Wallrabe, 2016), not only passively supporting, but helping to *shape* cultural policy in the Third Reich (Annika Wienert, 2016).[12]

My research on artistic compliance contributes to the literature that moves beyond the assumptions of total centralized control and aesthetic consistency and promotes a more nuanced view of the relationship between the creative professionals and the National Socialist state. Therefore, the primary goal of my thesis is to account for the opportunities available to German artists who were *not* subjected to ethnic, religious, or political victimization to participate in the National Socialist cultural discourse and how they chose to tap into them.

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[10] James A. Van Dyke, *Franz Radziwill and the Contradictions of German Art History, 1919-1945* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011).

[11] Van Dyke, *Franz Radziwill*, 6.

[12] Silke von Berswordt-Wallrabe, "Introduction," in *Artige Kunst: Kunst und Politik im Nationalsozialismus*, eds. Silke von Berswordt-Wallrabe, Jörg-Uwe Neumann, and Agnes Tieze (Bielefeld: Kerber Verlag, 2016), 196-199; Karen van den Berg, "Drilling the National Soul: Art of the Third Reich and the Political Unconsciousness," in Berswordt-Wallrabe, Neumann, and Tieze, *Artige Kunst*, 204-214; Annika Wienert, "Compliant, Malign Art," in Berswordt-Wallrabe, Neumann, and Tieze, *Artige Kunst*, 215-219. In the context of this study, the term "National Socialist art" will be applied broadly to artworks produced in Germany between 1933 and 1945, both dogmatic and non-dogmatic, rather than designate the products of total ideological Nazification. The reader must keep in mind, however, that even such a broadened definition is not completely accurate, because National Socialism, as a set if ideological principles, was formulated before Hitler's coming to power, it also spread outside of German borders, and continues to characterize certain political movements to this day, long after the Third Reich has vanished as a state.

The choice of artworks that fall into the category of architectural and technical subjects as the primary objects of study is predicated upon this approach to cultural production in the Third Reich. Indeed, cultural production that best supports the totalitarian paradigm is programmatic visual material such as agitation films, political posters, and didactic art. As tools of state propaganda, they constitute a direct expression of the official doctrine, promote state policies, and legitimize the means by which a regime stays in power. The appeal of this kind of visual arts for the proponents of the totalitarian view comes from the fact that direct causal authority relations can easily be established between the state that promotes it and the creative professionals that produce it. Indeed, according to German art historians Christian Fuhrmeister and Stephan Klingen (2013), since the 1980s, the lion's share of scholarly attention and public display has been limited to totalitarian propaganda; a category of images that represented only a small fraction of all artworks produced in National Socialist Germany.[13] The widely circulated tradition of figurative painting, such as landscapes, still lives, and genre scenes that at a cursory level have little to no overtly dogmatic content has largely been disregarded. Fuhrmeister and Klingen estimate that at the most important state-run exhibition of German art under National Socialism – the Great German Art Exhibition (1937-1944) – works with "subjects, titles, or themes that could be directly or indirectly linked to Nazi ideology" ranged between 1.7% and 3.4%,[14] while Swiss art historian Ines Schlenker (2007, 2014) argues that "Openly propagandistic representations were neither a prerequisite for the acknowledgment of an artist in the Third Reich, not for his commercial success," and that 10% of the artworks at best were "frankly propagandistic."[15] Looking at non-dogmatic artworks[16] allows us to tap into a larger pool of artworks that constitute cultural production in the Third Reich, and thus gain a better

[13] Christian Fuhrmeister and Stephan Klingen, "Die Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung 1938, Relektüre und Neubewertung," in *1938. Kunst, Künstler, Politik*, eds. Eva Atlan, Raphael Gross, and Julia Voss (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2013), 189-209; Christian Fuhrmeister, "Die (mindestens) doppelte Zurichtung der 'gewordenen Kunst,' " in Berswordt-Wallrabe, Neumann, and Tieze, *Artige Kunst,* 103-116.

[14] Fuhrmeister and Klingen, "Deutsche Kunstausstellung," in Atlan, Gross, and Voss, *1938: Kunst, Künstler, Politik*, 203-204.

[15] Ines Schlenker, *Hitler's Salon: The* "*Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung*" *at the Haus der Deutschen Kunst in Munich 1937-1944* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007), 172; Ines Schlenker, "Defining National Socialist Art. The First 'Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung' in 1937," in *Degenerate Art: The Attack on Modern Art in Nazi Germany 1937*, ed. Olaf Peters (New York: Neue Galerie, 2014), 103.

[16] In the context of this study, the term "non-dogmatic art" will be used to describe artworks that do not contain overt National Socialist propaganda such as graphic political slogans, official symbols of the party, recognizable political figures, racist, anti-Semitic or militant iconography.

understanding of artistic compliance, access a wider range of experiences associated with it, and tackle a broader spectrum of visual expressions it might have taken.

For this reason, my thesis is predominantly concerned with artworks that feature National Socialist building projects, architectural production, and infrastructural development. Although conceived under the National Socialist regime, images of architectural and technical subjects can be said to pertain to non-dogmatic genres, meaning that they can do without any explicit programmatic, moralizing, or didactic content. They can hardly accommodate graphic communication strategies commonly associated with propaganda, such as loaded slogans or exaggerated human characters. But the reverse is also true: although most of these works may be non-dogmatic in content, and therefore harder to mobilize for blatant state propaganda, they were nevertheless produced by artists who found professional acceptance and recognition under National Socialism. In other words, this is not to say that architectural and technical subjects painting lies outside of the realm of politics; rather, that we need to ask different questions about the kinds of authority relations which are at stake in the production of non-dogmatic works in order to address their political dimension. To what extent, for instance, did the official institutions in the Third Reich predetermine or limit the aesthetic choices made by artists working in non-dogmatic genres? Were any specific demands or expectations placed on them regarding the subject matter or style of representation? To what extent did images of architecture anticipate, conform to, exceed, or deviate from these demands? And if no positive quality criteria for non-dogmatic art have been formulated and enforced by state institutions, how did artists dispose of their relative creative freedom? How did they come to establish a common ground with the authoritarian regime that accommodated them? These are the kinds of questions that will be addressed in the thesis's four chapters.

Chapter 1 considers the visual arts under National Socialism through the lens of social psychology – the academic discipline that first developed systematic tools for the analysis of induction and compliance. More specifically, it maps the dyadic model of social influence and the feedback loop model of social influence onto the authority relations between Hitler's state and the German artists. The purpose of this chapter is to call attention to the limits of induction-centered approaches and stress the importance of attending to *directly-observable, external, behavioral* aspects of compliance as opposed to privately held beliefs associated with it. The last

two sections of Chapter 1 introduce two different types of cultural coordination that were attempted by the National Socialist state: structural (instituting policies, laws, and decrees on arts education, professional practice, sale, and display) and aesthetic (formulating stylistic and iconographic quality criteria for desirable German art). This further expands the previously discussed dyadic model and complicates the feedback loop dynamics in authority relations under National Socialism, opening them to a wider variability of responses from cultural professionals.

Chapter 2 shifts the focus of attention from control mechanisms implemented by state institutions and party officials in the Third Reich to the experience of cultural professionals. Drawing on relevant scholarly literature and the analysis of primary sources, it examines structural and aesthetic aspects of compliance as conditioned but *not entirely determined* by cultural coordination measures. First, it presents the socio-economic conditions of Weimar Germany that both compelled artists and intellectuals to take an active position in the transformation the German society and its cultural institutions and facilitated their alignment with the National Socialist regime after Hitler's coming to power. Chapter 2 then elaborates on the German artists' attempts to influence the National Socialist discourse on the visual arts via collective action in the first few years of the regime. More specifically, it discusses two artists' interest groups formed in the Weimar Republic and were active in this period of relative cultural openness and uncertainty: the *völkish* German Art Society and the pro-modernist National Socialist Students' League.

The long-term implications of the two conflicted aesthetic agendas for practicing German artists will become apparent in Chapter 3 and 4, where I discuss, among other things, how compliant artists who never belonged to either the German Art Society or the National Socialist Students' League made concerted efforts to balance the *völkish* and the pro-modernist aesthetic agendas. Richard Gessner – a prolific German artist who emerged as an avant-garde industrial landscape painter in the Weimar Republic and experienced renewed success under Hitler – provides a perfect case study of progressive structural and aesthetic alignment with the National Socialist regime. In Chapter 3, I discuss the strategies Gessner used to achieve professional recognition in the Third Reich while remaining within his own area of previously-developed expertise, the nature and extent of adjustments made in the process, as well as successful and failed attempts to navigate the conflicting demands of the state. This case study demonstrates

that artistic practices and social interactions retrospectively associated with compliance cannot be reduced to passive obedience to state-imposed rules and regulations. Instead, they often correspond to consistent behavioral patterns observed before Hitler's coming to power and after his demise. The case of Richard Gessner, a painter of technical subjects, industrial landscapes, and construction sites, also provides a segue into the second focus of this thesis – architectural representation and its role under National Socialism.

If Chapter 3 introduces paintings of buildings and technical subjects through the prism of a single artist, Chapter 4 approaches the topic from the standpoint of a specific architectural complex – the National Socialist German Workers' Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg (1933-1939). The site of annual mass-events that included speeches by political leaders, wargames, military parades, as well as sports and dance performances was captured by compliant German artists in a variety of media and on different stages of construction. In order to determine how Curt Winkler, Erich Mercker, Max Herterich, Paul Herrmann, Otto Albert Hirth, Blasius Spreng, and Karl Leipold made use of their limited creative freedom, I will attend to the visual representation strategies they mobilized in paintings and drawings of the March Field, the German Stadium, the Zeppelin Field, and the Congress Hall. Images of the Nuremberg Rally Grounds will be conceptualized as a specific *re*-mediation practice, whereby compliant German artists provided insights into the building economy and the architectural theory while also engaging with the official discourse on time and space.

To conclude, the overarching goal of this thesis is to demonstrate that artistic compliance in National Socialist Germany was a delicate balancing act, as much proactive as it was reactive. Artistic production in the oppressive political environment of the Third Reich demanded both audacity and caution from cultural professionals: as the call for artistic innovation was being pitted against the demand for easily-accessible popular propaganda, they were compelled to test the boundaries of the official discourse despite the omnipresent threat of disapproval or confrontation from the National Socialist government. A systematic study of non-dogmatic artworks, attending notably to the ways in which important construction sites, high-profile industrial and public architectural complexes were represented under Hitler, allows us to better understand how compliant artists navigated the vague and conflicted demands of the state. It provides an insight into the possibilities of cultural agency in twentieth-century dictatorships.

## Chapter 1

## Induction in Theory and Practice

This thesis deals with the visual arts, but it must be acknowledged that its foci – induction and compliance – have originated within the field of social psychology, a discipline that examines individual actions, cognitive processes, and emotional states as a function of social context. Theoretical models developed by social psychology based on empirical data to describe and operationalize social conformity, its various forms, aspects, and characteristics will be used to better understand cultural coordination in the Third Reich. Studies discussed in this chapter also give grounds for an analytical approach to artists' alignment with the National Socialist regime that is based predominantly on *observable* behaviors that can be documented and accurately assessed, rather than privately-held beliefs and internal dispositions – an approach that I advocate for and implement in my thesis.

In order to establish what constitutes artistic compliance in a dictatorship and what distinguishes it from other forms of conforming behaviors, I will be drawing on a set of basic principles underlying the so-called "dyadic model of induction." Although this theoretical model might appear somewhat reductive and mechanistic, it proves to be an efficient tool for visualizing authority relations between the National Socialist state (the primary influencing agent) and the German artists (an agent upon whom influence is exerted) *in hypothetical conditions of perfect communication and total control*. It therefore also provides a strong reference point for identifying any divergencies from the model that actually characterized cultural coordination in the Third Reich: rival hierarchies, uncertain chains of command, miscommunication, and procedural disturbances[1], to name just a few.

The dyadic model of induction will be expanded by introducing the "feedback loop dynamics" into the authority relations between the influencing agent and the subject of influence. Blurring the line between the outcomes of state induction and those of individual artists' initiative, this allows for a more fluid conception of compliance. We will see that the feedback loop understanding of authority relations in the Third Reich is supported by historical evidence

[1] Disruptive events that require substantial readjustment in the established administrative procedures and logistics.

of widespread support for Hitler's regime. Primary sources cited in a section of this chapter dedicated to popular consent suggest that although National Socialists used force and oppression to maintain order, millions of Germans willingly accepted political measures that dramatically restricted their civil liberties.

Finally, the last two sections of Chapter 1 adapt the social psychological understanding of induction to the field of art history. Building on Pamela Potter's two-fold nature of cultural Nazification, I suggest that influence exercised by the National Socialist state on the German artists can be either structural or aesthetic.[2] "Structural Nazification" is conceived as the process of creating numerous governmental bodies entrusted with drafting, implementing, and enforcing cultural policies, laws, and decrees, as well as issuing official public statements on different arts operations such as arts education, professional practice, conditions of sale and display. "Aesthetic Nazification" broadly refers to the attempts of various governmental bodies and political leaders to formulate and impose stylistic and iconographic quality criteria for desirable German art. The introduction of two different dimensions of induction further expands the previously discussed dyadic model and complicates the feedback loop dynamics in authority relations under National Socialism, opening them up to a wider variability of responses from cultural professionals.

Throughout this chapter, I call attention to the limits of induction-centered approaches to culture in National Socialist Germany and suggest that focusing on the modalities of compliance rather than the mechanisms of influence provides a better understanding of artistic production in the Third Reich. The two types of *accepting* influence or the two types of compliant behavior corresponding to structural and aesthetic Nazification will be discussed in Chapter 2.

**Induction and compliance in social psychology**

As previously stated, social psychology is a discipline that focuses on individual actions, cognitive processes, and emotional states as a function of the social context. The notion of "compliance" comes from a strand of social psychology concerned with informational and normative social influence dynamics.[3] According to a social psychologist specializing in

[2] Potter, *Art of Suppression*.
[3] Informational social influence occurs in situations wherein people engage in social comparison in order to appraise the validity of an existing opinion and/or in order to gain a more accurate knowledge on a subject. Normative social

international conflict analysis and resolution Herbert C. Kelman, "social influence can be said to have occurred whenever a person changes his or her actions and/or attitudes as a result of induction by another person or group – the influencing agent."[4] The induction or the pressure to conform may be overt and deliberate, as in explicit orders and suggestions, or implicit and unintentional, as when an influencing agent models a specific behavior or sets an example.[5] The influencing agent can be an individual or a group, an identifiable authority figure making specific demands to those over whom its power holds sway or the society as a whole with its collective normative standards or the majority position on a subject.[6]

Most importantly, Kelman's study suggested that social influence is not an absolute attribute of the influencing agent; *it is born in an interaction between the influencing agent and the subject(s) of induction*, where the latter retains a certain degree of agency in the social influence situation. This is why, according to Kelman, there are *different ways* of accepting influence, adopting induced behavior, or integrating received information. In his 1958 study, compliance was described as one of the three main types of social conformity, along with identification and internalization.[7] According to Kelman, compliance can be said to occur when an individual responds to real or imagined pressure from another person or a group by adopting in public the induced thoughts, feelings, or behaviors that they might not privately accept. In this case, acceding to induction is predominantly motivated by the desire to achieve a favorable reaction such as rewards or avoid an unfavorable reaction such as punishment from the influencing agent.[8] In other words, in situations where the influencing agent has the power to disburse rewards and administer punishment – that is, in authority situations – the subordinates

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influence occurs when people act in accordance with social conventions in order to gain acceptance by a social group. For a more detailed account of the two main types of social influence refer to John C. Turner, *Mapping Social Psychology Series: Social influence* (Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1991); Rober B. Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* (New York, NY: William Morrow&Company, 1984); Muzafer Sherif, *The Psychology of Social Norms* (Oxford, UK: Harper, 1936).

[4] Herbert C. Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 78.

[5] Kelman and Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience*, 78.

[6] For more information on the effects of authority figures on behavior see Elliot Aronson, Judith A. Turner, and J. Merril Carlsmith, "Communicator credibility and communication discrepancy as determinants of opinion change," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 67, no. 1 (1963): 31-36; Stanley Milgram, "Behavioral Study of Obedience," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 67, no. 4 (1963): 371-378. For group pressures to conform see Richard S. Crutchfield, "Conformity and Character," *American Psychologist* 10, no. 5 (1955): 191-198.

[7] Herbert C. Kelman, "Compliance, identification, and internalization: Three processes of attitude change," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 2, no. 1 (1958): 53.

[8] Kelman, "Compliance, identification, and internalization," 53.

adopt the induced behaviors and ideas *not because they agree with their validity but because outward conformity produces a desired social effect*. Kelman and Hamilton specify that since publicly performed compliant actions and externally demonstrated attitudes might be different from privately held beliefs, they are likely to manifest only when they are observable by the influencing agent, i.e., in a social setting or under surveillance.[9]

Another type of conformity described by Kelman is identification, which can be said to occur when an individual accepts influence in order to establish or maintain a satisfying relationship with another person or group.[10] "Identification," observe Kelman and Hamilton, "essentially involves taking over a role or adopting some aspect of behavior that goes with a particular role."[11] Identification is similar to compliance in that it also affects a person's public behavior or publicly expressed beliefs. However, unlike compliance, identification also implies private acceptance of induced actions and opinions. They are likely to manifest whether or not the influencing agent can observe them so long as the relationship between the influencing agent and the subject of induction remains meaningful or, in some way, attractive to the latter. What distinguishes it from the third and the deepest form of conformity – internalization – is its temporary character. On the other hand, internalization implies that a person wholeheartedly accepts social influence as a part of their personal system of values and commits to acting accordingly both in public and in private, regardless of surveillance or salience of the subject's relationship to the influencing agent.[12]

For Kelman, each process – compliance, internalization, and identification – is a function of two things: the source and degree of influencing agent's power.[13] Kelman's interest in this specific factor contributes to the body of research produced in the aftermath of World War II, wherein social psychologists have attempted to gain a better understanding of conformity as it manifested in an authoritarian setting. In the 1950s, following the publication of the

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[9] Kelman and Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience,* 104.
[10] Kelman, "Compliance, identification, and internalization," 53.
[11] Kelman and Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience,* 104.
[12] Kelman, "Compliance, identification, and internalization," 53.
[13] Although Kelman does not use this term in his study, in social psychology the ability of an influencing agent to create the three types of conformity refers to the concept of "social power." For more information on the concept and its uses see Susan T. Fiske, "Controlling other people: The impact of power on stereotyping," in *American Psychologist* 48, no. 6 (1993): 621-628; Datcher Keltner, Deborah H. Gruenfeld, and Cameron Anderson, "Power, approach, and inhibition," *Psychological Review* 110, no. 2 (2003): 265-284.

*Authoritarian Personality* by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson & Stanford,[14] the question of what drives people to support right-wing authoritarian causes became highly prominent in experimental psychology on obedience. For instance, both Solomon Asch's conformity experiments developed in the 1950s and Stanley Milgram's experiment on obedience to authority figures from 1961 stemmed in part from their desire to account for the situational factors that lead military personnel and civilians in National Socialist Germany to obey the commands given by state officials.[15] Kelman, for his part, arrived at a set of conclusions that relate each of the three types of conformity to different sources of influencing agent's power: (1) conformity is most likely to take the form of compliance when the influencing agent is perceived to possess a high level of control over rewards and sanctions, (2) identification is most likely to occur, when the influencing agent is perceived as having high attractiveness, and (3) internalization is most probable when the power of the influencing agent is based on credibility.[16]

One of the most frequently cited theories of power was developed by social psychologists Bertram Raven and John French in 1959. French and Raven have formulated their theory as a dyadic relation between two agents, one who exerts power (O) and one upon whom the power is exerted (P). Similarly to Kelman, they have identified five especially common types of influencing agent's power depending on its source ("bases of social power") – (a) reward power, based on P's perception that O has the ability to mediate rewards for him; (b) coercive power, based on P's perception that O has the ability to mediate punishments for him; (c) legitimate power, based on the perception by P that O has a legitimate right to prescribe behavior for him; (d) referent power, based on P's identification with O; (e) expert power, based on the perception that O has some special knowledge or expertise.[17] Much like Kelman, French, and Raven argued that the different types of power vary in terms of whether their use will create public compliance

[14] An extensive investigation in the social and individual psychology of anti-Semitism, sponsored by the American Jewish Committee. Theodor Adorno et al., *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York, N.Y.: Harper, 1950).

[15] The relevance of Milgram's experimental data for the analysis of perpetrator behavior in the Holocaust has been widely contested. Scholars have notably pointed out the differences in emotional responses to orders given by a legitimate authority between the concentration camp executioners and subjects of Milgram's experiment. For a more detailed account of the debate see George R. Mastroianni, "Milgram and the Holocaust: A Reexamination," *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 22, no. 2 (2002): 158–73 and A. Fenigstein, "Milgram's shock experiments and the Nazi perpetrators: A contrarian perspective on the role of obedience pressures during the Holocaust," *Theory & Psychology* 25, no. 5 (2015), 581–598.

[16] Kelman, "Compliance, identification, and internalization," 54 and 57.

[17] John R. French and Bertran Raven, "The Bases of Social Power," in *Group Dynamics: Research and Theory*, eds. Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 263.

and/or private acceptance. They have concluded that reward power, coercive power, and legitimate power are most likely to produce public compliance, while referent power and expert power are more likely to produce private acceptance.

Political systems where all five of French and Raven's bases of power are concentrated in the hands of a sole leader or an elite group can be described as totalitarian. In totalitarian systems, the state is the only source of legal and administrative power, the power to interpret and apply the law, regulate civil rights and freedoms, monitor day-to-day activities of its subjects (surveillance), and enforce order by disbursing rewards and punishments. The range of legitimate power in these cases is extremely broad: its influence extends into such spheres as labor relations, tax and property administration, technology, science, health, education, culture, and communications. In other words, in totalitarian regimes, the state is necessarily perceived as possessing high means-control or high normative influence, that according to Kelman, is likely to produce equally high levels of public compliance. However, in totalitarian systems, the state also controls the bases for informational social influence – referent and expert power – that according to Kelman are likely to increase the influencing agent's attractiveness and credibility for its subjects and the relative degree of private acceptance of imposed attitudes and actions by means of identification and/or internalization. This is primarily due to the fact that in totalitarian systems, the state has a monopoly of mass-media – the means of defining and interpreting social reality in accord with its ideological requirements, the means of expression and persuasion, extending its control over language and ideas.

The notion of totalitarianism as a system where the state possesses "total" political power initially appeared in an article by Giovanni Amendola entitled *Majority and Minority* that was published in *Il Mondo* on May 12, 1923. After Amendola coined the term to define how Fascists abused the Italian electoral system to win power in the town of Sanza, the adjective "totalitarian" began to be used by other authors in reference to Italian Fascism under the governance of Benito Mussolini. Fifteen years later, in his 1938 speech before the House of Commons in opposition to the Munich Agreement, Winston Churchill had first applied the term "totalitarian" to the National Socialist regime in Germany.[18]

[18] "We in this country, as in other Liberal and democratic countries, have a perfect right to exalt the principle of self-determination, but it comes ill out of the mouths of those in totalitarian states who deny even the smallest element of

In the decades that followed the end of World War II, this single word was believed to encapsulate the essence of Adolf Hitler's rule for scholars in a wide variety of disciplines seeking to understand the relationship between the National Socialist state and its subjects. It became the basis for an induction-centered approach to Hitler's regime – the "totalitarian paradigm" – wherein National Socialist Germany was viewed exclusively as a centralized dictatorship with an omnipotent and all-encompassing apparatus of surveillance and control. Political scientists like Karl Dietrich Bracher emphasized the top-down nature of decision-making and the total destruction of civil freedoms under Hitler.[19] In their seminal work comparing National Socialist Germany to the Stalinist Soviet Union, Carl Friedrich and Zbigniev Brzezinski (1956) outlined the six traits that these "totalitarian dictatorships" have in common: the adherence to central ideology, the supremacy of a single mass party, a monopoly of armed combat, a monopoly over communications, terroristic police control, and a centrally directed economy.[20]

Proponents of this induction-centered view, which denied individual German citizens any autonomy of thought or action, tended to avoid all evidence of the broad public support and the high degree of social integration in the Third Reich. Scholars have preferred to focus on such aspects of Hitler's rule as organized violence and heroic resistance: extensive studies on the German Resistance have been published to emphasize popular dissent for the regime and social behavior deviating from the state-imposed norms.[21] However, as the following section will demonstrate, since the 1990s, there has been an upsurge of scholarly interest in acceptance of the regime by a wide variety of social strata, ranging from the working class to large industrialists,

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toleration to every section and creed within their bounds." "Many of those countries, in fear of the rise of the Nazi power, ... loathed the idea of having this arbitrary rule of the totalitarian system thrust upon them and hoped that a stand would be made." Winston Churchill, "The Munich Agreement" (speech, The House of Commons, October 5, 1938), International Churchill Society Online, accessed January 8, 2019, www.winstonchurchill.org.

[19] See for example Hajo Holborn, "Stages of Totalitarian 'Integration' (*Gleichschaltung*): The Consolidation of National Socialist Rule in 1933 and 1934," in *From Republic To Reich The Making of the Nazi Revolution* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 109-128 and Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship; The Origins, Structure, and Effects of National Socialism*, trans. Jean Steinberg (New York: Praeger, 1970).

[20] Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Harvard University Press, 1956).

[21] One of the most comprehensive accounts of the German Resistance to Hitler has been published by a McGill Professor of History: Peter Hoffmann, *German Resistance to Hitler* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988). Other important English-language publications on the subject include David Clay Large, Mazal Holocaust Collection, and Goethe House New York, *Contending with Hitler: Varieties of German Resistance in the Third Reich* (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 1991); and Hans Mommsen, *Alternatives to Hitler: German Resistance Under the Third Reich* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003).

from intellectuals to aristocratic families. These studies all point to the effective adaptation of concerned individuals and groups to the regime, often regardless of their personal political views.

**Public consent under Hitler**

In September 1933, at Stahlhelm meeting in Hannover, Hitler proclaimed with confidence that the National Socialist government has won the people's support: "We won the people, […] the people belong to us, […] the people acknowledge our movement as the leadership, this is what matters, and this is what makes us happy."[22] *Führer*'s self-assured statement was possibly based on the reports by one of the National Socialist intelligence agencies that made it their business to gauge public morale and popular response to various policies, such as the SD and the Gestapo.[23] According to historians Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham, in the mid-1930s, the SD alone had some 3,000 full-time officials and some 50,000 part-time agents working undercover all over the Third Reich.[24] Published in the official press organs, such as *Völkischer Beobachter*,[25] the National Socialist leaders' political speeches conveyed an image of the German society that was one of mass-enthusiasm and unconditional commitment. However, in their preface to a section of their two-volume collection of primary documents that focuses on popular opinion, Noakes and Pridham state that assessment of the actual level of consent, dissent, and opposition to the National Socialist government poses a serious problem to contemporary historians: "Not only was there no opinion polls," explain Noakes and Pridham, "but it was impossible for people to express their views in public with any freedom. The results of elections and plebiscites were rigged, the media were strictly controlled."[26]

Nevertheless, it is possible to get a more balanced assessment of public opinion on Hitler's rise to power and his rule by attending to the reports of foreign observers, such as

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[22] Adolf Hitler's speech pronounced at the Stahlhelm meeting in Hannover reprinted in *Völkischer Beobachter*, September 25, 1933, 1.
[23] *Sicherheitsdienst des Reichsführers-SS* (Security Service of the Reichsführer-SS) formed in 1931 and *Geheime Staatspolizei* (Secret State Police) formed in 1933 were the two main intelligence agencies of the SS and the *NSDAP* in the Third Reich.
[24] Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham eds., *Nazism, 1919-1945: A history in documents and eyewitness accounts*, Vol. I (New York: Schocken Books, 1990), 569.
[25] *Völkischer Beobachter* was the newspaper of the National Socialist German Workers' Party published from 25 December 1920 to May 1945. During Hitler's rise to power, it reported general news, party activities, speeches by political leaders and propaganda posters.
[26] Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism, 1919-1945*, 568.

American and British diplomats sent to Germany to assemble information on the new regime. In 1933, foreign observers recorded a wide diversity of attitudes towards National Socialist leadership and policies, but most of them underscored its growing support among the population. In a report dating from April 25, 1933, the US consul general George S. Messersmith outlined the predominantly positive attitudes towards the National Socialist state that prevailed in all sectors of the German population:

> Among the original adherents of the National Socialist movement, there prevails an enthusiasm and a general attitude of mind which practically excludes all reasonable consideration of economic and financial problems. Among those who have recently joined the movement in order to maintain their official positions or to retain their places in business, industry, and finance, there prevails either the same mental attitude or complete reticence. One of the most extraordinary features of the situation to an objective observer is the fact that so many clear-thinking and really well-informed persons appear to have lost their balance and are actively approving of measures and policies which they previously condemned as fundamentally dangerous and unsolid.[27]

Messersmith's quote echoes the social psychological theory of conformity, demonstrating that internalization often exists side-by-side with compliance in dictatorships. He makes a clear distinction between Germans who have expressed genuine enthusiasm for Hitler's regime and those who adhered to his movement for practical reasons. While the US consul general qualifies the first group as "unreasonable," the second is said to include "clear-thinking" and "well-informed" citizens. This way, the Messersmith draws attention to the discrepancies between private beliefs and public behaviors for people who strived to find their place within the new regime.

Similarly, foreign observers have noted "a national unity in an *outward* form such as has never been before."[28] In other words, *publicly* manifested attitudes and behaviors produced an

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[27] George S. Messersmith, "Economic and Financial Program of the German Government (Berlin, April 25, 1933)." Original document: NA 862.51/3599 (MF 37) reprinted in *Fremde Blicke auf das "Dritte Reich," Berichte Ausländische Diplomaten über Herrschaft und Gesellschaft in Deutschland 1933-1945*, eds. Frank Bajohr and Christopher Strupp (Wallstein Verlag GmbH, 2011), 369-370.

[28] Charles M. Hathaway, US-Generalkonsul, "Present Course of Affairs in Germany for three Months of Hitler Administration (Munich, May 13, 1933)," my italics. Original document: NA 862.00/3013 (MF 3) reprinted in Bajohr and Strupp, *Fremde Blicke auf das "Dritte Reich,"* 374.

*appearance* of unanimous public acceptance of the new regime, as well as important social cohesion. One of the most recent studies on the subject, Frank Bajor's *"Community of Action" and Diversity of Attitudes* (2019), explores three case studies from National Socialist Hamburg – an archival clerk Nikolaus Sieveking, a group of Hanseatic trading firms, and the buyers of "Aryanized" property.[29] Bajor's study confirms George S. Messersmith's initial assessment by revealing a striking discrepancy between social action and ideological convictions of conformist Germans: "If we were simply to look at inner convictions of the Germans after 1933," Bajor says, "then a picture would emerge of a disparate society, often keeping its distance from National Socialism. But if we look at social practice, then we find evidence of far-reaching social integration […]."[30] Bajor's study and first-hand observations of foreign diplomats both lend us to believe that the type of conformity that most accurately characterized the German population under National Socialism was the one where inner convictions are often at odds with observable social behavior – compliance.

Another vital source of information on public opinion in National Socialist Germany is reports of Hitler's opponents – the Social Democrats – produced for the Social Democratic Party leaders in exile. These reports, based on the information provided by confidential observers throughout the Reich, confirmed the progressive increase of "real and profound [National Socialist] influence" "upon all classes of German society."[31] A report covering the Reichstag election of November 12, 1933, stated that "The general result indicates an extraordinarily rapid and effective process of fascistization of society."[32] While the SD reports may be seen as pointing to high levels of internalization rather than compliance, they also reveal a widespread political apathy that calls into question any genuine ideological commitment. In 1936, Social Democrats observed that "The average worker is primarily interested in work and not in a democracy. People who previously enthusiastically supported democracy show no interest at all

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[29] "Aryanization" (in German, *Arisierung*) refers to the transfer of Jewish-owned property to non-Jews in Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945. *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Online*, s.v. "Aryanization," accessed April 4, 2019, https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/aryanization.

[30] Frank Bajohr, " 'Community of Action' and Diversity of Attitudes: Reflections on Mechanisms of Social Integration in National Socialist Germany, 1933-45," in *Visions of Community in Nazi Germany: Social Engineering and Private Lives*, eds. Martina Steber and Bernhard Gotto (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 198.

[31] T. Siegel and T. von Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung unter dem Nationalsozialismum* (Frankfurt am Main, 1991), 165, quoted in Norbert Frei, "People's Community and War: Hitler's Popular Support," in *The Third Reich Between Vision and Reality: New Perspectives on German History 1918-1945*, ed. Hans Mommsen (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2001), 61.

[32] Frei, "People's Community and War," in Mommsen, *The Third Reich,* 61.

in politics."[33] Instead, participation in political life itself appeared to be extrinsically-motivated: "One must be clear about the fact that in the first instance men are fathers of families and have jobs, and that for them politics take second place and even then only when they expect to get something out of it."[34] The report further emphasizes that for this segment of the German population, public compliance with the tenets of National Socialism was rarely based on private acceptance thereof: "Many people reject participation in illegal activity on account of this basic attitude. They consider it pointless, and that one only ends up in jail because of it. But that does not by any means imply that they are going over to the Nazis."[35]

In a report from April 3, 1933, the US consul general George S. Messersmith outlined two interrelated types of public compliance among "the average Germans": one founded on the fear of persecution, and another stemming from a desire for acceptance by the official structures:

> The point has been reached where it is really dangerous for the average individual to express an opinion which would not be favorable to the present regime and to its proposed plans as far as they are known. Even with his best friend, the average German is unable to have free expression of opinion, for he cannot be sure that his friend may not be someone who is trying to strengthen himself with the Party.[36]

In both cases, private beliefs are irrelevant; what matters is the impetus for conforming behavior – the perceived ability of an authority to mediate punishments or rewards, an impetus that, as we have seen in the previous section, promotes outward manifestations of compliance.

Other primary sources confirm that the element of compulsion accounted for high degrees of social integration and acceptance under National Socialism. As another US consul general, Charles M. Hathaway has put it already in 1933, "the abundance of arrests have done their work and established a practical terror under which no one cares to express an opinion unpalatable to the Government, for it is unpleasant and unprofitable to be held in prison, even if

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[33] "Report on the Sources of Working-Class Support for the Nazi and the Limits to Opposition," 1936, English translation reproduced in *The Nazi State and German Society: Brief History with Documents,* Robert G. Moeller ed. (New York, NY: Macmillan Learning, 2010) 53-57.
[34] "Report on the Sources of Working-Class Support," in Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society,* 53-57.
[35] "Report on the Sources of Working-Class Support," in Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society,* 53-57.
[36] George S. Messersmith, "With Reference to the Boycott Against Jewish Business Establishments and With Further Reference to the Manifold Aspects of the Anti-Jewish Movement in Germany (Berlin, 3 April 1933)." Original Document: NA 862.4016/571 (MF 21) reproduced reprinted in Bajohr and Strupp, *Fremde Blicke auf das "Dritte Reich,"* 363-364.

you are not ill-treated."[37] However, as stressed by a social historian Werner Conze who has experienced the regime firsthand, "Force alone cannot explain the determination and effort of the German people, which were key factors in the success of National Socialism (in and outside Germany) until 1945."[38] Although following up on Conze's assessment of conformity and providing an exhaustive review of reasons for Hitler's popularity is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is nevertheless important to list a few factors that accounted for popular consent under National Socialism. In Autumn 1936, an SPD contact summarized them as follows: "The reduction in unemployment, rearmament, and the drive he shows in his foreign policy are the big points in favor of Hitler's policy […]."[39]Among Hitler's measures greeted with great enthusiasm by the German population, Swiss historian Philipp Burin (2004) also lists remilitarization of the Rhineland and the unification with Austria and with the Sudetenland.[40] To this, German historian Norbert Frei also adds informational strategies of mass mobilization as the most important National Socialist development that courted German people into the new regime and preventing its opponents from taking a stance against it.[41] SOPADE reports on popular attitudes point to the effectiveness of state propaganda targeted specifically at increasing Hitler's appeal. They demonstrate that even his purge of the *SA* in the Summer of 1934 "[has] not shaken the authority of Hitler in the *SA* and the Party but that his authority among the people has, if anything, grown. He's got guts; he takes tough action; he does not spare the bigwigs – those were the remarks made even by outsiders."[42]

Most importantly for our understanding of the mechanisms of internalization and compliance, however, is historical evidence that Hitler's pronouncements and policies addressed certain *pre-existing* dissatisfaction and demands of the German population. His rhetoric appealed to the feeling of resentment and injustice brought about by the Treaty of Versailles, the frustration with the Weimar political leadership, and hostility towards the unpopular ethnic minorities and sexually deviant groups. The previously mentioned SPD contact also explains that

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[37] Hathaway, US-Generalkonsul, "Present Course of Affairs" in Bajohr and Strupp, *Fremde Blicke auf das „Dritte Reich"* 374-375.
[38] Frei, "People's Community and War," in Mommsen, *The Third Reich,* 61.
[39] Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism, 1919-1945*, 574.
[40] Philippe Burrin, "Nazi Regime and German Society," in *Stalinism and Nazism: History and Memory Compared,* eds. Henry Rousso and Richard Joseph Golsan (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 148.
[41] Frei, "People's Community and War," in Mommsen, *The Third Reich,* 64.
[42] Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism, 1919-1945*, 571.

"People feel that the previous governments were weak-willed and the parties as well" and contends that "Hitler understood how to appeal to nationalist instincts and emotional needs which were *already there before*."[43] In other words, authority relations associated with both internalization and compliance should be perceived as an outcome of converging interests rather than of uni-directional command. In fact, "convergence" is the term swiss historian Philippe Burrin uses to describe the social, cultural, economic, and political conditions of Hitler's rise to power: "convergence of certain aspects of the regime's politics with aspirations that were already present in a diffused manner within German society."[44]

When talking about social consent and authority relations in the Third Reich, Messersmith even tipped the power balance in favor of the general public, suggesting that "while the higher leaders of the party have absolute and complete control of the Government and the country, they are not in a position to force certain decisions which are contrary to the wishes and the will of the masses and the intermediary leaders."[45] He goes as far as to suggest that "There is no dictatorship as is so commonly assumed either of one or three individuals. The masses are for the moment the dictator in Germany, and the party leaders are merely their spokesmen."[46] Echoing Messersmith's observations, a left-wing German historian Götz Aly argues that "the Third Reich was not a dictatorship maintained by force," but a popular regime, "sustained by the enthusiasm of the vast majority […]."[47] He pushes Messersmith's claim even further by making a sweeping statement that German citizens were provided with ample opportunity for participation in the political discourse.[48] Although both Messersmith's and Aly's accounts might be exaggerating the role of the "masses" in German politics of the period, together with the SD reports presented earlier in this section, they nevertheless provide reasons to believe that the phenomenon of compliance under National Socialism cannot be grasped from a strictly induction-centered, i.e., totalitarian standpoint. The feedback loop model of authority relations

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[43] Noakes and Pridham, 573, my italics, and 573-574.
[44] Burrin, "Nazi Regime and German Society," in Rousso and Golsan, *Stalinism and Nazism,* 148.
[45] George S. Messersmith, "Uncertainty as to the Development in the Economic and Financial Situation in Germany (Berlin, May 9, 1933)." Original Document: NA 862.51/3605 (MF 37) reproduced in Bajohr and Strupp, *Fremde Blicke auf das "Dritte Reich,"* 363-364.
[46] Messersmith, "Uncertainty," in Bajohr and Strupp, *Fremde Blicke auf das "Dritte Reich,"* 363-364.
[47] Götz Aly, *Hitler's Beneficiaries. Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State*, trans. Jefferson Chase (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2008), 28.
[48] Aly, *Hitler's Beneficiaries,* 29.

presented in the following section provides insights into the give-and-take nature of the National Socialist regime.

**Systems theory and the feedback loop model of induction**

This thesis conceives of the National Socialist state and its subjects as two agents engaged in one and same feedback loop – a systemic rapport where the *output* from the influencing agent eventually affects the *input* to that same agent. Social scientists use the feedback loop logic to explain a wide variety of processes, including identity formation, interpersonal, and organizational behavior. According to a social psychologist Dawn Robinson, the feedback loop is a model that helps us to better understand a wide variety of control systems and the ways in which "actors enact social roles with enough stability to preserve institutional arrangements, while still demonstrating remarkable creativity in unusual circumstances."[49] It also provides a theoretical basis for the analysis of adaptive mechanisms and goal-seeking behaviors on the part of individual social actors, groups, and entire institutions. Artistic compliance being one such adaptive mechanism, the feedback loop model is an essential tool for the analysis of visual artists' public actions and attitudes under National Socialism.

Social psychologists Roy Baumeister and Kathleen D. Vohs explain feedback loop dynamics in terms of causality:

> People often think about variable A causing outcome B to happen, and that being the end of it – a straight line from cause to effect. The logic behind feedback processes is that that picture often is too simple. Sometimes variable A causes outcome B, but outcome B then turns around and exerts an influence (directly or indirectly) on variable A, the original cause. This, in turn, causes variable A to make something else happen with respect to outcome B. In this circumstance, there is not a straight line of cause and effect but a closed loop. Causality occurs all around the loop.[50]

If the concept of causality in this explanation is replaced by that of induction, the feedback loop model would represent how adaptive mechanisms are mobilized, and changes occur in a given system. And, as the following chapters will demonstrate, no matter how authoritarian a system,

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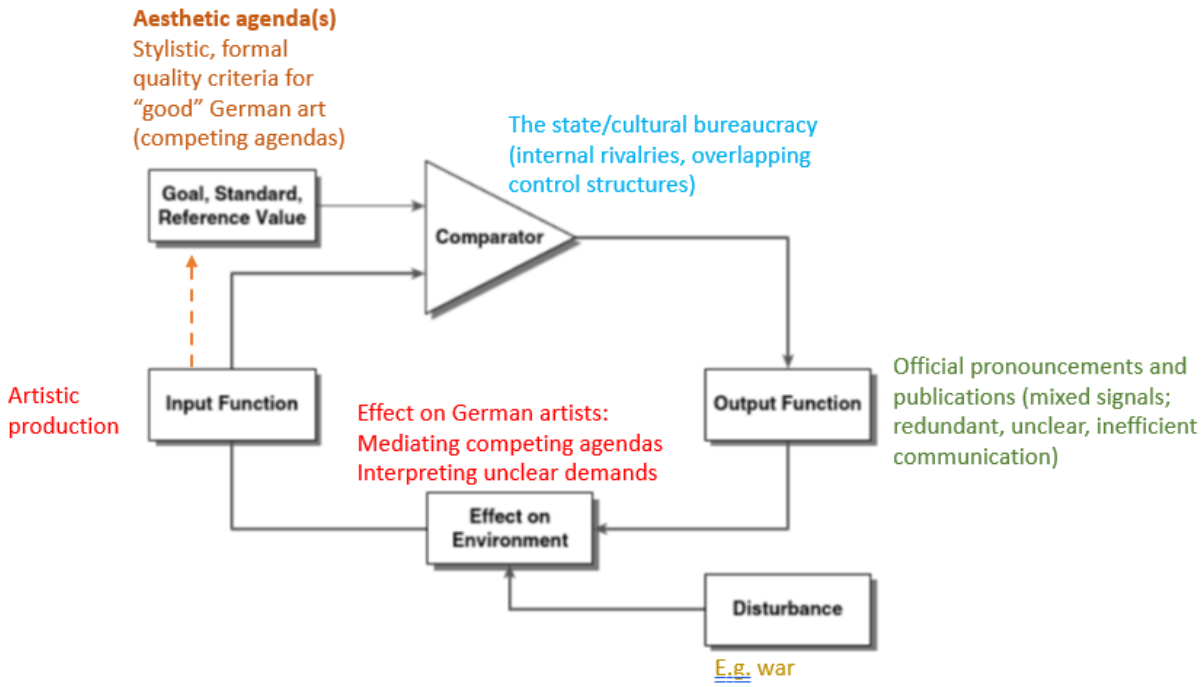
[49] Dawn Robinson, "Control Theories in Sociology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 33 (August 2007): 157.
[50] *Encyclopedia of Social Psychology*, eds. Roy Baumeister and Kathleen D. Vohs (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2012), 349.

there is no straight unidirectional line of influence from an omnipotent authority to its subjects; instead, following the feedback loop logic, induction occurs all around the loop, albeit by different means and in other forms.

Taking a step back to clarify the theoretical model, the most straightforward feedback loop comprises four main elements or nods: an Input function, a Reference Value, a Comparator, and an Output Function. The Comparator is a structure that compares Input Function with a set systemic goal, a standard, or a Reference Value. If the comparison reveals a discrepancy between the two, Comparator's Output Function affects the environment in a way that would rectify further Input in order to minimize the deviation from Reference Value.




Feedback loop of **aesthetic** compliance based on a schematic depiction of a feedback loop reproduced in *Encyclopedia of Social Psychology*, eds. Roy Baumeister and Kathleen D. Vohs (SAGE Publications, 2012), 350.

The Comparator function is effectuated by French and Raven's "O" modality – the influencing agent that produces the Output Function, that in its turn affects either the environment from which the Input function originated and/or the social modality that French and Raven identify as "P" – the agent upon whom influence is exerted. Depending on the discrepancies between the initial Input and the Reference Value, the Comparator either perpetuates/reinforces the initial Input by means of positive feedback or rectifies further Input by means of negative feedback.

According to social psychologists Charles S. Carver and Michael F. Scheier, in a standard feedback loop, "The change in Output is aimed at reducing the discrepancy between Input and Reference Value, causing the former to conform to the latter."[51] However, the effectiveness of this control mechanism is not predicated upon O's reward and coercive powers alone. How close P's actions and attitudes come to the O's Reference Value also depends on the unanimity of the Comparator function and the clarity of communication between the different nodes of a given system. Situations where these conditions are not met produce ample opportunities for P's self-regulation or volunteered input. If P's unsolicited change in public attitude or behavior receives positive feedback from O (or does not receive any negative feedback from O), it becomes part of the system's Reference Value, affecting O's further demands and expectations towards P. The change can, of course, be based on P's view of O's expectations, but this scenario nevertheless implies a higher degree of interpretation, self-regulation, and agency than the standard model of totalitarian control allows for. The effectiveness of a given control system also depends on its capacity to adapt to "disturbances," or external factors that, according to Carver and Scheier, "can change present conditions, either adversely (creating a discrepancy from the Reference value) or favorably (closing discrepancy)."[52] The more rigid a control system, the less effective it is at readjusting, which makes attending to feedback loop disturbances crucial to understanding opportunities for agency in dictatorships and the dynamic, give-and-take nature of compliance.[53]

As we will see further down, the pluralistic nature of the National Socialist ideology and the many disagreements within the Party leadership have often prevented the state from meeting the above-mentioned conditions of effective control in the cultural sphere. It is nevertheless important to briefly consider the two mains vectors of influence exercised by Hitler's state in an attempt to coordinate the arts – structural and aesthetic. Both were meant to narrow the discrepancy between the National Socialist Reference Value for "new" German art and artistic production (artists' Input). The introduction of these two different dimensions of induction further expands the previously discussed dyadic model and complicates the feedback loop

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[51] Charles S. Carver and Michael F. Scheier, *On the Self-Regulation of Behavior* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 12.
[52] Carver and Scheier, *On the Self-Regulation of Behavior*, 12.
[53] For obvious reasons, the feedback loop model does not allow one to gauge private acceptance or internalizaion: in order to receive positive or negative feedback, P's actions and attitudes (the Input function) need to be directly observable or overtly-stated, i.e. more or less publicly manifested. This does not, however, represent a drawback for my thesis, since its main goal is to assess the phenomenon of aesthetic compliance in the visual arts.

dynamics in authority relations in the Third Reich, opening them up to a wider variety of responses from cultural professionals.

**Structural mechanisms of induction or Structural Nazification**

In post-war literature, the process whereby the National Socialist state exercised normative influence over its subjects has often been referred to either as "Nazification" (*Nazifierung*) or "coordination" (*Gleichschaltung*).[54] As Pamela Potter observed in *Art of Suppression: Confronting the Nazi Past in Histories of the Visual and Performing Arts* (2016), the concept of "Nazification" was not initially part of official National Socialist discourse; rather, it is a contemporary historiographic construct that is used retrospectively to describe the progressive tightening of the National Socialist grip over the German society between the years 1933 and 1945.[55] Historians Robert Michael and Karin Doerr define *Gleichschaltung* as the set of legislative measures taken by the German government to ensure that "All of the German Volk's social, political, and cultural organizations be controlled and run according to Nazi ideology and policy. All opposition to be eliminated."[56] As follows from this definition, the process of *Gleichschaltung* had the ultimate goal of achieving *Reichseinheit* or "Uniformity within the Reich" and boiled down to "The forced coordination of all institutions according to Nazi ideology."[57] What follows is a brief historical overview of the Nazification process as it unfolded upon Adolf Hitler's coming to power and its implications for the arts.

Adolf Hitler was sworn in as Chancellor of Germany by President Paul von Hindenburg on January 30, 1933. At that point, he lacked a malleable majority in the parliament and persuaded von Hindenburg to call new elections. He then seized the opportunity presented to him by the burning of the Reichstag on February 27, 1933 to consolidate his control over the parliament through a series of decrees severely restricting civic rights and freedoms.[58] In his first

[54] American journalist and war correspondent William L. Shirer, for example, uses the terms synonymously. William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), 213-217. In his book *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany*, first published in 1960, William L. Shirer is one of the first scholars to apply the term "Nazification" to "high" culture – literature, visual arts, architecture, music and theater.
[55] Potter, *Art of Suppression*, 9.
[56] Robert Michael and Karin Doerr, *Nazi-Deutsch/ Nazi-German: An English Lexicon of the Language of the Third Reich* (Westport, Conn.; London: Greenwood Press, 2002), 192.
[57] Michael and Doerr, *Nazi-Deutsch/Nazi-German*, 335.
[58] On February 28, 1933, Hitler convinced President von Hindenburg to issue a decree adopting defensive measures against Bolshevik insurrection: Decree, 28 February 1933, by Reich President von Hindenburg, co-signed by Reich

post-election meeting that took place on March 15, 1933 Hitler had the cabinet draw up an amendment to the Weimar Constitution that would turn the plenary power to devise policies and laws from the Reichstag over to the National Socialist party.[59] He also passed the "Enabling Act" or *Ermächtigungsgesetz*, which was used to eliminate political adversaries (the German Democratic Party and the Communist Party) and obtain administrative control over the civil service, trades, and professions, extending into the cultural sector among others.[60]

Just a few days after the Enabling Act, the Reich Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda was established. A regulation on the responsibilities of the Ministry declared that "The Reich Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda is responsible for all influences on the intellectual life of the nation, public relations (*Werbung*) for State, culture, and the economy, for instructing the domestic and foreign public about them, and for the administration of all institutions serving this purpose."[61] At his first press conference that took place on March 15, 1933, the newly designated head of the department Joseph Goebbels outlined his view of the role of the new Ministry in terms of courting the German people into National Socialism: "It is

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Chancellor Hitler and Reich Ministers Frick and Guertner, Suspending Constitutional Rights and Instituting Other Measures, in III trial of war criminals before the Nurnberg military tribunals under control.
Council law No. 10 160 (1951). Article One of the decree suspended freedoms of expression and assembly, the privacy of postal and other communications, and warranted house searches. According to Article Two, disobedience to the decree was publishable by fines, hard labor and even imprisonment. Article Three imposed death penalty for such offenses as high treason and arson. Additional presidential decree issued on March 29, 1933 retrospectively extended capital punishment to crimes committed between January 31 and February 28, 1933.

[59] Two months after passing the Enabling Act, the National Socialist German Workers' Party was proclaimed the sole political party in Germany and the formation of competing parties was prohibited. See "Law Against the New Formation of Parties of July 14, 1933," in *The Nazi Years: A Documentary History,* ed. Joachim Remak (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 54. After von Hinderburg's death on August 2, 1934, Hitler assumed both the posts of Chancellor and President and would henceforth be referred to as Fuhrer and Reich Chancellor. "Law Concerning the Head of the German State of August 1, 1934." English translation of the law provided in Stephen J. Lee, *Hitler and Nazi Germany: Questions and Analysis in History* (Routledge, 2013), source 1.4 (n.p.).

[60] Original document in German "Gesetz zur Behebung der Not von Volk und Reich (Ermächtigungsgesetz) (23. März 1933)" reprinted in *Dokumente der deutschen Politik, Vol. 1: Die Nationalsozialistische Revolution 1933,* eds. Paul Meier-Benneckenstein and Axel Friedrichs (Berlin, 1935), 42-43. English translation: "Law to Remove the Distress of the People and the Reich (Enabling Act)" reproduced in *U.S. Department of State, Division of European Affairs, National Socialism. Basic Principles, their Application by the Nazi Party's Foreign Organizations, and the Use of Germans Abroad for Nazi Aims* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), appendix, document 11, 217-18. The Enabling Act allowed the Party administration to pass the "Law for the Restoration of a Professional Civil Service" or *Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums,* decreed on 7 April 1933. English translation of the document provided in Roderick Stackelberg and Sally A. Winkle eds, *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook: An Anthology of Texts* (London: Routledge, 2002), 150. On the Nazification of "personnel and practice" also see Konrad Hugo Jarausch, *The Unfree Professions: German lawyers, teachers, and engineers, 1900-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

[61] Hans Hinkel ed., *Handbuch der Reichskulturkammer* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, 1937), translated and cited in Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism, 1919-1945,* 382.

not enough," Goebbels says, "for people to be more or less reconciled with our regime, to be persuaded to adopt a neutral attitude towards us, rather we want to work on people until they have capitulated to us until they grasp ideologically that what is happening in Germany today not only *must* be accepted by also *can* be accepted."[62] Ten days later, on March 25, 1933, Goebbels stated at a meeting of radio officials that "The Ministry has the task of achieving a mobilization of mind and spirit in Germany."[63] In other words, when the Propaganda Ministry assumed the structural Comparator function in the cultural sphere, public compliance was posited as a norm, and private acceptance (internalization) was set as a goal.

The newly-established Propaganda Ministry started with the reorganization of German radio and a purge of its personnel, dismissing some 13% of the total broadcasting stall within the first six months.[64] It then proceeded to transfer the control over the press from the hands of private companies, political organizations, and religious bodies to the state. Finally, on May 15, 1934, Goebbels expressed his intention to take control over the arts: "The arts," he explained, "are for the National Socialist State a public exercise: they are not only aesthetic but also moral in nature, and the public interest demands not only police supervision but also guidance."[65] In other words, in order to court the masses into private acceptance of the National Socialist ideology, the arts had to be coordinated by the state. As a first step towards structural Nazification of culture, socialist and Jewish cultural officials have been dismissed from their posts, and all artistic unions and professional organizations had been gathered into "cartels."[66] On September 22, 1933, these "cartels" were then organized into a centralized governmental agency – the Reich Chamber of Culture (*Reichskulturkammer, RKK*), divided into seven sub-chambers for fine arts, music, theater, literature, press, radio, and film. Each chamber was further separated into subsidiary sectors, with the Chamber for Visual Arts divided into departments for

[62] Joseph Goebbels's speech to representatives of the press (15 March 1933), translated and cited in Noakes and Pridham eds., *Nazism, 1919-1945,* 381.
[63] Translated and cited in Noakes and Pridham eds., 382.
[64] Translated and cited in Noakes and Pridham eds., 384.
[65] Translated and cited in Noakes and Pridham eds., 397.
[66] Alan E. Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, & Economics in Nazi Germany: The Reich Chambers of Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 35-39.

architecture, auctioneering, craft associations, interior, and graphic design, painting, art publishing, design, sales, and sculpture.[67]

According to Paragraph 3 of the First Decree for the Implementation of the Reich Chamber of Culture Law,[68] promulgated on November 1, 1933, the primary task of the Culture Chambers was "to promote German culture responsibly on behalf of the German *Volk* and Reich" and "to regulate the economic and social affairs of the cultural professions."[69] Membership in one of the individual chambers was compulsory for all those who participated in the "creation, reproduction, intellectual or technical processing, dissemination, preservation, and direct or mediated sale of cultural assets."[70] Paragraph 5 of the document defines cultural assets or cultural goods as "all artistic creations or performance achievements that are transmitted to the public," and "all other intellectual creations or performances that are transmitted to the public through print, film, and radio."[71] However, according to Paragraph 10, "admission into a particular chamber may be denied, or a member may be expelled when there exist facts demonstrating that the person in question does not possess the necessary reliability and aptitude for the practice of his activity."[72] Finally, presidents of individual chambers were also empowered by Paragraph 28 to impose penalties on professional members of the chambers and non-member amateur artists who contravene the First Decree's clauses or "make false statements."[73] The Decree's clauses were to be enforced by the police authorities, judiciary organs, and civil services (Paragraph 29).

The First Decree for the Implementation of the Reich Chamber of Culture Law complemented the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service (*Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums*) passed on 7 April 1933, two months after Adolf Hitler had attained power. This ordinance aimed "to restore a national professional civil service and to simplify administration" by providing the dismissal of civil servants from office in

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[67] English translation of the "Law setting up the Reich Chamber of Culture (September 22, 1933)" reproduced in David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics And Propaganda* (London: Routledge, 2004) 190-191.
[68] Although there were further decrees and regulations promulgated by the Culture Chamber, according to Steinweis, they were almost always based of provisions of the First Decree. Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, & Economics*, 44.
[69] English translation reproduced in *The Arts in Nazi Germany: Continuity, Conformity, Change*, eds. Jonathan Huener and Francis R. Nicosia (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009), 172.
[70] Huener and Nicosia, *The Arts in Nazi Germany*, 172.
[71] Huener and Nicosia, 172.
[72] Huener and Nicosia, 172.
[73] Huener and Nicosia, 176.

accordance with a set of regulations." It ordered the dismissal of "officials who have entered the service since November 9, 1918, without possessing the required or customary educational background or other qualifications," "officials of non-Aryan descent," and "officials whose former political activity does not offer a guarantee that they will at all times without reservation act in the interest of the national state," and that "even where there would be no grounds for such action under the prevailing Law."[74] These provisions institutionalized a pre-existing pattern of excluding artists, musicians, writers, etc. who were considered to be racially or ideologically objectionable.[75] In 1933 alone, under this law, over twenty museum directors and curators were fired. Banned artists, such as Ernst Barlach, Geoge Grosz, Paul Klee, and Emil Nolde, were prohibited from practicing their profession; in some instances, organized searches by Gestapo officials were conducted to ensure that banned artists' brushes were dry and paint unused.[76] It is only logical to suggest that increasing the homogeneity and reducing the overall population subjected to *RKK* control mechanisms was thought to significantly improve their efficiency.

After a number of warnings to art critics, on November 27, 1936, the Minister of Propaganda issued an official ban on criticism of the arts. Both Goebbels and Hitler had previously expressed their opposition to art reviews in a variety of contexts, admonishing German critics for having failed to conform to National Socialist principles. "Since the seizure of power," stated Goebbels, "I have given German critics four years to conform to National Socialist principles. […] Since the year 1936 did not bring any satisfactory improvement in criticism, I finally forbid from today the continuation of criticism of the arts as hitherto practiced."[77] Goebbels's new decree ordered that evaluative criticism of the arts be replaced by descriptive and explanatory "commentary on the arts" written by "art editors" (*Kunstschriftleiter*). These writers were not allowed to hide behind pseudonyms; their whole names had to be published. Commentaries also were to adopt an encouraging and enthusiastic tone. In addition, critics were subsequently required to be at least thirty years old and possess a

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[74] English translation of the document provided in Stackelberg and Winkle, *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook,* 150. On the Nazification of "personnel and practice" also see Jarausch, *The Unfree Professions.*
[75] See Stephanie Barron, "1937: Modern Art and Politics in Prewar Germany," in *'Degenerate Art' The Fate of The Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany* (New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 11-20.
[76] Jonathon Green and Nicholas J. Karolides, *Encyclopedia of Censorship* (New York, NY: Infobase Publishing, 2014), 193.
[77] Joseph Goebbels, "Banning of Art Criticism (27 November 1936)," in David Welch, *The Third Reich Politics and Propaganda,* 202.

certified background in the arts; their appointment was subject to the Reich authorities' approval.[78] This latter measure can be seen as an attempt to minimize external disturbances to the feedback loop system and prevent conflicting signals from challenging the main Reference value. However, as we will see further down, Goebbels's ban on criticism did not address systemic conflicts coming from the duplicate Comparator functions.

Starting in January 1934, another governmental body for cultural policy and surveillance was created by Hitler within the National Socialist Party and entrusted to a self-proclaimed Party ideologue Alfred Rosenberg.[79] The Office of the Commissioner of the *Führer* for the supervision of the entire intellectual and ideological training and education of the *NSDAP* (*Amt des Beauftragten des Führers für die Überwachung der gesamten geistigen und weltanschaulichen Schulung und Erziehung der NSDAP*, hereafter *BDFU*, *Dienstelle Rosenberg* or *Amt Rosenberg* for short)" would thereafter also play an important role in the structural regimentation of the arts. Before that, Rosenberg presided over a non-governmental nationalistic political society The Militant League for German Culture (*Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur*, hereafter KfdK or the League). The League's main goal was to unite the German people of "Aryan" descent in a fight against the foreign and especially Jewish influences in all spheres of intellectual and cultural activity. The undesired tendencies in German culture were deemed to be expressions of cultural Bolshevism (*Kulturbolschewismus*).[80] Since the League was administratively and financially independent from the Party, it was not directly involved in drafting or enforcing National Socialist policies and regulations in the matters of culture, with its main activity being the so-called national education (*Volkserziehung*) that consisted primarily of organizing guest lectures on the problems associated with the "collapse" of the German culture. As the *BDFU* leader, Rosenberg gained a legitimate bureaucratic base from which to implement ideas developed

[78] Joseph Wulf, *Die bildenden Künste im Dritten Reich* (Gütersloh: Sigberg Mohn Verlag, 1963), 126-131; Brenner, *Die Kunstpolitik*, 108.

[79] Alfred Rosenberg was a Baltic German born in Estonia. He studied architecture in Riga and Moscow before emigrating to Germany at the outbreak of the October Revolution in 1917. Rosenberg became one of the earliest members of the *NSDAP*, joining in January 1919 eight months before Adolf Hitler. He expressed his views on politics and culture first in the main press organ of the *NSDAP* – "Volkischer Beobachter" and then in one of the most important ideological works of the Nazi movement – "The Myth of the Twentieth Century" (*Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, 1930). For more information on Alfred Rosenberg see Andreas Molau, *Alfred Rosenberg. Der Ideologie des Nationalsozialismus. Eine politische Biografie* (Koblenz: Bublies, 1993); and Ernst Piper, *Alfred Rosenberg. Hitlers Chefideologe* (München: Pantheon Verlag, 2007).

[80] Given that the activity of the League was much more oriented towards the second type of influence termed aesthetic Nazification, it will be addressed in more detail in the following section.

within the KdfK on the level of school policy, youth programs, church affairs, and a number of other areas where ideological issues came into play. In a 1939 book by Rudolf Kluge and Heinrich Krüger entitled "Constitution and Administration in the Greater German Reich" (*Verfassung und Verwaltung im Großdeutschen Reich*) Rosenberg's position is described as follows:

> In this capacity, he has to guard the purity of the National Socialist idea. His office was divided into an administrative department, department of education, office for the cultivation of the arts (*Kunstpflege*), the head office of science (philosophy, pedagogy, history, Aryan Weltanschauung), office for the cultivation of writing (*Schrifttumspflege*), department of ideological information, office for prehistory, the head office of Nordic issues, the head office of the press.[81]

With his jurisdiction extending into practically all cultural fields, Rosenberg challenged Goebbels's control over the visual arts. *Dienstelle Rosenberg* was meant to counterbalance administrative entities in Goebbels's control – the Propaganda Ministry and the Reich Chamber of Culture. Jonathan Petropoulos lists two reasons for Hitler's decision to undermine Goebbels's position by creating a duplicate organization for cultural development and surveillance: to humble the all-too-powerful propaganda minister and rectify the direction in which he was taking the National Socialist aesthetics.[82]

Whatever Hitler's initial motifs were, let us briefly consider the implications of his decision from the feedback loop model's standpoint. The duplication of the legitimate Comparator function means that the Output functions are also duplicated, which forces the subject of induction (P) to assess the discrepancies between the two Outputs, i.e., *to assume a secondary Comparator function* or a *Mediator function*. In a way, the subject of induction (P) is put in a position where he is expected to resolve/mediate the conflict or to make a choice at his own discretion. Even if the agent upon whom influence is exerted is willing to conform with the request, seeking to rectify their behavior, compliance becomes problematic and any unanimous

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[81] "In dieser Eigenschaft hat er die Reinheit der nationalsozialistischen Idee zu hüten. Sein Amt ist gegliedert in Verwaltungsamt, Amt Schulung, Amt für Kunstpflege, Hauptstelle Wissenschaft (Philosophie und Pädagogik, Geschichte, arische Weltanschauung), Amt Schrifttumspflege, Abteilung für weltanschauliche Information, Amt Vorgeschichte, Hauptstelle Nordische Fragen, Hauptstelle Presse." Rudolf Kluge and Heinrich Krüger, *Verfassung und Verwaltung im Großdeutschen Reich* (*Reichsbürgerkunde*) (Berlin: P. Schmidt, 1939), 197.
[82] Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 35.

input encouraged by the Comparator function – harder to achieve. In the following section, I will consider the conflict between Goebbels and Rosenberg in more detail in order to bring out the kind of mixed Output signals that the German artists had to navigate. The section on compliance will further expand on the ways in which conflicts of interest at the state level allowed for a certain degree of artistic freedom in National Socialist Germany.

**Mechanisms of aesthetic induction or Aesthetic Nazification**

In her historiographic review of National Socialist culture, Pamela Potter discusses unsuccessful attempts of post-war scholars to tackle a type of influence exercised by the National Socialist state on German art that is different from the structural one – what she has termed "aesthetic Nazification."[83] Recall that structural Nazification of cultural life in Germany operated on the level of policies, laws, and regulations that ensured state control over conditions of art production, sale, and display. Aesthetic Nazification, on the other hand, refers to the influence that the state exerted or attempted to exert on the modes of artistic representation – stylistic, formal, and iconographic qualities of artworks themselves. First and foremost, the assumption of aesthetic Nazification implies that the National Socialist state intended to control the way German visual arts looked, i.e., that it consciously assumed the role of an authority/influencing agent/Comparator function in the matters pertaining to aesthetics. It also implies that governmental organizations and political leaders were unanimous in their views of what constituted the Reference value for desired German art; that they had agreed on a set of positive quality criteria for desired German art that would be systematically propagated and enforced through an Output function of state rewards and reprimands.

Given the hierarchical structure of the National Socialist state and Hitler's longstanding interest in painting and architecture, any discussion of aesthetic Nazification would have to consider *Führer*'s personal preferences in the visual arts. On many occasions, Hitler had expressed his intention to control not only the kinds of people who participated in the process of cultural production but also the way art looked. His ideas on aesthetics were founded upon nationalistic and racist principles that characterized National Socialist worldview overall. On the pages of his political autobiography, *Mein Kampf,* published in 1925, Hitler sharply criticized the decadence of the Weimar Republic and expressed hopes of restoring German culture to its

[83] Potter, *Art of Suppression*, 4.

former glory. Hitler claimed that only representatives of a superior human race – the Aryans, could fulfill this mission. He considered them to be the "founders of culture" (*Kulturbegründer*) responsible for all of humanity's major achievements in the fields of culture, science, and technology.[84] In order to live up to the standards of the Aryan race from which it allegedly descended and avoid progressive "degeneration" (*Entartung)*, the German nation was expected to reject all foreign influences in these spheres of human creativity. Of all "foreign influences," Hitler believed the Jewish one to have the most adverse effect. He claimed that the Jews are the ultimate "destroyers of culture" (*Kulturzerstörer*), who did not have any culture-founding abilities and instead appropriated the most significant cultural achievements of other nations to then destroy them.[85] This destruction of the arts, for Hitler, happened primarily by aesthetic means, listing among the most apparent indicators of degeneration innovative representational techniques of such avant-garde movements as Cubism, Futurism, Dadaism, and Expressionism.

Hitler believed that in order to reverse the process and revive "true German art," all cultural activity needed to be entirely subordinated to the national political ideas.[86] Therefore, as the previous section on structural Nazification demonstrates, when *NSDAP* came to power, concerted efforts have been deployed to coordinate the arts by exercising legislative, coercive, and rewards powers of the state over creative professionals. These powers were used to rid the cultural sector of the "racially inferior" and "politically unsound" individuals. However, little guidance was provided with regards to the aesthetic Reference value for desirable art to those who escaped persecution and were willing to accommodate state demands. In post-war scholarly literature, the absence of a unified vision for "new" German art is often attributed to substantial disagreements in the ranks of Party officials competing for influence in the cultural sector, with the antagonism between Alfred Rosenberg and Joseph Goebbels often presented as the most consequential for the visual arts.[87] Therefore, to understand the erratic nature of aesthetic Nazification and account for the different options available to German artists willing to accommodate state demands, it is necessary to review the respective positions of these two political figures.

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[84] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (München, 1940), 317, 318, and 421.
[85] Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 329, 330, 332, and 358.
[86] Hitler, 279 and 283.
[87] Some of the earliest post-war accounts of the ways in which divisions within the party elites influences the arts include Lane, *Architecture and politics in Germany*; and Hildegard Brenner, *Die Kunstpolitik*, 63-86.

Rosenberg and Goebbels represented two of the most important governmental bodies responsible for the *implementation* of the National Socialist cultural policy, notably in its formative years – the National Socialist Society for German Culture (and later *DBFU*) and the Ministry of National Enlightenment and Propaganda. The standoff between these two great bureaucratic powers that took place between 1933 and 1937 had often been framed in aesthetic terms, as a "debate over modernism" or the "debate on Expressionism."[88] In the following paragraphs, I go back to primary sources to better understand their respective aesthetic agendas, their differences and points of convergence, especially as they might bear on the development of architectural and technical subjects painting in the Third Reich.

As Goebbels's major modern biographer, Ralf Georg Reuth, persuasively contends, the Propaganda Minister looked favorably on modern art. Without publicly endorsing any of the avant-garde movements, he was nevertheless reputed to have developed a marked affinity for Expressionism. Reuth reports that Goebbels's private art collection included aquarelles and paintings by the Expressionist artist Emil Nolde.[89] Goebbels also allegedly owned works by Käthe Kollowitz, an Expressionist artist who was forced to resign from the Berlin Academy of Arts, banned from exhibiting and marginalized after signing the "Urgent Call for Unity" (*Dringender Appell für die Einheit*) – an appeal by the *Internationaler Sozialistischer Kampfbund* (*ISK*) to fight against Hitler's regime.[90]

The ideological foundations of Goebbels's appreciation of Expressionism become apparent from the telegram sent by the Minister of Propaganda to the Norwegian painter Edward Munch in 1933 on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. "I greet you as the Greatest Painter of the Germanic World," began Goebbels, continuing his fawning eulogy in the third person:

> Sprouted from Nordic-Teutonic soil, his works speak to me of life's profound seriousness. His paintings, landscapes as well as representations of human beings are imbued by deep passion. Munch struggles to comprehend nature in its truth and to

[88] See, among others, Robert A. Pois, "German Expressionism in the Plastic Arts and Nazism: A Confrontation of Idealists," *German Life and Letters* 21, no. 3 (April 1968): 204-214; Hildegard Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle of 1933 and 1934," in Holborn, *From Republic to Reich,* 395–432; and Jonathan Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler: Collaboration and Survival in Nazi Germany* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2014).
[89] Ralf Georg Reuth, *Goebbels: Eine Biographie* (Munich: Piper, 1995), 291.
[90] The original text of the "Urgent Call for Unity" in German can be found on the Göttingen State Archive website, accessed March 1, 2019, http://www.stadtarchiv.goettingen.de/widerstand/texte/isk-einheitsfront.html.

> capture it in the picture, uncompromisingly scorning all academic formality. A powerful, independent, strong-willed spirit – heir of Nordic culture – he frees himself of all naturalism and reaches back to the eternal foundations of National [*völkischen*] art-creating.[91]

This letter reveals Goebbels's belief that Expressionism spurred from and contributed immensely to further development of what he believed to be "true German art," expressive of the German/Teutonic/Nordic racial essence – grave and dramatic in tone yet freed from academic conventions of lifelike representation.

In his diaries, Goebbels presented his thoughts on German culture through a series of binary oppositions "Race – Intellect," "Creativity – Reproduction," "Art – Science," where "Race" stood for everything "genuine, pure, spontaneous, organic, natural, inspired, and authentic," and "Intellect" was understood as a function of a contrived, overwrought and devious Jewish mind.[92] The second pairing echoed Hitler's racialist vision of culture as it was first described in *Mein Kampf* and suggested that the German race alone could be genuinely creative, while the cerebral Jewish race could only reproduce and imitate. Finally, Goebbels saw science as a *modus operandi* of the "devious intellect" of the Jews, while he conceived of art as the ultimate domain of the German spirit. Taken together, these three pairings lend us to believe that the Minister of Propaganda valued introspection into racial consciousness and its subjective expression above empirical observation and rigorous representation of physical reality. Both Goebbels's letter to Munch and his diaries discredited naturalistic art that slavishly reproduced physical reality, without calling upon and pondering the depths of the racial soul of the German people.

It must also be said that Goebbels had never expressed his support for Expressionism overtly and unequivocally. For example, in his widely-cited Kaiserhof speech to theater managers and directors, he acknowledged that Expressionism had "healthy beginnings" but had

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[91] "Edvard Munchs Werke, nordisch-germanischer Erde entsprossen, reden zu mir vom tiefen Ernst des Lebens. Seine Bilder, sowohl die Landschaft als auch die Darstellung von Menschen, sind von tiefer Leidenschaft erfüllt. Munch ringt danach, die Natur in ihrer Wahrhaftigkeit zu erfassen und sie unter rücksichtsloser Verachtung alles Akademisch-Formalen im Bilde festzuhalten. Als kraftvoller, eigenwilliger Geist – Erbe nordischer Natur – macht er sich von jedem Naturalismus frei und greift zurück auf die ewigen Grundlagen völkischen Kunstschaffens." Joseph Goebbels, "Dr. Goebbels an Edvard Munch," *Kunst der Nation*, no. 4 (December 15, 1933), translated and cited by Sue Prideaux, *Edvard Munch: Behind the Scream* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2007), 313.
[92] Toby Thacker, *Joseph Goebbels: Life and Death* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 28.

degenerated into excessive sentimentality and experimentation. In order to be fully accepted by the regime, Expressionism had to appeal to collective emotions, rather than individual drama, renounce social criticism in favor of an assertive and positive outlook on life, and adopt a more grounded and restrained aesthetic language: "German art in the next decade will be heroic, steely but romantic, factual without sentimentality; it will be nationalistic, with great depth of feeling; it will be binding and it will unite, or it will cease to exist."[93]

It would only be logical to assume that Goebbels's aesthetics would be reflected in the program of and enforced by the Reich Chamber of Culture. However, Dr. Karl-Friedrich Schreiber, Counsel for *RKK*, makes it clear that "The law for the National Chamber of Culture, including its enabling clauses, is a law without formal content; an organization law without material standards."[94] He posits that "Its task is, and will be for a long time, to operate within the cultural professions *separating the tares from the wheat*, and to decide *between the fit and the unfit.* But 'fitness,'" Schreiber explains,

> will not be determined by affiliation with this or that artistic trend, over whose ultimate value perhaps only coming generations can decide; but through *inner conformity with the will and being of the people.* To decide between the sound and the transitory, and *to divide by blood and spirit the German from the alien*, that is the direction of National Socialist cultural leadership, since that is also only the direction of National Socialist will.[95]

In other words, *de jura*, the *RKK* leadership refuses to dismiss artists on the grounds of their affiliation with any particular movement, be it historic or modern, provided that they align

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[93] "Kunst kommt vom Können, nicht vom Wollen. Das äußere Merkmal der Kunst ist die Gekonntheit. Es soll niemand glauben, dass Gesinnung allein es täte. Wohl gehört sie hinzu, aber sie kann nicht die Kunst durch ihre Gesetze an sich ersetzen. [...] Wir wollen die Kunst wieder zum Volke führen, um das Volk wieder zur Kunst führen zu können. (Beifall.) Das eine ist ohne das andere nicht denkbar. Möglich erscheint nur, daß die Kunst den inneren Rhythmus, den Herzschlag des Geistes ihrer Zeit abhorcht, versteht, formt und faßt. Es ist klar, daß dies in sich schließt einen rücksichtslosen Kampf gegen den blutigen Dilettantismus, der da glaubt, Können durch Wollen zu ersetzen, und meint, die Kunst mit den Methoden eines Soldatenrates befruchten zu dürfen."Joseph Goebbels, "Die Aufgaben des deutschen Theaters im Hotel Kaiserhof zu Berlin (May 9, 1933)," (speech), reproduced in Peter Longrich, *Goebbels: A Biography*, trans. Alan Bance, Jeremy Noakes, and Lesley Sharpe (New York: Random House, 2015), 224.

[94] Translated and quoted by Robert Brady, "Reichskulturkammer (*The National Chamber of Culture*) (1993)," in *The Nazification of Art: Art, Design, Music, Architecture and Film in the Third Reich*, eds. Brandon Taylor and Wilfred van der Will (Winchester, Hampshire: Winchester Press, Winchester School of Art, 1990), 80.

[95] Quoted by Brady, "The National Chamber," in Taylor and van der Will, *The Nazification of Art*, 80, italics by Schreiber.

themselves with the will and tastes of the popular majority whose interests the National Socialist state claims to represent. In theory, *RKK*'s conscious refusal to formulate and impose single-minded aesthetic standards for German art, a single aesthetic Reference Value, provided its members' freedom of experimentation and expression. In practice, however, the rationale for excluding "racially inferior" and "politically unsound" individuals from the Visual Arts Chamber were often formulated in aesthetic terms such as "non-mastery of balanced composition" or a lack of a "sensitivity to color balance."[96]

These double standards in the matters of aesthetics were also reflected in Goebbels's speech pronounced at a meeting of the heads of Reich Culture Chambers:

> The National Socialist state must, on principle, uphold the point of view that *art is free* and that attempts should never be made toward replacing intuition with organization. *Art as such, can only flourish when given the greatest possible freedom of development.* Those who think that they can confine art or civilization in general within fixed limits are sinning against art and civilization. When I say 'art is free,' I wish to steer clear of the opinion, on the other hand, as though absolutely anarchical tendencies in the art should be given free vent. However, free art must and can be within its own laws of evolution, *it must feel itself closely connected with the elemental laws of national life. Art and civilization are implanted in the mother soil of the nation. Consequently, they are forever dependent upon the moral, social, and national principles of the state.*[97]

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[96] Quoted in Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, & Economics,* 86-87.

[97] "Grundsätzlich muß auch für den nationalsozialistischen Staat der Standpunkt aufrechterhalten werden, daß die Kunst frei ist und daß man niemals de Versuch unternehmen darf, durch Organisation den Mangel an Intuition zu ersetzen. Die Kunst an sich kann nur gedeihen, wenn man ihr größtmögliche Entwicklungsfreiheit gibt. Und diejenigen, die die Kunst und überhaupt die ganze Kultur glauben einengen und bescheiden zu können, versündigen sich damit an der Kunst und an der Kultur. Wenn ich sage, die Kunst ist frei, so möchte ich mich auf der anderen Seite allerdings gegen den Standpunkt verwahren, daß damit einer absolut anarchischen Gesinnung in der Kunst freie Bahn gegeben sein sollte. Das kann nicht der Fall sein, und ist es der Fall, so werden sich die Mängel zeigen, die wir in den vergangenen 14 Jahren, die wir Gott sei Dank überwunden haben, immer und immer wieder feststellen mußten. So frei die Kunst in ihren eigenen Entwicklungsgesetzen sein muß und sein kann, so eng muß sie sich gebunden fühlen an die nationalen Lebensgesetze eines Volkes. Die Kunst und die Kultur entstehen im Mutterboden eines Volkes; sie werden deshalb auch immer an die sittlichen, sozialen, nationalen und die moralischen Grundgesetze des Staates gebunden sein, aber im Rahmen und in den Grenzen der nationalen Lebensgesetze muß man der Kunst eine frei Entfaltungsmöglichkeit geben." Joseph Goebbels, "Wir garantieren die Freiheit der Kunst. Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels auf der Tagung der Reichskulturkammer am 7. Februar," *Kunst der Nation*, no. 4 (February 15, 1934), original italics.

As historian Robert Brady explains, art and artists had for Goebbels "the spiritual duty' to place themselves "into a *correct angle* with regard to themselves and the people," and to receive "inspiration only from the national character in its totality."[98] It is equally important to emphasize elements of the *Blut und Boden* understanding of national aesthetics by the *RKK* leaders. They described German art as a product of a "racially" defined national body ("blood" in Schreiber's definition of *RKK*'s goals) and geographic specificity or the historical settlement area ("mother soil" in Goebbels's speech), which brings Goebbels much closer to his main adversary – Alfred Rosenberg, than their political infighting might lend us to believe.

Alfred Rosenberg, his allies and followers, belonged to the *völkish* or culturally-conservative, national-Romantic circle of National Socialists, which included at different points in its history the Minister of the Interior in Thuringia – Wilhelm Frick, the director of the state art academy in Weimar – Paul Schultze-Naumburg, and an SS Reichsleiter Richard Walther Darré, among others. Like Goebbels, Rosenberg promoted a racialist interpretation of art and culture. His seminal work "The Myth of the Twentieth Century" (*Der Mythus des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*), first published in 1930, affirmed the moral, social and cultural degeneration of the Aryan race and ascribed its decline to Semitic influences. Rosenberg believed that National Socialism would awaken the innate moral sensibility and an energetic will to power of the Aryans, who will ultimately weed out all foreign influences from their culture and dominate the other races. However, as the following paragraphs will demonstrate, Rosenberg's aesthetics was different from Goebbels' in that the *BDFU* leader and his followers rejected cultural modernism in favor of more traditional themes and modes of representation.

"The Myth of the Twentieth Century" is an obscure piece of literature with its author going back and forth between spiteful political commentary and muddled philosophizing. Although Rosenberg does not come up with a specific positive formulation of or the Reference value for "new German art," several scrambled statements on Western culture reveal his position on the current state of affairs in Germany. According to Rosenberg, first and foremost, a distinction needed to be made between the Hellenic and Germanic traditions, and their respective influence on the development of Western art had to be identified.[99] Although both Rosenberg

[98] Brady, "The National Chamber" in Taylor and van der Will, *The Nazification of Art*, 85.
[99] Alfred Rosenberg, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century: An Evaluation of the Spiritual-Intellectual Confrontations of our Age*, trans. Vivian Bird, preface by Peter Peel (Torrance, CA: The Noontide Press, 1982), 170-171.

considered both cultures to be of Aryan origin and in many ways related, he nevertheless noted many differences in their ideals of beauty and means of its expression. For instance, he believed Hellenic works to be self-contained or self-sufficient and inert, while the qualities he ascribed to Germanic creations were cross-referentiality and dynamism.[100] Rosenberg claimed that the Germanic heritage of Western art has for a long time been undervalued, with the Greco-Roman tradition credited for all of the outstanding cultural achievements in Europe.

Nevertheless, contrary to what one might expect from a conservative art theorist, Rosenberg did not advocate for returning to previous artistic movements or trends. In fact, he claimed to be against anachronistic imitation of past styles that nineteenth-century architectural historicisms and eclecticisms indulged in.[101]

Just like Goebbels, Rosenberg despised artworks that made proof of an analytical, cerebral approach to art, such as Cubism[102] and Impressionism, which he condemned as "disintegrating intellectualism," an "art of sensuality" and "color dissections," adversely impacted by a scientific understanding of the world.[103] Unlike Goebbels, however, Rosenberg found the movement that superseded Impressionism – Expressionism – to be equally despicable. "An entire generation," says Rosenberg, "cried out for expression but it had nothing at all to express. It cried out for beauty," he continues, "but it no longer had any ideal of beauty. It wished to reach creativity in art but it had lost every real formative power."[104] In his book, Rosenberg also observed with scorn the fact that Expressionism's visual language had been excessively influenced by "primitive art" of Japan and China.[105]

Rosenberg's definition of beauty in art spurred from a rigorous analysis of human figures represented on ancient artifacts, Western portraiture, and history painting. He studied facial features, bodily proportions, as well as the "gaze and posture" of the depicted subjects. Rosenberg's racialist understanding of Germanic beauty found its utmost expression in the iconography of the male hero that he claimed to be identifiable by a "tall slim figure, with bright

[100] Rosenberg, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, 177.
[101] Rosenberg, 313-232.
[102] Rosenberg, 184.
[103] Rosenberg, 183-184.
[104] Rosenberg, 184.
[105] Rosenberg, 184.

flashing eyes, high forehead, with powerful, but not excessive muscles."[106] Rosenberg admitted that these physical traits had little to do with reality; rather, they were a product of intentional artistic idealization. An innate ability to intuit the racial "ideal" is what for Rosenberg distinguished a true German artist and attested to his talent. "The Nordic artist has been dominated by a well-defined ideal standard of beauty," Rosenberg said in "Revolution in Visual Arts," an article that first appeared in *Völkischer Beobachter* on July 7, 1933. He also provided his readers with several examples of artists and artworks that he believed lived up to that standard:

> Nowhere is this powerful and powerfully natural, ideal as striking and prevalent as it is in Greece. But it predominates in Titian as well, and in Palma Vecchio, Giorgione, and Botticelli, who painted Gretchenesque figures. This ideal surface in Holbein, too, as, for example, in his painting of Gudrun, and Goethe's Hermann und Dorothea. It stands out in the face of Pericles as well as in that of the [medieval statue of the] Bamberg Horseman. It doesn't matter whether a given individual corresponds entirely to the ideal, as long as a longing for that ideal is alive, and the nation is in proximity to it and united in nature.[107]

For Rosenberg, representations of the human form in modern art (in the "Myth of the Twentieth Century" he discussed Gauguin, Picasso, Kokoshka and Chagall among others, in "Revolution in Visual arts" – Nolde and Barlach) embodied weakness, sickness, and "degeneracy,"[108] and the refusal to idealize human form attested first and foremost to artists' lack of professional skills.

Without ever referencing Alois Riegl, Rosenberg used the concept of an "aesthetic will" to describe an "active force" behind Aryans' desire to create art.[109] This aesthetic will compel the Germanic artist to overcome the resistance of matter, master, and transform it, transforming the creation of artworks into a heroic gesture. [110] Rosenberg believed that Great Germanic artists, such as Rembrandt, Rubens, and Frans Hals, used color and composition to create drama that attested to the exercise of the said "aesthetic will."[111] Later on in the "Myth of the Twentieth

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[106] Rosenberg, 177-178.
[107] Anson Rabinbach and Sander L. Gilman eds., *The Third Reich Sourcebook* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013), n.p.
[108] Rosenberg, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century,* 182-183.
[109] Rosenberg, 193-194.
[110] Rosenberg, 178-179, 198, 214-215.
[111] Rosenberg, 228.

Century," Rosenberg contradicted himself when advocating for the separation of "form" from "content." It is content that Rosenberg saw as "giving impetus" to the work of art and "conditioning its form,"[112] or content being "a problem of form."[113] Form only produced a "motor, sensory, emotional and intellectual" response, while content was an expression of an "artistic will."[114] What is certain, however, is that for Rosenberg, content seemed to go beyond subject matter and iconography, to encompass a kind of moral, mythical, or spiritual charge that racially-conscious Aryan artists imbued their works with. In the visual arts, it "manifests itself as the drama of the soul and as a concentrated atmosphere (Leonardo, Rembrandt)."[115] Formally, from the standpoint of style and mood, Germanic art had a dual nature: both Apollonian – "serene, balanced, harmoniously formal" and Dionysian – "sensually excited, ecstatic," both idealistic and naturalistic,[116] both beautiful and sublime. "[S]tyle," contended Rosenberg, "is a method, and not an artistic necessity," a method to either produce what Rosenberg has called a "typifying" image of a subject or an "individualizing" one.[117]

Summing up, with regards to the aesthetic Reference Value for state-supported artistic production, Goebbels and Rosenberg seemed to agree on one main guiding principle: the racialist aesthetics. However, in their respective commentary, the two state officials competing for Hitler's attention focused almost exclusively on depictions of the human form. Neither Goebbels nor Rosenberg directly addressed architectural or technical subjects, that, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 3, had been very present in both academic and modernist German painting. Racialist aesthetics that both political leaders promoted as the ultimate guiding principle for "new" German art could hardly be directly applied by compliant artists working in these genres, since architectural and technical subjects painting that will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3 deal with *products* of human creativity – buildings, infrastructure, equipment – rather than its agents. The connection between racialist aesthetics and images of the built environment could potentially be made through the "blood and soil" rhetoric underpinning some of Goebbels' and Rosenberg's pronouncements on culture, but in the absence of clear directives from the cultural

[112] Rosenberg, 186.
[113] Rosenberg, 196.
[114] Rosenberg, 192-193.
[115] Rosenberg, 195.
[116] Rosenberg, 212.
[117] Rosenberg, 213.

authority figures, gauging the ways in which the Aryan or Germanic soul manifested itself in architectural or technical subjects painting required individual artists to engage in active interpretation of official discourse not only on art but also on work, technology, and nature.

**Conclusion**

An upsurge in social psychology research on authority relations that happened in the aftermath of World War II has laid the grounds for a systematic approach to conforming behavior in dictatorial regimes. Although the dyadic model of induction and the feedback loop model might appear rigid or mechanistic, they nevertheless put into question the conception of Hitler's state as a system of absolute and perfect coordination and allow for an understanding of the cultural life in the Third Reich as one of changing Reference Values, constant nod readjustments, and dysfunctional control measures. Both social psychological models discussed in this chapter account for a variety of ways of accepting influence and, most importantly, allow for a certain degree of self-regulation and agency to the subject of induction in the social influence situation. Most importantly, they shift the focus of attention from the uncertain ground of internal convictions and beliefs towards forms of conforming behavior that are publicly-expressed, i.e., observable, more likely to have been accounted for and documented, and thus, more accurately assessable.

To conclude, the social-psychological understanding of authority relations in National Socialist Germany sets this thesis apart from the scholarly attempts of forming a general theory of National Socialist aesthetics, as if it was a fixed, coherent, state-imposed phenomenon.[118] Contrary to what Pamela Potter suggested in her historiographic review, however, this thesis also demonstrates that an absence of a single-minded aesthetic agenda for "new" German art does not put the assumption of aesthetic Nazification itself at fault.[119] The two are not necessarily incompatible if aesthetic Nazification is considered an ongoing dynamic process rather than a finished result of state induction; a constant interpellation of all feedback loop nods, rather than of some unitary Comparator function. Following this logic, we will see how compliant German

[118] The ambitious project of forming a general theory of National Socialist aesthetics has been articulated notably by George L. Mosse, *Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural and Social Life in the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1966).

[119] A number of key scholars from a wide range of approaches to National Socialist culture deny the Third Reich an aesthetics that it can call its own: it includes, for example, Marxist critics such as Berthold Hinz (1974), architectural historians such as Robert Taylor (1974) and conservative art historians such as Mortimer Davidson (1992).

artists assumed an active role in the process of devising the aesthetic Reference Value for “new” German art, and more specifically, architectural and technical subjects painting.

## Chapter 2

## Collaboration and Complicity

So far, I have discussed the activity of the National Socialist institutions in charge of the regimentation of cultural life in Germany, including the two types of influence they exerted over the artists: structural and aesthetic Nazification. Positive incentives to cooperate, such as prestigious state commissions, administration of honors, and awards, were complemented by a wide variety of persecutory measures, ranging from dismissals, exhibition bans, and fines to exile incarceration. However, focusing exclusively on the National Socialist system of coercion and rewards lends us to overlook artists' complicity in the process of cultural coordination. After all, as the minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels explained in a letter from 1931 accompanying his draft of the Reich Chamber of Culture Law, "State supervision" and "formal will of the law" were inseparable from "self-administration" and "self-formation" on the part of the artists.[1] In other words, at the outset of *Gleichschaltung,* the National Socialist state *expected* German artists to independently figure out adequate ways of achieving professional recognition under and giving an adequate visual expression to the new regime.

This chapter shifts the perspective onto the visual arts in the Third Reich from that of the state officials to that of cultural professionals. It examines structural and aesthetic aspects of compliance as conditioned but not entirely determined by the German state's attempts to nazify the arts. It starts with the presentation of the socio-economic conditions of Weimar Germany that compelled German artists and intellectuals to take an active position in the transformation of the German society and its cultural institutions, to defend their position as a collectivity and form artists' interest groups. We will see that these same socio-economic conditions anticipated and facilitated artists' alignment with the National Socialist regime after Hitler's coming to power. The next two sections elaborate on the opportunities for artists to participate in defining the National Socialist discourse on the visual arts via collective action – participation in and leadership of interest groups – up until 1936. First, I will discuss the reactionary German Art Society – its program, expectations toward the German government, exhibitions, and

[1] Freie Künstlerschaft Sachsens, Dresden, to Sächs (Landtag, 20 March 1931), BAK, R32/387, quoted in Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, & Economics,* 42.

publications. Second, I will review the activities of the pro-modernist National Socialist Students' League, focusing on the figure of Otto Andreas Schreiber. Standing for opposing aesthetic agendas, each of these two groups strove and felt entitled to determine the official discourse on art in the Third Reich. The chapter concludes that despite multiplying state regulations in the first few years of the regime, these associations benefitted from a certain degree of autonomy and were called upon to formulate an aesthetic program for the "new" German visual arts.

I rely on Bernd Widdig's 2001 study of culture and inflation in Weimar Germany, as well as on Alan Steinweis's 1993 examination of National Socialist cultural bureaucracy to understand the economic and professional issues that pushed German artists to unite into self-supporting collectives during the late Weimar Republic and the ways in which their aspirations were harnessed to orchestrate the coordination of the cultural sphere in the Third Reich. In his book, Steinweis explains that artistic unions and professional associations formed before 1933 provided not only an organizational model but also the "raw material" for the administrative body credited with *Gleichschaltung*. Considered from the standpoint of systems theory and the feedback loop model, Steinweis's study sheds light onto structural artistic compliance as not so much a process of top-down coordination of cultural production as a give-and-take relationship between the German artists and the National Socialist state, a process of coopting Reference Values, of gradual integration and merging that blends the boundary between the subject and the object of induction, between the output and the input function.

The climate of cultural uncertainty that allowed for competing viewpoints on German art to coexist in the first few years of the regime has previously been addressed by art historians such as Berthold Hinz (1979), Peter Adam (1992), and Jonathan Petropoulos (2014), among others. These scholars have studied the "quarrel over expressionism" or the "debate over modern art" as an expression of a political struggle between the different political factions competing for Hitler's attention (Rosenberg vs. Goebbels). Thorough studies focusing on the role of specific artists' interest groups in these debates are scarce. I will be primarily drawing on Joan L. Clinefelter's 2005 survey of the German Art Society's history and Anja Hesse's 2000 overview of their exhibition activities in order to understand the *völkisch* position on "new" German art under National Socialism. To grasp the pro-modernist grievances, I will be drawing on Ursula

Ruth Brockert Dibner's 1969 and Geoffrey J. Giles 1975 doctoral theses on the National Socialist Students' Association. Both Clinefelter and Dibner give much attention to the two interest groups' organizational structure and relations with official National Socialist institutions. Their findings point to the fact that instead of passively accepting state induction, both organizations proactively pushed for the elimination of pluralism in and a unitary vision of the visual arts. This indicates that German artists who did not challenge National Socialism on the level of politics were provided with a degree of expressive freedom. The question of whether or not artists' interest groups succeeded in making a significant impact on cultural policy and institutional organization in the Third Reich is beyond the scope of this thesis. Rather, my intention is to expand on Clinefelter's and Dibner's research by going back to key primary sources – texts produced by concerned artists and intellectuals themselves –to understand the two groups' respective aesthetic programs and establishing their intended contribution to the National Socialist discourse on art.

My ultimate goal is to go beyond previous literature on the topic to see how the coexistence of alternative aesthetic agendas and the competition of different artists' interest groups for the National Socialist state's support affected the cultural production in the long run; in other words, it is determining whether or not they succeeded in influencing the aesthetic Reference value in the feedback loop of artistic compliance. Although the climate of relative cultural openness and uncertainty in National Socialist Germany quickly came to an end and the organizations themselves have been dismantled around 1936, the impact of the *völkish/*pro-modernist debates on art persisted. In the feedback loop model's terms, the debates between the two artists' interest groups that took place in the first few years of the regime actually affected the National Socialist discourse on art in the long run. The long term implications of the two conflicted aesthetic agendas for practicing German artists will become apparent in Chapter 3, where I discuss, among other things, how a compliant artist who never belonged to either the German Art Society or the National Socialist Students' League made concerted efforts to balance the *völkish/*pro-modernist agendas and trends in the National Socialist technical thought. The example of Richard Gessner's career as an artist willing to accommodate state demands and cater to its Nazification efforts will demonstrate the lasting effects of these debates on National Socialist cultural discourse.

**Socio-economic conditions of compliance**

Already in the 1920s, problems of economic growth were acute in inter-war Germany – a country greatly affected by the consequences of the lost war and the punitive Versailles settlement. Hyperinflation plagued the cultural professions, with the luxury tax threatening the livelihood of young artists.[2] When the world economic crisis hit the country in October 1929, unemployment, low wages, and mounting misery were much more onerous for the producers of cultural goods than for any other sectors of the German economy.[3] In addition, historian Alan Steinweis notes that thousands of artists were left without any financial support because as the private market shrunk, many of the governmental cultural grant programs were also eliminated.[4] As their social status was eroding and their economic situation was progressively deteriorating, German artists and intellectuals developed a resentment towards the Weimar state. They felt that the new Republic was not as supportive of the cultural professionals as the German monarchies and insensitive to their problems.[5] At the same time, since artists constituted less than one percent of the total unemployed and were largely unprotected by trade unions, they lacked any substantial bargaining power and a strong political voice.[6]

In a comprehensive survey of the effects of inflation on Weimar Germany, Bernd Widdig puts forth that the destruction of the fabric of Wilhelmine culture and financial difficulties had the effect of politicizing cultural professionals: these conditions pushed German artists and intellectuals to take an active position in the transformation of German society and its institutions.[7] Other scholars, such as Vernon Lidke (2004) or Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimenberg (1994), agree that the progressive erosion of the cultural sector accounted for the remarkable rise in political self-consciousness among cultural professionals and an unprecedented organizational zeal.[8] Artists formed over forty interest groups during the Weimar

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[2] Gerald D. Feldman, *The Great Disorder: Politics, Economics, and Society in the German Inflation, 1914-1924* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 527-555.
[3] Klaus Kösters, "Anpassung - Überleben – Widerstand; Künstler im Nationalsozialismus," in *Künstler im Nationalsozialismus*, 20.
[4] Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, & Economics*, 14 and 16.
[5] Feldman, *The Great Disorder*, 542.
[6] Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, & Economics*, 14 and 16.
[7] Bernd Widdig, *Culture and Inflation in Weimar Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001), 170.
[8] Vernon L. Lidtke, "Abstract Art and Left-Wing Politics in the Weimar Republic," *Central European History* 37, no. 1 (2004): 50; "Redefining the Role of Intellectuals," in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimenberg eds. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1994), 285-286.

years, while others founded journals and joined political parties.[9] According to Lidke, politically-engaged artists and intellectuals identified themselves primarily with the left – the socialist and Communist movements.[10] But although organizations such as the "Socialist Artists Cooperative" were indeed active in the Weimar period, they were met with strong opposition from those representing the conservative wing, such as the "Association of Artists and Intellectual Creative Workers" allied to the German Nationalist Party and the German Art Society discussed further on in this chapter. Even Alfred Rosenberg's Militant League for German Culture addressed in Chapter 1, founded to broaden the National Socialist movement's appeal among cultural professionals and raise their *völkish* consciousness, contained 15% of artists.[11] Among all these interest groups that offered an alternative to official state institutions, some called for the deliberalization of the cultural sector and the creation of officially recognized public law institutions or professional chambers for the cultural occupations – a trend that Steinweis described as the "neocorporatist impulse."[12] As a result of these ideological disagreements and competing agendas, the visual arts remained only loosely organized and fragmented up until the early 1930s, which undermined their ability to pressure the German government for relief measures.

The main argument advanced by Steinweis in his seminal book on cultural institutions in the Third Reich is that once in power, the National Socialist Government, and in particular Joseph Goebbels, succeeded in harnessing the aspirations of German artists toward collective organization to orchestrate the "coordination" of the cultural sphere.[13] Nevertheless, this does not mean that the Reich Culture Chamber discussed in the previous chapter proceeded from ground zero and completely displaced all previous grassroots organizational efforts. As Steinweis explains, artistic unions and professional associations that formed in the Weimar Republic provided not only a model but also the "raw material" for the administrative body credited with the *Gleichschaltung* of the arts.[14] Similarly, Jonathan Petropoulos states that Goebbels arranged

[9] Lidtke, "Abstract Art," 50; Kaes, Jay, and Dimenberg, *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, 285-286
[10] Lidtke, 50; Kaes, Jay, and Dimenberg, 285-286.
[11] Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, & Economics*, 23.
[12] Steinweis, 17.
[13] Steinweis, 9-10.
[14] The most important being the Reich Association of Visual Artists of Germany (*Reichsverband bildender Künstler Deutschlands*, or *RVbK*). Steinweis, 10-13.

an actual incorporation of the existing *Berufsverbände* or professional associations and *Interessenverbände* or lobbying organizations into the system of Culture Chambers.[15]

Therefore, there are two interrelated factors accounting for artists' complicity in bringing about the Reich Culture Chambers and their subsequent compliance with its rules and regulations. First, this administrative body grew out of years of lobbying by creative professionals for professional and economic security. Second, the anti-Weimar sentiment shared by many of the German artists made them look to Hitler's government for financial support, employment, and favorable reforms.[16] As a result, artists' resistance to the new government and the need for coercive measures were offset by a significant forward movement. In feedback loop model's terms, upon Hitler's coming to power, much of the Reference Value for the arts was shared both by the Comparator function (the state) and the subjects of induction (the artists), decreasing the resistance to and increasing the effectiveness of the output function (structural and aesthetic coordination).

In the following sections, we will see that both Goebbels's and Rosenberg's views on artistic development under National Socialism had their proponents among cultural occupations. The pro-modernist fraction was represented by a very vocal union of young Berlin artists from the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund* (*NSD-Studentenbund,* National Socialist German Students' League), while the supporters of the *völkish* fraction organized themselves in a *Deutsche Kunstgemeinschaft* (German Art Society). Artists joined these interest groups to make their views on new German culture heard; these interest groups, in turn, acted on the artists' behalf through structural integration (securing support of National Socialist officials or gaining positions within the National Socialist administration), organizing exhibitions and publishing art periodicals. They competed for official recognition and approval, attempting with varying degrees of success to influence the official discourse on art. And although coercive structural Nazification of cultural professionals ensured that all artists' interest groups that transitioned into National Socialism or were formed in the aftermath of Hitler's rise to power were loyal to the new regime, significant differences remained in their respective aesthetic agendas. In other

[15] Jonathan Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain: The Art World in Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 255-256.
[16] It must be noted, however, that this was not the case with certain avant-garde artists, such as members of the Dada movement, who were as critical of the Weimar Republic as they were of the rise of Hitler.

words, – those of social psychology – the existence of competing aesthetic agendas in the early years of National Socialism produced a cultural climate where collective action was perceived as a means for artists to influence the Output dynamics and the Reference Value in the feedback loop of induction and compliance.

**The German Art Society**

Arguably the most outspoken and ambitious *völkish* artists' interest group, one with the longest history and with the strongest ties to the National Socialist Party, was the *Deutsche Kunstgesellschaft* (*DKG*) or the German Art Society. As this chapter will show, *DKG* has deployed conscious and substantial efforts to mediate between the interests of German artists and the state, as well as to promote their own vision of art in the Third Reich. This example proves compliance to be a bi-directional process, a process that unfolded within a set of boundaries defined by the state, but that still allowed for the creative agency on the organizational, regional, and even national levels.

DKG *program and expectations vis-à-vis the National Socialist state*

The German Art Society was founded in Dresden on November 15, 1920 by Bettina Feistel-Rohmeder, trained in painting and graphic arts by Adolf Hoelzel in Dachau, Ludwig Dill in Karlsruhe, and Bernhard Pankok in Stuttgart.[17] From 1934 to 1940, the Society was directed by Hans Adolf Bühler, a former student of Hans Thoma and a professor of fine arts at the Grand Ducal Academy of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe.[18] The two central figures of *DKG* did not only have artistic training in common; both also shunned artistic experimentation of the Weimar Republic and shared antiforeign, antisemitic, racialist views on culture. Besides Feistel-Rohmeder and Bühler, *DKG* membership counted many highly skilled, academically trained artists from an educated middle-class background, such as Walter Gasch, Siegfried Czerny, and August Gebhard, as well as schoolteachers, university professors, and art critics. It is the interests and

[17] Annette Ludwig, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunstzeitschrift "Das Bild," "Monatsschrift für das Deutsche Kunstschaffen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart." Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Verlages C. F. Müller* (Heidelberg: C. F. Müller, 1992), 13.
[18] Ludwig, *"Das Bild,"* 11.

economic well-being of such conservative intellectuals and cultural professionals that *DKG* was meant to protect against the "onslaught" of the avant-gardes.[19]

The German Art Society believed that the development of avant-garde movements such as Expressionism and New Objectivity in the Weimar Republic also threatened the established academic painting tradition. However, as a dogmatic and militant organization without any legal authority, *DKG* required governmental support to purge the German art of its modernist elements. They, therefore, appealed first to the Weimar government and later to the National Socialist Party in order to influence the official discourse on art and possibly even cultural policy. The three main charges *DKG* laid against the avant-garde trends in German art were formulated even before Hitler's coming to power, presented in a letter addressed to Paul von Hindenburg and summarized in Joan Clinefelter's 2005 overview of the *DKG*'s organizational structure. Written in 1928, this letter demanded that the President of the Weimar Republic reconsider his support of modernist art exhibitions. First, similarly to the head of the Militant League for German Culture, Alfred Rosenberg, the German Art Society members claimed that expressionist artists such as Emil Nolde and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner distorted the "German ideal of beauty" by depicting physically deformed or mentally insane human subjects. Second, they condemned explicit representations of prostitution and other "base sexual practices." And third, they took offense at the "horrific and insulting" portrayal of German World War I soldiers and veterans, possibly referring to works by Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, and Georg Grosz.[20] In other words, the Society's attacks were predominantly targeted at specific types of iconography encountered in avant-garde paintings as opposed to the style in which these subjects were represented. Formal characteristics of the modernist works condemned by *DKG*, such as simplified forms, loose brushstroke, clashing colors, were perceived not as consciously sought-after aesthetics but as an inevitable outcome of the lack of technical skill and proper training among modernist artists.

But if the anti-modernist sentiment was shared by the vast majority of the *völkish* groups, including Rosenberg's League, what distinguished the German Art Society was its attempt to

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[19] Anja Hesse, "Zwei Ausstelungen im Frühjahr 1933: Das ende des Kulturellen Freiheit in Braunschweig," in *Deutsche Kunst 1933-1945 in Braunschweig: Kunst Im Nationalsozialismus* (Hildesheim: George Olms Verlag, 2000), 38.

[20] Joan L. Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich: Culture and Race from Weimar to Nazi Germany* (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2005), 47.

come up with an aesthetic program for a National Socialist state-supported German art. As Clinefelter puts it, "their anti-modernism was not just defined negatively by what it [German art] was not, but also 'positively' by what they believed German art to be."[21] As we will see further on, the selection of artworks for *DKG*'s exhibitions and publications called for more traditional themes and easily-recognizable subject matter, as well as figurative, lifelike modes of representation that did not allow for any abstraction, distortion of forms, or colors. For the Society members, these traits were most fully and harmoniously embodied by the nineteenth-century academism within its two main tendencies: on the one hand, the Neoclassical commitment to the portrayal of physical objects, natural scenery, human figures, social interactions, and fashions in a dispassionate, objective way; and on the other, Romantic sentimentalism with its subjective, emotional understanding of physical reality and human experience thereof. It is this drive to formulate universal positive quality criteria for German art under National Socialism that positioned *DKG* as an artists' interest group with a higher degree of self-determination.

In the late 1920s, *DKG* supported Hitler's struggle for power in the hope that a National Socialist government would embrace the cultural change that the Weimar government had failed to bring about. In other words, the Society saw the alliance with *NSDAP* strategically – as a way to realize their own "mission," formulated in terms of eliminating the so-called "hereditary enemies of the German nation, Roma and Jews,"[22] by "show[ing] the German people the way back to their own art."[23] Rather than conceding to the rules and regulations of the National Socialist state, *DKG* voiced their own demands for the regime. In an article "What the German Artists Expect from the New Government!" circulated through the *Deutsche Kunstbericht* (German Art Report) and published in the March issue of 1933, Bettina Feistel-Rohmeder proclaimed unequivocally that both the German people and the National Socialist government had to embrace the *völkish* view of culture and support *DKG* in their struggle to rid it from alien and hostile elements. She claimed to speak on behalf of all German artists who allegedly

[21] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich*, 2.
[22] Bettina Feistel-Rohmeder, "Kurzer Rückblick auf due Entstehung und Entwicklung der Deutschen Kunstgesellstaft," in *Im Terror des Kunstbolschewismus. Urkundensammlung des "Deutschen Kunstberichtes" aus den Jahren 1927-1933* (Karlsruhe: C.F. Müller, 1938), 211-217, citation from p.211.
[23] Bettina Feistel-Rohmeder, "Die Deutsche Kunstgesellschaft, Sitz Dresden, und der Kampf um die Deutsche Kunst," in *Im Terror des Kunstbolschewismus,* 187-196, citation from p.195.

expected "that from now on, there be only one guideline for action – the worldview of the people and the state; passionate and firmly rooted in the reality of blood and history!"[24] Endowing *DKG*'s mission with utmost national importance, Feistel-Rohmeder claimed that German *Volk* and its art were intimately connected: "The elevation and strengthening of the national community serve the arts, and all those who want and can contribute to the arts, partake in the task of community-building."[25] And for the sake of this sacred bond,

> they [German artists] not only expect materialism, Marxism, and communism to be politically eradicated, banned, exterminated, and the Bolshevik non-art and non-culture to be eradicated, but demand that the spiritual struggle that the *völkisch* artists have waged for more than a decade without any help from the state would from now on take up by the people as a whole; it must be a matter of honor for the government to place the tried and tested soldiers of this cultural struggle in the forefront![26]

In other words, instead of passively accepting the state-initiated process of *Gleischaltung*, *DKG* artists proactively pushed for the elimination of pluralism in the arts and a unitary aesthetic doctrine.

Besides calling for the most radical purge of the arts, this latter quote suggests that German artists had *initiated* it before the National Socialist regime with its Culture Chambers had even been established. For that reason, they demanded *DKG*'s pioneering contribution to the fight against modern art be duly acknowledged, and their loyalty is rewarded by recognizing them as experts in the matters of German art. As such a self-proclaimed "expert," Feistel-Rohmeder also outlined concrete measures that German artists expected the state to undertake:

> That all products of cosmopolitan and Bolshevist purport be removed from German museums and collections. They can first be shown to the public in a beep; people can be

[24] Bettina Feistel-Rohmeder, "Was die Deutschen Künstler von der neuen Regierung erwarten," in *Im Terror des Kunstbolschewismus,* 181-185, citation from p.181. Although it can be suggested that Rohmeder's speaking on behalf of the German artists was unsolicited, Petropoulos confirms that the *völkish* movement benefitted from a widespread popular approval even before Hitler's coming to power and a growing grassroot support with the establishment of the National Socialist regime. Jonathan Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler,* 23-25.
[25] Feistel-Rohmeder, "Was die Deutschen Künstler von der neuen Regierung erwarten," in *Im Terror des Kunstbolschewismus,* 181.
[26] "[Die deutschen Künstler] erwarten, daß Materialismus, Marxismus und Kommunismus nicht nur politisch verfolgt, verboten, ausgerottet werden, sondern daß... der bolschewistischen Unkunst und Unkultur Vernichtung geschworen wird — wobei es Ehrensache des Staates zu sein hat, die erprobten Soldaten dieses Kulturkampfes in die vorderste Reihe zu stellen!" Feistel-Rohmeder in *Im Terror des Kunstbolschewismus,* 181.

> told what sums were spent on them, together with the names of the gallery officials and ministers of culture who were responsible for acquiring them, after which these inartistic products can have but a single use, which is a fuel to heat public buildings.[27]

In short, Feistel-Rohmeder argued that purging national museums of avant-garde works was not enough; these pieces of art had to be publicly ridiculed along with people responsible for their acquisition and display. Note that Feistel-Rohmeder suggested punitive actions against both physical objects and human beings long before the implementation of such measures by the National Socialist state.

DKG*'s structural integration strategies*

Following the publication of this programmatic text, *DKG* sought to lead by example, staging propagandistic traveling exhibitions of two types: those that highlighted positive examples of German art to be praised and emulated and those that cast modernist art in a negative light. The purpose of this dichotomous exhibition structure was didactic: to bring the German public into contact with what they believed to be "pure" (*rein*) German art and to reeducate their minds allegedly corrupted by hostile, alien forces.

Planning for the *Erste Wanderausstellung Rein Deutscher Bildender Kunst* (The First Travelling Exhibition of Pure German Visual Art), Rohmeder intended "to create an exhibition which provides a contrast for today's decay in art and human nature with the best that German artists of our day produce; only art of undisputedly high rank can be shown." And specified the racial restrictions on submissions, noting "that only works by artists German by blood be accepted."[28] She secured the support of Rosenberg's Fighting League and named Bühler responsible for curating the show. The latter met Rohmeder's program by only inviting active

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[27] "Daß aus den Deutschen Museen und Sammlungen alle Erzeugnisse mit weltbürgerlichen und bolschewistischen Vorzeichen entfernt werden. Man kann sie vorher in einer Häufung der Öffentlichkeit vorführen, kann diese mit den dafür aufgewandten Summen, den Namen der dafür verantwortlichen Galeriebeamten und Kultusminister bekannt machen — worauf die Werke der Unkunst nur noch einen Nutzwert haben können: nämlich als Heizmaterial öffentliche Gebäude zu erwärmen." Feisel-Rohmeder in *Im Terror des Kunstbolschewismus,* 182; Here translated by Andreas Hüneke, "On the Train of Missing Masterpieces. Modern Art from Germna Galleries," in Barron, '*Degenerate art,'* 121-134, citation on p.121.

[28] "Es gilt, eine Ausstellung zu schaffen, die der heutigen Verrottung in Kunst und Wesen das Beste gegenüberstellt, was deutsche Künstler unserer Tage hervorbringen; es darf also nur Kunst von unbestritten hohem Range gezeigt werden."; "daß nur Werke deutschblütiger Künstler eingeladen werden." Bettina Feistel-Rohmeder. "Plan Der I. Wanderausstellung Rein Deutsche Bildender Kunst," *Niedersächsische Landesarchiv*, Akte 12 Neu 13 Nr. 18763, 38-39.

members of *DKG* to participate, or artists that belonged to Bühler's personal circle of acquaintances – either his fellow students and professors from the Karlsruhe Academy (e.g., Siegfried Czerny and August Gebhard) or his own students and assistants (e.g., Hans Schoepflin and Wilhelm Sauter).[29]

The First Travelling Exhibition of Pure German Art opened in the staircase of Dankwarderode castle in Brunswick on April 30, 1933, and then toured Germany throughout 1934. According to Anja Hesse, of 148 exhibits, 60% were paintings, twelve were sculptures, and thirty-seven – graphic works. Hesse's review of the exhibits established that the vast majority of artworks were landscapes in the nineteenth-century academic painting tradition, with realistic portraits constituting the second largest category.[30] This exhibition was the Society's first attempt to define positive quality criteria for "new" German art by presenting works that the organizers thought best corresponded to the spirit of National Socialism. Just what these criteria were, emerged from commentary to the exhibition published in *DKG*'s journal *Das Bild*, discussed later in this chapter.

By its very name, The First Travelling Exhibition of Pure German Art also suggested that "pure" German art had an "un-pure" or "un-German" counterpart, presented by *DKG* at *Schandausstellungen* ("shame exhibitions") or *Schreckenskammer* ("chambers of horrors") in Mannheim under the title *Kulturbolschewistische Bilder* (Images of cultural bolshevism) and in Karlsruhe under the title *Regierungskunst von 1919 bis 1933* (Government art from 1919 to 1933). Using the exhibition as a defamation method, the German Art Society sought to discredit modernist artists that they despised, such as Beckmann, Chagall, Dix, Feininger, Heckei, Hofer, Kandinsky, Kirchner, Klee, Mueller, Nolde, Rohlfs and Schmidt-Rottluff.[31] While the Expressionists came under attack in Mannheim, the Karlsruhe 'shame-exhibition' focused almost exclusively on German impressionists, featuring works by Hans von Marées, Max Liebermann, Lovis Corinth, Max Slevogt, and Alexander Kanoldt.[32] This pendant exhibitions structure was

[29] Hesse, "Zwei Ausstelungen im Frühjahr 1933," in *Deutsche Kunst 1933-1945 in Braunschweig,* 41.
[30] Hesse, "Zwei Ausstelungen im Frühjahr 1933," in *Deutsche Kunst 1933-1945 in Braunschweig,* 41-42.
[31] List of artists suggested by Christoph Zuschlag in "An 'Educational Exhibition.' The Precursors of Entartete Kunst and its Individual Venues," in Barron, '*Degenerate art,'* 83-104, based on images of National Socialist publications reproduced on p. 94.
[32] Michael Koch, "Kulturkampf in Karlsruhe. Zur Aussstellung Regierungskunst 1919-1933," in *Kunst in Karlsruhe, 1900–1950* (Karlsruhe: Müller, 1981), 105.

later taken up by the National Socialist establishment and mirrored by the Great German Art/Degenerate Art exhibitions duo in Munich, which clearly suggests that either Feistel-Rohmeder's fiery manifesto anticipated the radicalization of cultural policy in the Third Reich in the mid-1930s, or that *DKG* has actually managed to inspire official National Socialist discourse, exhibition practices, and cultural policy.

In parallel, *DKG* members aimed at influencing the official discourse on art by forging strategic alliances with the Party officials and occupying administrative positions within the National Socialist state apparatus. In other words, rather than being passively assimilated or absorbed into the National Socialist system, the German Art Society proactively initiated and consistently sought after the process of structural integration. *DKG* has started forging alliances with Party officials even before Hitler's coming to power. As early as 1928, *DKG* aimed high by making Alfred Rosenberg their honorary member.[33] Jonathan Petropoulos claims that not only did the German Art Society and its supporters ally themselves with Rosenberg, they have also tried to induce Hitler to appoint the *völkish* thinker as the Minister of Culture instead of Joseph Goebbels.[34] Although Joan Clinefelter points to Rosenberg's personal lack of responsiveness to *DKG*'s appeals and invitations,[35] Alan Steinweis claims that Rosenberg's Combat League for German Culture *did* mediate between anti-modernist interest groups such as *DKG* that sought to shape official policy and the Party.[36] But perhaps the most important of *DKG*'s patrons and supporters was another high-ranking member of the League – Dietrich Klagges. Appointed State Interior and Education Minister of Braunschweig in 1931, Klagges was one of the first members of the National Socialist movement to attain ministerial office. He published widely on the German educational system and economic development in the Third Reich, stressing the interconnectedness of art and politics.[37] In 1933, Klagges became the official patron of *DKG*'s traveling exhibition of "pure" German art in Brunswick, agreeing to provide an exhibition space, funding, as well as to assure the ministry's purchase of some of the artworks.[38] The Society further used prestigious patrons like Klagges to secure the support of their traveling exhibition in

[33] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich,* 86.
[34] Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler*, 23.
[35] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich*, 88-89.
[36] Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, & Economics*, n.p.
[37] Richard Steigmann-Gall, *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919–1945* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 22.
[38] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich,* 60-61.

other German cities, requesting city administrations to provide free venues for their shows or cover the shipping costs, for example.[39]

Another way the Society sought structural integration was by infiltrating the state apparatus. In 1929, DKG has already joined the Fighting League for German Culture,[40] with Bühler co-founding and presiding over its Karlsruhe branch since 1930.[41] As previously noted, Rosenberg's League was not a Party organization; however, starting 1932, it was endorsed by Goebbel's Ministry for Propaganda to "assume the task of leading the struggle […] for German culture in all areas of art."[42] In an article of the official organ of the League for the greater Berlin district, *Deutsche Kultur-Wacht* Goebbels further noted that,

> at events intended to represent the efficacy of German culture, all party offices are required to seek the advice of the appropriate specialists from *Kampfbund für Deutsche Kultur* in both substantive and personnel matters, in accord with our basic principle of rejecting all limited, partisan artistic creations in an exclusive recognition, protection, and promotion of German art and culture.[43]

Joining the League thus endowed *DKG* with more authority and allowed them to exercise control over the arts.

The Society's association with the League was followed by its entry into the Visual Art Chamber sometime between its creation in September 1933 and October 1935.[44] In addition, between 1933 and 1937, individual Society members and supporters enthusiastically joined the *NSDAP*, so that over time, the Society's board came to be completely dominated by Party members.[45] They also progressively secured positions of cultural authority within the National Socialist administration and academic faculty, often using their power to advance the fortunes and careers of their fellow members. For example, both Clinefelter and Ludwig discuss the case

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[39] Clinefelter, 60-61. For a list of other patrons see p. 64.
[40] Bettina Feistel-Rohmeder, "Was die Deutschen Künstler," in *Im Terror,* 214.
[41] Ludwig, *"Das Bild,"* 11.
[42] First published as Joseph Goebbels, "Kampfbund für Deutsche Kultur," *Deutsche Kultur-Wacht* 1, no. 3 (1932): 17. Reproduced in Kaes, Jay, and Dimenberg, *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook,* 143.
[43] Kaes, Jay, and Dimenberg, *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, 143.
[44] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich,* 83.
[45] Koch, "Kulturkampf in Karlsruhe," in *Kunst in Karlsruhe,* 102-117; Hesse, "Zwei Ausstelungen im Frühjahr 1933," In *Deutsche Kunst 1933-1945 in Braunschweig,* 38-47.

of Adolf Bühler, who replaced old faculty at the Baden Art Academy in Karlsruhe with members of the German Art Society.[46]

Overall, based on previous research, it is possible to conclude that DKG's art exhibitions were conceived as a platform for disseminating *völkisch* positive and negative quality criteria for "new" German art. They were also a means of securing an official endorsement from state officials – the first step in *DKG*'s proactive pursuit of structural integration. Further efforts of infiltrating the state apparatus made by individual *DKG* members fall in line with the Society's goal of imposing their own cultural agenda from within the National Socialist system.

Das Bild – DKG*'s mouthpiece for* völkisch *art*

The same kind of assertiveness and a comparable degree of agency also come forth in *DKG*'s periodical publications. From 1927 to 1944, the Society published an art journal *Deutsche Bildkunst* (German Visual Art), that was relaunched as *Das Bild - Monatsschrift für das Deutsche Kunstschaffen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (The Image - Monthly magazine for the German art in the past and present) in 1933. As previously mentioned, the German Art Society used *Das Bild* to disseminate *völkish* ideas on cultural production, promoting the work of both historic and contemporary artists who lived up to their vision of "pure" German art. *Das Bild* surveyed a wide variety of media – paintings, graphic works, sculpture, decorative arts and architecture, reviewed exhibitions and issued cultural policy commentaries.

*DKG* forged strategic alliances with the National Socialist institutions and influential officials to endow their main mouthpiece with the authority of an official National Socialist publication without officially being one. That is, *de jura, Das Bild* was not state-run and could therefore avoid the many restrictions and obligations that came with the status of "Party press." The periodical was managed by Bühler, published under the authority of the Karlsruhe Art Academy, and was endorsed by the minister of Education, Culture, and Justice, Otto Wacker.[47] As historian Joan Clinefelter explains in her study, Wacker subsidized school subscriptions of

[46] Hesse, *Deutsche Kunst 1933-1945 in Braunschweig,* 70; Ludwig, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunstzeitschrift "Das Bild,"* 35.
[47] Hesse, *Deutsche Kunst,* 43.

*Das Bild* and strongly encouraged its use as an instruction tool for teachers, [48] increasing the journal's prestige and *DKG*'s sphere of influence to pedagogues and younger audiences.

But the journal's ambition far exceeded the circle of cultural professionals and educators: its goal was to promote a *völkisch* vision of German art at the national level – the level normally reserved for the state alone. It aimed to instruct the broader German public in matters of art and culture and restore the German nation's racial consciousness.[49] In his contributions to *Das Bild*, a prominent German architect, painter, publicist, and politician Paul Schultze-Naumburg explained that both the physical and spiritual characteristics of the Germanic peoples were a function of their race.[50] Since, according to this view, all products of *Volk's* creativity were also determined by its racial origins, both the artistic style and thematic content of visual artworks were considered to be "eternal and unchangeable."[51] This legitimized a reactionary view on the development of German art, whereby in order to produce "pure" German art, artists had to carefully study historical precedents from periods of German history when German culture was supposedly less contaminated by foreign and spiritually-depraved visual forms such as "imported Impressionism" or even Baroque and Rococo so admired by Hitler and had a more of a direct connection to its origins, to the tradition.[52]

Thus, for the *Das Bild* contributors, Matthias Grünewald, a sixteenth-century painter who famously rejected Renaissance classicism to continue the style of late medieval Central European fought "against the withering of the German art of his time"[53] and the pioneer of landscape painting Albrecht Altdorfer – gave "his people a conception of the greatness of ideologically-bound art and its German soil."[54] The journal also extolled the Romantics, such as Gaspar David Friedrich and Philip Otto Runge for promoting characteristics that were "desirable for a future German art": "Inwardness, soulfulness, […] and Germanic piety."[55] Of contemporary artists that corresponded to these demands, the journal singled out the symbolist painter Arnold Böcklin,

[48] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich*, 67 and 79.
[49] Ludwig, *"Das Bild,"* 28.
[50] *Deutscher Kunstbericht* 11 (1936), 333. Berlin Document Center, Feistel-Rohmeder, Bettina.
[51] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich*, 83 and 104.
[52] *Deutscher Kunstbericht* 3 (1937), 88. Berlin Document Center, Feistel-Rohmeder, Bettina.
[53] *Deutscher Kunstbericht* 6 (1937), 170. Berlin Document Center, Feistel-Rohmeder Bettina.
[54] *Deutscher Kunstbericht* 6, 170.
[55] *Deutscher Kunstbericht* 6, 170.

Wolfgang Willrich, and, naturally, Hans Adolf Bühler – the leader of the German Arts Society.[56] It must be said that to present artists – not state officials or ideologues – as leaders in the national revival and as educators of the German *Völk* was a rather bold step that attests to *DKG*'s view of artists as empowered, self-determined agents, rather than obedient followers of the state.

In the same order of ideas, *Das Bild* provided disproportionate attention to the producers of artworks featured on its pages, demanding that artists themselves be racially-pure and politically untainted.[57] Discussions of their national and regional identity, genealogy, and formative experiences played an overpowering role in the racialist art commentary of the publication. Clinefelter notes that compared to the artists' life path and character, descriptions, and reviews of actual artworks were significantly fewer and much less detailed.[58] Nevertheless, *DKG* members also attempted to formulate and push for the so-called "essential traits of pure German art:"

> Emphasized strength of feeling, world-encompassing spirituality, unconditional devotion to the natural phenomenon in fidelity and sincerity of observation, then, especially in graphics, the high flight of inner imagination and, in all fields of visual arts, the mastery of the technical.[59]

This is to say that, according to *DKG*, the artist's capacity to produce "pure" German art depended on three interrelated faculties: careful observation of external physical reality, advanced drafting skills for accurate representation thereof, and a vivid imagination to go beyond matter, to penetrate and capture the inner essence of natural phenomena. *DKG* considered quality criteria for producers of culture and the products of their creation inextricably related, inseparable from one another.

Although the Society's racialist vision of art aligned quite well with the cultural position of the Party, the pages of *Das Bild* were not filled with overt National Socialist imagery, such as portraits of National Socialist leaders, representations of events from the movement's history,

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[56] Ludwig, *"Das Bild,"* 33.
[57] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich,* 83.
[58] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich,* 85-86.
[59] "Die wesentlichen Züge rein deutscher Kunst: betonte Stärke des Gefühls, weltumschließende Geistigkeit, unbedingte Hingabe an die Naturerscheinung in Treue und Ernsthaftigkeit der Beobachtung, sodann, namentlich in der Graphik, der hohe Flug der inneren Vorstellungskraft und, auf allen Gebieten der Flächenkunst, die meisterliche Beherrschung des Technischen." Ludwig, *Die nationalsozialistische Kunstzeitschrift "Das Bild,"* 28.

recognizable political insignia and Party attributes, agitation graphics, etc. Instead, until World War II, the board opted for the non-dogmatic types of images, such as still-lives, landscapes, and genre scenes.[60] Images of architecture also appeared quite frequently on the pages of *Das Bild.* They included both photographs of historical, predominantly Romanesque, religious buildings and those of contemporary residential and administrative structures designed by the members of *Der Block* (an association of conservative architects formed in opposition to Bauhaus), such as one of the journal's main contributors Paul Schultze-Naumburg. Graphic works featuring vernacular architecture and picturesque cityscapes were also quite popular among *Das Bild* editors. One of the most frequently reproduced artists from this latter category was Oskar Graf. Graf achieved significant professional success in the Third Reich and came to be known for his etchings and aquatints of scenic German villages and towns. A notable feature of his work was the unexpected juxtaposition of humble provincial architecture with imposing autobahn bridges.

In fact, despite the general mistrust for technology shared by the *völkisch* movement, *Das Bild* did not avoid or condemn images of modern engineering achievements, construction, and even industrial production. Artists from the *Industriesaal* of the Great German Art Exhibition, such as Franz Gerwin, Erich Mercker, Otto Geigenberger, and Hermann Kupferschmidt, were regularly featured on its pages. Bettina Feistel-Rohmeder herself produced a positive review of the *Kunst und Technik* (Art and Technology) exhibition that took place in Dresden on May 1, 1939. The show was organized by the Chairman of the Association of German Engineers Fritz Todt with the financial and administrative support from the Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels and featured artworks that exulted the technical and industrial prowess of the Third Reich. In her commentary on the exhibition, Feistel-Rohmeder exults the emergent genre of German painting and applauds both the "magnificent modern bridge buildings" and the "glorifying documents of their construction."[61] She notes with pride that "some of the best works shown in Dresden are already known to the readers of *Das Bild*, and that the staff of the magazine and members of the *Deutsche Kunstgesellschaft* contributed about a third of the works on display."[62]

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[60] After the beginning of important military operations, scenes of war heroism and representation of Hitler and other important National Socialist figures appeared more frequently in the journal.
[61] Bettina Feistel-Rohmeder, "Ausstellung 'Kunst und Technik' im Austellungsgelände der Stadt Dresten, Lennestraße, com 18. Mai bis 10. September," *Das Bild,* Heft 4 (1939): 214.
[62] Feistel-Rohmeder, "Ausstellung 'Kunst und Technik,' " 215.

DKG *as both the subject and agent of induction*

Although generally-speaking no ideological adjustment was required from the Society's members (there was no major ideological conflict between the views of the Society and the Party), on the pages of *Das Bild, völkish* artists, and intellectuals – as Clinefelter's study makes clear – expressed their concerns for the direction in which National Socialist cultural discourse and policy were heading. Especially in the first four years of the regime, contributing authors attacked the National Socialist State for being too lenient towards the representatives of artistic modernism.[63] They often emphasized the fact that avant-garde artists continued to exhibit and sell their works in Germany. Although they had only the purpose "of serving the National Socialist regime daily and stubbornly in its doctrine and its conquests," they also did not hesitate to criticize official institutions for inadequate support of the artists loyal to the regime.[64]

Before appearing on the pages of *Das Bild,* such critical commentaries were often voiced at the *DKG* meetings. For example, on the occasion of the German Art Society's fiftieth anniversary, Munich gallery director Franz Hoffmann demanded that the National Socialist government act more decisively, eliminate the modernist artists, and offer more assistance to "pure" German artists.[65] Later published in Das Bild, his speech hinted at the ineffectiveness of National Socialist leaders in repressing modernist artists and interest groups that prevented the cleansing of German culture necessary for new German art to emerge.[66] The critical sentiment was mutual, as already by 1934, it appears that some members of the National Socialist administration, including the art historian Kurt Martin, Bühler's successor at the Karlsruhe Academy, thought the journal was going a separate way from the official position of the National Socialist government: "The effect of this journal seems to contradict the government's foreign policy intentions to culture. In any case, both Berlin and the decisive Munich are completely against Bühler and his cultural policy."[67] This climate of mutual mistrust between the *DKG* and the National Socialist administration might account for the fact that despite the Society's

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[63] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich*, 4.
[64] *Deutscher Kunstbericht* 10, 1940. Berlin Document Center, Feistel-Rohmeder, Bettina.
[65] "Aus dem Deutschen Kunstbericht," *Das Bild,* Heft 11 (November 1935): n.p.
[66] "Aus dem Deutschen Kunstbericht," *Das Bild,* n.p.
[67] "die in gleicher Weise jegliche Sachlichkeit und Sachkenntnis vermiss er ließ. Die Wirkung dieser Zeitschrift scheint den außenpolitischen Kulturabsichten der Regierung zu widersprechen. Jedenfalls ist sowohl Berlin als auch das maßgebende München restlos gegen Bühler und seine Kulturpolitik eingestellt." Quoted in Ludwig, *"Das Bild,"* 11-12.

multiplanar attempts to influence official discourse and policy on art, the National Socialist Party often pursued their own cultural initiatives without directly soliciting the group's expertise. By 1937 this resulted in what Clinefelter has called a "crisis of legitimacy:" from that year on, speeches, publications, and correspondence of the Society members reveal a feeling of being left out and unappreciated by the National Socialist officials.[68]

While a direct link between the Society's criticism of the regime's lenience toward the modern arts and, more generally, the extent to which *DKG* speeches, publications, and exhibitions actually shaped cultural policy cannot be unequivocally determined, there is a strong correlation between *DKG*'s ideas and official policies. In fact, ever since the first issue of *Das Bild* was published, the regime's attitude towards the modernists was progressively radicalizing, and within three years from that event, they were completely banned from public view. Once again, the pendant exhibition structure became from 1937 onward the signature of the National Socialist State, testifying to the influence of *DKG* ideas on the National Socialist state.

Forging strategic alliances with high-ranking Party officials, pursuing administrative and faculty positions in the National Socialist institutions, curating exhibitions, and publishing art periodicals required organized collective effort, which in and of itself was already an expression of political and cultural agency. Without the support of this interest group, individual artists were more likely to be absorbed by the state and brought into its ideological line, while coordinated collective action made it possible for them to have a certain degree of control over the process of structural integration. And while German art Society members never directly confronted the state at the expense of their own livelihood, they criticized the Party line in the matters of culture and pushed for its radicalization. Most importantly, while state officials were consumed by internal divisions, the Society was already actively engaged in artistic production that embodied an aesthetic alternative to Weimar modernism.

**The National Socialist Students' Association**

Although it is impossible to establish the extent to which *DKG* has actually influenced official cultural policy in the Third Reich, what attested to their successes in promoting *völkish* ideas on art was the rise of strong opposition to their cultural-conservative agenda. Opponents of

[68] Clinefelter, *Artists for the Reich*, 91-94.

the *völkish* camp gathered in and around the National Socialist Students' Association (*Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund*, abbreviated as *NSD-Studentenbund* or NSDStB), a vociferous, radical, anti-democratic students' interest group founded in 1926 by two law students at the University of Leipzig – Helmut Podlich and Wilhelm Tempel.[69] As a historian of German National Socialism Ursula Dibner explains, members of *NSD-Studentenbund* "deplored the lack of political activity [among the German students] and expressed the need of young intellectuals to combine forces with the working class in order to create a true German *Volksgemeinschaft* (a racially-homogenous community), […] fight Marxism and high finance."[70] At their public meetings, *NSD-Studentenbund* advocated for the underprivileged German students, agitated against the growing Jewish student population at German universities, and campaigned against liberal and social-democrat professors that did not share their political views.[71] By 1933, NSDStB had already taken over representative student bodies at the majority of German universities and was ready to assume the responsibility for integrating higher education and academic life with the administrative structure and ideological framework of the state.[72] Although other student organizations, unions, and fraternities still existed in the Third Reich, on July 30, 1934, the Minister of Science, Education and National Culture Bernhard Rust announced that "in future, the NSDStB alone is responsible for the entire ideological, political and physical training of the student body."[73]

While "ideological, political and physical training of the student body" had always remained the NSDStB's primary mission, when Baldur von Schirach took charge of the

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[69] Ursula Ruth Brockert Dibner, "The History of the National Socialist German Student League" (PhD Thesis, University of Michigan, 1969), 1.
[70] Dibner, "National Socialist German Student League," 1.
[71] Andreas Raith, "Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund (NSDStB), 1926-1945," *Historisches Lexikon Bayerns*, accessed on August 5, 2019, http://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/Lexikon/Nationalsozialistischer_Deutscher_Studentenbund_(NSDStB),_1926-1945; Michael H. Kater, "Der NSD-Studentenbund Von 1926 Bis 1928: Randgruppe Zwischen Hitler Und Straßer," *Vierteljahrshefte Für Zeitgeschichte* 22, no. 2 (1974): 149-150 and 154; Lisa Pine, *Eduction in Nazi Germany* (Oxford & New York: Berg, 2010), 34.
[72] Dibner explains the early success of the *NSD-Studentenbund* in the German universities by the prevailing student mood, "which was permeated with social discontent and frequently erupted into anti-Semitic and anti-democratic demonstrations." Dibner, "National Socialist German Student League," iii.
[73] Geoffrey J. Giles, "The Rise of the National Socialist Student Association and the Failure of Political Education in the Third Reich," in *The Shaping of the Nazi State* (Croom Helm and London: Varnes & Noble Books New York, 1978), 170; Geoffrey J. Giles, "The National Socialist Students' Association in Hamburg 1926-45," (PhD Thesis, Cambridge University, 1975), 34.

Association in 1929, he had placed particular importance on leader-training for the Party.[74] According to historian Geoffrey J. Giles, "He [von Schirach] thus pandered to the elitist attitudes […], by implying that *Studentenbund* members would by right become leaders, both in terms of Party rank and as the arbiters of ideology."[75] He claimed that the NSDStB's conviction that students had a special, higher mission within the movement looked like high-brow arrogance to party members who questioned the intelligentsia's contribution to the movement.[76] Such animosities would ultimately lead to an "increasing alienation and a steady decline in support for the Nazi leadership."[77]

Another point of tension between *NSD-Studentenbund* and the state that has come to the fore under Schirach was the increasingly anti-modernist Party line regarding cultural policy. According to historian Jonathan Petropoulos, "Schirach projected himself as an artist from the outset of his political career with the Nazis."[78] Coming from a privileged and cultured background – his father was an ex-army theater director in Weimar, married to a wealthy American woman – Schirach studied art history in Munich and wrote romantic poetry. He even managed to form a "close friendship" with Hitler based on their shared interest in art, a personal acquaintance that has played a major role in his successful political career.[79] After seven years as the head of Hitler Youth (*Hitlerjugend*, 1933-1940), Hitler appointed Shirach *Gauleiter* and *Reichsstatthalter* of Vienna, responsible, among other things, for the arts and cultural institutions in that region.[80] Despite his position at the top of the National Socialist hierarchy, Schirach did not share the leadership's conservative tastes. Notably, according to Petropoulos, he supported modernist artists who had fallen out of favor with the state, such as Emil Nolde and Leo von König, sponsored entire exhibitions of modern art such as *Junge Kunst im Deutschen Reich*, and pressed museum acquisitions of such titans of modernism as Gustav Klimt and Lovis Corinth.

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[74] In 1929, Baldur von Schirach published a booklet in which he defined the main tasks of the Association as "scholarship (the treatment of specialist questions of National Socialism), propaganda (the spreading of Nazi ideology in the university), and training (leader-training for the Party)." Giles, "National Socialist Student Association," in *The Shaping of the Nazi State*, 161; Baldur von Schirach, *Wille und Weg des Nationalsozialistischen Deutschen Studentenbundes* (Munich, 1929), 10.
[75] Giles, "National Socialist Student Association," in *The Shaping of the Nazi State*, 161.
[76] Giles, 161.
[77] Giles, 167.
[78] Jonathan Petropoulos. *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 221.
[79] Howard Becker, *German Youth: Bond or Free* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1946), 170.
[80] Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, 221.

Petropoulos further notes that his pro-modernist position also manifested itself in his personal art collection, which included works by Renoir and van Gogh.[81]

To sum up, the *NSD-Studentenbund* and their head von Schirach rallied the student body to stand up against the *völkisch* views on artistic and intellectual life. As the popularity of *DKG*'s reactionary agenda was growing among the National Socialist leadership, members of the pro-modernist *NSD-Studentenbund* found themselves in opposition to the official discourse on German culture. This means that even in such tight control systems as the Third Reich, when the cultural sphere is concerned and artistic compliance is in question, Reference Value shared with the Comparator function (National Socialist ideology) did not prevent discrepancies in further Input from the objects of induction.

*Otto Andreas Schreiber and his pro-modernist agenda*

It is not surprising, therefore, that the anti-modernist line promoted by the *völkish* camp and increasingly supported by the state, as well as the latter's desire to control the arts, ended up causing some friction between *NSD-Studentenbund* and the National Socialist party. At a student meeting held on June 29, 1933, at the Humboldt University in Berlin, two leading figures of *NSD-Studentenbund,* Fritz Hippler[82] , and his research director Johan von Leers[83] delivered speeches attacking the restoration of "Wilhelminian academicism" and "all regulation of art" in National Socialist Germany.[84] The spokesman for the Berlin chapter of *NSD-Studentenbund* was the painter Otto Andreas Schreiber (1907-1978). As a modernist artist and an artists' interest group leader who had in many ways succeeded in balancing accommodation and provocation, Schreiber's case provides significant insights into the nature of structural and aesthetic compliance in the Third Reich and therefore merits a closer study.

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[81] Petropoulos, 208, 222-223.
[82] Rabinbach and Gilman, *The Third Reich Sourcebook,* 557. Fritz Hippler later became an important National Socialist filmmaker and is best known as the director of the propaganda film *Der Ewige Jude* (The Eternal Jew). In 1942 Hippler was appointed director of the Film Chamber at RMVP.
[83] Professor at the University of Jena and author of anti-Semitic texts, Johan von Leers was eventually summoned by Joseph Goebbels to work in the propaganda ministry.
[84] Otto Andreas Schreiber, "Bekenntnis der Jugen zur deutschen Kunst," *Deutsche Allegemeine Zeitung,* July 10, 1933, 2; reproduced in full in *Gauklerfest Unterm Galgen. Expressionismus Zwischen „Nordischer" Moderne und „Entarteter" Kunst,* eds. Uwe Flekner and Maike Steinkamp (Berlin and Boston: Walter DeGruyter, 2015), 196-198.

The literature on Schreiber's aesthetic views is fragmentary. Konrad Donhuijsen et al.'s 2015 monography and its 2016 reedition consider Schreiber's role in the National Socialist regime but focus predominantly on his political activities as an *NSD-Studentenbund* chapter leader and his post-war contribution to modernist painting.[85] Dieter Scholz's (1999) and Michael Tymkiw's (2018) studies examine specifically Schreiber's progressive factory exhibitions and the persisting effect of his display strategies on National Socialist museums.[86] Jonathan Petropoulos (2014) and Wolfgang Ruppert (2015) give a more targeted, albeit cursory overview of Schreiber's role in the debates on modern art within a conflicted cultural climate of the first few years of the National Socialist regime.[87] Building on these studies, I will be going back to primary texts – mainly Schreiber's own writings on art – in order to elucidate his aesthetic program.

But first, let us briefly consider Schreiber's progressive politicization and his path to National Socialism. In 1929, Schreiber graduated with an honors degree from the State Art School in Berlin, where he studied German philology, philosophy, and fine arts.[88] In his student years, he witnessed the stark polarization of the Weimar society as Communism pitted against reactionary forces in politics. Previously uninvolved in any political activities, in 1931, Schreiber felt compelled to commit to one side or the other. Shaken by the destructive effects of the Russian Revolution on the Soviet people, he ended up siding with the National Socialists, which he saw as a "lesser evil."[89] Reflecting on this challenging choice later on in his life, Schreiber has brought up the question of artistic modernism as an important factor in his decision:

> You had to take a stand in this difficult time of the early 1930s: Communism or National Socialism. Since for us, the West Prussians, the color red stood for Stalin's dictatorship

[85]Konrad Donhuijsen et al., *Otto Andreas Schreiber: Wiederentdeckung* (Köln: Wienand, 2015); Konrad Donhuijsen et al., *Otto Andreas Schreiber 1907-1978 : Ein Malerleben* (Köln: Wienand, 2016).
[86] Dieter Scholz, "Otto Andreas Schreiber, die Kunst der Nation und die Fabrikausstellungen," in *Überbrückt: Ästhetische moderne und Nationalsozialismus. Kunsthistoriker und Künstler, 1925-1937*, eds. Eugen Blume and Dieter Scholz (Cologne: Walther König, 1999), 92-108; Michael Tymkiw, *Nazi exhibition design and modernism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018).
[87] Petropoulos, *Artists under Hitler*; Ruppert Wolfgang, *Künstler im Nationalsozialismus: Die „deutsche" Kunst, die Kunstpolitik und die Berliner Kunsthochschule* (Köln/Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2015).
[88] Konrad Donhuijsen, "Dunkle Jahre. Hitlers nützlicher idiot?," in Donhuijsen, *Otto Andreas Schreiber* (2015), 140.
[89] Donhuijsen, "Dunkle Jahre," in Donhuijsen, *Otto Andreas Schreiber* (2015), 141.

> and was therefore out of the question, I chose Brown, not the least because of the example of the Italian fascists, who were open to modern art.[90]

According to Schreiber's own account, in November 1931, he had joined the *SA*, and on January 1, 1932 – the National Socialist German Workers' Party. At the end of that year, he also became a member of the National Socialist German Student Association and the National Socialist Teachers Association.[91]

Despite being fully integrated into the National Socialist system, Schreiber was unable to succeed as an artist. In 1935, twenty-six of Schreiber's works presented at the *Berliner Kunst* exhibition that took place at the *Neue Pinakothek* in Munich were confiscated; in 1937, one of his woodcuts was also included in the Degenerate Art Exhibition in Munich.[92] Schreiber did not hesitate to voice his concerns about the unfavorable conditions for the development of modern art in Germany and publicly endorse fellow avant-garde artists that suffered the consequences. For example, when Emil Nolde's membership application to *Kampfbund* was rejected, Schreiber defended the artist against Rosenberg's attacks.[93] In the abovementioned Humboldt University speech of 1933, Schreiber also contested the excessive control that the National Socialist state had imposed in the cultural sphere: "The attempt of uncreative persons to lay down dogmas in art criticism is a nightmare to all young artists in our movement."[94] Schreiber's critique of the establishment went hand in hand with that of the *völkisch* interest groups. According to art historian Michael Tymkiw, in this speech, "Schreiber denounced the *Spießigkeit* (petit-bourgeois smugness) of cultural conservatives who treated cheap *Volkstümlichkeit* [folksiness] and the

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[90] "Du musst Stellung beziehen in dieser schwierigen Zeit der frühen 30er-Jahre — es geht um die Frage: Kommunismus oder Nationalsozialismus. Da die Farbe Rot über die bestehende Stalin-Diktatur uns Westpreußen nur zu gut bekannt war und nicht in Frage kam, entschied ich mich für Braun, nicht zuletzt wegen des Vorbildes der italienischen Faschisten, die der modernen Kunst gegenüber aufgeschlossen waren." Donhuijsen, 140.
[91] Donhuijsen, 141.
[92] Mario Andreas Luttichau, "*Entartete Kunst (Munich 1937). A Reconstruction,"* in Barron, '*Degenerate art,'* 79.
[93] Georg Bussmann, " 'Degenerate Art' – A Look at a Useful Myth," in *German Art in the 20th Century: Painting and Sculpture 1905-1985,* eds. Christos M. Jochimides, Norman Rosenthal, and Wieland Schmied (London: Royal Academy of Arts, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), 117.
A devoted *NSDAP* member since 1920, the case of Emil Nolde is often cited as evidence of the widespread support for the National Socialist regime in the modernist artistic community. For a comprehensive account of Emil Nolde's pursuit of accommodation in English see Petropoulos, "Emil Nolde," in *Artists under Hitler,* 154-176.
[94] Schreiber, "Bekenntnis der Jugen zur deutschen Kunst," 2.

slavish imitation of nature as the main criteria for an artwork's value."[95] Believing that this would inevitably lead to cultural stagnation, Schreiber proclaimed:

> The National Socialist students are fighting against artistic reaction because they believe in art's capacity for vital development and because of the wish to forestall the rejection of the generation of German artists which preceded the present one and whose powers will flow into the art of the future.[96]

The "previous generation of German artists" that Schreiber refers to and so vehemently defends in this passage were, in fact, the German Expressionists, members of *die Brücke* and *der Blauer Reiter*, such as Emil Nolde, Ernst Barlach, Erich Heckel, and Karl Schmitt-Rotluff.[97] Although many individual expressionist artists tended to lean toward the political left and were generally associated with the progressive urban culture of the Weimar Republic (considering their influence on the November Group, for example), they were much less clear on their political position and allegiances than the decidedly fascist Futurists in Italy or the devotedly socialist Constructivists in Russia.[98] The National Socialist proponents of modernism like Schreiber have therefore tried to reclaim Expressionism for the Third Reich as the foundation for a "new" German art. Schreiber and his like-minded colleagues believed that if cleansed of all Jewish and Bolshevik influences, Expressionism had the potential of expressing the Teutonic, Nordic vitality of the German *Volk*.[99] The aesthetic means to that were discussed by Schreiber in his art-theoretical journal *Kunst der Nation* (Art of the Nation), founded on October 30, 1933. Schreiber's writings on this platform for cultural debate and political pressure discussed in the following section provide additional insights into the give-and-take nature of artistic compliance.

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[95] Michael Tymkiw, *Nazi Exhibition.*
[96] "Die Nationalsozialistischen Studenten Kämpfen gegen die Kunstreaktion, weil sie an die lebendige Entwicklungskraft der Kunst glauben und weil sie die Verleugnung der deutschen Kunstgeneration, die der heutigen vorausging und deren Kräfte in die Kunst der Zukunft einmünden, abwehren will." Schreiber, "Bekenntnis der Jugen zur deutschen Kunst," 2.
[97] Schreiber, "Bekenntnis der Jugen zur deutschen Kunst," 2.
[98] Mihael Nungesser, "Das bildnirische Werk im Überblick," in Donhuijsen, *Otto Andreas Schreiber* (2015), 16.
[99] Peter Paret, *An Artist Against the Third Reich: Ernst Barlach, 1933-1938* (Cambrigde, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 63-65; James van Dyke, *Franz Radzwill*, 46 and 56; Uwe Flekner and Maike Steinkamp eds, *Gauklerfest Unterm Galgen. Expressionismus Zwischen „Nordischer" Moderne und „Entarteter" Kunst* (Berlin and Boston: Walter DeGruyter, 2015).

*The pro-modernist aesthetic program of* Kunst der Nation

On the pages of Schreiber's journal *Kunst der Nation,* contributing authors responded to the attacks of their *völkisch* opponents and explained how the pro-modernist aesthetic program would fit into the National Socialist ideological framework. Other than divisions within the compliant artistic and intellectual community with regards to official Reference Value for German culture, this points to the fact that artists' readiness to accommodate state demands alone did not guarantee official approval; in the case of the pro-modernist fraction, their conformity with the official Reference Value had to be explained and defended in programmatic texts and public speeches.

*Kunst der Nation* authors saw it as their primary goal to demonstrate that the subjective and innovative visual language of Expressionism was an authentic, racially-determined manifestation of the Germanic soul.[100] In line with the racialist view of art, cultural critic and design theorist Hans Eckstein argued that modernist painters attacked by the cultural-conservative critics were "German both by descent […] and by conviction."[101] Furthermore, he conceived of the stylized visual language of Expressionism as a direct expression of German sensibility and a "reaction of the German sensibility against supranational Classicism and 'l'art pour l'art' of Impressionism" both seen as "denationalizing European art."[102] Another *Kunst der Nation* author, Paul F., also opposed the formal historical languages of Mediterranean and Germanic cultures. He associated the former with the lifelike representation of human form and the latter with a drive towards stylization, ornamentation, abstraction, and expressive linework. [103] In his contribution to the journal, an illustrator and graphic artist who is also considered to be one of the most important stage designers of the first half of the twentieth century, Emil

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[100] In an article "Was ist deutsch an der Kunst der Deutschen?" Hans Eckstein says that "It seems that the fate of art in Germany depends on the answer we give to it. For the art of the future is being approached by a new, relentless demand that it be a manifestation of the German character in a distinguished sense. But all art which is not so, should not receive any support whatsoever from the State and the people." ("Es hat den Anschein als hinge von der Antwort, die wir auf sie geben, das Schicksal der Kunst in Deutschland ab. Denn an die Kunst der Zukunft tritt al neue unerbittliche Forderung heran, daß sie in auszeichnendem Sinne Manifestation des deutschen Charakters sei. Alle Kunst aber, die das nicht ist, soll keinerlei Förderung durch Staat und Volk erfahren.") Hans Eckstein, "Was ist deutsch an der Kunst der Deutschen?" *Kunst der Nation,* no. 3 (1 Dezember 1933): 4.
[101] Eckstein, "Was ist deutsch an der Kunst der Deutschen?" 4.
[102] "Als eigentümlich deutsch, als Reaktion deutschen Empfindens gegen den übernationalen Klassizismus und das in gewissem Sinne die europäische Kunst entnationalisierende l'art pour l'art des Impressionismus ist auch der deutsche Expressionismus und im besonderen die Kunst Roldes und seiner Geistesverwandten immer aufgefasst worden." Eckstein, "Was ist deutsch an der Kunst der Deutschen?" 4.
[103] F. Paul, "Der Wert des Gegenständlichen in der deutschen Kunst," *Kunst der Nation 2,* no. 24 (n.d.): 5.

Preetorius defined the essence of German art in terms of sustaining "mysterious tension" between art and nature, between objects and their pictorial representation.[104] Similarly, in an article entitled "Continuation of Expressionism," published in *Kunst der Nation* on April 1, 1934, Schreiber posited that "Painting is never an imitation of nature but rather always an 'interpretive' translation of nature into color and form."[105] Much like Otto Andreas Schreiber, Hans Eckstein, and Paul F., the National Gallery director in Berlin Professor Alois J. Schardt,[106] rooted Expressionist drive towards abstraction and stylization in specific historical precedents. Recapping Schardt's sensational programmatic lecture "What is German Art?" from July 10, 1933, the *Neue Zuricher Zeitung* wrote:

> For him, the specific character of the Germanic, of the German-national, is to be sought in the ecstatic and prophetic. To his mind, there is a connection between nonobjective ornament of the German bronze age and the painting of the German Expressionists (e.g., of a Nolde, Marc, or Feininger)! According to Schardt, the decline of German art began as early as 1431 with the incursion of naturalism. He holds that the German art produced after the first third of the fifteenth century, that is, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, is without value except as a historical document, and is fundamentally un-German [...].[107]

In a word then, the pro-modernist fraction whose views on art were represented in *Kunst der Nation* tended to associate the crude visual language of Expressionism with the quintessential qualities of the German spirit that originated in distant periods of history while rejecting naturalistic representation as culturally-alien.

In *Kunst der Nation,* pro-modernist artists and critics also responded to accusations of elitism. Schreiber explained that the main reason expressionist visual language does not

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[104] "Die Anspannung zwischen dem zu bewältigenden Naturgebilde und dem bewältigenden Künstler, sie allein ist es ja, die jenes besondere Leben schafft, jene besondere, geheimnisvolle Spannung, die das echte Kunstwerk erfüllen, und deren Grade zugleich die Grade sind aller bildnerischen Qualität." Emil Preetorius, "Kunst und Natur," *Kunst der* Nation 2, no. 1 (n.d.): 2.

[105] First published as "Forsetzung des Expressionismus," in *Kunst Der Nation* 2, no. 7 (1 April 1934): 1; full text reproduced in Rabinbach and Gilman, *The Third Reich Sourcebook,* 487.

[106] Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle," in Holborn, *Republic to Reich*, 407; Nungesser, "Das bildnirische Werk im Überblick," in Donhuijsen, *Otto Andreas Schreiber*, 16-17. Other than Alois Schardt, Schreiber's position was shared by nationally esteemed, respected art historians and museum directors, such as Ludwig Justi (Berlin) and Max Sauerlandt (Hamburg).

[107] Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle," in Holborn, *Republic to Reich*, 408.

immediately appeal to the vast majority of "lay observers" is the fact that it has not yet passed its formative stage and needed more time in order to find a common language with the German people.[108] Other contributors to the journal, however, were much less diplomatic in their assessment of the unresponsive public. A German painter, gallery owner, and art dealer Hans Pels-Leusden, for instance, proclaimed that "a tremendous educational effort is required to make people mature enough to understand an art which is far ahead of its time" and suggests that "It is not the artist who must descend to the level of the people and adjust himself to fit the more primitive demands of the public, but the artistic sensibility of the people must be raised to such a level that they are able to follow the artist into the true and sublime sphere of art […]."[109]

Although it might appear like for the pro-modernist fraction Expressionism represents the pinnacle of German art, in another programmatic *Kunst der Nation* article "Do We Young Painters Have a New Artistic Ideal?" published on November 1, 1933, Schreiber admits that the epoch of Expressionism is dying out, and a new generation of artists is on the rise.[110] He believed that the shift between Expressionism and a new kind of national art needed not to happen dialectically; rather, echoing the traditionalist argument of his *völkish* opponents, Schreiber suggested that artists of the new generation should attend to those traits of German art that remained constant throughout the ages *and* were effectively relayed by the Expressionists. Furthermore, pitting formal innovation against tradition, Schreiber claimed that the artists of the new generation "aren't the types to be taken in tow by any single painter, neither past nor present, nor by any school, any 'style'; they are consciously autonomous in the [formal] advances they make so that painting itself can be advanced."[111] The advancement of painting, in turn, required input both from "high-quality expressionists" and "high-quality classicists or naturalists." [112]

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[108] "Forsetzung des Expressionismus," 1.
[109] "So muß eine gewaltige Erziehungsarbeit einsetzen, um das Volk für das Verständnis einer ihrer Zeit (die obendrein in den Begriffen der flachsten Kunstperiode Deutschlands überhaupt steckt) weit vorauseilenden Kunst reif zu machen. Nicht der Künstler muß zum Volk heruntersteigen und seine Ansprüche den primitiveren Ansprüchen des Publikums angleichen, sondern der Kunstsinn der Menschen muß auf ein solches Niveau gehoben werden, daß sie imstande sind, dem Künstler in die wahre und erhabene Kunstsphäre zu folgen und auch schwierigere Pfade nicht zu scheuen, die das Höchste manchmal beschreitet." "Hans Pels-Leusden, Um die Zukunft der deutschen Kunst," *Kunst der Nation*, no. 16 (2 August 1934): 1.
[110] Otto Andreas Schreiber, "Haben wie jungen Maler ein neues Kusntideal?" *Kust der Nation* (1 November 1933): 6.
[111] Schreiber, "Haben wie jungen Maler ein neues Kusntideal?" 6.
[112] Otto-Andreas Schreiber, "Stil?" *Kunst der Nation*, no. 8, (April 15, 1934): 4.

In "Do We Young Painters Have a New Artistic Ideal?" Schreiber reiterated that emergent National Socialist art needed not to settle on one specific stylistic idiom: many different artistic genres and pictorial languages could achieve the desired effect, which was to "express a heroic ideal," a "pure racial form" in a "monumental" way.[113] Schreiber's alleged acceptance of different pictorial languages might produce an impression that, as Jonathan Petropoulos suggests, "They [the *NSD-Studentenbund* members] were open-minded in the sense that they saw multiple aesthetic styles as fitting into the new Reich […]."[114] In reality, however, heir thinking was purely strategic: at this point in the debate over modernism, it already became clear that the National Socialist state would never adopt Expressionism as its official style. Therefore, the pro-modernists argued for stylistic pluralism and openness, rather than advocating for one specific artistic movement or style of representation.

Moreover, the organization's own pro-modernist agenda was very selective: for example, while the *NSD-Studentenbund* members championed German Expressionism, they staunchly dismissed French Impressionism. When in 1933, Schreiber cofounded "The Ring of German Artists" in order to rally the support of practicing artists for their pro-modernist cause, they chose a telling motto: "Against French Aesthetics – For a Nativist German Art."[115] As mentioned at the beginning of this section, this was due to the distinction between Germanic and Mediterranean cultures made notably by contributing authors of *Kunst der Nation.* Therefore, despite their many disagreements with the *völkish* position on art, *Studentbund'*s own aesthetic discourse was, in many ways, just as rigid, rejoining Rosenberg in his rejection of Impressionism.

Another indication of Schreiber's search for balance between pro-modernist and conservative conceptions of the visual arts is provided in "Painters, Artists, and Dilettantes: After the Opening of the Reich Chamber of Culture" – a response to Goebbels's inaugural speech at the Philharmonic Hall in Berlin. In this text, Schreiber expressed the hope that not only would the Reich Chamber of Culture curb the conservatives' influence on artistic discourse, but that this new state institution would also separate "the modernist wheat from the modernist chaff," implying that there were two different *kinds* of modernism practiced in his time – the good and

[113] Schreiber, "Haben wie jungen Maler ein neues Kusntideal?," 6.
[114] Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler*, 29.
[115] Paret, *An Artist Against the Third Reich*, 63.

the bad.[116] Schreiber did not mention any concrete measures that *RKK* should deploy to this effect or quality criteria that it had to impose on cultural products, emphasizing instead the active role that the artists themselves had to play in the Third Reich. Schreiber sought to lead by example: a practicing artist himself, he also assumed an active role of a cultural mediator, relaying Goebbels's speech in a way to convince the journal readership of the trust that the state placed in artists to create an art that would be in harmony with the racial nature of the German *Völk*.[117]

In "Painters, Artists, and Dilettantes," Schreiber also discussed the "inauthentic" use of certain representational strategies both by Impressionists *and* Expressionists (without stating the names of the artists he was referring to):

> As an impressionist, he employs violet shadows, and the dissolution of contour and light, as if it was a learnable vocabulary. As an expressionist, he uses distortion repeatedly, because he knows that a layperson cannot easily tell distortion from an effective enhancement of forms. […] His works are, in the worst sense, 'technical' and 'impersonal,' shamelessly offering themselves to the public.[118]

Schreiber seems to concede the *völkish* fraction by accusing certain unnamed artists of adopting modernist pictorial strategies such as the distortion of form and the clashing colors out of "secret lack of painting skills" in those who claimed to be "misunderstood geniuses" or their desire to follow a fashion and please a specific audience. Upon closer reading, however, it becomes clear that although in "Painters, Artists, and Dilettantes" Schreiber discussed only Impressionism and Expressionism, he scorned artistic conventions in general; his words might even be interpreted as a piece of cautionary advice to the new state about imposing any formal controls on creative expression.

*Architectural and technical subjects painting in* Kunst der Nation

The previous section provided a broad overview of *Studentenbund's* pro-modernist aesthetic agenda, as presented by their spokesman Otto Andreas Schreiber and other *Kunst der*

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[116] Otto Andreas Schreiber, "Maler, Artisten, Dilettanten. Nach der Eröffnunf der Reichskulturkammer," *Kunst der Nation*, no. 1 (1 December 1933): 1.
[117] Schreiber, "Maler, Artisten, Dilettanten," 1.
[118] Schreiber, "Maler, Artisten, Dilettanten," 1.

*Nation* authors. Given the focus of the next two chapters on architectural and technical subjects painting, it is worth briefly considering ideas on modern architecture and technology presented in Schreiber's periodical. Combining the *blut-und-boden* racialist view of the land with a positive outlook on urban and technological development, *Kunst der Nation* may be said to have promoted architectural landscape and technical subjects painting as forms of "new" national art.

For Schreiber, relying on past or current artistic models was deemed insufficient; another important and more direct source of knowledge for the new national art was the German soil itself. Once again, his appeal to the indestructible blood bond that every German artist allegedly had with their native landscape echoed the *blut-und-boden* philosophy of his *völkish* rivals. In his programmatic text „Do we young artists have an artistic ideal?", Schreiber returned time and again to the trope of the native landscape as an ultimate inspiration for new German art, distinct from the art of the past: "From their native landscapes, they [the new generation of artists] shall develop new paintings and sculptures that are set in contrast to the past artistic intentions. With a sense of justice, they distinguish between the artists of the past and the artistic efforts of their own time period."[119]

It is important to specify, however, that the pro-modernist contributors to *Kunst der Nation* did not partake in the cult of peasantry and agrarianism to the same extent as their conservative counterparts. For authors such as Gert Theunissen, the notion of "native landscape" included both the rural and the urban, both nature and what their *völkish* opponents have disparagingly dubbed "asphalt culture," both architectural development of the cities and the cultivation of land. In "Erziehung zur Stadt," Theunissen also argued that modern German architecture that was being constructed in the cities was as much rooted in the "native landscape" as vernacular wooden huts of the countryside.[120] To illustrate his ideas, Theunissen chose a photograph of a smoking *Ruhrgebiet* factory taken in 1930 by W. Fitzenthaler. Similarly, for Paul Klopfer, German architecture drew inspiration directly from the natural environment; it sought to resolve the opposition between man-made structures and organic forms, while the visual arts – painting and sculpture – played the role of mediators in this process.[121] In fact,

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[119] Schreiber, "Haben wie jungen Maler ein neues Kusntideal?," 6.
[120] Gert Theunissen, "Erziehung zur Stadt," *Kunst der Nation*, no. 15 (January 15, 1934): 1.
[121] "Für die Malerei und die Plastik, wie auch für die tönenden Künste ist der Begriff 'Natur' leicht zu verstehen – nicht so für die Baukunst, die in ihr nicht das unmittelbare Vorbild sieht – dennoch besteht zwischen ihr und der Natur kein grundsätzlicher Gegensatz: die schöpferische Produktivität des Menschen entwickelt sich in und aus der

Alfred Partikel even declared that nature as a pictorial motif could not be considered a "landscape" per se unless it was somehow transformed by human creativity and productive labor.[122] In the sense of *Kunst der Nation* authors, "native landscape" had to include either buildings – ideally, modernist buildings that communicated a sense of technological progress – or some sort of technical equipment.[123] Artists reproduced in *Kunst der Nation* between 1933 and 1935 that explored these themes included Max Beckmann, Erich Heckel, and Franz Xaver Fuhr.

*Schreiber's Factory Exhibitions and the path of structural integration*

Unlike *DKG, NSD-Studentenbund* had the support of the Minister of Propaganda from the very beginning. When in July 1933, Schreiber organized the "Thirty German Artists" exhibition at the Ferdinand Möller Gallery in Berlin showcasing the leading German Expressionists, it was aggressively attacked by Rosenberg in *Völkischer Beobachter,* as well as in *DKG* publications, and, as a consequence, was closed by the interior minister Wilhelm Frick.[124] However, Nolde and Barlach remained on display until Rosenberg intervened directly with the Minister of Propaganda.[125]

Furthermore, even though Goebbels's support for expressionist artists and pro-modernist interest groups eventually met Hitler's disapproval, he still assisted the *NSD-Studentenbund*

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Produktivität der Natur." Paul Klopfer, "Architekturgeschichte oder Architekturwissenschaft?," *Kunst der Nation,* no. 23 (1934): 1.

[122] "Das sogenannte 'Motiv' ist noch keine 'Landschaft.' Der Begriff 'Landschaft' schließt mehr in sich, als blauen Himmel, grünen Strauch, rotes Dach usw. In der Landschaft ruht: Das Werden und Vergehen der sichtbaren Natur in Verbindung mit dem Menschen. Das ist die tiefere Bedeutung der Landschaft überhaupt. Geistige Einstellung zur Landschaft und handwerkliches Können müssen sich parallel zueinander fortentwickeln und doch eins sein. Ohne die beiderseitige Verflechtung gleicht die Arbeit einem Gewebe ohne Kette."
Alfred Partikel, "Gedanken über die Landschaftsmalerei," *Kunst der Nation,* no.1 (January 1, 1934): 2.

[123] A contributing author to *Kunst der Nation* hiding behind the initials N. M. writes that the artistic value of architecture rests on its ability to convey technological progress: "Wurde sie zwar in der Folgezeit durch den Historismus überwuchert – nicht unterdrückt –, so entstand sie um die letzte Jahrhundertwende durch den reinigenden Geist der Technik in neu gereifter Klarheit. ... Um 1780 verdichtete sich das antike Erbgut zu neuem abendländischen Stilpathos, begründete eine lange Entwicklung, die getragen wurde von den Ideen des Zwecks, des Fortschritts, der Ökonomie, der Schönheit, und ihre wertvollste Prägung in der Architektur fand." N.M., "Architekturschicksal," *Kunst der Nation,* no. 23 (1934): 2 ; *Kunst der Nation* articles that praised modernist, often industrial architecture also include Paul Bonatz, "Moderne Industriebauten – zu den neuen Arbeiten der Architekten Schupp und Kremmer," *Kunst der Nation,* no. 2 (November 5, 1933): 2; "Brücke und Turme," *Kunst der Nation,* no. 9 (May 1, 1934): 1; Hans Eckstein, "Neue Postbauten in München und Bayern - Tradition und Modernität im Bauen," *Kunst der Nation,* no. 11, (June 1, 1934): 1-3.

[124] For an overview of the exhibition in *Kunst der Nation,* see E.R.Satz, "Dreißig Deutsche Künstler," *Kunst der Nation,* no. 14, (July 2, 1933): 4; Michael Tymkiw, *Nazi Exhibition,* 89.

[125] Jean-Michel Palmier, *Weimar in Exile: The Antifascist Emigration in Europe and America*, trans. David Fernbach (London & New York: Verso, 2006), n.p.

members in finding administrative positions within his ministry and other party organizations. Thus, Goebbels sought out a *Studentenbund*-affiliated art critic and painter Hans Wiedemann to help him build up his Ministry, and Wiedemann, in his turn, hired Schreiber for the position of an *Abteilungsleiter* (departmental manager) of the Cultural Office at the *Kraft durch Freude* (*KdF,* Strength through Joy), the cultural institution in charge of the worker-focused leisure programs at *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* (German Labor Front).[126] In this capacity, endorsed by Weidemann and Goebbels, between 1933 and 1939, Schreiber organized some thirty-five hundred *Fabrikausstellungen* or factory exhibitions of modern art, each offering on average ninety prints by lesser-known Expressionist or Versit artists for viewing or sale.[127]

These events allowed Schreiber to position himself both inside and outside of the cultural establishment. On the one hand, they were legitimate, state-supported events with *Gau* (administrative regions or districts) of each city providing administrative help and staff. [128] On the other, Schreiber characterized these shows as a "wasp in the rear of the organization."[129] But even Rosenberg was unable to prevent them from happening because technically *KdF* was an independent body within the National Socialist state that enjoyed relative independence from the Party line, and because of the long-brewing animosities between Rosenberg and the head of the Labor Front – Robert Ley.[130] In other words, *Fabrikausstellungen* demonstrate how Schreiber effectively took advantage of rival hierarchies, competing organizations, and internal divisions within the National Socialist state to advance his pro-modernist agenda.

Similarly, on the one hand, Schreiber relied on Weidemann's support and a legitimate position within *KdF* to defend himself against the attacks of the *völkish* fraction and continue his advocacy of Expressionism. But on the other, he actually made efforts to accommodate the more

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[126] Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler,* 32; Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle," in Holborn, *Republic to Reich*, 404.
[127] Donhuijsen, *Otto Andreas Schreiber* (2015), 145; Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle," in Holborn, *Republic to Reich*, 410-411; Tymkiw, *Nazi Exhibition*, 74. (on p. 258, Tymkiw also provides a list of artists exhibited at earliest *Fabrikausstellung* that were connected to either Expressionism and/or Verismn: Hans Friedrich Groß, Wilhelm Heise, Alfred Kubin, Max Mayrshofer, Hans Meid, Adolf Schinnerer, Fritz Winkler, Alexander Kanoldt, Max Unold)
[128] Tymkiw, *Nazi Exhibition*, 76.
[129] "Aus einem Brief an Otto Pankok, in dem Schreiber 30 Drucke eines Selbstbildnisses von Pankok für die Ausstellungen anfordert, hält ein Bericht der Gestapo Düsseldorf fest, dass Schreiber seine neue Tätigkeit als 'Wespe im Hintern der Organisation' charakterisiert." Donhuijsen, *Otto Andreas Schreiber* (2015), 145.
[130] Donhuijsen, *Otto Andreas Schreiber* (2015), 145.; On Alfred Rosenberg and his conflicts with other leading Nazis see Reinhard Bollmus, *Das Amt Rosenberg unde seine Gegner* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Austalt, 1970).

conservative line of the *völkish* camp.[131] He went as far as to join Rosenberg's conservative League for German Culture, allegedly, to represent the pro-modernist fraction in this conservative organization. Likewise, when Rosenberg published a vehement response to Schreiber's anti-*völkish* Humboldt University speech in *Völkischer Beobachter* denouncing him as a "cultural Otto Strasser,"[132] Schreiber was quick to give "his word of honor […] that the student youth […] are not attacking his [Rosenberg's] personal views on art."[133] In an effort to come to an agreement with those less sympathetic to modernism Schreiber also excluded prominent controversial figures such as Nolde and Schmidt-Rottluff from his factory exhibitions and included artists admired by Hitler, such as Edmund Steppers and Fritz Erler.[134]

To conclude, *NSD-Studentenbund* provided young artists like Schreiber with an institutional platform to express their pro-modernist ideas, challenging the cultural policy. The leadership of its Berlin chapter allowed Schreiber to jump-start his political career and forge strategic alliances with high-ranking Party officials. In an effort to influence the official discourse on art, Schreiber managed to walk the fine line between accommodating and antagonizing his *völkish* opponents, navigated competing agendas, and exploited uncertain chains of command that permeated National Socialist institutions. Ultimately, Schreiber's example demonstrates that, although pro-modernist *NSD-Studentenbund* members tended to disagree with some of the state's cultural policies, they never came into direct conflict with the party line on broader ideological questions but diplomatically looked for points of contact with the National Socialist regime.

**Conclusion**

As the examples of the German Art Society and the National Socialist Students' Association demonstrate, upon Hitler's coming to power, German artists were not prevented from participating in debates over culture altogether. Interest groups and student organizations

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[131] Both Tymkiw, *Nazi exhibition*, 81-84 and Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler*, 3 believe that Schreiber managed to balance his advocacy of Expressionism with the need to "accommodate" the more conservative ideas of the *völkish* camp, but do not provide any concrete examples. In the two preceding sections, I discuss specific points of the pro-modernist aesthetic agenda advanced in *Kunst der Nation* that confirm this hypothesis.

[132] *Völkischer Beobachter*, July 14, 1933, quoted in Merker, *Die bildenden Künste im Nationalsozialismus,* 133. Otto Strasser was the leader of the left-wing ("national-Bolshevik") fraction of the *NSDAP*, expelled from the Party by Hitler in 1930.

[133] *Deutsche Allegemeine Zeitung* (14 July, 1933), quoted in Brenner, "Art in the Political Power Struggle of 1933 and 1934," in Holborn, *Republic to Reich,* 406.

[134] Tymkiw, *Nazi exhibition*, 83; Scholz, "Otto Andreas Schreiber," in Blume and Scholz, *Überbrückt,* 104.

played a significant role in mediating the diverging positions that the Third Reich inherited from the Weimar years of burgeoning cultural life. Their exhibitions and publications provided discussion spaces within which the "new" German style of art could be worked out collectively. Both the pro-modernist and the *völkisch* artists – fractions whose views on art were significantly different – exploited the same climate of cultural uncertainty that characterized the first few years of the new regime, each offering their services to the state, showcasing works that they believed best embodied its spirit and contributing to the emerging National Socialist discourse on culture with their theoretical writings. At the same time, their leaders and representatives competed for the state's attention and actively sought to integrate themselves into its administrative apparatus, seeing alliance with the Party as a chance to realize their respective agendas.

But the destiny of the two artistic camps discussed in this chapter was far from similar. Over the course of 1934 and through the summer of 1937, the pro-modernist position represented by Schreiber was increasingly pushed to the periphery. Alfred Rosenberg was appointed director of the "Office for the Supervision of the Entire Cultural and Ideological Education and Training of the *NSDAP*," and the conservative agenda of the *völkish* fraction had been institutionalized. Nevertheless, by that turning point in the debate over culture, both the German Art Society members and those of *NSD-Studentenbund* had already managed to secure positions of influence within various National Socialist organizations, enabling affiliated or supported artists to participate in Germany's cultural life. And although the impact of the German Art Society on the official cultural policy and exhibition practices was more pronounced, Otto Andreas Schreiber's efforts to reconcile Expressionism and National Socialism cannot be neglected. Schreiber's achievements in providing a voice and an exhibition platform to many modernist German artists appear even more substantial given the climate increasingly hostile to all variants of artistic modernism. Standing his ground to the conservative opposition, Schreiber had – even if for a time – pushed the boundaries of acceptable artistic expression, thus increasing the variety of forms that the Reference Value for compliant art can take.

My next chapter will show that the impact of public debates between the *völkish* and the pro-modernist camps had a lasting effect on aesthetic choices made by practicing German artists even after the conflict was settled by the state. Richard Gessner, whose life and career under

National Socialism will be examined in the following pages, was a painter of technical subjects who never belonged to either the German Art Society or the National Socialist Students' League. And yet, we will see that on his path to accommodate state demands and cater to its Nazification efforts, he still felt compelled to balance the *völkish* and the pro-modernist aesthetic agendas, the public and the corporate interests, as well as conflicting trends in the National Socialist technical thought.

## Chapter 3

## Richard Gessner: A Case Study of Artistic Compliance

In the two previous chapters, I have laid out the principles of a social-psychological approach to authority relations in the Third Reich, expanded on its structural and aesthetic components, and described divisions within the National Socialist leadership and artists' interest groups that interfered with cultural coordination, allowing for a more dynamic understanding of artistic compliance. This chapter provides insights into the ways in which creative professionals willing to accommodate the regime navigated the uncertain cultural climate under Hitler. It focuses on the life and work of Richard Gessner (1894 - 1989) – a German artist who emerged as an avant-garde landscape painter in the Weimar Republic, explored the themes of industry, technology, nature, and popular festivities, and experienced renewed professional success under National Socialism. (Fig. 1)

Gessner was born in 1894 in the city of Augsburg in a banker family, but in 1904 his family moved to Düsseldorf. In 1913, Gessner entered the Düsseldorf Academy of Arts, where he studied painting under Leo Spatz and Max Clarenbach. In 1915, he went on a three-year hiatus to become a war-artist in Macedonia. In 1918 he resumed his education at the Academy and became an active member of the Düsseldorf avant-garde circles, namely an artistic association *Das Junge Rheinland*, discussed further in this chapter. Upon Hitler's coming to power Gessner became a willing participant who accepted the regulations established by the National Socialist government but also profited significantly from the sale of his paintings to the highest state officials, including Hermann Göring, Albert Speer, Walter Funk, and Adolf Hitler himself. His paintings were exhibited at some of the most important state-funded exhibitions, such as *Lob der Arbeit* (1936), *Strassen Adolf Hitlers* (1936), *and Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung* (1937-1944). His contribution to German art under National Socialism was recognized with two prestigious prizes – the *Albrecht-Dürer-Preis* from the city of Nüremberg in 1937 and the *Cornelius Preis* from the city of Düsseldorf in 1941.[1]

[1] Stadt Archiv Nürnberg, F2: Stadtchronik, Bd. 47, 163; Otto Albert Schneider, "Der Cornelius-Preis für Malerei und Plastik 1941 – Gemälde und Plastiken im Kunstverein," *Düsseldorfer Nachrichten* 18 (Mai 1941): n.p.

Scholarly literature on Gessner is meager. There exists only one monography on the artist – *Richard Gessner. Monographie und Werkverzeichnis*, published in 1994 with introductory essays by two German specialists of Rhinish avant-garde art: Karl Ruhrberg and Friedrich Wilhelm Heckmanns.[2] While the former jumps from "the cheerful, colorful, relaxed impressions of the early years" to "the astonishing constructive-geometric fantasies of the late period," the latter traces the history of a single painting by Gessner – *Paris bei Nacht* (1924-1926), currently in the collection of *Kunstpalast*, Düsseldorf. Thus, both introductory essays glance over Gessner's work between 1933 and 1945, the period of his career when he pursued accommodation with the National Socialist regime. All other contributions to the volume follow their lead: Siegfried Kessemeier focuses on one of Gessner's postwar industrial paintings *Feierabend* (1949), Astrid Schunck surveys his graphic works from the 1920s, and a second article by Heckmanns discusses Gessner's colorful travel aquarelles produced in the 1920s and later in the 1970s. Two biographical texts in *Monographie und Werkverzeichnis* were contributed by the artist's spouse Sigrun Gessner. She portrays him as a well-traveled intellectual, integrated into the Rhinish avant-garde circles, who retreated to his countryside atelier upon Hitler's coming to power. Although these essays contain important biographical information, they have been produced by a member of Gessner's family and his estate holder, which puts their objectivity and completeness into question.

A similar approach to Gessner's oeuvre is reflected in various postwar exhibitions. The exhibition that took place from March 12 to May 12, 1984, at the Remmert and Barth Gallery in Düsseldorf on the occasion of Gessner's ninetieth anniversary included only the artist's earlier works – paintings and prints produced between the beginning of Gessner's study at the Düsseldorf Art Academy in 1913 and Hitler's appointment as chancellor in 1933.[3] In a short biography provided in the catalogue, Gessner's activity between 1933 and 1945 is reduced to four events: two exhibitions of his work at the Nierendorf Gallery in Berlin in 1933 and 1935, the reception of the Albrecht Dürer Prize from the city of Nuremberg in 1937 and the artist's residence at Schloß Kalkum near Düsseldorf from 1937 to 1945.[4] C.G. Boerner's commercial

[2] Friedrich W. Heckmanns and Karl Ruhrberg eds., *Richard Gessner. Monographie und Werkverzeichnis* (Köln: Wienand Verlag, 1994).
[3] *Richard Gessner zum 90. Geburtstag. Frühe Werke*, introduction by Dr. Peter Barth (Remmert und Barth Gallery, Düsseldorf, March 13 – May 12, 1984), exhibition catalogue.
[4] *Richard Gessner zum 90*, n.p.

exhibition of Gessner's works that took place in 1990 is even more narrow in range: the catalogue only includes artworks produced between 1913 and 1924, with the artist's short biographical entries ending in 1926 and resuming in 1989.[5] An exhibition of Gessner's paintings that took place at Galerie Vömel in Düsseldorf in 1970 presents paintings produced by Gessner in the Weimar years, specifically between 1920 and 1927, and those created after Hitler's demise, between 1948 and1969.[6] Gessner's interim years are represented with one single oil painting – *Schloßpark Kalkum* (1938) and described as follows by Rolf Bongs: "1937-1945. Residence at Schloß Kalkum near Düsseldorf. Images of the castle and park landscapes. Main theme 'the Ruhr area.'"[7] Bongs' description sustains the biased view that the artist led a reclusive life during the National Socialist period and painted mostly lyrical views of his countryside residence. The portrayal of Gessner as a painter of innocuous landscapes represents an attempt to absolve the artist of any complicity or voluntary involvement with the National Socialist regime, a strategy associated with the concept of "inner emigration."

The term "inner emigration" was coined by a German novelist Frank Theiss to describe the moral and political standing of intellectual and creative professionals opposed to Hitler's government, who nevertheless chose to remain in Germany after he had seized power in 1933 and continue their careers.[8] These artists, writers, and musicians allegedly sought to withdraw from contemporary cultural life and produce deliberately "non-topical" work that was removed in content and style from the Party's undertakings. In the realm of the visual arts, landscape painting was the genre that both attracted inner immigrants and was tolerated by the National Socialist regime. Thus, the New Objectivity painter Otto Dix famously describes his experience of inner immigration as "hav[ing] been *banished* to landscape painting," to both connote the apolitical nature of his work under National Socialism and sustain the romanticized image of a reprimanded artist, despite finding common ground with Hitler's regime.[9] Although Gessner indeed produced many poetic paintings of his atelier in Schloß Kalkum and its surrounding

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[5] *Richard Gessner: Frühe Druckgraphik 1913-1924* (Düsseldorf: Boerner, 1990), exhibition catalogue.
[6] *Richard Gessner*, preface by Rolf Bongs (Galerie Vömel, Düsseldorf, 1970), exhibition catalogue.
[7] "Wohnsitz im Schloß Kalkum bei Düsseldorf. Schloßbilder und Parklandschaften. Hauptthema 'Das Ruhrgebiet,'" *Biographische Notizen*, in Bongs, *Richard Gessner*, n. p.
[8] For an historiographic and critical overview of the concept of "inner emigration," including a discussion of Theiss see H.R. Klieneberger, "The 'Innere Emigration:' A Disputed Issue in Twentieth-Century German Literature," *Monatshefte* 57, no. 4 (1965): 171-180; Jost Hermand, *Culture in Dark Times. Nazi Fascism, Inner Emigration, and Exile*, trans.Victoria W. Hill (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013), 157.
[9] Quoted in Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler*, 177.

nature between 1933 and 1945, this chapter will demonstrate that reducing his artistic production to these types of images would be inaccurate. We will also see that he was an active participant rather than a passive observer of the cultural life in the Third Reich. And even if we decide to agree for a moment with authors who portray Gessner as an inner immigrant, critics of the concept like the German writer Thomas Mann would see his disengagement as renunciation, escapism, and compliance, rather than Theiss's "resistance through detachment."[10]

Cursory references to Gessner can be found in the literature on the twentieth-century Rhinish avant-garde circles, notably in relation to the artistic association *Das Junge Rheinland*, addressed further on in this chapter.[11] However, if discussions of more famous members, including Arthur Kaufmann, Adolf Uzarski, or Gert Wollheim, found in *DJR* literature often extend into the National Socialist period, Gessner's faith in the Third Reich is never addressed. Similarly, Gessner is sometimes mentioned in biographies and exhibition catalogues of his more well-known contemporaries, such as Werner Peiner, Otto Pankok, and Wilhelm Schmurr, but receives only a cursory treatment.[12]

Primary material on Gessner is also scarce, and that, for several reasons. First of all, many archival documents were destroyed in the havoc of World War II, and so were many of Gessner's artworks. Second, Gessner was able to escape persecution in the aftermath of Germany's defeat and continued practicing visual arts, receiving commissions from Rhinish industrialists, and exhibiting his work. His family estate avoids contact with researchers and enforces privacy restrictions on documents in their possession. One can presume that the reason for limiting access to Gessner's personal records might be the stigma associated with the collaboration and compliance of creative professionals under Hitler. This factor also comes into play when reaching out to large industrialists and construction companies who commissioned

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[10] Ron Theodore Robin, *The Barbed-Wire College: Reeducating German POWs in the United States During World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[11] See for example Dr. Wieland Koenig ed, *Das Junge Rheinland. Eine Friedensidee* (Düsseldorf, Stadtmuseum der Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf, 1988); Ulrich Krempel ed., *Am Anfang, Das Junge Rheinland: zur Kunst- und Zeitgeschichte einer Region, 1918-1945* (Düsseldorf: Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, 1985), exhibition catalogue; Susanne Anna and Annette Baumeister eds., *Das Junge Rheinland : Vorläufer, Freunde, Nachfolger*, preface by Susanne Anna (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2006).

[12] See for example Otto Pankok Gesellschaft, Bernhardt Mensch and Karin Stempel eds., *Otto Pankok, 1893-1966: Retrospektive zum 100. Geburtstag* (Oberhausen: Plitt Verlag, 1993); Dieter Pesch and Martin Pesch, *Werner Peiner - Verführer oder Verführter: Kunst des Dritten Reichs* (Hamburg: Disserta Verlag, 2014); Vera Bachmann and Bernd Ernsting, *"Alles Große ist still und ernst": Der Maler Wilhelm Schmurr. Biographie und Werkverzeichnis* (Cologne: LETTER Stiftung, 2009).

Gessner's works in this period, such as Thyssen, Shell, and Holzmann. Publicly accessible archival materials are preserved primarily in Düsseldorf (*Stadtarchiv Düsseldorf, Kunstakademie Düsseldorf*) and Berlin (*Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde*). Documents pertaining to the years between 1933 and 1945 include sensitive material: his 1933 application for *NSDAP* membership and records of Gessner's self-fashioning in the period, namely a handwritten curriculum vitae from October 1941. In one of her biographical texts, Sigrun Gessner also mentions that her spouse disliked corresponding in writing and preferred communicating by telephone. Whether this was a matter of fondness for technology or a well-thought-through strategic decision to reduce a traceable imprint during an uncertain time, this also diminishes the pool of available primary documents.

The three most important archival sources shedding light on Gessner's progressive alignment with the National Socialist regime are to be found in Munich: the so-called "artist's cards" conserved at the *Haus der Kunst* archive (*HDK*, former *Haus der Deutscher Kunst*, House of German Art); records of delivery for artworks submitted to the Great German Art Exhibition from the Bavarian State Archive; and exhibition catalogues of the Great German Art Exhibition found at the Central Institute for Art History. Gessner's artist's card contains serial numbers of artworks he had submitted to the Great German Art Exhibitions between 1938 and 1944. (Appendix) Numbers are written down by hand and bear different markings: encircled items represent accepted pieces, while the crossed-out signify rejection decisions. Since artist cards do not contain any actual titles, I have consulted the *HDK* delivery records at the Bavarian State Archive to identify artworks that corresponded to these serial numbers.[13] These registry books acknowledge receipt of specific titles accepted for the Great German Art exhibitions and assign

[13] *GDK* 1941: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Malerei, (Nr. 4001-4535), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 173, BayHStA; *GDK* 1941: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Graphik, (Nr. 2001-3583), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 174, BayHStA; *GDK* 1941: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Plastik, (Nr. 1-1376), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 175, BayHStA; *GDK* 1942: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Malerei, (Nr. 1-2000), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 176, BayHStA; *GDK* 1943: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Malerei, (Nr. 1-2000), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 177, BayHStA; *GDK* 1943: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Malerei, (Nr. 2001-3326), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 178, BayHStA; *GDK* 1943: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Graphik, (Nr. 1-2001), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 179, BayHStA; *GDK* 1943: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Graphik, (Nr. 2001-3044), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 180, BayHStA; *GDK* 1943: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Plastik, (Nr. 1-1313), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 181, BayHStA; *GDK* 1944: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Malerei, (Nr. 1-2000), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 182, BayHStA;*GDK* 1944: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Malerei, (Nr. 1-2000, Kladde), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 183, BayHStA; *GDK* 1944: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Malerei, (Nr. 2001-2392), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 184, BayHStA; *GDK* 1944: Einlieferungsverzeichnis Malerei, (Nr. 2001-2392, Kladde, unvollständig), Haus der Deutschen Kunst 185, BayHStA.

them the serial numbers later inscribed onto the artist's card. With these three types of archival records, I was able to ascertain the titles of Gessner's artworks accepted for each exhibition, determine the general and the yearly acceptance rates for Gessner, and arrive at meaningful conclusions concerning the development of his artistic career under National Socialism.[14] For instance, we see that the acceptance ratio peaks in 1940: Gessner submitted a total of five paintings to the Great German Art Exhibition that year, and all five of them were accepted. We can also conclude that the regime did not find Gessner's graphic works suitable for the exhibition since only two out of thirteen graphic works were put on display.

Finally, I explored Gessner's network of acquaintances and social contacts, as well as the reception of his work in the National Socialist press. I also examined his artworks in detail, insofar as their iconography, formal and stylistic properties speak to the development of Gessner's artistic career under National Socialism better than any written records. The study of all these sources has led me to conclude that unlike many of his friends and colleagues, Gessner had no allegiance to any specific political ideas. This non-allegiance allowed him to create a broader network of strategic acquaintances. Depending on the particular historical moment, Gessner was able to either integrate with his progressive, socially critical peers or mobilize his connections to more conservative cultural figures. Gessner's loyalties and style of representation changed significantly throughout his artistic career so that it is possible to separate it into four distinct periods: the early avant-garde years, "the crossroads," National-Socialist accommodation, and the post-war return to abstraction. We will also see that despite the marked differences in the visual language, Gessner's dedication to technical subjects – industrial painting and images of construction sites – remained a constant in this turbulent period of German history.

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[14] Some observations were less relevant for this specific research, but nevertheless reveal important information about the organizational aspects of *GDK*. For instance, when comparing the titles in my list of accepted submissions against the official exhibition catalogues, I found several discrepancies which may signify last-minute changes to the display, i.e. unregistered decisions to add or replace artworks for a specific exhibition. For instance, according to the registry, Gessner's oil painting entitled *Hüttenwerk* was to be exhibited along with three others of his works at the 1944 *GDK*. In the official exhibition catalogues, however, this painting has been replaced with two tempera pieces – *Die große Baugrube* and *Turbinengehäuse I* – that do not appear in Gessner's artist's card and *HDK* delivery records. Other observations produced important research leads that warrant further investigation, but excee the scope of this thesis. For example, according to Gessner's artist's card, he submitted a total of three sculptures to the 1944 exhibition, although there is no other evidence confirming Gessner's work in this medium. Since the 1944 catalogue does not list any sculptures by Gessner, all three have been rejected and it is therefore impossible to establish the titles of these works.

In the following sections, I will first define and trace the development of the genre Gessner came to specialize in – architectural and technical subjects painting – and broadly categorize his work according to the prevalent iconographic motifs and marked pictorial strategies. I will then discuss his early artistic pursuits within the Rhinish avant-garde circles and the various responses of its members to the National Socialist *Gleichschaltung* (emigration, resistance, accommodation). This section provides the context for a defining moment in Gessner's life, whereby he renounced his friendship with the defiant Otto Pankok to benefit from the compliant Werner Peiner's professional connections. The next three sections on the development of Gessner's career under National Socialism focus on his alignment strategies, the role of the National Socialist technical thought in his art, and his participation in the Great German Art Exhibitions (1937-1944).

**Richard Gessner and the technical subjects**

In the broadest sense, the category of technical subjects applies to all representations of work processes (with or without human subjects involved), sites, and equipment, ranging from weaving, plowing, or metalwork to industrial production and construction work. It is these two latter iconographic motifs that dominate Gessner's oeuvre. He has spent most years of his life carefully documenting the Ruhr region with its ever-expanding and ever-complexifying factory compounds, coal mines, refineries, and power plants. It is necessary to consider Gessner's work in relation to the development of the technical subjects painting in the West and specifically in Germany to identify possible effects of the regime change on his style and iconography.

According to Klaus Türk, technical subjects emerged within the larger category of landscape painting already in the 1770s with the increasing separation between agricultural and mechanized labor, craftsmanship and mass production.[15] In Germany, they developed into an independent genre in the 1830s, with paintings like Carl Blechen's *Rolling mill in Eberswalde* (1834) and Alfred Rethel's *Harkortsche Fabrik auf Burg Wetter* (1834) showcasing active industrial complexes using the pacifying visual language of traditional academic painting. (Fig. 2, 3) While the demand for idyllic Biedermeier-style landscape painting remained stable throughout the nineteenth century, artists' interest in more or less technically-accurate representations of industrial production grew, and so did their attention to the working conditions of factory

[15] Klaus Türk, *Bilder der Arbeit: Eine ikonografische Anthologie* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2000), 18.

workers. This new strand of realist images was produced by artists like Adolph Menzel, who owes his reputation to history paintings, and Max Liebermann, best known for his contribution to German Impressionism.

In Germany, commissions for technical subjects paintings came predominantly from large industrialists like the Krupp dynasty, who sponsored the first art exhibition dedicated exclusively to industrial painting. It took place in 1912 in the city of Essen to honor the 100th anniversary of Krupp Steelworks and included Menzel's seminal 1872-1875 painting of *The Iron Rolling Mill*.[16] (Fig. 4) In this painting, Menzel both praises the heroic labor of the German steelworkers and admires the new monumental structures erected for this purpose. At the beginning of the twentieth century, however, such idealizing and glorifying representations of industry were pitted against the socio-critical images produced by the avant-garde artists such as Käthe Kollwitz or Hans Baluschek.[17] (Fig. 5, 6) Not only did the avant-garde bring new themes to the broader category of technical subjects, but it also took them away from the stylistic conventions of academic landscape or genre painting. Exaggerated human form, abstracted architectural setting, crude expressionist linework captured the adverse effects of the industrialized economy on the working class.

Both these tendencies – the idealizing and the veristic one – inspired the development of technical subjects painting in the Ruhr-Rhein region, where Richard Gessner was born and brought up. Over the course of the nineteenth- and early-twentieth centuries, this predominantly rural region underwent rapid urbanization and industrialization. In the 1920s, the intensification of coal mining in the area led to a major construction boom, with smoke-belching factories, iron bridges, and an expansive railway network radically transforming the topography. German artists reflected on the ways in which the mechanization of labor affected human relations and new forms of architecture – transformed the living environment.

It is in this context that Gessner's interest in industrial painting emerged and developed into his specialization. His representations of the industry can be separated into four types:

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[16] Sabine Beneke and Hans Ottomeyer, "Zur Ausstellung," in *Die Industrie in der bildenden Kunst: Ausstellung vom 23. Juni bis 18. August 1912 im Kunstmuseum der Stadt Essen* (Essen: Freudebeuf und Koenen, 1912), 1, 31.
[17] Türk, *Bilder der Arbeit*, 21.

(1) Industrial cityscapes, such as his 1922 pastel *Industriestadt* or the 1923 painting *Hütte bei Nacht.* (Fig. 7, 8) Although in this type of images, distant smokestacks are often pushed to the background of working-class housing and bustling street activity, they dominate the city topography, structure its skyline, and envelop it in their fumes.

(2) Images of industrial compounds. While industrial cityscapes situate factories and rolling mills in their urban context, images of industrial compounds provide an exterior view of production facilities and administration buildings alone. *Zeche Rheinpreussen (Teerdestillation)* (1937) and *Niederrheinische Hütte* (1938) both feature shed-like structures, cooling towers, tanks, piping, and outdoors machinery that together constitute an industrial site. (Fig. 9, 10)

(3) Architectural "portraits." This category comprises images that provide a close-up view of individual components of a production site – pieces of equipment as well as individual buildings or fragments of buildings. *Der Hochöfen* (1939), for instance, is an image of a colossal oil refinery tower in clouds of saturated smoke, and *Anstrich einer Hydrieranlage* (1941) – that of glimmering hydrogeneration pipes. (Fig. 11, 12)

(4) Interior spaces where production processes take place rarely appear in Gessner's paintings, with the vast majority dating to the very beginning of his career (the mid-1910s) and towards its very end (1950s and 1960s). Such are *Hydraulische Presse (Rheinmetall)* (1915) featuring workers operating a hydraulic press machine at a steel mill and an image of a spacious and well-lit pipe-manufacturing facility *Röhrenwerk Lierenfeld* (1954). (Fig. 13, 14)

Another technical subject that captivated Gessner from the very beginning of his artistic career was construction. Just like industrial painting, images of the building process depict organized human labor, often performed with specialized tools and equipment, taking place on an allocated site. This technical subject falls within the broader category of architectural painting, but instead of representing finished structures, it captures the processes by which they come into being: transporting and preparing building materials, earthworks, framing, siding, roofing, etc. It includes both architectural projects and infrastructural development – construction of roads, railways, and bridges.

Images of building activity have a much longer history in western art than those of industrial production. According to Türk, this type of technical subject dates back to the Middle Ages and

proliferates during the Renaissance and Baroque periods.[18] He explains that while some images of construction, like Edward Rooker's *Part of the bridge at Blackfriars as it was in July 1766*, document real historical events, many others represent mythical or biblical scenes that involve some building activity. (Fig. 15) One of the most popular iconographic themes from this latter category is, of course, the construction of the Tower of Babel, an origin myth from Genesis that endows the act of erecting a building with deep symbolical meaning and prompts reflection on human hubris and divine providence.

Both documentary and allegorical images of construction portray coordinated collective labor that usually requires colossal material resources and organizational capacities. They, therefore, have a significant potential for the promotion of national unity and pride, as well as a strong capacity to project an image of economic prosperity. The National Socialist state effectively harnessed this potential as Adolf Hitler embarked on a massive, nation-wide building campaign. As numerous administration and residential buildings, as well as dams, autobahns, and railroads were being erected all over Germany, artists were called upon to document and glorify this process. Those who responded to the call included Erich Mercker, Carl Theodor Protzen, Ernst Vollbehr, and Walter Hemming, among others. But although production of construction images definitely intensified under National Socialism, it is important to note that Richard Gessner portrayed building sites already in the Weimar Republic. Gessner's case is therefore an example of compliance as convergence of interests between the artists and the state, as opposed to artists' response to state's demand for a specific type of images.

Gessner's representations of constriction sites can be separated into three categories:

(1) Construction activity at industrial sites. This is a hybrid category of technical subjects painting where building activity is set within the borders of an industrial compound. Single paintings like *Treibstoffwerk im Bau* (1936-1941) or *Kraftwerk Steyr* (1943) and entire series of paintings like *Bau des Ennstalkraftswerks I, II,* and *III* (1942) portray industrial architecture as monumental and ever-expanding. (Fig. 16, 17, 18) Whereas the first example zooms onto a piece of fuel-processing equipment, the second provides a wide-lens, birds-eye overview of the entire power station located in the Enns valley, central Austria.

[18] Türk, *Bilder der Arbeit*, 82-102.

(2) Images of other active construction sites. Gessner often documented identifiable building sites in Germany at different stages of development. Paintings like *Bau des Planetariums* (1925) *Bau der Rheinterrasse* (1926) that will be discussed in the following section, immortalize permanent structures designed by architect Dr. Wilhelm Kreis for *GeSoLei,* the largest trade fair of the Weimar Republic that took place in Düsseldorf in 1926. (Fig. 19a, 20) *Bau des Düsseldorf's Hauptbahnhofs* (1932) and *Bau der Autobahnbrücke über die Werra* (1935) capture major infrastructural development projects – the Düsseldorf train station and the bridge over a river in central Germany. (Fig. 21, 22)

(3) Building as allegory. In several important paintings by Richard Gessner, building activity stands for larger philosophical ideas. While the theme of *Turmbau zu Babel* (1922-29) is a well-established trope in Western art; *...und neues Leben blüht aus den Ruinen* (1942) is an architectural fantasy that does not refer to any specific building event, mythical or real, past or present. (Fig. 23, 60) It juxtaposes an identifiable ruinscape in the foreground with an unidentifiable new structure covered in scaffolding in the background to convey the idea of national regeneration.

In an interview with *Das Werk* published in 1940, Richard claimed to have been interested in technology very early in his life: "Already in my youth, I was particularly interested in technology, which was reflected in the fact that as a schoolboy I worked the lathe and the forge to build models of ships, blast furnaces, and mines. My earliest wish was to become an engineer." A pivotal experience that made him see technology in a new, aesthetic light was a visit to Hörder Bergwerks-und Hütten-Verein, a mining and ironworks company founded in 1852 in Dortmund (currently decommissioned): "It was only on the occasion of an experience of the Hörder Verein that I realized the tremendous *artistic* charm of technology. When I saw its blast furnaces and smelters, it affected me so much that it now became my ambition to experience and recreate these objects as a painter and a draftsman." Gessner prided himself on having committed to technical subjects early on in his artistic career and staying loyal to this genre for decades: "In 1913, I was about the only artist who painted exclusively industrial motifs. To this day, the mysticism of modern technology grips me." He concluded the interview with a resolute statement on the status of technical subjects in modern art: "I take it for granted that artists of the twentieth century cannot shut themselves off from the wonders of technology

and that they [the wonders of technology] must be represented on absolute par with any other motif."[19]

This interview reveals that industry and technology were "mystical" phenomena for Gessner, a source of endless "wonder." His admiration for these subjects was uncritical and apolitical – he did not concern himself with the effects of civic and industrial development on the natural landscape or human relations like many of his former avant-garde peers. Nor did he ever strive for absolute scientific accuracy in his representations of how industrial construction equipment worked. To an artist who has never received any technical training and could not penetrate the inner logic of complex mechanisms, they appeared – first and foremost – as aesthetically-appealing sculptural objects that could be rearranged into more harmonious compositions, magnified to achieve a dramatic effect, or simplified for increased readability. As will be discussed later in this chapter, this unconditional enthusiasm for technical subjects was successfully co-opted by the National Socialist state to alleviate the sense of unease within the general population associated with rapid industrial development and massive construction projects in the Third Reich.

**The early avant-garde years: *Das Junge Rheinland* (*DJR*) and *GeSoLei***

But in order to understand how Gessner's fascination with technical subjects was put at the service of the National Socialist state, we need to go back to the very beginning of his artistic career. Already in the mid-1910s, Gessner's paintings and prints were represented by the most important modernist art galleries in Düsseldorf: *Galerie Alfred Flechtheim*, Dr. Hans Koch's *Graphischen Kabinett von Bergh*, and Johanna Ey's *Galerie Neue Kunst*. One of the most important formative experiences of Richard Gessner's early career, however, was indisputably

[19] "Schon in meiner Jugend galt mein besonderes Interesse der Technik, was sich darin äußerte, daß ich schon als Schüler an der Drehbank arbeitete und schmiedete, um Modelle von Schiffen, Hochöfen und Bergwerken zu bauen. Es war mein frühester Wunsch, Ingenieur zu werden. Erst anläßlich eines Versuches des Hoerder Vereins ging mir beim Anblick der Hochöfen und Bessemerei der ungeheuer malerische Reiz der Technik auf und verlagerte sich so stark, daß es nunmehr mein Bestreben wurde, diese Dinge von der Seite des Malers und Zeichners zu erleben und zu gestalten. Schon im Jahre 1913 malte ich ungefähr als Einziger ausschließlich Industriemotive. Immer wieder bis zum heutigen Tage packt mich die Mystik der modernen Technik. – Ich sehe es als Selbstverständlichkeit an, daß einem Künstler des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts die Wunder der Technik nicht verschlossen bleiben können und sie absolute Gleichberechtigung in der Darstellung haben müssen mit irgendeinem andern Motiv. – mein Streben ist es von jeher gewesen, die mich persönlich stark interessierenden Industriemotive über ein Erlebnis zur Darstellung zu bringen." " 'Wie ich zum Industriemaler wurde,' Leonard Sandrock, Granz Erwin, Günther Dommnich, Erich Mercker und Richard Geßner erzählen von sich und ihrer Arbeit," *Das Werk* 20 (1940): 199-200.

his involvement in the foundation on February 24, 1919, in Düsseldorf, of *Das Junge Rheinland* (*DJR*), an artistic association committed to the advancement of Rhenish modernism on the national level. According to their statement of purpose, *DJR* accepted all artists independent of their political views or stylistic idioms, provided their willingness to go beyond petty regionalism, and contribute to the renewal of German art.[20] In practice, however, many artists that joined *DJR* were left-oriented and rejected academic art rooted in nineteenth-century naturalism. It counted active KPD (Communist Party of Germany) members like the poet and illustrator Adolf Uzarski or painter Karl Schwesig, as well as overtly anti-bourgeois, anti-war *Aktivistenbund*-ers such as Gert Wollheim and Otto Pankok among its founders.[21]

Richard Gessner was among the original founding *DJR* members who presented their work together for the first time in June and July of 1919 at the *Düsseldorf Kunsthalle*. Gessner was represented with four works: *Elberfeld, Hasper Hütte, Kühltürme,* and *Aus der Vorstadt*. (Fig. 25-27) All four of the pastel drawings represent technical, industrial, and urban subjects and demonstrated a visual language influenced by French Post-Impressionism: real-life subject matter, swift and think the application of paint, distortion of forms and colors for increased expressive effect.

In 1924-1925, when Gessner was on one of his extended trips to Paris, important changes occurred in *DJR*'s membership and structure. When art historian Walter Kaesbach replaced Fritz Roeber as the director of the Düsseldorf Academy in 1924, this conservative institution took a significant step toward integration with the local and international avant-gardes. Recognizing the inevitability of change, Kaesbach appointed prominent modernists such as Swiss-born Paul Klee and a largely self-taught German fauvist Oscar Moll, as well as *DJR* members Heinrich

[20] "Die Unterzeichneten tragen sich mit dem Plan, einen Zusammenschluß der gesamten jungen rheinischen Künstlerschaft zu erreichen. Diese Vereinigung, die sich als Notwendigkeit ansieht, um den jungen rheinischen Künstlern den ihnen gebührenden, schon viel zu lange vorenthaltenen Platz im deutschen Kunstschaffen zu erobern, bezweckt die gemeinsame Veranstaltung von Wanderausstellungen. Es soll sich dabei nicht um einseitige Förderung irgendeiner Richtung handeln, Voraussetzung soll nur Jugendlichkeit und Ehrlichkeit des Schaffens sein. Jugendlichkeit, wohl verstanden, nicht in Beziehung aufs Alter gemeint, sondern auf die Stärke und Frische des künstlerischen Strebens. Mit jeder Cliquenwirtschaft, wie sie bisher bei fast allen Ausstellungen üblich war, soll ein für allemal aufgeräumt werden." Ulrich Krempel, "Am Anfang: Das Junge Rheinland," in Krempel, *Am Anfang,* 8.
[21] Uzarski was also the group's acting secretary. Other important *Dr* artists who were also KPD members included Barz, Levin, Ludwigs, Monjau.

Campendonk, Ewald Mataré, Ernst Aufseeser, and Jankel Adler to teaching positions at the Academy.[22]

Around the same time, many *DJR* artists received important state commissions for *GeSoLei*, raising their professional status in the artistic community and contributing to their personal welfare. Welcoming over 7,5 million visitors, *GeSoLei* was the largest trade fair in the Weimar Republic that took place from May 8 to October 15, 1926, north of the historical city center. The name of the exhibition is an acronym that combines the initial syllables of the German words for hygiene (*Gesundheitpflege*), social welfare (*Soziale Fürsorge*), and physical exercise (*Leibesübung*); the notions that corresponded to the three main sections of the exhibition. It was organized by a prominent physician Prof. Arthur Schlossman, the burgomaster of Düsseldorf Dr. Robert Lehr, as well as a prolific neoclassical architect – Prof. Wilhelm Kreis, who was also a *DJR* member. As the architect in chief, responsible not only for the major permanent *GeSoLei* structures such as the *Rheinhalle* planetarium (today – *Tonhalle* concert hall), the Imperial Museum of Social and Economic Studies (*Reichsmuseum für Gesellschafts- und Wirtschaftskunde*) and the *Rheinterrasse* restaurant but also for the general plan of the 400,000 $m^2$ exhibition grounds,[23] Kreis was probably the *DJR* member whose career benefitted the most from the event. (Fig. 28-30) Many other abovementioned *DJR* artists, however, including those teaching at the Academy at that time, were also hired to work alongside Kreis, decorating the interiors of his buildings and temporary pavilions. For example, all nine of the artists responsible for the wall paintings in the foyer of *Rheinhalle* were members of *DJR*: Jankel Adler, Bernhard Gobiet, Arthur Kaufmann, Adolf Uzarski, Heinz May, Carl Cürten, Fritz Burmann, Josef Bell (1891-1935), and Werner Heuser.[24] (Fig. 31)

According to Schlossmann's original 1927 catalogue of the exhibition, Gessner was one of the artists, along with Burga von Wecus, Helmut Liesegang, Karl Diemke, Heinz Wever, Eduart Sturm, Fritz Lewy, Rudi com Endt and Fritz Burmann, who were actually consulted *at the*

[22] Anna Klapheck, "Die 'goldnen' zwanziger Jahre Die Akademie zwischen den Kriegen," in Krempel, *Am Anfang*, 64-72.
[23] Friederike Schuler, *Im Dienste der Gemeinschaft – Figurative Wandmalerei in der Weimarer Republik* (Marburg: Tectum Verlag, 2017), 208.
[24] Schuler, *Im Dienste der Gemeinschaft*, 208-209, 395.

*planning and construction stages* of the planetarium.[25] Although Schlossmann does not elaborate on the nature of the artists' input, it is possible to suggest that they had been commissioned to document the process. Two of Gessner's artworks from the period speak to this hypothesis: a pastel *Planetarium im Bau* (1925) and an oil painting *Bau des Planetariums* (1925).[26] (Fig. 19a, 32) Almost identical in their composition, the two artworks emphasize the monumentality and the austerity of Wilhelm Kreis's project: taking up over half of the canvas space, set against the backdrop of blue skies overcast with puffy clouds, the circular building rises from piles of construction rubble and towers over scaffolds and machinery like a colossal Greco-Roman temple. As will be demonstrated further down, visual analogies between the construction of new buildings and the ruination of old ones already apparent in Gessner's earlier works will become an important motif of his oeuvre under National Socialism. Nor were these analogies unique to Gessner, and characterize the work of many other compliant German artists specializing in the genre of architectural representation and the technical subjects discussed in Chapter 4.

In 1926, Gessner had also produced a pastel *Düsseldorfer Brücke mit Planetarium,* showing the fully completed neoclassical building from the southern bank of the Ruhr River. (Fig. 33) In this representation of the planetarium, however, Kreis's structure appears at a distance, visually overpowered by the cast-iron structure of the old Oberkassel Bridge. Commissioned in 1898 by Rheinbahn AG and completed by Philipp Holzmann & Cie GmbH, the bridge was over 600 m long with two massive arches spanning 181,25 meters each. Gessner's image captured a very specific moment in the bridge's history: in 1925-1926, it underwent important renovations by the architect Eduard Lyonel Wehner in order to accommodate the increase in traffic.[27] As a result of this intervention, the two historicist gateway towers designed by Adolf Schill between 1896 and 1898 (a neoclassical portal that had initially framed the cast-iron arches) were removed, giving the bridge a more modern look. Triglyphs visible on the large pieces of stone scattered in the foreground make it possible to identify them as the remainders of Schill's neoclassical towers.

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[25] Marta Fraenkel and Arthur Schlossmann, *Grosse Ausstellung Düsseldorf 1926 für Gesundheitspflege, Soziale Fürsorge und Leibesübungen* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1927), 1: 72.
[26] Fraenkel and Schlossmann, *Grosse Ausstellung Düsseldorf 1926,* 73. It is important to note with regards to these two works showcasing the Planetarium, that Gessner might not have relayed the construction process firsthand. Schlossman's catalogue features a photograph of the building by photographer A. Kay at the exact same stage of construction, with similar lighting and identical in composition.
[27] "Oberkasseler Bridge – 1926," *International Database and Gallery of Structures*, accessed April 1, 2020, http://en.structurae.de/.

Gessner's pastel drawing represents a definitive moment of the city's modernization: the erection of new modern buildings on the occasion of *GeSoLei* and the removal of older structures that have outlived their function. Gessner's *Düsseldorfer Brücke mit Planetarium* reveals his fascination both with picturesque ruins and technological advancement, neoclassical architecture and infrastructural development, traditional forms, and modern engineering achievements.

The same year Gessner documented another important construction site of *GeSoLei – Bau der Rheinterrasse* (1926), an architectural complex by the Rhine constructed between 1924 and 1926 to house restaurants, cafes, and assembly halls. (Fig. 20) The stripped-down classicism of the outer brick and masonry shell hid innovative aesthetic and technical solutions: a load-bearing structure of reinforced concrete and an expressionist interior – the *Rheingoldsaal* with its hanging keystones and shell-like ribbed dome. (Fig. 34) Instead of capturing the outside view of the construction site, as he did for the planetarium, Gessner positioned himself behind the building and examined the convex interior surface of the main façade, not yet closed off from the street by the rear wall. By choosing to represent an unfinished building from such an angle, Gessner draws attention to the abovementioned modernist structural elements at the expense of a more restrained and sober exterior.

Gessner's images of *GeSoLei* exhibition grounds reveal the artist's interest in capturing not only completed buildings – be they industrial or residential – and cityscapes, but also the construction *process* itself, with all of the materials, machinery, and scaffolding involved at its various stages. Together these motifs make up for another specialty genre of Gessner's, a genre that would later strongly resonate with the National Socialist authorities who embarked upon a massive building campaign in the mid-1930s and were eager to document their megalomaniac efforts. At the same time, Gessner's works discussed in this section emblematize a distinctly modernist approach to architectural representation, one that privileges process over product, fragmentation over the immaculate whole, one that transforms architecture from fine art into an engineering feat.

### ***DJR* responses to National Socialist *Gleichschaltung*: from resistance to accommodation**

Unfortunately, professional recognition achieved by Düsseldorf-based avant-garde artists in the mid-1920s would be short-lived. As has been established in Chapter 1, state regimentation of cultural life brought about by the establishment of the National Socialist regime on January 31,

1933, created an unfavorable climate for modernist artists. Most artistic associations came under direct attack by the new government, and *Das Junge Rheinland* was no exception. The *Gleichschaltung* of artistic unions and professional organizations followed by the foundation of the Reich Culture Chamber in September 1933, dissolved *DJR* and the *Rheingruppe*.

Persecution of individual artists targeted those deemed "politically-unreliable," non-Aryan or foreign, and took the form of layoffs at the Academy, painting bans, rejections of exhibition submissions, withdrawal of contracts, and arrests. Thus, Aufseeser was dismissed from his teaching post for his Jewish origins, and Klee – as a Swiss national; overt communists like Schwesig who were not connected to the Academy were arrested for KPD-related activities and died in internment.[28]

Reaction to National Socialist persecution differed greatly from one *DJR* artist to another. Some chose to emigrate shortly after Hitler's rise to power: Campendonk fled to the Netherlands, Wollheim – to France and then to Switzerland. Others stayed and took part in the underground resistance or opposed the regime by producing critical artworks. Peter Ludwigs is known for successfully doing both: after his paintings were branded "degenerate" and banned from public display, he joined the Resistance, designed and distributed communist ephemera (stickers, posters, brochures, pamphlets).[29] (Fig. 35) At the same time, he produced artworks that were much less explicit about his political allegiances but that nevertheless effectively expressed the sinister, alienating atmosphere of Germany in the 1930s. He used simplified, bulky, static, and isolated forms to impress onto the viewer an air of despair and resignation, going against the National Socialist ideology. Arrested for the second time by the Gestapo in 1943, Ludwigs was sent to a Düsseldorf prison, where the diabetic artist died of exhaustion and insulin deprivation.[30]

But a case of artistic opposition to National Socialism that is crucial to the study of Gessner's life trajectory is that of Otto Pankok. As the next section will demonstrate, he was a major influence on Gessner's aesthetic sensibility and a connecting point to other *DJR* members.

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[28] Kösters, *Künstler im Nationalsozialismus*, 19-29, 193–201.
[29] *Peter Ludwigs: Malerei, Grafik, Dokumente* (Düsseldorf: Stadtmuseum, 1982), exhibition catalogue, 17-18, 27-31. For further examples of Communist graffiti and stickers, and discussions of imahes made for the underground Communist press, see Karl-Ludwig Hofmann, "Antifaschistische Kunst in Deutschland: Bilder, Dokumente, Kommentare," in *Wiederstand statt Anpassung: Deutsche Kunst im Wiederstand gegen den Faschismus, 1933-1945* (Berlin: Elefanten Press, 1980), exhibition catalogue, 40-46; Allan Merson, *Communist Reisstance in Nazi Germany* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1985), 65, 104, 241.
[30] *Peter Ludwigs*, 17-18, 27-31.

Friedrich Heckmanns describes Pankok as an artist committed to pacifism and leaning towards the left.[31] Upon Hitler's coming to power, Pankok refused to accommodate the new regime and retreated into inner emigration.[32] Annette Baumeister also discusses Pankok as one of the most successful examples of resistance not by political means but through art. In his *Passion* cycle (1933-1934), Pankok related the story of Jewish persecution under National Socialism through the narrative of suffering and death of Christ. (Fig. 36) These works were recognized as providing a covert critique of the National Socialist policies by the official press and banned for depicting racial degeneration.[33] As a result, in 1935, Pankok was investigated by the Gestapo, branded "degenerate" and forbidden to work as an artist. His works were confiscated from museums, and some of them were exhibited at the Degenerate Art exhibition that took place in Munich in 1937. Even during the time of accrued Gestapo interest in his work, Pankok continued to capture the nomadic life of Sinti and Roma, who also fell victim to the racial laws.[34] (Fig. 37) But before I turn to Pankok's relationship with Gessner, it is important to mention one last category of responses to Hitler's *Gleichschaltung* of culture from the *DJR* artists, a category of responses that Gessner himself undoubtedly falls into – collaboration/accommodation/integration.

Perhaps the *DJR* artist most representative of this trend is Richard Schwarzkopf, appointed professor of applied arts at the Düsseldorf Academy in 1933, known for his 1936 series of six woodcuts – *Deutsche Passion* or *The German Passion*. (Fig. 38) Although the title of Schwarzkopf's series manifestly echoes the abovementioned cycle of critical drawing by Pankok, the subject matter is very different: the artist captured idealized Stormtroopers fighting against "gruesome" Bolshevik forces.

But former *DJR* members who like Richard Schwarzkopf wholeheartedly embraced the regime and unequivocally converted into National Socialism upon Hitler's coming to power were few and do not expand our understanding of artistic compliance in any significant way.

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[31] Friedrich Heckmanns, "Das Junge Rheinland in Düsseldorf 1919-1929," in *German Expressionism 1915-1925. The Second Generation,* ed. Stephanie Barron (Munchen: Preston Verlag, 1988), 84-86.
[32] Bernhard Mensch and Karin Stempel ed., *Otto Pankok, 1893-1966: Retrospektive zum 100. Geburtstag* (Oberhausen: Plitt Verlag, 1993), notably pp. 162 and 182.
[33] Annette Baumeister, "Mit Bildern widerstehen," in Krempel, *Am Anfang,* 110-112.
[34] For more information on Otto Pankok's interest in Roma and Sinti, including materials related to his play *Wie wir leben* consult RG-07.010 Records Relating to Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), from the Otto Pankok Museum, Düsseldorf at the Collections of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

What needs to be accounted for is what Ulrich Krempel has called a "grey area," situated somewhere in-between NS-partisans and committed anti-fascists, which he calls *nichtfaschistische Kunst* or "non-fascist art."[35] According to Krempel, there were quite a few artists who still shared humanist values but avoided direct confrontation with the new regime. He talks about them in terms of non-resistance, adaptation, and resignation. Former *DJR* artists that he believes fall into this category are Will Küpper, who chose isolation/inner migration, and Theo Champion, who became a successful landscape painter under Hitler but put his career and reputation at risk by helping to preserve Pankok's oeuvre. Although initially associated with this circle of predominantly left-wing avant-garde artists, changes of direction in Richard Gessner's career path, artistic production, personal and professional relations place him in the category of *DJR* artists who actively pursued accommodation with the National Socialist regime.

It is important to recall here, however, that the transition to National Socialism did not happen overnight. In Chapters 1 and 2, I have touched on the developments in the cultural sphere that prepared the grounds for Hitler's ideology of racism and anti-Semitism. Often, these ideas were already present in the official discourse on scientific progress and public health in the Weimar Republic, making even avant-garde artists susceptible to their appeal or easing their way into this belief system.

Let us briefly return to the example of *GeSoLei* in order to understand the kind of environment in which *DJR* artists, including Richard Gessner, worked in the late 1920s. On the one hand, focusing on the precarious condition of the working class, *GeSoLei* enabled progressive politics. Thus, for *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* reviewers, it played a positive role in fostering a critical and socially grounded approach to social hygiene.[36] On the other hand, working-class hygiene was structured through a racialized understanding of German society. The main section of the exhibition displayed concerns about mixed marriages and declining birth rates; sections on colonial hygiene and tropical medicine brought up the superior medical and hygienic knowledge of the Germans and scientific backwardness of the indigenous populations in their formerly occupied territories as a justification for the restoration of German colonies; a

[35] Krempel, *Am Anfang*, 17.
[36] Referenced in Robert Heynen, *Degeneration and Revolution: Radical Cultural Politics and the Body in Weimar Germany* (Historical Materialism Book Series, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), 463-464.

separate section of the exhibition was dedicated specifically to Jewish hygiene.[37] In a way, intentionally or not, by participation in *GeSoLei*, avant-garde artists from the *DJR* circle contributed to the racialist and colonialist discourses even before Hitler's coming to power.

**Richard Gessner at a crossroads: Between Otto Pankok and Werner Peiner**

Gessner's compliance under National Socialism is all the more surprising in that he stayed closely connected with some of the left-wing *DJR* members throughout the 1920s. Notably, he had formed a close relationship with Otto Pankok (1893–1966) and visited the artist several times at Dötlingen, where he had retreated after his break from the Academy.[38] Together with Otto Pankok and another left-wing *DJR* artist of Jewish origin, Gert Wolheim, Gessner had also participated in the foundation of the artists' colony in Remels, East-Frisia.[39]

From an artistic standpoint, it can be argued that it was his interactions with Pankok that drove Gessner to become interested in woodcuts, linocuts, and monotypes – the graphic media that make up the vast majority of Pankok's oeuvre. (Fig. 39) Landscapes produced by Gessner in the 1920s, such as *Arbeitstag (Landschaft mit Sonne)* (1920), *Harzlandschaft* (1920), *Hochgebirge* (1921) display the kind of broken contours, ragged hatching, and smudged shading that Pankok is best known for. (Fig. 40-42) During this period, Gessner stepped away from the thick application of saturated, solid color to explore the expressive potential of the monochrome and that of the vibrating, ecstatic line.

Friendship with Pankok influenced Gessner's formation as an artist, but whether or not Pankok's political ideas had any impact on Gessner's worldview cannot be ascertained from the available sources. However, what will be demonstrated further in this chapter is that their paths diverged, and their relationship gradually came to an end with the establishment of the National Socialist regime. This was paralleled with the rapprochement between Gessner and another avant-garde artist – Werner Peiner (1897–1984).

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[37] Falk Wiesemann, " 'Hygiene der Juden' auf der düsseldorfer GESOLEI 1926. Jüdische Kulturleistungen in der Weimarer Republik," *Geschichte im Westen*, no.1 (1993): 24–37; Sigrid Stöckel, "Die große Ausstellung über Gesundheitspflege, Soziale Fürsorge und Leibesübungen – GESOLEI – 1926 in Düsseldorf," in *Ideologie der Objekte, Objekte der Ideologie* (Kasse: Wenderoth, 1991), 34.
[38] Sigrun Gessner, " 'Malen ist Leben.' Erinnerungen an Richard Gessner," in Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner. Monographie und Werkverzeichnis,* 163.
[39] Karl Ruhrber, "Tradition und Gegenwart. Anmerkungen zum Werk des Malers Richard Gessner," in Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner,* 11.

Peiner was, in many respects, quite the opposite of Pankok – a relatively conservative *Neue Sachlichkeit* artist who later collaborated closely with the National Socialist regime. In 1933, following Klee's dismissal, Peiner had been appointed Professor of Monumental Painting at the Düsseldorf Art Academy in his stead and, from 1935, was the head of the Hermann Göring Painting Academy.[40] Known for his *Blut und Boden* landscapes such as *Deutsche Erde* (ca. 1930s, original lost), Peiner displayed a total of thirty-three works at the most prestigious exhibition of state-supported art under National Socialism – the Great German Art Exhibition (1937-1944) and created the monumental Gobelin tapestry series entitled *Decisive Battles of German History* (1937-1944) for the New Reich Chancellery.[41] (Fig. 43, 44) By 1944, Peiner had made it to Hitler's shortlist of the so-called "God-gifted" artists exempt from military service.[42]

Back in 1920, as Dieter and Martin Pesch argue, Peiner found in Gessner a "kindred spirit," a *Gesinnungsgenossen.*[43] Together with Fritz Burrman, Gessner and Peiner founded the *Dreimann-Wekstatt* in Düsseldorf. Under the patronage of late Dr. Fritz Roeber, the group benefitted from a special exhibition that took place independently from all other students of the Academy in the fall of that year.[44] The exhibition was a success, receiving raved press reviews and warranting the three artists the status of *Meisterschüler.*[45]

Two slightly different – albeit, by no means contradictory – tendencies can be noted when looking at artworks presented by Gessner at this event. The first tendency is embodied by the vibrant images of modern industry and urban life, such as the 1922 pastel *Industriestadt.* (Fig. 7) The artist provided a bird's-eye view of a lively industrial town and its outskirts, cast in the rich shades of ochre, terracotta, teal, and deep grey. A bustling central street carries the daily influx of workers to the factories, signaled by the many smokestacks. Although figural in content and relatively accurate in the depiction of volumes, Gessner's image nevertheless has a degree of formal abstraction and perspectival distortion that are unmistakably avant-garde. The second

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[40] Peter Adam, *Art of the Third Reich* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1992), 99-102.
[41] Ernst Klee, *Das Kulturlexikon zum Dritten Reich. Wer war was vor und nach 1945* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 2007), 452.
[42] Klee, *Das Kulturlexikon zum Dritten Reich,* 452.
[43] Pesch and Pesch, *Werner Peiner*, 16.
[44] Werner Peiner, *Werner Peiner, Ein Künstlerleben in Sturm und Stille. Eine Autobiographie*, ed. Manfred Thiel (Heidelberg: Elpis Verlag, 2004), 58.
[45] Pesch and Pesch, *Werner Peiner*, 16; Peiner, *Werner Peiner, 58.*

direction explored by Gessner at the *Dreimann-Wekstatt* exhibition is cultural-conservative by virtue of either the subject matter or medium. This tendency was represented by idyllic travel sketches of vernacular architecture, such as *Türkische Moschee* (1917) – a sunlit image of a simple plastered religious structure with a roof of terracotta tiles and a ramshackle peasant hut in the shady foreground. (Fig. 45) Equally noteworthy is the sudden interest Gessner took in textiles and embroidery with mythological motifs, embodied in the 1920 tapestry *Der fliegender Holländer* – possibly a reference to Wagner's operatic adaptation of Heinrich Heine's 1833 satirical take on the tale of the Flying Dutchman in which he cast the legendary ship as a Wandering Jew of the ocean.[46] (Fig. 46) Many years later, in 1941, a National Socialist art historian Otto Albert Schneider would deem Gessner's former association with Werner Peiner and Fritz Burmann to be one of the strongest points of his artistic career, and their "charmingly archaic representation style" – an important influence on Gessner's work.[47]

In 1922, however, both Burmann and Gessner gravitated away from Peiner after the artists had a disagreement over modern painting[48] and joined *Deutsche Kunstlerbund* [49] along with many Expressionist artists of their generation who were later defamed and persecuted by the National Socialists, such as Karl Hofer and Karl Schmitt-Rottluff. In 1930, together with Otto Pankok, Ernst Barlach, Karl Hofer, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Käthe Kollwitz, Max Lieberman, and Karl Schmidt-Rotluff, Gessner participated in a major modernist exhibition – the *Deutsche Kunstausstellung* in Munich *Glaspalast*; and, in 1932, together with Otto Dix and George Grosz – one at the Art Institute of Chicago. That same year, Gessner pursued reconciliation with Peiner, taking the latter by surprise. After Gessner had apologized to Peiner for their previous disagreements, the two artists decided to work together again in an atelier at the *Neuen Akademie* (Düsseldorf ),[50] focusing on decorative tapestry designs and putting on a two-man show at the *Stadtliche Kunsthalle* in February that year.[51] In his review of the exhibition, a National Socialist

[46] William Vaughan, "Der Fliegende Holländer," in *English National Opera Guide* (Calder Publications Ltd., 1982), 27–32; James Martin Harding, "Cultural Identities, Commodities, and Myth: Adorno and Baraka on Wagner and the Flying Dutchman," in *Adorno and A Writing of the Ruins. Essays on Modern Aesthetics and Anglo-American Literature and Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 117-148.
[47] Otto Albert Schneider,"Der Cornelius-Preis für Malerei und Plastik 1941," n.p.
[48] Peiner, *Werner Peiner,* 69; Pesch and Pesch, *Werner Peiner*, 18; Nikola Doll, *Mäzenatentum und Kunstförderung im Nationalsozialismus: Werner Peiner und Hermann Göring* (Bonn: VG Bildkunst, 2010), 36.
[49] Sigrun Gessner, "Lebenslauf," in Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, 174.
[50]Peiner, *Werner Peiner*, 74 and 79.
[51] One can only speculate whether Gessner's sudden change of heart had something to do with Hitler's 1932 fiery speech to at the Düsseldorf Industry Club and the upcoming presidential elections. Although the influence of neither

art historian Hans Eichler drew attention to the similarities in their work that emerged "despite deepest differences of opinion" (which proves, once again, that formal expression doesn't necessarily correlate with internal beliefs). He noted clarity and linearity of design among the formal characteristics shared by the two artists and their ability to portray contemporary material realities in a way that transcended the factual and evoked "eternal" concepts and values.[52]

In a word, Gessner appears as an artist at a crossroads between progressive modernism and cultural conservatism. But the key to an understanding of his career path might also lie in the artist's political *dis*-engagement and indifference – a mindset ascribed to Gessner by a number of scholars. In the preface to the 1994 monographic exhibition, Ruhrberg claims that Gessner never had the ambition to be a militant avant-gardist, pave new directions in art, and found new movements.[53] In fact, Ruhrberg *contrasts* Gessner both with Otto Pankok and Gert Wollheim to demonstrate that what made Gessner different from his *DJR* peers was specifically his political *dis*-engagement.[54] Astrid Schunk expressed a similar thought in her analysis of the industrial landscape in the German graphic art of the 1920s. Schunk separates interwar painters of urban life and industry in the Ruhr area into two distinct groups – the critical and the contemplative ones. For example, she contrasts Willi Borutta's representation of the difficult miners' life to several Walter Ophey's works, where factories become a part of meditative, almost dreamy landscapes. (Fig. 47, 48) She then decisively ascribes Gessner to this latter "uncritical" or "contemplative" trend in the industrial landscape.[55]

Both Karl Ruhrberg and Astrid Schunk describe him as an artist who was simply uninterested in politics and social criticism – an artist without any specific agenda or allegiances, who was able to move between different cultural and social trends of his time. In other words, this lack of critical engagement both with the subject of his work and his immediate socio-political environment did not limit Gessner's artistic freedom, quite the contrary: it opened his artistic practice to a much broader range of professional opportunities than his more socially-critical

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occurrence on Gessner's frame of mind can be archivally-ascertained, these events should be counted in when reflecting upon the changes in Gessner's personal and professional networks.

[52] Hans Eichler, "Neue Wege in der Düsseldorfer Malerei – Werner Peiner und Richard Geßner in der Kunsthalle," *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* (February 20, 1932): n.p.

[53] Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, 9.

[54] Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, 12.

[55] Astrid Schunk, Industriestädte um 1920. Das Ruhrgebiet in der Druckgraphik von Richard Gessner und seinen Zeitgenossen, in: Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, 92-98.

*DJR* peers would ever consider, including professional opportunities coming from the National Socialist state.

Even before Hitler's coming to power, from the outset of their relationship, Peiner presented a valuable connection for the advancement of Gessner's career as a painter of technical subjects. Peiner had acquaintances in the highest echelons of German business and industry – that is, he had direct access to Gessner's potential clients. A notable example is Gessner's 1930 painting *Shellhaus im Bau*. (Fig. 49) Peiner met the general director of the mineral oil company Rhenania-Ossag Mineralölwerke AG (Shell Group) Heinrich Späth in 1927 and became close friends with his successor Dr. Walter Kruspig and his wife. That same year, at the Neuen Galerie studio Peiner shared with Gessner, he had met Emil Fahrenkamp, professor of architecture at the Düsseldorf Art Academy since 1919. According to Dieter and Martin Pesch, "It was not friendship alone that bound the three men; at least for Fahrenkampf and Peiner, it was also economic interest."[56] In 1929, when Kruspig commissioned Fahrenkampf for the construction of Shellhaus – its headquarters in Berlin – Peiner was tasked with designing stained-glass windows for a multi-story modernist building overlooking the Tiergarten's *Landwehrkanal*. Recall that Gessner had just recently resumed his friendship with Peiner and was, therefore, able to jump on the ride with a painting of Fahrenkampf's construction site. Gessner captured the building at a stage in its construction that showcased both its striking wave-like façade (bottom half) and the innovative steel-frame structure (unfinished upper stories). To capture this architecture in all of its complexity, Gessner adopted a much more precise painting style, which allowed for increased detalization. With the "SHELL" billboard floating above the building, the painting functioned as an adversitement for the company.

To sum up, as a politically-divested artist with connections to different cultural circles, Gessner was much better equipped to survive in the conflicted cultural climate of the first few years of Hitler's regime than staunch ideological proponents of either the pro-modernist or the *völkisch*-reactionary camp. In the next section, we will further explore how strategically non-partisan or simply indifferent German artists like Gessner were left to their own wits and

[56] Pesch and Pesch, *Werner Peiner*, 21.

discretion to reconcile these opposing influences on culture, to guestimate the safest course of action based on various public pronouncements, and periodical publications on the subject.

**Gessner's career under National Socialism**

An examination of Gessner's artistic career in the first few years of National Socialism provides insights into the different aspects of compliance – its structural and aesthetic components – but also sheds light on the associated challenges. His personal experience with state institutions in the Third Reich demonstrates that even artists who were willing to cooperate with the new regime were often mistrusted, scrutinized, and confronted by it; in other words, in reality, *Anpassung* was not a smooth and straightforward process.

The most undisputable evidence of Gessner's pursuit of structural accommodation, i.e., his proactive integration with the official National Socialist institutions, is his *NSDAP* membership application from April 28, 1933.[57] It must be noted that although membership in one of the Reich Culture Chambers was compulsory for all those who participated in the "creation, reproduction, intellectual or technical processing, dissemination, preservation, and direct or mediated sale of cultural assets,"[58] joining the National Socialist German Workers' Party was not a requirement for artistic practice in the Third Reich. In any case, Gessner's request was rejected by the Chairman of the Düsseldorf Region Heinrich Pungs on the grounds of the artist's alleged involvement in "a Lodge that rejected the National Socialist fight against the Freemasons and Jews."[59] Further mishaps with the National Socialist authorities awaited Gessner in 1936 when his 1927-1928 painting *Paris bei Nacht* that had been in the collection of the Düsseldorf *Kunstmuseum* for several years already was spotted by the *NS-Komission* and deemed "unreconcilable with the German artistic sensibility."[60] (Fig. 50) Fortunately, the curator in chief, Dr. Hans Wilhelm Hupp, arranged for Gessner to get his painting back from the museum and store it in the safety of his friends' home.[61]

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[57] National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland. Microfilm Publication A3340 Records Relating to Membership in the *NSDAP* (RG 242), Parteikorrespondenz, D 43.
[58] First Decree for the Implementation of the Reich Chamber of Culture Law (November 1, 1933). English translation reproduced in *The Arts in Nazi Germany: Continuity, Conformity, Change*, Jonathan Huener and Francis R. Nicosia ed. (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009), 172.
[59] Huener and Nicosia, *The Arts in Nazi Germany,* 172.
[60] Sigrun Gessner, "Lebenslauf," in Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, 176.
[61] Gessner, 176.

The year 1936, when these two unfortunate incidents occurred, had marked the end of a period of conflicting viewpoints on modern art and relative artistic freedom in Germany. It is the year when the modern section of the Berlin *Nationalgalerie* in the *Kronprinzenpalais* was closed by the Minister of Education Bernard Rust, the year when Joseph Goebbels issued a ban on art criticism and Adolf Ziegler replaced Eugen Hönig as the president of the Reich Culture Chamber. The year 1936 signaled the beginning of a nation-wide purge of German art, with some 1,400 artists including Max Beckmann, Ernst Barlach, Otto Dix, Georg Grosz, Paul Klee, Oskar Kokoschka, and Emil Nolde defamed as "degenerate," removed from public collections and prohibited from practicing their profession.

The drastic radicalization of cultural policy pushed Gessner to persevere in his demonstration of loyalty to the National Socialist state. He quickly understood that he could cater to the state demand for paintings of architectural and technical subjects, showcasing the National Socialist achievements in industrial, technological, infrastructural, and urban development. As Gessner's former avant-garde friends and colleagues were being persecuted, he submitted works to two prestigious National Socialist exhibitions of architectural and technical subjects that took place in Munich and Berlin in 1936: *die Straßen Adolf Hitlers,* celebrating the German *Reichsautobahn* system and *Lob der Arbeit,* extolling the achievements of German industry and the working class. As previously mentioned, in 1937, Gessner had also resumed his friendship with Werner Peiner. It must be emphasized, however, that by that point, Peiner had already established himself as a state-supported, ideologically-committed artist, an influential cultural figure in the Third Reich, so his friendship was definitely an asset for any artist seeking professional recognition and accommodation with the National Socialist regime.

**Richard Gessner and the National Socialist technical thought**

As John C. Guse explains in his study on the development of technical thought in the Third Reich, the National Socialist ideological approach to technology changed depending on the vision and political influence of the state officials charged with overseeing German engineers at a particular point in the Third Reich's history.[62] Up until the beginning of World War II, there

[62] John C. Guse, "Nazi technical thought revisited, History and Technology," *History and Technology* 26, no. 1 (2010): 3-33. All further descriptions of Feder's and Rüdiger's technical thought provided in this section are based on Guse's article, unless indicated otherwise.

were two main competing currents in National Socialist technical thought: the "*völkisch*-technocratic" one represented at the state level by Gottfried Feder and the "technopolitical" one implemented by his successor as the Director of the National Socialist Office for Technology (*Amt für Technik*) and the National Socialist League of German Technology (*NS Bund Deutscher Technik*) – Fritz Todt.

Co-founder of the Militant League of German Architects and Engineers, which had its origins in Alfred Rosenberg's Militant League for German Culture, the *NSDAP* economist Gottfried Feder shared the anti-liberal, anti-capitalist, anti-urban, anti-modernist views of the *völkish* movement. He believed that technology was being "misused" for capitalist purposes, contributing to a decline in the spiritual values of the German *Volk*. He suggested a number of measures to make German industry and technology serve the collective welfare, including reeducation of German engineers and industrial decentralization, starting with Gessner's native Ruhr area: industries that did not exploit the specific raw materials of a locality were to be relocated to new towns in the countryside. Fritz Todt, on the other hand, was a proponent of more techno-optimistic views, insisting on an "organic" harmony of man, nature, and technology, and a preoccupation with unifying technology and art. He distanced himself from the reactionary *völkisch* circles and devoted his eight-year-long political career to the construction and the popularization of the *Reichsautobahn* – a vast system of motorways and bridges that completely transformed the German landscape.

Todt was convinced that the adverse effects of technology on nature or social relations could be alleviated through adequate engineering of new structures. Talking about the *Reichsautobahn*, he explains that "The aim has been to build this huge network of roads not only with the mechanical instruments of an engineer but also with an artistic sensibility, a love of nature and her soothing influence."[63] As a result, "The white ribbons of the motor roads are carefully embedded in the landscape, and their layout is harmoniously adapted to them […]."[64] Formal adaptation of the autobahn architecture came down to shaping the motorways into gentle curves, using local stone for their construction and local plants for their decoration. While in Feder's

[63] Fritz Todt, "The Motor Highways Built by Herr Hitler," in *Germany Speaks* (London: T. Butterworth, 1938). Full text available Online, accessed March 6, 2020 http://nseuropa.blogspot.com/2014/06/the-motor-highways-built-by-herr-hitler.html.
[64] Todt, "The Motor Highways."

"*völkish*-technocratic" conception, technology was to adapt itself to common good and welfare, in Todt's conception, both technology *and* nature were to take a new form: "The new roads lend a new character to the German landscape. The open, stretched lines which pass through the landscape force the eye to follow in their direction and the starting place and destination are more clearly marked."[65] In other words, Todt's motorways were constructed with the aim of creating new panoramas and new ways of looking at landscape. The effect would be particularly strong on the German artists: "the artist will be inspired by the enormous, heroic conception of the technical problem."[66]

In 1936, Gessner made an attempt to balance between these two directions in the National Socialist technical thought, to cater to both these trends at a time by submitting his works to *Lob der Arbeit* organized by *NS-Kulturgemeinde*, an association that had succeeded Alfred Rosenberg's anti-modernist *Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur* and to *die Straßen Adolf Hitlers* organized by Fritz Todt.

He exhibited a total of three works at *Lob der Arbeit - Umbau Bahnhof Zoo* (1930), *Bau des Dusseldorfer Hauptbahnhof* (1932), and *Bau des Presshauses Dusseldorf* (1925). (Fig. 21, 51, 52) All three paintings are images of public architecture in the process of construction – a Zoo, a train station, and a publishing house. By selecting images of buildings that directly served the community for this exhibition, Gessner catered both to the *vökish*-technocratic doctrine developed by Feder and the conservative vision of architecture advanced by the Militant League. Paintings of factories and oil refineries that Gessner produced in large quantities would have been much less suitable for this purpose since industrial architecture first and foremost serves the corporate rather than the public interests.

The 1936 exhibition *Die Straßen Adolf Hitlers* in Munich featured around 200 artists who celebrated the technical achievements of motorway building. There was only one painting by Gessner on display – *Bau der Autobahnbrücke über die Werra* (1935) – an image of the Werra Valley Bridge near Hannoversch Münden situated on the Kassel-Göttingen autobahn route that was built between October 1935 and April 1937.[67] (Fig. 22) The vertical orientation of the

[65] Todt, "The Motor Highways."
[66] Todt, "The Motor Highways."
[67] Blaine Taylor, *Hitler's Engineers: Fritz Todt and Albert Speer - Master Builders of the Third Reich* (Philadelphia and Newbury: Casepame, 2010), 25.

canvas and the closeup view of three viaduct pillars supporting the steel-frame superstructure emphasized the monumentality of the bridge.

While many artists like Ernst Vollbehr, who painted a series of 162 aquarelles for Fritz Todt in 1938,[68] came to specialize in autobahn painting, Gessner was more interested in other architectural and technical subjects. (Fig. 53) This did not prevent him, however, from acquiring Todt's support. In 1940, one of his industrial paintings, *Hochöfen* (1939), was purchased by the Munich-based *Hauptamt für Technik*, and in 1941, *Hochöfen* and two others of Gessner's works – *Zeche Rheinpreussen (Teerdestillation)* (1937) and *Treibstoffwerk im Bau* (1936-1941) were showcased in a luxurious folio *Art and Technology.* (Fig. 9, 11, 16) Published by the Party Technical Publishing House on the occasion of Todt's fiftieth anniversary, *Art and Technology* featured glossy color reproductions of paintings, sculpture, and graphic works produced by German artists in the 1930s and 1940s on the themes of industry, technology, architecture, and infrastructure.

The accompanying text was written by Wilhelm Rüdiger, an important German art historian, curator, and museum director during the National Socialist era. An *NSDAP* party member since 1930, Rüdiger started off as a staunch anti-modernist working as an art critic for the Rosenberg-controlled *Völkischer Beobachter* and *Kunst im Deutschen Reich*; he also helped to organize the infamous *Schandausstellungen* (Shame exhibitions) and deaccession modernist works from the Chemnitz collection.[69] But around 1941, Rüdiger's views on art started to shift in favor of Expressionism, compelling him to organize exhibitions by modernist artists that pushed the limits of official cultural policy.[70] As Todt's mouthpiece in art criticism, he was particularly interested in technical subjects and endorsed Richard Gessner in his writings as one of the finest representatives of the genre.

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[68] Ernst Vollbehr, *Die Strassen Adolf Hitlers, Baujahr 193-1934* (Leipzig: Koehler & Umelang, 1935).
[69] Petropoulos, *Artists under Hitler,* 186-187.
[70] Christoph Zuschlag, "Kunst, die nicht aus unserer Seele kam. Chemnitz, Städtisches Museum, 14. Mai bis Juni 1933," in *"Entartete Kunst." Ausstellungsstrategien im Nazi-Deutschland* (Worms: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1995), 100. Zuschlag notably talks about the Young Art in the German Empire exhibition that Rüdiger organized in Vienna in 1943 on behalf of Baldur von Schirach. This exhibition featured artists whose works had previously been confiscated from German museums, including Josef Hegenbarth, Josef Henselmann, Hanna Nagel, Carl Moritz Schreiner, Milly Steger and Friedrich Vordemberge. Importantly, although Rüdiger was reprimanded by the National Socialist authorities as a result, his newly-found appreciation of Expressionism as late as 1941 demonstrates that the debate over modernim was still very much alive after the radicalization of the National Socialist cultural policy.

It comes as no surprise then, that while each of the twenty-three artists included in the painting section of the volume was represented with a single artwork, Gessner had the honor of having three of his industrial landscapes reproduced in Rüdiger's book, with two of them – *Hochöfen* and *Zeche Rheinpreussen (Teerdestillation)* – featured on the two front pages, and the latter appearing twice in the volume. This is particularly striking because the only painting by Erich Mercker – one of the most successful and productive artists specializing in architectural and technical subjects in the Third Reich – was only reproduced at the very end of the section in grayscale.

In a nineteen-page preface to *Art and Technology,* Rüdiger essentially paraphrased Todt's principles of National Socialist technical ideology reviewed earlier in this section. It began with a discussion of art and technology as interconnected aspects of human creativity, exemplified by Leonardo Da Vinci's and Albrecht Dürer's graphics.[71] According to the author, while the old masters managed to balance aesthetic considerations with scientific observation when dealing with technical subjects in their work, with Adolph Menzel, the former began to outweigh the latter. Rüdiger accused nineteenth-century artists of casting a "painterly haze" over technical subjects, camouflaging blast furnaces and railway bridges with smoke and steam, instead of confronting their inorganic essence and radical difference from natural phenomena heads on.[72] He recognized that industry and technology have radically altered the German landscape and the fabric of historic cities, but artists needed not to try to obscure this fact.[73] Instead, he called for an art that would come to terms with the "demonic dreadfulness of the machine" and master it.[74] In fact, for Rüdiger, new monumental structures like Todt's *Reichsautobahn* did not "disfigure" nature but "elevated" it.[75] Moreover, the great motorways that embraced curvy hillsides and leaped over valleys provided better access to and a new way of experiencing nature.[76] He sang praises to modern artists that dared to represent the "organic technology" of the *Reichautobahn* in all of its expanse and mammoth greatness.

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[71] Wilhelm Rüdiger, *Kunst und Technik* (Munich: Verlag der Deutschen Technik, 1941), V-VI.
[72] Rüdiger, *Kunst und Technik*, X-XIII.
[73] Rüdiger, XVI.
[74] Rüdiger, XV.
[75] Rüdiger, XXII.
[76] Rüdiger, XXII.

When it comes to Gessner's works featured in the folio, it is unclear to what extent they supported Todt's and Rüdiger's technical thought. *Triebstoffwerk* and *Hochöfen* each present a closeup view of a single element of an industrial facility. These fragments are taken out of their physical context, so no sensible dialogue with their natural surroundings could possibly be established. At the same time, with these pieces of equipment taking up the entire space of the canvas, Gessner's works could be seen as answering Todt's call to face the radical difference of technology head-on, without any reservation. Painted from below and puffing clouds of steam, the giant tower of *Hochöfen* does look like an otherworldly monster stretching its many limbs, ready to swallow up tiny figures of workers at its base. *Zeche Rheinpreussen* provided a slightly expanded view of an industrial facility, with several different structures and types of equipment making it into the picture frame. Nevertheless, the natural context is still missing, and it is unclear whether any natural surroundings exist beyond the enclosure of this hermetic, geometric, man-made world.

In 1941, Rüdiger also published an article in the art journal *Das Werk* entitled *Kunst und Technik. Gedanken zum Thema Industriebild* (*Art and Technology. Thoughts on the subject of Industry Painting*) prompted by an exhibition of technical subjects at the Great German Art Exhibition in Munich. In this article, Rüdiger extended Todt's system of thought to include architectural and technological developments in the industrial sector. According to Rüdiger, an entire section was dedicated specifically to industrial painting, but the vast majority of works on display did not live up to his expectations. Once again, he accused German artists of staying within the borders of conventional landscape painting and obscuring technical subjects' true nature with "picturesque atmospheric effects." "Many artists still lack the courage to understand the essence of technology in all its hardness and intrinsic laws, as something new, and to represent it in their works," said Rüdiger; "It is one thing, to paint summer clouds and sunny panoramas, and a completely different one – to paint coal mines, pitheads, and railway stations. The hard world of technology demands a harder hand and a tougher heart than a blooming summer idyll."[77] For Rüdiger, the only two artists who came close to addressing the "oppressive"

[77] "Neben den Arbeiten dieser beiden Künstler erscheint vieles andere im Stil konventionell und in der Formgebung matt und ungeordnet; es fehlt manchem Maler noch immer der Mut, das Wesen des Technischen in all seiner Härte und Eigengesetzlichkeit als etwas Neues zu begreifen und im Bilde zu formen. Man sieht offenbar noch nicht ein, daß es etwas anderes ist, Sommerwölkchen und sonnige Panoramen als vielmehr Kohlenbergwerke, Fördertürme und Bahnhöfe zu malen. Die harte Welt der Technik verlangt eine härtere Faust und ein härteres Herz als eine

and "disturbing" "monster" or "demon" which is modern technology are Richard Gessner and Otto Geigenberger.[78]

The only painting by Geigenberger on display in 1941 was an image of an *Industriehafen* purchased by none other than Fritz Todt. Rüdiger praised this image of an industrial port for its vibrant palette that brings an otherwise uninteresting landscape to life: "With Geigenberger, […] the large simple surfaces come to life in color. The brown of barges, the blackness of coal, the rusty-red of steel carcasses, and the dull, emerald green of the canal water. A few bright accents, a lifebuoy, or a green cabin roof against the dark background give Geigenberger's technical pictures a remarkable intensity of color."[79] Gessner, on the other hand, was represented with two artworks that year: *Treibstoffwerk im Bau* (previously reproduced in Rüdiger's folio) and *Hüttenwerk* – a general view of a metallurgical plant embedded in Rüdiger's article. Both are images of industrial sites, and both were purchased by Hitler for the Reich Chancellery. In his article, Rüdiger compared Gessner to a "master builder" who reassembles disparate elements that constitute an industrial site into a coherent and harmonious whole:

> Richard Gessner builds up his painting from slag heaps, cooling towers, from the cylinders of boilers, pipes, and chimneys like a master builder. As an artist, he understands the secret architectonic order underlying the functional juxtaposition of objects and transforms it into a magnificent ensemble: in a completely unpathetic, very sober, and quiet way, with a stroke of his brush, 'ugly' factories become 'castles of work.'[80]

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blühende Sommeridylle." Wilhelm Rüdiger, "Kunst und Technik. Gedanken zum Thema Industriebild," *Das Werk,* 21(1941): 192-193.

[78] Rüdiger, "Kunst und Technik," 192-193.

[79] "Bei Geigenberger dagegen werden die großen einfachen Flächen farbig lebendig. Das Braun der Lastkähne, das Schwarz des Kohlenbergs, das Eisenrot von Stahlgerippen und das schmutzig dumpfe Smaragdgrün des Kanalwassers stehen nebeneinander. Ein paar helle Masten, einleuchtender Rettungsring oder ein grünes Kajütendach klingen auf dem breitangelegten [sic!] dunklen Grunde als lichte malerische Signale und tragen dazu bei, die Technikbilder Geigenbergers zu farblicher Eindringlichkeit zu gestalten." Rüdiger, "Kunst und Technik," 193.

[80] "Richard Gessner baut aus Halden, Kühltürmen, aus den Zylindern der Kessel, aus Röhren und Schornsteinen wie ein Baumeister sein Bild auf. Als Künstler erkennt er in dem Zweckhaften Beieinander der Dinge eine geheime architektonische Ordnung, er rafft die Gestalt der ganzen Anlage zu Einer großartigen Baugruppe zusammen: auf ganz unpathetische, sehr strenge und schweigsame Art wandeln sich unter seinem Pinsel 'häßliche' Fabriken gleichsam zu 'Burgen der Arbeit.' " Rüdiger, "Kunst und Technik," 193.

This quote reveals an apparent paradox in Rüdiger's thinking: although he condemned images of technical subjects that build on academic conventions of landscape painting, he expressed in favor of artworks that assimilated modern industrial structures to previous architectural models. He accused German artists of brushing over the harsh forms of industrial architecture, and yet he applauded Gessner for reconfiguring the "ugly" individual components of a metallurgical plant into a completely different, a more familiar and aesthetically acceptable building type – a castle.

But most importantly, Rüdiger believed that it is artists like Gessner and Geigenberger who would be the ones to finally come up with a new, authentic National Socialist style of representation: "Perhaps we will learn from the artistic experience of this new, enormous technical world the great, simple and unpathetic conception of form, which is the prerequisite for a new, monumental style of painting hoped for by everyone."[81] This means that in 1941, eight years after Hitler's coming to power and the establishment of the Reich Chamber of Culture attempts to formulate an identifiable National Socialist visual aesthetic were still being viewed as unresolved. It also demonstrates the active role that artists themselves have been allocated in this project.

**Gessner at the Great German Art Exhibition (1937-1944)**

Although *Lob der Arbeit* and *Strassen Adolf Hitlers* were both very important exhibitions of state-supported art, they could not compare in prestige, outreach, and scope with the *Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung* (*GDK*) or the Great German Art Exhibition. The Great German Art Exhibition took place yearly from 1937 to 1944 at the House of German Art in Munich and was designed to showcase the best of state-approved art. Initially, the exhibited works were chosen in an open competition by a panel of Hitler's trusted artists and intellectuals such as Adolf Ziegler, Arno Breker, and Gerdy Troost. But a few weeks before the opening of the very first show in 1937, Hitler replaced the jury with his personal photographer Heinrich Hoffmann and regularly intervened in the selection process himself. Some 900 works that were exhibited at eight yearly shows included portraits of political leaders and state officials, exemplary "Aryan" workers, soldiers, farmers and female nudes, mythological and genre scenes, still-lives, landscapes, and

[81] "wir werden vielleicht am künstlerischen Erlebnis dieser neuen ungeheueren technischen Welt wieder die große einfache und unpathetische Auffassung der Form erlernen, die die Voraussetzung sein wird zu einem von allen erhofften neuen monumentalen Bildstil." Rüdiger, "Kunst und Technik," 193.

animal paintings. Yearly, a section of the exhibition was dedicated to representations of the German industry and technology, Hitler's ambitious building projects, and infrastructural development. The need for works documenting and commending these markers of national strength and economic prosperity created a constant demand for paintings of architectural and technical subjects.

And although *Lob der Arbeit* and *Strassen Adolf Hitlers* had been used by Gessner as a way of navigating conflicted systems of technical thought advanced by competing Party officials, the best indicator of Gessner's progressive alignment with the National Socialist regime in general is his repeated participation in *GDK*. Despite Gessner's so-called "untrustworthy" history (his alleged affiliation with "the Lodge" or membership in the dissolved *DJR*), his works were admitted to seven consecutive *GDK* exhibitions out of eight, with a total of 18 out of 32 submissions put on public display. The significance of Gessner's exhibition frequency and the number of successful submissions become apparent in light of participation data provided by Ines Schlenker in her study of *GDK*: of 2465 artists who exhibited works at the eight *GDK* exhibitions, 1077 artists or 44% exhibited only once and only 197 or around 8% had works shown at every or almost every *GDK* exhibition.[82] According to Ines Schlenker, "It is this relatively small circle of 197 artists participating in every or almost every *GDK* that could be called representatives of the organizers' aims and ideas. Only they had the chance to influence exhibitions as well as being influenced by them."[83] With his works shown at seven out of eight exhibitions, Gessner was part of that influential 8% that modeled state-endorsed forms of artistic expression and molded popular tastes. More specifically, he was part of an elite of successful artists specializing in technical subjects, a small group of artists that included Erich Merker, Franz Gerwin, and Ria Picco-Rückert; artists that together were setting the course for what Patrick Jung has provisionally labeled the "Heroic School" of industrial German art.[84]

The one exhibition to which Gessner failed to send his works was the *GDK* of 1937. Ines Schlenker calls that very first show a "trendsetter," for a "new German art awaited by so

[82] Schlenker, *Hitler's Salon,* 149.
[83] Schlenker, *Hitler's Salon,* 150.
[84] Patrick J. Jung, "Erich Mercker and 'Technical Subjects': Industrial Painting in the Eras of Weimar and Nazi Germany," *The Journal of the Society for Industrial Archeology* 34, nrs. 1/2 (2008): 149-164.

many."[85] In November 1936, the *Mitteilungsblatt der Reichskammer der bildende Künste* invited all "living German artists" to submit "their best works that ideally had not been shown before" to "an as comprehensive and high-quality survey of contemporary arts as possible."[86] "It is therefore intended to neither favor specific art trends nor exclude others in the selection of the works; on the other hand, a high standard will be applied to the artistic value of the submitted works."[87] Faced with such an open-ended call for submissions that includes no specific jury expectations regarding artistic style or subject matter, Gessner decided to err on the side of caution rather than take the risk of making a mistake. In 1937, debates between the reactionary and pro-modernist camps on what constituted "new German art," or "pure German art" were still ongoing, so Gessner left it to others to set the trend.

Unfortunately for Gessner, paintings of technical subjects were still scarce at the 1937 show: out of 896 works on display that year, only nine fell under the category of "civil engineering" and only three qualified as "industry."[88] Images of construction sites included Erich Mercker's oil painting *Zeppelinfeld im Bau* and Walter Prinzl's print of *Reichsautobahnbrücke über die Werra*. Although different in medium, both featured major National Socialist building projects – the Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg and Hitler's motorway system. (Fig. 54) Two industry paintings by Otto Hamel provided a glimpse inside a rolling mill crowded with steel-workers. (Fig. 55) In addition, a print by Hermann Kupferschmid showcased an impressive piece of industrial equipment, a *15000-Tonnen-Presse*. One thing is certain by looking at these few examples: if Gessner were hoping to see a unified visual language setting the trend specifically for technical subjects, he would have been disappointed. Both lifelike, naturalistic, and manifestly impressionistic styles of representation were featured. Moreover, no outside views of industrial facilities – Gessner's specialty – were shown at the 1937 *GDK*.

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[85] Schlenker, *Hitler's Salon,* 113; *Mitteilung der Reichskammer der bildenden Künste* 2, no. 2 (1937): 1 quoted in Schlenker, *Hitler's Salon,* 117.
[86] *Mitteilung der Reichskammer der bildenden Künste*, 1 quoted in Schlenker, *Hitler's Salon*, 116.
[87] "Es ist daher beabsichtigt,bei der Auswahl der Werke weder bestimmte Kunstrichtungen zu bevorzugen, noch andere auszuschließen; dagegen wird an den künstlerischen Wert der eingesandten Werke ein hoher Maßstab angelegt werden." "Aufruf an alle deutschen Künstler," *Münchner Zeitung,* 19 November 1936.
[88] Based on the subject classification system conceptualized by *GDK-Research,* an online database of digitized images and catalogues of the Great German Art Exhibitions 1937-1944 created by the Central Institute for Art History, Munich, accessed March 12, 2020, http://www.gdk-research.de/.

Gessner nevertheless decided to submit three of his own works the following year. Two of them – *Bau des Düsseldorfer Hauptbahnhof* and *Zeche Rheinpreussen (Teerdestillation)* were accepted for the 1938 show, and one unidentified submission was rejected. (Fig. 9, 21) While Gessner took his chances with a completely new work – *Zeche Rheinpreussen*, he balanced out this more daring submission with *Bau des Düsseldorfer Hauptbahnhof* that had passed the test of the *NS-Kulturgemeinde* in 1936. But other than simply being a safe, pre-verified choice, Gessner's decision to submit this specific artwork for his first *GDK* exhibition demonstrated his understanding of current cultural politics, whereby 1938 Rosenberg's *völkisch* camp behind *NS-Kulturgemeinde* had definitely secured a top hand over pro-modernist Goebbels in the debate on "good" German art.

**"Clarity" and "logic" as quality criteria for "new" German art: Gessner's path to aesthetic compliance**

Before we discuss Gessner's first two submissions, we need to address one other factor that might have influenced his choice of artworks for the 1938 show and accounted for a number of aesthetic adjustments made to his painting style in the consecutive years: Hitler's 1937 pronouncement on culture and the notion of "clarity."

Although scholars generally agree that the National Socialist state had failed to come up with a *positive* aesthetic program it could call its own,[89] and would rather define desirable artistic production *ex negativo*, by contrasting it with works branded "degenerate," Hitler's speech at the House of German Art did provide some clues as to what the aesthetic Reference Value for "new" German art might be. Notably, he emphasized "clarity" as one of its undisputable and quintessential traits. In his inaugural speech, the *Führer* contrasted "modern art" of the Weimar Republic with a "German art" that would eventually crystallize under National Socialism.[90] He believed that "clarity" was an inherent quality of "true" German painting, exemplified by the nineteenth-century Romantics. He appreciated "the clarity and simplicity with which these sensibilities were rendered"[91] and concluded that "to be German is to be clear. But that would

[89] For a historiographic review of this position on art under National Socialism see Potter, *Art of Suppression.*
[90] For all subsequent references to Hitler's 1937 pronouncement on German Culture unless otherwise indicated: Adolf Hitler, "Speech at the Opening of the Great German Art Exhibition" (speech, July 18, 1937), reproduced in Rabinbach, Anson, and Gilman, *The Third Reich Sourcebook*, 759-768.
[91] Hitler in Rabinbach and Gilman, 763.

also imply that to be *German* is to be logical."[92] Ultimately, for Hitler, "this law provides us [i.e., National Socialists] with a standard for measuring the value of [current and future] art."[93]

The absence of clarity and logic, on the other hand, distinguished most of the artistic avant-garde movements, such as "Impressionism […], Futurism, Cubism, and […] Dadaism."[94] He associated the lack of said "clarity" with "abominable paint smears and droppings on canvas," "spattering the canvas with paint," and other visual representation strategies that gave an "unfinished" look to paintings.[95] With these demeaning expressions, Hitler was most likely evoking the modernist strategy of applying thick, undiluted paint onto the canvas – the visible, textured, broken brushwork and its gestural quality.

Attended to by millions of cultural professionals seeking accommodation with the new government, transmitted over radio, and reiterated in the press, Hitler's pronouncements on culture would have reached Gessner in one form or another. As a result, compared to his earlier works, all of Gessner's submissions to the Great German Art Exhibitions demonstrated increased precision of line, greater detalization, and compositional order. He seems to have completely abandoned the use of palette knife and thick, saturated pigments in favor of smoother, tighter brushwork and muted tones.

*Bau des Düsseldorfer Hauptbahnhof* that passed the muster both with the *NS-Kulturgemeinde* in 1936 and the *GDK* jury in 1938 works as an indicator of Gessner's understanding of state demands and anticipates further changes to his work. (Fig. 21) The subject of this painting is the modernist building with a massive tower designed by Krüger and Eduard Behne to replace the smaller Wilhelmine head-house seen in the background. Gessner depicts the building as he would have seen it in 1932 – still but a structural carcass, fenced along the perimeter and covered with scaffolding from top to bottom. While the new building was only completed in 1936, and the east wing of the station was not open until 1937,[96] the heavy steam coming from behind the construction site alludes to the ongoing activity at the old head-house. By using repeated shapes or motifs in a composition, Gessner effectively relates the intimate

[92] Hitler in Rabinbach and Gilman, 762.
[93] Hitler in Rabinbach and Gilman, 762.
[94] Hitler in Rabinbach and Gilman, 761.
[95] Hitler in Rabinbach and Gilman, 763 and 767.
[96] "Kleine Stadtgeschichte Düsseldorf," *Stadtarchiv Landeshauptstadt Duesseldorf*, accessed September 5, 2019, http://www.duesseldorf.de/stadtarchiv/stadtgeschichte/gestern_heute/42_bilddokumentation.shtml.

connection between the city's burgeoning industrial economy and its infrastructural development: the clouds of locomotive steam blend in with the smoke coming from a distant plant, and the towering cranes mirror its slender smokestacks. The didactic clarity with which Gessner draws these parallels would have undoubtedly appealed to the National Socialist conception of art as easily accessible to the common *Volk*, the so-called "lay" audiences.[97]

For the spectator to visually access distant objects situated on overlapping planes, Gessner positions the observation point at a fair distance from and slightly above the scene. And yet, he makes no concession to optical distortion or aerial perspective: the minutia and precision of his brushwork cast every plank and rod is in sharp focus, make every brick and gear perfectly discernable. The high levels of visibility and detalization provided by Gessner in his work would have catered to Hitler's vision of official German painting as an art of perfect "clarity." Attesting to Gessner's accurate assessment of state demands, this work was purchased by none other than Hitler himself and placed in the collection of the Reich Chancellery.

Similar attention to minutia can be noted in *Treibstoffwerk im Bau* (1941) – another image of a construction site purchased by Hitler for the Reich Chancellery, this time – of an unidentified power plant. (Fig. 16) Here, instead of providing a birds-eye perspective onto the scene, Gessner positions the viewer in its midst, presenting a sharp close-up image of refinery cisterns. The neat row of identical fuel containers, surrounded by an orthogonal grid of piping, scattered planks, and stacked bricks, creates an overall impression of stasis, order, and regularity. These characteristics of Gessner's work under National Socialism stand in striking contrast with his earlier paintings, such as *Grafenberger Wald* (1919). (Fig. 56) Presenting a similar arrangement of repetitive vertical elements in the middle ground (tree trunks), the painting is nevertheless distinguished by craggy impasto brushwork that blurs the boundaries between individual elements of the composition and brings them into movement. At the same time, Gessner's *Treibstoffwerk im Bau* is reminiscent of a wall mosaic commissioned to Werner Peiner a few years prior by architect Rudolf Bruening[98] and featured at the previously discussed Peiner and Gessner show at the *Kunsthalle.* (Fig. 57) Intended for the reception hall of the Rhenania-Ossag (Shell Group) administration building in Hamburg, the mosaic features a pattern of

[97] Hitler, "Great German Art Exhibition," in Rabinbach, Anson, and Gilman, *The Third Reich Sourcebook*, 759 and 767.
[98] Pesch and Pesch, *Werner Peiner*, 23.

superimposed cooling towers and transmission lines. Peiner's 1932 mosaic and Gessner's 1941 painting share the same striking frontality and orthogonal arrangement of industrial elements.

Gessner's *Bahnhofsbau Düsseldorf* and *Treibstoffwerk im Bau* not only have a similar level of detalization but also stand out for their compositional clarity. This latter parameter has to do with breaking down the pictorial space into *easily identifiable* planes – foreground, middle ground, and background. Many of the twentieth-century avant-gardes have famously abandoned the accurate representation of three-dimensional reality, using optical distortions and confusing compositions to convey their individual, emotionally charged vision of the world. These pictorial strategies were deemed ineffective, however, when it came to relating the achievements of the National Socialist industry and technology to the broader masses. Therefore, for the Great German Art Exhibition, preference was given to images that were straight-forward, informative, and educational both in content and form.

Such was Gessner's *Kraftwerk Wasserburg am Inn* – a painting from 1940 that staged the construction of the hydroelectric generation plant on the river Inn. (Fig. 58) Just like the previous two, this painting was purchased by Adolf Hitler for the Reich Chancellery. Once again, the artist provides an elevated view of the construction site. The foreground recedes into an excavation pit, filled with construction materials, tools, and workers. Subtle elliptical lines that indicate the excavation benching gently scoop the viewer into the cavity, drawing their attention to the base of the monumental structure. A stark black shadow cast by the bank reinforcement further accentuates the epicenter of activity – the installation of turbine generators in the powerhouse. As the eye follows a stark vertical of the crane rising from the powerhouse to meet the completed sections of the superstructure, intense ochres transform into lighter shades of cream and yellow. Moving from left to right along the strong diagonal of the hydraulic power plant, warmer tones give way to cooler hues of grey and blue. The "hue-zoning" strategy used by Gessner to articulate different picture planes and various stages of construction contributes to its compositional eloquence.

Taken together, all the paintings submitted by Gessner to the Great German Art exhibition discussed in this chapter share a soothing and balanced color palette of sandy ochres and steely blues, which provide an atmospheric, uniform quality to his oeuvre. One might speculate that he abandoned clashing, often garish color combinations and stark contrasts seen in the

abovementioned *Industriestadt* or *Grafenberger Wald* because for Hitler, artists "who truly see blue meadows, green skies, and sulfur-yellow clouds" are "deformed cretins" with "defect in their eyesight."[99]

Another commonality in Gessner's *GDK* submissions that reflects the National Socialist ideology as advanced by Hitler is his treatment of human subjects as unimportant props. In 1933 already, Hitler declared:

> It is thus necessary that the individual should finally come to realize that his own pride is of no importance in comparison with the existence of his nation; that the position of the individual ego is conditioned solely by the interests of the nation as a whole; […] that above all the unity of a nation's spirit and will are worth far more than the freedom of the spirit and the will of an individual; and that the higher interests involved in the life of the whole must here set the limits and lay down the duties of interests of the individual.[100]

To be fair, the depiction of people had never been Gessner's forte; he was first and foremost a painter of technical, not human subjects. Whenever Gessner chose to populate his scenery with people, they appeared as a deindividuated, unruly force swarming the streets like in *Industriestadt* (Fig. 7) or highly stylized, stocky figures like in *Paris bei Nacht.* (Fig. 50) In both cases, their blank facial expressions and frozen bodily gestures do not give away any signs of human interiority or interpersonal engagement. Overall, however, Gessner's earlier works were a lot more populated than paintings exhibited at *GDK*. In this latter case, industrial facilities often appear deserted, self-sufficient, animated by forces of nature, rather than operated by human workers. Human figures are dwarfed by construction equipment and heaps of building blocks, reduced to insignificant specs, whose sole purpose is to provide a better sense of monumental scale to their architectural surroundings. It is possible to argue that Gessner's treatment of human subjects was at the very least encouraged by the decreased value of individual human lives in the Third Reich, where products of the collective labor were believed to provide a better representation of the *Kulturbegründer Volk* than accurate portraits of its individual members.

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[99] Hitler, "Great German Art Exhibition," in Rabinbach, Anson, and Gilman, *The Third Reich Sourcebook*, 766.
[100] Adolf Hitler speaking at Bueckeburg, Oct. 7, 1933, in *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler, 1922-39*, ed. N.H. Baynes, trans. Professor George Reisman (Oxford, 1942), 1: 871-72.

To conclude, as the head of the National Socialist state, Hitler was probably the single most important induction agent in the Third Reich. He had both the authority and intention to influence the visual arts, but, as the 1937 pronouncement on culture lends us to believe, had either intentionally avoided or failed to provide German artists with a universal and concrete aesthetic agenda. His demand for overall "clarity" was anything but clear in itself, resulting in a wide variety of possible responses from cultural professionals striving for accommodation, including didactic iconography and increased detalization in Gessner's case. Catering to the needs of specific commissions, observing his more prominent peers, and learning by trial and error, in 1941, he had finally succeeded in putting forth multiple successful *GDK* submissions at once. (see Appendix A)

At the same time, it is important to consider that Gessner had experimented with a realistic detailized representation style before the National Socialists' rise to power with the previously discussed *Shellhaus im Bau* serving as a typical example. This speaks to Gessner's artistic compliance as a convergence of pre-existing developments in his work with the preferences of the new regime. It also appears that German artists perceived Hitler's demand for clarity as pertaining only to paintings exhibited at such high-profile state-sponsored exhibitions as *GDK* but not to contemporary artistic production in general. Gessner, for instance, continued producing images of nature, industry, and popular entertainment in the aesthetic tradition of post-impressionism without any interference from cultural authorities. The painting *Märchenstadt* or *Phantastische Stadt* produced in 1938 (Fig. 59) – that is, the same year as the three artworks previously discussed in this section – represents a chaotic and heteroclite urban environment: buildings, barriers, stairs, galleries, and porticoes. As its title indicates, all these structures pertain to an imagined city, a city from a fairy tale (*Märchen*), an architectural fantasy. This surreal space is characterized by a distorted perspective and a general spatial confusion, bold outlines, and a thick application of paint, bright colors, and high contrasts. It is haunted, rather than inhabited by human figures whose imprecise contours give them an impression of oscillating movement, smudging their gestures and facial features. Condemned by Hitler in his 1937 speech, these formal features account for the popularity of *Märchenstadt* after World War II: it has been widely exhibited as a prime example of modernist painting from 1947 onward.[101]

[101] *Richard Gessner. Gemälde, Aquarelle, Zeichnungen und Lithos* (Galerie Oberstenfeld, Duisburg, 1947); Kunstausstellung Herrenhausen Orangerie (Hannover, 1947), catalogue number 50, plate 10; *Richard Gessner.*

But, rather than revealing Gessner's defiance of Hitler's view on art, the persistence of modernist tendencies in Gessner's work under National Socialism after 1937 speaks to the relative artistic freedom granted to artists who had otherwise proven their loyalty to the regime.

## Covert defiance at *GDK*? Richard Gessner's ambiguous architectural fantasy "*…a new life springs from ruins.*"

Compositional eloquence and clarity discussed in the previous section are apparent even in one of Gessner's most enigmatic architectural fantasies: *"…und neues Leben blüht aus den Ruinen"* or *"…a new life springs from ruins."* (1944) (Fig. 60) Submitted to the very last *GDK* in 1944, this large painting quite literally reproduces the semantic structure of its title, a verse that comes from the fourth act of Friedrich von Schiller's 1803-1804 drama *Wilhelm Tell.*[102] Ruins of a church emerge from a shadow in the lower left, while evenly-illuminated, monumental structures tower at a distance. Cranes that appear next to these neoclassical buildings and scaffolding covering their walls once again identify the scene as a construction site. The strategic placement of stone blocks first in the foreground, then next to a steamboat pointing in the direction of the construction site seems to suggest that material from a ruined church is literally being repurposed for the new modern buildings. The analogical relation between the ruined church and the conglomeration of unidentifiable neoclassical structures is once again articulated by means of their similar stepped silhouettes. Moreover, the old and the

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*Einzelausstellung* (Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf, 1964), catalogue number 16; *Richard Gessner. Einzelausstellung* (Märkisches Museum, Witten, 1965), catalogue number 9; *Richard Gessner. Einzelausstellung* (Galerie Alex Vömel, Düsseldorf 1970), plate 5.16; *Retrospektive. Richard Gessner. Arbeiten aus 70 Jahren* (Stadtsparkasse im Sparkassen-hochhaus, Düsseldorf 1982), catalogue number 39; *Richard Gessner. Arbeiten aus 70 Jahren, Einzelausstellung* (Stadtsparkasse, Oberhausen, 1982), number 11; *Richard Gessner zum 90,* catalogue number 7; Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, 221.

[102] Attinghausen richtet sich langsam in die Höhe, mit großem Erstaunen:
Hat sich der Landmann solcher Tat verwogen,
Aus eignem Mittel, ohne Hülf der Edeln,
Hat er der eignen Kraft so viel vertraut –
Ja, dann bedarf es unserer nicht mehr,
Getröstet können wir zu Grabe steigen,
Es lebt nach uns – durch andre Kräfte will
Das Herrliche der Menschheit sich erhalten.
Er legt seine Hand auf das Haupt des Kindes, das vor ihm auf den Knieen liegt.
Aus diesem Haupte, wo der Apfel lag,
Wird euch die neue bessre Freiheit grünen,
Das Alte stürzt, es ändert sich die Zeit,
*Und neues Leben blüht aus den Ruinen.*
Freidrich Schiller, *Wihelm Tell*, 4.2.10- 22, my italics. https://www.friedrich-schiller-archiv.de/wilhelm-tell-text/4-aufzug-2-szene/3/.

new buildings have been allocated an equal amount of canvas space that further emphasizes their relatedness.

What distinguishes this construction site image from the previous three works is the ostensibly allegorical meaning that it acquires when considered in its historical context. By the time this painting was displayed at the Great German Art Exhibition, most national resources had been deployed toward the war, and all large-scale building activity unrelated to military efforts had been shut down.[103] At the House of German Art, it was surrounded by images of war heroism that dominated the 1944 *GDK* and were intended to uplift the spirits of the German people. In this context, *"…a new life springs from ruins"* can be interpreted as a hopeful image of post-war reconstruction, a lyrical, yet an optimistic vision of a new era, wherein National Socialist building economy would resume, and monumental neoclassical structures would "tower over millennia of the future, like the cathedrals of our [German] past."[104]

There is one other possible interpretation, however, that might reveal a covert defiant streak in Gessner. Schiller's play *Wilhelm Tell* had immense popularity and was frequently staged during the Nazi regime. Describing the freedom struggle of Swiss peasants against the Habsburgs, it was considered a drama celebrating a strong popular leader and a "healthy *Volksturm.*"[105] However, it was banned from public performance in 1941 after an attempt on Hitler's life by the young Swiss theology student Maurice Bavaud.[106] In 1944, a direct reference to the banned play could have been perceived as an explicit critique of German *Gleichschaltung* policies and an alignment with the regime's critics who associated Hitler with the arrogant tyrant defeated by Tell. Unfortunately, there is no sufficient data – such as Gessner's testimony or other belated attempts at resistance – to support this hypothesis.

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[103] Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression,* notably 5, 25, 61.
[104] Adolf Hitler, "Speech at a 1937 Party Rally in Nuremberg" (speech, 1937) quoted in Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich,* 197.
[105] Karl-Heinz Schoeps, *Literature and Film in the Third Reich*, trans. Kathleen M. Dell'Orto (New York and Woodbridge: Camden House, 2004), 60.
[106] Georg Ruppelt, *Schiller im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland: d. Versuch e. Gleichschaltung* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1979), 43.

**Allegory in architectural and technical subjects painting: On the symbolical meaning and political significance of Gessner's *Burgen unserer Zeit***

Another *GDK* construction image that stands out in this late National Socialist period of Gessner's career is *Burgen unserer Zeit* (1943). (Fig. 24) In 1942, Gessner was commissioned by the Phillip Holzmann Company to capture the construction process of the Heidershofen dam on the river Enns, Styria. In his painting of the building, Gessner placed the viewer directly in the riverbed, at the heel of the dam, on its upstream side that received the water load. This monumental wall was buttressed with tower-like structures and topped with a broad crest roadway. The section of the dam captured by Gessner takes up the entire picture frame, barely leaving any space for contextualization.

The image was both meant to document a specific construction project and allude to other architectural projects of paramount political and military importance. On the one hand, the documentary value of representation has been ensured by Gessner's first-hand experience of the building process. From excavation to completion, which took nearly one year, Richard Gessner and his wife Inge Gessner lived in a barrack on the construction site.[107] Gessner had also produced many photographs of the dam at different stages of construction, photographs he could refer back to later in his atelier, and reproduce for increased accuracy.[108] (Fig. 61) On the other hand, the image acquires allegorical, symbolic meaning that reveals the artist's continuous support for the National Socialist regime.

The title of the painting – *Cities/towns of our time* – elevated the subject matter to a historical city-building act, transforming the utilitarian structure of Heidershofen into Rüdiger's "castle of work."[109] Massive cylindrical buttresses stand tall like towers or a medieval fortress, and pervasive wooden scaffolding that plaques the dam alludes to the vernacular architecture of the same period. Instead of integrating the modern hydraulic structure into its natural context as he did with *Kraftwerk Wasserburg am Inn,* Gessner inscribed it into the centuries-long history of German architecture. (Fig. 58) The effect, however, is comparable: both *Kraftwerk Wasserburg*

[107] Gessner, "Lebenslauf," in Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, 178.
[108] A selection of Gessner's photographs, including images of the Heidershofen dam are preserved in the Photographische Sammlung SK, Stiftung Kultur der Sparkasse (Köln/Bonn), accessed March 31, 2020, https://www.photographie-sk-kultur.de/sammlung-a-z/richard-gessner/.
[109] Rüdiger, "Kunst und Technik," 193.

*am Inn* and *Burgen unserer Zeit* legitimized and normalized the civil engineering projects on a massive scale, endowed them with utmost importance, and inspired national pride.

This heroic image of an unbreachable stronghold had further political connotations if considered in tandem with Phillip Holzmann's other major construction projects of the 1930s and 1940s. During the National Socialist period, the company was involved with some of the most important state-funded building projects like the new Reich Chancellery in Berlin, the Nuremberg Rally Grounds, and the Reichsautobahn. But what's more important, Holzmann also had its part in constructing the two most extensive military defense systems during World War II under the command of Organisation Todt – Westwall and the Atlantic Wall.[110]

Westwall or the Siegfried Line was a defensive line with a system of border fortifications, bunkers, tunnels, "Dragon's teeth" tank traps, and Czech hedgehogs built during the later 1930s along the French-German border. (Fig. 62) In 1942, Hitler put Todt and his organization in charge of an even larger military project – the Atlantic Wall, to be built on the coasts of occupied France, the Netherlands, and Belgium in preparation for an anticipated Allied offensive. (Fig. 63) Despite their utmost military importance, these structures were geographically scattered and visually unimpressive. It would have been extremely difficult to capture their national significance in a single image.

An attempt to immortalize the Siegfried line has been made by Ernst Vollbehr, author of *Strassen Adolf Hitlers*: in 1941, he published a book of aquarelle paintings commissioned by Fritz Todt – *Mit der OT beim Westwall und Vormarsch: Tagebuchaufzeichnungen und farbige Bilddokumente des Kriegmalers*. (Fig. 64) Although quite informative, Vollbehr's "daily sketches and color illustrations" did not live up to the high fine arts standard of the Great German Art Exhibition. At the same time, Gessner's historicized and heroic image of a monumental, impenetrable, unbreachable dam, with its towers and embrasures, did a much better job of capturing the full defensive potential and military importance of both the Siegfried Line and the Atlantic wall. In 1943, exhibiting this large-scale painting at *GDK* would have supported state efforts to instill a sense of security and protection in a German population coping with the Third Reich's military defeats on the Eastern Front. In other words, with *Burgen unserer Zeit*

[110] Manfred Pohl, Philipp Holzmann. *Geschichte eines Bauunternehmens 1849 – 1999* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 1999).

Gessner both completed a corporate commission and fulfilled a state demand for reassuring propaganda images at a time of struggle.

**Concluding remarks**

The example of Gessner's artistic career discussed in this chapter confirms that the compliance of creative professionals in the Third Reich was a complex phenomenon that had both structural (integrating with state institutions) and aesthetic (making required formal and stylistic adjustments) components. To these two previously considered dimensions of artistic compliance, I would also suggest adding a social or relational one: under National Socialism, compliance was also about forming and maintaining personal and professional networks.

This case study has demonstrated that compliance is far from being an abrupt shift in attitudes and dispositions that occurs upon a regime change. Rather, the development of artistic practices and social contacts retrospectively associated with compliance happens gradually, often *before* a political shift occurs at the institutional level, and therefore, cannot be reduced to passive obedience to state-imposed rules and regulations. We have seen that Gessner stepped onto the crossroads between progressive modernism and cultural conservatism before the rise of National Socialism. Standing on this crossroads "unencumbered" by firm political allegiances, he was able to construct a vast network of strategic acquaintances and mobilize them for various professional opportunities. Depending on the particular historical moment, he could either integrate with his progressive, socially critical peers from *Das Junge Rheinland* or mobilize his connections to more conservative cultural figures, such as Werner Peiner.

The coexistence of conflicting viewpoints on German culture in the first few years of the regime resonated with Gessner's own search for a visual idiom and further complicated the practice of artistic compliance. Although by 1936-1937 significant efforts had been deplopyed by sate authorities to silence the public debate between the pro-modernist and the reactionary camps, in the absence of a universal and unequivocal official quality criteria for desirable German art, their competing agendas had a lasting effect on aesthetic choices made by German artists. Therefore, although Richard Gessner never belonged to either the German Art Society or the National Socialist Students' League, on his path to accommodate state demands and cater to its Nazification efforts, he still felt compelled to balance the *völkish* and the pro-modernist aesthetic agendas: while industrial landscape and the technical subjects remained his favored

genres, the visual language used to depict these modernist themes varied greatly in terms of naturalism and detalization between 1933 and 1945, without necessarily following a *linear* path from post-impressionism to National Socialist realism. Similarly, while his ambition pushed him to exhibit his work at the most high-profile state-supported display of German art in the Third Reich – *GDK*, a large part of his commissions was still ensured by the private sector, which was more open to formal variety in the visual arts.

Furthermore, the debates on German culture fed into discussions taking place in other spheres of activity under National Socialism, such as industry, technology, and engineering, prompting Gessner to reflect on major infrastructural, architectural, and even military developments of Hitler's regime. But in the absence of clear conceptual and stylistic guidelines for technical subjects, he chose to follow a well-tried strategy: he associated with party officials and influential industrialists representing divergent positions on these matters. At the same time, this double alignment seems to have had no impact whatsoever on the final product; meaning that no special aesthetic adjustments were made by Gessner in that area to warrant the support of either the "*völkisch*-technocratic" or the "technopolitical" camp.

The same attitude warranted Gessner a successful post-war career. Although at least four of his works have been seized as "German War Art," by Captain Gordon Gilkey's "confiscation program," transferred to the Central Collecting Point in Munich and shipped to the U.S., Gessner managed to escape criminalization and persecution.[111] He continued painting industrial architecture, adjusting his style of representation to fit the renewed international interest in abstract painting in the aftermath of World War II. The shift from hyper-realistic images of construction sites to representations of industrial structures as arrangements of crude geometrical forms and fields of color was quick and drastic. Already in 1946, he painted a manifestly cubist still-life with a jug; by 1947, he applied the same kind of visual language to architecture, and by

[111] In the aftermath of World War II Captain Gordon Gilkey of the U.S. military forces was entrusted with carrying out a pledge made by Franklin D. Roosevelt at the Yalta Conference in 1945: to "remove all Nazi and militarist influences from public office and from the cultural and economic life of the German people." Gilkey's mission was to seek out and oversee the seizure and removal of all quote-on-quote "militaristic artworks" (i.e. propaganda art) in Germany. He called it the "confiscation program." According to the Receipts For Cultural Objects : Shipments To United States Authorities of the Cultural Object Movement and Control Records, the four artworks by Gessner confiscated by Gilkey were Hochöfen (1940), Hüttenwerk (1941), Das große Bauwerk (1944) and Und neues leben blüht as den Ruinen (1944). NARA M1946. Administrative records, correspondence, denazification orders, custody receipts, property cards, Jewish restitution claim records, property declarations, and other records from the Munich CCP. The National Archives, Washington.

the end of the 1950s, Gessner was filling his canvases with non-objective shapes, patterns, and bold linework. (Fig. 65-67) It seems that at least in Richard Gessner's case, compliance was not so much an outcome of authoritarian control over the visual arts as a persistent professional attitude, an established adaptive strategy that transcended specific induction agents and corresponding political regimes.

## Chapter 4

## Compliant Architectural Representation as *Re*-Mediation

Chapter 3 discussed the social, structural, and aesthetic aspects of artistic compliance, specifically as they pertained to the life and work of Richard Gessner, a painter of industry and construction sites that found accommodation with the National Socialist regime. We have seen that important changes in Gessner's visual language coincided with major political shifts that rocked Germany in the twentieth century and echoed Hitler's pronouncements on culture. But although the *Führer* did set some quality criteria for National Socialist art, conflicted or parallel voices coming from within the German political and intellectual circles (artists' associations, competing ministries, and party organizations) prevented the consolidation of a single-minded aesthetic agenda in the Third Reich. Gessner's aesthetic choices between 1933 and 1945 were, therefore, in many ways, based on his personal assessment of the complex cultural situation in Germany, rather than directly dictated from above by a centralized and unanimous authority. His active and timely engagement with the changing political ideas and the ability to navigate conflicted artistic trends warranted him professional recognition in the Third Reich.

This chapter delves even deeper into the topic of *aesthetic* compliance, moving beyond formal and stylistic analysis of a single medium toward an examination of the complex intermedial relations between architectural production and its image, and interrogating visual representation strategies that intervened directly into the viewer's experience of time, space and materiality. I will be focusing on the state-approved representations of one of the largest ongoing urban development projects in the Third Reich – the National Socialist Party Rally Grounds (*Reichsparteitagsgelände*) in Nuremberg. The specificity of this particular subject matter lies in the fact that unlike structures depicted by Richard Gessner – projects of the private industry sector and various branches of the military – the Rally Grounds constituted one of the so-called *Führerbauten,* a public construction project personally controlled by Hitler. The stakes of compliance would have necessarily been higher, and the opportunities for creative freedom – much more limited for this kind of artistic production. In order to test this assumption, Chapter 4 looks at images of the Rally Grounds exhibited at the *Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung* (*GDK*)

between 1937 and 1942 – a series of high-profile annual exhibitions of state-supported paintings, sculpture, and graphic arts that took place at the House of German Art in Munich.

I will examine the ways in which compliant visual artists' engagement with the National Socialist ideas on time, space, and materiality of the built environment may be said to constitute a *re*-mediation practice; that is, a dynamic and constructive process that either involves evaluating and reconciling diverging positions on a subject (e.g., Gessner in Chapter 3), or alternatively, establishing connections between pictorial and built media, appropriating and refashioning the representational practices of architecture. This chapter demonstrates that instead of passively documenting National Socialist architectural production and letting "stones speak for themselves," artists like Curt Winkler, Erich Mercker, Max Herterich, Paul Herrmann, Otto Albert Hirth, Blasius Spreng, and Karl Leipold became its active interpreters. I will interrogate the role that their depictions of National Socialist buildings and building projects played in overcoming major drawbacks of the architectural medium, such as immovability, drawn-out and costly production while also bridging the gulf between design and construction, regime's expectations and historical realities.

This chapter unfolds in four parts. An introductory section provides a concise overview of the National Socialist conceptions of architecture specifically in relation to the notions of history and temporal duration; it also conceptualizes the genre of architectural landscape painting as a remediation practice and presents the National Socialist Party Rally Grounds. Part I discusses representations of the *Märzfeld* arena as a site of perpetual building activity; Part II concerns itself with depictions of the German Stadium and the affordances of architectural fantasy; and Part III examines the tension between permanence and ephemerality in representations of the Zeppelin Field and the Congress Hall.

**National Socialist architecture and time**

"Total terror, the essence of totalitarian government," Hannah Arendt wrote, "is supposed to provide the forces of nature or history an incomparable instrument to accelerate their movement."[1] First raised in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* in 1951, the questions of historical consciousness and the experience of temporal passing in National Socialist Germany have

[1] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego, New York, London: A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace & Company, 1951), 466.

received sustained scholarly attention since the 1990s. In 1995, philosopher Peter Osborne described fascism as an example of politics that centrally involves struggles over the experience of time, "a politics which takes the temporal structures of social practices as the specific objects of its transformative (or preservative) intent."[2] Osborne believes that the National Socialist political "reality" is lived as an endless repetition of "the moment of vision and resolute decision," "an ecstatic-horizontal temporality of *Dasein.*"[3] Similarly, one of the founding figures of comparative fascist studies, Roger Griffin, locates the origins of fascism in projects that inaugurated a new experience of time.[4] In his seminal book *Modernism and Fascism* (2007), Griffin proclaimed the concept of *Aufbruch*, described both as a violent and adventurous palingenetic mood of "breaking through to new beginnings," and the state of messianic expectancy that precedes it, to be the foundation of fascist culture.[5] Building upon postwar scholarly literature, this section identifies two parallel trends within National Socialist conceptions of historical consciousness and temporal passing that fed into the architectural discourse in the Third Reich: German intellectuals' presentism and Adolf Hitler's future-orientedness. Making this distinction implies that there can be qualitatively different experiences of time at one historical moment.

Upon Adolf Hitler's coming to power, many highly esteemed German intellectuals expressed their hopes for national regeneration, conceived as a process of disburdening or relinquishing from the rule of historical time. In 1934, Julius Petersen, the leading scholar of German classicism and professor at the University of Berlin, recorded his excitement for the new regime in the following terms: "Tomorrow has become today: the feeling that the world is ending has given way to a sense of new beginning. The ultimate goal now stands out unmistakably within the field of vision opening up before us; all faith in miracles is now harnessed to the active transformation of the present."[6] Eight years later, discussions on the distinctive experience of the past, current and projected events under National Socialism were

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[2] Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and Avant-garde* (London: Verso Books, 1995), xii, 200.
[3] Osborne, *The Politics of Time*, 167. *Dasein* is a fundamental concept in the existential philosophy of Martin Heidegger. It evokes a mode of "Being-in-the-World" and engaging with others experienced in the present time.
[4] Roger Griffin, *A Fascist Century*, ed. Matthew Feldman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 6.
[5] Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism: The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 7.
[6] Julius Petersen, Die Sehnsucht nach dem Dritten Reich in deutscher Sage und Dichtung (*The Longing for the Third Reich in German Legend and Poetry*) (Stuttgart: Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1934), 1, quoted in Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism*, 1.

taken up by the arts journalist Gert Theunissen. In an architectural journal *Der Deutsche Baumeister,* Theunissen extolled the newly-acquired power of the German people to "*fashion* history."[7] Contesting the image of National Socialism as an exclusively conservative or reactionary ideology, he portrayed it as one of uncompromising Heideggerian Being-in-the-World and direct involvement (*Bewandtnis*): "[it is] not a century of historical reflection," he declared, "but rather one in which the center of gravity lies in the present, in the constant availability and vigilant expectation of immediate action, in a word: in action itself."[8] As the German troops marched on Europe and the "final solution to the Jewish question" was being drafted in Berlin, Theunissen proclaimed Hitler's main achievement to be a "profound revolution that will deliver us [the Germans] from historical subjection and bind us to the present."[9]

While German intellectuals hoped for a present-oriented cultural politics, Hitler's own obsession with architecture stemmed from the medium's ability to endure through time and transmit National Socialist ideas and achievements to *future* generations. His massive building campaign was bound to create "witnesses"[10] to his regime that, by virtue of their extraordinary longevity, would "reach into future millennia"[11] and "speak"[12] on his behalf to distant posterity.

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[7] "dann wird es klar, daß wir zwar in einem historischen, das heißt *geschichtsbildenden*, aber keineswegs in einem historisierenden Jahrhundert leben, sondern vielmehr in einer Epoche, deren Schwerpunkt in der Gegenwart, in der ständigen Bereitschaft, in der Wachsamkeit zum sofortigen Handeln, mit einem Wort: in der Tat liegt." Gert Theunissen, "Der Mensch der Technik," *Der Deutsche Baumeister,* Heft 2 (February 1942): 10, my italics.

[8] Theunissen, "Der Mensch der Technik," 10.

[9] "Der Nationalsozialismus — und darin liegt sein Daimonion und seine größte, historisch wirksame Macht, wenn wir auf die Entwicklung der Zivilisation im Laufe der letzten hundert Jahre blicken — steht dem Ziel der sich in großer Tiefe vollziehenden Umwandlung aus der historischen Gebundenheit in die Bindung an die Gegenwart am nächsten, denn im Nationalsozialismus ist zwar ein starkes Geschichtsbewußtsein vorhanden, und er orientiert sich auch weitgehend nach großen geschichtlichen Erfahrungen, aber dieses Geschichtsbewußtsein und diese Orientierung drehen sich ausschließlich in den Angeln des Jetzt und Hier." Theunissen, "Der Mensch der Technik," 10.

[10] "Den gerade sie werden mithelfen, unser Volk politisch mehr denn je zu einen und zu stärken, sie werden gesellschaftlich für die Deutschen zum Element des Gefühls einer stolzen Zusammengehörigkeit, sie werden sozial die Lächerlichkeit sonstiger irdischer Differenzen gegenüber diesen gewaltigen gigantischen Zeugen unserer Gemeinschaft beweisen, und sie werden psychologisch die Bürger unseres Volkes mit einem unendlichen Selbstbewusstsein erfüllen, nämlich dem: Deutsch zu sein!" Adolf Hitler, "Rede auf der Kulturtagung des Parteitags der NSDAP in Nürnberg am 7. September 1937," reproduced in Jörn Düwel and Niels Gutschow, *Baukunst und Nationalsozialismus. Demonstration von Macht in Europe 1940-1943. Die Ausstellung Neue Deutsche Baukunst von Rudolf Wolters* (Berlin: DOM Publishers, 2015), 470.

[11] "Deshalb sollen diese Bauwerke nicht gedacht sein für das Jahr 1940, auch nicht für das Jahr 2000, sondern sie sollen hineinragen gleich den Domen unserer Vergangenheit in die Jahrtausende der Zukunft." Hitler, "Rede auf der Kulturtagung," reproduced in Düwel and Gutschow, *Baukunst und Nationalsozialismus,* 471.

[12] "Ja, sollten selbst die letzten lebenden Zeugen eines solches Volkes ihren Mund geschlossen haben, dann werden die Steine zu sprechen beginnen." Hitler, "Rede auf der Kulturtagung," reproduced in Düwel and Gutschow, *Baukunst und Nationalsozialismus,* 466.

The *Führer*, therefore, entrusted to National Socialist buildings the mission of both witnessing "the greatness of the [German] people" and testifying to their "moral right to existence" for generations to come.[13] This projective and anticipatory approach to architecture is exemplified in Hitler's perception of historical monuments: "The gigantic works of the Third Reich are a token of its cultural renascence and shall one day belong to the inalienable cultural heritage of the Western world, just as the great cultural achievements of this world in the past belong to us today."[14] In other words, Hitler believed that all great structures of past civilizations were built specifically for their posterity to admire rather than for their contemporaries to use, and founded his architectural campaign on this diachronic model.

His programmatic speech at the opening of the first German Architecture and Arts and Crafts Exhibition (*Deutsche Architektur- und Kunsthandwerkausstellung*) that took place at the House of German Art in Munich on January 23, 1938, claimed for the German people the right and privilege of architectural communication: "Their word is then that word which bears witness longer than the spoken: it is the word of stone!"[15] Praising scale models and plans of his monumental building projects showcased at this exhibition, he extolled symbolic and representational functions of architecture as future-oriented while disregarding practical concerns as present-bound: "And for the first time since the age of our great cathedral buildings," he claimed, "you will see here a truly great architecture exhibited, […] an architecture that reaches far, far beyond everyday life and its needs, and that can claim to withstand the critical scrutiny of

[13] "Such visible demonstrations of the higher qualities of a people, as the experience of history proves, will remain for thousands of years as an unquestionable testimony not only to the greatness of a people but also to their moral right to existence." Adolf Hitler, *Liberty, Art, Nationhood. Three Addresses delivered at the Seventh National Socialist Congress, Nuremberg, 1935* (Berlin: Müller and Sons, 1936), 38–39.
[14] Adolf Hitler, "Speech at the Kulturtagung (Culture conference) of the Nuremberg Party Congress" (speech, 6 September, 1938), in Baynes. *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler,* 1:597. Three years earlier, in his address to the Seventh Nuremberg Rally in September 1935, Hitler had already asked the German people a widely-cited rhetorical question that revealed his view of architectural monuments as both grounds and tokens of greatness of ancient civilizations: "What would the Egyptians be without their pyramids and their temples and the artistic decorations that surround their daily lives? What would Greeks be without Athens and the Acropolis? What would the German emperors of the Middle Ages be without their cathedral and their imperial palaces?" Aldolf Hitler, *Adolf Hitler from Speeches 1933-1938* (Berlin: Terramare Office, 1938), 82.
[15] "Wenn Völker große Zeiten innerlich erleben, so gestalten sie diese Zeiten auch äußerlich. Ihr Wort ist dann überzeugender als das gesprochene. Es ist das Wort aus Stein!" Adolf Hitler, "Speech at the opening of the *Deutschen Architektur- und Kunsthandwerkausstellung* at the House of German Art" (speech, January 23, 1938), quoted in Gerdy Troost, *Das Bauen im neuen Reich* (Building in the new Reich) (Bayreuth: Gauverlag Bayerische Ostmarkt, 1939), n.p.

millennia and to be for millennia the pride of the people who created these works."[16] In other words, for Hitler, a divestment from contemporary practical matters warranted the effectiveness of diachronic architectural communication.

The architectural imperative "to found for eternity"[17] was ultimately connected to Adolf Hitler's desire for transcendence and immortality. The effectiveness of diachronic communication ascribed to built structures and their capacity to endure through time, however, did not depend on their resilience to the effects of aging. Physical deterioration was not only acceptable but expected from Hitler's monumental "witnesses," insofar as it occurred in an aesthetically pleasing manner. In 1936, while planning the Berlin Olympics, Hitler's architect in chief Albert Speer came up with the "theory of ruin value" (*Theorie vom Ruinenwert*) – a set of construction principles to be applied primarily to the new community and Party buildings. According to Speer, this reflection on building standards for National Socialist architecture was prompted by a "lamentable spectacle" of "metallic debris" that remained from the demolition of a tramway station made from reinforced concrete and claimed that his theory was meant to prevent aesthetically *un*acceptable disintegration of buildings.[18] Speer's "theory" boiled down to using durable, natural building materials, such as granite, and providing additional support to load-bearing vertical elements. This would ensure a graceful aging of the Party and community structures and their gradual transformation into picturesque ruins, akin to those of classical antiquity.[19] Needless to say, the "theory of ruin value" resonated with Hitler's conceptions of architectural heritage and received his most enthusiastic approval.[20]

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[16] "Und zum ersten Mal seit dem Zeitalter unserer großen Dombauten sehen Sie hier eine wahrhaft große Architektur ausgestellt, das heißt eine Architektur, die sich nicht selbst verbraucht im Dienste kleiner Alltagsaufträge und Bedürfnisse, sondern eine Architektur, die über den Alltag und seine Bedürfnisse weit, weit hinausreicht und die beanspruchen kann, der kritischen Prüfung von Jahrtausenden standzuhalten und für Jahrtausende der Stolz des Volkes zu sein, das diese Werke geschaffen hat." Adolf Hitler, "Speech at the opening of the *Deutschen Architektur- und Kunsthandwerkausstellung* at the House of German Art" (speech, January 23, 1938), quoted in Düwel and Gutschow, *Baukunst und Nationalsozialismus,* 146.

[17] Hannah Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, Jerome Kohn ed. New York: Schocken Books, 2005, 121.

[18] "It was hard to imagine that rusting heaps of rubble could communicate these heroic inspirations which Hitler admired in the monuments of the past. My 'theory' was intended to deal with this dilemma. By using special materials and by applying certain principles of statics, we should be able to build structures which even in a state of decay, after hundreds or (such were our reckonings) thousands of years would more or less resemble Roman models." Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich. Memoirs by Albert Speer*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 56.

[19] Speer, *Inside the Third Reich,* 56.

[20] "That I could even conceive of a period of decline for the newly founded Reich destined to last a thousand years seemed outrageous to many of Hitler's closest followers. But he himself accepted my ideas as logical and

To conclude then, there is a marked discrepancy in the way in which the experience of temporal passing was described by German intellectuals and that of their *Führer*. While the former hoped for a present-oriented cultural politics, the latter preferred to engage in projective and diachronic architectural thinking. As we will see further on, architectural landscape painting – notably images of state and community buildings – reflected this tension, placing compliant artists in an active position of mediators. Their role in the process was to negotiate the presentist and future-oriented trends in architectural discourse while also *re*mediating the State's utopian impulse, transforming utopic projection into actuality, thus sustaining and actively contributing to state propaganda.

**Architectural landscape painting as a remediation practice**

To understand how compliant artists working in the genre of architectural landscape painting found themselves in a position to interrogate or reinterpret the National Socialist ideas on time, space, and materiality, we must first discuss the ways in which images of the built environment may be said to constitute an intermedial artistic practice. To do so, we turn to Irina Rajewsky's typology of intermedial practices and apply the concept of "intermedial references" to architectural representation.

According to philologist and cultural theorist Irina Rajewsky, "intermediality may serve foremost as a generic term for all those phenomena that (as indicated by the prefix "inter") in some way take place between media;" phenomena that in some way involve "a crossing of borders between media."[21] She identifies three types of intermediality: medial transposition, medial combination, and intermedial references.[22] The first category conceives of intermediality in the sense of medial transposition, i.e., an intermedial relation where a given media product or its substratum is transformed into another medium. The second category has to do with combining at least two conventionally distinct media or medial forms of articulation, each present in their own materiality. The last category of intermediality includes intermedial references, "understood as meaning-constitutional strategies that contribute to the media

illuminating. He gave orders that in the future the important buildings of his Reich were to be erected in keeping with the principles of this 'law of ruins.'" Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 56.

[21] Irina O. Rajevsky, "Intermediality, Intertextuality, and Remediation: A Literary Perspective on Intermediality," *Intermedialités*, no. 6 (Fall 2005): 46, 50.

[22] Rajewsky, "Intermediality, Intertextuality, and Remediation," 52-53.

product's overall signification."[23] She specifies that in intermedial references, "the media product uses its own media-specific means, either to refer to an individual work produced in another medium (i.e., what in the German tradition is called *Einzelreferenz*, "individual reference") or to refer to a particular medial subsystem (such as a specific film genre) or another medium *qua* system (*Systemreferenz*, "system reference")."[24] As a result, "The given product constitutes itself partly or wholly in relation to the work, system, or subsystem to which it refers."[25] Rajewsky postulates that in this third category, "intermediality designates a communicative-semiotic concept," but "rather than combining different medial forms of articulation, the given media-product thematizes, evokes, or imitates elements or structures of another, conventionally distinct medium through the use of its own media-specific means."[26] Rajewsky explains that with intermedial references, "a given media product cannot use or genuinely reproduce elements or structures of a different medial system through its own media-specific means; it can only evoke or imitate them. Consequently, an intermedial reference can only generate an illusion of another medium's specific practices."[27]

It is this last form of intermedial relations that is of particular interest for our discussion of architectural representation in the Third Reich. Compliant visual artists use the media-specific means of painting and graphic art to capture construction sites, buildings, and urban infrastructure. In large part, this subject matter defines architectural representation, but, according to Rajewsky's logic, the reverse is also true: painting and drawing become meaning-constitutional strategies that contribute to the represented architecture's signification. Graphic arts and architecture thus enter into a complex "communicative-semiotic relation," where each of the two distinct media is interdependent. To be sure, in architectural landscape painting, for instance, there is only one medial form of articulation – the pictorial one, where line and color are applied onto two-dimensional support. Two-dimensional graphic arts cannot "genuinely reproduce or use" representational practices specific to the three-dimensional medium of architecture – its spatial, temporal, and material qualities. But, as we will see further on, besides

[23] Rajewsky, 52-53.
[24] Rajewsky, 52-53.
[25] Rajewsky, 52-53.
[26] Rajewsky, 53.
[27] Rajewsky, 55, author's italics.

thematizing architecture, i.e., making architecture its subject, graphic arts can, to some degree, *evoke or imitate its structure*.

What comes out of Rajewsky's definition, and is of particular importance for our study of artistic compliance, is the fact that mediation of pre-existent built structures in pictorial form necessarily involves acts of interpretation, appropriation, and refashioning, or *re*mediation as conceived by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin (2000).[28] Focusing first and foremost on digital media, in *Remediation. Understanding New Media* Bolter and Grusin use the term remediation to denote a particular kind of intermedial relation where "newer and older [media] forms are involved in a struggle for cultural recognition."[29] Although when architecture and graphic arts are concerned, it cannot be claimed that one predates the other, in certain cases, notably, in National Socialist Germany, painting and drawing not only entered into a dialogue with architecture but also challenged it.

The primary incentive behind such remediation was Hitler's open and consistent valuation of the achievements of National Socialist architecture over contemporary German art. Already in 1937, at the review of artworks selected by the jury for the first exhibition of Great German Art at the House of German Art, the *Führer* had shown great dissatisfaction with the production of contemporary German artists. According to the Reich Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels, who reviewed the preliminary selection of artworks for the exhibition together with Hitler, "The sculptures are all right, but some paintings are a downright catastrophe. Pieces were hung that made one positively cringe. […] The *Führer* was beside himself in rage."[30] "These paintings demonstrate," fumed Hitler "that we in Germany have no artists whose works are worthy of being hung in this splendid building."[31] Two years and two consecutive *GDK* exhibitions later, Hitler still emphasized the discrepancies between the accomplishments of architecture and those of the graphic arts. When talking about the achievements of "creative work" in the Third Reich at the Day of the German Art on July 16, 1939, Hitler once again emphasized the superiority of architecture over painting. He claimed that "a decent standard has

[28] Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000).
[29] Jay David Bolter, "Transference and Transparency: Digital Technology and the Remediation of Cinema," *Intermedialités*, 6 (Fall 2005): 14.
[30] Adolf Hitler, quoted in Frederic Spotts, *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* (Woodstock and New York: The Overlook Press, 2004), 171.
[31] Adolf Hitler quoted in Spotts, *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics*, 172.

been achieved in architecture" and that it should have "an uplifting effect on the truly creative genius."[32] He also warned German artists that for all further exhibitions at the House of German Art, he'd be applying "ever-more stringent criteria to select from the mass of average ability the works of true talent."[33]

Visual artists were thus provided with a strong incentive to live up to the standard of National Socialist architecture and even attempted to surpass the latter by demonstrating the unique affordances of their own, i.e., pictorial, media, its advantages over architecture. For once, we will see how paintings and drawings of National Socialist buildings at various stages of construction compensated for the consequences of Hitler's future-orientedness and utopianism, namely unrealistic expectations and reluctance to adjust to the changing historical circumstances. Present-bound practical concerns that had to do with the physical realization of his building projects were waived aside by Hitler. In *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics,* art historian Frederic Spotts outlines the main problems with Hitler's building campaign that left his architects and Party officials aghast: scrambling for exorbitant budgets, finding the necessary workforce and building materials, meeting unrealistically tight deadlines.[34] So while *Führer*'s executives were struggling to meet his delusional expectations for the Nuremberg Rally Grounds, artworks provided reassuring views of burgeoning construction sites and completed buildings even if, in reality, some of them had not yet passed the excavation stage.

Not only were compliant artists able to compensate for the slow pace of architectural development and the discrepancies between plans and their realization, but they also increased its public presence and overall impact. The main problem with buildings as instruments of state propaganda is their immobility, their fixed location. While only a limited number of visitors could experience the Party Rally Grounds firsthand, a single artwork featuring its remediated marching grounds or stadia could tour the Third Reich, spreading the fame of National Socialist structures across a wider population, even reaching international audiences. Furthermore, Hitler himself had famously engaged in watercolor studies of historical buildings in his youth and

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[32] Adolf Hitler "Speech at the Day of the German Art Munich" (speech, July 16, 1939), reproduced in Adolf Hitler and M. Domarus, *The Complete Hitler: A Digital Desktop Reference to His Speeches and Proclamations, 1932-1945* (Wauconda: Bolchazy-Carducci Publisher, 2007), 1644, my italics.
[33] Hitler, "Speech at the Day of the German Art Munich," (speech), quoted in Hitler and Domarus, *The Complete Hitler,* 1644.
[34] Spotts, *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics,* 381-384.

continuously fiddled with sketches of his state architects.[35] Picturing building projects curated by Hitler was thus a great way for artists seeking professional recognition of capturing *Führer*'s attention, securing his approval, and making it into his personal art collection.

In a word, compliant artists working in the intermedial genre of architectural landscape painting found themselves in a position to interrogate or reinterpret National Socialist architecture and the underlying ideas about the nature of time, space, and materiality. Whether or not they took advantage of this opportunity is the key question addressed in this chapter.

**Introducing the National Socialist German Workers' Party Rally Grounds**

The discussion of architectural representation that follows is a case study of artworks that feature a specific architectural complex – the National Socialist German Workers' Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg (*Reichsparteitagsgelände*, NPRG). The site was constructed between 1933 and 1939 to host the National Socialist German Workers' Party Rallies – annual, week-long, ostentatious mass-events that included speeches by political leaders, wargames, military parades, as well as sports and dance performances. Attended by as many as a quarter of a million people, extensively covered in the domestic and international press, and effectively captured in Leni Riefenstahl's propaganda film *Triumph of the Will* (1935), these Rallies were meant to celebrate the unity of the German people and the greatness of their *Führer*.

The venue extended over a vast territory southeast of the historical town center and its imperial castle, which included the Dutzendteich lake, a memorial to fallen soldiers from World War I, purpose-built marching grounds, monumental assembly buildings, and residence camps situated along a central axis of the Great Road.[36] (Fig. 68) One of the *Führerbauten,* NPRG enjoyed priority status for financial and material resources.[37] As a result, together with the

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[35] For example, see *The Watercolours of Hitler: Recovered Artworks. Homage to Rodolfo Siviero* (Florence: Alinari, 1984).

[36] A more detailed description of key NPRG buildings will be provided in the following sections of this Chapter. For an extensive historical account of the rallies and individual NPRG structures see Hamilton T. Burden, *The Nuremberg Party rallies*: 1923-39, foreword by Adolf A. Berle (New York: Praeger, 1967); Paul B. Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression. The SS, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy* (London: Routledge, 2000); Andrew Rawson, *Showcasing the Third Reich. The Nuremberg Rallies* (Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2012).

[37] Joshua Hagen and Robert Ostergren, "Spectacle, architecture and place at the Nuremberg Party Rallies: projecting a Nazi vision of past, present and future," *Cultural Geographies* 13, no. 2 (2006): 160.

largely unrealized rebuilding of Berlin and Linz, it became one of the largest architectural development endeavors in the Third Reich.

The vast majority of scholarly analyses of the site focus on the underlying ideological significance of stripped-down neoclassicism.[38] In light of primary sources, however, such attention to architectural style seems unwarranted and excessive. Even influential art historians of the 1930s and 1940s, such as Hubert Schrade,[39] argued for the limited relevance of style in National Socialist architecture: according to Schrade, the buildings that had been erected since Adolf Hitler's coming to power were "neither all completely stylistically identical," nor did they represent "something completely new stylistically."[40] Instead, in his programmatic texts, he emphasized the phenomenological qualities of community and Party buildings constructed under Hitler. Speaking of the Rally Grounds in Nuremberg, he stressed the ability of National Socialist architecture to organize disparate individuals into a coherent whole: "[In Nuremberg] the masses were freed from their formlessness, the individuals from their incoherence."[41] In line with this idea, a number of contemporary studies suggest that NPRG buildings have been designed to act on the phenomenological, sensory level, bypassing reasoning; relying not so much on the style to convey a specific political message but more so on the structures' dwarfing scale and a purposeful arrangement of voids and masses in space.[42] These architectural qualities were meant to impart onto the participants and observers of the rallies a sense of belonging to a

[38] The impact of classical antiquity on the architecture of the Party Rally Grounds has notably been discussed by Alex Scobie in *Hitler's State Architecture. The Impact of Classical Antiquity* (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990). A noteworthy exception to the rule is Paul Jascot's (2002) analysis of the NPRG construction enterprise in relation to the DEST (*Deutsche Erd und Steinwerke GmbH*) economic expansion ventures and the development of the SS forced-labor policies. Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression.*

[39] Hubert Schrade (1900-1967) was a German art historian. In 1933, he joined Alfred Rosenberg's *Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur* and in 1937 – *NSDAP*. Appointed to the University of Heidelberg in 1935. Dietrich Schubert, "Heidelberger Kunstgeschichte unterm Hakenkreuz: Professoren im Übergang zur NS-Diktatur und nach 1933" in Schellewald, *Kunstgeschichte im "Dritten Reich": Theorien, Methoden, Praktiken,* eds. Ruth Heftrig, Olaf Peters, Barbara (Berlin, 2008), 65-86.

[40] Schrade vermied die Frage nach einem Stil, denn die seit der nationalsozialistischen Revolution entstandenen Bauten seien "weder alle miteinander stilistisch vollkommen übereinstimmen[d]", noch stellten sie "stilistisch etwas ganz Neues" dar.

[41] "[In Nürnberg sei] die Masse von ihrer Formlosigkeit, die Individuen von ihrer Zusammenhanglosigkeit durch die soldatische Formation befreit [worden]." Hubert Schrade, *Bauten des Dritten Reiches* (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1937), 7-38.

[42] See for example Sharon Macdonald, "Words in Stone?: Agency and Identity in a Nazi Landscape," *Journal of Material Culture* 11 no. 105 (2006); Evgeniya Makarova, *L'espace de propagande nationale-socialiste. Le cas du stade Zeppelin à Nuremberg* (Archive Ouverte UNIGE, 2016).

homogeneous, disciplined community, materialize the hierarchical structure of the National Socialist regime, headed by the omnipotent and omnipresent *Führer*.

In the same order of ideas, although Hitler himself often referred to classical antiquity and the Middle Ages as models for architectural production in the Third Reich, it was not necessarily in relation to style. As previously noted, in his pronouncements on culture, he repeatedly failed to address the question of style,[43] focusing instead on temporal/historical aspects of buildings and their monumental scale. The relevance of the temporal dimension specifically for the analysis of the Rally Grounds is warranted by Joshua Hagen and Robert Ostergren's (2006), as well as Roger Griffin's (2008) studies of mass-celebrations in the Third Reich. Hagen and Ostergren conceive of the Nuremberg Rallies as ritualized events, where architecture, synchronized movements, chants, and light effects combined to entrance the masses.[44] They also claim that the Rally Grounds were instrumental in creating and projecting "images of historical greatness, current political legitimacy, and promises of future grandeur."[45] For Griffin, the Nuremberg Rallies also represented an example of National Socialist liturgy and involved a "deliberate manipulation of time;" their ultimate goal was breaking out of "ordinary time" conceived as "meaningless individual time" and into a collective "magic time" which he also calls "the epic communal time of the *Volksgemeinschaft.*"[46]

The next three sections of this chapter continue discussing the phenomenological and temporal aspects of National Socialist architecture by focusing on its representations in state-supported visual arts. They draw attention to the fact that the Nuremberg Rally Grounds received ample attention from compliant German artists featured at the most important showcase of contemporary "creative work" in the Third Reich: the Great German Art Exhibition between 1937 and 1942. I will be focusing on paintings and graphic works that pictured four key NPRG structures of Albert Speer's general plan for the site: the March Field, the German Stadium, the Zeppelin Field, and the Congress Hall. We will see how in each of these cases, compliant German artists used the limited space of creative freedom carved out by the intermedial nature of

[43] Düwel and Gutschow, *Baukunst und Nationalsozialismus*, 133, 146 and 148.
[44] Joshua Hagen and Robert Ostergren, "Spectacle, architecture and place at the Nuremberg Party Rallies: projecting a Nazi vision of past, present and future," *Cultural Geographies* 13, no. 2 (2006): 157-158.
[45] Hagen and Ostergren, "Spectacle, architecture and place," 157.
[46] Griffin, *A Fascist Century*, 16-18.

their work to express a variety of perspectives on temporal passing, spatiality, and materiality, some of which aligned with the official architectural discourse while others diverged from it.

**Part I: Presentifying *Märzfeld***

March Field or the *Märzfeld* arena was the most popular NPRG structure among compliant artists that participated at the Great German Art Exhibition: it was depicted in three out of nine artworks featuring the architectural complex: an oil painting by Max Herterich (1880-1952), entitled *Reichsparteitagsgelände Nürnberg, Märzfeld, Stand vom Herbst 1939* (n.d.) (Fig. 69), exhibited in 1940; Erich Mercker's (1891-1973) oil painting *Märzfeld, Nürnberg* (n.d.) (Fig. 70), exhibited in 1941; and Curt Winkler's (1903-1974) pencil drawing of *Turm IV mit Krangerüst auf dem Märzfeld* (n.d.) (Fig 71), also displayed at the 1941 exhibition. An additional painting of *Märzfeld* has been produced by Paul Herrmann (1864-1946/1948) in 1942 (Fig. 72) but is not listed in the Great German Art Exhibition catalogues.[47] Overall, all four artists align with the regime's official discourse on architecture by using anticipatory tropes in their representations of *Märzfeld* and emphasizing its "timelessness." At the same time, artworks discussed in this section manifestly privilege the construction process over the finished product and embody the anti-historicist, presentist views on culture advanced by German intellectuals evoked in the introduction section.

[47] Although this painting by Paul Herrmann was not on display at the Great German Art Exhibition, there are reasons to believe that it was produced for this purpose and would have been exhibited had the annual exhibitions not been interrupted by war. Herrmann achieved professional recognition in the Third Reich and received the title of professor in 1941. He exhibited a total of sixteen works at *GDK*, one of which featured an aquarelle of a nocturnal Nüremberg Rally, which means that the artist was interested in this subject and in attendance at the events. His artworks were purchased notably by Adolf Hitler, Theo Memmel, Hermann Göring and *Hauptkulturamt der Reichshauptstadt Berlin*. It is also known that he carried out commissions from Albert Speer, the architect of *Märzfeld*, as early as 1938-1939: the artist produced designs for the mosaics in the New Reich Chancellery and aquarelles of the building itself in the process of construction. See for example "Der Mosaiksaal in der Neuen Reichskanzlei. Nach einem Aquarell von Paul Herrmann (Architekt Albert Speer)," *Illustrierte Zeitung Leipzig*, 4908-4920 (1939): 552 and 574; and *Die Neue Reichskanzlei. Über den Bau der Neuen Reichskanzlei von Adolf Hitler* (München: Zentralverlag Der NSDAP., Franz Eher Nachf., Gmbh., 1940), 29. Last but not least, the image itself was reproduced in the most important National Socialist art journal published notably on the occasion of the Great German Art Exhibition. See Hans Schachinger, "Bildnis des Führers - Kunst Und Gemeinschaft Zur Grossen Deutschen Kunstausstellung 1942," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich*, August-September 1942, Ausgabe A (Berlin, München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, Franz Eher Nachfolger GmbH); and "Paul Herrmann. Betrachtungen eines Künstler über die Kunst des Zeichen," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich*, February 1941, Ausgabe B (Berlin, München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP., Franz Eher Nachfolger GmbH).

*Situating* Märzfeld

This gigantic arena was named after the Roman god of war and in honor of the reintroduction of conscription in March 1935. It was designed by Hitler's architect in chief Albert Speer to accommodate the display of Reich's Armed Forces' prowess that took place on the last day of the annual rallies.[48] From 1933 to 1938, *Wehrmacht* performed military maneuvers involving infantry, combat vehicles, and heavy artillery on the Zeppelin Field, but as the imperialist ambitions of the National Socialist state grew, so did the scale and the complexity of these wargames. Speer's design for a new arena consisted of a 955 by 610 meters marching ground, surrounded by fourteen-meter-high stands, seating 150,000 spectators and twenty-four rectangular towers, bearing swastika flags. Opposite a single wide entrance would be a monumental grandstand for the Party leaders and *Wehrmacht* generals, decorated with bronze figures by one of the most praised sculptors of the German Reich, Joseph Thorak.[49] Foundation works began in 1936, but the project was abandoned three years later after a construction ban had been issued for all buildings not essential to the war effort, so that by September 1939, only the western half of the stands and eleven out of twenty-four towers were completed.[50]

Since the present chapter is concerned primarily with the temporal dimension of architectural representation, let us first situate *GDK* images of the March Field in relation to its construction timeline. Kurt Winkler's[51] pencil drawing *Turm IV mit Krangerüst auf dem Märzfeld* (Fig. 71) features one single *Märzfeld* tower – the tower number four, as the title specifies. Although still surrounded by scaffolding, the tower appears to be near to completion: fine ashlar masonry facework covers its blind frontal façade and a plain decorative cornice already crowns its top. Tower number four also appears in an oil painting by Erich Mercker,[52]

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[48] Burden, *The Nuremberg Party Rallies,* 62.
[49] Troost, *Das Bauen im neuen Reich*, n.p.
[50] Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression*, 61.
[51] Winkler, Kurt (1903-1974) was a German graphic artist, most known for his lithographs, copperplate engravings and etchings. He first acquired extensive technical training in graphic and print production as an apprentice at the *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*. Then, in 1922 he studied print reproduction at the Leipzig Academy for Book Trade and Graphics, and, from 1925 to 1929 – painting at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts. *Nachlass Curt Winkler,* accessed July 19, 2020, https://curtwinkler.hpage.com/ (Official website for Curt Winkler's estate). During the National Socialist years, Winkler worked in the genre of cityscapes and technical subjects. Between 1938 and 1944, he exhibited a total of seventeen drawings at *GDK,* one of which was purchased by Adolf Hitler, and another – by Heinrich Himmler.
[52] Mercker, Erich (1891-1973) was a German civil engineer (Technical University of Munich, 1911) and a self-taught painter of technical subjects. He achieved significant professional success as a painter of industrial plants and construction sites under Adolf Hitler, who later entrusted him with the selection of technical subjects paintings for

*Märzfeld, Nürnberg* (Fig. 70) displayed at *GDK* the same year. It is the leftmost of the seven vertical structures crammed into a corner view of the *Märzfeld* enclosure from the south-west. In Mercker's image, scaffolding has been removed, and construction activity has moved onto the next tower in a row, which is still lacking the upper cornice. A significant element of Mercker's painting and an indicator of burgeoning construction activity is the rail tracks that run around the enclosure. The rail tracks are equally featured in Max Herterich's[53] painting of the enclosure – specifically, its western and northern facades that meet in the middle of the picture plane – and four *Märzfeld* towers. (Fig. 69) Based on the presence of identical iconographic elements that allow to situate the images in relation to construction activity that took place at the site, it is possible to assume that all three of them capture the same point in time, specified by the title of Herterich's painting: *Reichsparteitagsgelände Nürnberg, Märzfeld, Stand vom Herbst 1939* (Party Rally Grounds Nuremberg, March Field, Fall 1939). Considering that construction works on the site had been suspended in September 1939, this means that Winkler, Mercker, and Herterich represent the arena in its most complete state. Herrmann's[54] aquarelle depicts *Märzfeld*

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the Reich Chancellery. *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon,* s.v. "Mercker, Erich" (Berlin, Boston: K. G. Saur, 2020), accessed July 19, 2020, https://db-degruyter-com.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/view/AKL/_20009684.
From 1938 to 1944, he exhibited a total of thirty-four paintings at the Great German Art Exhibition, with eight of these works purchased by Adolf Hitler, five – by Albert Speer, and two – by Robert Ley. For a detailed account of Mercker's life and work under National Socialism refer to Jung, "Erich Mercker and 'Technical Subjects,' " 149-164; Patrick J. Jung and Carma M. Stahnke, *Erich Mercker and Technical Subjects: A Landscape and Industrial Artist in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Grohmann Museum Man at Work Art Collection. Milwaukee: MSOE Press, 2014).

[53] Herterich, Max (1880-1952) was a German landscape painter. He studied painting with L. Herterich and L. Löfftz at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts. *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon*, s.v. "Herterich, Max," accessed July 19, 2020, https://db-degruyter-com.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/view/AKL/_00060473.
In 1939-1940, Herterich exhibited a total of six artworks at *GDK* that represented ancient ruins, historical buildings and contemporary construction sites. *Reichsparteitagsgelände Nürnberg, Märzfeld, Stand vom Herbst 1939* (Party Rally Grounds Nuremberg, March Field, Fall 1939) showcased in 1940 was purchased by *Zweckverband Reichsparteitag Nürnberg*, a public corporation created in March 1935 "For the construction and maintenance as well as for the operation of grounds, buildings and other facilities for the Reich Party Rallies in Nuremberg." Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression*, 34.

[54] Herrmann, Paul (1964-1944/46/48) (also known as Henri Héran) was a German painter, graphic artist, and lithographer. Herrmann first studied architecture under Friedrich von Thiersch, but then decided to become a painter. He attended Max Ebersberger's and Ferdinand Barth's paining schools. In 1890s he worked as a graphic artist for the "Puck" magazine in New York and for "Le Centaure" and "Pan" in Paris. *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon,* s.v. "Herrmann, Paul (1864)," accessed July 19, 2020, https://db-degruyter-com.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/view/AKL/_00111892.
In 1906 he settled in Berlin. Already in the 1920s he works for publishing houses that supported *NSDAP*, such as Bruckmann-Verlag, and became a successful artist under Hitler. Between 1940 and 1944, he exhibited a total of sixteen artworks at *GDK*, three of which were purchased by Adolf Hitler and two by Hermann Göring, among others. As previously mentioned, in 1938-1939 Herrmann was commissioned by Albert Speer to produce designs for the mosaics in the New Reich Chancellery and aquarelles of the building itself in the process of construction (see footnote 424).

(Fig. 72) in that same state but is dated to 1942, confirming that no progress had been made on the arena between 1939 and 1942.

*Linear perspective as a symbolic form and an intermedial reference device*

Another aspect that all four images have in common is the key role that linear perspective plays in structuring the spectator's visual experience. In his 1927 essay *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, the German art historian Erwin Panofsky discussed the nature and the history of pictorial space. Most importantly, he established the development of perspectival representation in Western art as the result of shifting ideas on visual perception and habits of cognition and the changing conceptions of truth and illusion.[55] In other words, Panofsky's work entails what art historian James Elkins has called a metaphorical conception of perspective, where perspective is "a sign signifying a mental state, a culture, or an expressive language" representing a specific worldview so that differing historical versions of perspective "are expressive of the cultures that invented them."[56] Based on the premise that perspective is a symbolic form embedded in the social, historical, and epistemic circumstances from which it arises, an analysis of the *Märzfeld* images allows us to expand on the National Socialist conceptions of space and time.

The type of space-organizing device used by Curt Winkler in *Turm IV mit Krangerüst auf dem Märzfeld* (Fig. 71) is the linear, one-point perspective, where orthogonal lines are parallel to the ground and appear to meet at a vanishing point on the horizon located at the eye-level, while transversal lines are parallel to the picture plane and intersect the orthogonal lines at a right angle. One-point perspective might be the simplest way of depicting a three-dimensional form in illusionistic pictorial space, but, as we will see further on, its use by Winkler in architectural representation is strategic and should not be ascribed to a lack of technical skills.

Whereas the tower's interior façade is completely parallel to the picture plane, the guardrails, cross-bracing, and support platforms of the scaffolds materialize the orthogonal and transversal lines of the perspectival grid. This is a case of "intermedial reference" in Rajewsky's understanding of the term, where a painting evokes an element of architecture using its own media-specific means – the linear perspectival system. Architectural scaffolding is assimilated into a piece of graphic art, not only as an iconographic element but as a structural one. This

[55] Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as a Symbolic Form* (New York: Zone Books, 1991).
[56] James Elkins, *The Poetics of Perspective* (Ithaka: Cornell University Press, 1994), 15, 17.

modular support system extends the tower structure beyond its masonry walls, making the building appear larger than it is. On the one hand, this visual strategy speaks to the National Socialist architectural megalomania, the insatiable obsession with the massive built form, and the ambition to surpass all existing historical structures in monumentality and scale. On the other, the regular grid of rectilinear blocks of travertine that populate the foreground extends the perspectival grid from the structure's base to the lower edge of the picture frame, projecting it into the space occupied by the spectator.

Such intermedial references are key to understanding the ways in which the artist conceived of space and time and what his contribution to National Socialist discourse was. Winkler's use of one-point perspective both bridged the distance between the two distinct locations and synchronized two different historical moments: years 1941 and 1939, the *Haus der Deutschen Kunst* and *Märzfeld*, Munich and Nuremberg, the "Capital of the Movement" (*Hauptstadt der Bewegung*) and the "City of the Reich's Party Rallies." As previously mentioned, the Rally Grounds was key to the orchestration and celebration of the German national unity: uniforms, coordinated performances, and collective chanting produced a sense of inter-identification and emphatic connection amongst the individual participants, while architecture structured and channeled their movement and materialized their position in the hierarchy of the National Socialist state. However, the site only served its purpose seven days a year; integrating the Nuremberg Rally landmark into the context of a year-long exhibition allowed the National Socialist regime to maximize its propagandist potential. Furthermore, Winkler presents the spectator with the frontal view of tower number four, looking from the inside of the enclosure out, through a barrel-vaulted roman archway and onto a distant landscape. It is, therefore, the interior marching grounds of the arena that is extended into the *HDK* exhibition hall, creating a symbolic bond between the participants of the Nuremberg Rallies and the spectators of the *Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung*. By sharing one *Lebensraum*,[57] a space of synchronized communal experience, they become one, a single *Volksgemeinschaft*.[58] For

[57] In National Socialist Germany, the term *Lebensraum* or 'living space' was widely used to define the territory necessary for the racial survival, economic prosperity, and cultural development of the German people. It therefore provided the ideological rationale for the regime's expansionist geopolitics.

[58] According to Detlev Peukert, "The concept of National Socialist *Volksgemeinschaft* utopia sought the formation of an ideologically homogenous, socially conformist, performance oriented and hierarchically structured society by means of educating the 'well suited' and 'eradicating' the supposedly 'unsuitable.' " Quoted in Michael Wildt,

increased realism, Winkler replicated the kind of fragmentary visual experience that the Rally participants would have had for the *GDK* spectators: given the colossal dimensions of the marching grounds and a limited angle of the visual field in humans, the latter would most certainly have had only a partial view of the *Märzfeld* enclosure.

Winkler's perspectival grid has one other important purpose: it symbolically breaks down the picture plane into smaller visual information units. What is being scaffolded then is not so much the *Märzfeld* tower – which hardly required exterior support at this final stage of construction – but the viewing experience itself. As Éric Michaud rightly notes, the German landscape painting of the National Socialist era "was charged with the task of forming a new way of looking," where "forming" or *Bildung*, must be understood in its pedagogical sense.[59] Whether artists' attempts of "forming a new way of looking" responded to a programmatic demand of the National Socialist state or came from their own initiative is up for debate (Michaud does not provide sufficient evidence for it being dictated from above), but images of architecture discussed in this section may definitely be said to have engaged in this task. The didactic way in which Winkler decorticates the pictorial space for the viewer mimics both the underlying principles of successful instruction and the *Gestalt* principles of totalitarian propaganda: clarity, simplicity, and repetition. Whereas in the learning sciences, the scaffolding technique is associated with non-directive teaching methods, whereby the instructor gently facilitates the learning process, allowing for a more autonomous process of knowledge construction,[60] Winkler mobilizes this instructional strategy to orchestrate the spectator's engagement with the artwork in a very directive manner. As the viewer's gaze penetrates the scene at the eye level, it is trapped into the funnel of the perspectival grid. The centrifugal force of this simple one-point perspective in a symmetrically-composed pictorial space of Winkler's drawing is exceptionally potent. Trapped into the vortex of converging orthogonals and transversals, the viewer's gaze rushes past the construction site, through the archway, straight to the vanishing point on the horizon in a fraction of a second. This very immediacy of sensory

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*Hitler's Volksgemeinschaft and the Dynamics of Racial Exclusion: Violence Against Jews in Provincial Germany, 1919–1939*, trans. Bernard Heise (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014), 3.

[59] Éric Michaud, *The Cult of Art in Nazi Germany, Cultural Memory in the Present*, eds. Mieke Bal and Hent de Vries, trans. Jant Lloyd (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004),118.

[60] Pauline Gibbons, *Bridging Discourses in the ESL Classroom: Students, Teachers and Researchers* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018).

experience, as opposed to elaborate argumentation that appeals to the rational mind, is what often accounts for successful political propaganda. The connection between the viewer and the artwork is established on a pre-cognitive level, allowing no time to reflect on the visual mechanism at work.

The final aspect of Winkler's intermedial artwork that evokes temporal passing is the emphasis he places on provisional support systems. In architecture, scaffolding, for instance, is only meant to hold up a structure for a limited period of time, the time it takes to complete construction. Similarly, the perspectival grid is only meant to provide guidance for the artist while arranging three-dimensional objects in illusionistic pictorial space. Both the scaffolds and the perspectival lines thus locate the representation within the present moment and articulate its transience: when the building is completed, the scaffolds will be removed; when the contours of objects are traced, the supporting lines will be eliminated from the drawing. What is directly observable in the moment thus forestalls further development, draws the foreseeable, immediate future closer to the present.

This sense of presentifying anticipation is embodied in Gerdy Troost's 1938 anthology of emblematic National Socialist architecture, *Das Bauen im neuen Reich*. Widow of Hitler's first architect in chief Paul Ludwig Troost and one of the *GDK* curators, Gerdy Troost dedicated a large section in the book to the description of the March Field:

> It is surrounded by massive stone watchtowers, which are connected by walls of spectators' stands and an uninterrupted wall of flags. The main building of the March Field, which at the same time concludes the Party Rally Grounds against the open landscape, is the Führer's Grandstand, over which monumental sculptures by Professor Josef Thorak are erected. Arrow towers on either side of the high-armed arches bear the national emblems.[61]

Gerdy Troost's account of the arena seems accurate, except for the fact that what she was *actually* describing in the present tense was not the March Field itself (since it was not yet completed by 1938), but its small-scale three-dimensional projection – the architectural model, presented in 1938 at the First Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibition at the House of German

[61] Troost, *Das Bauen im neuen Reich*, n. p.

Art, and featured next to this succinct description of the marching grounds in her book. Troost documented the *Märzfield* arena as if it were fully completed and inscribed this anachronistic, fictional projection of the building into the National Socialist *history* of architecture.

Once again, it's this double temporality of actuality and anticipation that Winkler's representation of *Märzfeld* plays into. The artist infinitely suspends the moment right before the provisional support system is removed and the site is ready for exploitation. Recall that in 1939, the construction work was rapidly scaled down due to the outbreak of war. By 1941, the year when Winkler's drawing was exhibited at *GDK*, Germany would have already shifted most of its resources to the military front, and the incomplete structures would have been hidden under a camouflage netting.[62] Therefore, the presentifying potential of Winkler's drawing also lies in the fact that it arrests the monumental construction project at the peak of its glory in September 1939, negating its wartime abandonment and demise.

*Temporal passing and National Socialist historical consciousness*

If in Winkler's image it is the temporary architecture of scaffolding that materializes the structural elements of a one-point perspectival system, in Erich Mercker's *Märzfeld, Nürnberg*, this role is assumed by the train tracks. (Fig. 70) Just like the scaffolds, train tracks are a temporary addition to the building; they are not a part of the marching grounds' architecture and are only there for the duration of construction. Unlike the representational function of the monumental enclosure, they serve a purely practical goal: to facilitate and speed up the transportation of materials, people, and equipment around the enormous worksite. This horizontal infrastructure also carries tower cranes, which in turn allow for vertical mobility of heavy loads. Together, these temporary, mobile elements take up as much canvas space as the permanent, static structures of towers and tribunes, symbolically claiming for technology a place on par with architecture. This idea is even more pronounced in Paul Herrmann's 1942 aquarelle, where the construction crane is both the most prominent and centermost element of the composition. (Fig. 72)

An abundance of mobile elements also introduces a sense of continuous, paced time into the painting, an impression of process, and duration. They chart the course of linear narrative

[62] Rawson, *Showcasing the Third Reich*, 58.

progression from left to right or from front to back. The movement in space is identified with the movement in time, spatial recession – with temporal progression: each station of the railway corresponds to a specific *Märzfeld* tower, and each tower materializes a specific stage of construction. While the one in the foreground is complete and emblematizes the future of the arena, the next two stand for the present moment: with tiny human figures scattered at its top and a steaming rail carriage delivering stone blocks to the crane, they are being actively worked on. The only remnant of the past is the dark strip of trees in the background, hinting at the *Dutzendteich* woodland cleared for construction.[63]

Mercker's image is an example of a progressive narrative, where a sequence of events is presented as happening simultaneously in one location to convey the passing of time. This type of visual narrative structure has previously been associated by art historian Jocelyn Penny Small with the art of classical antiquity, where temporal passing was conceived as movement through space and spatial organization of pictorial elements played a crucial role in articulating the relationship between past, present, and future.[64] In Mercker's case, the recurrence to the progressive visual narrative in his representation of the March Field would be warranted by the cult of classical antiquity in the Third Reich and the significance of the Greco-Roman building tradition for National Socialist architecture.[65] At the same time, spatial compression and foreshortening of pictorial elements, organized according to the rules of the one-point perspective, bring vertical structures that punctuate the enclosure at equal intervals progressively closer together, alluding to temporal acceleration allowed for by technological advancement and heroic efforts of the construction workers. In other words, provided progressive visual narrative, a one-point perspective system precipitates, and presentifies the foreseeable future of the represented event. At a time when Germany was engaged in WWII, Mercker's image sustained a

[63] What allowed Speer to submit a design for an enlarged Rally Grounds in 1936 incorporating a new huge arena was the acquisition of the large area of woodland to the south of Dutzendteich Lake. Rawson, *Showcasing the Third Reich*, 56.
[64] Jocelyn Penny Small, "Time in Space: Narrative in Classical Art," *The Art Bulletin* 81, no. 4 (1999): 562-575.
[65] For historically divested National Socialists, the cult of classical antiquity did not come down to a nostalgic revival of historical forms associated with the Greco-Roman civilization. Rather, as it was about incarnating their virtues and reliving their myths in the present moment. For the impact of classical antiquity on National Socialist architecture, see Alexander Scobie, *Hitler's State Architecture: The Impact of Classical Antiquity* (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990); For the manipulation, distortion and strategic uses of the classical past by the National Socialists, see Johann Chaputot, *Greeks, Romans, Germans: How the Nazis Usurped Europe's Classical Past* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016).

reassuring impression of a burgeoning building economy and presented what was to come in a positive, productive, constructive light.

Max Herterich (Fig. 69) used a slightly different set of strategies to emphasize the structure's monumental scale, create an impression of the first-hand experience, and communicate a suspended sense of presentness. Unlike Winkler, he constructed his image according to a two-point linear perspective evoked spatial recession of the two visible sides of the enclosure by placing the two vanishing points on either side of the structure, outside of the picture frame. Departing from Winkler's stark, rectilinear frontality, Herterich's representation of the *Märzfeld* arena appears slightly bulged, as if captured through a wide-angle lens. First of all, this subtle visual distortion produces an impression of breadth and distance, emphasizing the colossal scale of the arena. Main orthogonals merge with the horizon line, infinitely extending the enclosure into the distance. Second, the produced effect also mimics the so-called "natural perspective" vision, whereby the orthogonal lines appear slightly curved rather than straight.[66] This optical effect is another way of simulating a first-hand visual experience for the spectator, of creating an impression of direct access to a distant place and time.

What distinguishes Herterich's representation of *Märzfeld* is its increased historical accuracy. Although the image does not feature any camouflage netting *per se*, it succeeds in relating the overall atmosphere of abandonment and desolation that would have prevailed on the worksite sometime after construction had been suspended. There are no human figures present in the scene, no equipment; construction materials are scattered around the foreground overgrown by vegetation. In that, Herterich's painting of the *Märzfeld* arena recalls Albert Speer's aforementioned romantic sketch of the Zeppelin tribune in ruins. According to the architect, "It showed what the reviewing stand on the Zeppelin Field would look like after generations of neglect, overgrown with ivy, its columns fallen, the walls crumbling here and there, but the outlines still clearly recognizable."[67] Recall that Speer presented this sketch to Adolf Hitler when

[66] Alistair Burleigh, Robert Pepperell, and Nicole Ruta, "Natural Perspective: Mapping Visual Space with Art and Science," *Vision, Special Issue* '*The Perspective of Visual Space*' 2, no. 2, (2018).

[67] "To illustrate my ideas I had a romantic drawing prepared. It showed what the reviewing stand on the Zeppelin Field would look like after generations of neglect, overgrown with ivy, its columns fallen, the walls crumbling here and there, but the outlines still clearly recognizable. In Hitler's entourage this drawing was regarded as blasphemous. That I could even conceive of a period of decline for the newly founded Reich destined to last a thousand years seemed outrageous to many of Hitler's closest followers. But he himself accepted my ideas as logical

planning for the 1936 Summer Olympics as an illustration of his "theory of ruin value" (*Theorie vom Ruinenwert*). Speer's drawing of the Zeppelin tribune is also projective, as it was produced *before* the actual stadium was constructed in Nuremberg, while already anticipating its demise and connecting it to the great monuments of the past. Past, present, and future co-exist in the same pictorial space of architectural representation, time is compressed, future – precipitated, and history – presentified.[68]

Whether Herterich's painting brings out the picturesque qualities of the *Märzfeld* arena and dresses an optimistic portrait of the future or, on the contrary, gives an uncanny impression of an abandoned, desolate place is a matter for debate. What it does achieve, however, is a representation of the National Socialist architecture as timeless: neither contemporary, not historic, neither an active worksite site nor an ancient ruin. In other words, it answers the call of German intellectuals, left unanswered by Hitler, to disburden or relinquish culture from the rule of historical time. Furthermore, the anticipatory trope of scaffolding here works both as an indicator of progress made on the most extensive marching grounds in the Third Reich and an omen of its imminent destruction, recalling heaps of timber left from a shipwreck. Its projective potential is balanced out by the ruinist trope of vegetation overgrowth and uneven terrain, alluding to earthworks that are both an essential part of constructing new buildings and excavating the ancient ones.

Paul Herrmann's aquarelle (Fig. 72) has many formal similarities with Herterich's depiction of *Märzfeld* (e.g., composition, angle), but is dated to 1942, confirming the daunting fact that no progress has been made on the arena between 1939 and 1942. Vegetation overgrowth covers unfinished buildings, piles of construction materials, and construction equipment alike, unifying permanent and temporary elements into a single formation, a conglomeration of objects that all share the same faith, that of abandonment and oblivion. It is telling that one of three artworks exhibited by Herrmann at the Great German Art Exhibition that year was an earlier

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and illuminating. He gave orders that in the future the important buildings of his Reich were to be erected in keeping with the principles of this 'law of ruins.' " Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 56.

[68] Christine Ross conceptualizes such rapport to time as a presentifying regime of historicity, "one in which the articulation of the past, the present, and the future is rethought as the past is brought closer to the present and the present brought closer to the future." Christine Ross, *The Past is the Present; It's the Future Too. The Temporal Turn in Contemporary Art* (New York, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 16.

etching *Die Zeit* (Time) or *Chronos* (1913).[69] (Fig. 73) In this etching, a winged figure of Chronos spills his wrath onto humanity, crushing people and their monuments with his bare feet. For Herrmann then, time is a ruthless, destructive force that annihilates both agents and products of creative labor, which puts into question (or at the very least into a less optimistic perspective) Hitler's overly-ambitious, projective architectural campaign.

A more hopeful historicizing poetics permeates Winkler's drawing of *Turm IV*. His perspectival funnel fixates the spectator's gaze on the hallmark of classical engineering – the Roman arch in the center of the composition, tracing the National Socialist building tradition back to antiquity and that of medieval fortifications. The "ruin value" of Winkler's *Märzfeld* tower is also brought forth by means of its juxtaposition with Oskar Graf's 1915 aquarelle painting *Ruins of a Church in Mesen* (*Kirchenruine in Messines*). (Fig. 71) Graf's aquarelle of a destroyed Flemish Church was presented right next to Winkler's drawing on the same exhibition wall. The village of Mesen was a strategic military location captured by the German troops in 1914. Although in Graf's painting, this large congregational space lies in ruins, its former glory is evoked by the arched elements of the church's crossing that have endured through the military conflict. Graf's aquarelle of the Mesen Church would have provided a convincing illustration of Speer's theory of ruin value and Hitler's ambition to produce buildings that would be "immortal substantiations" of the Third Reich, buildings that would "tower like cathedrals of our past, into the millenniums of the future," bearing "witness to the greatness of the German Empire even when they had fallen into a state of ruin."[70] In a way, such visual pairing also reflects on the ongoing architectural casualties of WWII and glorifies the progressive militarization of the German population. In a way, this parallel between the two military conflicts legitimizes the destruction of important monuments as an unavoidable sacrifice for a "greater cause," a sacrifice to the Roman god of war, Mars, patron-god of *Märzfeld.*

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[69] Hans Wolfgang Singer, *Das graphische Werk des Maler-Radierers Paul Herrmann (Henri Héran): Wissenschaftliches Verzeichnis* (München: Bruckmann, 1914), Cat. Nr. 155.
[70] Hans-Ulrich Thamer, "The Orchestration of the National Community: The Nuremberg Party Rallies of the *NSDAP*," in *Fascism and Theater. Comparative studies on the aesthetics and politics of performance in Europe, 1925-1945,* ed. Günther Berghaus, Providence (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996), 183-184.

*Conclusion*

To conclude, this section considered the role and intermedial means of architectural landscape painting in conveying a specific rapport to space, history, and temporal duration. Three images of the *Märzfeld* arena exhibited at the Great German Art Exhibition, and an additional etching of the arena reproduced in an affiliated art journal were examined notably for their strategic uses of linear perspective in an attempt to form a new way of looking that bridged time and distance. It was established that overall, all four artists sustained the regime's official discourse on architecture by using historicizing and anticipatory tropes in their representations of *Märzfeld*. Artworks discussed in this section proved particularly effective in overcoming major drawbacks of the architectural medium, such as immovability, drawn-out and costly production while also reconciling initial design and actual buildings, regime's expectations, and historical realities. At the same time, privileging the construction process over the finished product, they embodied the anti-historicist, presentifying views on culture advanced by German intellectuals in the 1930s. Artists like Herterich and Herrmann also succeeded in introducing a certain ambiguity in the interpretation of construction site images: rather than presenting *Märzfeld* as an emblem of heroic labor, they used images of the unfinished arena to convey a sense of disillusionment with the outcomes of the National Socialist building campaign and the prospects of World War II.

**Part II: Intermediality and heterochrony in Otto A. Hirth's *German Stadium* cycle**

One of the highlights of the 1942-1943 Great German Art Exhibition in Munich was a cycle of four large-scale oil paintings by a German artist, architect, writer, and editor Otto Albert Hirth (1899-1969). (Fig. 74-77) All four depicted *Deutsches Stadion* or the Great German Stadium – a megalomaniac structure designed by the *Führer*'s architect in chief Albert Speer to host the Pan-Germanic athletic games. *Deutsches Stadion in Nürnberg I* (n.d.) is a close-up view of the left side of a monumental columnated portico – the principal entrance to the spectator tribunes and the arena. *Deutsches Stadion in Nürnberg II* (n.d.) is a corner view of the stadium from outside the enclosure, with spectator tribunes rising above the memorial wall. *Deutsches Stadion III in Nürnberg* (n.d.) features Hirth's variation on Speer's neoclassical propylaeum, and *Deutsches Stadion in Nürnberg IV* (n.d.) provides a glimpse onto the horseshoe-shaped arena.

The artist used a hyper-realistic style of representation to create an awe-inspiring image of the Stadium as-built and in use: clouds of dust hover over the arena, human figures circulate in

the shadow of the colossal tribunes, dramatic skies enliven austere architecture. Nothing in the paintings suggested that by the time World War II had started, and all non-military construction activities had been indefinitely suspended, Speer's masterpiece had barely passed the excavation stage; that at this point, the building so meticulously portrayed by Hirth was nothing but a utopian fantasy, an architectural *capriccio*.

Focusing on Hirth's representations of the German Stadium, Part II interrogates the ideological role of architectural fantasy in the Third Reich. It examines how this genre has been strategically mobilized by a state-supported German artist to bridge the gulf between overly-ambitious building projects and the material circumstances of their production, the regime's hubris and historical realities, its longing for immortality, and the transience of its artifacts. It first presents Albert Speer's design for the German Stadium as stemming from a utopian imagination and then grounds Otto Hirth's work in the Western tradition of architectural *capriccio* painting. Next, it compares the image of the German Stadium created by Hirth to Speer's original project and concludes with a discussion of the *Deutsches Stadion* cycle in relation to the official National Socialist discourse on history and time. Ultimately, this section aims to identify the intermedial representation strategies used by Hirth to revise the past and substitute fiction for the future in a pivotal historical moment when the defeat of the German troops in the battle for Stalingrad marked the regime's imminent demise.

*Albert Speer's utopian design for the German Stadium*

In order to assess the extent to which Hirth's rendering of the Great German Stadium may be said to represent an architectural fantasy that stems from a utopian imagination, we must first consider its prototype and source of inspiration – Albert Speer's project for the largest open-air stadium in the world. (Fig. 78) *Deutsches Stadion* was conceived as a part of a larger architectural ensemble – the National Socialist German Workers' Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg (*Reichsparteitagsgelände*, NPRG). In 1935, Hitler's architect in chief presented the head of the National Socialist state a project of a gigantic horseshoe-shaped structure to be included in his overall design for the Rally Grounds. The overall structure was modeled on one of the main historic attractions of Athens – the Panathenaic Stadium, which had impressed him greatly when he had visited it in 1935.[71] The main entrance would be through a neoclassical

[71] Albert Speer, *Erinnerungen* (Berlin: Ullstein-Verlag, 1996), 75.

portico situated at the open end of the track. A large, pillared courtyard would be connecting this raised, temple-like structure to the stadium, preceded by two grandstands for the *Führer*, his special guests, and the press. The seats for 400 000 spectators would rest on a massive barrel-vaulted substructure circumscribing the entire arena. The exterior walls would be faced with pink and dark red granite and measure 600 by 440 meters.[72]

The cornerstone for the German Stadium was laid on July 9, 1937, and earthworks started right away with a forestry team clearing the trees and a construction team leveling the ground for excavations.[73] In 1938, a specimen section for the tribunes was erected in the Hirschbachtal valley, twenty miles north-east of Nuremberg, to finalize the design. But, in 1939, with the beginning of World War II, Germany had to shift most of its human resources to the military front, and the superstructure was never built.[74]

There are both formal and practical reasons to suggest that Speer's project for the German Stadium stemmed from a utopian imagination. First of all, its design was inspired by some of the most self-consciously utopian architectural projects of modernity – the so-called "revolutionary architecture" or "paper architecture" of eighteenth-century France.[75] Its most prominent representatives and theoreticians Étienne-Louis Boullée, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, and Jean-Jacques Lequeu lived in the atmosphere of growing political and social discontent, and, as Austrian art and architecture historian Emil Kaufman puts it, "wished to realize, for the common good, the ideals of the time by contriving architectural schemes such as had never existed before."[76] These revolutionary architects shared idealistic views on socio-political betterment and conceived of their monumental creations as models for a purified form of the French government.[77] However, most of their projects were too conceptual and adventuristic to be realized in their time and were therefore deemed to remain on paper.

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[72] Taylor, *The Word in Stone*, 173.
[73] Rawson, *Showcasing the Third Reich*, 54.
[74] Jaskot, *The Architecture of Opression*, 61-65.
[75] In his memoirs, Speer cites Étienne-Louis Boullée, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, and Jean-Jacques Lequeu, as a major influence on his work. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 154-159.
[76] Emil Kaufman, *Three Revolutionary Architects, Boullée, Ledoux, and Lequeum* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1952), 42: 3: 435.
[77] Tessa Morrison, *Unbuilt Utopian Cities 1460 to 1900: Reconstructing their Architecture and Political Philosophy* (Surrey, Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2015), 86.

German art historian Wend von Kalnein provides a comprehensive description of Étienne-Louis Boullée's Metropolitan Church (Fig. 79) that is worth citing in full to appreciate the formal similarities between this emblem of eighteenth-century visionary architecture and Speer's work:

> In the Metropolitan Church [1781-1782], the built mass has coalesced into a block; the colonnades are no more than quotations. The interior acquires a colossal scale from the way in which Boullée has chosen to make the columns small so that their sheer repetition serves to magnify the scene. The colonnades in the drum no longer create openings to admit light but serve merely as decorative bands. Boullée is less interested in architectural than in spiritual effect. This is achieved not only by the gigantic crossing arches that serve to expand the dome, or by the temple-like drum, to which wide flights of steps ascend from the nave, but by the magical abundance of light that pours down like the miracle of Pentecost.[78]

As a twentieth-century example of stripped-down neoclassicism, the German Stadium shares many aesthetic and constructive features with Boullée's visionary architecture, including colossal dimensions, regular alignments, repetitiveness and symmetry. In fact, both structures may be said to be *out of scale* with human use and possess an awe-inspiring, dwarfing presence. Although spatially, the German Stadium is the Metropolitan Church in reverse – the gigantic convex dome is replaced by the enormous concave enclosure of the stadium – it was also designed in a way to produce a strong "spiritual effect." Speer's creation was meant to contribute to attendants' total immersion into the spectacle, contain and magnify their quasi-religious communal elation.[79]

Just like Boullée's Metropolitan Church, Speer's project for the German Stadium was never realized for a number of practical reasons. Already at the planning stage, both Speer and Hitler's state officials acknowledged the immense budget, workforce, and material requirements of his project. Hitler, however, refused to spare any resources – financial or human – to realize

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[78] Wend von Kalnein, *Architecture in France in the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press (Pelican History of Art), 1995), 249.

[79] On the phenomenology of National Socialist architecture see Miguel Abensour, *De la compacité, Architectures et régimes totalitaires. Le cas Albert Speer* (Paris, Sens & Tonka, 2013) and Makarova. "L'espace de propagande nationale-socialiste."

his dream of hosting the Pan-Germanic athletic games in Nuremberg. He refused to discuss financial matters with other state officials and, as historian Andrew Rawson puts it, "reminded the doubters that Frederick the Great had not questioned how much was being spent on the Sanssouci Palace (French for "carefree"), when it was being built in Potsdam, Berlin, in the eighteenth century."[80]

The staggering costs aside, Speer's epic plans for this colossal structure were extremely challenging from the engineering standpoint. In his description of the construction works, Andrew Rawson evokes the engineers' frustration with Speer's overly-ambitious design.[81] Likewise, in his memoirs, Speer recalls the never-ending negotiations between Hitler, the architect in chief, and the different engineering bureaus: while the latter suggested revisions to Speer's initial design in order to make it more feasible within the deadlines imposed by Hitler, the *Führer* himself continuously intervened in the design process, setting back the construction works.[82]

In the same order of ideas, construction of the German Stadium was also pitted against unforeseen technical difficulties, such as the instability of the swampy terrain around the building's foundations. As a result of these setbacks, the work on the superstructure represented in Hirth's paintings was being postponed until it was no longer possible due to the previously mentioned construction ban issued in 1939 for all buildings not essential to the war. Speer continued to tinker with the design, but three years later, construction workers were sent off to join their military units, and Speer, relieved of his architectural assignments to focus on munitions, ended up losing all interest in the project.[83]

What *Märzfeld* and the German Stadium have in common then is that neither of those buildings was ever fully built. As stated before, by 1939, only the western half of the *Märzfeld* stands and eleven out of twenty-four towers were completed, while the German Stadium had never actually moved past the excavation and foundation stages. There is a significant distinction, however, in the ways in which the two structures were represented by compliant German artists. While Max Herterich, Erich Mercker, Curt Winkler, and Paul Herrmann

[80] Rawson, *Showcasing the Third Reich*, 53.
[81] Rawson, 56.
[82] Referred to by Speer as the "Great Stadium." Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, 68-70.
[83] Rawson, *Showcasing the Third Reich*, 56.

produced images of the March Field from first-hand observation, Otto Albert Hirth relied on Albert Speer's designs for the German Stadium to picture it. And while the former depicted the *Märzfeld* arena *in the process* of construction, the latter went straight from the architect's conception to the finished product, representing the German Stadium as completely built and even anticipating how it would be used. So, while Herterich, Mercker, Winkler, and Herrmann can be said to have stayed in touch with certain historical realities, Hirth, as we will explore further down, chose not to.

*Otto Albert Hirth and the genre of architectural fantasy*

Otto Albert Hirth (1899-1969) was a German landscape and portrait painter. Although Hirth attended drawing classes in Munich and studied painting under Angelo Jank,[84] he worked in the publishing business, just like his father Georg Hirth (1841-1916), the founder of the famous Art Nouveau magazine *Jugend*.[85] In the 1920s, Otto Hirth was the editor in chief of his father's journal, and, since February 1, 1934, worked for the *Zentralverlag der NSDAP* (Central Publishing House of *NSDAP*).[86] Between 1939 and 1944, Hirth exhibited a total of thirty paintings at the Great German Art Exhibition, nine of which had been purchased by Adolf Hitler and three – by Albert Speer, attesting to the artist's recognition among the two most powerful architecture-lovers in the Third Reich.

In the National Socialist press, the painting genre that Hirth worked in was dubbed *Architekturphantasie* or "architectural fantasy," a term that is often used in reference to the *capriccio* tradition in Western art.[87] According to the definition of *capriccio* in the Larousse Dictionary, "in painting, engraving, drawing, especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," it describes "works of imagination and fantasy, whether in regards to a landscape in ruins and invented or transposed monuments (F. Guardi, M. Ricci, etc.) or of a grotesque or picturesque setting (Callot, G.B. Tiepolo), or even a fantastic one (Goya's Caprices,

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[84] Hans Heyn, "Hirth, Otto A.," in *Süddeutsche Malerei aus dem bayerischen Hochland* (Rosenheim: Rosenheimer Verlag Haus, 1982), 226.
[85] *Deutsche Biographie*, s.v. "Hirth, Georg," accessed March 7, 2020, https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz42522.html#ndbcontent_sfz32599 ; Thomas Mann and Heinrich Mann, *Letters of Heinrich and Thomas Mann, 1900-1949*, ed. Hans Whysling, trans. Don Reneau, Richard Winston, and Clara Winston (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998), 339.
[86] "Personalfragenbogen für die Anlegung der SA – Personalkarte" from March 12, 1937, A3341 SA Kartei Roll 037A, Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde.
[87] "Vorschau auf die Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung. Munchen 1941," *Illustrierter Beobachter,* 16 Jahrhang, Folge 30 (July 24, 1941): n. p.

engravings)."[88] Importantly for our study of aesthetic compliance under National Socialism, artistic subjectivity and creative agency play a central role in capriccio, which, according to architect and architectural theorist Samir Younés "becomes a mediation between the real and their aesthetization of the real."[89] In the process of mediation, the artist engages in "creative re-ordering, re-composing and transforming of buildings, ruins, landscapes, urban spaces processed from memory, imagination and architectural invention."[90] Specifically, for urban designer and architect David Mayernik, the two main strategies of *capriccio* are "juxtaposing familiar things in unfamiliar ways (local landmarks set in different landscapes)" and "imagining future perspectives on our world (showing great buildings in a future ruined state; generally showing the process of decay or entropy; cities and nature exchanging roles)."[91] "At its most successful level," Younés concludes, "the historical *capriccio* […] assemble[s] within one composition past and present architectures and landscapes from different locations."[92] What these definitions of *capriccio* add to our understanding of aesthetic compliance under National Socialism then is the notion that creative play with architectural objects, spaces, and temporal registers is an essential quality of capriccio and that artists working in this genre are, therefore, by definition, granted with the license to do so.

Out of thirty paintings presented by Hirth at the Great German Art Exhibition between 1939 and 1944, eleven featured fictional Italian vistas with sunbathed piazzas, rooftop terraces, antique ruins, Renaissance palaces, and picturesque Mediterranean vegetation. The very first painting by Hirth that ended up in Hitler's personal collection, *Der Palast* (n.d., *GDK* 1939) (Fig. 80), presents an excellent early example of the artist's engagement with "creative re-ordering" of spaces and historical periods: it represents an archetypal sixteenth-century villa with a double-ramp staircase reminiscent of the Villa Melzi d'Eril in Bellagio, next to the three Corinthian columns that remain from the fifth-century BC Temple of Castor and Pollux at the Foro Romano in Rome and a more recent residential structure covered in scaffolding with construction workers

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[88] " 'Il Capriccio': Definition of the *Capriccio* (Caprice) in the French Larousse Dictionary," trans. by Julie Kleinman, in *The Architectural Capriccio: Memory, Fantasy and Invention*, ed. Lucien Steil (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 1.
[89] Samir Younés, "The Poietic Image," in Steil, *The Architectural Capriccio*,18.
[90] Lucien Steil, "Preface. The Architectural *Capriccio*: Memory, Fantasy, Invention," in Steil, *The Architectural Capriccio*, li-lii.
[91] David Mayernik, "Meaning and Purpose of *Capriccio*," in Steil, *The Architectural* Capriccio, 12.
[92] Younés, "The Poietic Image," in Steil, *The Architectural Capriccio*, 20.

unloading building materials from a boat. In an interview with *Illustrierter Beobachter* from December 17, 1942, featuring the painting, the artist claims direct observation and sketching to be secondary to the workings of memory and creative imagination.[93] Describing his work process, Hirth states that "Painting directly from nature should only be necessary for preliminary studies. In order to create a true work of art, it must be filtered through the artistic personality of the creator, his own knowledge and skill, and be the sum of all his artistic experience."[94] Rather than "portraits of existing buildings,"[95] Hirth's architectural landscapes represent composite, synthetic images of architectural ideal types: "out of a hundred palaces that exist somewhere and which I have seen once, a new one emerges, which captures, if I may say so, the 'essence' of all of them."[96]

The genre of *capriccio* is particularly well-suited for the depiction of the German Stadium because it involves the invention of buildings and spaces "that may or may not be built, or forms that may not be buildable even if there is a will to do so."[97] In this enterprise, the only criterion of success, according to Younés, is a high degree of verisimilitude: "By depicting a fictive reality, verisimilitude lays claim to artistic truth and poses itself as a believable artistic possibility."[98] In order to achieve credibility, Hirth claims to have developed "a new, thin, transparent style of painting" which "does not tolerate blurriness and calls for correct drawing;" he talks about "linear precision" and "diligence" which must be maintained on all stages of painting, from the first draft to the finishing touches.[99] The artist's description of his painting technique conveniently echoes both the historical conventions of architectural *capriccio* and Adolf Hitler's call for "clarity" in German art. Recall that Hitler associated the lack of said

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[93] "So malter ich dies Bild! Wir sprechen mit Künstler: Otto A. Hirth," *Illustrierter Beobachter,* 17 Jahrhand, Folge 51 (December 17, 1942): n.p.
[94] "Die Arbeiten unmittelbar nach der Natur sollten nur die notwendig vorhergegangenen Studien sein. Zur endgültigen Gestaltung eines Kunstwerkes bedarf es der Filtrierung durch die künstlerische Persönlichkeit des Schaffenden und der ihr innewohnenden Kräfte des Wissens und des Könnens und der Summe all seiner künstlerischen Erfahrung." "Otto A. Hirth," *Illustrierter Beobachter,* n.p.
[95] "Ich habe nur selten einmal bestehende Gebäude 'porträtähnlich' gemalt; es entstanden meistens aus solcher Anregung phantasievoll veränderte Bauten." "Otto A. Hirth," *Illustrierter Beobachter,* n.p.
[96] "Aus hundert Palästen, die es irgendwo gibt und die ich irgendwann einmal gesehen habe, entsteht ein neuer, der damit, wenn ich so sa-gen darf, die 'Essenz' aller ist." "Otto A. Hirth," *Illustrierter Beobachter,* n.p.
[97] Younés, "The Poietic Image," in Steil, *The Architectural Capriccio,* 22.
[98] Younés, "The Poietic Image," in Steil, *The Architectural Capriccio,* 20.
[99] "Architektur, die keine Verschwommenheit duldet, verlangt gebieterisch nach der korrekten Zeichnung; und das Lineare, wenn Sie wollen, Strenge muß auch bei den nachfolgenden Arbeitsgängen mit dem Pinsel von der Untermalung an durch alle Mallagen hindurch beibehalten werden." "Otto A. Hirth," *Illustrierter Beobachter,* n. p.

"clarity" with the avant-garde strategies of applying thick, undiluted paint onto the canvas – the visible, textured, broken brushwork and its gestural quality. Hirth, on the other hand, honed an extreme precision of outlines and smooth finishes, layering thin washes of color onto the canvas to achieve a hyper-realistic effect.

It is important to note, however, that these same qualities also endowed his paintings with starkness, coldness, and eeriness associated with the New Objectivity (*Neue Sachlichkeit*) movement. Promoted by a thematically diverse and politically disparate group of artists, the New Objectivity aesthetics may nevertheless be said to possess several unifying traits. In an exhibition catalogue to *Neue Sachlichkeit and German Realism of the Twenties* (1978-1979), Wieland Schmied lists "a new and intentional fidelity to the outlines of objects," "visual sobriety and acuity," "static pictorial structure, often suggesting a positively airless, glossy space, and the general preference for the static over the dynamic," "eradication of the traces of the process of painting, and elimination of all gestural elements" as some of the most common and consistent characteristics of the movement's aesthetics.[100] New Objectivity had notably made urban landscape one of its preferred subject matters, but following the logic of *capriccio*, indulged in spatial distortion and temporal compression, and used built environment to relate complex ideas about the nature of reality. For Franz Radziwill (1895-1983), for instance, urban scenery became a symbolic battleground between the forces of nature and technology; for Alexander Kanoldt (1881-1939), idyllic Italian cityscapes with their horizontal stacking of buildings become allegories of hierarchical societal organization.[101]

Although in 1937, many of the New Objectivity artists were branded as "degenerate" by the National Socialist state, others – including Radzwill and Kanoldt – found a way of working with Hitler's regime. Olaf Petersen even claims that official National Socialist art was itself influenced by New Objectivity:

> It must first be established that some significant National Socialist painters came from Neue Sachlichkeit. The instances of Werner Peiner, Adolf Ziegler and Adolf Wissel are by no means peripheral figures, but have central position in National Socialist art.

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[100] Wieland Schmied, *Neue Sachlichkeit and German Realism of the Twenties* (London: Hayward Gallery, 1978/79, London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978), exhibition catalogue, 13.
[101] Hans-Jürgen Buderer, "Stadt und Landschaft," *Neue Sachlichkeit: Bilder auf der Suche nach der Wirklichkeit: figurative Malerei der zwanziger Jahre* (Munich: Prestel, 1994), 77-107.

> Secondly, one must not close one's eyes to the fact that protagonists of Neue Sachlichkeit such as Alexander Kanoldt, Franz Lenk, Georg Schrimpf, Franz Radziwill and Bernhard Dörries certainly held important teaching posts and cultural political positions after 1933. And thirdly, it must be noted that well into the Second World War the reception of important exponents of Neue Sachlichkeit was maintained, i.e., their works from the Weimar period were still exhibited and widely publicized.[102]

The New Objectivity aesthetics apparent in Hirth's painting style had therefore become widely accepted in the 1930s due to the progressive integration of artists formally associated with this avant-garde movement into the National Socialist cultural mainstream. And, although there exists no record of Otto Albert Hirth's association with the New Objectivity movement, he would have attracted the interest of "the right-wing Bourgeoisie" for the very same reason as the New Objectivity artists listed by Petersen: according to Jost Hermand, representatives of this socio-political group "saw it [the New Objectivity art] as a kind of return to the realist ideals of the nineteenth century."[103] In the nineteenth century, neoclassical architects like Friedrich Schinkel had also popularized the artistic genre of *capriccio* in Germany.[104] But, whereas Schinkel's fantastical urban landscapes embodied, according to architectural historian Jean-François Lejeune, the socio-cultural and political opening of the Prussian society during the artist's lifetime,[105] Hirth's Italianizing *capriccios* were produced in dialogue with a dictatorial regime. As we will see further down, on the one hand, they fed into the National Socialist discourse, but on the other, they provided an escape from the contemporary political realities.

*From scale models to architectural fantasy painting*

In the abovementioned interview with *Illustrierter Beobachter*, Hirth also briefly addressed the German Stadium cycle, contrasting the production of these four paintings with his "usual" way of working. Unlike his Italian *capriccios,* which were a product of Hirth's "memory and imagination," the German Stadium cycle was actually based on Speer's ground, section, and

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[102] Olaf Peters, *Neue Sachlichkeit und Nationalsozialismus,* 147, in Plumb, *Neue Sachlichkeit 1918-33,* 148.
[103] Jost Hermand, "Unity within diversity? The History of the concept 'Neue Sachlichkeit,'" in *Culture and Society in the Weimar Republic,* ed. K. Bullivant (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), 166-182, quoted in Plumb, *Neue Sachlichkeit,* 19.
[104] Jean-François Lejeune, "Metaphors for a Political Urban Landscape: Schinkel's Capricci of a New 'Athens-on-the-Spree,'" in Steil, *The Architectural Capriccio*, 79-98.
[105] Lejeune, "Metaphors for a Political Urban Landscape," in Steil, *The Architectural Capriccio,* 79.

elevation plans.[106] In addition, he would have had privileged access to Speer's scale model of the stadium first presented at the cornerstone ceremony in 1937 and exhibited at the First Exhibition of German Architecture and Applied Arts (*Erste Deutsche Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerk-Ausstellung*) a year later.[107] This exhibition documented the regime's activities in the field of architecture and applied arts but was closely modeled on the Great German Art Exhibition and hosted at the same venue. The catalogues for the two exhibitions of architecture had been published by the *Knorr & Hirth Verlag* Munich, once run by Otto Hirth's father, Georg Hirth together with his first wife Elise/Else Knorr (1852–1920), and his father in law Thomas Knorr (1851–1911).[108] We also know that he was invested in the German Architecture and Applied Arts exhibition based on a painting he showcased at the Great German Art Exhibition in 1940 – *Das Haus der Deutschen Kunst und sein geplanter Ergänzungsbau* (1940), depicting a "complementary" building to the House of German art designed by architect Leonhard Gall that would have housed all future exhibitions of National Socialist architecture and applied arts. (Fig. 81) Although the money for the project had already come in, and Hirth's painting was purchased by Hitler on November 27, 1940 for 6,000 RM, construction of the *Haus der Deutschen Architektur*, as it came to be called, was abandoned for unclear reasons.[109]

In any regard, Hirth's connection to the *Knorr & Hirth* publishing house and his involvement with the *Deutsche Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerk-Ausstellung* would have provided him privileged access to Speer's models and plans for the German Stadium. Although Albert Speer constantly tinkered with the design, editing out and adding architectural elements, it is possible to establish that Hirth has used the most recent version as a reference for his paintings. For instance, in *Deutsches Stadion in Nüremberg II*, Hirth represented the outer wall of the courtyard enclosure as featuring a sequence of mural memorial plaques, an element that was only added by Speer in 1942. Likewise, the monumental staircase and the double square-based columns that screened the propylaeum were a part of the 1942 revisions made by Speer to

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[106] "Otto A. Hirth," *Illustrierter Beobachter*, n.p.
[107] *1. Deutsche Architektur- und Kunsthandwerkaustellung im Haus der Deutschen Kunst zu München. 22 Januar bis 18 April 1938* (München: Verlag Knorr & Hirth G.m.b.H., 1938), exhibition catalogue.
[108] Knorr & Hirth Verlag also published *Münhner neueste Nachrichten* and the magazine *Jugend*. "Hirth, Georg," *Deutsche Biographie*, accessed March 7, 2020, *https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz42522.html#ndbcontent_sfz32599* ; Mann and Mann, *Letters of Heinrich and Thomas Mann*, 339.
[109] Schlenker, 2007, 91-92.

his 1937 design for the main entrance.[110] Thus, although all of Hirth's paintings exhibited in 1942 and 1943 are undated, the production year – 1942 – can be construed by comparing them to Speer's consecutive section and elevation plans.

Hirth closely followed Speer's designs with one curious exception – *Deutsches Stadion in Nüremberg III.* Unlike the three other paintings, and despite the direct reference to the German Stadium in the title, *Deutsches Stadion in Nüremberg III* did not reproduce any of the architect's models or plans. Rather, in this painting, the artist recombined some of the most recognizable features of Speer's structure, such as the stepped pediment of the propylaeum and the aqueduct-like one-tier arcade of the enclosure, into a new *capriccio*-like composition. Furthermore, Hirth reduced Speer's megalomaniac structure in size to better fit the human scale and replaces his austere square-based paired columns with single round ionic ones – a type of column that was often used in nineteenth-century neoclassical architecture, such as Friedrich Schinkel's *Altes Museum* (1823-1830). The resulting building was then as much a product of Speer's design as of Hirth's imagination.

Regardless of the liberties Hirth took with *Deutsches Stadion in Nüremberg III* and perhaps even more so *because* of them, Speer's utopian design and Hirth's pictorial fantasy are intimately connected, with the result of their joint efforts being an intermedial architectural creation: an architecture that does not exist in physical reality, but possesses a sensible presence in National Socialist cultural sphere nevertheless. In fact, to explain the nature of utopian architecture, Italian architect and architectural historian Franco Borsi calls attention to the priority of the projected image over the physical realization of the building: "Here, images take over, so that the 'real,' the 'ideal,' and the 'utopian' make way for another dimension: the 'virtual,' the image which does not exist, but might exist, a counterpart to the real."[111] In this quote, Borsi introduces the Bergsonian concept of virtuality as later taken up by Gilles Deleuze to explain how utopian architecture is nowhere in actuality but is nonetheless real and can be interacted with when pictorially rendered. Deleuze argued that for Henri Bergson, "virtual" is not opposed to the "real," but to the "actual," whereas the "real" is opposed to the "possible."[112] In

[110] Based on Albert Speer's plans reproduced in Leon Krier, *Albert Speer Architecture* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1989); and courtesy of the Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds.
[111] Franco Borsi, *Architecture and Utopia* (Paris: Hazan, 1997), 31.
[112] Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone, 1991), 96-98.

other words, following the intrinsic logic of *capriccios* as described by Samir Younés, Lucien Steil, and David Mayernik, utopian architecture does not have to be *realized*, but only *actualized* by means of pictorial representation in order to exist and have its effect on reality. But it is also highly *dependen*t on the image to partake in "actuality." It is, therefore, important to emphasize the mutually-beneficial nature of the intermedial relation between Hitler's master-builder and the compliant landscape painter: while it gave Speer's project *ersatz* materiality, a virtual existence or actuality, it also provided Hirth with an opportunity to actively partake in the National Socialist building campaign. The additional example of Hirth's involvement with Leonhard Gall's unrealized project for the House of German Architecture lends us to believe that the artist might have consciously exploited these affordances of architectural fantasy to participate in the National Socialist architectural discourse.

As we will see next, when architectural utopia is actualized by means of pictorial representation, it becomes a potent political device that can be mobilized in times of struggle to evoke positive alternative scenarios, uplift people's morale, and sustain the authority of the state. Exhibited at a moment of German history when all resources had been shifted from Hitler's massive building campaign toward the military front, and the master-builder of the German Stadium was losing interest in his creation, Hirth's series of paintings kept Speer's project alive in the popular imagination. Besides, in 1942, Germany was suffering important military defeats on the Eastern front, and the likelihood of positive outcomes for the Third Reich was progressively decreasing. Hirth's architectural fantasy imagined an augmented state of being both for Speer's building and National Socialist Germany in general.

*Hirth's architectural fantasy and its relationship to time*

The key to understanding the political effectiveness of the German Stadium as an intermedial artwork lies in its relationship to time. As is often the case with architectural fantasies, not only are they located within distant, compressed, hybrid, or imaginary geographies, but they also inhabit temporalities that are out of our immediate experiential reach – either distant pasts or hypothetical futures.[113] To suggest a way in which both these temporal registers may relate to each other, postmodernist philosopher Fredric Jameson claims that "utopian future has […] turned out to have been merely the future of one moment of what is now our own

[113] Borsi, *Architecture and Utopia*, 8.

past,"[114] and feminist theorist Elizabeth Grosz states that "the utopian is *not* the projection of a future at all, although this is how it is usually understood; rather it is the projection of the past."[115] What emerges from these two diverging positions on the temporal dimensions of utopias, architectural or not is – to use Keith Moxey's terms – their heterochronic and anachronic nature.[116] That is, multiple temporalities can coexist within a single image of an imaginary built environment, and fantasy architectures can create temporalities of their own.

More importantly, the anachrony and heterochrony of architectural fantasies endow them with an important generative, mobilizing force. For architectural theorist Nathaniel Coleman, the actualization of architectural utopias through their visual representation bears on the real by inspiring social, political or cultural change: "Architectural projections and utopias are close relations: both argue against inadequate existing conditions while drawing upon the past to augur a transformed future envisioned as superior to the present."[117] Similarly, for cultural historian Gabriele Bryant, such "aesthetic counter-worlds" always grow out of a state of crisis and refuse to engage with the building's immediate social and functional context. This desire to transcend the present reality, Bryant says, "leads to an involvement with the historical context *ex negativo*" an "untimely mediation" in the Nietzschean sense, which "aims to work *against the time*, and therefore *on* time and thus hopefully *for the sake of its time*."[118]

Otto Albert Hirth uses the genre of architectural fantasy to put both the distant historical past and the hypothetic future at the service of a present in crisis. For once, Hirth's close reproduction of Speer's working plans as-built imagined the ultimate, augmented form of the German Stadium that surmounted all construction problems and adjustments that often intervene in the process of construction in real life. Hirth minimized the discrepancies between blueprints and buildings, between designs and their material realization, the ideal and the "actual." In a word then, the heterochronic and intermedial nature of architectural representation combined

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[114]Frederik Jameso, *Archaeologies of Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (London, New York: Verso, 2005), 286.
[115] Elizabeth Grosz, *Embodied Utopias: Gender, Social Change and the Modern Metropolis*, eds. Amy Bingaman, Lise Sanders, and Rebecca Zorach (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 272.
[116] Keith Moxey, *Visual Time: The Image in History* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013).
[117] Nathaniel Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 45.
[118] Gabriele Bryant, "Projecting modern culture: 'aesthetic fundamentalism' and modern culture," in *Tracing Modernity: Manifestations of the Modern in Architecture and the City*, eds. Mari Hvattum and Christian Hermansen (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 166-168, author's italics.

allowed Hirth to eliminate the effects of duration and contingency, making a temporal leap into the ideal future of the German Reich. To authenticate this idealizing image, Hirth goes as far as to suggest that the stadium was not only fully completed, but also fully operational, that is – already in use: massive clouds of dust hover over the arena, suggesting some kind of sports or wargame activity, smoke is coming from the giant braziers, people are circulating both outside of the enclosure and on the arena. He further enlivens the architecture by providing dramatic skies as a backdrop. In short, Hirth makes every effort to make the unbuilt German Stadium so present in the viewer's consciousness, that it appears both real and actual, despite remaining a purely visual representation of an architectural projection.

Not only does Hirth offer an image of a fictive, idealized future, but he also presentifies it; that is, he uses a number of representational strategies to make it seem as if this hypothetical future is accessible in the present moment. Hirth produced four paintings, showing the building from a variety of angles, from the outside, as well as from the inside. The viewing subject is positioned comfortably at the natural eye-level – as opposed to a bird's eye view one would necessarily have of Speer's scale models. This, in turn, creates an illusion of a first-hand experience, as if the painter could circulate within this fictional space and paint different vistas from direct observation. To further ground these images in the present, Hirth endows them with a history, with a past. Upon closer observation, it becomes apparent that staffage does not merely provide the scale for the monumental structure. The tiny human figures appear to be dressed in a historical, pastoral fashion; we also notice horses, a means of transportation that was hardly in use in the thirties in urban areas of Germany. By populating the image with these imaginary Arcadian characters, the painter provides a contemporary National Socialist construction project with a past, inscribes the German Stadium *into* history, essentially revisioning history.

*Conclusion*

To conclude, in his *Deutsches Stadion* cycle, Otto Albert Hirth successfully mobilized the mythopoetic and generative potency of architectural fantasy, substituting fiction for past and utopia for future, imparting meaning onto the present in crisis. Up until the winter of 1942-1943, when Hirth's paintings were exhibited at the Great German Art Exhibition in Munich, Hitler's army was victorious in an almost unbroken chain of military successes. Europe lay under his domination, but the battle for the city of Stalingrad in late 1942 proved a turning point. The

Soviet forces defeated the German troops and forced them on the defensive. The long retreat westward that followed was to end with Germany's surrender in May 1945, some three years later. In 1942 and 1943, sustaining the illusion that the Third Reich's largest construction project had a continuation suggested that National Socialist Germany had one too. Hirth's imaginary German Stadium demonstrates that in the Third Reich, intermediality and heterochrony were potent ideological devices by means of which the National Socialist present "triumphed" both over the accidents of history and the anguish of future.

Furthermore, by grounding Hirth's work in the Western tradition of *capriccio* painting on the one hand, and emphasizing its connection with the twentieth-century avant-gardes, such as *Neue Sachlichkeit*, on the other, this section takes National Socialist architectural landscape painting out of what cultural historian Pamela Potter has recently called "diachronic" and "synchronic isolation."[119] Potter explains that with a few exceptions to the rule, scholarly literature on the visual and performing arts under National Socialism still portrays the twelve-year period of Hitler's rule in Germany as a historical aberration, squeezed between the overromanticized Weimar Republic and the sanitizing "reset" of the Zero Hour. She also critiques current approaches to art in the Third Reich that regard it as radically distinct and antithetical to contemporary modernist developments of its political adversaries. Although drawing such diachronic and synchronic barriers facilitates the post-war process of dealing with historical trauma in the West, it prevents a deeper understanding of the role that the visual arts and architecture played in the industrialized societies.

Beyond the role of architectural *capriccio* under National Socialism, this section interrogated the space of artistic freedom – however limited – that compliant German artists had at their disposal in the Third Reich. Despite the widespread conviction that the National Socialist state controlled all aspects of creative expression, it seems that even in Hitler's Germany, the genre of architectural fantasy allowed for artistic subjectivity and provided ample opportunities for creative play with architectural objects and temporal registers. Otto Albert Hirth consciously exploited the affordances of this genre to participate in the National Socialist architectural

[119] Potter, *The Art of Suppression.*

discourse, which makes him not only compliant but complicit, i.e., actively engaged in sustaining the National Socialist ideology and cultural policy.

## Part III: "Building for eternity" and picturing the ephemeral at the Nuremberg Rally Grounds

As discussed in the introductory section on National Socialist architecture and time, official architectural discourse in the Third Reich sprung from Hitler's ambition to "found for eternity" and emphasized the ability of built structures to endure through time. Even Speer's "theory of ruin value" imagined the unavoidable deterioration of the *Führerbauten* as a state-regulated process, whereby buildings would decay in line with pre-planned parameters, so as to retain a recognizable and aesthetically-appealing form. Working against time and historical circumstances, compliant artists that pictured the Nuremberg Rally Grounds at the Great German Art Exhibition made a significant contribution to immortalizing the image of National Socialist architecture. But, as the following discussion of *GDK* artworks that featured the Zeppelin Field and the Congress Hall demonstrates, they also stressed its ephemerality, bounding it to the present.

### *The Zeppelin Field and the Cathedral of Light*

The NPRG structure that surprisingly attracted the least attention from compliant artists was the only building that was fully completed before the war and frequently used: the Zeppelin Field. (Fig. 82) Speer's 1934 design for a rectangular marching ground, surrounded by spectator tribunes and a monumental grandstand for political leaders was meant to replace the temporary earth and timber structures erected on that site to accommodate the 1933 Rally of Victory (*Reichsparteitag des Sieges*). According to the architect, the grandstand was inspired by the Pergamon Altar.[120] Built in the first half of the second century BC on one of the terraces of the Pergamon acropolis in ancient Greece, it was excavated by German archeologists in 1930 and transported to Berlin. Although directly referencing this cult structure, Speer replaced the open-air columnated courtyard with a closed pavilion and extended the ground plan lengthwise to close off the giant marching grounds on the eastern side. As a result, the Zeppelin Grandstand significantly surpassed its ionic prototype both in mass and scale.

[120] Taylor, *The Word in Stone,* 210.

I have already discussed the very first pictorial representation of the *Zeppeinfeld* – a sketch produced by its architect Albert Speer to illustrate his "theory of ruin value." This work, however, was only shown to Hitler and some of the state officials and was never exhibited in public. The only image of the building presented at the Great German Art Exhibition was an etching of the grandstand by a Munich-based graphic artist Blasius Spreng (1913-1987)[121] – *Zeppelinwiese* (*GDK* 1942). (Fig. 83) Although there can be no doubt that Spreng's etching is that of the Zeppelin tribune, the artist deploys concerted efforts to attenuate the differences between the National Socialist leaders' grandstand and its ancient Greek prototype. For instance, he eliminates the marching grounds, focusing only on the Zeppelin Grandstand, which is dramatically foreshortened to fit into the picture frame and, at the same time, attenuate it's elongated form that distinguished it from the Pergamon Altar. It also features a procession of human figures moving upward along the side of the tribune, instead of circulating inside the enclosure as if to suggest a ritual procession on the terraced topography of the Pergamon acropolis. The placement of staff figures in the foreground also reduces Speer's gigantic tribune to a more human scale. In other words, Spreng emphasizes historical references at the expense of the dwarfing effect that National Socialist architecture was meant to produce.

Another painting that made for the public image of the *Zeppelinfeld* and the Nuremberg Rallies in general was Karl Leipold's (1864-1943)[122] *Der Lichtdom* (*GDK* 1942). (Fig. 84) To be sure, the painting does not feature either the marching grounds or the grandstand as such, both immersed in opaque darkness. Instead, it captures an artificial light spectacle that took place at the site in 1937. For the Rally of Labor (*Reichsparteitag der Arbeit*) at the Ninth Party Congress, Speer, who delegated a particularly important role to the nocturnal presentation of the Rallies, conceived an extraordinary piece of ephemeral architecture. Punctuating the perimeter of the

[121] Spreng, Blasius (1913-1987) was a German painter and graphic artist. From 1931 to 1938, Spreng studied with Richard Klein at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, traveled to France, Italy, Turkey, Egypt, the Netherlands, and the Balkans. In 1940 he was appointed Professor of graphic arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Nuremberg. In 1941 Spreng was enrolled as a war painter by *Organisation Todt*. *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler des XX. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Hans Vollmer, s.v. "Spreng, Blasius," Band 4: Q-U (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 1958), 333.
[122] Leipold, Philipp Karl (1864-1943) was a German painter. From 1880 to 1883 Leipold studied at the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts and in 1884/1885 – at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts under Karl von Piloty. In 1889/1890 he also attended the Julian Academy in Paris. Wolfgang Reschke, *Biographisches Lexikon für Schleswig-Holstein und Lübeck*, s.v. "Karl Leipold," Band 7 (Neumünster: Wachholtz Verlag, 1985); Karl Leipold is best known for his atmospheric landscapes and cityscapes inspired by German Symbolism and his extensive travels. He was honored with a monographic show at the Great German Art Exhibition with twenty-one out of twenty-seven artworks purchased by Adolf Hitler.

gigantic Zeppelin Field, one hundred and thirty anti-aircraft searchlights directed their beams upward, projecting colossal columns of light into the sky. (Fig. 85, 86) Albert Speer marveled at his own creation: "The actual effect far surpassed anything I had imagined. […] The hundred and thirty sharply defined beams, placed around the field at intervals of forty feet, were visible to a height of twenty to twenty-five thousand feet, after which they merged into a general glow. The feeling was of a vast room, with the beams serving as mighty pillars of infinitely high outer walls."[123] The official press agency did not stint the pathos either in describing the *Lichtdom* experience: "Like meteors, the beams of the one hundred and fifty giant searchlights shoot into the obscured, grey-black night sky. The tall columns of light join against the cloud ceiling to form a luminous halo."[124] Even foreign observers, such as the British ambassador, Sir Neville Henderson, could not hide their fascination. As he wrote in his journal, "the effect, which was both solemn and beautiful, was like being in a cathedral of ice."[125]

All three accounts of Speer's light spectacle describe it in architectural terms. Unlike all other *Führerbauten* constructed with the intention to "outlast centuries," this edifice was a one-night ephemeral spectacle that *had* to be *re*-mediated in order to endure through time – captured in verbal and photographic accounts of first-hand observers. While the former clearly emphasized *Lichtdom*'s architectural qualities and the feeling of inhabiting this symbolic space, the latter failed to do so. Photographs made from the inside of the Zeppelin enclosure could not encompass the entirety of the megalomaniac spectacle. Made from up-close, they could only feature a handful of parallel searchlight beams. At the same time, those made from a distance to provide an overall view of the spectacle, necessarily positioned the viewer outside of it, where individual rays merged into a single screen of light relating none of *Lichtdom*'s architectural and spatial qualities.

Karl Leipold successfully remediates a photograph of *Lichdom* made by Hitler's personal photographer Heinrich Hoffmann in oil to give a lasting image to Speer's ephemeral creation that better corresponds to the architect's vision and the verbal witness accounts. (Fig. 84) Leipold depicts an entire *Lichtdom* wall as viewed from the Grandstand's upper platform and curves the

[123] Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 59.
[124] Quoted in Joachim C. Fest, *Hitler*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (Orlando, Austin, New York, San Diego, Toronto, London: A Harvest Book, Hancourt Inc., A Helen and Kurt Wolff Book, 2013), 514.
[125] Neville Henderson, *Failure of a Mission: Berlin 1937-1939* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1940), 72.

pillars of light at the crown to give an impression of a pointed archway – the hallmark of Gothic cathedrals. Not only does it emphasize the architectural quality of the light spectacle, but it also sacralizes the political rally, endows it with religious significance. The image also features the congregation – masses of people gathered on the Zeppelin Field that are visible, i.e., *present*, and immortalized only by virtue of light shed upon them by the *Lichtdom*. Snatched out of darkness by the "divine" light, they also appear unified by it into a single formation, a collective body of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. In 1942, when this painting was exhibited at *GDK*, the war was not only hampering architectural production but also, as Eric Michaud points out, the organization of festivals and ceremonies, so the "'cultural work' of artists was becoming ever more important for supporting and strengthening the [National Socialist] community."[126] Indeed, remediated by Leipold, the fleeting moment of the communal *Lichtdom* experience at the 1937 Party Rally became immortalized history. In fact, his painting bears within it the promise of immortality for all things transient – light and human life alike – on the condition that they partake of the National Socialist political spectacle.

*The Congress Hall*

The Congress Hall was designed by architect Ludwig Ruff and constructed by his son Franz Ruff in response to Hitler's demand for a spacious indoor meeting hall, capable of seating 50,000 members of the Party elite. (Fig. 87) Just like the Zeppelin Field, this *Führerbau* was modeled on an antique monument – namely, the Roman Colosseum – but modified to meet the needs of the rallies. The Congress Hall was constructed on a horseshoe plan facing the Dutzendteich Lake, with a vast interior open space to be covered by a glass ceiling. It would be built out of brick and concrete and clad in thin granite slabs for efficient and economic construction.[127] Adolf Hitler laid the foundation stone on September 11, 1935 as part of the Reich Party Rally for Freedom, and the finished building was to be handed over to the Nazi Party Rally in 1943. Engineers from Hochtief, Siemens Bauunion, and Philipp Holzmann were hired to develop technical solutions for the architects' ambitious project.[128] The latter commissioned Curt Winkler to document their work on this important *Führerbau*, with *Kongreßhalle in Nürnberg im*

[126] Michaud, *The Cult of Art in Nazi Germany*, 72.
[127] Rawson, *Showcasing the Third Reich*, 46.
[128] Jaskot, 164.

*Bau,* 1939 (Fig. 88) representing one of the five drawings featuring the Congress Hall construction site.[129]

The drawing provides a birds-eye view of the entire construction site, including the Dutzenteich Lake and the surrounding natural landscape extending up to the horizon. Just like Karl Leipold's *Der Lichtdom,* Winkler's representation of the Congress Hall is based on a widely circulated photograph of the building made from a construction crane. (Fig. 89) Although the artist reproduces the overall composition of the picture, he significantly enhances the sharpness and detalization of the image. Once again, National Socialist architectural painting makes proof of remediation, or rather *reverse remediation* – a kind of remediation where an older medium compensates for the drawbacks of a newer one, and not vice versa – to create a convincing image of a key public building. Winkler's meticulous droughting style captures the most minute details of the transient elements present in the scene – the temporary building equipment and the mutable vegetation. Paradoxically, the hyperrealistic representation of technology and nature overpowers the architecture of the Congress Hall itself, whose façade is barely distinguishable underneath the dense screen of painstakingly-reproduced scaffolding. It could be argued that the desire to immortalize the ephemera of construction rather than the final product – a trend that clearly emerges from the vast majority of NPRG representations featured at *GDK* – stems from the artists' desire to reclaim some agency over the products of their creative process. While the finished buildings are results architect's design and state control, construction ephemera are material artifacts of the constantly-evolving practical needs and human labor. Depiction of a National Socialist structure – here, the Congress Hall – becomes a pretext for the representation (and even glorification) of the fleeting and the mundane.

Winkler's drawing stands out of all other Rally Grounds images showcased at *GDK* because it places one of its key landmarks into a larger geographical context. All other artworks discussed in this chapter focus on its individual structures, which take up the entire picture frame. This almost universal trend in representations of the Rally Grounds is worthy of consideration because it goes against the official discourse surrounding the complex. The reason the Dutzendteich area was selected for the National Socialist Rallies was its proximity to

[129] Images reproduced in Arthur Schütze und Nadine Wischnewski, *Eine Arbeit Bildarchiv Der Philipp Holzmann AG, Ein Projekt des Berlin-Brandenburgischen Wirtschaftsarchivs*, s.v. "Die Kongresshalle Nürnberg," accessed July 14, 2020, https://holzmann-bildarchiv.de/bauen-im-ausland/kongresshalle-nurnberg/.

Nuremberg, the City of the *Reichstage* or Imperial Diets, and its primary landmark – the medieval *Kaiserburg*.[130] The connection between the historical *Reichstage* and the contemporary *Reichsparteitage* was sought after on many different levels: mass processions often connected the historical center with the Rally Grounds; the plan of the Rally Grounds was laid out so that its central axis, the Great Road, points directly at the medieval castle; promotion material for the annual rallies, such as posters, postal cards, and maps often featured *Kaiserburg* as a backdrop for the Rally Grounds. (Fig. 90) And yet, the castle does not appear in any of the *GDK* images presented in this chapter. The reverse is also true: the historic city of Nuremberg was featured in twenty-three individual *GDK* exhibits without any reference to the newer structures constructed by the Dutzendteich Lake. The only *GDK* painting of an actual National Socialist Rally event – *Der Zapfenstreich am Parteitag in Nürnberg* by Paul Herrmann (*GDK* 1943) – does not feature any of Speer's or Ruff's purpose-built architecture. (Fig. 91) The artist chooses a moment in the nocturnal torch procession that traditionally started at the Zeppelin Field, where it has already reached its final destination – the historical center of Nuremberg and illuminates the feet of its medieval castle. In a word then, efforts deployed by the National Socialist party to establish a symbolic connection between the two architectural landmarks, the medieval and the National Socialist one, were manifestly being disregarded by the compliant artists.

To conclude, artists discussed in this section showed a clear preference for the depiction of construction activities over the finished product and of the ephemeral over the permanent. By means of intermedial references to and strategic *re*mediation of NPRG buildings, models, and their photographic records, they actively engaged with the ideological framework set by the state, compensating both for Hitler's utopian future-orientedness and architecture's medium-specific drawbacks.

*Conclusion*

This chapter considered the ways in which compliant German artists working in the genre of architectural landscape painting contributed to National Socialist discourse on the built environment and its relationship to temporal duration. It stemmed from two main premises: first, that images of existing or projected buildings may be said to constitute an intermedial representation practice that allows for greater creative involvement with official architecture;

[130] Hagen and Ostergren, "Spectacle, architecture and place at the Nuremberg Party Rallies," 158.

second, that there can be qualitatively different conceptions or experiences of time at a particular historical moment, and that, even in Hitler's Germany.

Namely, I focused on representations of one of the largest ongoing urban development projects in the Third Reich – the National Socialist Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg, exhibited at the prestigious Great German Art Exhibition between 1937 and 1942. Part I concerned itself with representations of *Märzfeld* and the ways in which compliant German artists intervened into the very structure of visual perception to articulate what contemporary art historian Christine Ross has called a presentifying "regime of historicity," a rapport to temporal duration "in which the articulation of the past, the present, and the future is rethought as the past is brought closer to the present and the present brought closer to the future."[131] Part II focused on *Deutsches Stadion in Nürnberg I, II, III,* and *IV* – a cycle of four large-scale oil paintings of Albert Speer's German Stadium produced by Otto Albert Hirth (1899-1969). In an effort to understand the role of heterochronic architectural fantasy in the Third Reich and the complex nature of aesthetic compliance, this section identified intermedial representation strategies used by Hirth to revise the past and substitute fiction for future in a pivotal historical moment when the defeat of the German troops in the battle for Stalingrad marked the regime's imminent demise. Part III expanded on the ways in which compliant German artists worked against time and historical circumstances, both immortalizing the image of National Socialist architecture and exposing its ephemerality.

Overall, using a relatively conservative (figurative, naturalistic) representational means that catered to Hitler's tastes in the visual arts, compliant German artists effectively explored the relationship between pictorial and built media, appropriating and refashioning the representational practices of the latter. Moving back and forth between presentist, historicizing, and future-oriented temporal registers, they not only reflected on the various aspects of Hitler's building campaign but also on the troubling historical realities. They proved to be complicit rather than merely instrumental in the construction of the official discourse on architecture. What the regime did not account for is that in the process, compliant German artists would both

[131] Ross, *The Past is the Present,* 16.

enhance the public image of the *Fühehbauten* and infuse it with their own anxieties about the outcomes of World War II and the faith of National Socialist culture.

## Conclusion

Already in 1964, Hannah Arendt took issue with the assumption of absolute state control in the Third Reich that reduces the relationship between the National Socialist political authorities and German citizens to that of uncompromising command and passive obedience. In her essay "Personal Responsibility under Dictatorship," the prominent political thinker condemned the so-called "cog-theory" of responsibility under dictatorship – where every German citizen is considered a cog in the machinery of prosecution, and no individual functionary may be held accountable for the actions performed at a request of a higher authority – as "moral evasion."[1] In line with Arendt's standpoint, this thesis objected the rigid and oversimplifying "totalitarian" approach to the study of visual arts in the Third Reich that absolves German artists from any *voluntary* involvement in state-supported cultural production. Without completely dismissing the influence exerted by the government officials over the arts, I argued for a view of artistic compliance that attends to the *convergence* of interests between the artists and the state, emphasizing the *give-and-take* nature of this relationship and the opportunities available to German artists – at least the German artists who were not subjected to ethnic, religious, or political victimization – to participate in the National Socialist discourse and the ways in which they tapped into them. I examined structural and aesthetic aspects of artistic compliance as *conditioned* but not entirely *determined* by the German state's attempts to coordinate the arts.

As discussed in Chapter 1, significant efforts were deployed by the National Socialist government to coordinate the arts – the process referred to as *Gleichschaltung* or Nazification – and had a restrictive effect on creative freedom. The threat of persecution combined with positive incentives to cooperate made German artists more attuned to the desires and wishes of the state, more willing to comply with its demands. The *readiness* to act within prescribed limits does not, however, in and of itself have any effect on cultural *production*. The discipline of social psychology that first developed methodological tools for the systematic study of social conformity suggests that the degree of compliance must be assessed based on *observable*

[1] Hannah Arendt, "Personal Responsibility under Dictatorship (1964)," in *Responsibility and Judgement* (New York: Schocken Books, 2003), 29. Hannah Arendt first evokes and rejects the "cog-theory" a year earlier in *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New-York: Viking Press, 1963).

*behaviors* rather than presumed from internal beliefs and personal dispositions. Examples of observable behaviors attesting to compliance discussed in Chapter 2 included joining Party organizations, participating in state-supported exhibitions, and making aesthetic choices based on the public pronouncements of the political leaders.

I used the dyadic model of induction advanced by social psychology for the analysis of authority relations to provide a basic view of cultural Nazification in *hypothetical conditions of perfect communication and total control*, as well as to locate potential disturbances and breaking points in this closed system. I also explained how the feedback loop dynamics blurred the line between the outcomes of state induction and those of artists' initiative. Finally, having identified two different modes of induction – structural and aesthetic – I expanded the dyadic and the feedback loop models of authority relations under National Socialism, opening them up to a wider variability of responses from cultural professionals.

In subsequent chapters, I have consistently drawn attention to the ways in which the decentralized, improvised, and polycratic nature of the National Socialist state actually made aesthetic compliance quite challenging for German artists seeking accommodation with the regime – a realization that would be inconceivable from within the "totalitarian" paradigm. The complexities and mishaps of artistic compliance under National Socialism were notably explored in Chapter 3, which focused on the life and career of a technical subjects' painter Richard Gessner. This avant-garde artist specializing in the representation of industrial architecture and construction sites accepted state regulations and effectively navigated its uncertain cultural climate toward renewed professional success. I examined both the structural aspects of Gessner's compliance (applying to join the Party, participating in the Great German Art Exhibition, etc.) and the aesthetic ones – the subtle shifts in iconography, formal and stylistic features of his work that correlated with the regime change. I also suggested that there existed a third dimension to artistic compliance under National Socialism that manifested itself when artists used their networks of acquaintances for career advancement. But most importantly, this case study confirmed that the development of artistic and social practices retrospectively associated with compliance happened gradually, often *before* political shifts took place at the institutional level, making it irreducible to passive obedience to state-imposed rules and regulations.

Another important observation made in my analysis of Gessner's career under National Socialism was the dual nature of his search for an appropriate artistic idiom during this period. The artist made concerted attempts to juggle corporate and public commissions, reconcile technocratic and conservative tendencies within the National Socialist thought, and balance progressive modernism and cultural conservatism in his work. I argued that the ground for such duality was paved by the artists' interest groups and student organizations that engaged in proactive collective action and interfered in the process of *Gleichschaltung*. In Chapter 2, I discussed the pro-modernist and *völkish* associations that exploited the climate of cultural uncertainty in the first few years of the regime to advance opposing aesthetic agendas. The German Art Society and the *NSD-Studentenbund* that I focused on, competed for state attention with their respective publications and exhibitions, while also actively seeking integration into its administrative apparatus. From the standpoint of Systems Theory and the feedback loop model presented in Chapter 1, it can be said that compliant artists' organizations destabilized the boundary between the subject and the object of induction, between the output and the input functions in authority relations under National Socialism.

My methodological procedure for establishing structural compliance of both individual artists and artists' interest groups was relatively straightforward. First and foremost, it required identifying and consulting archival sources that confirmed affiliation with governmental organizations (e.g., ascertaining *NSDAP*/*RKK* membership). In this case, the main challenge was of a practical nature: there are significant gaps in archival records, many of which were destroyed in the havoc of World War II and others withdrawn from public access by the interested parties. Participation in major state exhibitions was established with the help of official catalogues and delivery receipts in museum registries. Aesthetic compliance, however, proved more difficult to operationalize and assess. Identifying and describing iconographic, formal, and stylistic changes in artists' work that occurred upon the regime change proved an effective strategy for pinpointing the potential outcomes of state induction. Analysis of these aspects was particularly useful for avant-garde artists like Richard Gessner, who needed to make significant adjustments to their work in order to find accommodation with the National Socialist regime. Cases where no substantial formal and stylistic adjustments needed to be made on the part of the artists, however, required a different approach to account for aesthetic compliance.

I presented one possible method of expanding our understanding of aesthetic compliance in Chapter 4 on the complex relations between built and pictorial media in the Third Reich. Focusing on the state-approved artworks featuring the National Socialist Party Rally Grounds, I examined how compliant architectural and technical subjects' painters enhanced or altered the public image of its *Führerbauten*. I first discussed representations of the *Märzfeld* arena as a site of perpetual building activity; the second part of the chapter concerned itself with depictions of the German Stadium and the affordances of architectural fantasy; finally, I examined the tension between permanence and ephemerality in representations of the Zeppelin Field and the Congress Hall. I established that instead of passively and impartially documenting the process of architectural production, compliant German artists engaged in active *re*-mediation thereof, appropriating and refashioning the representational practices of architecture, overcoming major drawbacks of this immovable and costly medium, while also bridging the gulf between design and construction, regime's expectations and historical realities, ultimately contributing to the National Socialist discourse on time, space, and materiality.

As announced in the introduction, this thesis was limited to non-dogmatic images of architectural and infrastructural development produced by artists who found professional acceptance and recognition under National Socialism. Therefore, although the method of analysis advanced in Chapter 4 yielded many valuable insights into the nature of aesthetic compliance in the Third Reich, it would prove less effective for paintings and graphic works that did not mobilize intermedial relations to the same extent. Considering the broad spectrum of pictorial genres and media affected by state regimentation of cultural life in Hitler's Germany, it is safe to say that the subject of aesthetic compliance is not exhausted by research presented in this thesis and requires further investigation.

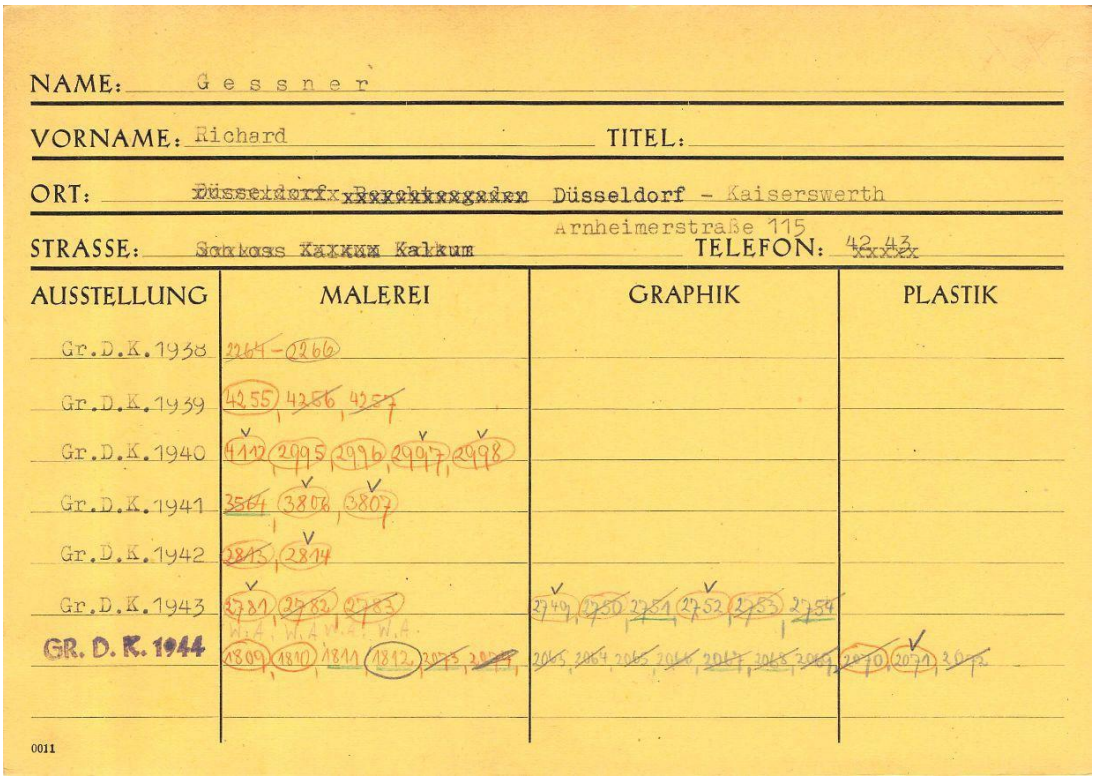
To conclude, while scholars have previously noted the effects of internal rivalries on the National Socialist arts sphere,[2] they consistently presented the climate of cultural uncertainty under Hitler as the regime's *failure* – a failure to impart onto the German artists a set of coherent aesthetic demands. Research presented in this thesis, however, has led me to believe that the National Socialist state might have deliberately sustained the said climate of cultural uncertainty.

[2] For example, see Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*; Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, & Economics*; Petropoulos, *Artists Under Hitler*; Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich.*

It compelled compliant German artists to act at their own discretion, participating in the development of aesthetic conventions for "new" German art on par with state functionaries and ideologues, which, in turn, made creative professionals *complicit*, i.e., completely entrenched in the National Socialist regime. In fact, speaking about the notion of responsibility under dictatorship, Hannah Arendt located the real power of the National Socialist regime specifically in its ability to make "the existence of each individual in Germany depend either upon committing crimes or on complicity in crimes."[3] Ultimately, if one does not have clear orders to act on, compliance becomes a matter of personal reflection, interpretation, and decision-making; in other words, a matter of *participation* – however limited – and therefore, of *individual* responsibility.

[3] Hannah Arendt, "Organized Guilt and Universal Responsibility (1945)," in *Essays in Understanding 1930-1954. Formation, Exile, and Totalitarianism,* ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schoken Books, 1994), 124.

# Appendix



NAME: Gessner

VORNAME: Richard TITEL:

ORT: ~~Düsseldorf xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Düsseldorf – Kaiserswerth

STRASSE: ~~Sankass Kaxxxx Kalkum~~ Arnheimerstraße 115 TELEFON: ~~42 43 xxxxx~~

| AUSSTELLUNG | MALEREI | GRAPHIK | PLASTIK |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gr.D.K.1938 | 2264 – 2266 | | |
| Gr.D.K.1939 | 4255, 4256, 4257 | | |
| Gr.D.K.1940 | 4112, 2995, 2996, 2997, 2998 | | |
| Gr.D.K.1941 | 3804, 3806, 3807 | | |
| Gr.D.K.1942 | 2813, 2814 | | |
| Gr.D.K.1943 | 2781, 2782, 2783 | 2749, 2750, 2751, 2752, 2753, 2754 | |
| GR. D. K. 1944 | 1809, 1810, 1811, 1812, 2073, 2074 | 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072 | |

0011

| Gessner's Participation at the Great German Art Exhibition 1938-1944 – Overview | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Exhibition** | **Accepted/Rejected** | **Title** | **Medium** | **Buyer** |
| *GDK* 1938 | R | N/A | | |
| *GDK* 1938 | A | Teerdestillation | Oil on canvas | Hermann Göring |
| *GDK* 1939 | A | Bahnhofsumbau Düsseldorf | Oil on canvas | Adolf Hitler |
| *GDK* 1939 | R | N/A | | |
| *GDK* 1939 | R | N/A | | |
| *GDK* 1940 | A | Kraftwerk Wasserburg am Inn | Oil on canvas | Adolf Hitler |
| *GDK* 1940 | A | Dorf Kalkum | Oil on canvas | N/A |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *GDK* 1940 | A | Nächtlicher Bauplatz | Oil on canvas | N/A |
| *GDK* 1940 | A | Hochöfen | Oil on canvas | Hauptamt für Technik, München |
| *GDK* 1940 | A | Hüttenwerk Solingen | Oil on canvas | Stadt Solingen |
| *GDK* 1941 | R | N/A | | |
| *GDK* 1941 | A | Hüttenwerk | Oil on canvas | Adolf Hitler |
| *GDK* 1941 | A | Treibstoffwerk im Bau | Oil on canvas | Adolf Hitler |
| *GDK* 1942 | A | Triptychon: Der Niederrhein | Oil on canvas | N/A |
| *GDK* 1942 | A | Wehrbau am Niederrhein | Oil on canvas | Albert Speer |
| *GDK* 1943 | A | Bürgen unserer Zeit | Oil on canvas | Walter Funk |
| *GDK* 1943 | R | Föhnstimmung | Oil on canvas | |
| *GDK* 1943 | R | Flußkraftwerk im Bau | Oil on canvas | |
| *GDK* 1944 | A | Das große Bauwerk | Oil on canvas | N/A |
| *GDK* 1944 | A | Und neues Leben blüht aus den Ruinen | Oil on canvas | N/A |
| *GDK* 1944 | A | Die große Baugrube | Tempera | N/A |
| *GDK* 1944 | A | Turbinengehäuse I | Tempera | N/A |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *GDK* 1944 | R | Holzhäuser mit Transformatorentüren | Oil on canvas | |
| *GDK* 1944 | R | Das Pumpenhaus | Tempera | |
| *GDK* 1944 | R | Alte u. neue Zeit | Tempera | |
| *GDK* 1944 | R | Märztag | Tempera | |
| *GDK* 1944 | R | Die Baustelle | Tempera | |
| *GDK* 1944 | R | Der ganze Bagger | Aquarell | |
| *GDK* 1944 | R | Kraftwerk im Bau | Aquarell | |
| *GDK* 1944 | R | N/A | Sculpture | |
| *GDK* 1944 | A | N/A | Sculpture | |
| *GDK* 1944 | R | N/A | Sculpture | |

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# Figures

Figure 1. Richard Gessner in his atelier at Schloß Kalkum, 1942, photograph. In *Richard Gessner*, eds. Heckmanns, Friedrich W., and Karl Ruhrberg. Köln: Wienand Verlag, 1994, p. 159.

Figure 2. Carl Blechen, *Rolling mill in Eberswalde,* 1834, oil on panel, 25.5 x 33 cm. https://useum.org/artwork/The-Neustadt-Eberswalde-Rolling-Mill-Carl-Blechen-1830 (Accessed March 11, 2020).

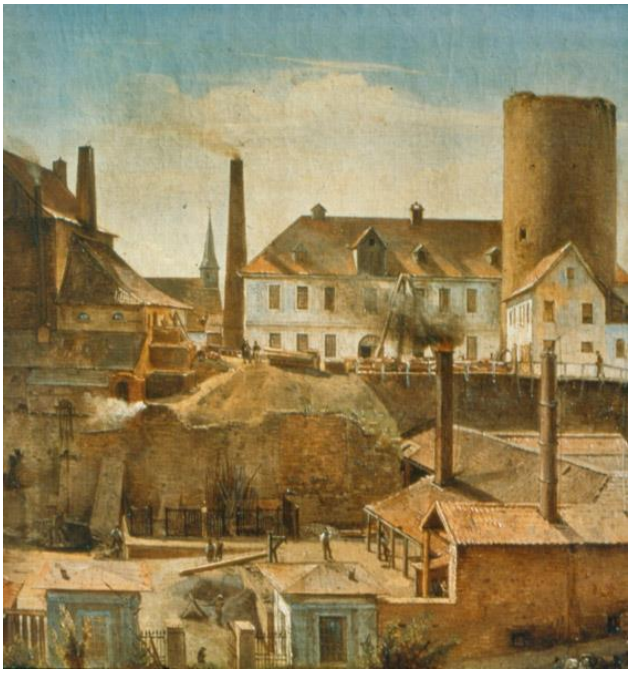


Figure 3. Alfred Rethel, *Harkortsche Fabrik auf Burg Wetter*, 1834, oil on canvas, 43.5 x 57.5 cm. https://www.lwl.org/westfaelische-geschichte/portal/Internet/input_felder/anzeigen.php?verzeichnis=med&dateiname=bh-060-04.jpg&bild_id=178 (Accessed March 11, 2020).

Figure 4. Adolph Menzel, *The Iron Rolling Mill (Modern Cyclopes)*, 1872-1875, oil on canvas, 254 x 158 cm. https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/the-iron-rolling-mill-modern-cyclopes-adolph-menzel/pgFVPI1J1YGXZA?hl=en (Accessed March 11, 2020).

Figure 5. Käthe Kollwitz, *March of the Weavers*, 1897, etching, 39.05 x 50.17 cm. https://collections.artsmia.org/art/9064/march-of-the-weavers-kaethe-kollwitz (Accessed March 11, 2020).

Figure 6. Hans Baluschek, *Arbeiterstadt* (Working-Class City), 1920, oil on canvas, 123 cm x 92 cm. https://flashbakshop.com/products/arbeiterstadt-working-class-city (Accessed March 11, 2020)

Figure 7. Richard Gessner, *Industriestadt*, 1922, pastel on canvas, 115 cm x 110 cm. In Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, p. 47

Figure 8. Richard Gessner, *Hütte bei Nacht,* 1994, oil on canvas. In Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, pp. 48 and 203.

Figure 9. Richard Gessner, *Zeche Rheinpreussen (Teerdestillation)*, 1937. In Wilhelm Rüdiger, *Kunst und Technik.* Munich: Verlag der Deutschen Technik, 1941, plate 8.

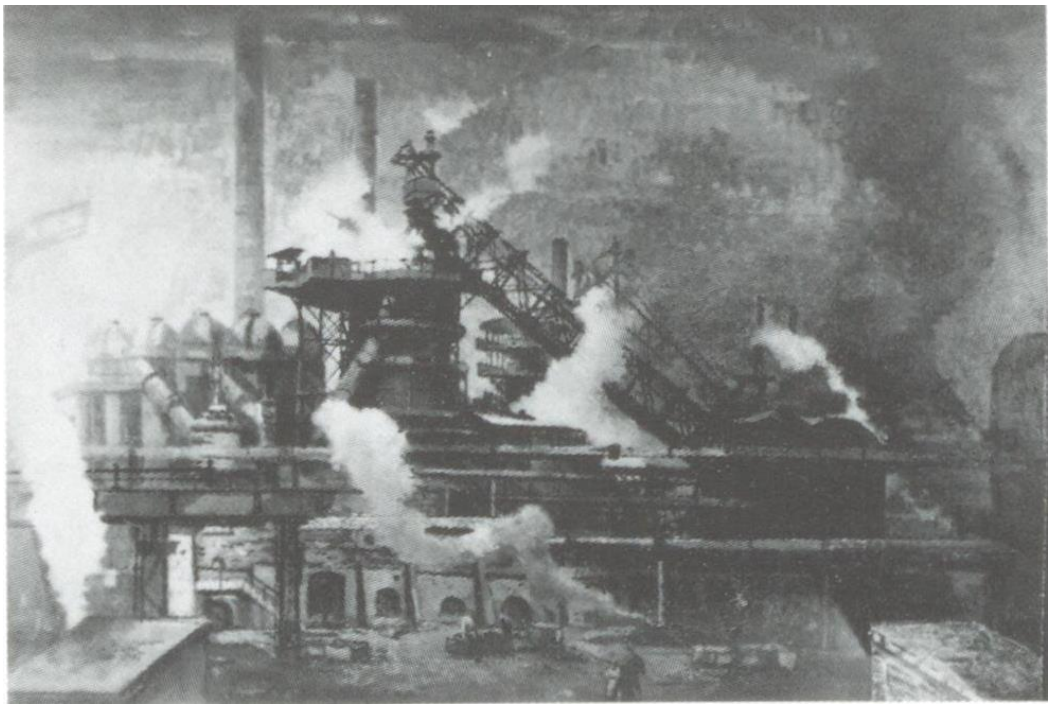
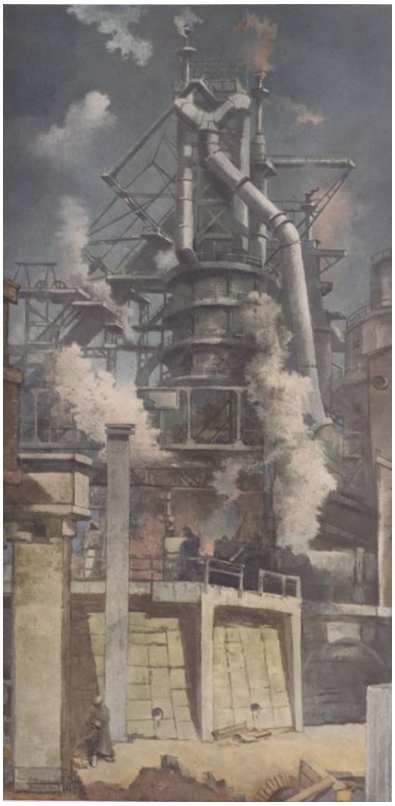


Figure 10. Richard Gessner, *Niederrheinische Hütte*, 1938, oil on canvas, 75 x 100 cm. In Heckmanns and Ruhrberg, *Richard Gessner*, p. 223.



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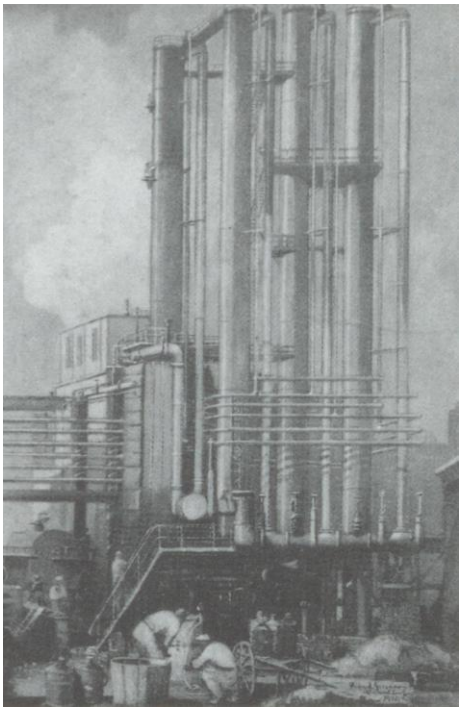

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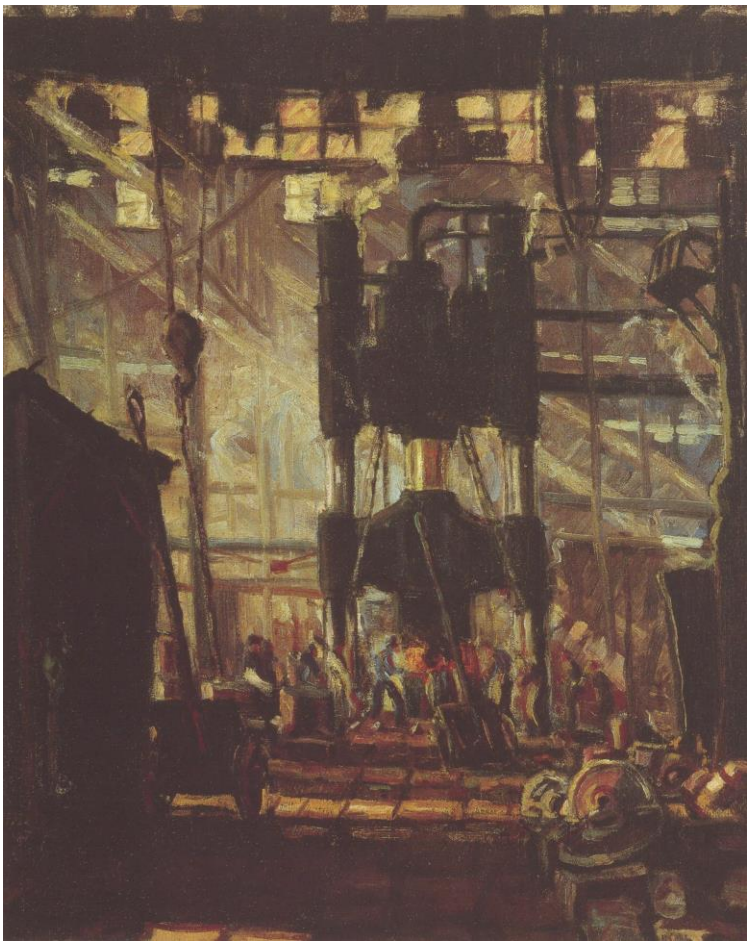

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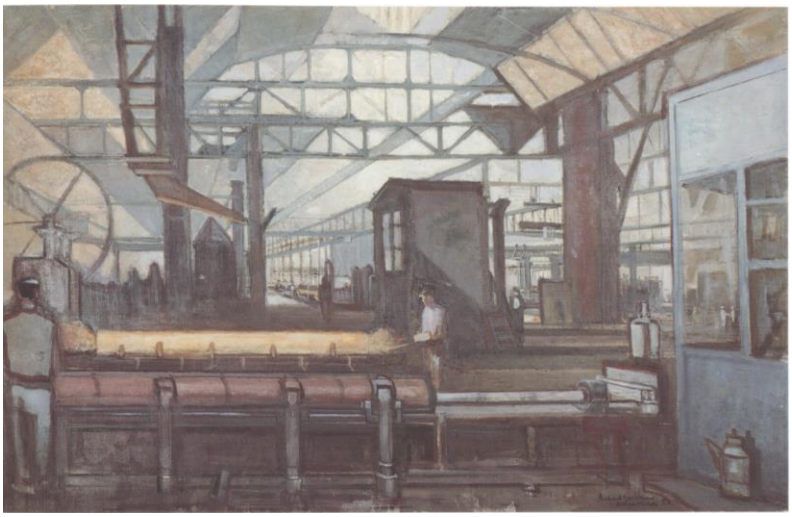

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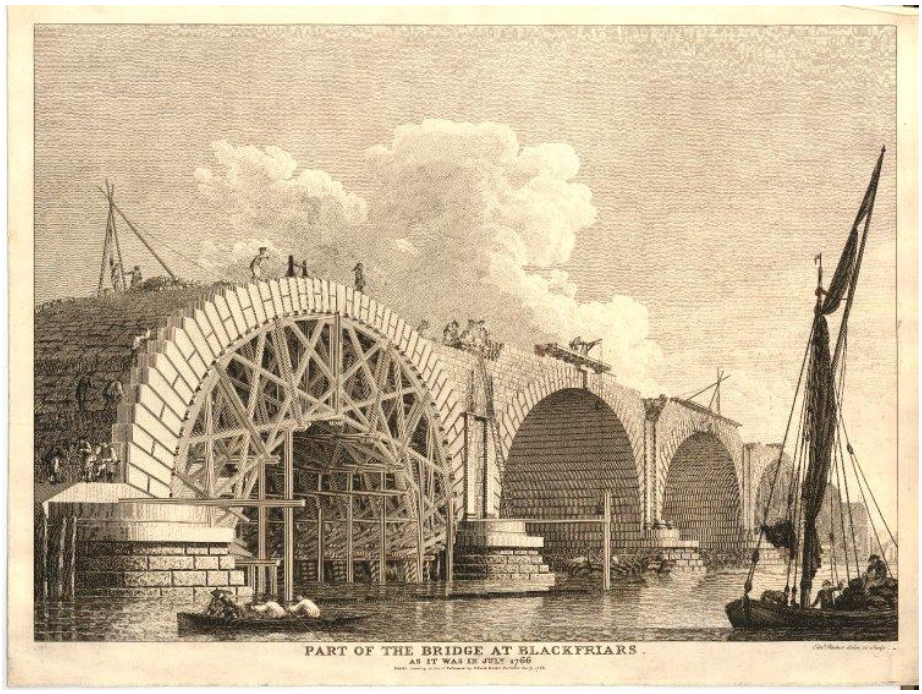


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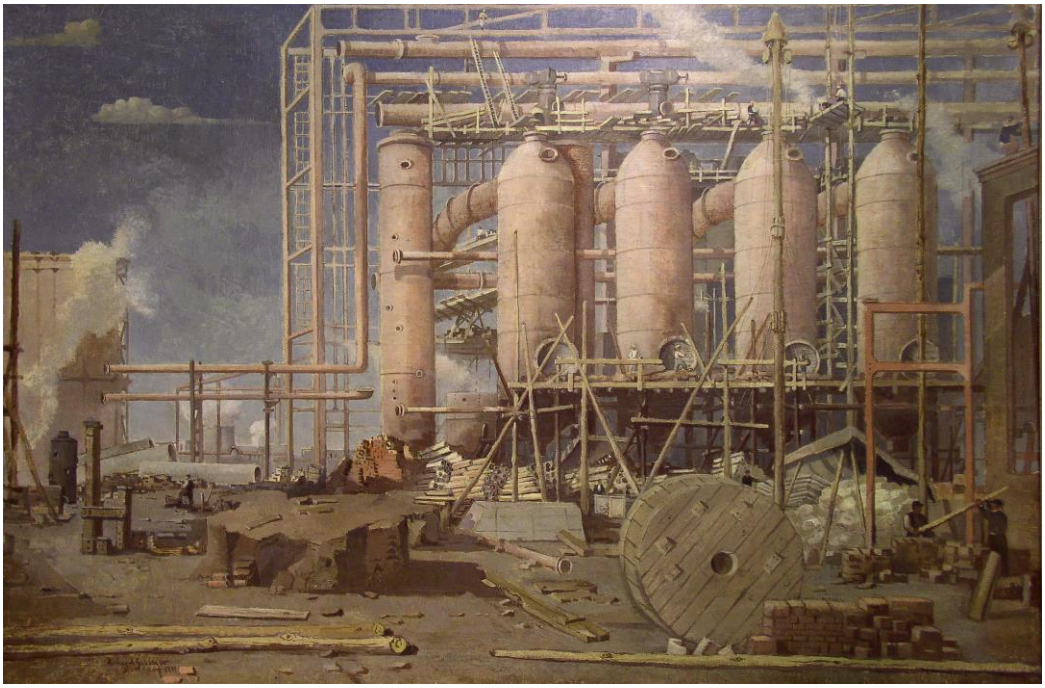

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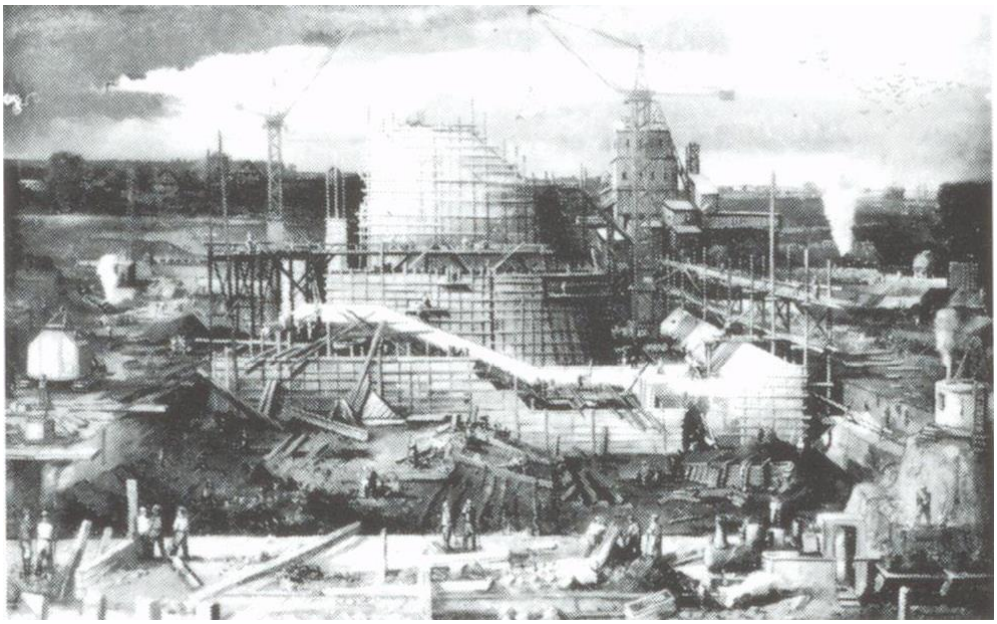

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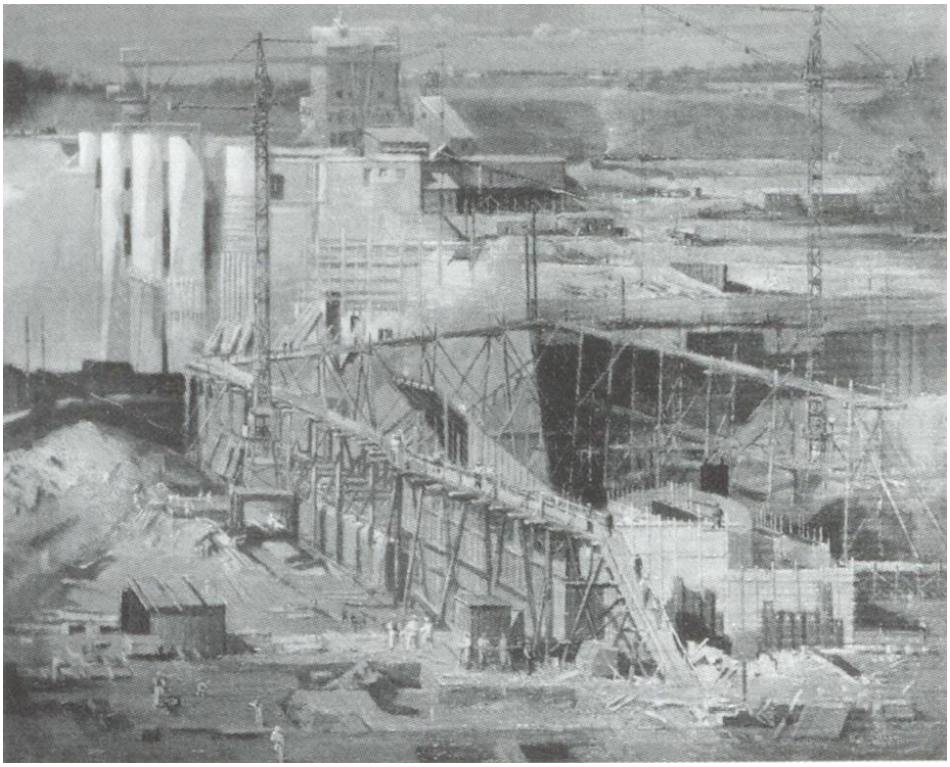

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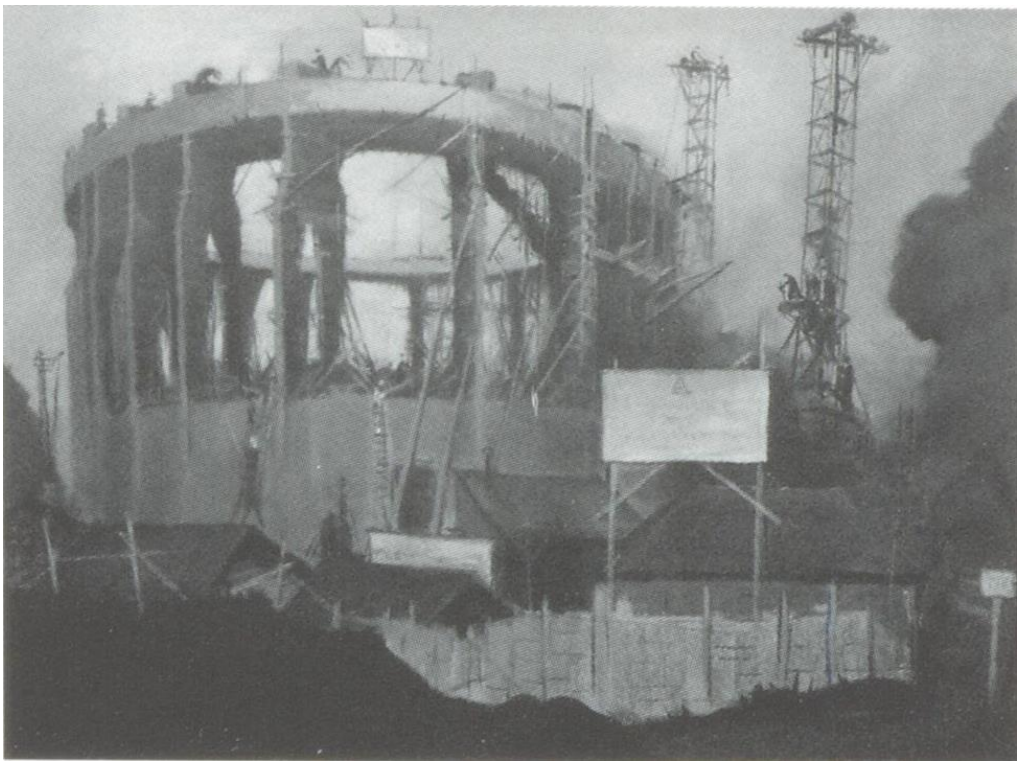

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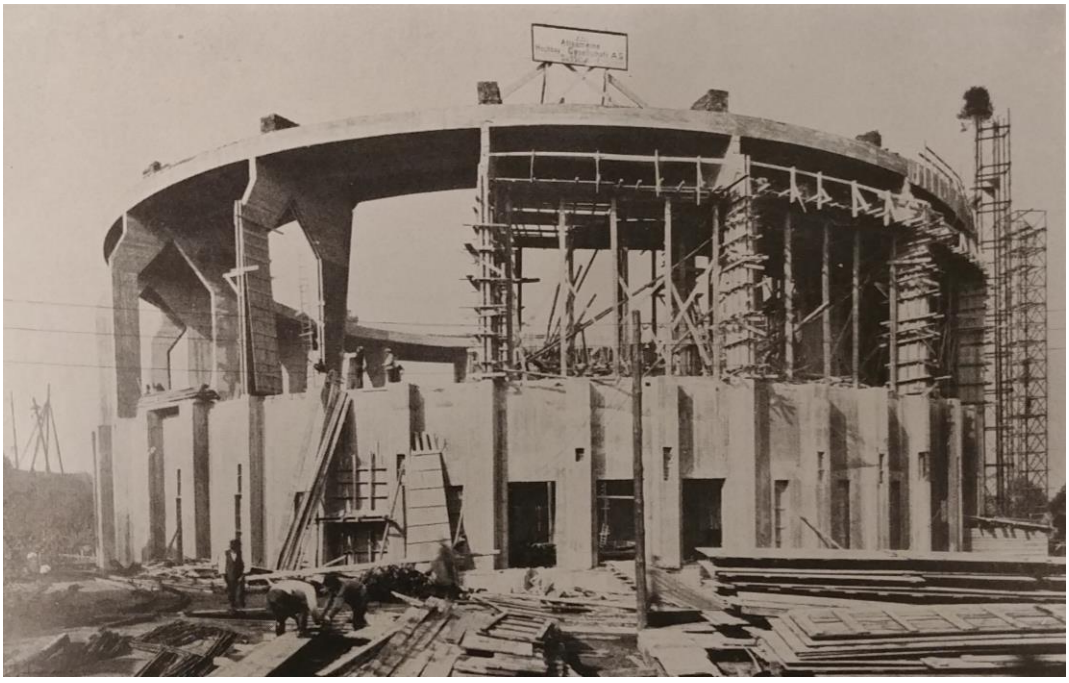

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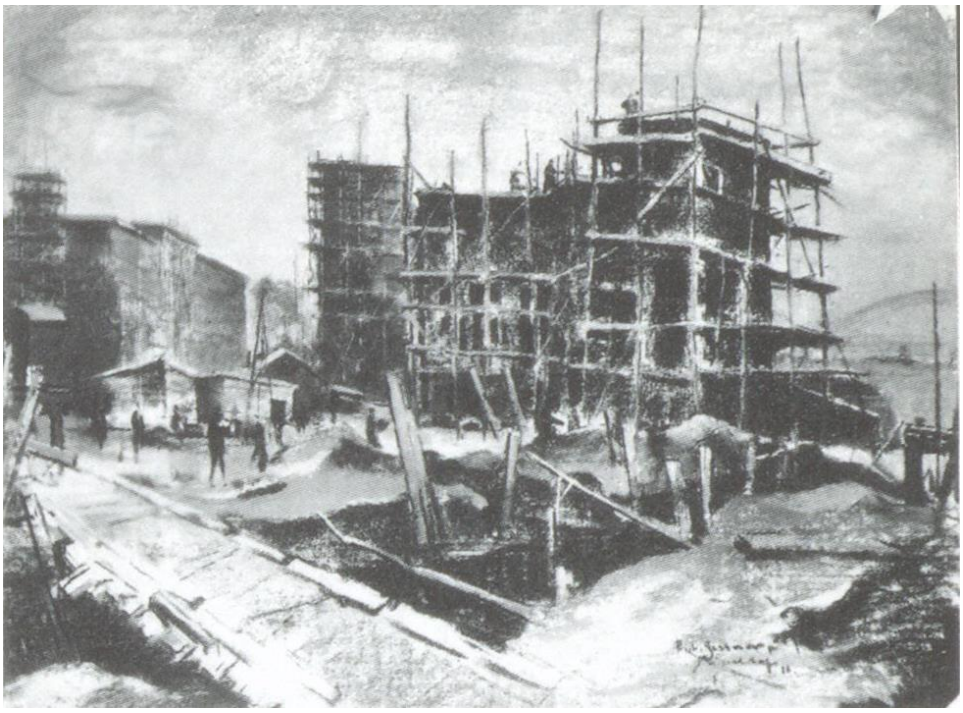

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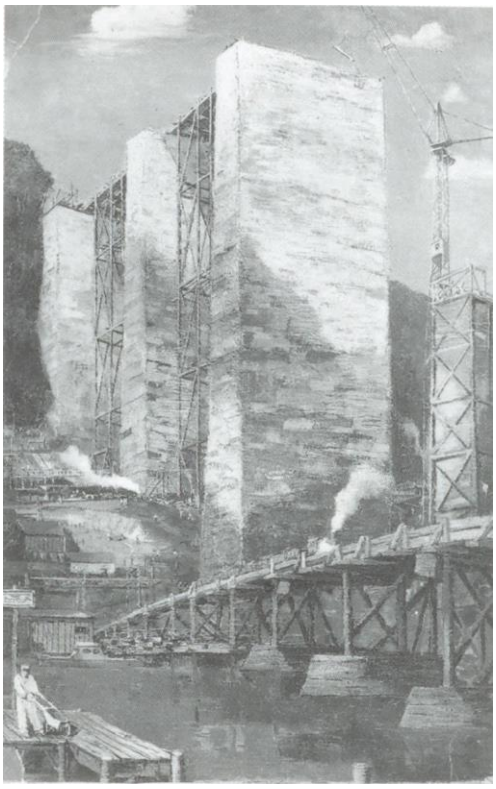

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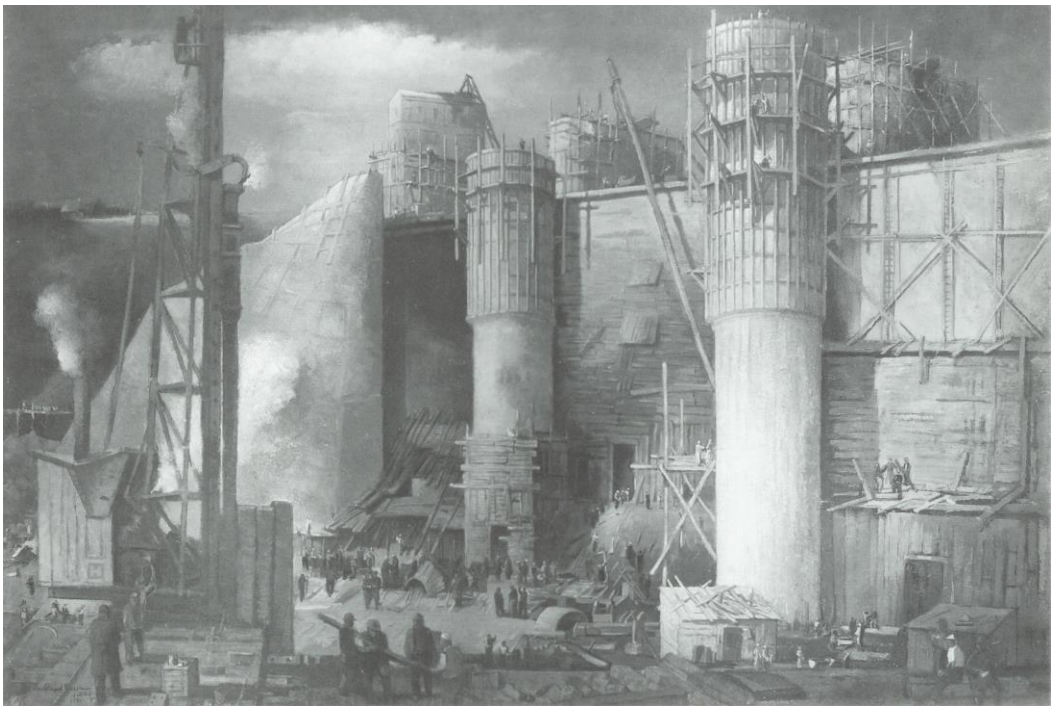

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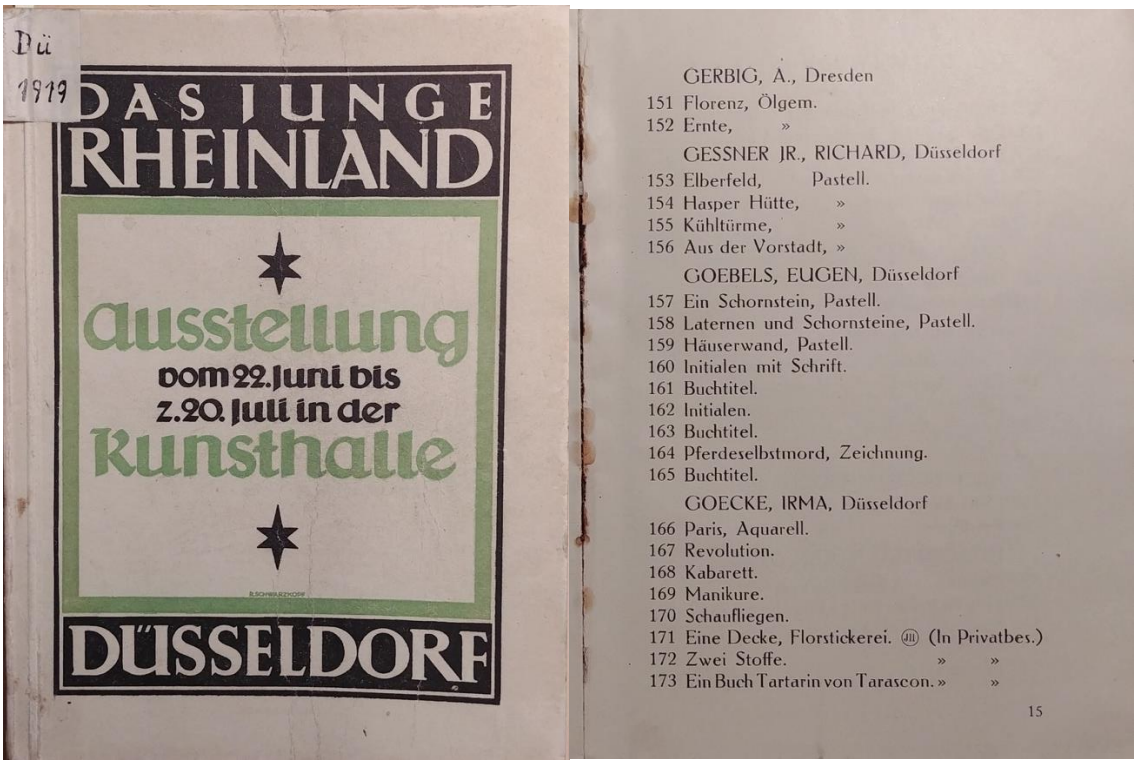


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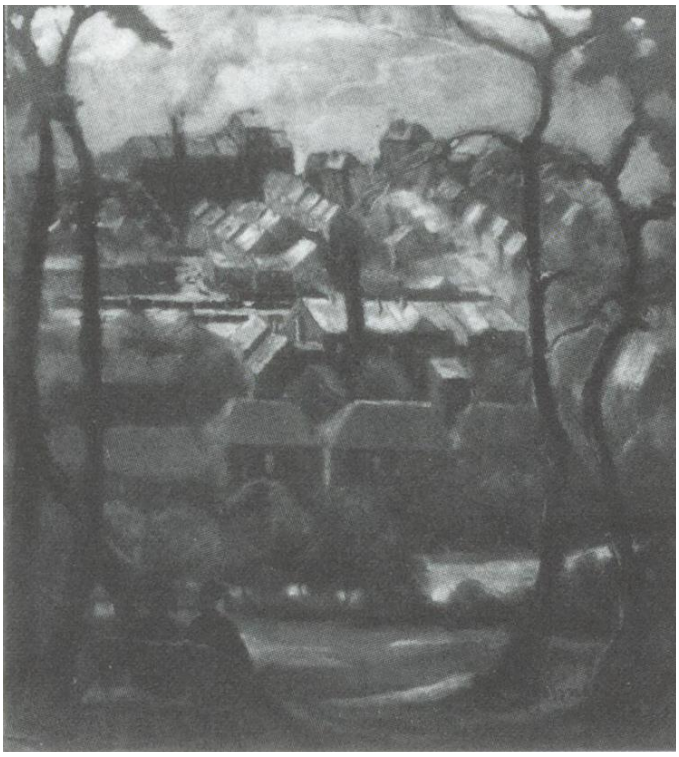

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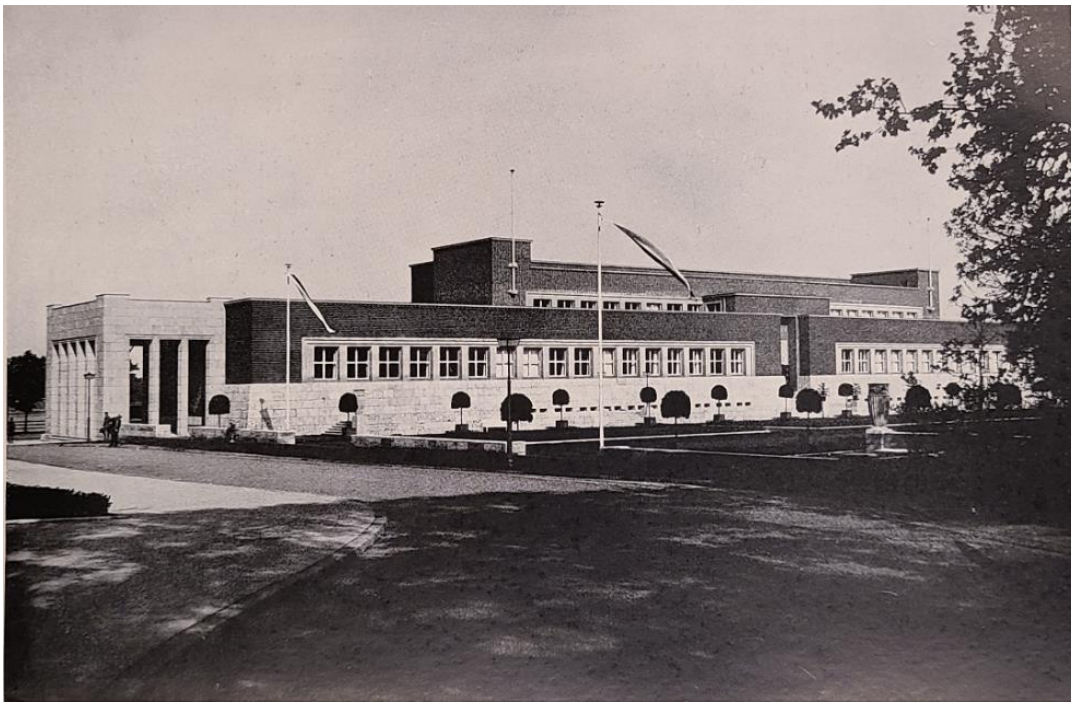

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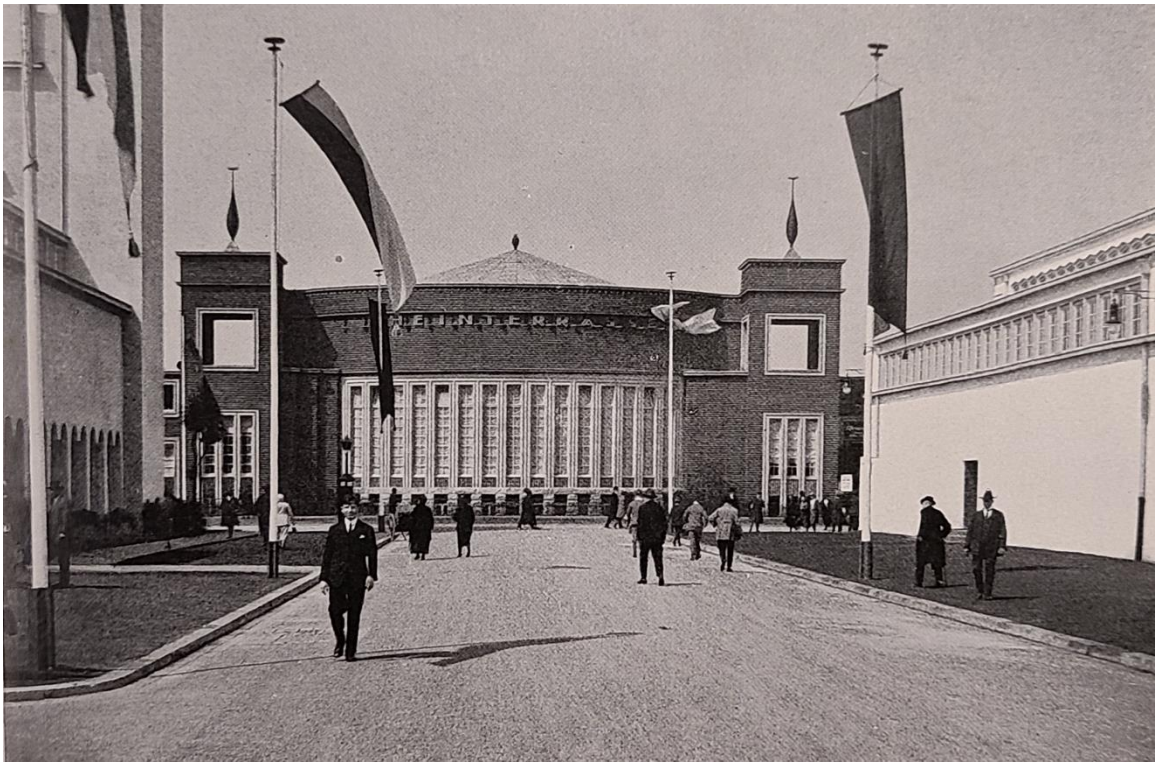

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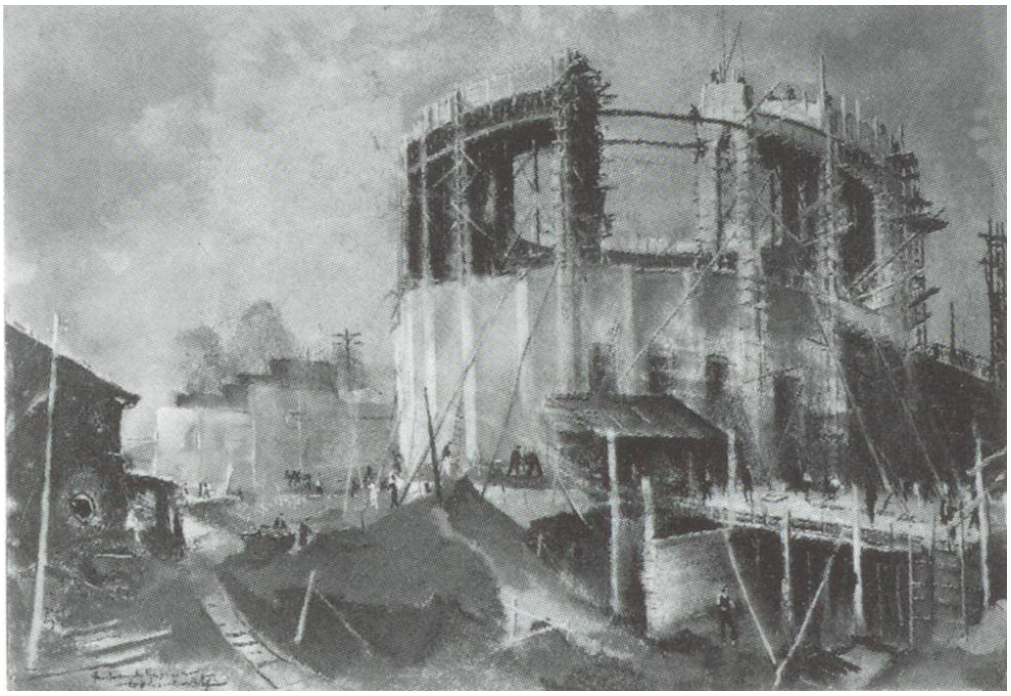

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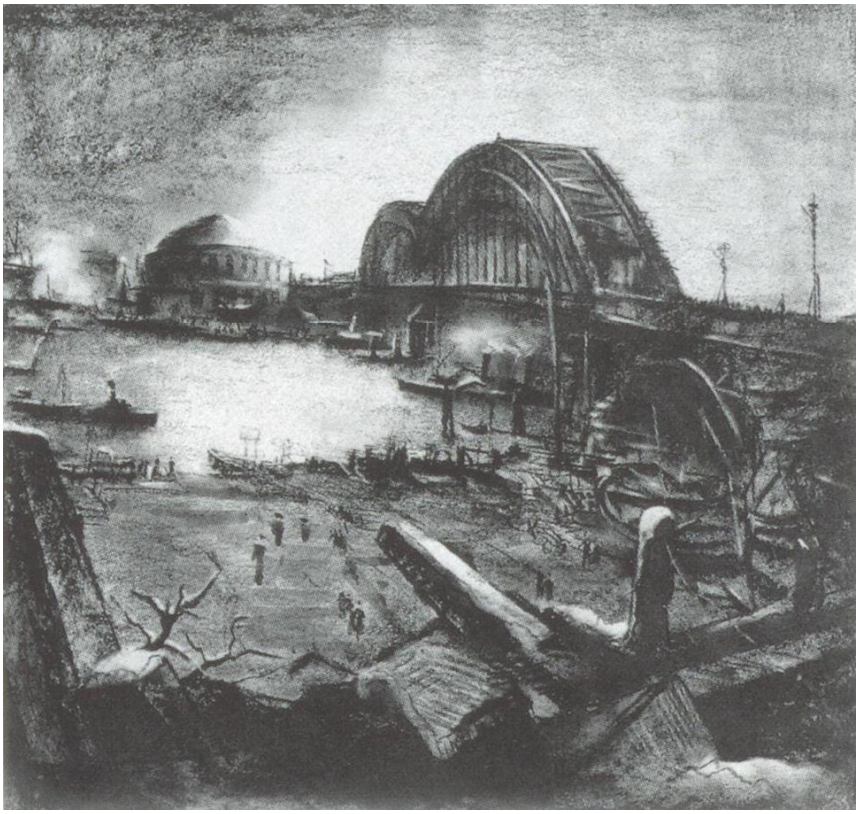

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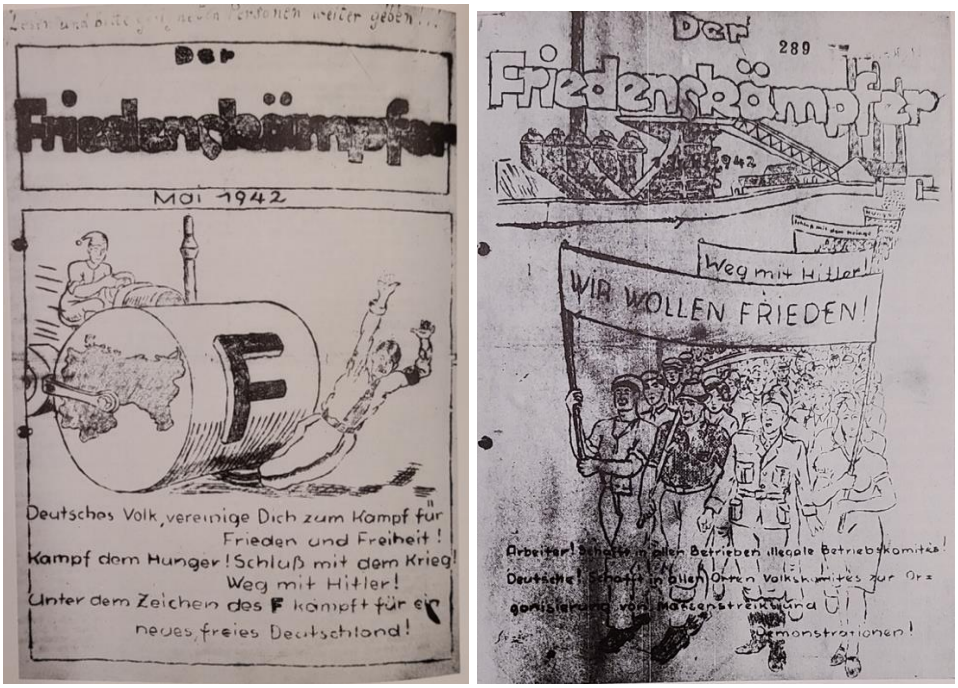


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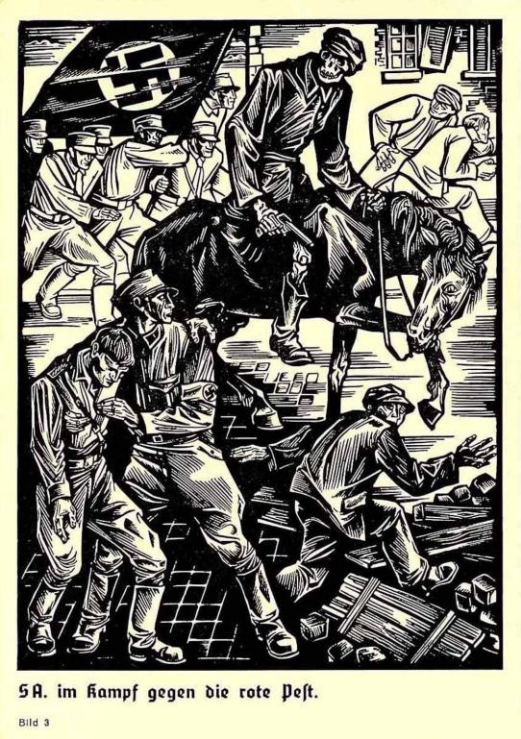


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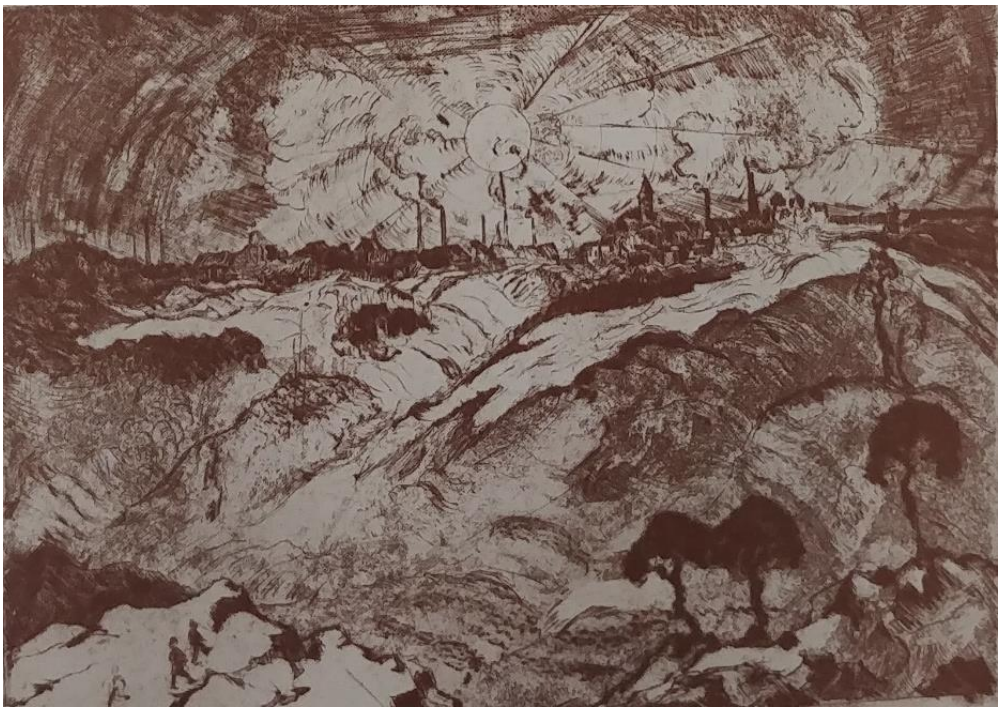

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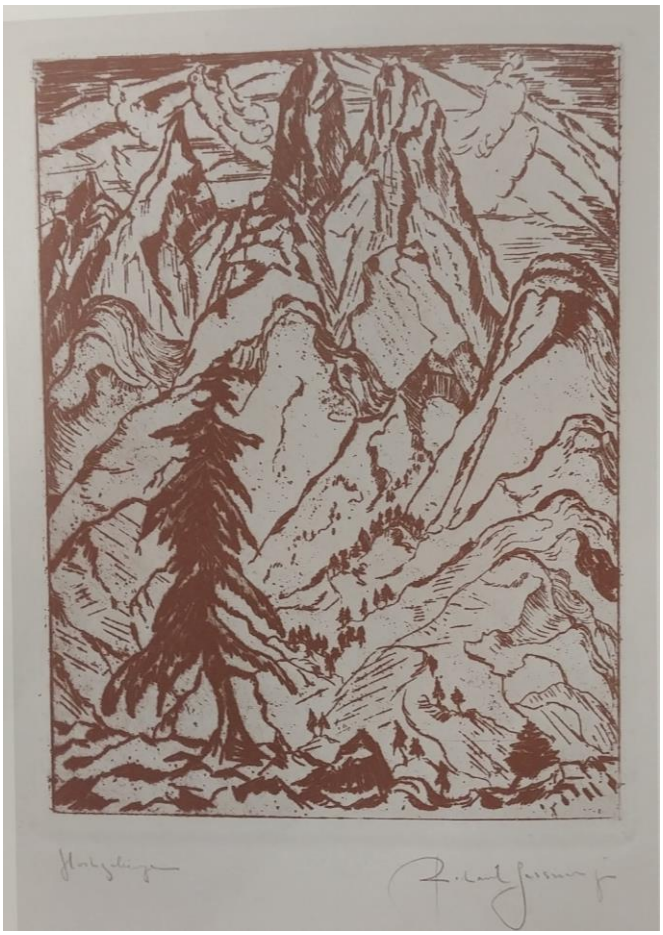

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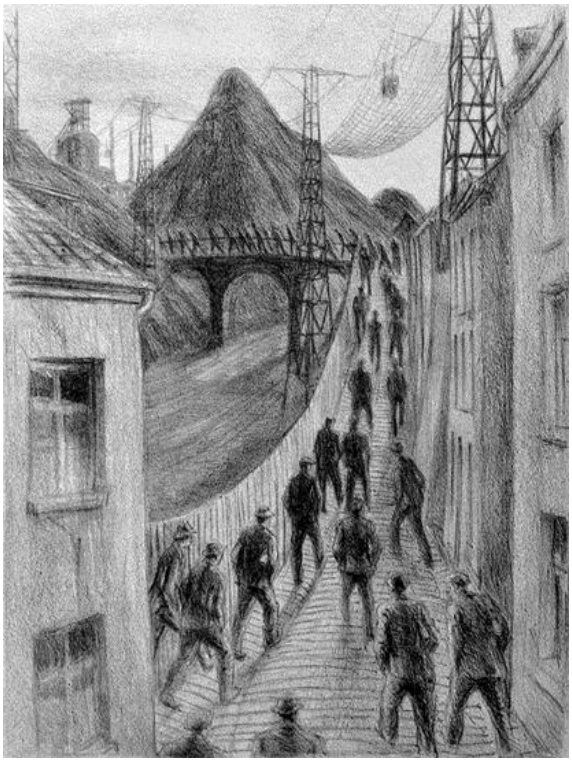

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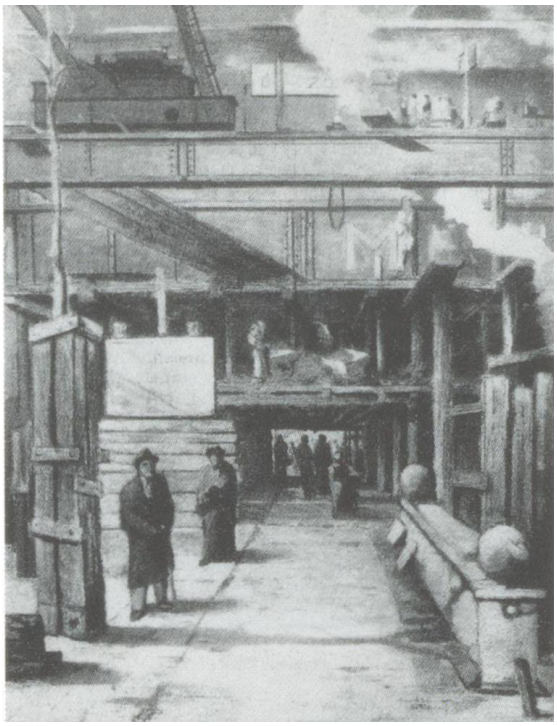

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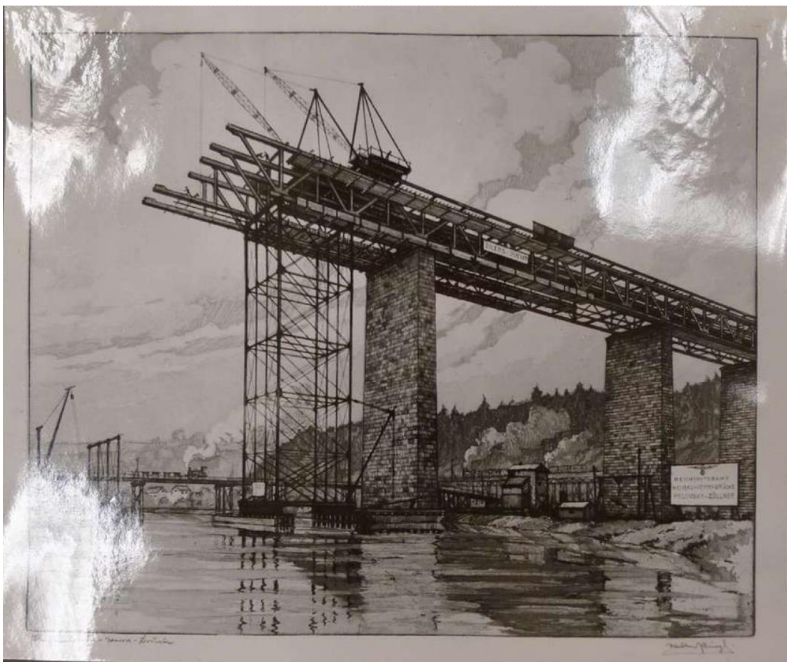

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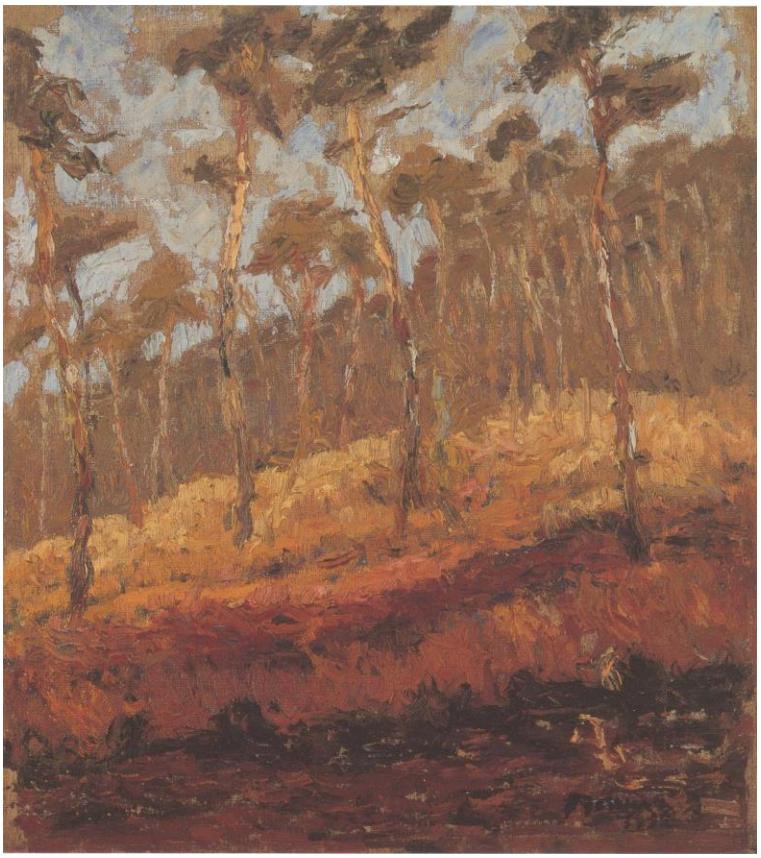

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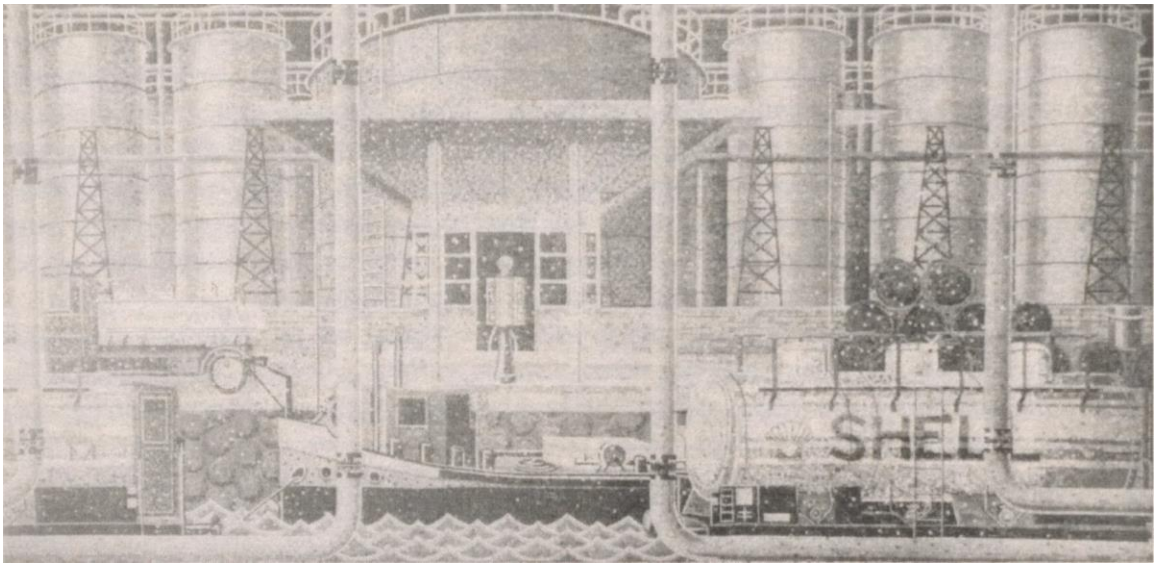


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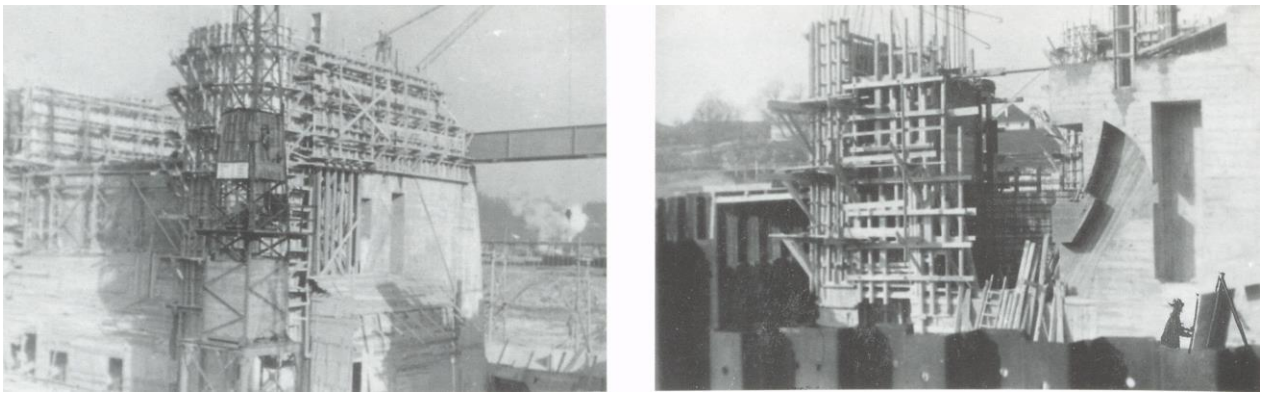

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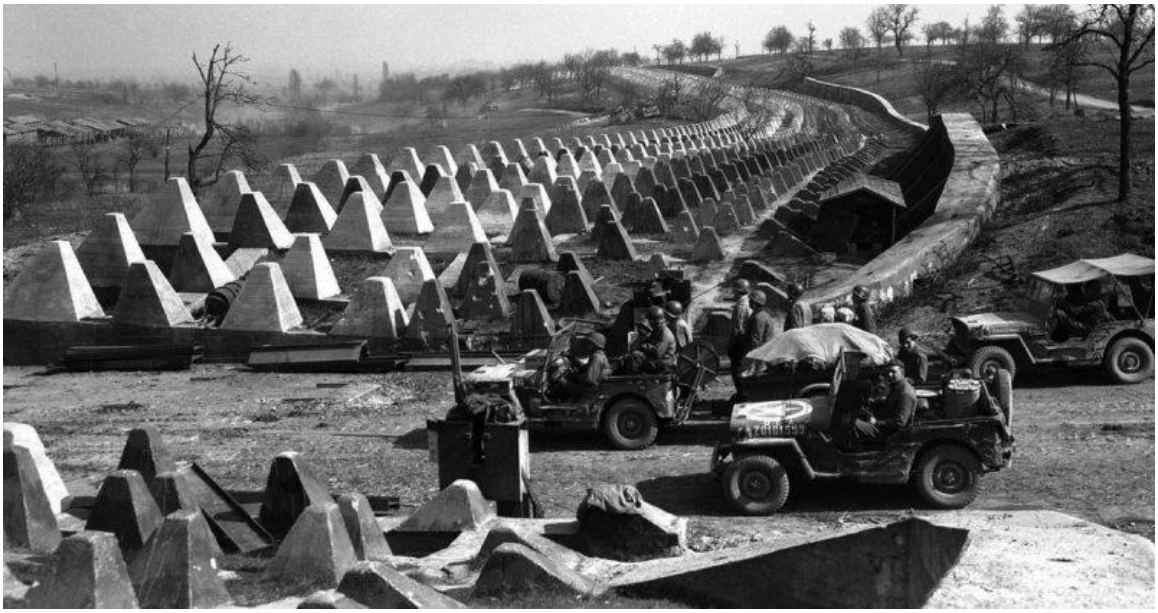

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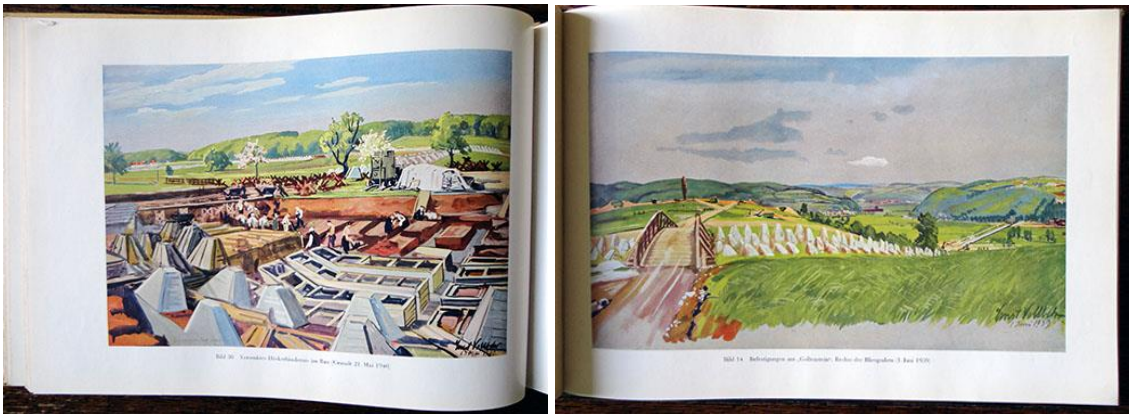

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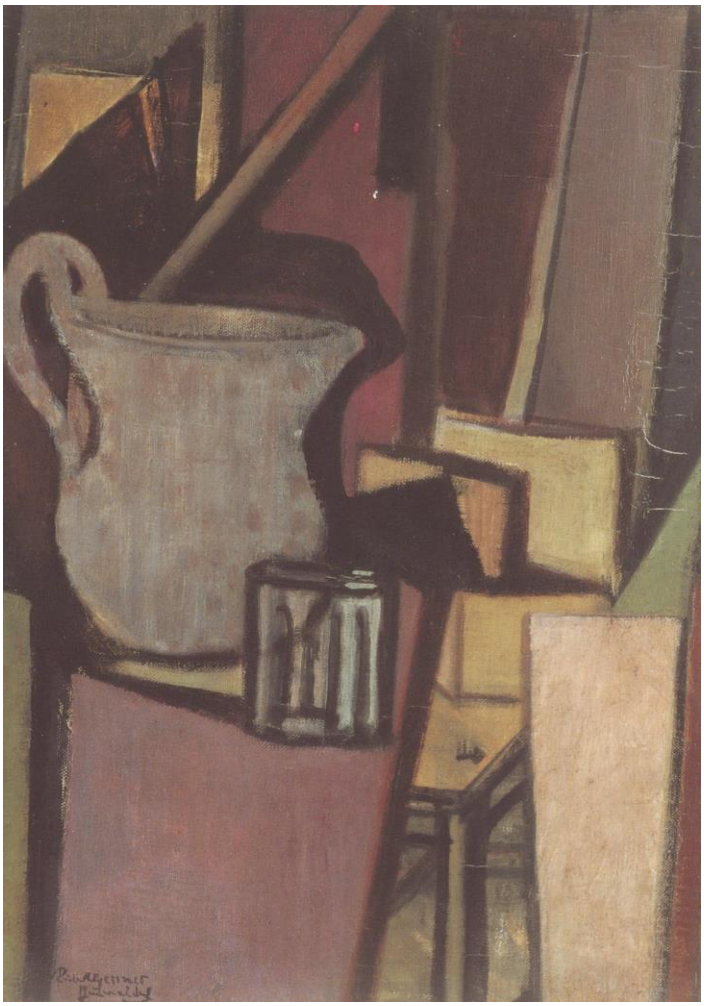

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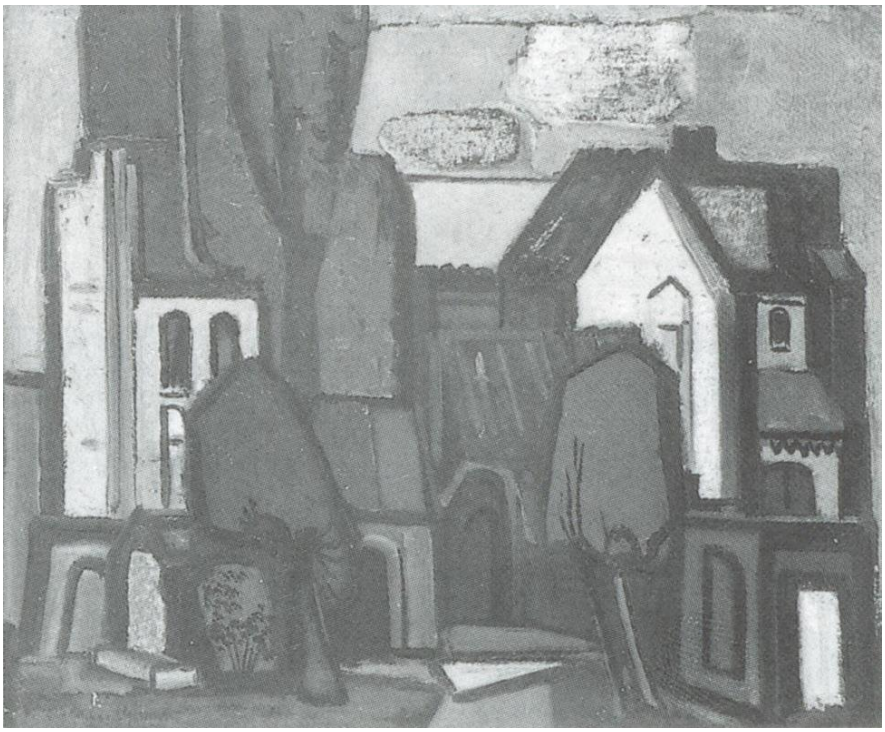

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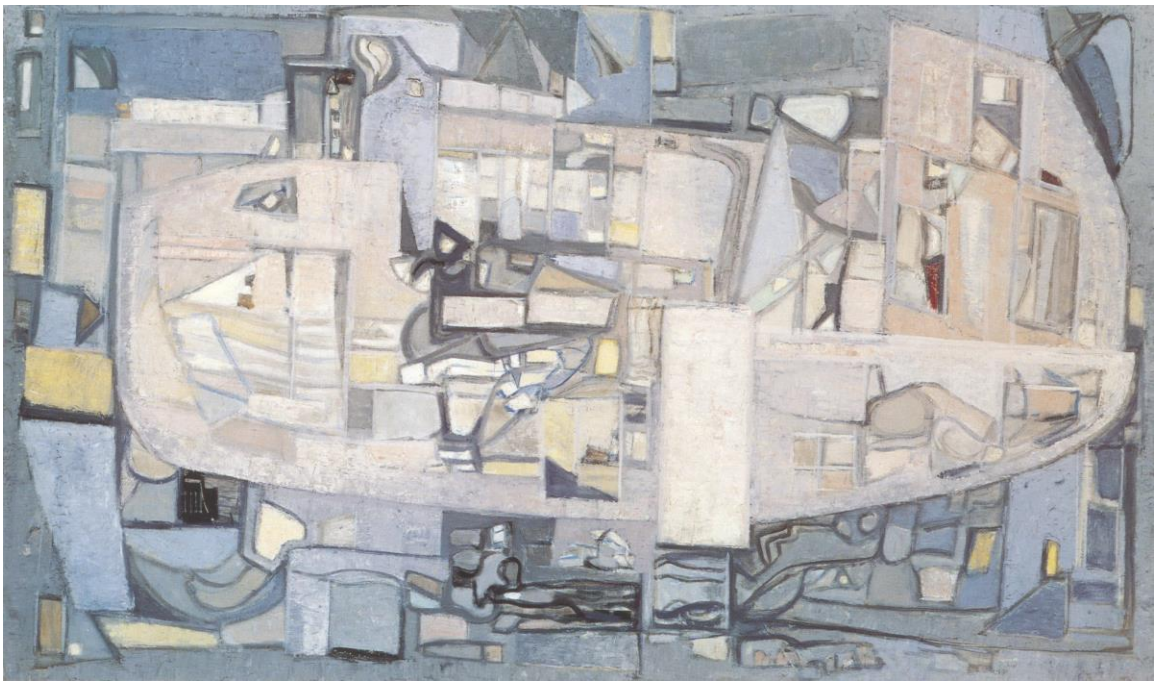

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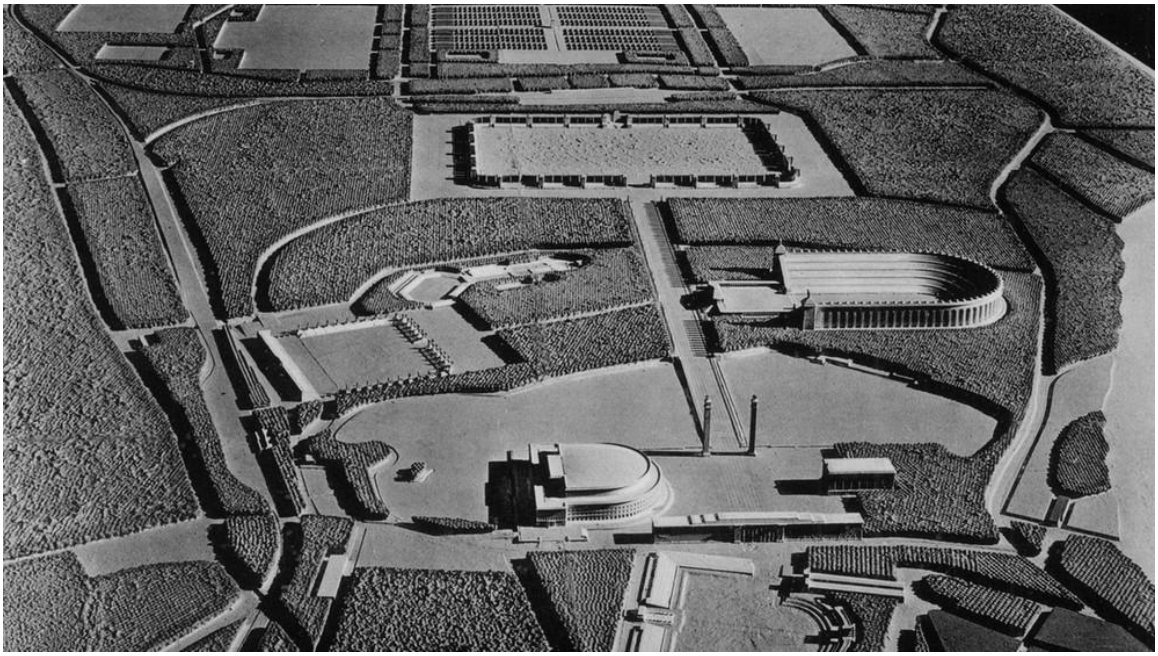

Figure 68. Albert Speer, Model of the National Socialist German Workers' Party Rally Grounds *(Reichsparteitagsgelände)*, view from north. Stadtarchiv Nürnberg. http://www.kubiss.de/reichsparteitagsgelaende/stationen/stationen.htm (Accessed July 30, 2020).

Figure 69. Max Herterich, *Reichsparteitagsgelände Nürnberg, Märzfeld, Stand vom Herbst 1939*, n.d., oil on canvas, GDK 1940. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte. Zweckverband Reichsparteitag Nürnberg. http://www.gdk-research.de/de/obj19404330.html (Accessed April 3, 2020).

Figure 70. Erich Mercker, *Märzfeld, Nürnberg*, n.d., oil on canvas, 105 x 120 cm, GDK 1941. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Sammlung Haus der Deutschen Kunst, Gm 98/371. http://www.gdk-research.de/de/obj19364281.html (Accessed April 3, 2020).

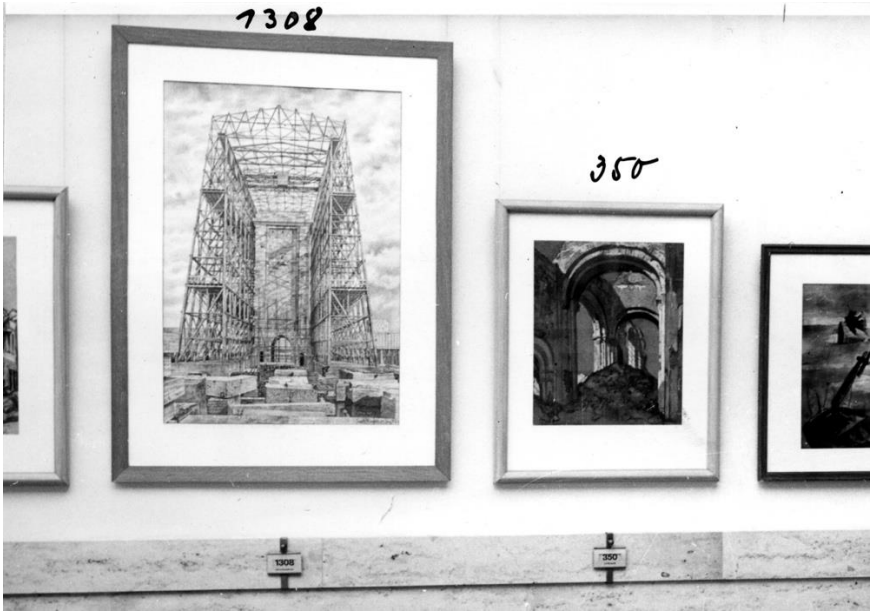


Figure 71. *Left*, Curt Winkler, *Turm IV mit Krangerüst auf dem Märzfeld*, n.d., pencil on paper, GDK 1941. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte; *Right*, Oskar Graf, *Kirchenruine in Messines 1915*, n.d., aquarell, GDK 1941. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte, Haus der Kunst GMbH, Historisches Archiv, HDK 24. http://www.gdk-research.de/de/obj19364875.html (Accessed April 3, 2020).

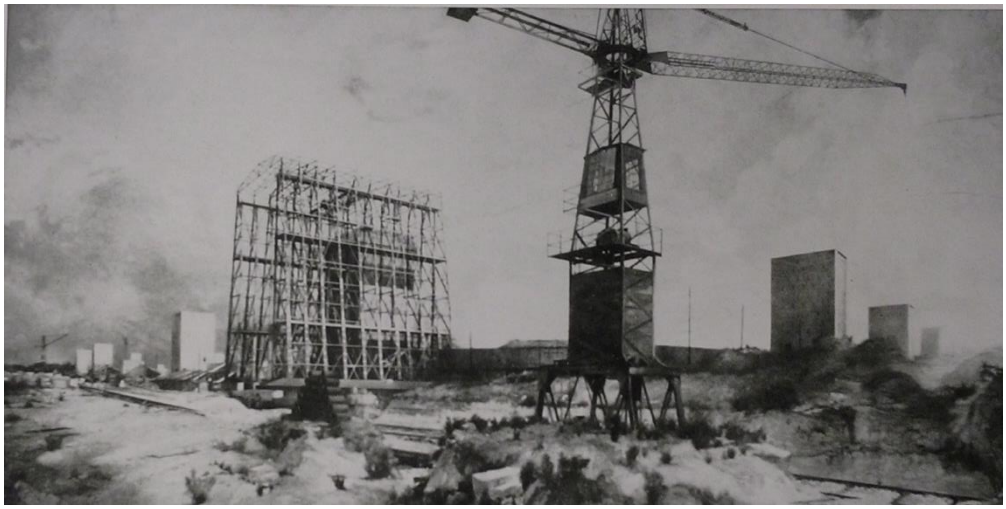

Figure 72. Paul Herrmann, *Märzfeld*, n.d., aquarelle. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte.

Figure 73. Paul Herrmann, *Die Zeit/Chronos*, 1913, etching, GDK 1942. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte. http://www.gdk-research.de/de/obj19362190.html (Accessed June 5, 2020); *Die Kunstwelt*: *deutsche Zeitschrift für die bildende Kunst*. Berlin, 1913. Exhibition Catalogue, Nr. 17.

Figure 74. Otto Albert Hirth, *Deutsches Stadion in Nürnberg I*, n.d., oil on canvas, GDK 1942. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte. http://www.gdk-research.de/en/obj19362199.html (Accessed April 3, 2020).

Figure 75. Otto Albert Hirth, *Deutsches Stadion in Nürnberg II*, n.d., oil on canvas, GDK 1942. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte. http://www.gdk-research.de/en/obj19362200.html. (Accessed May 5, 2020).

Figure 76. Otto Albert Hirth, *Deutsches Stadion in Nürnberg III*, n.d., oil on canvas, GDK 1943. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte. http://www.gdk-research.de/en/obj19360369.html (Accessed May 5, 2020).

Figure 77. Otto Albert Hirth, *Deutsches Stadion in Nürnberg IV*, n.d., oil on canvas, GDK 1943. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte. http://www.gdk-research.de/en/obj19360370.html (Accessed May 5, 2020).

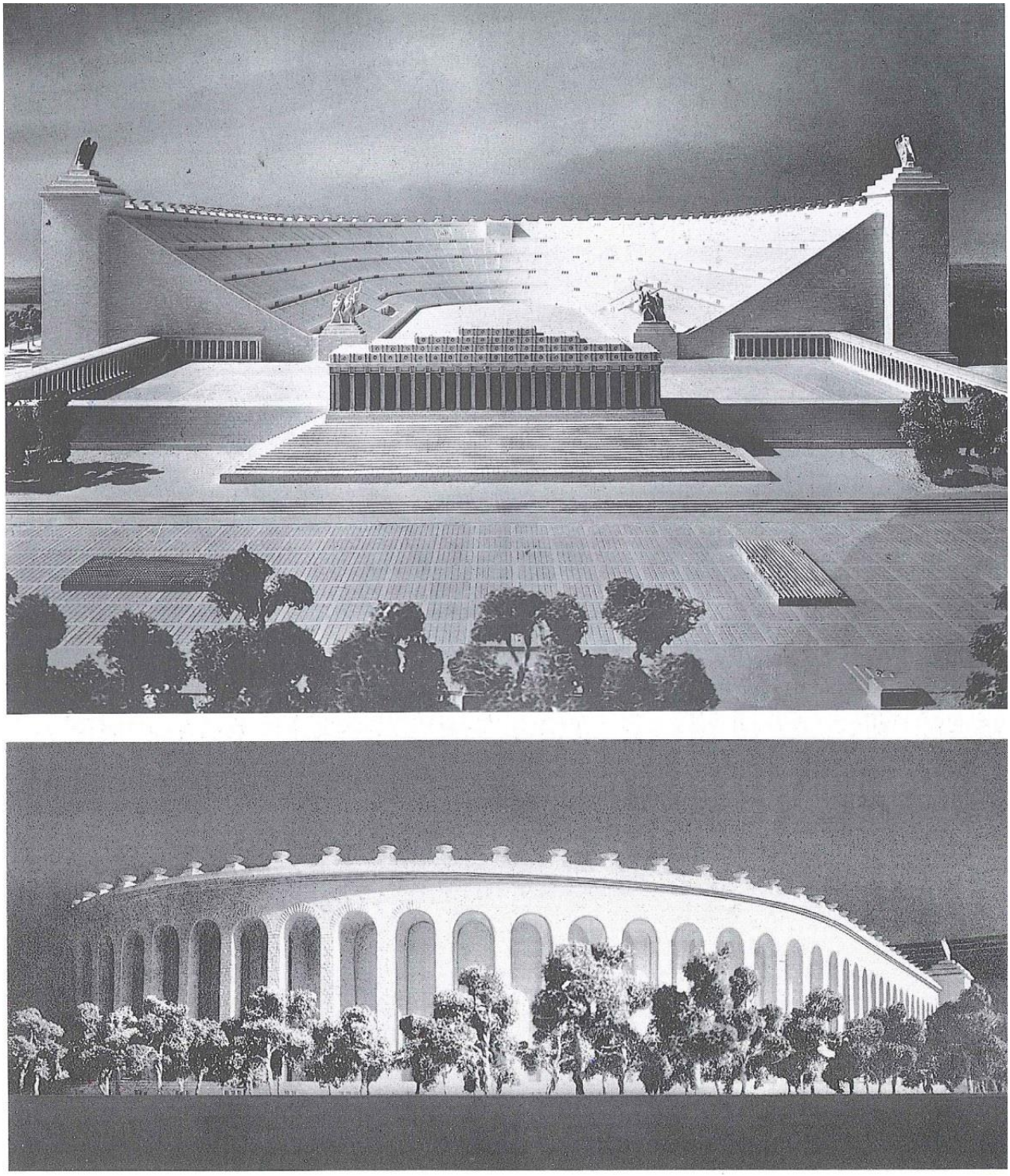

Figure 78. Albert Speer, Scale model of the Great German Stadium, 1937. In Andrew Rawson, *Showcasing the Third Reich: The Nuremberg Rallies.* Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2012, p. 53.

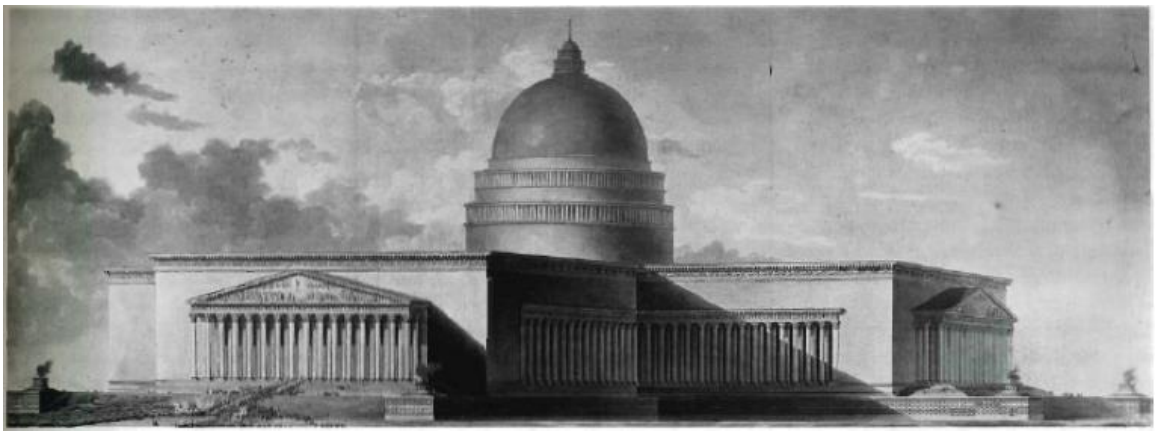

Figure 79. Etienne-Louis Boullée, Plan for the Metropolitan Church, 1781 – 1782, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. In Wend Von Kalnein, *Architecture in France in the Eighteenth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press (Pelican History of Art), 1995, p. 246.

Figure 80. Otto Albert Hirth, *Der Palast*, n.d., oil on canvas, 105 x 150 cm, GDK 1939. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Sammlung Haus der Deutschen Kunst, Gm 98/239. http://www.gdk-research.de/de/obj19402736.html (Accessed June 10, 2020).

Figure 81. Otto Albert Hirth, *Das Haus der Deutschen Kunst und sein geplanter Ergänzungsbau*, 1940, oil on canvas, 140 x 195 cm, GDK 1940. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Sammlung Haus der Deutschen Kunst, Gm 98/242. http://www.gdk-research.de/de/obj19404346.html (Accessed June 10, 2020).

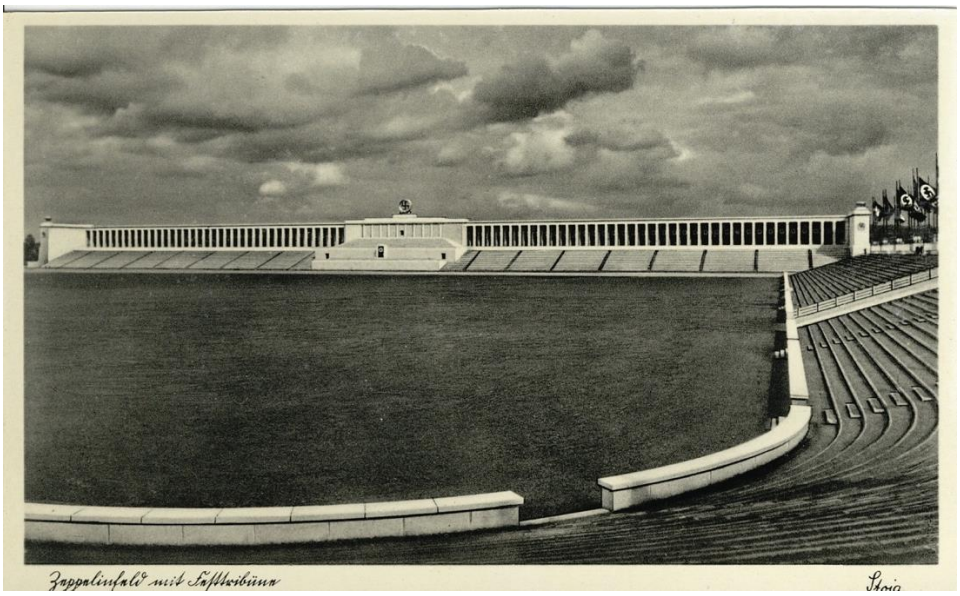

Figure 82. Albert Speer, *Zeppelin Grandstand*, 1935-1937, National Socialist German Workers' Party Rally Grounds, Nüremberg. In Stoja-Verlag Paul Janke, "Zeppelinfeld mit Festtribüne," *Nürnberg - Stoja postcard*, (ca. 1938), Stojaton Nr. 597. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/32/Zeppelinfeld1.jpg/800px-Zeppelinfeld1.jpg (Accessed July 30, 2020).

Figure 83. Blasius Spreng, *Zeppelinwiese*, n.d., etching, GDK 1942. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte. http://www.gdk-research.de/de/obj19362761.html (Accessed July 30, 2020).

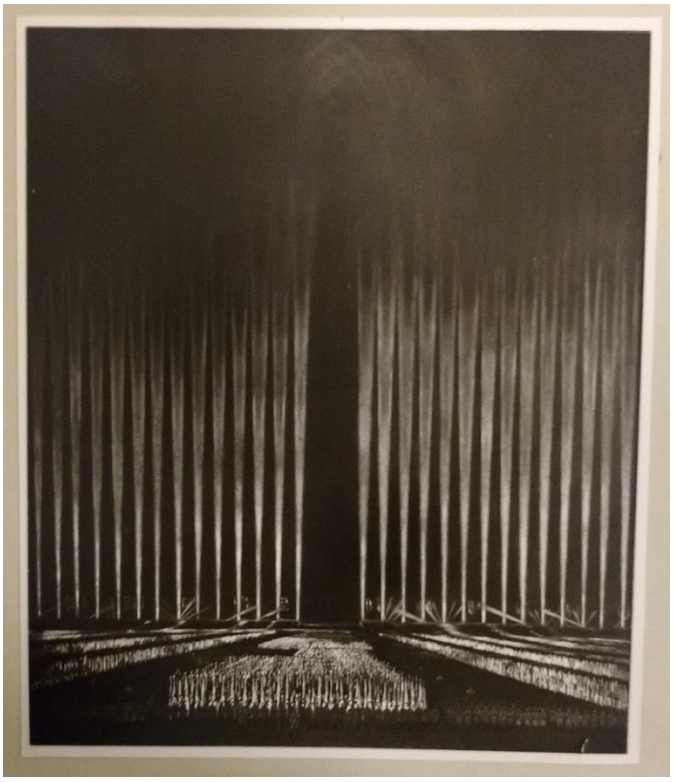

Figure 84. Karl Leipold, *Der Lichtdom*, n.d., oil on canvas, GDK 1942. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte. http://www.gdk-research.de/de/obj19362379.html (Accessed July 30, 2020).

Figure 85. Albert Speer, *Cathedral of Light* on the Zeppelin Field, NSDAP Rally on September 5-12, 1938, Nürnberg. Photograph by Heinrich Hoffmann, "Blick von außerhalb d.Stadions; Lichtdom von Albert Speer; nachts." Fotoarchiv Hoffmann M.107, hoff-20328, 1938.

Figure 86. Albert Speer, *Cathedral of Light* on the Zeppelin Field, NSDAP Rally on September 5-12, 1938, Nürnberg. Photograph by Heinrich Hoffmann, "Blick von außerhalb d.Stadions; Lichtdom von Albert Speer; nachts." Fotoarchiv Hoffmann M.107, hoff-20441, 1938.

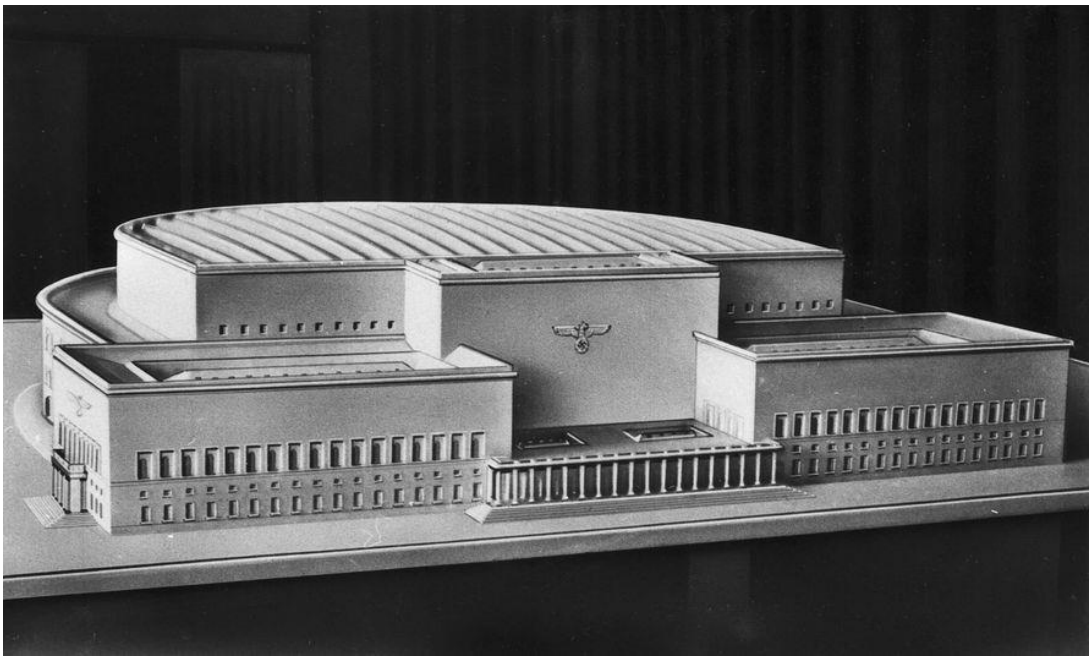

Figure 87. Ludwig and Franz Ruff, *Model of the Congress Hall*, construction started 1935. In Arthur Schütze and Nadine Wischnewski, *Eine Arbeit Bildarchiv Der Philipp Holzmann AG, Ein Projekt des Berlin-Brandenburgischen Wirtschaftsarchivs*, s.v. "Die Kongresshalle Nürnberg." https://holzmann-bildarchiv.de/bauen-im-ausland/kongresshalle-nurnberg/ (Accessed July 14, 2020).

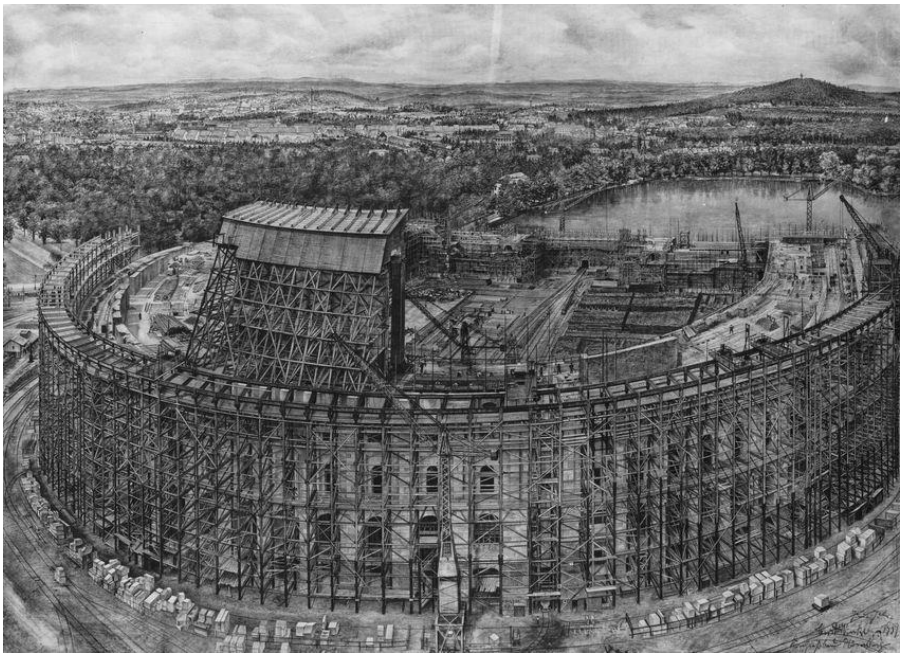

Figure 88. Curt Winkler, *Kongreßhalle in Nürnberg im Bau,* 1939, pencil on paper, GDK 1940. In Schütze and Wischnewski, "Die Kongresshalle Nürnberg." https://holzmann-bildarchiv.de/bauen-im-ausland/kongresshalle-nurnberg/ (Accessed July 14, 2020).

Figure 89. Ludwig and Franz Ruff, *The Congress Hall*, construction started 1935, photograph from 1938. In Schütze und Wischnewski, "Die Kongresshalle Nürnberg." https://holzmann-bildarchiv.de/bauen-im-ausland/kongresshalle-nurnberg/ (Accessed July 14, 2020).


Figure 90. Hans Friedmann, *Reichsparteitag Nürnberg*, propaganda postcard, 1938. Verlag Photo-Hoffmann München N° 38/2. Auktionshaus Christoph Gärtner GmbH & Co. KG. https://www.stampcircuit.com/stamp-Auction/auktionshaus-christoph-g%C3%A4rtner-gmbh-co-kg/8594400/lot-27438-ansichtskarten-propaganda.

Figure 91. Paul Herrmann, *Der Zapfenstreich am Parteitag in Nürnberg*, n.d., aquarelle on paper, GDK 1943. Photothek des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte. http://www.gdk-research.de/de/obj19360359.html (Accessed June 1, 2020).