Analyses of Works and Georg Kolbe's Media Strategies

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Participation without Participating— Georg Kolbe, Friedrich Nietzsche, and National Socialism

> "Genuine art of the present must of necessity be revolutionary, because it can only exist at all in opposition to the existing order."[1]
> *Karl Löwith, 1941*

This essay examines Georg Kolbe's work and career in the late Weimar Republic and from 1933 onward. At this time, Kolbe was intensively engaged with Friedrich Nietzsche's figure of Zarathustra. The perception of this figure and its interpretation in National Socialism is another topic of investigation. After all, a Nietzsche memorial hall was planned in Weimar, for the decoration of which Kolbe made an effort relatively late and was also consulted but did not prevail. In a first step, his career in the so-called Third Reich will be examined in light of both contemporary art journalism and its reception after 1945, with a focus on those of his works that might reveal a connection to Nietzsche. This is important because Kolbe's later *Zarathustra/Zarathustras Erhebung IV* (Zarathustra/The Rise of Zarathustra; p. 264, fig. 4) from 1943 is be understood as a reaction to the relative loss of significance that Kolbe's works experienced in the context of sculpture in the Third Reich, and the figure itself is subject to a change in meaning. Before that, Nietzsche and National Socialism will be briefly discussed in order to be able to evaluate Kolbe's actions and position against this background as well. And finally, I will attempt to interpret Kolbe's concrete engagement with Nietzsche as an artistic response to specific circumstances, which turn out to be more coincidental than one might assume given the importance of the subject.

Georg Kolbe and the Third Reich

A look at the art journalism in the National Socialist state makes clear how esteemed and popular Georg Kolbe, who is considered one of the best-known sculptors of the Weimar Republic,[2] was even after the seizure of power. Rudolf G. Binding's influential and representative monograph from 1933, entitled *Vom Leben der Plastik. Inhalt und Schönheit des Werkes von Georg Kolbe* (On the Life of Sculpture. The Content and Beauty of Georg Kolbe's Oeuvre), saw its sixth edition in 1936.[3] The sculptural work and several drawings were comprehensively presented with ninety-five illustrations in total. Kolbe's position in the book series as a whole is noteworthy, as it was embedded in the palpable attempt to continue to provide journalistic support for artistic modernism in the early years of the NS regime. Binding's Kolbe monograph appeared as the second volume in the series *Kunstbücher des Volkes* (Art Books for the People), which featured overviews of, among others, Ernst Barlach (vol. 1), Käthe Kollwitz (vol. 3), Paula Modersohn-Becker (vol. 4), Edvard Munch (vol. 6), Renée Sintenis (vol. 11), and finally Wilhelm Lehmbruck (vol. 16)—all artists whose works were soon to be branded as degenerate. Kolbe was situated

within the context of Weimar modernism; and at the same time, a future perspective was opened up. Regarding Kolbe's works of the early 1930s, it was stated:

> "The last figures—for the time being, the last—and yet perhaps only prefigures of other, later, latest figures—seize us with a closeness, as with the breath of the freshly born. […] and then *Zarathustra*, like a welcoming of the gigantic—no measure frightens. The human measure lies deep down under this, like the world under the left of the rising *Übermensch*: blessing, repelling—while the right clenches flat to a fist in the knowledge of power and will."[4]

Kolbe was credited with future artistic potential, as it was speculated that perhaps he had thus far created only "prefigurations." His *Zarathustra*, associated with Nietzsche's philosophy, was specifically interpreted as gigantic and even as boundless; it both blesses and rejects.

The publishing house popularized the work of the above-mentioned artists through art postcards and large photographs, with Ernst Barlach, who was the subject of internal National Socialist disputes about the future of modern art in the new state, and Kolbe standing out quantitatively, followed by Fritz Klimsch and Ruth Schaumann. A brochure enclosed with the sixth edition lists twenty-six art postcards and nineteen large photographs of works by Kolbe as being on offer. Perhaps created in the context of Kolbe's preoccupation with Nietzsche at the time were *Der Einsame* (The Lonely Man, 1927/29) and the illustrated *Kniendes Menschenpaar* (Kneeling Couple, 1931); *Zarathustras Erhebung IV* (1943–47) does not appear on the list; and with *Athlet* (Athlete, 1935) and the *Krieger-Ehrenmal* (Soldiers' Memorial, 1934/35) in Stralsund, a different, sporting-military accent was set at the same time.

Publications on Kolbe were widely praised in the Third Reich and aimed at his emphatic establishment within the new state. Regarding Binding's volume, it was argued: "Not since 'Rilke's Rodin' has such an important work on sculpture been written." And about Wilhelm Pinder's book *Georg Kolbe. Werke der letzten Jahre* (Works of the Last Years) from 1937: "A new work on the great German sculptor, whom we today rightly place alongside Michelangelo and the Naumburg Master."[5] A reference to recent modernism (in France) was thus still preserved, and Kolbe was at the same time accepted into the Olympus of sculpture since the Middle Ages.

However, such constructions proved to be fragile in several respects. For the years 1936/37, what has been said so far may not seem remarkable; but the fact that Bruno E. Werner's 1940 overview of German sculpture continued to cite and recognize the "degenerate" artists Lehmbruck and Barlach as pioneers may surprise today's readers. Kolbe continued to function prominently as a kind of hinge figure within a transitional generation, mediating between individual personalities and a new, first generation, with the *Stehende Frau* (Standing Woman, 1915), the *Selbstbildnis* (Self-Portrait, 1934), the *Große Pietà* (Large Pietà, 1930), and the *Menschengruppe (Menschenpaar)* (Human Group [Human Couple], 1937) illustrated as evidence of the development.[6] That a legitimizing,

regime-supporting function could be decidedly ascribed to his work in this context is shown by the first pages of the publication. Following Fritz Klimsch's *Führer* bust, which appears as a frontispiece, Kolbe's *Großer Wächter* (Large Guardian, 1937) is illustrated directly next to the preface of the overview published in the second year of the war. To put it bluntly, one could say: The Führer and the armed youth flank and secure the development of German art, which, with the third illustration—a detail of Richard Scheibe's *Ehrenmal* (Memorial, 1930) in Biebrich am Rhein—was further and topically situated in the specific context of the war. Kolbe played a key role in this: as a kind of initiator of newer sculpture in Germany and in two ways as a guardian figure—normatively aesthetically and metaphorically militarily.[7]

The text emphasizes Kolbe's enormous importance, but also hints at a new and dangerous tendency: "To this day, the influence of his ingenious work dominates the broadest areas of sculptural creation in Germany and beyond its borders, although a countermovement is gradually emerging, especially in our own day."[8] The author contrasted Kolbe's efforts, which, according to him, possess something hovering, something tremulous, and express soulfulness and at times melancholy, with the recent sculptural tendency toward static repose; Kolbe's "beautiful nonchalance" was contrasted with Richard Scheibe's "ascetic tautness." However, Kolbe was attested a "nobility" and "human dignity" peculiar to him, illustrated by his *Menschenpaar*, installed at the Masch Lake in Hannover in 1937.[9] Two things seem important here. First, Kolbe's intense preoccupation with Nietzsche's "Zarathustra" plays no role in this publication, and the main work is not even mentioned; second, in Werner's view, Kolbe did indeed create architecture-related sculpture, but contributed little or nothing to the new monumentality of architecture-bound sculpture in the NS state, which was the focus in 1940. This becomes clear when the author grouped together by name Willy Meller, Josef Thorak, Arno Breker, Kurt Schmid-Ehmen, and Adolf Wamper to form a group that was meaningful and forward-looking in this respect.[10]

The aforementioned combination, the juxtaposition of Klimsch and Kolbe at the beginning of Werner's contemporary reference work, which might be worthy of its own consideration, was repeated with sharper tendency in May 1942 in the Reich Chancellery. Adolf Hitler, who a few weeks earlier had given his permission for the early awarding of the Goethe Medal to Kolbe,[11] monologued about art, first commenting on the heterogeneous quality of art magazines, and then maintaining with regard to the works of Kolbe that "the older the master became, the more they diminished in perfection. Klimsch, on the other hand, was becoming greater and more important with his works."[12] Subsequently—in typical Hitler manner—the possible development of an artistic late work was tied to physiological conditions—to eyesight; and astonishingly, the early work of Lovis Corinth, who in the meantime had been ostracized with regard to his late work, was dubbed "fabulous."[13] Kolbe's verbal demotion corresponded to Hitler's verdict in 1940, which—as will be shown—had repudiated Kolbe's Nietzsche plans.

In 1942, Kurt Lothar Tank published the second essential overview after Werner's publication, entitled *Deutsche Plastik unserer Zeit* (German Sculpture of Our Time), with a preface by Reich Minister Albert Speer.[14] The remarks reacted almost critically to Pinder's

panegyric to Kolbe published in 1937, when the latter's judgment is confirmed on the one hand, but is then turned into its opposite:

> "we are convinced that Georg Kolbe is the greatest sculptor of this transitional period, and we appreciate the thoroughly German and—as has been said time and again—noble nature of his forms, and yet we believe that the generation born after 1900, if it is to fulfill its historical mission, must not follow Kolbe, but seek its own expression. It has already found this, as Breker above all proves, and it will increasingly fortify and convincingly proclaim this monumentally heroic attitude in the years to come."[15]

Kolbe was actually erased from the canon of National Socialist art with such words, which signified a kind of poisoned praise and illustrate the aesthetic narrowing of NS art between 1937 and 1942. While he did not "disharmonize" with the new art of the present in 1942 and, according to Tank, could even fertilize it,[16] his position was actually obsolete. A deeper reason for this was—and this leads back to Nietzsche—the unwillingness of the individual to subordinate or even submit, which Tank clairvoyantly identified in Kolbe. This may surprise today's viewers of Kolbe's sculptures of the 1930s and early 1940s, but it resolves itself through subtle comparative analyses of individual works.[17]

Tank noted critically: "At the center of Kolbe's world is man, not the state, which sets man superhuman tasks stretching to the limits of his physical and mental powers."[18] According to this, in the works of Kolbe, man stood opposite the state, which acted in a totalitarian manner; and the superhuman, with which Tank was concerned here, had nothing to do with Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch*, but rather concerned the imposition and surrender to the "total war" proclaimed by Goebbels soon after the appearance of the book and the defeat at Stalingrad.[19]

After 1945, art-historical research dealt with Kolbe's late work in a completely different way, but in the evaluative and exclusionary result partly identically, as far as Kolbe was still considered to be of any importance at all. Nietzsche played a role here, which is interesting in terms of research history, because researchers looked at Kolbe's preoccupation with Nietzsche with a specific image of Nietzsche in mind, which could thus be defined in at least two ways: by Kolbe's reception in the Third Reich and by the personal interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy. Werner Hofmann—with direct reference to Nietzsche—spoke in 1958 with regard to Kolbe's figures of the 1930s of "stereotypical figures of the Third Reich" and of "tiresome repetition […] muscular leader animals, to whom man as a herd-follower is supposed to offer his homage, agents of [a] radicalism hostile to thinking."[20]

At the beginning of the 1980s, Dietrich Schubert emphatically pointed out the art-historical desideratum (itself in need of explanation in terms of the history of science) of an analysis of "Nietzsche's forms of reification in the visual arts" and then first addressed this himself in an extensive essay that has become fundamental for research.[21] With regard to National Socialism and Kolbe, however, his statements turn out to be very brief and, in

my opinion, underestimate the status of Kolbe's preoccupation. Schubert introduces his passage with a reference to Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche's and Peter Gast's abuse of her brother, in order to speak of a "turn toward the nationalist-fascist Nietzsche transformation."[22] He characterizes Kolbe's figure, in the words of Werner Hofmann, as a "muscular animal" and speaks of the adoption of a widespread but "distorted image of Nietzsche." He then jumps to Josef Thorak's 1944 Nietzsche bust presented at the *Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung* (Great German Art Exhibition) in Munich, with words that were also intended to apply to Kolbe: "Josef Thorak's 1944 Nietzsche bust (plaster for marble), now lost, may be about the last in the Nazi representation and veneration of the philosopher abused for anti-Semitism, Aryanism, and violence."[23]

Klaus Wolbert's pioneering study on sculpture in the Third Reich pointedly states with regard to Kolbe: "The works of Georg Kolbe led directly from the afterlife of Nietzsche's thoughts into fascism."[24] Wolbert argues in a differentiated manner, but quickly arrives at statements with moral connotations: "What is fatal about this iconography [of the *Ascending Man* as Zarathustra] is the undeniable fact that it foreshadowed specific figures of the NS image of man. And through his collaboration in the Third Reich, Kolbe himself showed that his theme could be effortlessly integrated without considerable modification." This culminates in the sentiment: "There need not be much doubt about the fundamentally inhumane, mass-despising substance of figures such as *Dionysos* or *Beethoven als Heros*."[25] It was and is necessary to start at these positions.

In her fundamental Kolbe monograph, Ursel Berger has taken a differentiated look at the issue of the development of his works in the 1930s based on the holdings of the Kolbe Museum. She recognizes for these years the "problem of the mechanical enlargements" of small sculptures, which then only required superficial treatment by the artist and could thus "slid[e] into a dry classicism" or—as in the case of the figures working with rough surfaces—"appear like oversized sketches."[26] The latter judgment applied to the *Herabschreitender* (Descending Man) of 1936, which is important for our context. Berger speaks of "clumsiness in the work period around 1930" and of the overcoming of this around the mid-1930s—especially, however, in the case of the female figures, while the male figures continue to be evaluated by her rather negatively.[27]

In surveys of art in the Third Reich, Kolbe is mentioned but plays a subordinate role.[28] All in all, the ambivalent picture emerges of a Kolbe who was recognized, honored, and supported in the Third Reich, but whose work, at the latest around 1940, could be seen in central publications as having been very gradually replaced, if not as an aberration. In the art history of twentieth-century sculpture or NS art after 1945, Kolbe is ignored or marginalized.

Friedrich Nietzsche and the Third Reich

What is the fundamental situation with Friedrich Nietzsche—whose late work can also appear problematic for other reasons?[29] His philosophy and his statements on art

were perceived in an almost incomprehensible breadth,[30] and thus it can be said that "Nietzsche's impact can hardly be overlooked."[31] His reception in the Third Reich includes the problem of a so-called proto-fascism—discussed after 1945—in the work of the philosopher, who died mentally deranged in 1900, and interlocks with the view of Kolbe's artistic engagement with Nietzsche immediately before and during the Third Reich. In view of the extensive and controversial Nietzsche literature, possible answers will only be summarized here: Nietzsche was by all means viewed positively in the new National Socialist Germany, in no small part due to his reception by sections of the radical right prior to 1933.[32] But this positive reception was perhaps smaller and shorter-lived than usually assumed, although Nietzsche's language was partially transposed into the language of National Socialism. Adolf Hitler did not refer to Nietzsche by name in *Mein Kampf* or in his aforementioned "*Tischgespräche*"; he had visited the Nietzsche Archive in Weimar, although there seems to have been little conversation between the "Führer" and Nietzsche's sister.[33] A well-known photograph from 1932 showing Hitler in front of a bust of Nietzsche conveys almost intimidated uncertainty with respect to the cult of genius surrounding the exceptional philosopher Nietzsche. The efforts for a Nietzsche memorial in Weimar were supported rather modestly by the "Führer" after a visit to Weimar in July 1934, and then concretely at the beginning of October of the same year, with 50,000 RM from his private treasury, although he increased this support at a later time.[34] The dates are interesting because it is precisely this period (1932) in which Kolbe's intensive preoccupation with the figure of "Zarathustra" and its naming falls.

Numerous National Socialists invoked Nietzsche, but "Nietzsche's work became first and foremost an essential part of the ideological training of the National Socialists and served to legitimize a new educational system."[35] In his standard work on the reception of Nietzsche, Steven Aschheim cites abundant evidence for this; but also for the distancing from and even rejection of Nietzsche in the Third Reich—for example, on the basis of an alleged hereditary mental illness, as well as the fact that opponents of National Socialism invoked Nietzsche and his anti-anti-Semitism with good reasons, or by emphasizing his concept of the *Freigeist* (freethinker), which implied a fundamental critique of the state. The last point refers to a rationale in Nietzsche's philosophy itself for the discrepancy between Kolbe's conception of man and the supposedly total NS state alluded to by Tank in 1942 and cited above.

Nietzsche's philosophy is nevertheless described in parts as "proto fascist," as, for example, when he—albeit a good fifty years before the beginning of Hitler's regime—advocated "the relentless destruction of all degenerate and parasitical elements."[36] In this respect, he seemed to offer points of contact for a fascist or National Socialist reception, which is not surprising in view of the syncretic NS ideology. However, Nietzsche was discussed far more intensively and in a more intellectually sophisticated manner in fascist Italy than in National Socialist Germany. Nevertheless, several eliminatory passages in Nietzsche's surviving writings and estate fragments, which— against the background of population explosion, urbanization, massification, and proletarianization in the second half of the nineteenth century—even outlined a physical mass murder of millions as a

possibility, by no means explain the murder of European Jewry as a concrete realization of a crime against humanity.

In a posthumous fragment, Nietzsche demanded the attainment of "that enormous *energy of greatness* which can model the man of the future by means of discipline and also by means of the annihilation of millions of the bungled and botched, and which can yet avoid *going to ruin* at the sight of the suffering *created* thereby, the like of which has never been seen before."[37] Such passages can be located, among others, in the contemporary degeneracy and eugenic discourse of the nineteenth century, which was to become further radicalized and finally put the murder of human beings in perspective. In this context, it is said to have been Nietzsche who "brought about the turn toward anti-degenerative activism in Germany."[38] In a well-founded study, Bernhard Taureck has pursued in detail the question of Nietzsche's "proto-fascism," by which he understands his rejection of the ideal of equality: "Nietzsche's counter-ideal is called: slavery, rank order, caste order, Machiavellianism, war."[39] However, despite partial confirmation, Taureck ultimately cannot come to a clear conclusion himself and confesses that this is hardly possible due to Nietzsche's oscillation and iridescence, his metaphorical use of language.[40] A fundamental problem remains Nietzsche's evasive ambivalence. Moreover, his project remains philosophical and spiritual, elitist-aristocratic, and related to the individual, in contrast—also perceived by historians of the history of eugenics—to socio-technological reforms with "the eugenic goal of breeding entire populations."[41]

Nietzsche Reifications in Art

Nietzsche was already a myth during his lifetime and was revered artistically.[42] Motifs from his philosophy can also be found in the early works of Kolbe.[43] Even before 1900, Fritz Schumacher had designed a Nietzsche monument, with a somber round temple crowned by a partially nude figure with raised arms. Henry van de Velde also designed a temple in 1911/12 and combined it with a stadium for Weimar, so that the philosopher would be honored, and his vision of a new man would take concrete shape in the athletic competition of youth.[44] In the field of sculpture, Max Klinger and Wilhelm Lehmbruck had created fundamental works between 1900 and 1918, while Otto Dix created an energetically charged, unique work. These were portrait busts or allegorical single figures.[45] In the field of graphic art and painting, Hans Olde, Edvard Munch, and Erich Heckel, among others, had created portraits before the First World War;[46] after the war, the Weimar avant-garde, including representatives of the Bauhaus in Weimar, continued to identify with Nietzsche. The founding director of the Bauhaus, Walter Gropius, attended the memorial celebration of the philosopher's seventy-fifth birthday in October 1919.[47]

Parallel to this, after the First World War, the Nietzsche community divided into two larger camps in terms of intellectual history. In summary, one can say: On the one hand, there was a right-wing conservative to fascist following, grouped not least around Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche in the Weimar archive, which had already been modernized by

Henry van de Velde in 1903; and on the other hand, there was a pan-European oriented group, who saw themselves as intellectual aristocrats and free spirits and had a center in Munich. This created a natural tension with the brown plebs in the so-called capital of the movement.

But how did Georg Kolbe concretely develop his "Zarathustra" figures? The research first postulates a fundamental change in his work around 1930, which Ursel Berger described to the effect that, before the First World War, the sculptor had tried to find an expression of the present life in his sculpture; since the early 1930s (especially after his trip to Greece in 1931), however, he wanted to create models for a "higher humanity," a new elite.[48] Ideas for an engagement with Nietzsche and an artistic tribute to him can therefore already be identified from the late 1920s. They seem to have arisen naturally from the engagement with a monument to Beethoven and refer to Kolbe's continued preoccupation with Max Klinger.[49] Kolbe's efforts, however, were not only directed towards sculpture, but also towards a framing architecture. Thus, probably starting in 1928, he drew sketches for a Nietzsche memorial hall, which depict a pantheon-like circular building. At the same time, however, Berger points out elsewhere that "concrete […] traces of Nietzsche's ideas" cannot be detected in Kolbe's work for a long time.[50] She explains the turning to Nietzsche and especially to Zarathustra primarily biographically in connection with the death of Kolbe's wife. Subsequently, Kolbe stylized himself "Zarathustra-like" as a lonely man and worked "obsessively" on a tribute to Nietzsche.[51]

In order to fully comprehend Kolbe's activities, one would have to take the final phase of the Weimar Republic as the historical context, the renewal of Kolbe's interest in Zarathustra, already evident around 1900, as a continuation of the Beethoven models from 1926/27, Otto Dix's parallel intensive, renewed preoccupation with Nietzsche during this time,[52] Oskar Schlemmer's *Folkwang Cycle* and the later Essen competition "Junge Deutsche Kunst" (Young German Art, 1934),[53] and finally the concrete plans for the Nietzsche memorial in Weimar, which were probably taken up again from 1933 onwards, as a zeitgeist phenomenon. Kolbe's attempt was embedded in a general trend of the time;[54] Nietzsche, the new man[55] or even *Übermensch*, the political and economic crisis, modern memorial concepts in the Weimar era, individual artistic sensibilities, as well as particular, local cultural-political interests all intertwine in a complex way. We are dealing here with a plurality of approaches and responses.

Important with regard to Kolbe in our context are a number of sculptures: perhaps *Der Einsame* (The Lonely One) from 1927 (cast in 1929)—which can be seen as having been derived as a figure from the *Beethoven* model as well as from *Junger Mann* (Young Man) from 1926—must be interpreted as a still undecided, melancholy prelude, in which the artist's personal situation, as well as Nietzsche's connection between loneliness and creativity, formulated in Zarathustra, are embodied. It would thus stand in a central relation to the genius Beethoven, Nietzsche's thinking together of the great, creative, and lonely man, and Kolbe's artistic self-conception. The *Herabsteigender* (Descending Man) from 1927 (there is also a descending female figure from this year) can be connected with Nietzsche, since Zarathustra's path is a downfall that ultimately opens the prospect of

an *Übermensch*, which Zarathustra himself is not yet. Downfall/descending and advent/ascending can both be connected to Nietzsche's teaching as different modes of time.

The *Dionysos* (Dionysus) from 1931/36 is directly connected with the artist's preoccupation with Nietzsche and is presumably based on studies after the model of the tall American dancer Ted Shawn.[56] The motif of dance, so central to Nietzsche, has thus migrated in Kolbe's work from the female (e.g., *Tänzerin* [Dancer, 1911/12]) to the male sex. The sculptural group *Emporsteigende Menschen* (Ascending People) from 1931/32—recognizable in a studio photograph as separate figures each approximately 160 cm tall and interpreted by Ursel Berger as the original idea for a Nietzsche monument[57]—and *Menschenpaar* (Couple) from 1936, with which Kolbe won first prize in a competition and which was installed at the Maschsee in Hannover in 1937, also belong in this context, as do the individual descending and ascending male and female figures.

After the personal tragedy in 1927 (the death of Kolbe's wife Benjamine), together with the political and economic crisis of the Weimar Republic intensifying from 1929/30 onwards, and after the beginning of the National Socialist regime, Kolbe continuously and intensively dealt with a theme that had ambivalent connotations. It could, to a great extent, take on a compensatory character, because with it one could evade reality, could escape; but with it one could also try to begin anew, to shape the future.[58] It tied idealistic-utopian ideas to a new type of man, which overcame, surpassed the present and the contemporary man.[59] This is also found in Nietzsche, without being able to prove Kolbe's knowledge of the passage, because in *Ecce Homo*, he writes in reference to "Zarathustra": "man is to him a thing unshaped, raw material, an ugly stone that needs the sculptor's chisel." And: "I walk among men as among fragments of the future: of that future which I see."[60]

In the context of the late Weimar Republic—and not only with the rise of the Third Reich—the sculptor Kolbe drew on Nietzsche and created, among other things, the figure of "Zarathustra." The decathlete Hermann Lemperle now served the sculptor as a model, so that these figures took on a trait of athletic exaltation.[61] Around 1932/33, Kolbe noted for himself a breakthrough with regard to the naming of the figure of a large ascending man as *Zarathustras Erhebung I* (1932/33; p. 264, fig. 1), connected this with Nietzsche's philosophical theorem of the Great Noon (conceived by Nietzsche, who saw man on a trajectory between animal and *Übermensch*, as both a transition and a downfall), and also understood this as a kind of self-liberation. Kolbe spoke of his hitherto "freest position in the realm of the male body."[62] The figure was connected with apparently self-selected and not commissioned designs and plans for the erection of a Nietzsche monument, to which the versions of the *Emporsteigendes Menschenpaar* (Ascending Couple) from 1931 and 1939 also belong. The *Ring der Statuen* (Ring of Statues), conceived from 1933 onwards for the Rothschild Park in Frankfurt am Main and installed only posthumously in 1954—albeit with figures from the late 1930s[63]—also follows on from this complex. A drawing, dated 1933, sketchily depicts "Zarathustra" in the center.[64]

All this illustrates, despite all uncertainty regarding the exact dating, how Kolbe was able to connect several themes and concepts with the artistic exploration of Nietzsche,

to think them through in parallel, and to realize them in other contexts only loosely connected to the original idea. Kolbe's work possesses a relative semantic openness, which at the same time made it creatively flexible and susceptible to—possibly unintended—attributions of meaning. Whether Kolbe, in light of Hitler's rise to power and his documented closeness to Weimar, and with a view to his participation in the 1933 academy exhibition, perhaps only now came to assign his figures the identifying title *Zarathustra* must remain a matter of speculation. Ursel Berger assumes the naming *Zarathustra/Zarathustras Erhebung* for the year 1932.[65] However, there is a typewritten note by Kolbe dated 1933 (though later crossed out), which reads: "The name, the title is absolutely necessary for the public—little as I need it myself."[66] Based on this source in the estate, 1933 seems entirely possible as a year and would clearly date the naming to the early stages of the Third Reich. In another undated note with the heading "(Zarathustra !!!!!)," Kolbe noted first Nietzsche's view of Heraclitus and then Nietzsche's view of the Dionysian: "when the awestruck millions sink in the dust: this is when you will be able to approach the Dionysian."[67] Such a fragment could also hint at the actualization or concretization of Zarathustra in the new political context of the Third Reich—the artistic genesis of the figure, which has little or nothing to do with National Socialism, precedes a possible unifying semantic charge or even clarification undertaken by Kolbe.[68]

Kolbe's Struggle for Form

We shall take another look at the finding of form as a creative process dependent on several factors. As early as the late 1920s, Kolbe had conceived monuments, among others, to the genius Beethoven and to the foreign minister Walter Rathenau (1928–30), who was assassinated by politically right-wing conspirators.[69] In this way, the artist had closely associated himself with the democratic Weimar Republic, since Rathenau was considered by the National Socialist anti-Semitic agitators to be a mastermind in a "Jewish conspiracy to sell off the German people," which had been identified by the *Völkischer Beobachter*, a party organ of the NSDAP.[70] Kolbe's approximately four-meter-tall, abstract-spiral Rathenau memorial fountain in the Volkspark Rehberge in Berlin was dismantled by the Nationalist Socialists in 1934.[71] His Friedrich Ebert bust of 1925, as well as the aesthetically quite different Heinrich Heine monuments installed in Frankfurt am Main and planned in Düsseldorf, were also bound to displease the new powers that be because of their hatred of the Jewish literary figure.[72] Kolbe thus occasionally became a victim of National Socialist cultural policy. Against this background, the Office for Preservation of the Arts with its Cultural-Political Archive even tried to discredit Kolbe to the Gestapo in 1936 as politically unreliable and artistically "degenerate." In addition to brief references to signatures, memberships, and support from the "Jewish press," it stated inherently contradictorily: "In his art, the sculptor represents a line that today is rejected as 'African' or even 'Alpine.'"[73]

In contrast, in the fall of 1933, Kolbe and his colleague Gerhard Marcks found themselves called upon to collaborate with the new state:

> "To our great astonishment, Kolbe and I were called out of our corner. We were at an initial meeting yesterday and, despite all our misgivings, came to the conclusion that we should indeed try to collaborate in order to assert our artistic views as far as possible. […] In contrast to the *Kampfbund* [Militant League for German Culture], the state wants to support a modern group of artists."[74]

Kolbe's larger-than-life nude figures of women and men were then also accepted at all times in the Third Reich, although they had already been developed and implemented in the final phase of the Weimar Republic. Thus, abstractly speaking, we would either be dealing with an artistic National Socialism before the Third Reich or with the continuity of a specific aesthetic from the late Weimar Republic into the Third Reich, which did not necessarily have to be National Socialist, but could become so through the new context. Such subsumptions, however, may not lead much further and obscure the view of the processual nature of the work's development.

Specifically, based on previous research by Hella Reelfs, Ursel Berger has named a total of twenty works by Kolbe for the period 1931 to 1947, including sculptures and sketches, that are directly related to an artistic tribute to Nietzsche or Zarathustra;[75] in addition, there are the drawings for a memorial hall and the *Ring der Statuen*, as was documented on the occasion of a project carried out in the Kolbe Museum in 2000. We are dealing here with either a *Menschenpaar* (Berger names three versions for 1931/32—one of which is smaller than life-size and one approximately 180 cm high—and two for 1939) or a 250-cm-high (Large) *Emporsteigender* (Ascending Man, 1932). In addition, there is a *Torso Dionysos* from 1931/31 with a height of 210 cm, as well as a 260-cm-high *Dionysos* from 1931/36, which was cast posthumously and installed in the Georg-Kolbe-Hain. Distinguished from these is *Zarathustras Erhebung I* from 1932/33, seen in a studio photograph dated 1934 (p. 264, fig. 1).[76] In 1933, a drawing of the first *Zarathustra* figure and the approximately 250-cm-high plaster model were exhibited at the Prussian Academy of Arts, where they were highly praised and thereby politically staged as well as received.[77] This figure appears more strained than the *Emporsteigender*. The supporting leg is answered by a more outwardly turned, erect right leg. Arms and hands are simultaneously more rigid and more gestural; in the photograph, the shoulder area appears broader, the physiognomy somewhat aged, more mature. The mouth in particular has changed from a gentle smile to an expression of latent imperious contempt, as can be seen in the illustrations in Binding's Kolbe monograph.[78] By 1934, Kolbe had changed the head of *Zarathustra*, perhaps already adapting here to the new regime, especially since he had to perceive the dismantling of his Rathenau fountain as a serious problem in the new state. During this time, photos were taken that depict the "small Zarathustra model" in a niche or between pillars, simulating an architectural installation.

Thus far, the "model for a monument to Nietzsche," which is dated to 1932 and is said to have been 40 cm high, has inexplicably remained undiscussed in this context. This model is remarkable because it shows an "Ascending Man" with raised arms that are formed to some degree into a ring. Here, Kolbe could have wanted to symbolically

express Nietzsche's Zarathustra and his doctrine of the "eternal return";[79] however, this was obviously not pursued and would also represent a singular case within Kolbe's oeuvre, which is why this remains doubtful. Kolbe had failed at expressing the spiritual dimension of Nietzsche's *Übermensch* from the very beginning by adapting the type of the athlete, as a comparison with Wilhelm Lehmbruck would demonstrate. The impressive possibility of an abstract form, as Otto Freundlich realized this in 1929 with the 200-cm-high *Ascension (Aufstieg)* in the context of the Cologne Progressives, can only be pointed out here.[80]

A second version of *Zarathustra* from 1937 (p. 264, fig. 2) is illustrated in Wilhelm Pinder's monograph from the same year.[81] Here, two models seem to have been produced: one 97 cm high and the other 250 cm high. This second and probably also a third version (250 cm high and smoothed) were discussed by the Nietzsche Archive from 1939 onwards in the context of a possible placement. Richard Oehler, a great-nephew of Nietzsche and a librarian in Frankfurt am Main, as well as being a member of the board of the Nietzsche Archive in Weimar, wrote to Kolbe on April 11, 1940, pointing out that Adolf Hitler himself had to be asked for permission to install the *Zarathustra*. For this reason, Kolbe was to have photographs made that would be presented to Hitler via Reich Minister and Chief of the Reich Chancellery Hans Heinrich Lammers. "I consider it very important that the Führer should receive an impression of the figure that is as perfect as possible."[82] Kolbe had photographs of *Zarathustra III* (p. 264, fig. 3) enlarged to 60 cm and sent nine of these to Oehler in May 1940. Dr. Meerwald from the Reich Chancellery in Berlin wrote to Oehler on September 30, 1940, informing him of a scathing verdict: "The Führer considers the statue proposed by you to be totally unsuitable and has ordered that another artist be commissioned by the Reich Governor in Thuringia to produce a new design."[83]

The third version is described as almost classicistic and smooth and would thus have been closer to Hitler's personal taste. Ursel Berger dates it to 1940 and thus to the year in which Kolbe could still expect his work to be installed in Weimar, whereby his position was also already contested. In Bruno E. Werner's overview of sculpture in the Third Reich quoted at the beginning of this essay, he was slowly replaced and overtaken by new tendencies. Could Kolbe have reacted directly to this with the third version, especially since he increasingly adapted himself aesthetically around 1938 anyway? The last *Zarathustra* version from 1943 was later criticized by Waldemar Grzimek to the effect that a will to ascend was no longer expressed.[84] Can this not also be seen as a specific aesthetic response by Kolbe? In her monograph from 1990, Berger illustrates this as *Zarathustras Erhebung* and as catalog no. 144 of the Kolbe Museum's holdings with the dates of execution 1932–47 and the casting date 1950; this conflating dating, however, obscures the process of creation, for it concerns the approximately 260-cm-tall fourth version, which was created between 1943 and 1947 with interruptions due to the war and was cast posthumously.

As a partial conclusion, one can state that Kolbe initially realized a design that had a positive effect on both himself and others, which was aesthetically conceived before Hitler came to power, but did not pose any problems in the new state—on the contrary. Perhaps it was only now, with regard to the title, that the figure was more clearly named, and this was possibly connected with Hitler's affinity for Nietzsche, which was clearly discernable

between 1932 and 1934 and which could give older ideas for monuments new topicality. However, despite all the efforts of Wilhelm Pinder and the Nietzsche Archive, the artist could not really succeed in the Third Reich; this was also dependent on Hitler's personal taste, which preferred the much simpler and smoother Klimsch, not to mention Breker and Thorak. Kolbe apparently tried to adapt, which would then be expressed in the third version of *Zarathustra* from 1940. In Weimar, the rejection of Kolbe's model gave rise to a certain sense of dismay, but above all to perplexity: "The Führer does not want Kolbe's Zarathustra! But whom should one present for a design? Breker? Should I also try Röll? In any case, it must be an artist who appeals to Hitler. Thorak?" One considered approaching Albert Speer, who might have been able to help here, and consoled oneself in the knowledge that: "The only good thing about the whole matter is that Hitler is interested."[85]

Ultimately, in light of the overall views of sculpture in the Third Reich, which distinguished the artist from contemporary tendencies toward monumentalization, and the looming defeat of the NS state, Kolbe turned his interpretation of Nietzsche perhaps even into its opposite. In 1943, the ascent of the figure of *Zarathustras Erhebung IV* is halted as if under duress and culminates in a state of rigidness. The figure, which was not cast until 1950—and could thus be re-contextualized and received in the young Federal Republic of Germany—cannot move on; it must stop and, at the same time, look the presence of the horror of 1943 in the eye with a sense of powerlessness, defiance, and shock. This subjects it to medusa-like petrification. Max Beckmann's painting *Prometheus* from 1943 might involuntarily come to mind as one "stuck" in the Caucasus. Beckmann's painting was a kind of slap in the face to his son Peter, who justified NS crimes, and responded to contemporary history.[86] In the same year, Kolbe reinterpreted the rise of Zarathustra—which could all too easily be interpreted as the rise of the NS movement—as a failure.

Grzimek's aforementioned commentary, which sought to identify a deficit, recognized the change, but perhaps misjudged its contemporary historical reference. Kolbe used the opportunity to expose and invert the affirmative pose-like aspect of National Socialist sculpture—to which he himself succumbed at times—at a late point in time.

Kolbe's inner distance, which broke through in 1943, was already expressed in a brief correspondence with Eleonore Wollenschläger at the end of 1939. He was pleased about her "extreme enthusiasm for Nietzsche," but criticized the interpretation of art through language as "literature" and did not exclude his biographer Rudolf Binding from this. Kolbe warned against a "pathos that leads into emptiness. Words […] often in the superlative, produce hollow ecstasy."[87] He excluded Nietzsche's "incomparable […] art of diction" and "unique enlightenment" from this and, at the same time, confessed that his struggle for a statue of Zarathustra, at that time firmly intended for Weimar, was still not over. Therefore, Wollenschläger should refrain from advertising with his work for her own Nietzsche proposition. Here, Kolbe's discord becomes clear, as he expressed criticism of the so-called art journalism of the time. He reported on his striving for a perfect sculptural solution—by his own admission not yet achieved—and yet tried to place his *Zarathustra* in Weimar.

1 Georg Kolbe, *Zarathustras Erhebung I* (The Rise of Zarathustra I), 1932/33, plaster, larger than life, historical photograph

2 Georg Kolbe, *Zarathustras Erhebung II* (The Rise of Zarathustra II), 1937, plaster, h. ca. 250 cm, historical photograph

3 Georg Kolbe, *Zarathustras Erhebung III* (The Rise of Zarathustra III), 1940, plaster, h. ca. 270 cm, historical photograph

4 Georg Kolbe, *Zarathustras Erhebung IV* (The Rise of Zarathustra IV), 1943/47, bronze, h. 260 cm, historical photograph

5 Georg Kolbe, *Menschenpaar (Entwurf für das Nietzsche-Archiv in Weimar)* (Human Couple [Model for the Nietzsche Archive in Weimar]), 1939, plaster, small-format model in a niche, historical photograph

6 Georg Kolbe, *Zarathustras Erhebung (Entwurf für das Nietzsche-Archiv in Weimar)* (The Rise of Zarathustra [Model for the Nietzsche Archive in Weimar]), 1939, plaster, small-format model in a niche, historical photograph

Difficulties with Regard to Placement

Under the conditions of the National Socialist regime, the preoccupation with Nietzsche could bring one close to the perpetrators; for Kolbe, however, it was perhaps a matter of participation without actually participating. He had already been dealing with a theme that then found continuation in the Third Reich. His previous reception, which was especially influenced by national conservatism, also allowed for this, but it was transformed in the Third Reich and became more racially influenced, as Arie Hartog has demonstrated.[88] It is, however, primarily a phenomenon of reception, which Kolbe seems to have addressed in phases; nevertheless, the analytical separation of reception history and formal analysis remains important.

When, for example, Nietzsche's great-nephew Richard Oehler, referring to Nietzsche's idea of "higher breeding," wrote: "This idea could also be excellently represented for all visitors of the Nietzsche Hall by works of visual art: for example, one could depict a young couple of Nordic-Germanic character […], who wish to be married,"[89] and when Kolbe's *Menschenpaar* was discussed and prepared, as it were, by Oehler in 1935 as possible niche figures for the Nietzsche Memorial Hall (fig. 5), then these are considerations, which were probably conceived for Weimar in the precise knowledge of Kolbe's work, albeit

independently of him. The racial narrowing of the work's message is made independently of Nietzsche—whose thoughts on breeding are interpreted quite one-dimensionally[90]—and Kolbe. Kolbe's work, however, allows for such instrumentalization.

"A spirit that avoids contact with judges and executioners deserves to be called free."[91] In this sense, Kolbe was not free in the Third Reich. At the same time, Nietzsche opened up for him—in temporal parallel to reflections of Harry Graf Kessler[92]—the possibility, on the one hand, to strive for a philosophically founded human ideal and, on the other hand, to regain a certain freedom in the course of the National Socialist regime through subsequent distancing and reflection.

The ideal concept of a higher human species, which art was supposed to advance with vivid models, could, however, be integrated into the initially vague ideas of a "species-pure" racial state. I would like to further elaborate on this. The art historian Wilhelm Pinder, who pandered to the new regime, published his Kolbe monograph in 1937. It contained an anecdote according to which a visitor to the sculptor's studio is supposed to have said: "When one has absorbed this world, one feels obliged to behave even more decently, by no means only in artistic matters, but in every situation that demands an attitude."[93] In the Third Reich, this could be ignored and perverted in the most brutal way. The inherently abbreviating call "to behave even more decently" cited in Pinder's anecdote could then become the bizarre yet consistent notion of "having remained decent" even as a mass murderer, as Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler claimed in one of his infamous Posen speeches.[94]

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, George Bataille addressed the connection between Nietzsche and the SS; and at this point, one can briefly think Kolbe, Nietzsche, and the SS together, just as Aschheim brought the term "Untermensch" (subhuman), already used by Nietzsche, into direct connection with the infamous SS brochure of the same name from 1942. In it, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's *Zwei Menschen* (Two Humans) was contrasted with Josef Thorak's *Menschenpaar* rather than with Kolbe's. This would have been possible, of course, because the relevant NS literature, which condemned so-called "degenerate" art and promoted "German" art, perceived Kolbe in the late 1930s as an exception to the general decline of the Weimar era. In 1937, Wolfgang Willrich denunciated the contacts between the modern Weimar art trade and art criticism and visual art, and then stated: "Among the German artists included in the long series of monographs *Junger Kunst* (list in the appendix!), only one artist has remained healthy—and even he was at times close to the limit of a fashionable style—Kolbe."[95] One year later, in 1938, Adolf Dresler then also contrasted Eugen Hoffmann with Kolbe and Klimsch in his book *Deutsche Kunst und entartete "Kunst."*[96]

With his choice of Zarathustra, Kolbe aimed at a self-conquest of man in the sense of Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, who, however, did not so much represent a racial ideal as embody a spiritual-moral ideal,[97] and the advent of the Great Noon—the vision of a feast for the "highest of the elect."[98] Nietzsche's promulgation of the *Übermensch* as an overcoming of nihilism and Hitler's propaganda image of the *Volksgemeinschaft* (national or racial community) probably represent irreconcilable opposites anyway.[99] The idea of the Nietzsche

Archive in Weimar from 1935 to create a place of pilgrimage "for the great mass of the people" contradicts Nietzsche's own thoughts on the phenomenon of the mass, which he tied to the concept of ressentiment and contrasted with a pathos of distance.[100] In addition, the idea of the Nietzsche memorial received rather insufficient support from those in power, which could testify to Nietzsche's rather marginal importance for NS ideology and may also have had to do with Hitler's attitude towards Paul Schultze-Naumburg, who built the Nietzsche memorial hall in Weimar but had already disappointed Hitler in 1934/35 during the interior remodeling of the Nuremberg opera house.[101]

The newspaper articles in Georg Kolbe's estate reinforce this general impression. At the beginning of 1939, the shell of the memorial hall was completed, and Kolbe was also mentioned in this context, albeit only in the provincial press.[102] Previously, a certain Dr. von Leers or the editors of the newspaper *Nationalsozialistische Landpost* had referred to Kolbe's *Zarathustra* when illustrating Leers's article on Zarathustra, Iran, and the "Nordic world of ideas" with a cutout of his head and chest.[103] In the small volume *Bildwerke*, published in the *Insel-Bücherei* series in 1939/40, co-designed by Kolbe, and with a text by Richard Graul, Nietzsche and the *Zarathustra* sculpture no longer played a role. As no. 26, the *Aufsteigender Jüngling* (Ascending Youth) was illustrated and dated to 1936. The strongly assimilated, smoothed figures from around 1937 onwards dominated the illustration nos. 30–41 (the last image being a back view of the sculpture *Stehender Jüngling* [Standing Youth] from 1939). As the final illustrations, Kolbe showed himself with a self-portrait) from 1934 next to a bust of Franco from 1938 and thus positioned himself politically.[104]

Finally, the editions of the Kolbe monographs by Wilhelm Pinder from between 1937 and about 1939 (with print runs up to 20,000) also differ in that the first edition contains sixty-four intaglio plates, and pages 76/77 illustrate *Zarathustra II* as a "statue for a Nietzsche monument" with the (incorrect) height of 270 cm. In the subsequent editions, it is no longer included, and the illustrations, now expanded by four gravure plates, depict instead new bronze casts (from 1938) of women and men, which make a comparatively more official and also more conforming impression. While Kolbe himself took the initiative to have his *Zarathustra* installed in Weimar, it was taken out in a contemporaneous representative publication and replaced by works that conveyed an "official Kolbe" but avoided any possible controversy.[105]

Georg Kolbe's case is exemplary because it sheds light on the ambivalence of invention and reception (attribution of meaning) of forms in the early 1930s and also raises the question regarding the individual behavior of artists and their fate in the Third Reich. The example of Friedrich Nietzsche also addresses the highly topical problem of how to deal with artists and thinkers who expressed offensive or even inhumane thoughts: Nietzsche, because he was possessed by an anti-bourgeois furor and was obviously willing to think the extreme in a nihilistic age he diagnosed as such. His specific discussion of the phenomenon of cruelty, which he analyzed and advocated, has recently been subtly considered.[106] Several of his thoughts compromise Nietzsche from a historical perspective, and he "stands in stark contrast to all those values that are formative and determinative in contemporary

Western societies."[107] Others, however—especially elitist, intellectual-aristocratic ideas—were suitable points of contact for a resistance against those in power during the Third Reich. And still others remain today possible thorns for an honest self-understanding, when, "in the hour of the perfect noon, the critical time is present, in which the abyss of the nihilism of an existence that has become aimless strives to overcome itself."[108]

The history of Nietzsche's reception in the Third Reich includes, in addition to Kolbe's continued reflections, the unique panel painting *Die sieben Todsünden* (The Seven Deadly Sins) by Otto Dix from 1933 with an inscribed Nietzsche quote and Hitler as a personification of Envy,[109] Heidegger's Nietzsche seminars and lectures of the 1930s and 1940s,[110] and the fascinating Nietzsche study of the exiled Heidegger student and critic Karl Löwith from 1935,[111] as well as the symptomatic failure of a Weimar memorial project in the form of a Nietzsche hall, for which a sculpture by Kolbe had been temporarily intended (cf. p. 265, figs. 5 and 6). As mentioned in the above, Adolf Hitler himself regarded the figure *Zarathustras Erhebung III* (cf. p. 264, fig. 3) as "totally unsuitable" and dismissed it.[112] On a suggestion of Count Solms, Kolbe had contacted the Nietzsche Archive earlier—and yet relatively late—in 1938. He reminded Richard Oehler of this in April 1939, since his *Zarathustra* was apparently finished and needed a placement. Kolbe encountered a muddled situation, because in Weimar, one was particularly dissatisfied with the designs of a seated *Nietzsche-Zarathustra* by Fritz Müller-Camphausen. Richard Oehler considered the sculptor to be the opposite of a "creative man." To him, Kolbe seemed at this time "to be the best artist" to finish the stagnating artistic project; meanwhile, his brother Max had even forgotten about the existence of a six-member committee, of which he himself was a member, for the artistic design of the hall.[113]

Now, for a short time, Kolbe was being promoted by Richard Oehler, in that he was emphatically brought into play in Weimar, and his third *Zarathustra* version was to be installed.[114] Hitler prevented this, and Richard Oehler—in view of this final decision against Kolbe's possible involvement—somewhat resignedly fell back on his original idea, which, paradoxically, Müller-Camphausen had actually followed, but could not satisfactorily realize:

> "I have the feeling that Hitler simply does not want a symbolic Zarathustra, but rather a real Nietzsche monument. That had been my original thought. I have always talked about creating something similar to Klinger's Beethoven monument. Thus, if we get a huge Nietzsche-Zarathustra (of course somehow stylistically enhanced) enthroned high above in the apse, then that which I had always had in mind and that, I believe for sure, would also please Hitler, would be achieved. It would have to be a great artistic achievement, not something paltry like the design by Müller-Kamphausen."[115]

It was symptomatic that the internally divided ruling elite and the self-proclaimed cultural elite of the Third Reich neither possessed nor could develop a uniform image of Nietzsche, nor did it have a consistent conception of art, and only in the rarest of cases did it have

qualitatively strong artists at its disposal. When asked from Weimar, the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini attempted to redeem them from this dilemma, which was equally due to intellectual and artistic averageness and inner-party personal competition. He quickly filled the intellectual and artistic vacuum with the gift of an ancient statue of Dionysus. In 1942, on the occasion of Nietzsche's hundredth birthday, the German Reich received an ancient Roman replica of a statue of Praxiteles which reached Weimar in the midst of a bombing raid in 1943, the final phase of the war now being underway. Placed in the empty niche of the hall of honor, it would have represented, according to Jürgen Krause, a typical "pseudo-solution,"[116] palliating one's own creative incapacity. As the embodiment of a Dionysus Sardanapalus, it would also have involuntarily cynically exposed those in the know to Hitler's will to self-destruction and the destruction of the German people at the end of the war.[117] Of course, Mussolini's gift had nothing to do with the somewhat forced and then also ambivalent sculpture of Kolbe, who continued to work on his *Zarathustra* despite the disappointment of 1940, or with Richard Oehler's original and resumed idea of a "Nietzsche-Zarathustra" in imitation and exaggeration of Max Klinger's *Beethoven*.

Notes

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1 Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche. The Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Thought* [1941], trans. David E. Green (London 1964), p. 185.

2 See also, as essential overviews of the time: Willi Wolfradt, *Die neue Plastik* (Berlin ²1920), pp. 74–76; Alfred Kuhn, *Die neuere Plastik von achtzehnhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich ²1922), pp. 85–86. References to Rodin are clearly seen, and the quality of Kolbe is emphasized, but so is the notion that he could not be a permanent bearer of sculptural development. For all Kolbe's importance for official art in the Third Reich, this latent marginalization is repeated in this period. In Carl Einstein's epochal *Propyläen-Kunstgeschichte. Die Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin 1926), Kolbe plays no role and is mentioned only as the owner of a work by Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (p. 565). In the register of the third edition of 1931, he is missing completely. At the latest with Carola Giedion-Welcker's book *Plastik des XX. Jahrhunderts. Volumen- und Raumgestaltung* (Stuttgart 1955), Kolbe disappears from the canon of modern sculpture and has, as it were, merely historical value. On Kolbe's public perception, see: Arie Hartog, "Äußere Anmut oder innere Schönheit? Der erfolgreichste deutsche Bildhauer und seine Kritiker 1920 bis 1934," in: *Georg Kolbe 1877–1947*, ed. Ursel Berger, exh. cat. Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin and Gerhard-Marcks-Haus, Bremen (Munich 1997), pp. 78–86; Arie Hartog, *Moderne deutsche figürliche Bildhauerei. Umrisse einer Tradition* (Pulsnitz 2009), pp. 97–108. For more on the partial situating of Kolbe within Expressionism, see: "Kolbe," in: *German Expressionist Sculpture*, ed. Stephanie Barron, exh. cat. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1983, pp. 132–135; Gerhard Kolberg, "'Was ist des Menschen Bild?' Skulpturen des Expressionismus," in: *Die Expressionisten. Vom Aufbruch bis zur Verfemung*, exh. cat. Museum Ludwig, Cologne (Ostfildern-Ruit 1996), pp. 200–219, here pp. 208f.; Anita Beloubek-Hammer, "Das 'Problematische' und das 'Gelöste.' Georg Kolbe und der Expressionismus," in: exh. cat. Berlin/Bremen 1997 (see note 2), pp. 71–77.

3 Rudolf G. Binding, *Vom Leben der Plastik. Inhalt und Schönheit des Werkes von Georg Kolbe* [1933] (Berlin undated [⁶1936]); cf.: Josephine Gabler "Georg Kolbe in der NS-Zeit," in: exh. cat. Berlin/Bremen 1997 (see note 2), pp. 87–94.

4 Binding ⁶1936 (see note 3), p. 75 [translated]; illustrated on p. 92, detail on p. 38.

5 See the references at the end of the book by Bruno E. Werner: *Die deutsche Plastik der Gegenwart* (Berlin 1940).

6 In certain approaches, Werner perpetuates theses of the late Weimar Republic, when, for example, it was argued by Lothar Schreyer in 1931: "The sculptors of this in-between generation are thus late historians who want to liberate themselves from historicity, but who are also not predestined to determine the new sculptural form. Among these sculptors, Georg Kolbe (b. 1877), Wilhelm Lehmbruck (1881–1919), and Ernst Barlach (b. 1870) should be mentioned." Lothar Schreyer, *Die bildende Kunst der Deutschen. Geschichte und Betrachtung* (Hamburg, Berlin, and Leipzig 1931), p. 342 [translated].

7 For more on Georg Kolbes *Krieger-Ehrenmal* (1935) in Stralsund, see: Dietrich Schubert, "Revanche der Trauer über die Opfer? Kolbe versus Barlach—ein Soldaten-'Ehrenmal' für die Stadt Stralsund 1928–1935," in: Martin Warnke (ed.), *Politische Kunst. Gebärden und Gebaren* [=*Hamburger Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte*, no. III] (Berlin 2004), pp. 73–96.

8 Werner 1940 (see note 5), p. 34 [translated].

9 Ibid., pp. 36–37 [translated].

10 Ibid., p. 157.

11 See the essay by Magdalena Bushart in this volume, pp. 312–330.

12 Quoted in: Henry Picker, *Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier* (Frankfurt am Main and Berlin 1991), p. 341, entry from May 30, 1942 [translated]. See also: Klaus Backes, *Hitler und die bildenden Künste. Kulturverständnis und Kunstpolitik im Dritten Reich* (Cologne 1988), pp. 98–99. The so-called *Tischgespräche* (table talks) as a contemporary historical source are not unproblematic, but the temporal coincidence of the special provision for Kolbe on the one hand and the art monologue with reference to Klimsch and Kolbe on the other seem to me to indicate a certain authenticity here.

13 Picker 1991 (see note 12), p. 342 [translated].

14 Kurt Lothar Tank, *Deutsche Plastik unserer Zeit* [edited by Undersecretary Wilhelm Bade and with a preface by Reich Minister Albert Speer] (Munich 1942).

15 Ibid., p. 48 [translated].

16 Ibid., p. 50 [translated].

17 Here, I continue to regard Max Imdahl's approach as fundamental. See: Max Imdahl, "Pose und Indoktrination. Zu Werken der Plastik und Malerei im Dritten Reich" [1988], in: idem: *Gesammelte Schriften*, 3 vols., vol. 3: *Reflexion, Theorie, Methode* (Frankfurt am Main 1996), pp. 575–590. Cf. the partly critical references in: *Artige Kunst. Kunst und Politik im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Silke von Berswordt-Wallrabe, Jörg-Uwe Neumann, and Agnes Tieze, exh. cat. Kunstsammlungen der Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Kunsthalle Rostock, and Kunstforum Ostdeutsche Galerie, Regensburg (Bielefeld 2016). See also the essay by Arie Hartog in this volume, pp. 278–293.

18 Tank 1942 (see note 14), p. 49 [translated].

19 For more on the historical context and the dissolution of the certainty of victory, see: Aristotle A. Kallis, "Der Niedergang der Deutungsmacht. Nationalsozialistische Propaganda im Kriegsverlauf," in: *Das Deutsche Reich und der Zweite Weltkrieg, Band 9, Teil 2: Die Deutsche Kriegsgesellschaft 1939 bis* 1945 (Munich 2005), pp. 203–250, here pp. 231–235.

20 Werner Hofmann, *Die Plastik des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main 1958), p. 73 [translated].

21 See: Dietrich Schubert, "Nietzsche und seine Einwirkungen auf die Bildende Kunst – Ein Desiderat heutiger Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft?" in: *Nietzsche-Studien. Internationales Jahrbuch für die Nietzsche-Forschung*, no. 9 (Berlin and Boston 1980), pp. 274–282; idem, "Nietzsche-Konkretionsformen in der Bildenden Kunst 1890–1933. Ein Überblick," in: *Nietzsche-Studien. Internationales Jahrbuch für die Nietzsche-Forschung*, nos. 10/11 (Berlin and Boston 1981/82), pp. 278–327.

22 Schubert 1981/82 (see note 21), p. 313 [translated].

23 Ibid., p. 314 [translated].

24 Klaus Wolbert, *Die Nackten und die Toten des "Dritten Reiches." Folgen einer Geschichte des Körpers in der Plastik des deutschen Faschismus* (Gießen 1982), p. 163 [translated]. Cf. ibid. passim (e.g., p. 79 on Pinder's Kolbe monograph; p. 113 on the dismissal of Kolbe and Scheibe in 1933; the illustration of the decathlete in the context of sports sculpture on p. 191). Cf. also the new edition from 2018, which calls for a separate analysis.

25 Ibid., p. 165 [translated].

26 Ursel Berger, *Georg Kolbe – Leben und Werk, mit dem Katalog der Kolbe-Plastiken im Georg-Kolbe-Museum* (Berlin ²1994), p. 109 and cat. no. 163 [translated].

27 Ibid. p. 116 [translated].

28 See: Reinhard Müller-Mehlis, *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* (Munich 1976), pp. 126–132. "Kolbe was accepted and not merely tolerated; but he was not the artist of the new type," p. 131 [translated]; Backes 1988 (see note 12), pp. 98–99.

29 See the impressive volume: Heinrich Detering, *Der Antichrist und der Gekreuzigte. Friedrich Nietzsches letzte Texte* (Göttingen 2010).

30 See, for example: Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, 2 vols., vol. 1: *Der Wille zur Macht als Kunst* [1936/37] (Stuttgart ⁶1998); Dieter Jähnig, "Nietzsches Kunstbegriff (erläutert an der 'Geburt der Tragödie')," in: Helmut Koopmann and J. Adolf Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth (eds.), *Beiträge zur Theorie der Künste im 19. Jahrhundert*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt am Main 1972), vol. 2, pp. 29–68; Georg Picht, *Nietzsche* (Stuttgart 1988), pp. 256–312; Julian Young, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge, UK 1992); Theo Meyer, *Nietzsche und die Kunst* (Tübingen and Basel 1993) [without any reference to Kolbe]; Salim Kemal, Ivan Gaskell, and Daniel W. Conway (eds.), *Nietzsche, Philosophy and the Arts* (Cambridge, UK and New York 1998) [without any reference to Kolbe]. The connection between Schopenhauer's philosophy of art and Nietzsche's is also significant. See: Wolfgang Schirmacher (ed.), *Schopenhauer, Nietzsche und die Kunst* (Vienna 1991).

31 Meyer 1993 (see note 30), p. 154 [translated].

32 For more on this, see: Uwe Puschner, Walter Schmitz, and Justus H. Ulbricht (eds.), *Handbuch zur "Völkischen Bewegung" 1871–1918* (Munich 1996); Stefan Breuer, *Ordnung der Ungleichheit – die deutsche Rechte im Widerstreit ihrer Ideen 1871–1945* (Darmstadt 2001); as well as, for the context of the reform movements around 1900: *Die Lebensreform. Entwürfe zur Neugestaltung von Leben und Kunst um 1900*, ed. Kai Buchholz et al., 2 vols., exh. cat. Institut Mathildenhöhe, Darmstadt, 2001 [here, in vol. 1, the section entitled "Ideengeschichte, Geistesgeschichte und Weltanschauung"). For more on the complex of Nietzsche and the so-called Conservative Revolution, see, most recently, the extensive anthology: Sebastian Kaufmann and Andreas Urs Sommer (eds.), *Nietzsche und die Konservative Revolution* (Berlin and Boston 2018); Milan Wenner, "Spannungsvolle Nähe. Oswald Spengler und das Nietzsche-Archiv im Kontext der Konservativen Revolution," in: Ulrike Lorenz and Thorsten Valk (eds.), *Kult – Kunst – Kapital. Das Nietzsche-Archiv und die Moderne um 1900* (Göttingen 2020), pp. 133–151.

33 See: Steven E. Aschheim, *Nietzsche und die Deutschen. Karriere eines Kults* (Stuttgart and

Weimar 1996), p. 259. The author refers to Albert Speer's diaries.

34 See: Jürgen Krause, *"Märtyrer" und "Prophet." Studien zum Nietzsche-Kult in der bildenden Kunst der Jahrhundertwende* (Berlin and New York 1984), pp. 222–223. On January 9, 1939, the Bielefeld daily newspaper *Westfälische Neueste Nachrichten* reported on a further donation made by Hitler.

35 Aschheim 1996 (see note 33), p. 260 [translated].

36 Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Birth of Tragedy," in: idem: *Ecce Homo*, trans. Anthony M. Ludovici (Edinburgh and London 1911), p. 73. In this context, Nietzsche speaks of "that new party of life-advocates, which will undertake the greatest of all tasks, the elevation and perfection of mankind." The one-sided, eugenic interpretation of such a passage casts a shadow on Nietzsche's iridescence. Cf.: Bernhard H. F. Taureck, *Nietzsche und der Faschismus. Eine Studie über Nietzsches politische Philosophie und ihre Folgen* (Hamburg 1989), pp. 154–190.

37 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power. An Attempted Transvaluation of all Values*, vol. 2, books III and IV, trans. Anthony M. Ludovici (Edinburgh and London 1913), § 964, p. 368 [emphasis in the original].

38 For fundamental details, see: Peter Weingart, Jürgen Kroll, and Kurt Bayertz, *Rasse, Blut und Gene. Geschichte der Eugenik und Rassenhygiene in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main 1988), pp. 64–66 and 70–72, here p. 72 [translated].

39 Taureck 1989 (see note 36), p. 10 [translated].

40 Unfortunately, Aschheim did not take note of Taureck's differentiated study, which attempts to precisely map out Nietzsche's "proto-fascist" tendencies. A monumental, critical account is furthermore: Domenico Losurdo, *Nietzsche – der aristokratische Rebell. Intellektuelle Biographie und kritische Bilanz*, 2 vols. (Berlin 2009), cf. here vol. 1, part 3, section 19, pp. 580–600. A review of the articles in: Henning Ottmann (ed.), *Nietzsche-Handbuch. Leben – Werk – Wirkung* (Stuttgart and Weimar 2011) [special edition], repeatedly results, in my opinion, in the fact that an evaluation as "proto-fascist" is problematic despite numerous, from today's point of view inhumane "values" of Nietzsche.

41 Weingart/Kroll/Bayertz 1988 (see note 38), p. 72, note 69 [translated].

42 See, for example: Anneliese Plaga, *Sprachbilder der Kunst. Friedrich Nietzsche in den Bildwelten von Edvard Munch und Giorgio de Chirico* (Berlin 2008); Gerda Wendermann, "Der einsame Wanderer. Edvard Munch malt Friedrich Nietzsche und dessen Schwester," in: Lorenz/Valk 2020 (see note 32), pp. 249–271. In the context of Expressionism, see: Gunter Martens, "Im Aufbruch das Ziel. Nietzsches Wirkung im Expressionismus," in: Hans Steffen (ed.), *Nietzsche. Werk und Wirkungen* (Göttingen 1974), pp. 115–166; James Rolleston, "Nietzsche, Expressionism and Modern Poetics," in: *Nietzsche-Studien. Internationales Jahrbuch für die Nietzsche-Forschung*, vol. 9, 1980, pp. 285–301; Hans Ester, "Nietzsche als Leitstern des Expressionismus," in: Hans Ester and Meindert Evers (eds.), *Zur Wirkung Nietzsches* (Würzburg 2001), pp. 99–111; Anita Beloubek-Hammer, *Die schönen Gestalten der besseren Zukunft. Die Bildhauerkunst des Expressionismus und ihr geistiges Umfeld*, 2 vols. (Cologne 2007), here vol. 1, pp. 32–37 and 279–303; Louisa Theobald, *Arts and Crafts, Nietzsche und die frühe "Brücke." Studien zur Graphik Ernst Ludwig Kirchners* (Regensburg 2011). The essays and contributions of Dietrich Schubert from 1980 and 1981/82 (see note 21) continue to be fundamental. Taking the works of this author as a starting point, the central figure of Otto Dix and his reception of Nietzsche could be discussed in terms of research history, to which, in addition to Schubert, Otto Conzelmann and James A. van Dyke, among others, have contributed.

43 See: *Der schreitende, springende, wirbelnde Mensch. Georg Kolbe und der Tanz*, ed. Ursel Berger, exh. cat. Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin and Edwin Scharff Museum, Neu-Ulm (Neu-Ulm 2003); regarding Nietzsche, the motif of dance, and Kolbe, see also: Beloubek-Hammer 2007 (see note 42), vol. 1, pp. 279–303 (on Kolbe, here pp. 301–302).

44 See: Krause 1984 (see note 34), pp 154–212; *und Ihr Kinderlein kommet … Henry van de Velde – Ein vergessenes Projekt für Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. Thomas Föhl, exh. cat. Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar (Ostfildern-Ruit 2000); and for a further context: Helmut Scharf, *Kleine Kunstgeschichte des deutschen Denkmals* (Darmstadt 1984), pp. 207–301.

45 See: Christoph Schmälzle, "Die 'Wahrheit' der Gesichtszüge. Konkurrierende Nietzsche-Bilder in der Kunst um 1900," in: Lorenz/Valk 2020 (see note 32), pp. 273–295.

46 For detailed information on Olde, see: Anna-Sophie Borges, "Ecce Dementia? Friedrich Nietzsche in Fotografien und Radierungen von Hans Olde," in: Lorenz/Valk 2020 (see note 32), pp. 225–247.

47 For more on the complex of Nietzsche, Weimar, and his reception in the visual arts, see, fundamentally: Krause 1984 (see note 34); *Wege nach Weimar. Auf der Suche nach der Einheit von Kunst und Politik*, ed. Hans Widerotter and Michael Dorrmann, exh. cat. Ausstellungshalle im Thüringer Landesverwaltungsamt, Weimar (Berlin 1999),

here the essays and exhibits under the heading "Dionysos im 20. Jahrhundert," pp. 155–215; Erhard Naake, *Nietzsche und Weimar. Werk und Wirkung im 20. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna 2000); Simone Bogner, "'… den Ausbau und zugleich die Zusammenfassung der Nietzsche-Bewegung von Weimar aus und in Weimar.' Die Nietzsche-Gedächtnishalle von Paul Schultze-Naumburg," in: Hans-Rudolf Meier and Daniela Spiegel (eds.), *Kulturreformer. Rassenideologe. Hochschuldirektor. Der lange Schatten des Paul Schultze-Naumburg* (Heidelberg 2018), pp. 47–59.

48 See: Berger **²**1994 (see note 26), p. 116 [translated]. Kolbe had been preoccupied with Nietzsche since 1900 at the latest, for example on the basis of his acquaintance with Raoul Richter and his Nietzsche Lectures, published in 1903 and reprinted several times. See: Raoul Richter, *Friedrich Nietzsche. Sein Leben und sein Werk. Fünfzehn Vorlesungen* (Leipzig 1903). I thank Thomas Pavel for this reference.

49 For more on "Beethoven" from 1926 onwards, which is dependent in phases on Klinger's famous polychrome figure from 1902, see: Binding **⁶**1936 (see note 3), pp. 51–57; Berger **²**1994 (see note 26), pp. 100–105 and 305–307. Kolbe transforms a seated, portrait-like concrete figure flanked by two female genii into a seemingly rising, genius-like youth figure as the center of a more dynamic group of three. For more on Klinger's *Beethoven*, see: Georg Bussmann, "Max Klingers 'Beethoven' in der 14. Ausstellung der Wiener Secession," in: Jürgen Nautz and Richard Vahrenkamp (eds.), *Die Wiener Jahrhundertwende. Einflüsse, Umwelt, Wirkungen* (Vienna, Cologne, and Graz 1993), pp. 525–542; Thomas Strobel, "Beethoven – Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft im Geiste Richard Wagners," in: Pavla Langer et al. (eds.), *Max Klinger. Wege zur Neubewertung* (Leipzig 2008), pp. 236–250.

50 Ursel Berger, "'Herauf nun, herauf, du großer Mittag.' Georg Kolbes Statue für die Nietzsche Gedächtnishalle und die gescheiterten Vorläuferprojekte," in: Widerotter/Dorrmann 1999 (see note 47), pp. 177–194, here p. 181 [translated].

51 Ibid. [translated]; in this context, see also: Kurt Badt, "Feiern durch Rühmung" [1960], in: idem: *Kunsttheoretische Versuche. Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, ed. Lorenz Dittmann (Cologne 1968), pp. 103–140; on Nietzsche: ibid., pp. 114–118. More essential, however, is Badt's thought that the artist "seizes these processes together with the emotional impulses they give off by presenting them as an individual, solely responsible, for explicit shaping by highlighting, solemnly setting in the light, praising testimony for the thing itself" (p. 140 [translated]). This seems to me to have been the case with Kolbe's intensive and long-term preoccupation with Nietzsche. For more on the topos of loneliness proposed by Berger, also with references to Nietzsche, see: Walther Rehm, "Der Dichter und die neue Einsamkeit," in: idem, *Der Dichter und die neue Einsamkeit. Aufsätze zur Literatur um 1900* (Göttingen 1969), pp. 7–33.

52 See the references in: Olaf Peters, *Otto Dix. Der unerschrockene Blick. Eine Biographie* (Stuttgart 2013), pp. 165–175 and 196–205; and for more on a major work, see: Dietrich Schubert, "Otto Dix: 1933 – 'Die sieben Todsünden,'" in: Uwe Kiessler (ed.), *Architektur im Museum 1977–2012* [commemorative publication in honor of Winfried Nerdinger] (Munich 2012), pp. 232–245.

53 See: *Oskar Schlemmer. Der Folkwang-Zyklus. Malerei um 1930* [vol. 1] and *Junge Deutsche Kunst. Der Folkwang-Wettbewerb 1934* [vol. 2], exh. cat. Staatsgalerie Stuttgart and Museum Folkwang, Essen, 1993–1994 (Ostfildern-Ruit 1993).

54 See, in general: Christian Drobe, *Verdächtige Ambivalenz. Klassizismus in der Moderne 1920–1960* (Weimar 2022), on Schlemmer: pp. 120–133.

55 See: Alexander Gerster, Barbara Könczöl, and Janina Nentwig, *Der Neue Mensch. Utopien, Leitbilder und Reformkonzepte zwischen den Weltkriegen* (Frankfurt am Main et al. 2006).

56 See: exh. cat. Berlin/Neu-Ulm 2003 (see note 43), pp. 89f.

57 See: Berger **²**1994 (see note 26), p. 113.

58 With "Zarathustra," Kolbe could also overcome a possible creative crisis, for the former formulated: "No longer to will, no longer to value, no longer to create! Oh, that this great weariness may never be mine!"; see: Nietzsche 1911 (see note 36): "Thus Spake Zarathustra," § 8, p. 113.

59 Dietrich Schubert has presented in detail that surpassing or ascending does not have to be understood as a physical action by the sculptor Wilhelm Lehmbruck, who also dealt with Nietzsche and took his own life at a young age. See: Dietrich Schubert, *Die Kunst Lehmbrucks* (Worms **²**1990), pp. 177–190; on p. 182 with reference to Herbert von Einem on the "open form" and on p. 184 on the elaborated "dialectical dynamics of upwards and downwards" [translated]. Elsewhere, Schubert speaks in view of the *Emporsteigender Jüngling* (Ascending Youth) of "the new male figure in the Nietzschean sense of the tension between eros and spiritual growth." Dietrich Schubert, "Wilhelm Lehmbruck im Blick von Meier-Graefe," in:

Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 2015, pp. 147–166, here p. 150 [translated].

60 Nietzsche 1911 (see note 36): "Thus Spake Zarathustra," § 8, p. 113.

61 The sports discourse of the time must also be taken into account here. See, among others: Birgit Bressa, "Vom griechischen Athleten zum deutschen Kämpfer. Klassische Körperbilder des Sportlers in der Skulptur der zwanziger bis vierziger Jahre," in: Hans Körner and Angela Stercken (eds.), *1926–2002. GeSoLei. Kunst, Sport und Körper* (Ostfildern-Ruit 2002), pp. 314–324; as well as, fundamentally: Stefan Lehmann, "Ideologisierte Utopie. Zum Nachleben des antiken Athletenbildes in der Kunst der Moderne," in: *Ideale. Moderne Kunst seit Winckelmanns Antike*, exh. cat. Kunstmuseum Moritzburg, Halle (Saale) (Dresden 2018), pp. 16–41, here pp. 36–41.

62 Quoted in English in: Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *Art Under a Dictatorship* (New York 1954), p. 102. In the MvT Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin, this is found on a typewritten page dated April 15, 1933 ("15.IV.1933," Kolbe's birthday), but this has been crossed out in pencil. The text can also be found in the section "Gedanken und Notizen 1931–1935," in: Georg Kolbe, *Auf den Wegen der Kunst. Schriften-Skizzen-Plastiken* [with an introduction by Ivo Beucker] (Berlin-Zehlendorf 1949), p. 31.

63 See the essay by Ambra Frank in this volume, pp. 136–151.

64 See the illustration in: Berger ²1994 (see note 26), p. 183.

65 Berger ²1994 (see note 26), p. 115.

66 Typewritten page (see note 62); quoted in English in: Lehmann-Haupt 1954 (see note 62), pp. 102f.

67 Typewritten page, MvT Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

68 Berger ²1994 (see note 26), pp. 115–116.

69 For more on the Rathenau assassination, see: Martin Sabrow, *Der Rathenaumord. Rekonstruktion einer Verschwörung gegen die Republik von Weimar* (Munich 1994).

70 Berger ²1994 (see note 26), p. 79 [translated].

71 See: ibid., pp. 104–105 and 324–325.

72 See: ibid., pp. 110–111 and 122–123; Dietrich Schubert, "'Und er kriegt doch kein Denkmal, der Jude!' – oder: 'Der Leidensweg der Heine-Ehrung.' Der letzte Heine-Denkmal-Wettbewerb vor der NS-Diktatur, Düsseldorf, Oktober 1929 – Mai 1932," in: Wolfgang Karsten (ed.), *Radical Art History. Internationale Anthologie. Subject: O. K. Werckmeister* (Zurich 1997), pp. 430–449; idem: *"Jetzt wohin?" Heinrich Heine in seinen verhinderten und errichteten Denkmälern* (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna 1999). See also: Ursel Berger, "Das Frankfurter Heine-Denkmal und Georg Kolbes Beitrag zur symbolischen Denkmalsform," in: exh. cat. Berlin/Bremen 1997 (see note 2), pp. 61–70.

73 See the letter of June 8, 1936 in the Federal Archives, NS 15-69, copy in the GKM, Berlin [translated].

74 Letter from Gerhard Marcks to the painter Leo von König, October 3, 1933; quoted in: *Gerhard Marcks 1889–1981. Briefe und Werke*, selected, edited, and introduced by Ursula Frenzel (Munich 1988), p. 74 [translated].

75 See: Berger ²1994 (see note 26), pp. 337–339. Cf. also: Werner Stockfisch, *Ordnung gegen Chaos. Zum Menschenbild Georg Kolbes*, PhD diss. Humboldt University, Berlin, 1984 (typescript), pp. 131–132, which refers to Reelf's preliminary work.

76 See: Berger ²1994 (see note 26), p. 115, fig. 55. Both the large version of *Zarathustras Erhebung* and a small version from 1932 have not survived.

77 See: Hartog 2009 (see note 2), p. 105, with a reference to the review by Richard Biedrzynski in the *Deutsche Zeitung* of May 19, 1933, in which the "promulgation of the German spirit from the heritage of Nietzsche" allegedly visible in Kolbe's *Zarathustra* is felt "particularly vividly and admonishingly" as a "revolutionary mission today, at the threshold of a national-political turning point of the empire," and are connected with each other [translated].

78 Binding ⁶1936 (see note 3), unpaginated [p. 92].

79 See: Karl Löwith, *Nietzsches Philosophie der ewigen Wiederkehr des Gleichen* [1935] (Hamburg ⁴1986); Mirguel Skirl, "Ewige Wiederkehr," in: Ottmann 2011 (see note 40), pp. 222–230.

80 See: Joachim Heusinger von Waldegg, *Otto Freundlich. Ascension. Anweisung zur Utopie* (Frankfurt am Main 1987); on p. 10 with a reference to Kolbe's *Herabschreitender* from 1927 and the remark that "the exemplary nature of an attitude became apparent in the determination of gesture and facial expression" [translated].

81 Georg Kolbe. Werke der letzten Jahre, mit Betrachtungen uber Kolbes Plastik von Wilhelm Pinder (Berlin 1937), pp. 76/77.

82 Letter from Richard Oehler to Georg Kolbe, April 11, 1940; copy from the Goethe and Schiller Archive, Weimar in the GKM, Berlin.

83 Letter from Dr. Meerwald to Richard Oehler, September 30, 1940; copy from the Goethe and Schiller Archive, Weimar in the GKM, Berlin.

84 See: Waldemar Grzimek, *Deutsche Bildhauer des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts. Leben – Schulen – Wirkungen* (Munich 1969), pp. 81–87, here p. 86: "The elongated Zarathustra figure of 1943 lacks the volumetric weight to be able to make the will to ascend and an energetic stride convincing" [translated]. Also quoted in: Berger ²1994 (see note 26), p. 339. Grzimek sees Kolbe as a "special position" and (p. 85): "His sculptures in the 1930s fit in with his artistic development, which may have been only insignificantly reinforced by those of the regime's official representational mindset" [translated].

85 Letter from Richard Oehler to Max Oehler, October 3, 1940; copy from the Goethe and Schiller Archive, Weimar in the GKM, Berlin [translated; emphasis in the original]. On October 8, Richard wrote again to Max Oehler, telling him that he wanted to inform Kolbe of the outcome of the matter. In this context, he mentioned Richard Scheibe in particular as an alternative.

86 See: Olaf Peters, "'Gestaltung ist Erlösung.' Zu Max Beckmanns anti-nazistischer Malerei der frühen 1940er Jahre," in: Bertram Kaschek et al. (eds.), *Das subversive Bild. Festschrift für Jürgen Müller* (Berlin and München 2022), pp. 396–409.

87 Handwritten draft of a letter from Georg Kolbe to Eleonore Wollenschläger, December 19, 1939, MvT Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin.

88 Hartog 2009 (see note 2), pp. 97–108.

89 Richard Oehler, "Gedanken über die Nietzsche Gedenk-Halle," copy of the manuscript; read to the head of the archives on September 6, 1935, as stated in a handwritten note by Max Oehler. Quoted in: Krause 1984 (see note 34), p. 224 [translated].

90 See: Thomas H. Brobjer, "Züchtung," in: Ottmann 2011 (see note 40), pp. 360–301. On p. 360, he states: "The principal meaning of breeding for N. is a clearly cultural and moral one" [translated]—without negating the biological meaning that also occasionally arises.

91 George Bataille, "Nietzsche," in: Jörg Salaquarda (ed.), *Nietzsche* (Darmstadt 1980), pp. 45–49, here p. 48 [translated]. Bataille's text was first published in: *Critique*, no. 32, 1949, pp. 271–274.

92 At the end of 1932, Harry Graf Kessler spoke—based on Nietzsche—of a "New Man," to whom he attributed chivalrous qualities: "If his creation is successful and is not disturbed by material misery and political strife, he will be a man in whom solidarity and responsibility will be the basic moral forces; physical health and beauty, as well as light, air, and sun, will be the basic elements of his lifestyle." Quoted in: Burkhard Stenzel, "'… eine Verzauberung ins Helle und Heitere.' Harry Graf Kesslers Ideen zur Kulturerneuerung in Deutschland," in: Wolfgang Bialas and Burkhard Stenzel (eds.), *Die Weimarer Republik zwischen Metropole und Provinz. Intellektuellendiskurse zur politischen Kultur* (Weimar, Cologne, and Vienna 1996), pp. 37–55, here p. 50 [translated]; for more on the reversal of Graf Kessler's Weimar plans after 1900 by the National Socialists from 1936 onwards, see: pp. 48–52. For more on the context, see: Peter Grupp, *Harry Graf Kessler 1868–1937. Eine Biographie* (Munich 1995), pp. 85–128 and 149–152; Theodore Fiedler, "Weimar contra Berlin. Harry Graf Kessler and the Politics of Modernism," in: Françoise Forster-Hahn (ed.), *Imagining Modern German Culture 1889–1910* (Hannover and London 1996), pp. 106–125; Laird M. Easton, *The Red Count. The Life and Times of Harry Kessler* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London 2002), pp. 99–115, 185–195, and 391–396.

93 Pinder 1937 (see note 81), pp. 6–7; quoted in: Berger ²1994 (see note 26), p. 116 [translated].

94 From Heinrich Himmler's Posen speech of October 4, 1943, in which he deliberately openly addressed the "extermination of the Jews" before an audience of SS leaders and Wehrmacht generals. Quoted in: Wolfgang Michalka (ed.), *Das Dritte Reich*, 2 vols. (Munich 1985), vol. 2, p. 257 [translated].

95 Wolfgang Willrich, *Säuberung des Kunsttempels. Eine kunstpolitische Kampfschrift zur Gesundung deutscher Kunst im Geise nordischer Art* (Munich and Berlin ²1938), p. 73 [translated]. The list in the appendix (pp. 170–171) itemizes sixty-three numbers (some double numbers), with Kolbe as no. 60 with the assessment in brackets: "(Arbeitsrat, the only artist of significance in the whole series)" [translated].

96 Adolf Dresler, *Deutsche Kunst und entartete "Kunst." Kunstwerk und Zerrbild als Spiegel der Weltanschauung* (Munich 1938), plates pp. 78/79.

97 Cf. (contemporary and already differentiated): Hans Weichelt, *Zarathustra-Kommentar* (Leipzig ²1922), pp. 335–345. On the one hand, Weichelt points out that Nietzsche's *Übermensch* was very much "conceived as a biological quantity" (p. 336) and, on the other hand, pathetically emphasizes that "the doctrine of the *Übermensch* was developed on the hot ground of ethical fervor" and that one could extract a "tremendous sense of responsibility" from it (p. 345) [translated].

98 Nietzsche 1911 (see note 36), p. 74.

99 For more on the concept of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, which has now become an important NS research topic, see: Michael Wildt, *Die Ambivalenz des Volkes.*

Der Nationalsozialismus als Gesellschaftsgeschichte (Berlin 2019), pp. 23–113.

100 See: Renate Reschke, "Masse," in: Ottmann 2011 (see note 40), pp. 279–280.

101 See: Krause 1984 (see note 34), p. 225. For more on Nuremberg and Weimar, see: Norbert Borrmann, *Paul Schultze-Naumburg 1869–1947. Maler, Publizist, Architekt* (Essen 1989), pp. 208–210.

102 The articles preserved in the estate appeared with basically identical wording between January 7 and 9, 1939 in the *Westfälische Neueste Nachrichten* (Bielefeld), *Der Freiheitskampf* (Dresden), the *Zittauer Nachrichten*, the *Mittelschlesische Gebirgszeitung* (Waldenburg), and the *Egerer Zeitung*. Only Georg Kolbe was mentioned by name as a sculptor: "Now the most important German sculptors, among them Georg Kolbe, are already busy creating designs for a Nietzsche-Zarathustra monument" [translated]. The correspondence between Richard and Max Oehler as well as Georg Kolbe in April 1939 reveals that such an involvement of Kolbe had no official character on the part of the Nietzsche Archive but was now concretely discussed only in April/May 1939.

103 Dr. von Leers, "Wiedergeburt im Lande Zarathustras. Der Iran und die nordische Gedankenwelt," in: *Nationalsozialistische Landpost*, September 17, 1937. I would like to thank Dietrich Schubert for pointing out this article.

104 See: *Georg Kolbe. Bildwerke, vom Künstler ausgewählt, mit einem Text von Richard Graul* (Leipzig undated [1939/40]). See also the reference to Kolbe's "assimilation" using the example of *Venus and Mars* (1939/40) in: Dietrich Schubert: "Fliehende Liebe. 'Fugit Amor.' Auguste Rodins Liebespaar und verwandte Darstellungen," in: *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, vol. 3, no. LXVIII, 2017, pp. 159–178, here p. 173.

105 I thank Thomas Pavel for this and other references made at our meeting in Berlin on October 4, 2022.

106 See: Wolfgang Müller-Funk, *Crudelitas. Zwölf Kapitel einer Diskursgeschichte der Grausamkeit* (Berlin 2022), pp. 169–193.

107 Ibid., p. 171 [translated].

108 Löwith ⁴1986 (see note 79), p. 110 [translated].

109 Otto Dix, *Die sieben Todsünden*, 1933, mixed media on wood, 179 × 120 cm, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe. See, among others, the remarks by Birgit Schwarz in: idem, *Werke von Otto Dix*, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, 1986; Schubert 2012 (see note 52); Peters 2013 (see note 52), pp. 199–201.

110 See: Heidegger ⁶1998 (see note 30).

111 See: Löwith ⁴1986 (see note 79). In 1941, in American exile, Löwith contrasted Nietzsche and Richard Wagner, resolutely adhering to Nietzsche's approach: "While Nietzsche, however, did not test his will for a spiritual revolution in any political reality, Wagner also participated in this intoxicating spectacle with the use of his person, first in Leipzig in 1830, where, according to his own statement, he took part in the destruction like a madman." Löwith 1995 (see note 1), p. 201 [translated].

112 See: Krause 1984 (see note 34), p. 231.

113 See: letter from Richard Oehler to Max Oehler, March 27, 1939, copy from the Goethe and Schiller Archive, Weimar in the GKM, Berlin. At this time, Binding's Kolbe monograph had not yet been acquired by the Nietzsche Archive, and Richard Oehler suggested this. See also: letter from Richard Oehler to Max Oehler, April 22, 1939, with a reference to the temporally overlapping considerations of Kolbe and Oehler, copy from the Goethe and Schiller Archive, Weimar in the GKM, Berlin.

114 See: Krause 1984 (see note 34), p. 232. Here, Krause cites Oehler's parallel consideration of reverting to the abstract symbol of the flame, which underlines the conceptual impasse of the efforts in Weimar.

115 Letter from Richard Oehler to Max Oehler, October 8, 1940, copy from the Goethe and Schiller Archive, Weimar in the GKM, Berlin [translated].

116 See: Krause 1984 (see note 34), pp. 232–233 [translated]. See also the description in: Taureck 1989 (see note 36), pp. 80–81.

117 For more on Delacroix's famous painting *The Death of Sardanapalus*, see: Christine Tauber, *Ästhetischer Despotismus. Eugène Delacroix' "Tod des Sardanapal" als Künstlerchiffre* (Constance 2006).