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# **Georg Kolbe Celebrates His Birthday Journalistic Strategies**

In the public perception, the milestone birthdays of prominent artists always follow the same pattern. There are appreciative newspaper reports, which become more extensive with increasing age, congratulatory telegrams from politicians and cultural functionaries, the occasional award or medal, and, from the age of fifty, an additional retrospective exhibition that highlights the honoree's work. The celebrations and the journalistic response are indicators of the honoree's social status and market value, understood not only in financial terms but also in an idealistic sense. The more reports, events, and honors there are, the more important, valuable, and significant the work associated with the person is. On such occasions criticism is, at best, only hinted at; the focus of the tributes is on merit and the attempt at historical classification. The result is a tiresome uniformity—anyone looking for original assessments or individual comments will be bitterly disappointed by this type of text. This makes it all the easier to identify the patterns of argumentation used to justify a general assessment. They usually draw on several sources, such as recent monographs or the artists' own statements, and at the same time follow the rules of language shaped by current cultural-political discourses. In contrast to exhibition reviews, the texts lay claim to a certain politeness; they are not intended to be read as individual opinions or snapshots, but rather as a résumé of an overall performance up to a certain point in time. This claim makes them interesting for the analysis of contemporary reception: after all, the status, external perception, and self-portrayal of the artists are reflected here as if under a magnifying glass.

This also applies to the commemorations of Georg Kolbe's birthdays in 1927, 1937, 1942, and 1947, which were subject not only to changing market cycles, but also to changing political and ideological guidelines. Kolbe liked to present himself as a solitary creator who, unperturbed by the business and politics of art, concentrated exclusively on his sculptural work. As he explained to Wilhelm Pinder in 1934, for example, he did "not think much of the verbal affirmations of all those [...] who are supposed to represent [visually]."<sup>1</sup> The clear separation suggested by this attitude between the work and its contemporary reception, or the person of the artist and his position in the cultural establishment, lives on in Kolbe research to this day.<sup>2</sup> However, the sculptor certainly participated in the interpretation of his sculptures—not only by controlling, providing, and selecting illustrations, but also by "verbal affirmations" in conversations (for example, in the context of the so-called studio visits),<sup>3</sup> speeches, and a not insignificant number of written position statements.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, he used selected authors to comment on his work: in the case of Rudolf G. Binding, we know that at least some of the texts were written at Kolbe's request;<sup>5</sup> in the case of Wilhelm Pinder, a similar constellation can be assumed. Kolbe also followed the press coverage very closely: he employed a clipping service and amassed an extensive (and partly annotated) collection of newspaper articles, which is now in the archives of the Georg Kolbe Museum. This collection, the composition of which may to some extent be due to chance, but which also reflects the artist's decisions about the nature and completeness of the documentation, forms the starting point for my reflections on how the components of status, external perception, and self-representation interacted in the reception of Kolbe in the "Third Reich."<sup>6</sup> I am not concerned with the question of



1 Georg Kolbe at the awarding of the Goethe Prize, published in: *Frankfurter Wochenschau*, September 6–12, 1936, no. 37, p. 5

what is to be interpreted as adaptation and what as inner conviction, but rather exclusively with the analysis of textual propositions and their consequences. I would like to begin with an honor that was not tied to a birthday, but which had a significant impact on the reception from the mid-1930s onward: the awarding of the Goethe Prize by the mayor of the City of Frankfurt am Main in August 1936 (fig. 1).

## From Traditionalist to Classic

The Goethe Prize, initiated in 1927 by the Frankfurt City Council, had acquired a national component in the “Third Reich”; after the statutes were amended in June 1933, the selection committee included not only local representatives from the fields of science, culture, and politics, but also the Reich ministers Bernhard Rust and Joseph Goebbels.<sup>7</sup> The response in the regional and national press was correspondingly great. The award was announced in advance in all major newspapers and received extensive coverage afterwards. In his speech at the award ceremony, Mayor Karl Linder, a “man of the new Germany,” as Kolbe flatteringly characterized him in his letter of thanks,<sup>8</sup> praised the artist’s perseverance and related it to the “obligation to fanaticism” that Hitler had demanded of the arts at the Nuremberg Rally in 1933:<sup>9</sup> unperturbed by all fashions, Kolbe had always followed the path given to him and had created “symbols beyond all temporal bonds.” In the struggle for “harmony of content and form,” his work was related to Goethe’s and

was a “symbol of German form in general.”<sup>10</sup> In his response, Kolbe spoke of the ideal of a harmonious, life-affirming art that nevertheless pursues a higher purpose: like the poet, the sculptor, “as an architect of the human body,” is always searching for “the clear—the exemplary”; like Goethe, he ceaselessly strives for “the interpretation of humanity and its improvement.”<sup>11</sup> At the same time, Kolbe distinguished himself from those colleagues who had lost themselves in the “problematic” instead of working toward “fulfillment”—he refrained from pointing out in the final editing of his manuscript that the desire for problems arose from a misguided “German fighting spirit.”<sup>12</sup>

The Goethe Prize recalibrated the public’s view of Kolbe. In the 1920s, Kolbe had declared the search for harmonious form to be the content of his work and had distanced himself from all forms of modernism.<sup>13</sup> His work was received in this spirit, although the all-too-close ties to the sculptural tradition of the nineteenth century were increasingly criticized. This was evident not least in the tributes on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday in 1927, which were rather reserved in their assessment of the artist’s contemporary significance. Even if one or two authors appreciated the “cultivated and pure effect” of the sculptures,<sup>14</sup> the majority of the accolades left a faint feeling of unease. The art historian Curt Glaser, for example, attested Kolbe a “harmonious” talent, but one that had fallen out of time.<sup>15</sup> The critic Fritz Stahl expressed the wish for more “emotional content,”<sup>16</sup> and Paul Westheim, editor of the magazine *Das Kunstblatt*, a weighty voice in the Weimar Republic’s art establishment, lamented a striking lack of artistic passion.<sup>17</sup> After 1933, it was primarily the competing ideological camps that determined reception: whether Kolbe was defamed as a “cultural Bolshevik” or celebrated as an important sculptor depended on party political calculations and personal preferences.<sup>18</sup> This changed with the awarding of the prize. The artist was now placed in the vicinity of Goethe and ennobled as a classic; his sculptures acquired the rank of “symbols” or “role models.” By wanting the prize to be seen as dedicated to art in general, but especially to all sculptors “from whom the new Germany now expects the most,”<sup>19</sup> Kolbe cleverly combined the recognition of his work with the demands of politics, without taking an ideological position. The success of this strategy can be seen directly in the congratulations from patrons and friends with varying degrees of closeness to the system. For some, the award was proof that Kolbe’s work had finally taken its rightful place in the National Socialist art establishment; others saw it as the continuation of a bourgeois understanding of culture.<sup>20</sup>

## Role Models, Symbols, Embodiments

The theoretical repositioning had been prepared by the conservative nationalist poet Rudolf G. Binding, who had written several texts on Kolbe since 1927. His monograph *Vom Leben der Plastik* (On the Life of Sculpture), published in 1933 in the *Kunstbücher des Volkes* (Art Books of the People) series by Rembrandt-Verlag and repeatedly reprinted until the postwar period, had been written in close consultation with the sculptor—Binding himself spoke of a “Binding-Kolbe book or Kolbe-Binding book.”<sup>21</sup> The subtitle

*Inhalt und Schönheit des Werkes von Georg Kolbe* (The Content and Beauty of the Work of Georg Kolbe) was by all means to be understood programmatically: the point was to give a deeper meaning to the search for form. The poet placed the sculptures in a field of tension between timelessness and topicality. On the one hand, he described them as quasi divine figures evoking the ancient ideal of beauty, and on the other, as expressions of the “truth of our time.” In his view, this linked them to modern products such as automobiles, propellers, ships, and snowshoes:

“They have the same faith, the same gaze, the same confidence: they both seek something immutable, ultimate, most simple, irrefutable, inexorable.”<sup>22</sup>

According to this model, nudes are both contemporary and eternal. They appeal to the senses and at the same time proclaim universally valid ideals; as “embodiments,” they are indebted to a supra-temporal “archetype,”<sup>23</sup> but they also function as symbols of the present that have been given form; they are drawn from life, but they also give a “premonition of something most pure, something superior, something detached.”<sup>24</sup> Of course, Binding wanted to see Kolbe’s future work tied to more concrete ideal concepts: after the drafts for a Beethoven monument (as “genius of highest will, highest thrust”) and the figure of the descending Zarathustra (as “spirit descending from the mountains as herald and commander”), “the man of action” was still missing as a third force.<sup>25</sup> Significantly, the question of who represented this “man of action” remained open; however, readers in 1933 might have associated quite concrete ideas with it. Whether and to what extent the exaltation of the sculptures arose in joint conversations cannot be clarified in retrospect.<sup>26</sup> What is certain is that Kolbe adopted the explanatory models. This is evident not only in his speech at the Frankfurt Goethe Prize ceremony, but also in a commentary on his group of sculptures *Menschenpaar* (Human Couple) that was written at about the same time. Very much in the spirit of Binding, he stated here: “Formed with sensual means, appealing to the senses, I have designed these people of high nature as a model of human dignity.”<sup>27</sup>

Binding remained an important intermediary for Kolbe. Not only did he claim to have provided the impetus for awarding the Goethe Prize to Kolbe,<sup>28</sup> but he was also directly and indirectly involved in the press coverage of 1936. On the one hand, the Archiv für publizistische Arbeit (Archive for Journalistic Work), from which journalists could obtain the basic data for their essays, recommended his monograph as an aid to interpretation;<sup>29</sup> on the other hand, the poet contributed a series of essays on the occasion of the award, in which he praised the decision of the City of Frankfurt am Main in the highest terms. It was groundbreaking, he wrote, because it honored a work that “above all others can make visible what is German.” According to Binding, this includes “discipline and strength, simplicity, no poses, no exuberance, no ramblings.”<sup>30</sup> Under this premise, he stylized Kolbe as a shaper of national ideals:

“Does he think like his people? Do his people think like him? He has made visible the image of the world that lives in us, and a German city, well aware of what this means today, thanks him for it with the highest prize it can bestow.”<sup>31</sup>

In October 1936, Binding again varied his book and essay. In the journal *Das Innere Reich*, he focused on Kolbe’s more recent works and stylized them as a “Hochbild des Menschen” (epitome of humanity), ideals of virtue given form, and, incidentally, counter-images to a socially critical or realistic modernism:

“The figures are not naked by chance, but naked as holy truth and for truth’s sake. They despise the veiling, the adventitious, the clothing, the ingredient. [...] They despise the situation, the mood, almost the touching, for the sake of the embodiment. They are strong without the evasion of emotion. They are harsh and averse to flattery. They know no distortion, no age, no illness, no decrepitude. They are young and virile, chaste and feminine. They are taut and yet laden with form. They are disciplined and free. They live in their form. They bend under it, conforming to it as to a destiny.”<sup>32</sup>

By referring to the symbolic character of the figures, Binding offered a pattern of interpretation that could be connected to National Socialist ideology on several levels without necessarily adopting its terminology. In its ambiguity, which could be interpreted as an affinity to but also as an affirmation of the “Third Reich,” it first unfolded its effect in the context of the award ceremony in 1936 and a little later in the tributes to Kolbe’s sixtieth birthday in 1937.

In the journals of the NS organizations, the model was clearly linked to *völkisch* (national-racial) thinking. Here, the consciousness of tradition was explained as resistance to the aberration of modernism or the so-called “Systemzeit” (“time of the System,” i.e., the Weimar period), and the nudes were presented as embodiments of National Socialist ideals—sometimes directly, more often figuratively. A leader of the Berlin chapter of the Bund Deutscher Mädel (BDM, League of German Girls) saw in the female figures “everything we are looking for [...]: calm security, natural serenity, a quiet devotion, and a readiness for something greater than ourselves.”<sup>33</sup> The poet Max Wegner, on the other hand, identified the male figures in the SS magazine *Nordland* as “portraits of our faith, our devotion to the naked sword” and concluded: “This is the German man, this is his strength, this is his faith, this is his love, this is his willingness to fight!”<sup>34</sup> However, the exemplary nature of the figures could also be used as an argument against the avant-garde, which was defamed as degenerate. The magazine *NS-Frauen-Warte* illustrated Kolbe’s *Emporsteigendes Menschenpaar* (Ascending Couple) from 1931/32 under the motto “Beauty and Purity in Expression and Form” and juxtaposed it with “degenerate” works by Ernst Barlach, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Oskar Schlemmer, and Pablo Picasso.<sup>35</sup> Finally, the monograph by the art historian Wilhelm Pinder, published by Rembrandt-Verlag in 1937 on the occasion of Kolbe’s sixtieth birthday, can also be attributed to this model of interpretation—the

author described it as a “somewhat more detailed congratulation.”<sup>36</sup> Like Binding before him, Pinder sought to present the figure of a timeless presence. However, he attached great importance to a historical classification that would place Kolbe in the tradition of the great masters, on the one hand, and declare him a pioneer of the new, on the other: the artist had overcome the painterly ideas of his epoch and thus prepared the way for the “sculpturally noble age” that was now dawning. The author saw the reference to the present not so much in the form as in the attitude to life and the physical ideal of the “Third Reich”:

“He [Kolbe], as solitarily as all the masters of the late period, has discovered [...] his own beauty, his own great expression. And only now does the nobility of the body, the good conscience towards the Earth and the body all around appear as something general, as a true faith—and now one discovers with astonishment that the signs that we need have already been given, that the young girl, the athlete, the decathlete are already there!”<sup>37</sup>

Because Kolbe’s work represents “the eternal life of our people,”<sup>38</sup> Pinder argued, the sculptor should be called upon more often in the future for state commissions, such as replacing the figures on the Siegesallee in Berlin’s Tiergarten: “Whole families of Kolbesque figures are just waiting to bear witness to the new Germany.”<sup>39</sup>

This unambiguously physically oriented status as role models, as propagated by Pinder, received a further boost in the highly successful book of photographs, largely commissioned by Kolbe himself, which was published by Insel Verlag in 1939.<sup>40</sup> The commentary this time was written by Richard Graul, a former director of the Museum of Applied Arts in Leipzig, who had been acquainted with the artist for more than three decades.<sup>41</sup> Graul spoke of the bronzes as a “family of the German people,” which was an expression of different sensibilities, but also of its own time:

“It is a family of our present, of a tremendous turning point in time, strong-willed and of a self-confident, proud attitude—a humanity whose form and nature Kolbe had already sensed and sought decades ago. Now that it stands before us, it is recognized with admiration as the ideal of German nationality.”<sup>42</sup>

In the arts pages of the daily newspapers, the tone was less specific. Here, too, there was occasional talk of the “new German” that Kolbe had prepared with his sculptures.<sup>43</sup> On the whole, however, they left it at a vague reference to a “higher humanity” and spoke of “sculptural figures that elevate and educate by their very existence,”<sup>44</sup> of the “noble image of man that Kolbe created for his time and its longing for a lasting symbol,”<sup>45</sup> of the “struggle for artistic expression, which is also an expression of the time and even more so of its desires and longings,”<sup>46</sup> of the fact that the “image of a future type of man” is not drawn from the past, but rather from the present,<sup>47</sup> or of the fact that the figures, in their perfection, “stand among us not only as an image, but also as a role model.”<sup>48</sup>

There were exceptions, such as when the art critic Paul Fechter focused exclusively on the aesthetic qualities of the sculptures,<sup>49</sup> or when Carl Georg Heise warned against looking for concrete messages in works of art.<sup>50</sup> On the whole, however, the ambivalent pattern prevailed, and it seems to have been accepted all the more readily since the abolition of “art criticism” and its transfer to “Kunstberichterstattung” (art reporting) clearly limited the scope for dissenting opinions.<sup>51</sup> Basically, one could not go wrong with talking about symbols or role models: after all, the awarding of the prize had already provided political confirmation.

## State Honors

The public honors for his sixtieth birthday were undoubtedly a high point in Kolbe’s career to date. In its spring exhibition of 1937, the Prussian Academy of Arts in Berlin dedicated a separate section to the sculptor which he was able to furnish himself (fig. 2); in addition to the flood of newspaper reports, there was a radio broadcast, which in turn was prominently announced with a photo spread in the radio magazine.<sup>52</sup> Friends congratulated with a “Stammtischorden” (medal from the regulars’ table), the representatives of the NS state with official salutations.<sup>53</sup> The fifty-sixth birthday in 1942 was also lavishly honored. This is all the more remarkable because the general conditions had changed once again—not only because of the war, but also because of the cultural-political developments since 1937. In the field of sculpture, a new hierarchy had emerged, promoted by the large-scale construction projects of the state and the *Große Deutsche Kunstausstellungen* (Great German Art Exhibitions), which were declared to be the showcase of National Socialist art, and which, in turn, were journalistically flanked by the magazine *Kunst im Dritten Reich*. The place of the older generation around Kolbe, Fritz Klimsch, and Karl Albiker was now taken by artists such as Arno Breker and Josef Thorak, whose work could be seen less as an anticipation than as a product of the “New Germany” and its ideology. At the same time, the representatives of the bourgeois arts pages had gradually disappeared from the daily newspapers. Not only those art critics who had been forced to emigrate had fallen silent, but also many of those who had remained: Karl Scheffler had already complained in 1937 that he could only congratulate Kolbe privately because he was no longer able to work as a journalist;<sup>54</sup> in 1942, Carl Georg Heise also combined his congratulations with the comment that, in contrast to the previous birthdays, he could not “publicly sing the praises of your [Kolbe’s] work” because he was “sinking further and further into the shadows as a journalist.”<sup>55</sup> At the same time, the press was bound by the “press instructions” of the “Deutscher Wochendienst” (German Weekly Service), which dictated to the authors the topics and content of their reporting.

As in 1937, Kolbe was honored with congratulatory telegrams from representatives from politics and culture,<sup>56</sup> a volume of his drawings with a text by Wilhelm Pinder,<sup>57</sup> a radio broadcast by Reichssender Berlin, and countless articles. Most importantly, on the afternoon of April 15, he received the Goethe Medal (fig. 3) from Leopold Gutterer, State



**2** Exhibition view with works by Georg Kolbe in the spring exhibition of the Preußische Akademie der Künste, Berlin, 1937, historical photograph

Secretary in the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, the heads of the fine arts and personnel departments, and the head of the Reich Propaganda Office; the accompanying congratulations from Goebbels came by telegram.<sup>58</sup> Like the Goethe Prize, the Goethe Medal for Art and Science was a carryover from the Weimar Republic; it had been established by Paul von Hindenburg in 1932. In the hierarchy of artist honors, it was placed above the title of professor (which Kolbe already held anyway),<sup>59</sup> but below the “Adlerschild des Deutschen Reiches” (Eagle Shield of the German Reich), which only three artists had received by 1944. Formally, the medal was awarded by Adolf Hitler, to whom the proposals were submitted by the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda.<sup>60</sup> In 1941, the guidelines for awarding the medal were tightened in order to limit the number of recipients. Instead of recognizing individual achievements that were also relevant to cultural policy, the award was now to be given for the entire body of work; the award was to be the “crowning achievement of a lifetime’s work” and was therefore to be bestowed, if possible, on the seventy-fifth birthday and only in “exceptional cases” on the seventieth birthday.<sup>61</sup> This applied to the majority of candidates. But there were also younger honorees: among the artists, these included the sculptors Josef Wackerle, Richard Scheibe, and Karl Albiker, the painters Ernst Vollbehr and Julius Paul Junghanns, and the architect Paul Bonatz. Like Kolbe, they received the Goethe Medal on their fifty-sixth birthdays, and Wackerle on his sixtieth. Such exceptions required justification. In Kolbe’s



**3** On the occasion of the awarding of the Goethe Medal, Georg Kolbe receives Leopold Gutterer, State Secretary of the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, in his studio on April 15, 1942, historical photograph

case, the various instances of the Reich Chamber of Culture argued with a standard phrase: this was a case of a “particularly outstanding artistic personality” who had “rendered lasting services to German art” and whose works were represented in almost all museums.<sup>62</sup> Hitler approved the award in January 1942, but ordered that it be treated confidentially until the award ceremony.<sup>63</sup> The press, although informed in advance by the Deutscher Wochendienst, therefore reported only after the award with brief, always identical reports. On a private level, the honor was certainly noticed. The art historian Paul Clemen, for example, noted rather pointedly that “the Fuehrer had awarded him the same prize the year before—unfortunately only on my seventy-fifth birthday.”<sup>64</sup> The sculptor Wilhelm Saake was pleased that, with Kolbe, a “representative of good, honest art was deemed worthy of this award by a high authority,”<sup>65</sup> and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff hoped that Kolbe would be remembered “not only by the secret Germany—but also by the official one.”<sup>66</sup> With regard to the birthday tributes, however, the awarding of the Goethe Medal was only mentioned in weekly and monthly journals. This may have been the intention of Hitler and the Reich Ministry for Enlightenment and Propaganda. In this way, the artist could be honored without again being granted the central role in the cultural scene that he had been given in 1936 and 1937.

This was also evident in the content of the coverage. The press had already been alerted to the upcoming birthday by the Deutscher Wochendienst in January 1942, and was

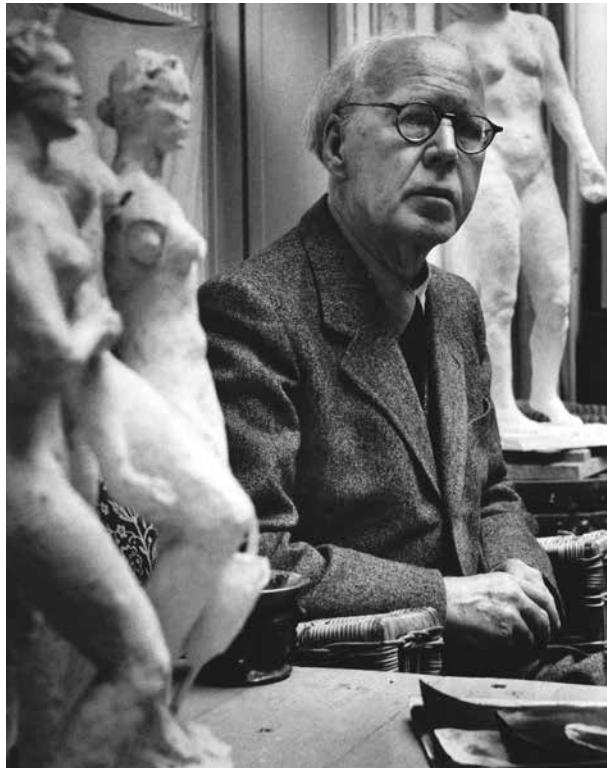
again called upon to report on April 14.<sup>67</sup> The newspapers dutifully complied with this request. The first was a tribute by Werner Rittich, which had already appeared on April 12 in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the official newspaper of the NSDAP, and thus could have an exemplary effect. The article followed a simple pattern: first, the artist's importance was noted, then Kolbe's merit of having rediscovered nude sculpture as a means of expression was pointed out, and finally the "strong impetus" that the "new Germany" had given to Kolbe's work—away from the individual, towards the monumental—was mentioned, and the hope for further works for "völkisches Leben" (national-racial life) was expressed.<sup>68</sup> This structure, down to individual phrases, can be found in a number of smaller newspapers, where the image of the jubilarian is supplemented by further biographical details or the odd phrase from the repertoire of NS reporting. The obligatory reporting produced quite comical effects, as when the artist, who worked primarily in bronze, was hailed as a strong-willed "master of the chisel" in the *Täglicher Kreisblatt für Beeskow-Storkow*, the *Schweriner Kreisblatt*, and the *Senftenberger Anzeiger*:

"From his [Kolbe's] work speaks the will and the readiness for action of our days, his sculptures breathe power, and his art carved in stone carries the soul of today. [...] His figures in stone are an expression of hard times. Filled with a strong personal power. The new Germany gave the artist a strong boost. In the full force of his creativity, Kolbe will give us more works. Works in which he has erected a monument to himself, works that will outlast his life."<sup>69</sup>

Although there were also voices that continued to follow Binding's and Pinder's example and once again evoked a "philosophical refinement" in the nudes,<sup>70</sup> there was now rarely any talk of role models or symbols<sup>71</sup>—this function had been taken over since 1938 by Arno Breker's nude sculptures, which also lacked attributes.<sup>72</sup> Rather, one spoke of the "harmonious beauty" of the older works<sup>73</sup> and of the "heroic, calm, and collected conception" of the newer works,<sup>74</sup> occasionally also of the "purity of form."<sup>75</sup> The studio reports, often accompanied by photographs, painted a picture of an artist who was primarily at home in the world of his figures. The herald of the new had become an old master whose work was appreciated but no longer urgently needed.

## Timelessly Time-Specific?

The model of the symbolic or exemplary had thus not become obsolete. On the contrary, we find it again in the tributes that appeared in April 1947 on the occasion of Kolbe's seventieth birthday and his death in November of the same year, but now under different auspices (fig. 4). The texts differ only in nuances from those used to celebrate the sixty-fifth birthday in 1942; at times, one cannot help feeling that the authors had merely rearranged and recoded their eternally identical text modules. The consciousness of tradition, which before 1945 had been interpreted as resistance to the changing fashions of



4 Probably the last photograph of Georg Kolbe before his death, taken by Herbert List, September 1947

the avant-gardes, indeed as a moral “bulwark of clear and clean Germanness” against the “corruption campaign planned by the Jews,”<sup>76</sup> was transformed into a sign of resistance to the “barbarism” of the “Third Reich,”<sup>77</sup> the *völkisch* “Germanness” into a “European Germanness,”<sup>78</sup> and the physical ideality of the new German people into a supranational commitment to human dignity:

“Kolbe’s figures are therefore not trumpeting theatrical heroes, not artisanal *prima donnas*, and also not power-mad musclemen, of which we have had enough in the last decade; they are people of inner nobility, people capable of making their own decisions, with controlled sensuality. [...] They are messengers of a profound and mature *humanitas* whose language is spoken by all peoples.”<sup>79</sup>

Moreover, the talk of timelessness made the artist a beacon of hope for all those who perceived the “Third Reich” primarily as a disruption of their national self-image:

“Those who no longer know their way in and out of the evil confusion of the times, those who in a quiet hour would like to give an account of the good and the beauty slumbering in the heart, those who, in a word, would like to

recognize the genius of the German, in order to draw hope and to feel solid ground under their feet again, should immerse themselves in the multifaceted landscape of Kolbe's art—and such a viewer would have to be in a bad way if he did not find what he was looking for here: self-confidence and trust in the people from whom this artist also comes.”<sup>80</sup>

Kolbe also updated his vocabulary. Instead of the “high type,” he now spoke of the “good in humanity” and instead of the “enhancement” of pure existence: “I want to educate/form [Ger.: *bilden*] people and speak with them for simplicity in humanity.”<sup>81</sup>

The arbitrariness of the definition that appears here does not diminish the importance of the model for the (respective) contemporary reception. After all, all the strands of interpretation presented here converged in the conviction that the figures, by virtue of their formal perfection, heralded a generally and supra-temporally valid ideal worthy of aspiration by all: nobility, high-mindedness, moral integrity, qualities that in turn could be linked to different ideological goals and could also be applied to very different artists—here, it should be recalled that even Arno Breker, who had created omnipresent “symbols” for the “Third Reich” on behalf of Albert Speer’s General Building Inspectorate, was able to succeed once again after 1945 as a timeless “prophet of beauty.”<sup>82</sup> The problematic nature of this pattern of interpretation was rarely addressed—and when it was, it was with an apologetic undertone that stylized Kolbe as a victim of circumstances:

“The vast number of his [Kolbe’s] admirers did not always maintain the respectful distance that is required in front of the work of art. His sculptures succumbed to a popularity that, scattered in countless reproductions, diminished the real artistic pleasure in favor of the fashionable. Kolbe himself, far too much of an artist, unerringly pursued his path through this hustle and bustle around him, guided by a benevolent genius that made him create lasting works unlike any other of his epoch.”<sup>83</sup>

Only Carl Georg Heise, who had always followed Kolbe’s work sympathetically over the decades, fundamentally questioned his supra-temporal role model status. In his obituary, Heise acknowledged the achievements of the early Kolbe and his efforts to create an art beyond historicist or classicist specifications, but he also drew a clear line between the “masterpieces” and the “side shoots of his abundant production.” Above all, he linked the sculptor back to the historical context and thus to the ideology of the “Third Reich.”

“Did he [Kolbe] really surpass his time, or was he only shaped by it and transient like it? He did not die at the height of his fame. The time is past when a statesman thought that a race of Kolbe-humans should be raised, and when the little volume with illustrations of his works published by Insel Verlag was the most desired wish-fulfillment under the Christmas trees of the German youth.”<sup>84</sup>

Critical tones of this kind remained the exception, of course; too great was the longing for an art that promised continuity, seemingly unencumbered by all political dangers, committed only to the true and the good, and apparently still too great was the longing for the “land of a more superior humanity.”<sup>85</sup> The exemplary “race of Kolbe-humans” had lost nothing of its efficacy even after 1945.

## Notes

- 1 The formulation is found as a quotation from a letter by Kolbe to Wilhelm Pinder in the latter's reply of May 3, 1934, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.261, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].
- 2 For more on Kolbe's reception, see: Ursel Berger, *Georg Kolbe – Leben und Werk, mit dem Katalog der Kolbe-Plastiken im Georg-Kolbe-Museum* (Berlin 1990); Arie Hartog, *Georg Kolbe. Receptie in Duitsland tussen 1920 en 1950*, PhD diss., Catholic University Nijmegen, 1989; Ursel Berger, "Georg Kolbe in der NS-Zeit. Tatsachen und Interpretationen," ePaper, Georg Kolbe Museum, November 4, 2013, <https://www.yumpu.com/de/document/read/21308335/ursel-berger-georg-kolbe-in-der-ns-zeit-georg-kolbe-museum> [last accessed July 1, 2023].
- 3 The format of the studio visit is found surprisingly often, with the authors for their part liking to emphasize the artist's taciturnity according to the motto "Create, you artist. Do not speak," only to report on a conversation after all; see, for example: Hoth, "Die Sprache wahrhaft genialer Schöpferkraft. Ein Neusalzer besuchte den Bildhauer Georg Kolbe, den Goethepreisträger 1936," in: *Nordschlesische Tageszeitung*, September 5, 1936, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin.
- 4 For more on Kolbe's own position statements, see the bibliography in Berger 1990 (see note 2), pp. 406–408.
- 5 This can be proven for the monograph published in 1933 and for the "Aufruf" (Appeal) for the realization of the Beethoven monument; see notes 21 and 26 below.
- 6 Unless otherwise noted, all articles cited here are from the collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin.
- 7 See the files on the Goethe Prize in the Prussian Academy of the Arts, Archives of the Akademie der Künste, Berlin, PrAdk 0889.
- 8 Draft letter from Georg Kolbe to Karl Linder, September 1, 1936, MvT estate, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]. In fact, Linder had been a member of the NSDAP since 1923, had first made a career in the Gau administration of Hesse before becoming mayor in 1933, and rose to the position of deputy Gauleiter of Hesse-Nassau in 1937; see: Bettina Tüffers, *Der braune Magistrat. Personalstruktur und Machtverhältnisse in der Frankfurter Stadtregierung 1933–1945 [Studien zur Frankfurter Geschichte, vol. 54]* (Frankfurt am Main 2004).
- 9 Reprinted in: *Städtisches Anzeigenblatt*, no. 36, September 4, 1936, pp. 547–548, here p. 548. The famous Hitler quote from the Nuremberg Rally speech of September 1, 1933 reads in its entirety: "Art is a sublime mission that obliges one to fanaticism. Those who have been chosen by destiny to reveal the soul of a people [...] will suffer hardship rather than become unfaithful to the star which guides them from within." Quoted in: Adolf Hitler, *Führung und Gefolgschaft [Die Erhebung. Dokumente zur Zeitgeschichte]* (Berlin 1934), p. 23 [translated].
- 10 Ibid. The phrase "symbols beyond all temporal bonds" (*Sinnbilder jenseits aller zeitlichen Bindung*) belongs to the text of the award certificate.
- 11 Ibid. The speech was printed several times after the award ceremony, for example in the Frankfurt newspaper *Städtisches Anzeigenblatt* (see note 9, p. 548), the *Niederdeutscher Beobachter*, and the Goethe calendar for the year 1937 (next to a reproduction of the Stralsund memorial from 1936), all preserved in the collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin. It was also included in abbreviated form in the anthology of Kolbe's writings; see: Georg Kolbe, *Auf Wegen der Kunst. Schriften, Skizzen, Plastiken, mit einer Einleitung von Ivo Beucker* (Berlin 1949), p. 34.
- 12 See the manuscript of the speech with Kolbe's handwritten notes, MvT Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin.
- 13 "The German experiences art not with the eyes, but with the brain or the mind. He does not miss perfection of form where it is lacking. But I look only for this. [...] To take over tradition is considered as being influenced, as disgrace. What perversions, what suicide." Georg Kolbe, "Begleit-Wort," in: *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* 53, 1923/24, pp. 195–196, here p. 196. Reprinted in Kolbe 1949 (see note 11), pp. 14–16.
- 14 Anonymous ["X"], "Kleine Chronik," in: *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, April 21, 1927, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin.
- 15 "A harmonious gift. A happily balanced talent. Georg Kolbe thus stands in a time in which art no longer seems to flow naturally from a joyful affirmation of this world, which burdens its own creation with the heavy problems of thought and theory." Curt Glaser, "Georg Kolbe," in: *Berliner Börsenkurier*, April 15, 1927, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive Berlin [translated].
- 16 "But it seems as if he must now, out of inner necessity, create figures of stronger emotional content

and expression. For which we will now quietly wait with him." F. St. [Fritz Stahl], "Georg Kolbe wird morgen 50 Jahre alt," in: *Berliner Tageblatt*, evening edition, April 14, 1927, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**17** "When one speaks of Kolbe, one will always speak first of the cultivated taste of this sculptor, who gives an unusual refinement to everything he does. Taste has nothing to do with the artistic, with creative design as such. [...] Passions do not blaze as in the case of Munch, and blood does not race as in the case of van Gogh." Paul Westheim, "Georg Kolbe," in: *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, September 9, 1927 [translated]. Kolbe felt deeply offended by Westheim's judgment; he commented on the newspaper clipping with the words: "What kind of blood races in Mr. W.? That of a Dante, for example? I wonder what a pleb thinks of passion" [translated]. The request for return, also noted on the clipping, indicates that he passed the article on. It can be assumed that Carl Georg Heise's response, which appeared a short time later in Westheim's *Kunstblatt* of all places, was written at his instigation; see: Carl Georg Heise, "Georg Kolbe. Zu seinen neuen Arbeiten," in: *Das Kunstblatt*, November 1927, pp. 328–392.

**18** Berger 1990 (see note 2), pp. 120–131.

**19** Significantly, the reference to the "new Germany" is missing in the reprint of the speech held in 1936; see Kolbe 1949 (see note 11), p. 35.

**20** See the letters of congratulation from, on the one hand, Fritz Hellwig (August 5, 1936, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.148, GKM Archive, Berlin) and Fritz Behn (August 3, 1936, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.20, GKM Archive, Berlin) and, on the other hand, from Erich Heckel (August 10, 1936, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.144, GKM Archive, Berlin) and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (August 4, 1936, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.362, GKM Archive, Berlin).

**21** Letter from Rudolf Binding to Georg Kolbe, November 13, 1934, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.54, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]. Elsewhere, Binding speaks of the book being as much Kolbe's as his own; see: letter from Rudolf Binding to Georg Kolbe, December 5, 1933, GK Estate, inv. No. GK.51, GKM Archive, Berlin. The suggestion that the poet should write a "preface" for an illustrated book came from Kolbe (see: letter from Rudolf Binding to Georg Kolbe, May 19, 1933, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.47, GKM Archive, Berlin); conversely, Binding submitted individual passages to the artist for his approval (see: letter from Rudolf Binding to Georg Kolbe, September 6, 1933, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.50, GKM Archive, Berlin). For this reason alone, it is unlikely that Binding's interpretative approach would have contradicted Kolbe's own convictions, as Ursel Berger assumes; see: Berger 1990 (see note 2) pp. 136–137.

**22** *Vom Leben der Plastik. Inhalt und Schönheit des Werkes von Georg Kolbe, mit einer Ausführung von Rudolf G. Binding* (Berlin 1933), p. 10 [translated].

**23** Ibid. [translated].

**24** Ibid., p. 16 [translated].

**25** Ibid., p. 20 [translated].

**26** In the case of the Beethoven monument, at least, there seems to have been an exchange of ideas between Binding and Kolbe: at Kolbe's request (see: Rudolf Binding's letter of acceptance to Georg Kolbe, December 11, 1927, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.47, GKM Archive, Berlin), Binding had written a fiery "appeal," in which he reported on a dinner in a larger circle in March 1927. Together, they had considered the problems of creating a monument to the composer, which, of course, had to be "at the same time a monument to the heroic German soul." After a long struggle, Kolbe developed exactly that: the "draft of a monument to the heroic German soul." Rudolf G. Binding, "Aufruf," in: *Das Beethoven-Denkmal von Georg Kolbe*, exh. cat. Galerie Paul Cassirer, Berlin, 1928, unpaginated [translated]. This corresponded to Kolbe's own self-evaluation: "It should not be Beethoven himself, not his portrait, but rather his translation—a Hero." Georg Kolbe, "Jenseits des Finanzministers und der Zeitleuchten" [1928], reprinted in: Kolbe 1949 (see note 11), pp. 21–23, here p. 22 [translated].

**27** Quoted in: Berger 1990 (see note 2), p. 356 [translated].

**28** Binding congratulated Kolbe by saying: "This year's award to you reminds me of last year. At that time, a man from the board of trustees approached me and asked [...] whether I knew of a worthy candidate for the Goethe Prize. At that time, I already named you; I had no other name, as you will surely believe me. But last year, they probably did not yet have the courage to choose you. It is good that they have it today." Letter from Rudolf Binding to Georg Kolbe, August 3, 1936, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.55, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**29** Excerpts from the book were reprinted, for example, in the newspaper *Niederdeutscher Anzeiger*, August 28, 1936; the central statements are discussed by Ludwig Baer in an article in the *Fränkischer Kurier*: "Georg Kolbe," in: *Fränkischer Kurier*, undated [1936], collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin.

**30** Rudolf G. Binding, "Georg Kolbe, der Bildhauer. Träger des Goethepreises der Stadt Frankfurt a. M. für das Jahr 1936," in: *Württembergische Zeitung*, August 1936, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin. The passage varies a similar list in the book. In 1933, however, "discipline and strength" were not yet part of it, but the renunciation of ecstasies and raptures was; see: Binding 1933 (see note 22), p. 10.

**31** Binding 1936 (see note 30) [translated].

**32** Rudolf G. Binding, "Hinweis auf die menschliche Gestalt. Mit einigen Abbildungen von Werken Georg Kolbes," in: *Das Innere Reich*, October 1936, pp. 802–804, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin; excerpt reprinted in: *Offenbacher Zeitung*, November 20, 1936, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**33** Anonymous [a leader of the Berlin chapter of the BDM], "Georg Kolbe und wir. Gestaltung von Reinheit, Kraft und Leidenschaft," in: *Das Deutsche Mädel*, undated [May 1936], collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**34** Max Wegner, "Georg Kolbe. Der Bildner der deutschen Gestalt. Ein Besuch unseres Mitarbeiters Max Wegner bei Professor Dr. H. C. Georg Kolbe," in: *Nordland. Das Kampfblatt der Völkischen Aktion* 5, no. 2, January 15, 1937, Magdeburg, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]. In the article, Kolbe is characterized as an opponent of the Weimar Republic who, in "complete solitude" and without any recognition in the art world, had exclusively followed his own path. The sculptor's parting words are put into his mouth: "Keep your ardent faith, you boys!" [translated]. The idea that Kolbe was preferably addressing the National Socialist youth may have been promoted by Kolbe's appeal in the *Deutsche Studentenzeitung* of that year; see: Georg Kolbe, "An die deutschen Studenten," in: *Deutsche Studentenzeitung*, May 31, 1934, p. 3, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin.

**35** *NS-Frauen-Warte* 4, no. 20, 1935/36, pp. 630–631; cf. Stephanie Marchal and Andreas Zeising, "Aus des Blutes Stimme." Vermittlung und (Re)Kontextualisierung von NS-Kunst in der Zeitschrift *NS-Frauenwarte*, in: *Artige Kunst. Kunst und Politik im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Silke von Berswordt-Wallraabe, Jörg-Uwe Neumann, and Agnes Tieze, exh. cat. Kunstsammlungen der Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Kunsthalle Rostock, and Kunstforum Ostdeutsche Galerie, Regensburg (Bielefeld 2016), pp. 88–101, here p. 94 [translated].

**36** Letter from Wilhelm Pinder to Georg Kolbe, April 14, 1937, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.262, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]. In the book itself, Pinder called the birthday "an opportunity for avowal, i.e., by no means permission, to say more or less than one believes." *Georg Kolbe. Werke der letzten Jahre, mit Betrachtungen über Kolbes Plastik* by Wilhelm Pinder (Berlin 1937), p. 9 [translated]. Pinder had summed up his "belief" in a letter to Kolbe from 1934: "I too believe in the movement—and in you!" Letter from Wilhelm Pinder to Georg Kolbe, May 3, 1934, GK Estate GK, inv. no. GK.261, GKM Archive GKM, Berlin [translated].

**37** Pinder 1937 (see note 36), p. 10 [translated].

**38** Ibid., p. 15 [translated].

**39** Ibid., p. 14 [translated].

**40** The plans for the volume date back to January 1939 (publishing contract of January 12, 1939). As early as November 1940, the publisher reported the printing of the 111,000th to 120,000th copy, see: letter from Anton von Kippenberg to Georg Kolbe, November 1, 1940, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.527, GKM Archive, Berlin.

**41** See: Kolbe's letters to Hermann Schmitt, which admittedly do not paint a friendly picture of Graul: GK Estate, inv. no. GK.616.5\_001-006, GKM Archive Berlin.

**42** *Georg Kolbe. Bildwerke, vom Künstler ausgewählt, mit einem Text von Richard Graul* (Leipzig undated [1939/40]), p. 47 [translated].

**43** Adele von Wahlde, "Die Welt Georg Kolbes," in: *Wilhelmshafener Zeitung*, 1936 (without precise day or month), evening edition, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**44** N. N., "Edle Plastische Gestalten," newspaper title unknown, undated [1937], no. 35, pp. 4–5, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**45** Dr. St., "Ein Gestalter des Harmonischen," in: *Nationalzeitung*, Hagen and *Nationalzeitung*, Essen, August 1936, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**46** F. A. Dargel, "Georg Kolbe 60 Jahre," newspaper title unknown, undated [1937], collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**47** Fritz Hellwag, "Willenseinheit von Seele und Körper. Zum 60. Geburtstag Georg Kolbes (14.4.)," in: *Mitteilungsblatt der DAZ*, undated [1937], collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**48** Heinz Flügel, "Nordische Schönheit in der deutschen Kunst," in: *Nationalsozialistische Landpost*, April 16, 1937, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

**49** Paul Fechter, "Der Bildhauer Georg Kolbe. Zu seinem 60. Geburtstag am 15. April," in: *Berliner*

*Tageblatt*, April 14, 1937. The article varies Fechter's report on the awarding of the Goethe Prize; see: Paul Fechter, "Ein deutscher Bildhauer. Georg Kolbe bekam den Goethepreis," in: *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, August 23, 1936, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin.

50 "Kolbe's sculptural work also urges us to communion. Like all true and superior art, it does not wish to devote itself to particular contents, but rather, on a deeper layer, to prepare the soul for that stillness and devotion from which alone creative humanity is able to breathe and act." Carl Georg Heise, "Georg Kolbe. Zum 60. Geburtstag," without note of the title of the newspaper [*Frankfurter Zeitung*], undated [April 15, 1937], collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

51 Otto Thomae, *Die Propaganda-Maschinerie. Bildende Kunst und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit im Dritten Reich* (Berlin 1978), pp. 133 [translated].

52 Friedrich Karl Stockhausen's program aired on April 14 on Reichssender München; cf. *Berlin hört und sieht. Die reich illustrierte Funkzeitschrift*, no. 16, April 11–17, 1937, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin.

53 The newspaper *Neuköllnische Zeitung* reported in retrospect that, in 1937, Bernhard Rust and Baldur von Schirach, among others, had sent their congratulations to the artist, "in which the confidence is expressed that the brilliant artist 'may still create many works for the German people in mature freshness and health' and 'that the consciousness of the attachment to his work may always give him new strength to serve common ideals.'" Anonymous, "Goethe laureate Georg Kolbe 65 years," in: *Neuköllnische Zeitung*, April 15, 1942, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]. No letters from high-ranking politicians have been preserved in the Kolbe Archive; the list of well-wishers on the occasion of his fifty-sixth birthday shows that there must have been some; see note 56 below.

54 Letter from Karl Scheffler to Georg Kolbe, April 14, 1937, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.303, GKM Archive, Berlin.

55 "Tomorrow is your fifty-sixth birthday. Three times I have been allowed to publicly sing the praises of your work on 'major' birthdays—but since it cannot be this time, and since I am, 'in the course of time,' sinking further and further into the shadows journalistically 'over time,' I would at least like to tell you personally that I am thinking of you and sending you my best wishes." Letter from Carl Georg Heise to Georg Kolbe, April 14, 1942, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.156, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

56 See the two lists of answered correspondence on the occasion of his fifty-sixth birthday, MvT Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin. Among the congratulators from politics listed there are, in addition to the State Secretary in the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, Leopold Gutterer, and the Ministerial Director in the Chamber of Culture, Hans Hinkel, the names of several mayors and lord mayors (of Frankfurt am Main, Posen, and Stralsund, among others), the district leader of the Delitzsch chapter of the NSDAP, as well as the General Culture Officer Walter Thomas from the Reich Governor's Office in Vienna.

57 *Georg Kolbe. Zeichnungen. Mit 100 Abbildungen und einer Einleitung von Wilhelm Pinder* (Berlin 1942).

58 Thomae 1978 (see note 51), p. 286. This telegram is also not (or no longer) among Kolbe's documents.

59 Kolbe was awarded the title of professor in 1918 by the Prussian Ministry of Culture; see Berger 1990 (note 2), p. 177.

60 Thomae 1978 (see note 51), pp. 195–196.

61 Statutory order of March 8, 1941, quoted in: Thomae 1978 (see note 51), pp. 190–191 [translated].

62 Thomae 1978 (see note 51), p. 286 [translated].

63 *Ibid.*

64 Letter from Paul Clemen to Georg Kolbe, April 17, 1942, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.83, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

65 Letter from Wilhelm Saake to Georg Kolbe, April 19, 1942, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.295, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

66 Letter from Karl Schmidt-Rottluff to Georg Kolbe, April 19, 1942, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.363, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

67 Thomae 1978 (see note 51), p. 286.

68 Werner Rittich, "Georg Kolbe 65 Jahre," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, April 12, 1942, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]; the report can only be found in the collection of press clippings as a copy from the Federal Archives. Rittich had already dedicated a longer essay to Kolbe in February 1942; see: Werner Rittich, "Das Werk Georg Kolbes. Zum 65. Geburtstag des Künstlers," in: *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 6, no. 2, February 1942, pp. 31–41, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin.

69 *Senftenberger Anzeiger*, April 15, 1942, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

70 Fritz Hellwig, "Georg Kolbe 65 Jahre alt," in: *Die Kunst für Alle* 56, June 1942, pp. 198–204, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

71 Among the exceptions are Kurt Mandel, for example, who describes a development "from the thoroughly spiritual sculpture to the symbolic" (Kurt Mandel, "Meister der weiblichen Anmut," in: *Heilbronner Tageblatt*, April 14, 1942, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]), Adolf Meurer, who discovers in the figures "the eternal life of our people" (Adolph Meurer, "Stil und Antlitz der deutschen Plastik, Zum 65. Geburtstag Georg Kolbes am 15. April," in: *Cottbuser Anzeiger*, April 15, 1942, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]), and the author C. K., who recognizes here "images of folkish humanity" (C. K., "Georg Kolbe 65 Jahre," in: *Münchener Zeitung*, April 15, 1942, *Der Westen*, April 13, 1942, and *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 15, 1942, all collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]).

72 For more on this problem, see: Magdalena Bushart, "Überraschende Begegnung mit alten Bekannten. Arno Brekers NS-Plastik in neuer Umgebung," in: *kritische berichte*, no. 2, 1989, pp. 31–50.

73 Felix Zimmermann, "Gestalter harmonischer Schönheit. Zum 65. Geburtstag des Bildhauers Georg Kolbe," in: *Dresdner Nachrichten*, April 15, 1942; Hermann Dannecker, "Gestalter des Menschen, Georg Kolbe zum 65. Geburtstag am 15. April," in: *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, April 15, 1942, and *Steglitzer Anzeiger*, April 14, 1942, all collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

74 Anonymous, "Georg Kolbe. Zu seinem 65. Geburtstag am 15. April," in: *Familien-Magazin*, April 10, 1942, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

75 F. A. Dargel, "Die Stunde der Gnade. Zum 65. Geburtstag von Georg Kolbe," in: *Allgemeiner Wegweiser*, undated [1942], collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

76 Wegner 1937 (see note 34) [translated].

77 In the review by Ewin Redslob, for example, it is written: "The value of Kolbe's life lies in the straightforwardness with which he pursued his own path. Hardly any of today's German works stands out in the bizarre contours of contemporary events of the last four decades in such a clearly drawn outline, so unwaveringly leading to the goal, as that which in Kolbe's work points beyond the temporal into the eternal." Edwin Redslob, "Jenseits der Zeit. Zu Georg Kolbes siebzigstem Geburtstag," in: *Der Tagesspiegel*, February 15, 1947, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

78 In his congratulatory letter on the occasion of Kolbe's seventieth birthday, Bruno Kroll described the sculptor as a representative of "a truly European Germanness, which can only be European if it is truly German." Letter from Bruno Kroll to Georg Kolbe, April 17, 1947, GK Estate, inv. no. GK.193, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

79 Walter G. Oschilewski, "Anruf des Lebens. Georg Kolbe zum 70. Geburtstag" in: *sie*, April 13, 1947, reprinted as an obituary [translated]. The word *humanitas* also appears in Alfred Werner's tribute: "Gestaltetes Leben. Georg Kolbe zum 70. Geburtstag am 15. April," in: *Der Morgen*, April 15, 1947, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin.

80 Gert H. Theunissen, "Gestalter und Künster. Zum 70. Geburtstag Georg Kolbes," in: *Tägliche Rundschau*, April 14, 1947, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

81 Georg Kolbe, quoted in: A. Marfeld, "Der Wille des Prometheus," in: *Neue Zeit*, April 13, 1947, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

82 See: Arno Breker. *Der Prophet des Schönen. Skulpturen aus den Jahren 1920–1982, mit Texten von Ernst Fuchs, Katalog und Biografie von Volker G. Probst* (Munich 1982).

83 Dr. F., "Bekenntnis zur Plastik," newspaper title and date of publication unknown [covered by a piece of adhesive tape from the Kolbe Archive], collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

84 Carl Georg Heise, "Abschied von Georg Kolbe," in: *Die Welt*, November 25, 1947, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].

85 F. A. Dargel, "Prof. Georg Kolbe gestorben," in: *Telegraf*, November 21, 1947, collection of press clippings, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].



