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„One-sidedly Artistic“

Georg Kolbe in the Nazi Era

By Ursel Berger

One of the most discussed topics concerning Georg Kolbe involves his work and his stance during the Nazi era. These questions have also been at the core of all my research on Kolbe and I have frequently dealt with them in a variety of publications¹ and lectures. Kolbe's early work and his artistic output from the nineteen twenties are admired and respected. Today, however, a widely held position asserts that his later works lack their innovative power. This view, which I also ascribe to, was not held by most of Kolbe's contemporaries.

In order to comprehend the position of this sculptor as well as his overall historical legacy, it is necessary, indeed crucial, to examine his *œuvre* from the Nazi era. It is an issue that also extends over and beyond the scope of a single artistic existence and poses the overriding question concerning the role of the artist in a dictatorship.

Georg Kolbe was born in 1877 and died in 1947. He lived through 70 years of German history, a time characterized by the gravest of political developments, catastrophes and turning points. He grew up in the German Empire, celebrating his first artistic successes around 1910. While still quite young, he was active (with an artistic mission) in World War I. He enjoyed his greatest successes in the Weimar Republic, especially in the latter half of the nineteen twenties—between hyperinflation and the Great Depression. He was 56 years old when the Nazis came to power in 1933 and 68 years old when World War II ended in 1945. He had two more years to live. He experienced two World Wars, severe crises and several different political systems, including the Nazi dictatorship.

Research—Reception

Of the 50 years in which Georg Kolbe was active as an artist, the twelve years during which the Nazis ruled Germany were the most complicated. They have occupied me more than any other period of his life. I interviewed numerous contemporaries—at a time when this was still possible, read hundreds, perhaps thousands of documents and systemically reread them in recent years.

Methodologically, this type of research has its difficulties. The availability of source material is not particularly good, despite the fact that much paper was produced. One must assume that matters that did not conform to the political system were often inadequately documented in a dictatorship. In normal times, political opinions can be openly expressed in letters, for example. This was, however, inadvisable during the Nazi era. As such, this otherwise important source material documenting Kolbe's thoughts is limited for the time between 1933 and 1945. Making matters more difficult is the fact that during the Nazi era it is possible for some sources—for example public statements and private commentaries—to contradict each other. One must have read a great deal to be able to judge which one is perhaps closer to the truth.

On the other hand, I myself have experienced the extent to which art of the Nazi period has always been and remains to be a widely discussed matter about which almost everyone has a firm opinion. In general, however, the behavior of an artist during that time cannot be characterized with a few commonplaces. Black and white matters are accompanied by numerous shades of gray. In the following text, I will not only present the facts as found in the documents but also examine some of the assertions most frequently repeated by critics.

The Georg Kolbe Museum not only possesses the sculptor's artistic estate but also his written legacy. The artist's life and work as well as aspects of his thinking are documented here. At the same time, we also see how these holdings were handled both internally and externally, both by the artist himself and the administrators of his estate. Kolbe hired a press clipping service in the nineteen twenties and this work continued to be carried out until the recent past. The media response during Kolbe's lifetime and in the seven subsequent decades is consequently gathered together in one place and accessible for scholars.

The internal processing is of particular interest. After the war, Kolbe himself provided answers to several questions concerning his stance during the Nazi era. The museum's first director, Margrit

Schwartzkopff, who worked for the artist since 1929, first as a photographer and later also as his secretary, ardently argued against the accusations that Kolbe discredited himself during that time.

Kolbe's granddaughter and the museum's second director, Maria von Tiesenhausen, edited the artist's letters and writings for a publication in which the problematic issue of the Nazi era was hardly taken into account.² Numerous particularly interesting and informative documents were not included. To extent that they are preserved in the Georg Kolbe Museum, the artist's writings can be accessed at the Kallipoe Internet portal. Numerous documents that will play a role in the following text are reproduced on the museum's website.

In the nineteen seventies, the art historian Hella Reelfs was occupied with the preparations for a catalogue raisonné. She questioned the popular positive estimation of Kolbe's work during the Nazi era; the accounts provided by contemporaries were suspected of attempting to "whitewash" the situation and in many cases were accordingly regarded as untrustworthy. The papers of this art historian are now also preserved in the museum's archive.

Kolbe and Politics

In 1933, Georg Kolbe wrote: "I have never been politically active; I have devoted all of my endeavors to serving art."³ I must object here! Kolbe was naturally not a politician, nor was he a political artist. However, he was frequently confronted with political matters and he concerned himself with them. The cliché of the non-political artist does not apply in his case. He was an artist who not only chafed at his times but also reacted to them. He did not withdraw to Worpswede or Güstrow but resided in the metropolis of Berlin, where he was in contact with important personalities from the worlds of culture and politics.

Kolbe moved in political circles long before the Nazi era. During World War I, he was involved in a controversy with Emperor Wilhelm II, who opposed his designs for a war memorial.⁴ In 1915, Kolbe spoke out firmly against the show-offish style favored by the emperor: "I know one thing for sure, namely how not to design monuments. You have to suppress the pompous, the ostentatious, because a bombastic-Battle of Nations-Bismarck Tower-style makes for a presumptuous facade. The well-known German concept of the 'colossal' should remain unexpressed. That alone would already improve matters a great deal."⁵

As a much sought-after portraitist, Kolbe also had contacts with politicians. At the outset of World War I, he made a likeness of Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, who was then Chancellor of the German Empire. The fact the he discussed the state of the war effort with the artist is documented in a diary entry by Gerhart Hauptmann.⁶

A decade later, in 1925, Kolbe produced a portrait bust of the late German President Friedrich Ebert. The sculptor Hugo Lederer triggered a fierce controversy with his sharp criticism of the posthumous portrait that superficially seemed to concern aesthetic criteria but political sentiments surely also played a part. Ebert was a Social Democrat, and when Kolbe made a portrait of another party member, Minister of the Interior Carl Severing, the press reported that the "parliamentary Socialist caucus commissioned the Ebert-immortalizer Kolbe to make a bust of the head-comrade. It has been noted Kolbe is also supposed to already have prepared busts of other comrades in order to have everything readily at hand if necessary."⁷

Kolbe also drew criticism from right wing extremists on account of other works, for example his Rathenau Fountain, a memorial dedicated to the industrialist Emil Rathenau and his son Walter, the former German Foreign Minister who was assassinated in 1922. Shortly after the completion of the memorial, it was besmeared with large letters: "Dedicated to the Jewish Republic."⁸ The Social Democratic newspaper "Vorwärts" provided an account of the incident in its issue of November 20, 1930: "On Wednesday night, the Rathenau Fountain in the Rehberge Volkspark was hideously disfigured. Common rabble besmeared the memorial. They identified themselves with steel helmet, swastika and the slogan 'Front Heil.' The reliefs of Emil and Walther Rathenau were likewise

defiled. That is the spirit of the Third Reich! The German populace will one day get its dirty knuckles rapped because of this misery.”⁹

In the nineteen twenties, Georg Kolbe became Germany’s most successful sculptor and he was correctly regarded as a representative of the Weimar Republic. His success at that time, however, does not mean that he was particularly dependent on the powers that be, as was previously the case regarding the relationship of some other artists to Emperor Wilhelm II or afterwards to Adolf Hitler.

Kolbe was a leftist at that time¹⁰ or perhaps rather a left-leaning liberal. He regularly talked politics with one of his then models, an active communist and member of the “Die roten Tänzer” Agitprop dance company (headed by Jean Weidt); this according to this former dancer. She left for Moscow, where, according to her own account, she remained in contact with Kolbe.¹¹

While she did not manage to recruit Kolbe for the Communist Party, he did have a certain predilection for the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1932, the German ambassador invited him to spend several weeks in Moscow. He told his brother, the Dresden architect Rudolf Kolbe, that he went there for the purpose of informing himself about life under Communism, commenting: “They have nothing to laugh about.”¹²

Upon his return, Kolbe wrote to a friend in Stuttgart on July 12, 1932: “I was greatly impressed by Russia—and while I was able to witness the construction of a new collective there, Germany found its way back to the costume. And how easy it is for this magic to emerge victorious!!! I think that the people in your part of the country are very satisfied now because you once told me about the strong support for Hitler there. I cannot hide my great shame about also participating in getting Hindenburg reelected. The artist is indeed a real simpleton!”¹³ Kolbe was referencing the so-called “Cabinet of Barons” in his letter, the government formed by Chancellor Franz von Papen on July 1, 1932. Evidently much more clearly than others (including the barons in Papen’s cabinet themselves), Kolbe recognized that this event opened the door to Hitler’s ascension to power. The artist was namely not the simpleton he pretended to be. He himself had voted for Paul von Hindenburg at the previous presidential election. The only alternatives were Hitler and Communist Party leader Ernst Thälmann; at the second round of voting, the Social Democrats called on its members to vote for Hindenburg.

Kolbe wrote a text about his trip to Russia that was published on January 21, 1933 (nine days before the social National Socialist “seizure of power”) in the weekly newspaper “Tagebuch,” an anti-Nazi left-wing liberal weekly newspaper that would soon be banned. This ambitious text was not included in the two editions of Kolbe’s writings published in 1949 and 1987.¹⁴ It is apparent that one wanted to avoid making the impression that Kolbe was an enthusiastic visitor to the Soviet Union. A few excerpts are presented here in translation:

“There are no top hats in all of Russia! I liked that very much. There are in fact no hat stores at all. Men’s spring fashions – what does one wear – thin rim, wide rim? Nothing doing! Everyone wears caps. Protective lids on the head. Finito!

Salamander shoes, Leiser’s resplendent shop windows. No jewelry and no silverware, there are no silken garments to seduce you. The lady has vanished, the gentleman with a cravat in the color of the season and stiff collar—a monocle clamped in his eye. Luxury is as dead as doornail—

really dead—not only made ridiculous. Indeed, the very last joy of the bourgeoisie is also missing: cake with whipped cream—cocktail time. That’s passé, [...] only vodka can make one forget.

And the city is swarming with lively people. Real lovely contemporaries—no blatherers, no scoundrels, no flashy fellows. The older generations are visibly hardened by the suffering they encountered. The younger one, however, and especially the children conduct themselves well – future of a hopeful future [...]

This is not the field of Russian art. Sentimental historical tomes. Numerous melodramatic sculpted and painted concoctions, old, new and the very newest—very Western in their origins [...]

Now, farewell, dear Moscow! The Finnish border is located right behind Leningrad. That was the way out. Oh horrors! Like right into the chocolate shop – like in a paradise of sweets.

Farewell, you dear Russian people!”¹⁵

It is a particularly apolitical, quite romantically transfigured text that provides more insights into what Kolbe did not like about Germany instead of offering an analysis of conditions in the Soviet Union. But in the face of the contemporary situation, such a text did indeed have a political impact, creating difficulties for Kolbe early in the Nazi era.¹⁶

On February 16, 1933, about two weeks after Hitler was named chancellor of Germany, Kolbe again turned to the same South German friend he had written after his return from the Soviet Union: “I am fortunate not to have an official position; what disgusting fellows you probably get to meet there.”¹⁷ It can be said with certainty that Georg Kolbe did not welcome the Nazi takeover and that he was not a sympathizer of this movement.

Kolbe was again able to give voice to his own true political orientation after the end of World War II, which he experienced as a “liberation by the Russians, as an resurrection.”¹⁸ He consequently participated in the early phases of the “Club of Creative Artists” and the “Cultural League for the Democratic Renewal of Germany.”¹⁹ On the first anniversary of Germany’s capitulation, he wrote a newspaper essay praising the “veracious care for culture” on the part of the Soviet administration, as opposed to the “Goebbels creatures.”²⁰

Kolbe and the Cultural Politics of the Third Reich

Georg Kolbe was one of Germany’s best-known artists and the country’s most successful sculptor when the National Socialists came to power in 1933. In 1927, for example, the art historian and museum director Carl Georg Heise wrote in an American magazine: “Who is the greatest German painter? One might give a hundred different answers. Who is the greatest German sculptor? There is only one possible answer to this question. Georg Kolbe.”²¹ This somewhat one-dimensional statement corresponds to the resonance Kolbe’s work found with the public. The statistics of the Kestner Gesellschaft in Hannover, for example, can be cited to demonstrate this point. The Kolbe exhibition from early 1933 attracted 2700 visitors while only 580 visitors came to see the previous show of works by Oskar Schlemmer and Pablo Picasso.²² Kolbe was a prominent figure around 1930; a member of society, he was active in artist associations and frequently addressed cultural issues.

As one of the best-known artists of his day, Kolbe was investigated with a view to his background as early as 1933.²³ He was suspected of being a leftist. In March 1933, a forthcoming exhibition in Chemnitz was forbidden because he was thought to sympathize with the Communist Party of Germany. The prohibition, however, was soon lifted. One of the principal protagonists of the Weimar Republic, some of the new potentates considered him “tainted” on account of his portrait of Ebert, the two Heine memorials, the Rathenau Fountain, his membership in progressive artist associations and not least because of his contacts with Jewish art dealers.

Alfred Flechtheim, Kolbe’s primary art dealer around 1930, later became one of the main targets of Nazi propaganda in the fight against so-called “degenerate art” and the art trade that was supposedly dominated by Jews before 1933.²⁴ Flechtheim stated however that when he went into exile in the fall of 1933, he himself was not personally attacked but “his” artists instead. On October 1, 1933, he wrote from Paris to a Swiss collector: “Yesterday I left Berlin forever. My

galleries there and in Düsseldorf are to be closed. There is no place for me there. Hofer, Kolbe and probably Renée [Sintenis] as well will be vilified! What is left for me to do there? I have set off for here without any money to see what I can do. If I had not dealt with Hofer, Kolbe, Renée [Sintenis], Klee and with my French artists they would not have bothered with me; yes, they even gave me to understand that if I did without these artists I could carry on quite happily as an art dealer!!! But I would prefer to be really poor abroad than a traitor!! There is no room for these artists of mine in the Third Reich."²⁵

This is a grotesque document that is simultaneously informative as regards the zigzag course of the cultural policies of the National Socialists. The artists named here by Flechtheim all survived the Third Reich with more or less difficulties, but things would have been different for Flechtheim himself, the Jewish art dealer, had he decided to remain in Germany.

Kolbe's encounter with the artistic policies of Nazi Germany especially involved the opposition to modern art taken by the National Socialists. One example from many concerns the sculptor's efforts on behalf of the Deutscher Künstlerbund. In early 1935, Kolbe declared his willingness to assume its chairmanship, but almost immediately retracted his commitment because of the attempt to interfere with the Künstlerbund's autonomy in conjunction with its next exhibition in Magdeburg. Kolbe wrote on this occasion that the "the danger of such a private position as the expressed request to revoke the already made election of Herr Carl Hofer to membership in the jury became immediately clear and I could not follow it, [...] it is possible that a different course could be taken in the next city, let us say against Schmidt-Rottluff's art, for example. It is impossible for me to serve such forces and after careful consideration I have decided to withdraw my acceptance of the post of chairman."²⁶ Kolbe was finally persuaded to continue serving as head of the Künstlerbund. As the April 1935 newsletter of the Künstlerbund informs its members, it has been resolved to "forego" the Magdeburg exhibition "for artistic and collegial reasons."²⁷ Because of its exhibitions of Expressionist artworks, the Deutsche Künstlerbund (still under Kolbe's chairmanship) was banned in 1936.

Kolbe, however, did make several public signals indicating a willingness to conform. I have gathered them together in my 1990 monograph on the artist (2nd edition 1994) and have selected the following case to discuss here. In August 1934, Kolbe was one of the signatories of the so-called "Aufruf der Kulturschaffenden," a declaration by German artists calling for the merger of the offices of President (the head of state) and Chancellor (the head of government) in the person of Adolf Hitler following Hindenburg's death. A friend who regularly spoke with Kolbe confirmed that the artist's opinion of Hitler had not changed: "He still saw Hitler as a hated brute."²⁸ So why did he now advocate Hitler's elevation? Kolbe never explained this. Ernst Barlach, one of the other signers, subsequently noted in a letter to his cousin Karl Barlach, "I also signed the 'Aufruf der Kulturschaffenden' and as such, I am no longer suspected of promulgating cultural Bolshevism, at least until they drag it out again."²⁹ Interestingly, Barlach is usually not criticized for signing the "Aufruf der Kulturschaffenden." Kolbe, by contrast, is indeed taken to task because of it. It is questionable whether Barlach was more hard-pressed in 1934. In any case, the public space was "cleansed" of the same number of works by these two artists at that time.

Most scholars who occupy themselves with Georg Kolbe from the outside initially only see the publically expressed positions such as those contained in the "Aufruf der Kulturschaffenden." But what is more significant or carries more weight—the public statement in favor of Hitler or the private rejection stated in a private conversation with friends? By no means should such published positions be glossed over, particularly with a view to the impression they make on others. I am convinced, however, that they do not reflect Kolbe's personal beliefs.

Kolbe's Change of Style

Kolbe altered his style in the nineteen thirties. It is widely believed he did so in order to adapt his art to the new Nazi ideology. Is this really the case? It must first be noted that Georg Kolbe's work consistently reflected and regularly changed in keeping with the respective zeitgeist. In 1910, he worked differently than in 1915, and in 1915 differently than in 1920, 1925, 1930 and 1935. The models who sat for him also changed along with his stylistic development. While he favored dancers from the Ballets-Russes before World War I, his ideal models in the nineteen twenties were Expressionist dancers. Around 1930, he was impressed by a tall muscular American dancer (Ted Shawn) and later a decathlon athlete who at the same time also had a doctorate in art history, thus embodying in one person the artist's interest in sports, scholarship and art.

The stylistic changes in Kolbe's work were never triggered by external circumstances but probably rather by a spontaneous reaction to the zeitgeist. Perhaps the opposite was also the case, namely that an artist like Kolbe not only received the zeitgeist but also shaped it, or at least participated in shaping it. (That fact that Kolbe, despite all the changes his art had undergone, basically remained true to his idealized figural means of expression, which is only varied over the course of his career, is another matter.)

Not only the zeitgeist (as was the case earlier) played a role in the changes evident in Kolbe's art around 1930, but also personal issues. The most decisive turning point in the artist's life was his wife's tragic death in 1927, probably a suicide. After that, the sculptor never returned to his cheerful, gently moving figures of women that had marked his previous work. He now seems to have deliberately suppressed the fundamental quality of these earlier pieces, which indeed exuded the erotically motivated pleasure taken in beautiful female bodies. It appears as if the naturalness of his artistic production had been disturbed. Instead of forming his works based on feelings, he they were produced after being run through a kind of mental filter.

Kolbe sought to deal with his wife's death through art, now also producing male figures that had previously only been an exception in his work. These statues assume a specific role within the artist's attempt to overcome this crisis in his life by means of his art.



Lonely One
(Einsamer), 1927



Young Man
(Jüngling), 1927/28



Ascending Man
(Aufsteigender), 1930



Zarathustra's Ascent
(Zarathustra), 1932/33

The statue titled "Lonely One" can represent the phase immediately after the death of his wife—a gaunt male figure who is seemingly immersed in grief. The "Lonely One" with bowed head was followed in 1927/28 by the statue of a "Young Man," a bronze that Kolbe installed in his sculpture court. According to the artist, this figure, which he called "Ascetic Youth," had the function of watching over him: "He assists me in moments of distress."³⁰

The upright but still ascetic and slender "Young Man" represents only an intermediate phase in Kolbe's mourning process. Over the course of the following years, in fact until his own death, the

figure of an ascending man would be at the core of his artistic endeavors. "I am working a great deal on a large ascending man, but I will have difficulty coping with it."³¹ The extent to which this figure is closely tied to Kolbe's own attempts to find his way out of his own personal crisis is very evident in a passage from another letter. Regarding "Ascending Man," he wrote that the then director of Berlin's Nationalgalerie, Ludwig Justi, did not bestow as much as a glance at the sculpture: "It is perhaps more of a Lehmbruck instead of a Kolbe—but otherwise I would have also committed suicide with gas."³² This was a drastic way of stating that while that Lehmbruck took his own life during a crisis, he, by contrast, attempted to overcome the crisis with his art. The model for "Large Ascending Man" was apparently far advanced by 1932, but it was never cast and the plaster version has not survived.

In 1932/33, Kolbe produced a second over-life-sized version of "Ascending Man" that no longer features the sense of gentile serenity. The energetically moving male figure was ultimately titled "Zarathustra's Ascent," making the statue a symbolic figure for a monument to Friedrich Nietzsche. As a letter dated May 1927 confirms, the sculptor had the idea for such a work several years earlier, namely immediately after the death of his wife. Kolbe writes that he is "incapable of refraining from a sculptural dedication [...] to Nietzsche."³³

Nietzsche became the point of reference for the whole of Kolbe's late work. The background outlined here clearly demonstrates that Kolbe was not concerned with an interpretation of the philosopher's writings but sought rather to overcome his own grief with the aid of the emotionality of Nietzsche's "Thus Spoke Zarathustra." As the artist himself noted: "The large powerful man who liberated himself, that was the task; it was also the path to his own liberation."³⁴ The subsequently completed first version of the Zarathustra figure from 1932/33 was likewise not cast nor has it been preserved. Numerous other versions followed, including more restrained ones. The final version was left incomplete at the time of Kolbe's death in 1947.³⁵

The development of Kolbe's art in the direction of powerful male figures, which began prior to the Nazi period, can be explained by the artist's own biography. It has nothing to do with the rise of the Nazi movement, his opposition to which Kolbe had clearly expressed only shortly before.

What Does Nazi Art Look Like?

The often-pronounced allegation that Kolbe adapted his style to conform to Nazi art is not only false from Kolbe's perspective but also from the reverse direction. A crucial question must be posed: What style would Kolbe have adapted in the case that he actually wanted to adapt his art in the sense of the new regime? The initial years of Nazi rule in Germany were marked by considerable controversies in the field of art and there was consequently no "Nazi style" in 1933. The debate on this question has not taken this fact into sufficient account.

The contemporary Paul Ortwin Rave noted that "in the spheres of painting and sculpture, Hitler spoke solely about what was to be rejected and persecuted. He was not able to communicate what was to take the place of the style that was to be stamped out, speaking instead only vaguely of hopes and expectations in this direction."³⁶ Paul Westheim noted ironically in 1933: "It was unanimously agreed that German art had to be valiant, heroic, Nordic, Germanic, blood-soaked, ecstatic, primeval, mythical, inspired, down-to-earth ... and agreeable. The disastrous thing, however, was the fact that there was no agreement about what something like this should look like in practice."³⁷

Because the stylistic direction desired by the new regime was completely ambiguous, numerous artists who wanted to make themselves useful to the new regime resorted to ingratiating themselves by producing portraits of Hitler or other prominent Nazi leaders. The existence of such portraits can be seen as a yardstick for the readiness of the respective artist to conform to the new system. While Kolbe did not portray any leading Nazi politician,³⁸ he did accept the commission to make a likeness of Spain's dictator Francisco Franco in 1938.³⁹

An lively debate was carried out early in the Nazi era in favor of Expressionism that was even widespread in party circles. While it was argued that this typically German style conformed to the “movement,” the decision against the rehabilitation of Expressionism was only made public with the presentation of such works at the 1937 “Degenerate Art” exhibition and Hitler’s speech at the opening of the Haus der Deutschen Kunst Munich. Afterwards, there was that large segment of the most important development in the history of German art from the first three decades of the twentieth century would be ostracized. Journals that propagated modernism were banned, museum directors were forced from their positions and galleries were closed.

A majority of artists, especially those who did not belong to the avant-garde, not to mention the painters and sculptors working in outdated styles, continued as before. The catalogues of the exhibitions in Munich’s Haus der Deutschen Kunst reveal that only very few works were shown that could not have also been produced before 1933 and exhibited at the predecessor venue in Munich’s Glass Palace.⁴⁰ This is also confirmed by the website featuring reproductions of the works exhibited in the Haus der Deutschen Kunst.⁴¹ The intense critical occupation with the Nazi era on the whole has led to the misleading notion that a broad trend in Nazi art existed; the importance of art in the political system of National Socialism has in general probably been overestimated.

Unlike the painters, the best known of whom more or less disappeared from public view at that time, most of the sculptors remained familiar figures. Even artists who were represented at the “Degenerate Art” exhibition like Wilhelm Lehmbruck, Ernst Barlach and Gerhard Marcks continued to be presented publically, albeit at less prominent venues. Their works were still published and openly offered for sale and continued to play an important role for private art dealers and collectors. In the process, these artists or their heirs were in constant fear that an exhibition or work ban would be imposed on them. The sculptor Gerhard Marcks was not, as is often claimed, prohibited from exhibiting his works. He was, however, threatened with such a ban and was at the very least not allowed to show some specific early works. The confiscation of examples of “degenerate art” generally did not automatically lead to an exhibition ban. (This applied marginally to Kolbe as well.)

The National Socialist battle against so-called “degenerate art” was largely directed against works produced before 1933. As such, these artworks were not produced in protest of Nazi ideology. On the other hand, however, works that were not combated were likewise usually conceived independently from what the Nazi Party found praiseworthy (whatever that may be). For the most part, Georg Kolbe’s sculptures were not categorized as “degenerate.” An exception was his style from the time between 1919 and 1923.

Comparisons with Promoted Works from the Early Nazi Era

If Georg Kolbe’s stylistic development in the nineteen thirties cannot be viewed as a positive response to National Socialism, and if, on the other hand, there was a the outset no canonized Nazi style on which the sculptor could have oriented himself, one must consequently ask about what the Nazi authorities and the party-run media thought about Kolbe’s most recent works from that time. Was it possible for Kolbe to get the impression that his new style was being positively received? Does this mean that he could have—albeit unconsciously—anticipated the desired style favored by the Nazis in the future? Seen from Kolbe’s perspective, this question must be answered in the negative.

The artist was confronted with the fact that numerous examples of his work that had been publically exhibited in recent years were now being removed from sight. These not only included the Heine and Rathenau memorial or the Ebert bust, which were dispensed with for political or racist reasons but also works dating from around 1930 that did not conform to National Socialist principles as regards content and style. Hermann Göring, for example, made sure that Kolbe’s marble “Genius” disappeared from Berlin’s State Opera House and Joseph Goebbels ejected the large “Night” from Hans Poelzig’s Broadcasting House in Berlin.⁴² The latter was replaced by the “Symbol of



Georg Kolbe, Night (Nacht),
1926/29



Hans Schellhorn, Hermann Fuchs, Symbol of Broadcasting Unit
(Sinnbild der Rundfunkeinheit), 1933

Broadcasting Unit" group by Hans Schellhorn and Hermann Fuchs, a depiction of a member of the SA giving the Nazi salute flanked by a "mental" and a "manual" laborer.

The contents of this group executed in a coarse New Objectivity style represent the epitome of Nazi propaganda. However, one looks in vain for this perhaps most programmatic example of sculpture from the Nazi era in the scholarly publications dealing with the art of the Third Reich.

Goebbels likewise ensured that Kolbe was not named head of the master class for sculpture at the Academy of the Arts. The academy invited the sculptor to assume this post and he had already accepted the position. In the end, the position went to the painter and sculptor Arnold Waldschmidt. While he was relatively little-known artist compared to Kolbe, he had other qualities: Oskar Schlemmer, for example, noted that "Prof. Waldschmidt is Party Member 54 and in Berlin well-known in the ministry".⁴³ Kolbe, by contrast, was not a member of the Nazi party. During the Nazi era, Waldschmidt produced a monumental sculptural relief frieze for the former Ministry of Aviation, a coarse translation of Expressionist forms with staccato-like sequences.⁴⁴ This artist's sculptural style, which was favored by Goebbels as well as Göring, the minister of aviation, is also far removed from Kolbe's own work.

Even before 1933, Kolbe would have not won every competition he entered or achieved everything he desired. But he also did not experience the slights he would be confronted with during the Nazi era. Another telling example dates to 1935, when a Nietzsche Hall with sculptural decorations was being planned in Weimar. Kolbe did not even receive an inquiry concerning a large-scale Nietzsche sculpture (despite the fact that the first plaster version of "Zarathustra's Rising" was exhibited in Berlin's Academy of Arts in 1933, attracting much media attention). The commission was given instead to the sculptors Emil Hipp and Fritz Müller-Kamphausen, two artists who are almost completely forgotten today.

It is necessary to take a closer look at Hipp at least because he was probably Adolf Hitler's favorite sculptor before discovering Josef Thorak and Arno Breker. Hitler became familiar with Hipp's formal vocabulary in conjunction with the project for a Richard Wagner monument in Leipzig, the foundation stone for which he laid in 1933. Known for his hovering ethereal figures, Hipp planned to make use of them in the monument and they are also a part of the decorations of the fireplace he designed for Hitler's office in the Munich "Führerbau." Paul Schultze-Naumburg, who favored Hipp and advocated his appointment to the Weimar post, presented these bloodless figures of all things as positive examples in his book on Nordic beauty.⁴⁵ Kolbe's Zarathustra style is also far removed from the works of this sculptor who was favored early on by the National Socialists.

After the letdown with Hipp in Weimar, Nietzsche's cousins finally asked Kolbe about a Nietzsche statue and the sculptor believed that his wishes would be fulfilled. However, Hitler had to grant

permission. After a long waiting period, the news arrived that Hitler rejected Zarathustra figure; no reasons were given.⁴⁶

Kolbe had already come to the realization that the style of his most recent works—his powerful male figures—did not find much approval. The Nazi Party fought against his war memorial for Stralsund⁴⁷ and his figures of athletes for Berlin's Olympic grounds were controversial.⁴⁸ Especially such works, which any number of present-day art historians view as adoptions of Nazi art, could easily have been rejected by party members who were intoxicated by their new authority.

This does not mean that Kolbe's did not find recognition during the Nazi years. On the contrary. Kolbe continued to draw on his great fame and popularity. Although reduced in size, the still existent bourgeois arts press remained enthusiastic about his art. His contributions to the exhibitions in Munich's Haus der Deutschen Kunst (1937: three statues, otherwise only one work among the over 1000 exhibited objects at each show) were reviewed, reproduced in the catalogue and thrice acquired by public institutions.⁴⁹ Kolbe did not see the continued recognition of his art as a special distinction within the Nazi system—he was accustomed to such approval. What was new, however, as we have shown, was that Nazi authorities preferred third-class artists to him.

However, reactions to Kolbe's works were not unanimous even among Germany's foremost politicians. Newspapers accordingly reported that Hitler, who later rejected the Zarathustra statue, stood in admiration before Kolbe's "Decathlon Man" when he visited the Venice Biennale in 1934. The statue was later only installed on Berlin's Olympic Grounds thanks to a private donation. The figure remained controversial and at some point it was simply dropped off one night in front of Kolbe's door.⁵⁰

As far as his own estimation of his situation at that time is concerned, the draft of a letter to the wife of the German ambassador in Tokyo dated October 1, 1935 is illuminating: "I was genuinely pleased to hear that your husband selected a work from my hand as his jubilee present. I cannot express in words what this means in times like our own. They are the last, the very final bonds. Bonds that are now only there to be severed. Please take careful notice of the fact that you are abroad in the service of the nation, in the service of the great advertisement. The big picture is valid there. Marvelous! Things are more closely calculated here at home. It can come to pass that one is cast into the fire for the same mentality that is permissible, perhaps even desired, on the outside. This is apparently the spirit of the revolution. From here, I can only report about myself that there is indeed no use for me in the great tasks."⁵¹

Architectural sculpture on Berlin's Olympic Grounds

The sculptures produced for Berlin's Olympia site are now usually seen as exemplary of works of this type from the Nazi era, albeit wrongly because this was not a typical large-scale Nazi endeavor. The National Socialists had originally rejected the international Olympics movement, but reoriented their opinion in 1933 and decided to build a new stadium for the 1936 Berlin Games. Sculptural decorations were not a part of the original plans. It was only in 1935 that an art commission was set up. It did not have its own budget, but an ambitious sculptural program was nevertheless realized with funds from sponsors and various ministries. In the process, the agenda was set by the architect Werner March. As the art commission's preserved files indicate, he demanded an architectural classification regarding both format and style. Put crudely, one could say that the members of this commission did not have a precise notion about what Nazi sculpture was supposed to look like. Unaware of Hitler's increasing preference for Josef Thorak, the art commission rejected an entry from him in July 1935. It was only shortly after the opening of the games in March 1936 that Hitler's admiration for this Austrian sculptor became known. A large-scale sculpture of a boxer inspired by Max Schmeling was installed on the spur of the moment on the remote so-called "Green."

Arno Breker likewise took part in the first competition for sculptures to be installed on the Olympic grounds and made a positive impression: “Breker, a figural sculptor of a more realistic sort, should be considered for the two large figures at the House of German Sports.”⁵² Constant criticism caused the artist, the spelling of whose name was not yet familiar at that time, to depart from his very natural sculpting style. The loosely modeled dressed model figure of his “Victory” has been preserved,⁵³ which differs stylistically to the completed smooth large-scale bronze.



Resting Athlete (Ruhender Athlet), preliminary study, 1935



Resting Athlete (Ruhender Athlet), 1935

Kolbe’s design for a “Resting Athlete” was likewise criticized: “The position of the crossed leg should be conceived in a less casual manner.”⁵⁴ Unlike Breker, Kolbe did not depart from his model when producing the large-scale bronze.

As a comment by Kolbe in his above-cited letter to the wife of the German ambassador in Tokyo clearly indicates, the controversies between the artists and the art commission have only been preserved in a shortened form in the existing files: “I am sending you today a photograph of the large reclining man I produced on behalf of the Prussian Ministry of Education for the sports field here. The figure is double life-sized. It turned out well and makes a good impression; it is certainly not rubbish. However: It has nothing to do with what is supposed to happen out there. Even when installed standing on its own, it is certainly not conceived as an advertisement for the large stadium as such.—But even on its apportioned position at the learner’s pool, i.e. far removed from all Olympic victory attitudes, it is felt to be one-sidedly artistic. Make up your own mind; I just want to let you know what I think!”⁵⁵

C. G. Heise, the former Lübeck museum director who had been dismissed by the National Socialists, emphasizes the stylistic discrepancy in his review of the Olympic grounds: “It is indisputable that the most important work from a purely sculptural point of view is Georg Kolbe’s Resting Athlete, a piece that—and this is symptomatic—is also the work that is most difficult to integrate into the architecture.”⁵⁶

The “Reich Sports Ground” was the first large-scale facility to unite architecture and monumental sculpture in the Nazi era. It was a pioneering effort for the major projects to be carried out in the future, albeit in the sense one proceeded differently: no competitions, no debating art commission, no broad participation of the artists and no longer the severe archaic style that marks most of the Olympic figures.

Commissions in the Nazi Era

While controversial questions concerning the definition of German art and what National Socialist art should look like were never definitively and comprehensively answered, a kind of neoclassical tendency developed in the course of a few years, the most noted proponents of which were the architect Albert Speer and the sculptors Arno Breker and Josef Thorak. This was in fact absurd to

the extent that this style is by no means German and much less ethnic in nature. It was not an original stylistic contribution insofar as such a neoclassical trend was already widely disseminated in Europe and the United States of the nineteen thirties. This style was in fact incompatible with Nazi ideology and antithetical to the ideologically better-suited so-called Domestic Revival style that was likewise continued in part.

Arno Breker and Josef Thorak seem to have oriented themselves on Kolbe's Nietzsche figures and his "Decathlon Man" for their own heroic sculptures. The journalist G. H. Theunissen already broached this topic in 1935 when he noted on the occasion of a Thorak exhibition: "Thorak is not inept in his imitation of Kolbe's sculpture, [...] one doubts—in the face of the nude 'Boxer'—whether the path taken by Kolbe in his "Zarathustra" is also a suitable one for Thorak. This pathos ends in a false heroism."⁵⁷ This statement concerns the above-mentioned bronze that was later installed at the outskirts of the Olympic grounds in Berlin.

A number of the individual heroic figures as well as the groups with two figures executed on numerous occasions by Breker and Thorak in conjunction with major state commissions can be viewed as coarse monumentalized variations of compositions by Kolbe from the first half of the nineteen thirties. Can Kolbe be blamed for this? Is an artist responsible for the ways his works were copied or varied, particularly when the spirit and the quality of the source dissipates in the process? The widespread notion that Kolbe adapted his style during the Nazi era draws on such connections. However, the reason that some of Kolbe's works recall those of star Nazi sculptors is not because the artist adapted their style but because state sculptors modeled their works on Kolbe's statures, thus nazifying them.

Kolbe would surely have been very surprised by equation suggested by some present-day critics. According to his own estimation, he was far removed from them. In his statement on Arno Breker's denazification proceedings, Kolbe emphasized that "a transformation in his approach to art became visible after coming into contact with Hitler, which was formerly closer to the French point of view and now sank under the weight of considerable Nazi influences."⁵⁸ As far as Kolbe's own work was concerned, the artist could not see such connection.

The sculptors Arno Breker and Josef Thorak were deeply involved in the Nazi regime and it is interesting to compare their associations with the system to Kolbe's. The two received highly remunerated commissions, professorships, enormous studios and other properties. Breker, for example, was presented with Jäkelsbruch Manor on the occasion of his birthday. Their proximity to the power elite can be easily confirmed with an image search on the internet. We find photographs showing Hitler visiting the occupied city of Paris accompanied by Breker and Albert Speer or of Thorak as a guest at Hitler's Berghof home in the Bavarian Alps.⁵⁹ No such pictures of Kolbe exist. One of the sculptor's friends stated that he avoided "any potential 'highest-level' state visit of the kind bestowed upon numerous other sculptors. With the exception of Schirach, no leading state or party representative ever visited him."⁶⁰ It is also conspicuous that he did not attend the public dedications of his sculptures during the Nazi era, as opposed to earlier decades. He apparently did not want to encounter any of those "disgusting fellows" (see above).

After the end of the war, Kolbe wrote: "I was thankful that I was able to keep myself out of the spotlight during those years."⁶¹ That is certainly not a whitewashing after the fact, albeit not so clear-cut. In the 1936 letter that we have already cited several times, Kolbe lamented the fact that there is "no use for me in the great tasks." No artist wishes not to be successful. This ambivalent attitude recalls that of Gerhard Marcks, who wrote in a 1939 letter to his sculptor colleague Bernhard Hoetger: "We are fortunately spared from state commissions; it is therefore comparatively easy for us to continue working in an unsoiled tradition because nobody wants to abuse us."⁶² Marcks did not completely withdraw from the art world, however, sometimes seeking out a public stage. He worked intensely on a commission for Posen (the present-day Poznań, Poland) depicting a large-scale charioteer with a team of horses.⁶³ The sculptural program for Posen was planned in conjunction with the city's Germanization.⁶⁴ While Marcks suggested and made plans for a proud figure of Victory, Kolbe—due to overwork—wanted to realize an older

project for Posen, a “falling person” because the city of Posen “hat occasion enough to symbolically memorialize falling persons.”⁶⁵

Even more than in Kolbe’s own words, letters from his friends indicate their belief that the artist deserved much more recognition than he received during those years. Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, who as a former member of the Brücke group of painters had even greater problems than Kolbe during the Nazi era, wrote to his friend in the face of the sculptor’s 65th birthday in 1942: “I hope that in the meanwhile you have weathered your birthday well and that not only the concealed Germany—but also the official—remembered you on this day.”⁶⁶ And this was indeed the case; Georg Kolbe was awarded the Goethe Medal for Art and Science, the presentation of which was quite inflationary at that time. It was presented to Kolbe by Leopold Gutterer, undersecretary in the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda.

Kolbe carried out a number of public commissions during the Nazi period. Only a few of them, however, were highly visible in the contemporary art scene, for example the statue “Proclamation,” which was installed in the entrance of the German Pavilion at the 1937 Exposition Internationale in Paris. It did not play a role at all in the German media, which was dominated by accounts on the monumental groups of figures by Josef Thorak in front of the tall tower designed by Albert Speer. Kolbe, however, was awarded a prize by an international jury in Paris.⁶⁷

Aside from his work on public commissions and projects, some of which, like the Stralsund war memorial, the Beethoven monument and the Zarathustra figures, had been begun prior to 1933, Kolbe was particularly active in the field of sculpture for an architectural context. In a manner typical for his work during the Weimar Republic—for example for the German Pavilion in Barcelona, Broadcasting House in Berlin and the Berlin Opera—he conceived in each case a statue intended for an architectonic ensemble. In the Nazi era, Kolbe produced sculptures especially for barracks, namely male nudes. At the instigation of the painter Walter Wellenstein, a neighbor of Kolbe’s in Berlin’s Westend district who served as art commissioner for the Ministry of Aviation, Kolbe made three works for the German air force, “Walking Man” 1937/38 for the Air Force Service Area Headquarters II, Berlin Dahlem (now Nationalgalerie Berlin); “Large Warrior” 1933/38, Berlin-Tegel Barracks; “Standing Youth” 1938, former anti-aircraft division Bonn-Venusberg (now Düsseldorf, in front of the so-called Drahthaus). A “Kneeling Youth” was erected in Krefeld in 1939 as a monument for the victims of work. Aside from several private commissions, he also worked on municipal projects for Eilenburg, Mönchengladbach, Leipzig and naturally for Frankfurt am Main in particular. As thanks for the Goethe Prize, Kolbe donated the “Statue of a Young Woman” from 1936/37 to the Goethe-Haus.

For the artist himself, his most important work that occupied him during the whole Nazi era was the “Ring of Statues,” a group of male and female figures set up in a circle. Kolbe began work on this ambitious plan, which was likewise one of his ideas for a Nietzsche project, without a commission. The German Academy of Youth Leadership in Braunschweig considered realizing the project, but in the end, Emil Hipp was chosen over Kolbe. The contract for the “Ring of Statues” was concluded with the city of Frankfurt am Main in 1941; it was only installed in Frankfurt’s Rothschildpark in 1951.

Most of the large-scale commissions from the late nineteen thirties and forties could not be completed because of World War II. However, because he usually received an advance upon closing a contract, his financial situation was not unfavorable during the Nazi period, even when a prohibition on account of the war made the casting of large bronzes impossible. As opposed to previous decades, he now largely financed his freelance artistic endeavors as well as his livelihood through public commissions, particularly as the activities of private collectors decreased considerably at that time.

Kolbe was reproached in retrospect for taking part in the exhibitions shown at the Haus der Deutschen Kunst in Munich. A contemporary explained Kolbe’s attitude: “He completely abhorred the hoopla of Munich’s art scene. He participated more out of duty in all of these Munich

exhibitions with one figure each."⁶⁸ The term duty here is difficult to understand from a present-day perspective. At the time, however, it was important for many of the sculptor's friends that the public art scene not be entirely surrendered to minions and diehards, which is why they wanted Kolbe's works to be showcased more often. In some of the letters addressed to the sculptor concerning the shows at the Haus der Deutschen Kunst, it is lamented that Kolbe's respective figure was not installed advantageously or positioned on the periphery of the show.⁶⁹

In retrospect, one has grown used to seeing an approving, affirmative statement concerning the Nazi regime in every action taken during the Nazi era. At the same time, every award was regarded as a confirmation by the "Nazis." Kolbe was without a doubt officially recognized during the final years of the Nazi period. Along with over 1000 other artists, he was exempted from military service in 1944, meaning that his name was added to the so-called "God-gifted list" making him one of the small group of "irreplaceable artists." Other sculptors on the list included Fritz Klimsch, Josef Thorak and Arno Breker.

As regards honors presented during the Nazi time, contemporaries could by all means have thought very differently about them than we do today. When Georg Kolbe was awarded the Goethe Prize in 1936, Schmidt-Rottluff opined that it was "just another one of those liberalistic prizes."⁷⁰ Kolbe was particularly present in the city of Frankfurt am Main for over two decades thanks to the support of museum director Georg Swarzenski. It was this Jewish art historian—long dismissed from his municipal post but still active as director of the private Städelsches Kunstinstitut—who was the first to inform Kolbe about the planned award. And he was surely involved in the unusual decision to present the Goethe Prize to Kolbe as it had previously only been awarded to authors.⁷¹ Frankfurt was incidentally the city with—through the intervention of Swarzenski and Alfred Wolters—the largest number of figures by Kolbe.

Georg Kolbe, however—who as has been shown above—saw Hitler and the movement very critically—did not decide to completely alter the manner in which he worked as an artist. It was the sculptors of his generation who were the first to free themselves almost totally from the constraints of commissions; they presented their artworks in exhibitions and waited for buyers or customers. Kolbe successfully did this to a large degree. Is it conceivable that an artist alters or gives up the presentation of his works just because a new administration had come to power? He had previously worked independently from the artistic notions of the political authorities, should he now—if only by implication—accepts it by withdrawing? Or put most drastically, should he give up his profession?

It is sometimes argued that Kolbe was so well known and so successful financially that he did not even have to participate in the contemporary art scene!⁷² However, in the Weimar Republic Kolbe was only very successful as regards earnings from 1926 to 1929. Earlier and then during the Great Depression, he was directly affected by the crises and in fact very dramatically so in the early nineteen thirties. On the whole, naturally, most other artists earned less than he did, but Kolbe had just built his house and was now experiencing financial difficulties. It would have had serious consequences for him had he completely withdrawn from the art scene during the Nazi period and only accepted a few private commissions. Although he did not do that, his production "shrank" considerably. In 1927, the foundry delivered 58 bronzes to him—in 1933, however, it was only 14. While he had a particularly successful year in 1937 when 42 bronzes were cast, a year later, in 1938, his production fell to 21 bronzes, half the number cast in 1937.⁷³ Kolbe's "business" largely came to halt during World War II because of the prohibition of bronze casting on account of the war.

"Prototypes of Aryan selection patterns"?

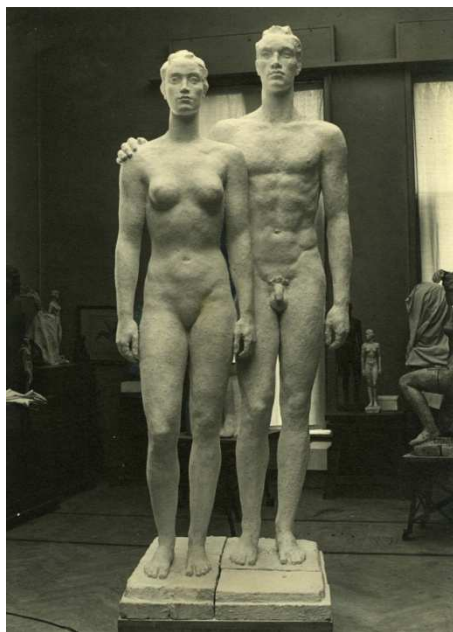
The most serious charge made against the nude statues of the Nazi era is that they reflect and propagate the racist ideology of the National Socialism. Such claims, however, are usually not accompanied by supporting documentation from contemporary reception and comparisons with

racist publications from the Nazi period are not forthcoming. The term “Aryan” is often used for artworks characterized as racist, although the word plays a hardly discernible role in the literature on art of the Nazi era. Paul Schultze-Naumburg preferred the “Nordic” to the “Aryan” for persons depicted in art.

Kolbe’s works have also been retroactively associated with Nazi ideology despite the fact that the artist’s writings contain no indication of racist thoughts. His library, which has been preserved almost completely intact, contains nothing pertinent in this regard. How little the highly esteemed “Nordic race” came into play is made obvious by the female faces that often feature Slavic cheekbones or that the jutting back of the “Nordic” male head can be lacking. In the sense of the common schemata, the noses are mostly too flat.

How the supposed exposure of racist contents by later critics functioned can be seen, for example, on a website in which the author characterized her occupation with sculpture from the Nazi era as “shocked and curious.”⁷⁴ Concerning Kolbe’s “Human Couple” on Hannover’s Maschsee, we read: “It is obvious what they are meant to represent. He has a dull determined expression and his muscular body shown in an upright posture; he represents war. But he will first father a child with his meticulous genital [...]. She, with her soft and patient face, will become a German mother [...]. She is [...] naive (or faithful) enough, not to ask when her hero will return home from battle. [...] A living being enclosed and determined by biology and sex. Propagation material.”⁷⁵

This work has been associated and interpreted in the light of two of the crimes committed in the name of National Socialism: war making and racial fanaticism. This reading appears absurd on several accounts. The sculptural program of the Maschsee is regarded as exemplary for Nazi art. However, a letter from Kolbe’s estate shows that the idea for it goes back to Justus Bier, the Jewish art historian and director of the Kestner Gesellschaft (which was banned in 1936 because it did not want to rid itself of Bier). He asked Kolbe for his support because he feared that the head of the municipal planning and building office would simply hire “any convenient sculptor.” Bier, by contrast, recommended a limited competition, to which two Hannover sculptors as well as Georg Kolbe and Gerhard Marcks would be invited.⁷⁶ At a second wider competition, Kolbe emerged victorious with his “Human Couple.”



Human Couple (Menschenpaar), Plaster, 1937



Human Couple (Menschenpaar), Plaster, 1931/32

One must take into consideration that Ivan Loewy/Hans Levi (see below) was the model for the male figure while his sister Renate posed for the female figure; both posed numerous times for Kolbe (he for the "Resting Athlete" from Berlin's Olympic grounds). The "non-Aryan" siblings, he a musician, she a dancer, embodied a couple that Kolbe wanted to depict as friends. The author of the above-cited website knows nothing about the artist and the circumstances under which his work was produced.

Kolbe's couple varies a group from 1931/32, his first large-scale draft for a Nietzsche monument (aside from the figure of Zarathustra and the "Ring of Statues," Kolbe also experimented early on with a couple). The connection to Kolbe's attempts to create symbolic figures for Nietzsche's work and significance is still a determining factor behind the Hannover group, which Kolbe characterized by means of a direct Nietzsche quotation as a "higher type of man." The sculptor himself provided an interpretation of his bronze group that contradicts the above-cited reading. While the difference between man and woman is, on the one hand, supposed to be emphasized in accordance with what is known concerning Nazi ideology, Kolbe stated: "The bodies are of the same stature, similar in the external and internal bearing." While the present-day writer saw this couple primarily in the sense of procreation, the figures were for Kolbe "united as friends." His intention was the embodiment of a "model of human dignity."⁷⁷ While the pathos-filled diction of Kolbe's explanation might seem foreign today, that is no reason not to take them seriously.



Georg Kolbe, Guardian (Hüterin), 1938



Wolfgang Willrich, Guardian of Race (Hüterin der Art)

In the case of another one of Georg Kolbe's sculptures, the title was taken to indicate a racist intention. Two art historians published the opinion that the statue "Hüterin" (Guardian, Keeper) was in actual fact originally named "Hüterin der Art" (Guardian of the Race) and simply renamed afterwards.⁷⁸

Reference was thus made to a work with this title by the draughtsman and pamphleteer Wolfgang Willrich. Kolbe is accordingly supposed to have oriented his work on Willrich's "Guardian of the Race," which provided him with a kind of "racist model."⁷⁹ The blond woman in Willrich's work has placed her hands on her pregnant stomach in which a "purebred" offspring is obviously growing. Kolbe's figure, however, is neither pregnant nor does her pose resemble Willrich's to such an

extent that one would feel obliged to assume a direct relationship between them. A quarter of a century earlier, Kolbe had already produced a figure with similarly positioned arms.⁸⁰ The fact that the sculptor would have found inspiration in the work of a fifth-rate painter is in any case an absurd notion. A juxtaposition of the two “Guardians” was commented upon as follows: “Kolbe rendered more as regards the translation and exaltation of the ‘Guardian of the Race’ theme. The more general title of his sculpture can easily be comprehended based on knowledge of contemporary phraseology.”⁸¹ The term “Guardian of the Race” was not common at that time, nor was it before or afterwards.⁸² It did not belong to Nazi phraseology or otherwise to German usage. As such, the conclusion that a “Guardian” must necessarily be a “Guardian of the Race” is unconvincing.

Willrich’s “Guardian of the Race” is a central work for scholars of Nazi art and is reproduced in Hildegard Brenner’s pioneering examination of National Socialist art policies.⁸³ It is familiar to everyone who has occupied himself with Nazi art. During the Nazi period, however, Willrich’s depiction was almost completely unknown. Unless one approved of Willrich’s vicious defamatory publication “Cleansing the Art Temple,” where it was reproduced as the frontispiece.⁸⁴ It is incidentally very likely that Kolbe helped the publisher Georg Biermann to take legal measures against the book.⁸⁵

The accusation of racism made on account of the equation with the two “Guardians” is an extremely grave one to the extent that it makes the artist an accomplice of a genocidal regime. However, no convincing evidence has been found in this regard. In light of all this, it sounds grotesque that Evelyn Künneke, the daughter of the operetta composer Eduard Künneke, was in all likelihood the model for Kolbe’s “Guardian.” She was a tap dancer and nude photo model in the early nineteen thirties, later a chanson singer and actress, frivolous comedienne and in West Berlin, finally, one of the “Drei alten Schachteln,” a group of three well-known and now aging female singers and actresses!⁸⁶

Especially the figural program of the Olympia grounds has been interpreted as the epitome of racist imagery. Hilmar Hoffmann, for example, saw the statues as works made in accordance with “Nazi editorial instructions,” as “prototypes of Aryan selection patterns,” as members of the “master race,” “unspecifically trained musclemen who were game for everything.”⁸⁷ Let us take another look at the figure of Kolbe’s “Resting Athlete.” The model is known; it is again Ivan Loewy. This identification, which is not documented in the Kolbe Archive, was conveyed to me by three different sources. In each case, it is reported that that Loewy took particular pride in taking friends to the Olympic grounds in order to show them the magnificent specimen for which he—as a Jew (a half-Jew according to the definition of the time)—posed.

Artists in the Times of Dictatorship

Georg Kolbe was not a Nazi and it was not his intention to embody Nazi contents in his art. To the extent that he continued to pursue his career—and in the manner in which he did so previously—he appeared in public with his works. As such, his art was open to criticism and interpretation, whether positive or negative. Even in the years before the Nazis came to power, the reception of his oeuvre did not always correspond to the artist’s wishes and expectations. In a dictatorship, however, inappropriate interpretations can result in problematic consequences.

Kolbe was incidentally by all means aware that he was not generally understood. There is an interesting passage in a letter in which he responds to criticism from the community of Diez an der Lahn that had requested a war memorial from him. On April 19, 1929, Kolbe wrote: “On the one hand, one speaks about a great artist and then the demand is expressed that the great masses must understand his work on the other. Pardon me, but this is not the case and it never was the case. If I cannot invent something from within myself but am instead forced to seek something that the inhabitants of Diez, who cannot possibly be able to judge such artistic matters, like, it would result in pure guesswork on my part and inevitably kill any intent on my part.”⁸⁸ This passage

demonstrates that Kolbe—even when he accepted commissions—insisted on submitting a work in accordance with his own artistic notions. Simply realizing the specifications of the contracting authorities did not correspond to his artistic approach. He continued holding this position even after 1933.

Kolbe's formal vocabulary doubtlessly changed in the late nineteen twenties, independent of political implications. This stylistic change meant that even his more recent sculptures remained suited for public tasks after 1933 without him having to adapt his style in any way. The general thrust of his oeuvre to that point with its concentration on beautiful youthful bodies was now accompanied by greater seriousness and a more strongly emphasized ideality. Many of these figures were installed in public spaces and even more were shown at exhibitions. In general, they were—after 1933 as well—understood in the media as works of art and not as interpretations of Nazi ideology. The extensive archive of newspaper clippings in the Georg Kolbe Museum shows that even in the Nazi era the reception of Kolbe's work remained restricted to traditional areas of the bourgeois art establishment, namely articles and exhibition reviews in newspaper arts sections. As such, the situation changed little compared to the earlier reception. However, a gradual modification of the diction was unavoidable in the face of the dictatorial surveillance of the press.

Georg Kolbe, his friends and the admirers of his works believed for the most part that he did not adapt his art to the spirit of National Socialism. Later critics were often of the very opposite opinion. The truth rests somewhere in-between. This does not mean, we state again, that Kolbe wanted to conform to Nazi ideology but rather that most contemporaries during the period of Nazi dictatorship were increasingly no longer in a position to completely distance themselves from the propaganda environment and that Kolbe's works were among those that influenced the pictorial memory of the Nazi era.

¹ Ursel Berger, "Ein verdienter Altmeister.' Die Rolle des Bildhauers Georg Kolbe während der Nazizeit," in *Kunst und Kunstkritik der Dreißigerjahre*, Akademie der Künste der DDR (Dresden, 1990); *Georg Kolbe—Leben und Werk. Mit dem Katalog der Kolbe-Plastiken im Georg Kolbe Museum* (Berlin, 1990); 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1994), pp. 109–150; *Die Athleten von Olympia-Berlin. Wie nazistisch sind die Skulpturen von 1936*, in *Der Tagesspiegel*, February 19, 1993 (reprinted in *Sportstadt Berlin in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Jahrbuch 1993 des Sportmuseums Berlin [Berlin, 1993], pp. 116–120); "Die Empfindung ist alles.' Die Figurenplastik Georg Kolbes," in *Georg Kolbe 1877–1947*, exh. cat. Georg Kolbe Museum Berlin, Gerhard Marcks-Haus Bremen (Munich, 1997), pp. 23–32; "'Herauf nun, herauf du großer Mittag.' Georg Kolbes Statue für die Nietzsche-Gedächtnishalle und die gescheiterten Vorläuferprojekte," in *Wege nach Weimar. Auf der Suche nach der Einheit von Kunst und Politik*, ed. by Hans Wilderotter and Michael Dormann, exh. cat. Weimar (Berlin, 1999), pp. 177–194; "'Modern Sculpture' versus 'The Decoration of Power.' On the Perception of German Sculpture of the Twenties and Thirties after 1945," in *Taking Positions. Figurative Sculpture and the Third Reich*, ed. by Penelope Curtis, exh. cat. Henry Moore Institute (Leeds, 2001), pp. 30–41, here p. 31., pp. 60–75.

² Georg Kolbe, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, ed. by Maria von Tiesenhausen (Tübingen, 1987).

³ Trans. from *ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴ Ursel Berger, "Georg Kolbe in Istanbul 1917/18," exh. cat. Georg Kolbe Museum Berlin, Berlin 2011.

⁵ Translated from the manuscript in the Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin. See also Ursel Berger, "'Man unterdrücke das Schwülstige, Prahlerische.' Georg Kolbe im Ersten Weltkrieg," in *Bildhauer sehen den Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. by Ursel Berger, Gudula Mayr and Veronika Wiegartz (Bremen, 2014), pp. 102–113.

⁶ Gerhart Hauptmann, *Tagebücher 1914 bis 1918*, ed. by Peter Sprengel (Berlin, 1997), p. 122.

⁷ Berger 1990/94 (see note 1), pp. 80f. (newspaper clipping in the Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).

⁸ Trans. from Josephine Gabler, "Georg Kolbe in der NS-Zeit," in Berger 1997 (see note 1), pp. 87–95, fig. p. 88.

⁹ Berger 1990/94 (see note 1), pp. 80f. (newspaper clipping in the Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).

¹⁰ In the sole publication that names Kolbe's political stance, he was characterized as a leftist (1924 in an article in an Italian magazine. German translation in Berger 1990/94 [see note 1], p. 190).

¹¹ On the model Eva Rechlin, see Ursel Berger, "Georg Kolbe und der Tanz," exh. cat. Georg Kolbe Museum Berlin and Edwin Scharff Museum Neu-Ulm (Berlin, 2003), pp. 77–81.

¹² Trans. from text in private collection, Estate of Rudolf Kolbe.

¹³ Trans. from letter to Julia Hauff (Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).

- ¹⁴ Georg Kolbe. *Auf Wegen der Kunst. Schriften, Skizzen, Plastiken*, ed. by Ivo Beucker (Berlin, 1949); Tiesenhausen 1987 (see note 2).
- ¹⁵ Trans. from "Georg Kolbe. In einem anderen Land...", in *Das Tagebuch*, ed. by Leopold Schwarzschild, Munich, January 21, 1933, pp. 112f.
- ¹⁶ Statements by Kolbe's contemporary Kurt Meinhardt (Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).
- ¹⁷ Trans. from letter to Ottilie Schäfer (Handschriftenabteilung Staatsbibliothek Berlin).
- ¹⁸ Trans. from letter to Erich Cohn, New York; see Berger 1990/94 (see note 1), p. 147). The echo found by the famous 1985 speech given by Germany's president Richard von Weizsäcker in which he characterized Germany's capitulation as a liberation demonstrates the extent to which Kolbe was ahead of his time. See also M. v. Tiesenhausen's lack of understanding regarding Kolbe's statement; see Tiesenhausen 1987 (see note 2), p. 187).
- ¹⁹ See the letters to Johannes R. Becher and Klaus Gysi (GK.469, Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).
- ²⁰ Trans. from *Tägliche Rundschau*, Berlin, May 9, 1946.
- ²¹ Trans. from Carl Georg Heise, "Georg Kolbe," in *Art in America*, April 1927, pp. 136–138, here p. 136.
- ²² Wieland Schmied, *Wegbereiter zur modernen Kunst. 50 Jahre Kestner-Gesellschaft* (Hannover, 1966), p. 237.
- ²³ Joseph Wulf, *Die Bildenden Künste im Dritten Reich. Eine Dokumentation* (Frankfurt am Main, 1966), p. 324.
- ²⁴ Ottfried Dascher, *Alfred Flechtheim. Sammler, Kunsthändler, Verleger* (Wädenswil, 2011); Jan Giebel, "'Und jetzt hat ihn Flechtheim.' Georg Kolbe in der Galerie Alfred Flechtheim," in Ottfried Dascher, *Sprung in den Raum. Skulpturen bei Alfred Flechtheim*, ed. by Ottfried Dascher (Wädenswil, 2017), pp. 389–410.
- ²⁵ Archive of the Oskar Reinhart Collection, Winterthur (trans. from Ursel Berger, "Renée Sintenis ... einmal Göttin, einmal Tierfreundin," in *MuseumsJournal*, April 2008, pp. 22–24, here pp. 23f.).
- ²⁶ Trans. from Berger 1990/94 (see note 1), p. 125 (draft of a letter in the Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).
- ²⁷ Trans. from Marianne Lyra-Wex, *Die Ausstellung des Deutschen Künstlerbundes im Hamburger Kunstverein 1936*, exh. cat. Bonn 1988, p. 92.
- ²⁸ Information from Kurt Meinhardt (Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).
- ²⁹ Letter dated August 31, 1934. (Friedrich Dross, *Ernst Barlach. Die Briefe II* [Munich, 1969], p. 490).
- ³⁰ Trans. from Georg Kolbe, letter to Ottilie Schäfer dated August 31, 1931 (Handschriftenabteilung Staatsbibliothek Berlin).
- ³¹ Trans. from *ibid.*, letter dated May 9, 1930.
- ³² Trans. from *ibid.*, letter dated January 15, 1931.
- ³³ Trans. from Letter to Rudolf G. Binding dated May 28, 1927, private collection.
- ³⁴ Georg Kolbe, "Zu Zarathustra's Erhebung," in Beucker 1949 (see note 14), p. 31.
- ³⁵ They were nevertheless cast and installed in the museum's garden (Berger 1990/94 [see note 1], cat. 144).
- ³⁶ Trans. from Paul Ortwin Rave, *Kunstdiktatur im Dritten Reich* (Hamburg, 1949), p. 49.
- ³⁷ Trans. from Paul Westheim, "Kulturbilder aus der deutschen Gegenwart," in *Kunstkritik aus dem Exil*, ed. by Tanja Frank (Hanau, 1985), pp. 34–41, here p. 35.
- ³⁸ Kolbe's student Liselott Specht-Büchting informs us that Kolbe was requested to produce a portrait of Hitler. He is supposed to have said that he made portraits of every Tom, Dick and Harry. Why should he not also portray Hitler. In the end, the request was withdrawn (Berger 1990/94 [see note 1], p. 129).
- ³⁹ When Kolbe's acquaintance, the New York collector Erich Cohn asked the artist in 1946 why he made a portrait of Franco, the artist responded: "Firstly, did not wholly recognize the true situation. And secondly, seen in formal terms, it was a private commission that gave me the opportunity to get to know Spain." (trans. from Tiesenhausen 1987 [see note 2], p. 187). This is indeed not really a satisfactory answer. In the face of the news blackout regarding the deployment of the German Legion Condor in the Spanish Civil War and the Nazification of the press, Kolbe was surely only insufficiently informed about the actual situation in Spain.
- ⁴⁰ www.bayerische-landesbibliothek-online.de/glaspalast.
- ⁴¹ www.gdk-research.de.
- ⁴² The figure from the opera house came to the Nationalgalerie; the bronze from Broadcasting House is lost.
- ⁴³ Trans. from Oskar Schlemmer, letter to Ferdinand Möller dated December 19, 1936 (Eberhard Roters, *Galerie Ferdinand Möller* [Berlin, 1984], p. 281).
- ⁴⁴ Bruno E. Werner, *Die deutsche Plastik der Gegenwart* (Berlin, 1940), fig. pp. 170f. This relief was hidden behind a similarly political artwork, the mosaic mural by Max Lingner.
- ⁴⁵ Paul Schultze-Naumburg, *Nordische Schönheit. Ihr Wunschbild im Leben und in der Kunst* (Munich and Berlin, 1937), fig. pp. 198f.; Relief for the Wagner monument, Leipzig, fig. p. 201.
- ⁴⁶ This decision was criticized in Weimar; see Berger 1999 (see note 1), p. 190.
- ⁴⁷ On December 3, 1934, County Leader Kieckhöfer wrote to the mayor of Stralsund: "Broad swaths of the populace, especially members of the Nazi Party, are of the opinion that this figural group does not represent a symbolic embodiment of the soldiers at the front. Instead, the model represents a personification of an athletic idea. Not the gestraffte power of the man alone may be the emerging expressive strength of the front soldier. I am of the opinion that the focus must be placed on the heroic experience of the Great War, which, however, is lacking here." (Stadtarchiv Stralsund, M 3840, no. 156; trans. from Werner Stockfrisch, *Ordnung gegen Chaos. Zum Menschenbild Georg Kolbes* (phil. Diss. Berlin, 1984), p. 172; Berger 1990/94 [see note 1], p. 133). Kolbe's group later received more positively.
- ⁴⁸ Berger 1990/94 (see note 1), pp. 132–134.
- ⁴⁹ According to the documentation of the Haus der Deutschen Kunst, Hitler purchased "Young Woman" while education minister Bernhard Rust acquired "Guardian," both exhibited 1937, later in the Nationalgalerie Berlin-Ost; minister for

economic affairs Walter Funk bought "Descending Figure," exhibited 1941. Of the eleven exhibited figures by Kolbe, three were furthermore purchased by private persons and one was acquired by a gallery.

⁵⁰ Berger 1990/94 (see note 1), p. 133.

⁵¹ Trans. from typescript in the archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum (with a note by Margit Schwartzkopff stating that the letter was not sent in this version).

⁵² Trans. from Protocols of the three meetings of the art commission: Bundesarchiv, R 18, vol. 5612, pp. 115–119, 235–241, 359–365.

⁵³ Galerie Volker Westphal Berlin, exhibited 2006 at the exhibition "Skulpturen im Olympia-Gelände. Modelle, Fotografien, Dokumente," Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin.

⁵⁴ Trans. from the protocol of the meeting of March 7, 1935 (Bundesarchiv, Berlin. Rep. 320, no. 608, fol. 115).

⁵⁵ Trans. from the typescript in the Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin. The enclosed photograph was reproduced in a Japanese magazine.

⁵⁶ Trans. from C. G. Heise, "Reichssportfeld—künstlerisch gesehen," in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, August 3, 1936.

⁵⁷ Trans. from *Kölnische Zeitung*, March 28, 1935.

⁵⁸ Trans. from carbon copy in the archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin.

⁵⁹ See Bildarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz (<http://bpkgate.picturemaxx.com/>); amongst others no. 30012147; 50042614.

⁶⁰ According to Kolbe's contemporary Kurt Meinhardt (Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin). Baldur von Schirach owned a statue by Kolbe. Works by Kolbe were also acquired by the wife of Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, whose father and uncle—the sparkling wine manufacturer Henkell—were portrayed by Kolbe in the nineteen twenties. Kolbe received the support of the head of the Reich Labor Service Konstantin Hierl, a neighbor in Berlin's Westend district (Berger 1990/94 [see note 1], pp. 142–144).

⁶¹ Trans. from Georg Kolbe, letter to Erich Cohn (Tiesenhausen 1987 [see note 2], p. 187).

⁶² Arie Hartog, "A Clean Tradition? Reflections on German Figurative Sculpture," in exh. cat. Leeds 2001 (see note 1), pp. 30–41, here p. 31.

⁶³ Günter Busch and Martina Rudloff, *Gerhard Marcks. Das plastische Werk* (Frankfurt am Main and Berlin and Vienna 1977, WVZ Nr. 387–389, 392, 424).

⁶⁴ Adam S. Labuda, "Das Kunstgeschichtliche Institut an der Reichsuniversität Posen," in *Schwerpunkt: Kunstgeschichte an den Universitäten im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. by Jutta Held and Martin Papenbrock, in *Kunst und Politik*, vol. 5, 2003, pp. 143–160, here p. 151. Marcks is not listed among the participating sculptors, instead we find: "Abel, Albiker, Avenarius, Bleeker, Bronisch, Cauer, von Graevenitz, Klimsch, Kolbe, Nuss and Scheibe."

⁶⁵ Trans. from letter dated March 14, 1942 to the mayor of Posen (now Poznań). Carbon copy in the archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin.

⁶⁶ Trans. from letter dated April 19, 1942 (Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).

⁶⁷ The document is preserved in the archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum.

⁶⁸ Information from Kurt Meinhardt (Archive of Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).

⁶⁹ See for example Berger 1990/94 (see note 1), p. 141.

⁷⁰ Trans. from letter dated August 1936 (Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).

⁷¹ On June 19, 1936, he indicated to Kolbe: "but please, very, very confidential ..., that in connection ... something else and very pleasant is being planned here for you." (trans. from document in the Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin)

⁷² Hella Reelfs, "Bildhauer im Dritten Reich. Zur Karriere von Georg Kolbe," in *Neue Züricher Zeitung*, August 31, 1977.

⁷³ Foundry invoices in the Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin.

⁷⁴ The author's name is Susanne Gerber (www.kuukuk.de/text/natio.html).

⁷⁵ Trans. from www.kuukuk.de/text/natio.html (last access May 18, 2018).

⁷⁶ Letter from October 29, 1935 (Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin).

⁷⁷ Trans. from typescript in the Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin.

⁷⁸ Klaus Wolbert, *Die Nackten und die Toten des "Dritten Reiches." Folgen einer politischen Geschichte des Körpers in der Plastik des deutschen Faschismus* (Gießen, 1982), fig. p. 41.

⁷⁹ Hans Ernst Mittig, "Künstler auf der Seite des NS-Regimes," in *Erneuerung als Tradition. 100 Jahre Dresdner Kunst und Kunstakademie im (inter)nationalen Zusammenhang*, ed. by Constanze Peres and Dieter Schmidt (Dresden, 1997), pp. 137–152, here p. 148. "In 1982, Wolbert already recognized the title 'The Guardian' [...] as a reference to a racist model that Willrich realized in 1937 with his 'Guardian of the Race.' The pose in its own right anticipates Kolbe's work of the same name."

⁸⁰ "Figure of a Young Woman," 1912, in Berger 1990/94 (see note 1), cat. Nr. 21.

⁸¹ Trans. from *ibid.* p. 149.

⁸² The expression does not appear in the "Deutsches Wörterbuch" by the Brothers Grimm or in Georg Büchmann's "Geflügelte Worte." It is also not included in Viktor Klemperer's observations on the language of the Third Reich. I have likewise not been able to find it in Nazi publications, with the exception of Willrich himself, who probably coined the term. The fact that "The Guardian of the Race" is not cited in the numerous newspaper clippings dealing with Kolbe's statue in the archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum demonstrates that there was apparently no connection at that time between Kolbe's figure and Willrich's racist depiction.

⁸³ Hildegard Brenner, *Die Kunstpolitik des Nationalsozialismus* (Reinbek, 1963), fig. 23.

⁸⁴ Wolfgang Willrich, *Säuberung des Kunsttempels* (Munich and Berlin, 1937). It was also reproduced in another one of Willrich's books (*des Edlen ewiges Reich*, Berlin, 1939, p. 39) as well as in the National Socialist art magazine "Das Bild" in December 1934 when it was shown in Berlin at the "Die Auslese" exhibition, where a "group of cronies" (Rave 1949 [see note 38], p. 44) tried to present themselves as pioneering artists for the new system. The illustrations clearly indicate that "Guardian of the Race" was not a painting, as is usually assumed, but only a drawing.

⁸⁵ Kolbe responded to an inquiry from Biermann dated November 8, 1937 the following day (Tiesenhausen 1987 [see note 2], p. 159). Biermann's letter has not been preserved; the published, who was not on particularly close terms with Kolbe, surely informed the artist about his intentions. Thanks to a letter written to Emil Nolde by the art dealer Ferdinand Möller, we know what it concerned: "Professor Biermann sued the publisher of the book 'Cleansing of the Temple' for libel and obtained a preliminary injunction preventing the book [...] from being sold in the future." (trans. from Roters 1984 [see note 41], p. 278). Mittag, however, mistook Kolbe's letter to Biermann to be a "document of conformation."

⁸⁶ I have been told numerous times that the popular German singer and actress Evelyn Künneke was Kolbe's model. She is said to have herself claimed to have posed for the large "Night" in Berlin's Broadcasting House. Künneke, however, was only 8-years-old at the time it was made! It can be assumed that she remembered on posing with raised arms. Accordingly, only the 'Guardian' is contemplable. Its proportions indicate that a very large woman—like Künneke—posed for the work.

⁸⁷ Trans. from *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, January 23/24, 1993.

⁸⁸ Trans. from carbon copy in the Archive of the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin.