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Narrativity and Historicism in National Socialist Art

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During the last few decades, narratology has become a growing field of interest within the humanities, most notably among literary analysts, linguists, and semioticians who chiefly have focused upon verbal discourses, whether in written or oral form, though also on cinema films and television. However, the ability of static pictures to represent actions and to narrate stories (or meta-stories) seems to have received much less attention in art theory contexts.[1]

Thus in this presentation, I intend to approach some aspects of pictorial historical narration, more specifically with regard to National Socialist art and its implicit rendering of temporal and historical processes. Certainly in many artworks from that period a future orientation, towards an ideal political, social and ethnic (or racial) state of affairs, seems to have been prevalent, partially by rendering present states or actions pointing to or enhancing its fulfilment. However, the realization of this utopian state is frequently supposed to receive its legitimacy by referring to an assumed historical (or rather mythologized) past, e.g. Antiquity or the Middle Ages. Thus past, present and future become to some extent interrelated, though still revealing a linear image of time considered to be unidirectional and irreversible.

Now, pictorial narration, I believe, is frequently based upon the existence and activation of mentally stored action and scene schemas on part of the beholders. These mental schemas are usually constituted out of earlier experiences of action series and events, either due to the beholders' previously acquired, direct familiarity with them, or due to the beholders' acquaintance with written, oral, and of course pictorial descriptions of certain events (e.g. religious or mythological tales). Pictorial narration, we might assume, consists of representing (more or less significant) components of action sequences familiar to the beholders, sometimes only by rendering a specific, arrested moment which can activate a wider, mentally imagined event schema. Moreover, narrative and temporal aspects in pictorial representations may also occur in implicit renderings of nature's and the seasons' cyclic processes, of man's ontogenetic and phylogenetic development, of cultural and historic situations as related to other contexts or even the present (i.e. the context in which the picture has been created), and so on. Furthermore, in National Socialist art, as in artworks from other historical periods, certainly also ideal actions or action structures are frequently rendered, which, like those of general action sequences (or parts of action sequences), are based upon the cognitive demands and presuppositions of the intended beholders, although the mental representations referred to in these cases involve goal-related or normative ideals.

I

Within traditional art history, it is far from uncommon to treat artworks as symptomatic of a cultural climate or a world view, that is, formulate statements suggested by the work in this respect. According to e.g. Erwin Panofsky, such a so-called iconological meaning level is "apprehended by ascertaining those underlying principles which reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion – unconsciously qualified by one personality and condensed into one work…[T]hese principles are manifested by…both 'compositional methods' and 'iconographical significance'."[2] Now, although this iconological approach towards works of art is well-known and prominent among art historians, it has not been accepted unanimously, but has been criticized for a number of reasons. Most notably, perhaps, the world view-concept (and its cognates) is not very precise and can be used in several senses. Thus it cannot only overlap with (or result in) specific philosophical doctrines, but also religious, epistemic, political, moral or otherwise ideological convictions, interests and desires as well as patterns of behavior. Moreover, the term is not only applied to groups of per-

sons as well as periods and epochs, but sometimes also to certain individuals.[3]

Still, speaking in very loose terms, a world view may, as suggested by the anthropologist Michael Kearney, perhaps be outlined as a "way of looking at reality, [which] …consists of basic assumptions and images [i.e. mental representations] that provide a more or less coherent, though not necessarily accurate, way of thinking about the world."[4] According to Kearney, in order to make any cross-cultural comparisons of world views possible, it seems fruitful to establish at least a minimal set of general characteristics of any world view. He claims that we might distinguish between at least four aspects or "diagnostic categories" which should be taken into consideration.[5] (i) First, a necessary requirement for something to be a world view is, apart from a conception of a "cosmic totality" or universe, the awareness and distinction between the Self and the Other, that is, the surrounding environment as well as other individuals.[6] (ii) Second, world views can be characterized by their ways of categorizing reality. The process of classification, that is, naming objects and conceptually subsuming them under larger more general groupings, appears to be a universal phenomenon in all societies, although, of course, a wide variety of classifications schemes exist.[7] (iii) Third, a basic feature of any world view appears to be the notion of causality, that is, the relationship between acts or causes and their (desired) ends or effects. Although the very concept of causality seems to be a cross-culturally universal phenomenon, its concrete manifestations may of course vary considerably. For example, in societies or individuals with a relatively weak distinction between the Self and the Other, it is more likely that personal thoughts and feelings are attributed to the external world, such as will and volition as causes of events such as weather conditions or accidents.[8] (iv) Forth, as suggested by Michael Kearney, the notions of Space and Time might also be considered to be basic characteristics of world-views.[9] In the present context, I intend to focus upon the temporal aspects which world views as transmitted by works of art may imply or suggest, more specifically in National Socialist art.

According to Kearney, it seems that various cultures put emphasis on one area of time rather than the other two (i.e. the past, the present, or the future). A future orientation seems to be predominant in Jewish, Christian and modern Western societies. Perhaps most notable in this respect are societies influenced by Calvinist thinking with their underlying theory of predestination, that is, the doctrine that God has decreed from eternity that part of mankind shall have eternal life and part eternal punishment (which our success, or lack of success, in this life is indicative of). In many Latin American and Mediterranean societies, however, the future is apparently seen as quite uncertain and unreal; there the temporal focus seems to lie on the present. A strong orientation to the past appears to have been manifested in traditional Chinese culture as well as in Mormon societies (the latter being concerned with the historical past of their religion and genealogy, i.e. their family trees).[10]

Apart from such varying orientations to specific areas of Time, there also seem to be different ways of looking at the process of time. In relatively simple, preliterate societies, without any tradition of historiography, a tendency towards an oscillating image of time appears to have been prevalent.[11] This means that time is regarded as something as a zig-zag rhythm, swinging back and forth between recurrent events or states of affairs, such as night and day, the seasons, drought and flood, life and death or the succession of generations, certain festivals and ceremonies, and so on. Such an image of time has frequently, though somewhat misleadingly, been referred to as a cyclical, completely repetitive sense of time. In few societies, if any, seems this very strict view, implying no changes whatsoever, have been prevalent. On a higher level, it is of course also conceivable to think of the emergence, rise and fall of entire civilizations or societies in a similar oscillating way. A linear image of time, however, considers time to be unidirectional and irreversible. Indicative of such a view is obviously the grammar of numerous Indo-European languages, where verbs in every sentence have to be expressed in a tense, such as past, present and future (which actually is not the case in all languages). This time image has been predominant in ancient Hebrew and Christian societies, but perhaps most notably modern Western societies, with an especially well-developed historiography. Quite obviously, a linear view

of time appears to be correlated or at least compatible with a future orientation of time. It should further be noted that oscillating and linear time images do not necessarily have to be mutually exclusive; both views seem to have been common in all societies, depending on the context – thus we probably should conceive them as a matter of prevalence or degree rather than a matter of kind.[12]

II

Now, which views of temporality or historical progress seem to have been prevalent within National Socialist or, if we may generalize, fascist world views? First of all, we may note that it has sometimes been claimed that the term "fascism", stemming from the Italian term "Fascismo", should be restricted to the specific national form of "authoritarian" or "totalitarian" regime or political movement which ruled Italy from 1922 to 1943 under Mussolini's leadership. Some scholars have argued that there are substantial differences between Italian fascism, German National Socialism and other varieties of 'fascist' movements.[13] In Italy, for example, several centers of power existed side by side during that period, such as the military, the Catholic Church and the bureaucratic apparatus, and the monarchy was actually not formally abolished before 1946. Moreover, the National Socialist movement seems to have put much stronger emphasis on racial issues than its Italian counterpart. Apart from pointing to such differences between various totalitarian movements, also outside Italy and Germany, some scholars have also stressed the frequent use of the term "fascism" as an epithet, as a value-laden, derogatory expression, devoid of any substantial or explanatory meaning. Actually very few political groups would nowadays call themselves "fascist", at least not explicitly. And as already George Orwell wrote in 1944: "...the word 'Fascism' is almost entirely meaningless. In conversation, of course, it is used even more wildly than in print. I have heard it applied to farmers, shopkeepers, Social Credit, corporal punishment, foxhunting, bull-fighting, the 1922 Committee, the 1941 Committee, Kipling, Gandhi, Chiang Kai-Shek, homosexuality, Priestley's broadcasts, Youth Hostels, as-

trology, women, dogs and I do not know what else... almost any English person would accept 'bully' as a synonym for 'Fascist'."[14]

Also the historian Gilbert Allardyce, for example, launched in his article, "What Fascism is Not: Thoughts on the Deflation of a Concept" from 1979, a vehement attack on the use of the term by postwar historiography. Certainly, so he claims, it should not be used as a generic concept applicable to political movements beyond Mussolini's Italy.[15]

However, since the 1990's an increasing consensus concerning the use of "fascism" seems to have been emerging among some political scientists and historians such as e.g. Robert Paxton, Stanley Payne, Roger Eatwell and Roger Griffin.[16] According to their point of view, this concept may very well be stipulated as a generic one with certain core tenets, at least for pragmatic and comparative reasons. Perhaps attempts to find a definition of that concept by finding essential, i.e. necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for something to be a member of that category might be unsuccessful (just as in the case of many other concepts, such as e.g. the concept of "art"!). However, many categories, psychologically speaking, are not experienced as having clear-cut boundaries, but rather as possessing a graded structure. This means that there are certain category members who are experienced as cognitive reference points (or the clearest cases of category membership), while other members gradually deviate from them, although they still belong to the category in question. In other words, categories are formed around their most representative instances, which have something like a prototypical character. The more attributes an item shares with other members in a category, and the fewer attributes it shares with members of contrast categories, the higher is its degree of family resemblance (in a Wittgensteinian sense) and thus typicality supposed to be.[17] A similar line of reasoning might certainly also be applicable to the concept of "fascism".

Although numerous differences among various forms of authoritarian movements can be discerned, there still seems to exist a cluster of similar constituents among some of them which are said to justify subsuming them under the concept "fascism". Some

candidates in this respect are, for example, the following ones:

- Anticommunism
- Antiliberalism
- Anticonservatism (i.e. against tradition, preservation and/or gradual change, though temporary alliances with conservative groups may occur)
- Antimodernism
- Antirationalism
- Creation of a new nationalist authoritarian state not based on traditional models or principles
- Positive evaluation of and willingness to use violence and war
- Social Darwinism
- Emphasis on the aesthetic structure of meetings, symbols, and political liturgy, stressing emotional and mystical aspects
- Extreme stress on the masculine principle and dominance
- A specific tendency towards an authoritarian, charismatic style of command or leadership[18]

All these core tenets of fascism have of course been given various degrees of emphasis in different fascist movements or do not even necessarily always occur side by side. Many scholars have also stressed fascism's ideological or theoretical incoherence and the lack of "great texts" – compared to, for example, Marxism – and the great variety of its practical manifestations. Still, although these aspects or features do not provide necessary and sufficient conditions for the concept "fascism", and thus are not all-inclusive, they certainly hint at some characteristics which frequently are associated with the core of this concept.

Its theoretical weakness and heterogeneity certainly stems from its generally anti-intellectual approach, its focus upon activity, and its emphasis on feelings or "mobilizing passions". Some of these mobilizing passions – which function in fascist movements to recruit followers and "weld" its followers to its leader - can, as suggested by Robert Paxton, perhaps be outlined as follows:

"1. The primacy of the group, toward which one has duties superior to every right, whether universal or individual.

2. The belief that one's group is a victim, a sentiment which justifies any action against the group's enemies, internal as well as external.

[...]

5. An enhanced sense of identity and belonging, in which the grandeur of the group reinforces individual self-esteem.

[...]

7. The beauty of violence and of will, when they are devoted to the group's success in a Darwinian struggle."[19]

Social Darwinism undoubtedly played an important role in fascist thinking. First, a hierarchical, evolutionary chain is stressed: neither are humans born equal, nor are they essentially rational. In nature man was fundamentally a savage until being civilized by powerful leaders; man needed to be bonded within a new community, having a less materialistic set of goals. A traditional, male-dominated family would be at its core, although also strong emphasis is put on youth and its organizations, thus somewhat undermining the autonomy of the family. Thus fascism sought to reconstruct man, not least in a more martial and aggressive way.

Second, the Darwinian idea of evolution as survival of the fittest was applied to society and history in general. Furthermore, fascist views on historical changes could perhaps be understood as a cyclical or oscillating view on temporality. Thus, seemingly in contradistinction to liberal or Marxist linear views on history as a progressive development, fascism thought of history as an unending struggle of groups and civilizations which rose and fell with frequent regularity. History certainly supported Darwinian biological laws and taught a whole series of sociological lessons. The fall of ancient Rome was by Italian fascists considered as an important example of how decadence and lack of discipline led to the domination by people having more strength and energy, despite being less sophisticated and more primitive. In order to shape destiny and bring about significant changes a political elite consisting of extraordinary men exercising power and vision would be needed. [20]

However, to treat fascist thinking as a completely fatalist cyclical philosophy would be somewhat misleading. Roger Griffin's work on fascism as a generic concept has by numerous scholars been described as

one of the conceptually and methodologically most sophisticated approaches in fascist studies. According to Griffin, we might very well characterize a "fascist minimum" as "palingenetic populist ultra-nationalism".[21] The term "palingenesis" stems, etymologically seen, from the Greek terms "palin" (again, anew) and "genesis" (creation, birth) and is used by Griffin as referring to a core myth within fascist thinking. The idea of renewal, rebirth or regeneration is of course by no means peculiar to fascism, but also essential within Christianity, most notably with the resurrection of Jesus Christ himself, the Renaissance view on the West's cultural history, Marxist thinking, just to mention a few examples. And as an archetype myth it is not even restricted to the Western world. Certainly, as Griffin claims, the idea of and striving for a new birth occurring after a period of perceived decadence lies at the heart of fascism. The term "populist ultra-nationalism" is referred to as a very specific sub-category of "nationalism". First, fascist movements depend, even if they are led by small elites, in practice or in principle on the support of the public or larger groups of people. Second, they reject anything compatible with liberal institutions or pluralist representative governments, they favor prevalently charismatic forms of politics, and they endorse a concept of the nation as a "higher" racial, historical spiritual or organic reality which includes all the members of ethnical community who belong to it. Fascism's mobilizing vision is that of the national community rising phoenix-like after a period of intruding decadence which all but destroyed it.

Although a palingenetic political myth could be interpreted as a backward-looking nostalgia for a restoration of the past, the repetition of the same, it would be a mistake, according to Roger Eatwell, to simplify fascist thinking as endorsing a strictly cyclical view on historical changes.[22] Indeed, the palingenetic vision embraces the idea of revolutionary progress, and the new order will be created within a linear historical time. The past, as e.g. Ancient Rome (Mussolini) or the Holy Roman Empire (Hitler), may be looked at with great sympathy and as giving guidance for the current political program - its exact reproduction, though, is by no means fascism's goal.

III

Now, I would like to show some examples of how this line of thinking seems to have been manifested in fascist art, more specifically in National Socialist art which more outspokenly than in Fascist Italy seems to have expressed some kind of palingenetic ultra-nationalism. In Italy, the regime's policy regarding high culture remained rather ambivalent. No clearly defined 'state art' was set out, and the cultural situation then was more pluralistic, although numerous examples can be found which are in line with fascist thinking as here outlined. [23] In the Third Reich, however, the artistic production was more strictly regulated, not least due to Hitler's own personal dedication to the arts and to architecture. National Socialism's aversion towards modernist art was at first not self-evident. As late as 1934 the minister of propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, proclaimed that art also in a National Socialist state should be free from any restrictions, and he praised the sound intentions of expressionism, as a truly innovative German art.[24] However, not least because of Hitler's personal intervention, this situation changed, most notably in 1937 when an exhibition with "Aryan/German" art was shown in Munich, simultaneously with a counter-exhibition under the heading "Entartete Kunst" (degenerated art) which represented artists such as Pablo Picasso, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Cézanne, Marc Chagall, Emil Nolde, Edward Munch, Paul Gauguin, Oskar Kokoschka, just to mention some few examples. According to Hitler, art should be easily recognizable and interpretable; it should be realistic and non-problematic. Goebbels later on required art as a political uplifting means of showing a social utopia, as promising and inspiring. As a consequence of this new policy, the possibilities of artists to work and to exhibit their works became strictly regulated or rather repressed. Modernist art was rejected as non-Aryan, Jewish, Bolshevist, as degenerate art which reflected a degenerate society and racial conditions which certainly were incompatible with the National Socialist utopia. Hitler's inauguration speech at the House of German Art in July 1937 may be put forward as a clear illustration of this line of thinking:

" [...A]nd what do you fabricate? Deformed cripples and cretins, women who inspire nothing but disgust, human beings that are closer to animals than human beings, children who, if they would live like this, could be nothing than a curse of God! And these cruelest of dilettantes dare to present this to today's world as the art of our time, i.e. as the expression of what our time produces and of what gives it its stamp. Let no one say these artists see it like this. Among the paintings submitted for this exhibition I have seen some works, that would actually lead us to believe that there are people who see things differently than they are, i.e. that there really are men who see the present-day shapes of our people only as degenerate cretins, who fundamentally perceive, or, as they would say, experience meadows as blue, skies as green, and clouds as sulphur yellow... [But] in the name of the German people, I [...] mean to forbid these pitiable unfortunates, who clearly suffer from visual disorders, from attempting to force the results of their defective vision of the world onto their fellow human beings as reality or, indeed, from presenting it as 'art' ".[25]

Perhaps some of the most repulsive examples which should illustrate the decadence and degeneration of modernist art may be found in the work Kunst und Rasse (Art and Race), published by the architect Paul Schultze-Naumburg in 1928, in which he argued that only "racially pure" artists could produce a healthy art which upheld timeless ideals of classical beauty, while racially "mixed" modern artists evidenced their inferiority and corruption by producing distorted artwork. As evidence of this, he reproduced examples of Modernist art next to photographs of people with deformities and diseases, graphically reinforcing the idea of modernism as some kind of sickness (see illustration 1).[26] Undoubtedly, a juxtaposition such as this clearly reveals and exemplifies the contemptuous, indeed aggressive, and in my view certainly repugnant attitude held among National Socialist representatives towards people considered to be weak, mentally ill, or racially inferior – and towards art seen as symptomatic of such 'defects'. Moreover, this illustration might also help to show that National Socialist art intended to render ideal 'Aryan' men and women is, ideologically speaking, far from being inoffensive, but indeed implies an extremely contemptuous view on humans deviating from this 'racial' standard.[27]

Now, although National Socialist art hardly can be claimed to be completely homogeneous, there are common denominators and inspirational sources, as required by the regime, such as antiquity, neoclassicism, romanticism and salon and history painting from the 19th century. Many of the painters who received official commissions belonged to an older generation having been active long before 1933, but whose works had become more or less obsolete during the rise of the avant-gardes. Common for them was perhaps most notably the rejection of Modernist abstraction and non-figurative art. Prevalent influences came from Italian and Flemish painting of the 16th and 17th centuries, German renaissance painters (such as Albrecht Dürer, Lucas Cranach, Albrecht Altdorfer), and not least German painting from the 19th century (e.g. Carl Spitzweg, Caspar David Friedrich, Hans von Marées, Hans Thoma), who were especially admired by Hitler himself.[28]

According to official ideology, art should be easy understandable and 'realistic', a means of expressing the (timeless) German essence and racial superiority as well as forecasting a political and social utopia. Everyday life is usually rendered in a non-problematic and idyllic way. Humans seem to live in a preindustrial society, a cultural environment consisting of craftsmen and peasants with close contact to nature and within an 'unspoiled' social order (see illustrations 2 and 3).[29] About 20% of the paintings produced before 1939 were actually showing idyllic renderings of country life (see illustration 4).[30] Other groups of artworks consisted of topics taken from ancient mythology, such as Leda and the swan, Prometheus, Diana etc, rendered in a usually simplified and unsophisticated classicist manner (see illustration 5).[31] Male and especially female nudes were quite prominent, showing idealized and racially superior human beings. Men are frequently depicted as heroic and muscular, women as sexually attractive and potentially reproductive, sometimes with as quasi-pornographic appearance, or as mothers, as preservers of the race (see illustrations 6, 7, and 8).[32] Another category of paintings was

concerned with family life, usually rendering small families indicating a feeling of social comfort and solidarity (see illustration 9).[33] Numerous works dealt with large scale architectural and industrial projects, such as construction sites of 'autobahn' bridges and motorways, industrial facilities, and monumental official buildings, thereby hinting at a grandiose future which had yet to come, but which certainly was in progress. The absence of individuals with identifiable working tasks, rather than the implicit or explicit visualization of collective activities, is striking, as well as the sometimes occurring anachronistic use of preindustrial working aids, such as shovels or horses with carriages (see illustrations 10, 11, and 12).[34] After 1939, the production of art with military topics increased, also indicating Germany's struggle for victory and its endeavors to accomplish a political change. However, far from only emphasizing the heroic aspects of military life, many works stressed the comradeship of the soldiers as well as the horrors of war (see illustrations 13 and 14).[35] One last group of artworks which deserves mentioning consists, not surprisingly, of portraits and idealizing depictions of party officials, not least Hitler himself (see illustration 15).[36]

In summing up, then, we might thus distinguish between some main groups of artworks produced and officially sanctioned between 1933 and 1945, having the following topics:

1. Landscapes, showing the beauty and 'eternal' essence of the German homeland
2. The simple, idyllic life of peasants and craftsmen
3. The security and comfort provided by the family
4. Workers in a pre-industrial society
5. Women as mothers or sexually reproductive, preservers of the race
6. Racially worthy (Nordic, Aryan) humans, sometimes from a (mythologized) ancient/antique past
7. Construction sites (e.g. of high ways, bridges, [administrative] buildings)
8. Party officials (not least Hitler himself)
9. War scenes, often idealizing the comradeship and (heroic) death of soldiers.

Now, in concluding this article, I would like to claim that National Socialist art as here described, quite clearly might be regarded as having given expression to a certain world view as outlined above, more specifically to a view on (ideal) historical change as a linear progress which is in line with the idea of palingenetic ultra-nationalism. The past, a pre-industrial way of life, is rendered as an idyllic world functioning as a (timeless) source of inspiration for the future; racially perfect men and women are depicted, partially stemming from an ideal ancient past. Still, these renderings are seemingly not intended to suggest the exact reproduction or restoration of the past; rather, they point to the ongoing as well as future sanitation and beautification of the German race and homeland. Renderings of construction projects and war scenes show us furthermore that this historical and political development is in progress. The past may very well have had numerous advantages compared to the 'decadent and inferior present', as experienced by National Socialists - but indeed, the really 'perfect world' had yet to come...
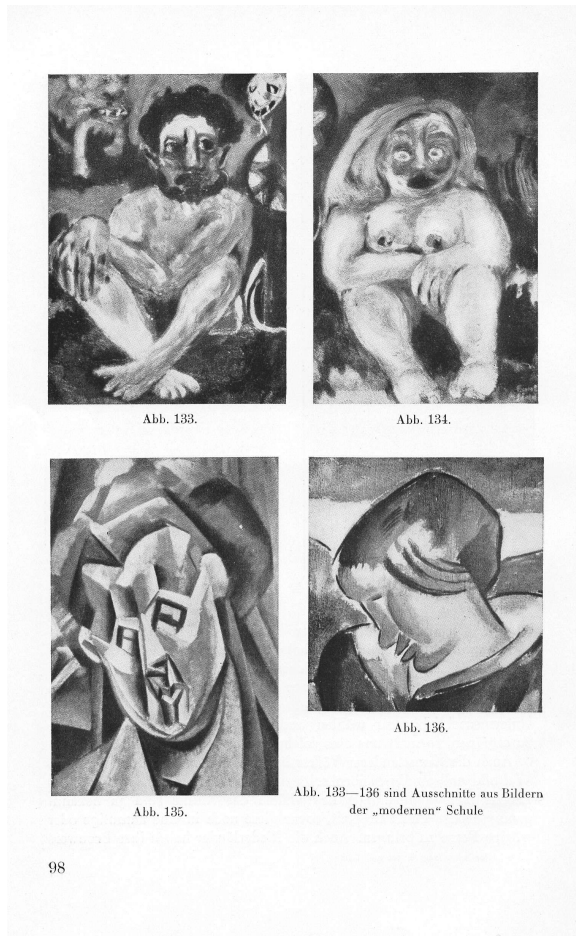
Illustration 1: Examples of Modernist painting juxtaposed to photo–graphs of deformed or diseased persons (Paul Schultze-Naumburg,: "Kunst und Rasse", 1928)

Illustration 2: Sepp Hilz, "Peasant Trilogy – Cornucopia" (c. 1941)

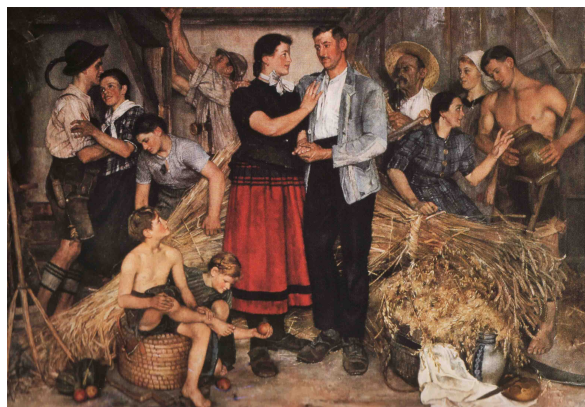Illustration 3: Karl Mader, "Harvesters resting" (date unknown)"

Illustration 4: Werner Peiner, "Autumn Countryside in the Eifel" (date unknown)
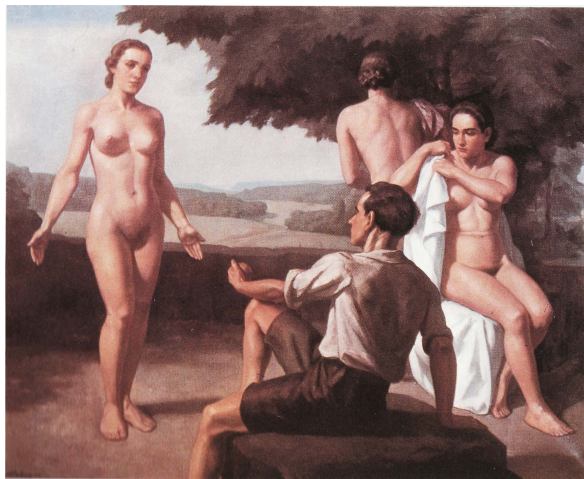

Illustration 5: Ivo Saliger, "The Judgment of Paris" (date unknown)

Illustration 6: Paul Mathias Padua, "Leda and the Swan" (1936)

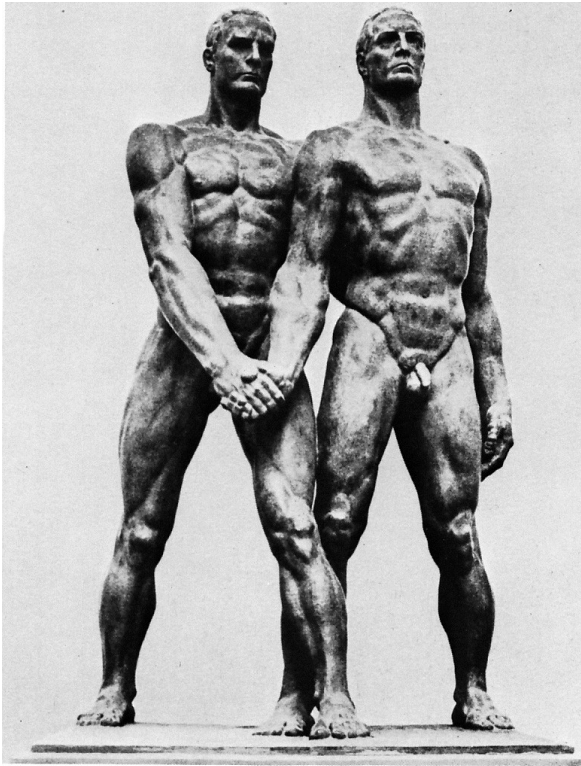Illustration 7: Fritz Mackensen, "Baby (at the breast)" (date unknown)

Illustration 8: Josef Thorak, "Comradeship" (German pavilion at the Paris World Fair 1937)

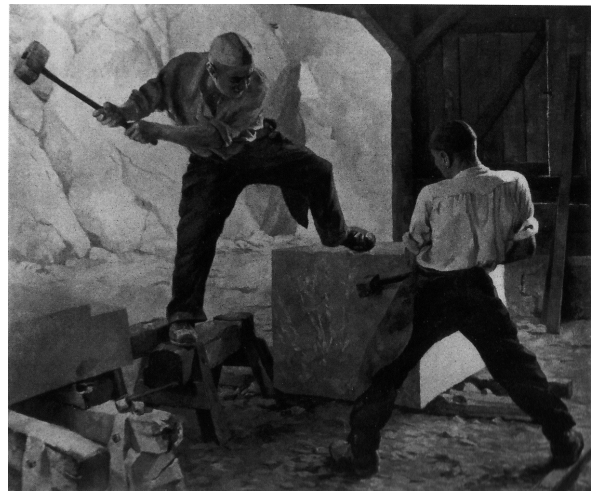Illustration 10: Paul Herrmann, "Extension Work on the new Reich Chancellery in Berlin" (1938)

Illustration 11: Rud. Schwarz, "Construction" (date unknown)

Illustration 9: Heinrich Pforr: "Under the Lamp" (date unknown)

Illustration 14: Paul Mathias Padua, "May 10 1940" (date unknown)

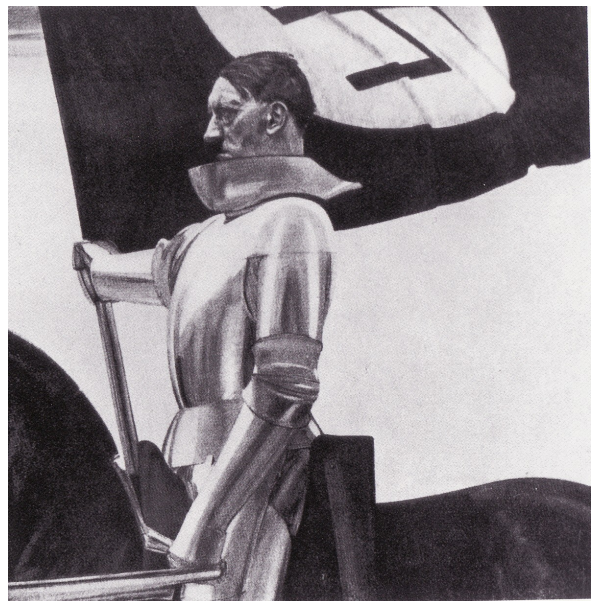Illustration 12: Ferdinand Staeger, "Labour Service" (date unknown)

Illustration 15: Hubert Lanzinger, "Portrait of Hitler as the 'Protector of German art' " (date unknown)

Illustration 13: Reinhold Launer, "Comrades" (date unknown)

Endnotes

1. This article is a revised version of a paper given at the annual conference of the NORDIC SOCIETY OF AESTHETICS, "Aesthetics and the Aesthetic: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives", May 29th to June 1st 2008, Uppsala, Sweden.
2. Panofsky (1962), p. 7.
3. Cf. Hermerén (1969), p.134 ff.
4. Kearney (1984), p. 41.
5. Ibid., pp. 65 - 68.
6. Ibid., pp. 68 - 78.
7. Ibid., pp. 78 – 84.
8. Ibid., pp. 84 – 89.
9. Ibid., pp. 89 - 106.
10. Ibid., pp. 95 – 97.
11. Such an image of time has frequently, though somewhat misleadingly, been referred to as a cyclical, completely repetitive sense of time. In few societies, if any, seems this very strict view, implying no changes whatsoever, have been prevalent.
12. Ibid., pp. 99 – 102.
13. Cf. Kallis (2003), pp. 45 – 56, pp. 191 – 248; Stanley G. Payne, A History of Fascism 1914 – 1945; London: UCL Press, 1995, pp. 441 – 61 (reprinted in Griffin & Feldman [2004], pp. 55 – 75).
14. George Orwell, 'As I Please' 17 [What is Fascism?], Tribune, 24 March 1944 (reprinted in Griffin & Feldman [2004], p. 51)
15. Gilbert Allardyce, "What Fascism is Not: Thoughts on the Deflation of a Concept", American Historical Review, 84 (1979) pp. 367 – 398; partly reprinted in Kallis (2003), pp. 49 - 56
16. Cf. Paxton (1998), Payne (1995), Eatwell (1992, 1996a, 1996b), Griffin (1993), Griffin & Feldman (2004).
17. Research within cognitive psychology seems to suggest that numerous common taxonomic categories are acquired after encountering several particular instances of the category in question, after which relevant characteristics are extracted and integrated into category knowledge. Put in another way, categories are formed around their most representative instances, so-called prototypes. Moreover, Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblances may be treated as a general psychological principle of category formation: "...[M]embers of a category come to be viewed as prototypical of the category as a whole in proportion to the extent to which they bear a family resemblance to (have attributes which overlap those of) other members of the category. Conversely, items viewed as most prototypical of one category will be those with least family resemblance to or membership in other categories" (Rosch & Mervis [1975], p. 575). Cf. also Rosch (1975, 1994); Rosch & Mervis (1975), Rosch & Lloyd (1978), Ranta (2000), pp. 187-207, (2007).
18. Cf. Payne (1980): "Fascism as a 'Generic' Concept", reprinted in Kallis (2003), pp. 82 – 88.
19. Paxton (1998), reprinted in Griffin & Feldman (2004), p. 308.
20. Cf. Eatwell (1992), reprinted in Kallis (2003), p. 74f.
21. See e.g.. Griffin (1993), pp. 32 - 39, reprinted in Kallis (2003), pp. 174 – 181.
22. Cf. Eatwell (1992), reprinted in Kallis (2003), p. 74.
23. For an overview, see e.g. Ades et al. (1995), pp. 130 – 136.
24. Cf. ibid., p. 271; Davidson (1988), pp. 9ff.
25. My translation. Original printed in Völkischer Beobachter , No. 200, 19.7. 1937; reprinted in e.g. Brantl et al. (1997), p. 83.
26. Illustration from Schultze-Naumburg (1928), p. 98f.
27. I would like to emphasize that I had considerable doubts as to the inclusion of this illustration into this paper, not least for ethical reasons. However, my decision is based upon the epistemic value it might have for the reader as an artistic and ideological counterexample of what National Socialist art was supposed to endorse. But I would certainly like to distance myself from any evaluative, ethical or otherwise ideological standpoints implied in this illustration.
28. Cf. Davidson (1991), p. 30f.
29. Illustrations from ibid., pictures 559, 840.
30. Ibid., p. 32. Illustration from ibid., picture 970.
31. Illustration from Davidson (1992), picture 1148.
32. Illustrations 6 and 7 from Davidson (1991), pictures 936, 839. Illustration 8 from Davidson (1988), picture not numbered.
33. Illustration from Davidson (1991), picture 1050.
34. Illustration 10 from ibid., picture 553. Illustrations 11 and 12 from Davidson (1992), pictures 1253 and 1323.
35. Davidson (1991), p. 34. Illustrations from ibid., pictures 782 and 938.
36. Illustration from ibid., picture 781.

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Illustrations

Illustration 1: Examples of Modernist painting juxtaposed to photographs of deformed or diseased persons. From Schultze-Naumburg, Paul: "Kunst und Rasse", München: J. F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1928, p. 98f.

Illustration 2: Sepp Hilz, "Peasant Trilogy – Cornucopia" (c. 1941). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 559.

Illustration 3: Karl Mader, "Harvesters resting" (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 840.

Illustration 4: Werner Peiner, "Autumn Countryside in the Eifel" (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 970.

Illustration 5: Ivo Saliger, "The Judgment of Paris" (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/2: Malerei R-Z", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1992; picture 1148.

Illustration 6: Paul Mathias Padua, "Leda and the Swan" (1936). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 936.

Illustration 7: Fritz Mackensen, "Baby (at the breast)" (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 839.

Illustration 8: Josef Thorak, "Comradeship" (German pavilion at the Paris World Fair 1937). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 1: Skulpturen", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1988; picture not numbered.

Illustration 9: Heinrich Pforr: "Under the Lamp" (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 1050.

Illustration 10: Paul Herrmann, "Extension Work on the new Reich Chancellery in Berlin" (1938). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 553.

Illustration 11: Rud. Schwarz, "Construction" (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/2: Malerei R-Z", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1992; picture 1253.

Illustration 12: Ferdinand Staeger, "Labour Service" (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/2: Malerei R-Z", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1992; picture 1323.

Illustration 13: Reinhold Launer, "Comrades" (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 782.

Illustration 14: Paul Mathias Padua, "May 10 1940" (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 938.

Illustration 15: Hubert Lanzinger, "Portrait of Hitler as the 'Protector of German art' " (date unknown). From Davidson, Mortimer G.: "Kunst in Deutschland 1933-1945 – Eine wissenschaftliche Enzyklopädie der Kunst im Dritten Reich, Band 2/1: Malerei A-P", Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 1991; picture 781.

Summary

In this paper, I intend to outline and discuss some aspects of pictorial historical narration, more specifically with regard to National Socialist art and its implicit rendering of temporal and historical processes. Certainly in many artworks from that period a future orientation, towards an ideal political, social and ethnic (or racial) state of affairs, seems to have been prevalent, partially by rendering present states or actions pointing to or enhancing its fulfilment. Still, the realization of this utopian state is frequently supposed to receive its legitimacy by referring to an assumed, more or less constructed historical past, e.g. Antiquity or the Middle Ages. Hence past, present and future become to some extent fused, though revealing a linear image of time considered to be unidirectional and irreversible. Influenced by e.g. the works of Roger Griffin, I shall suggest that fascism, of which National Socialism can be seen as a subcategory, might be circumscribed as some kind of 'palingenetic populist ultra-nationalism'. Officially sanctioned art produced during the Third Reich seems, as I will attempt to show in concluding this paper, to be in line with the idea of palingenetic populist ultra-nationalism.
Although I have attempted to treat and examine these topics as value neutral and 'clinical' as possible (which probably is required by a serious academic pa

per), this should by no means be interpreted as an (implicit) attempt to legitimize National Socialist ideology. My aim is certainly not to belittle or palliate the seriousness of the matter, nor indeed the actual atrocities committed by the Nazi regime and its followers. Neither should the quite repugnant and despicable implications of National Socialist ideology in its cultural manifestations, such as in works of art, be underestimated. Thus I, as the author, clearly wish to distance myself from any of the standpoints put forward by various representatives of National Socialist thinking, as here outlined.

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- "Theories and Observations in the History of Art - A Comment on a Central Issue within the Philosophy of Science" (Konsthistorisk tidskrift , 1-2/2001)
- "Categorization Research and the Concept of Art - An Empirical and Psychological Approach" (Nordisk estetik tidskrift/ Journal of Nordic Aesthetics, 25-26/2002)
- "Narrativity and Time in Static Pictures" (Congress Anthology: XVth International Congress of Aesthetics, Tokyo/Japan, 2001/2002)
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- "Art, Narratives, and Morality – Is Kokoschka's The Prometheus Triptych a 'Good' Work of Art?" (Congress Anthology: XIIth International Congress of Aesthetics, Ankara, Turkey, 2007)

Title