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INTELLECTUAL ALIENATION IN A FRAGMENTED SOCIETY AND UNIVERSE,

AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE WORK OF

WOLFGANG KOEPPEN (1906 -).

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SUMMARY OF THESIS TEXT

This text is concerned with the intellectual and social alienation experienced by a twentieth century German writer (1906 -); the alienation begins in the context of German society, but this context is later globalised. The thesis first discusses the social and intellectual origins and the salient features of this alienated stance, before proceeding to a detailed analysis of its recurring symptoms and later intensification in each of the author's main works, chronologically surveyed, supported by reference to minor writings. From the novels of the thirties' showing the burgher-artist conflict, and its symbolic dichotomies, the renunciation of traditional German values, and the ambiguous confrontation with new disruptive socio-political forces, we move to the post-war trilogy (1951-54), with its roots in the German social and political experience of the thirties' onwards. The latter, however, is merely a background for the presentation of a much more comprehensive view of the human condition:- a pessimistic vision of the repetitiveness and incorrigibility of this condition, the possibility of the apocalypse, the bankruptcy and ineffectiveness of European religion and culture, the 'absurd' meaninglessness of history, the intellectual artist's position and rôle(s) in mass-culture and an abstract, technologised mass-society, the central theme of fragmentation - of the structure of reality, society and personality, the artist's relation to this fragmentation, intensified in the twentieth century. Style and language are consonant with this world-picture. Many of these features recur in the travel-books (1958-61); diachronic as well as synchronic approaches characterise the presentation of various modes of contemporary society in America, Russia, France and other European countries. Important features of intellectual alienation are:- the changelessness of historical motifs (e.g. tyranny, aggression), the conventions of burgher society, both old and new forms, the qualitative

depreciation and standardisation of living, industrialisation and technology in complex, vulnerable and concentrated urban societies, ambiguities of fragmented pluralism. Reference is made to other travel-writers.

3. The general outline of the book

4. The author's background and his view of the world

5. Romantic revolt

6. The author's view of the world

7. The fragmented psyche, schizophrenia, alienation

8. The global canvas

9. The author's view of the world

10. The author's view of the world

11. The author's view of the world

12. The author's view of the world

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INTRODUCTION : SYNOPSISThe General Nature, Features and Origins of Wolfgang Koeppen's Alienation

Universal dimension of Koeppen's pessimism - affinities with other world writers - Expressionist origins of recurring motifs - lost unity of 'Geist' and 'Leben' - alienation of artist from burgher philistinism - divorce of Geist and political world - Koeppen and the 'conservative revolution' (affinities and disagreements) - anti-rationalism - revulsion against war, nationalism, technology, mechanisation - hostility of conservative 'Geist' to Ratio, 'Materie', utilitarianism, de-humanisation of the individual - alienating effects of industrialisation and urbanisation - reification - 'outer-directed' personality - society powerless to control events - information processed and abstractified by remote institutions - artist and the Grosstadt - ambiguities of artist's outsider position - aspects of the burgher-artist antithesis - artist's special rôle and status - the artist and wholeness - 1914 and 1945 contrasted, problems for the contemporary artist intensified - fragmentation of reality and effect on identity and artist's creative task - Koeppen's pessimistic nihilism - artist's isolation, observational distance, and generalised commitment - freedom of artist versus the world's standards and values, sacrosanctity of art - spiritual freedom versus political allegiance, versus the 'cage', categorisation, the frontier - Cassandra rôle.

INTRODUCTIONThe General Nature, Features and Origins of Wolfgang Koeppen's Alienation

Wolfgang Koeppen (1906 -) has experienced the vicissitudes and turmoil of almost the whole of German twentieth century history - the first World War, the short-lived "Revolution", the ill-fated and half-hearted attempts at democracy in the Weimar experiment, the decisive influences of Expressionist thought and activity, the traumas of the Nazi period, the Fascist barbarisms unleashed upon civilisation during the second World War, the division of a psychically shattered nation as well as its assimilation into the international scene, attended by fears of the recurrence of the barbarisms on a mightier scale. Koeppen's tragic and pessimistic vision of German society extends increasingly into a conception of the human condition in general - frontiers are, for the writer, obstacles to be crossed; national frontiers, provincial boundaries and outlooks were from the beginning phenomena which engaged and impoverished the human spirit. It is the second World War in particular which brought 'the world' to German soil, the world which German 'Macht' had hoped to subdue; even before Koeppen produced his travel books with their extensive global canvas, the German scene (and the author's own commentaries on it) had become part of a more universal picture of mankind. Decades earlier, at the end of the previous World War, Hofmannsthal had summarised the devastation wrought by the war and its meaning for the whole of Europe: "Der Krieg als geschichtliche Krise, Ende der materiellen und ideellen Kredite"¹. This discredited also the hopes of writers who had looked to the war to produce a spiritual renewal. By the end of the second World 'conflict' Koeppen's apocalyptic vision takes in the whole universal scene, even though his frame of reference in his immediate post-war work was the Federal Republic. In common with the Expressionists who decisively influenced the mood, the concerns and the orientations of his writings throughout his life, Koeppen's attention was focussed on Man rather than particular men, whenever he

supported the cause of the minority or the oppressed. The alienation he feels in the artist-burgher confrontation is not peculiar to a German writer only, even though many targets of the writer's satire have obvious social and historical roots in a particular national community. The artist's protest against the ideology of the tyrant or the shibboleths of mass-society, his consistent critique of collectivised living and its threat to individual uniqueness and the quality of life, these are attacks and warnings directed at all forms of contemporary society throughout the world, whose developments (and therefore fears and hopes) bear a similar stamp and character; equally these positions are adopted by other artists across the globe. Thus Koeppen may claim intellectual affinity with many European and American writers as well as those nearer home - Faulkner, Joyce, Hemingway, Conrad and Kafka, as well as H. Mann, Roth and Jahn:

Es gibt eine Tradition! Aber sie ist anders als unsere Traditionalisten sie sich vorstellen. Die neue Tradition ist international! ... Es gibt über alle Grenzen, über alle Kontinente hinweg die gemeinsame Sprache, das verwandte Welt- und Zeitempfinden ... Ein deutscher und etwa ein afrikanischer Schriftsteller der Neuen Schau werden einander besser verstehen als jeder von ihnen seine nationalen Kollegen provinziellen Geistes²

Certain fundamental attitudes and recurring motifs in Koeppen's work and outlook were formed or evolved during the Expressionist period in Germany; he can be associated, for example, with certain - but by no means all - aspects of what has been described as "die konservative Revolution". He can be aligned with certain dominant traits of conservative Kulturpessimismus and with the caveats introduced into contemporary cultural criticism by opponents of social progressivism and critics of developments in mass-society. Koeppen's Weltbild invariably shows man and society fragmented and dis-integrated; it is the world of Rilke's Malte Laurids Brigge and Kafka's characters, where the accord between man and Nature, man and society, not to mention man and the Creator of his

universe, has been lost, where man is "unbehaust", to use Holthusen's³ word, where Rilke's "wir sind gar nicht mehr zu Hause in dieser Welt" is echoed by one of Koeppen's many aimless characters.⁴ The total disarray of mind and body, a society out of control and a prey to cosmic forces which it has itself partly engineered, the "Substanzverlust, Nihilismus und Ich-Zerfall"⁵ which one critic sees as a significant feature (among others) of Expressionist literature, - these phenomena preside over Koeppen's work and are intensified in the later period. The unity of 'Geist' and 'Leben', of 'Geist' and 'Natur' has been vanquished by deep schisms in the very structure of Being. Koeppen recalls in a travel article a visit to the Archaeological Museum in Athens - here is evidence that at one time in history Man stood near to the Gods, the divine image walked the earth: "Der Geist ist Leib, der Leib ist Geist geworden! ... Der Übermensch? Hier ist sein Bild. Die Schönheit? Hier steht sie nackt."⁶ There are occasional hints in his writings that there existed a mythical world of integrated human relationships, of a concordance between man and environment, or a wholeness which vouchsafed identity and cohesion. The alienated artist, one might say, is engaged on an eternal search for this lost "Ganzheit"; Hofmannsthal sees the German writer's situation at the turn of the century as being that of divorce and estrangement deriving from the discrepancy between contemporary society and conceptions of earlier ages.⁷ The artist is the mediator, the solitary, preserving - if only in his own person and identity - what remains of Geist in its struggle with the disruptive forces destroying man's spiritual integrity. Hofmannsthal's unease and isolation extend to an unfavourable comparison with French culture, where the artist, even when attacking the social structure and its mores works within a scale of values shared by himself and the community:

Die Literatur der Franzosen verbürgt ihnen ihre
Wirklichkeit. Wo geglaubte Ganzheit des Daseins

ist - nicht Zerrissenheit - dort ist Wirklichkeit. Die Nation, durch ein unzerreissbares Gewebe des Sprachlich-Geistigen zusammengehalten, wird Glaubensgemeinschaft, in der das Ganze des natürlichen und kultürlichen Lebens einbeschlossen ist; ein Nationstaat dieser Art erscheint als das innere Universum ... als das gedrungene Gegenstück zur deutschen Zerfahrenheit⁸ das Nationalgesellschaftliche ist nicht das primäre, sondern die Widerlegung des Gesellschaftlichen ist das primäre.⁹

The Expressionist's enemy whose life and outlooks preclude any reconciliation of artist and community, of 'Geist' and 'Leben', is the "deutsche Bildungsphilister"¹⁰ who figures prominently in Koeppen's own early experience of social and spiritual alienation. If, as C.G. Jung observes, "Als Geist bezeichnet man jenes Prinzip, das im Gegensatz zur Materie steht"¹¹ (presented as one of the many possible interpretations of Geist in German thought), then, on one level, "Materie" is associated with burgher attachment to material possessions - though the concern of culture-critics with "Materie" has additional more abstract, metaphysical implications. The German intellectual's revulsion at greedy materialism - which continues into post-World War Two literature and the reactions to the "Wirtschaftswunder" - is a central feature of literature and thought contemporary with Koeppen's early life. The material greed and self-satisfied complacency associated with it become an affront to "der deutsche suchende, nach höchsten Verantwortungen und Bindungen dürstende Geist"¹²; the artist's hope is that "der Geist Leben wird und Leben Geist, mit anderen Worten: zu der politischen Erfassung des Geistigen und der geistigen des Politischen ..."¹³ When one recalls that Keetenheuve in Das Treibhaus is centrally concerned with morals and politics, - and the total divorce between the two spheres of interest - when one reads of the politicians, officials, villains, blackmailers, generals and syndicates heading for positions of power in Bonn, "und sie begriffen nicht das Wort des Dichters, dass die innerste Hauptstadt jedes Reiches nicht hinter Erdwällen liegt und sich nicht erstürmen lässt"¹⁴, one sees where Koeppen's concerns as

a writer are grounded. This search for a spiritual synthesis, which Hofmannsthal describes as "nichts anderes als eine konservative Revolution"¹⁵ is the background to the ecstatic Rausch and the high-powered emotionality of many Expressionist writers, - which leaves its imprint on Koeppen's early work - and is characteristically unaccompanied by statements or blue-prints of how such a synthesis, such a re-integration of society is to be achieved. No doubt this has something to do with the fact that it never was achieved; the fact that it wasn't also ensured the perpetuation of the artist's situation as that of the outsider in society, and for Koeppen it entailed much more, namely, the eventual renunciation of any belief that Geist would have any power over the world, its existence and creative power residing only in the artist-outsider.

One can point to certain ideas and attitudes prominent in the Expressionist era which underlie the satire and pessimism of Koeppen's work and the savage disillusionment which colours it. His own nature and individualism preclude the attachment of labels to his response to society. If the "Conservative Revolution" is to be associated with the panaceas recommended by a Spengler, or even the war experiences of a Jünger, then Koeppen can not be aligned with such movements. They would represent for him a further repudiation of Geist. The ambiguities relating to "conservative revolutionary" movements are numerous and complex; common to them is a distrust of or repugnance at developments in urban and industrial society, the implications of scientific, and more especially, of technological progress, the loss of identity and essence in a conformist and materialist society, directed by the demands and pressures of a capital- and profit-centred mechanism. In the face of such pressures the cry for the "neue Mensch" is heard. Only when the German tragedy is complete, and another world holocaust has taken place, is even this cry silenced, and yields to a total "Ideologieverdacht", to use Hans Mayer's expression, which also entailed, for Koeppen, a total "Ideal-verdacht" as

well. Where rational ethical principles are concerned, these are already regarded as suspect - already, writes P. Hohendahl, "Es lässt sich nicht mehr allgemein sagen, was gut oder böse ist; ... erstens unterliegt die Behauptung allgemeiner, rationaler ethischer Sätze dem Ideologieverdacht, und zweitens wird die allgemeine Gültigkeit des Rationalen durch das emotionale Kraftfeld ersetzt."¹⁶ It is the surrender to the vague humanitarian impulse, devoid of rational aims and the rational means necessary to implement the aims or provide concrete direction for the impulse, which renders the revolutionary fervour ineffective, as will be seen in the case of von Süde in Die Mauer Schwankt. Golo Mann points to the dangers and ambiguities of the "conservative revolution" as well as its defensible features; it attacked "Zivilisation: Technisierung, Zusammenballung der Massen in riesigen Städten, Herrschaft des Geldes. Dem entsprach im Politischen die Demokratie: eine pfiffige Erfindung der Kapitalisten, um ihre Herrschaft zu verlarven, die Massen je nach Bedarf aufzupeitschen oder zu zähmen."¹⁷ Rousseau's diatribe against "civilisation" had the same targets, and Koeppen's concern is also for Man enslaved by false democracies, consuming passively the wares of State or private capitalism. He shared and understood the revolutionaries' "hoher Sinn für Brüderlichkeit und Abenteuer" which was "feindlich der modernen Welt, ihrem Geschäftsgeist, ihrer Atomisierung, ihren vulgären Vergnügungen."¹⁸ For the latter are divisive, disrupting the intense emotionality of cosmic brotherhood and feeling. Koeppen's increasing despair is a measure of the failure of the cosmic dream, the artist sees "das ganze Elend der Welt ... es ihm Angst macht ... eiskalt zynisch, aber doch bebend vor Empörung."¹⁹ His anguished awareness that the abstract trinity of goals enshrined in the teleological optimism of 1789 were nullified by the very nature of the human condition, is to be seen against the universalist vision which has no truck with the perversions of nationalist ideology, and even overrides, in its primitivist anarchism,

the constrictions of family and all artificial social groupings. The vision is described by Kasimir Edschmid:

"Jeder Mensch ist nicht mehr gebunden an Pflicht, Moral, Gesellschaft, Familie. Er wird nichts als das Erhabenste und Kläglichste: er wird Mensch ... Aus Kulisse und Joch überlieferten verfälschten Gefühls tritt nichts als der Mensch. Keine blonde Bestie, kein ruchloser Primitiver, sondern der einfache, schlichte Mensch ... Sein Leben reguliert sich ohne die kleinliche Logik, ohne Folgerung, beschämende Moral und Kausalität lediglich nach dem ungeheuren Gradmesser seines Gefühls ... Nun ist der Mensch wieder grosser, unmittelbarer Gefühle mächtig ... Er ist wirklich Mensch. Er ist verstrickt in den Kosmos, aber mit kosmischem Empfinden. So kann er ... grosse Ekstasen aus seiner Seele aufschwingen lassen ... Sie (d.h. diese Menschen) sind unverbildet. Sie reflektieren nicht ...²⁰

Both the nature of the revolt and its intense emotionality are depicted here, and they leave their imprint upon certain 'revolutionary' features of Koeppen's early novels. The arationality, and in some cases anti-rationality of the revolt is also intimated, and this has far-reaching implications for the age and its ethos. But this very character of the revolt contained within itself the seeds of its ineffectiveness: Golo Mann concludes: "zur begrifflichen Klärung leisteten sie nichts und wollten auch gar nichts dazu leisten. Sie spielten nicht mit, denn das ganze öffentliche Spiel gefiel ihnen nicht; genug, wenn sie seine Regeln erschütterten, seine Steine durcheinanderwarfen. Ihr Beitrag lag im Protest gegen Staat und Gesellschaft, so wie sie waren."²¹ One recalls Koeppen's own confession: "Ich bin nicht zuletzt deshalb Schriftsteller geworden, weil ich kein Handelnder sein mag."²²

But in one important respect he took issue with the "conservatives" in question. Their scorn of all forms of democracy, disdaining the voice of the individual conscience, both inside and outside legislative bodies, not to mention more internationalist conceptions as might be embodied in Kantian projects of world peace, such a revulsion was for this writer misdirected and equally an affront to the work of Geist in the world. The racialist or 'Volkisch' nationalism of a de Lagarde or a Langbehn - and

conservativist movements certainly included such elements - are considered divisive and do not relate to the frontier-less conceptions of the world Koeppen would espouse. The degenerations of democracy to its modern forms of "totalitarian" slavery (Arnold Gehlen's "Ameisenstaat")²³ are equally pilloried; at a time when - after 1945 - democracy had been "öffentlich-rechtlich" institutionalised in a manner unprecedented in German history, it was a matter of intense anguish for a writer, already "von der Anstrengung erschöpft, Nationalsozialismus, Krieg und Zusammenbruch überlebt zu haben",²⁴ to witness the fate of true individualism: "Das Ansehen der Demokratie war gering. Sie begeisterte nicht ... Das Volk schwieg."²⁵ Equally, some hope had attached to the Weimar Republic with its promise of a saner rapport (i.e. saner than the preceding militarism) with a world beyond Germany's claustrophobic national frontiers. There are numerous references in his writings to the burgher with his idéés fixes of nationalist military power and self-aggrandisement to whom the Republic is an alien concept. Here the struggle of Geist against Macht is waged; Heinrich Mann expresses the artist's task thus:

Auf die Wirklichkeit wie sie ist sich nicht einlassen ... den Geist für unabhängig halten von den Zufällen des wirklichen Geschehens wie auch von dem Lande ... den Menschen lieben nicht als ihm selbst verwandte Gruppe, nur als immer gültige Idee, und diese dort aufsuchen, ... wäre es auch jenseits der Grenze; den Staat herausfordern durch das Bekennen der Wahrheit ... ohne Ansehen fordern, was wahr und gerecht wäre, den ewigen Frieden fordern, während ein Zeitalter des Krieges soeben anbricht: dies ist die reine Gestalt des Geistigen.²⁶

We know that Heinrich Mann is counted amongst the "outsider"-figures with whom Koeppen has a confessed affinity.²⁷ Like Mann, he cherished the contact with neighbours and the direst enemy was war and nationalism - the "Kultur" of the Third Reich had "die befruchtende Kommunikation mit den neuen Ideen des Auslandes unterbunden."²⁸ His despair at the recurring surrender to the demonic powers of evil in the guise of the value placed on war and destruction is the key to the apocalyptic gloom which now

attends all his writings. Any "Disjunktion zwischen dem in der Utopie vergegenwärtigten Paradies der Menschlichkeit und der Hoffnungslosigkeit eines moralischen Chaos in der bestehenden Gesellschaft"²⁹ (Hohendahl) derives, as well as from any other fundamental flaws in the social mechanism, from basic aggressions and possessiveness which brutalise and alienate man from "die Idee" and the ecstatic harmony which binds all men together. The aggressions are part of the more comprehensive demonic forces which control human destiny: "Weil der Geist vom Leben getrennt ist, deshalb erscheint in der Dichtung unserer Zeit das Leben so oft als dämonische Macht, zerstörend, dunkel, und allen lichten Verstandeswerken entgegengesetzt."³⁰ In Koeppen's panoramic views of history which we shall be examining, these demonic powers mock and subvert human endeavour and turn hopes and purposes into chaos and disorder. "Ein Dschungel war die praktische Politik"³¹; "ein törichter Ritter gegen die Macht, die so versippt war mit den alten Urmächten"³²; the judges at Nuremberg after the collapse of the fascist regime are already preparing for the next war:

Nicht nur die deutschen Verhältnisse ängstigten mich. Ich blickte traurig in die Welt, die in Nürnberg den Krieg und seine Verbrecher verurteilt hatte und sich auf neue Kriege und neue Verbrechen vorbereitete. Macht und Besitz und altes Unrecht wurden gefestigt und bestätigt.³³ (my emphasis)

These are the cancerous growths in the body - or the soul - of civilisation. The phenomenon of war came to be associated with other dehumanising products of civilisation, the Machine, the production-line, the brutalisation process to which the human spirit is subjected in a technological society. One commentator of the Expressionist period observes:

Die Aufgabe sei ... 'den Fortschritt der Zivilisation aufzuhalten.' Der Ausbruch des Krieges verstärkte dieses Moment, und ... der Kampf gegen den Krieg (wurde) zu einem Protest gegen die Zivilisation. Das Kommen des Krieges bot in überzeugend destruktiver Gestalt den Beweis ... dass der industriellen Produktion überhaupt das Gift der Gewalt innewohne, und die Aussicht auf sein Ende schien die Bedingungen zu schaffen ... zu der Wiederentdeckung und Neulebung der Seele des Menschen.³⁴

Equations begin to form; "Industrie- Maschine- Verlust der Seele- Mord," becomes the aetiological equation for war. Schickele's "aufgeklärter Kannibalismus"³⁵ and Wolfenstein's Rousseauistic strictures on the impersonality, the in-humanity (i.e. a-humanity) of technologised warfare,³⁶ exemplify the intellectual background to Koeppen's obsessional (for it is nothing less than this) concern with the anguish and the ravages brought by the destruction. No landscape is complete without the graveyards and the parade-grounds which prepare for them. No community is portrayed without the inclusion of those who further the work of history's war-Gods. The historical vision is of war in the past, war in the present, and the apocalypse in the future, which takes on the character of Spenglerian prophecy. The author's sympathies are often reserved for the young, caught in the snares laid by society, of which war is seen as the most tragic and degrading. Steinhausen sees the contribution of the young to the anti-war reaction as highly significant: "Das neue Ethos ... trug bei dieser durch Krieg und Revolution gegangenen Jugend den Charakter der Reaktion gegen alles, was an Härte, Gewalt, Bedrückung, Hass und Feindschaft bis dahin im Übermass über die Menschheit losgelassen war."³⁷

In the intellectual and literary history of the period under review which so emphatically coloured Koeppen's reactions and attitudes both to society and to metaphysical realities, (extending in private interviews to statements on the ontological structure of the cosmos³⁸), there are wide-ranging implications in the equations discussed above. With the Machine, the mechanisation of life, (extending even to the "Mechanisierung des Geisteslebens"³⁹ which discomforts the artist-figures in the post-war novels), the German soul and psyche are disrupted and anguished more than in any other national culture (as we saw in Hofmannsthal's envy of the French artist working within his cultural reference-points); the debate which first seriously began with Hamann and Herder has now developed to pregnant and tragic dimensions in which energies of soul and body, the

activities of Ratio and Phantasie become polarised, and with some writers, even 'Intellekt' is not our comprehensive 'intellectual' faculty but the antithesis of 'Seele'. Hofmannsthal had described one version of the dissociation: "ihre Kopfgedanken passen nicht zu ihren Gemütsgedanken, ihre Amtsgedanken nicht zu ihren Wissenschaftsgedanken, ihre Geschäfte nicht zu ihrem Temperament, ihre Öffentlichkeit nicht zu ihrem Privatleben."⁴⁰

Mechanisation, a perversion of the sane and sanguine Ratio which once aspired merely to fathom the secrets of Nature, once controlled by Man, now rules him; as an impersonal process, it standardises, de-individualises, thrives in mass-societies, is arid and lifeless, represents the triumph of 'Materie' over Geist, produces "Verlust des Realitätssinnes",⁴¹ impoverishes the 'Seele', thus numbing the sensitivities in the face of the overpowering and stereotyped abstractions imposed on society or created by it. Walter Rathenau saw the whole revolt we have associated with "conservative" culture-criticism as essentially anti-mechanistic: "Die Mechanisierung aber ist auf Zweckhaftigkeit aufgebaut. Ihr ist keine Handlung und kein Gegenstand Selbstzweck ...". Its opponents fought against "Städte ... Demokratien, Verkehr, Handel und Industrie und noch jetzt bedeuten alle konservativen Programme nichts weiter als Umschreibungsformeln des unbewussten Willens gegen die Mechanisierung".⁴² Koeppen's ambiguous attitudes to city life and his own observational standpoint in relation to it (to be contrasted with Hofmannsthal's, for whom a city hotel was anathema) are rooted in these elements of German thought which deeply suspect the effects of urban and industrial life upon freedom and individual identity, which detest the obedience of the herd to the exploitation of mass-appetites and instincts. Gehlen speaks of "angstvolle Vorstellungen vom Ameisenstaat der Zukunft, von Vermassung und drahtloser Lenkung der Gehirne, vom Verlust der Person und vom Verfall der Kultur ... und dabei verweist man die Technik gern in die Rolle des Angeklagten ...".⁴³ He sees the Enlightenment "maître et possesseur de la nature" become the "maître

et possesseur de la société".⁴⁴ One of Nietzsche's legacies is the aristocratic disdain for the subjection of the individual to the dictates and claims of the masses, and this form of heroic individualism is extolled against the arid conformities of burgher society: "Das hervorstechende Merkmal der aristokratisierenden Haltung ist (dagegen) die empfindliche emotionale Reaktion gegen die antiindividualistischen Strömungen der Zeit ... Beklagt wird die allgemeine Vermassung, welche die Grösse des Einzelnen nicht mehr gestatte und statt dessen die Durchschnittlichkeit fördere."⁴⁵ Progress, mechanisation, industrialisation, technology and capitalism, these inextricably interwoven concepts ("Wählt man einseitig eine der Einzelercheinungen als Grundvariable, so laufen die übrigen als glückliche Zufallsergänzungen nebenher") are interpreted by Rathenau as products of "ungermanischer Geist".⁴⁶ He sees America as embodying the realisation of these 'progressive' principles, and hence lacking "kultur-bildende Kräfte".⁴⁷ Symbolically, America exerted a strong fascination for Koeppen, and the whole ambiguous relationship he felt towards "das neue Rom"⁴⁸ receives detailed treatment later.

Whatever fascinating variety of phenomena and possibilities are offered by the 'Grossstadt', the latter has invariably removed man from the source of naturalness and vitality, and has de-natured him, especially the former craftsman who has joined the urban working masses: "Alles Ursprüngliche und Natürliche, alles echt Menschliche und Lebendige muss in solcher Sphäre immer mehr schwinden. Das bedauerlichste Produkt dieser Entwicklung ist die städtische und industrielle Arbeiterschaft, die ... einer Fühlungs-nahme mit den natürlichen und organischen Quellen des Daseins entbehrt und den mechanisierten Menschentypus in traurigster Form zeigt."⁴⁹ Thus are produced the 'Betriebsmenschen' and the 'Fachmenschentum',⁵⁰ and Koeppen's contempt is regularly directed at the society which produces them and his sympathy extends to the victims of the process, of the "Zwang zur Nützlich-keit"⁵¹, victims of the "utilitarischer Geist"⁵² - a typical attack,

involving the younger generation runs:

Von wem soll das Heil kommen, wenn nicht von einem Dilettanten? Die Fachmänner marschierten auf alten Wegen in die alten Wüsten. Sie hatten noch nie woanders hingeführt, und nur der Dilettant schaute nach dem Gelobten Land aus ... die Kinder (fanden es) auch nicht, wurden müde, wuchsen auf und liessen sich als Fachanwälte für Steuerrecht nieder, was alles über den Zustand der Welt sagt. Aus dem Paradies war man vertrieben worden.⁵³

The amateur sees more of the game, the specialist has lost contact with the concept of the whole, (he has knowledge, whereas the artist has insight), activities are compartmentalised - just as personal identity itself is becoming divided and dissociated. Professions become strait-jackets, spurned by the bohemian; 'Steuerrecht' is particularly despised as the end in view is more starkly Mammon's. Utilitarian work and activity, "auf Zweckhaftigkeit aufgebaut", of the kind produced by the modern division of labour, both alienates and fails to satisfy the creative spirit seeking fulfilment and totality of being; "in der Schule des Berufes" work, if enjoyable at all, is no longer "die Freude des Schaffens, sondern des Erledigens ... die Zeit eilt, die Konkurrenz treibt ... der Erfolg liegt nicht in der Vollendung, sondern in der Erweiterung, hundertmal das gleiche Produkt wiederholen ..."⁵⁴ Koeppen's savage disgust with the impoverishment and brutalisation of the individual when treated and interpreted as a member of the herd, which underlies his depictions of city desolation and human disorientation, has its roots in these critiques of Enlightenment ideology and their positivistic aftermath; the room for manoeuvre for the human spirit is narrowed and constricted, the sense of personal autonomy and creative, responsible individuality yields to that of serving society as a mechanical cog, the "psychologische Mensch" (Kornfeld) reduced to a function, the horror of which becomes the spearhead of the Expressionist attack upon the age and its ethos:

Die ereignisverdünnten Räume, in denen der industrielle oder administrative oder gelehrte Spezialist arbeitet, mit nur vager und entfernter Kontrolle der Auswirkungen seiner Tätigkeit, die sich meist überhaupt

der Vorstellbarkeit entziehen - sie sind dagegen die natürlichen Regionen exzessiver Phantasmen, in denen sich die unterernährten sozialen Instinkte ergehen⁵⁵

The feeling predominates of the individual's being "ein austauschbares und etwas abgeschliffenes Rad in der grossen Maschine," a machine which can run without him, and the fruits of his actions are conveyed to him "chiffriert als Zahlen und Kurven oder bloss in Gestalt der Lohnabrechnung"⁵⁶ which diminishes the sense of responsibility. Hence emptiness and boredom impoverish the workers' lives, and create in them a hunger for all kinds of meretricious and fleeting satisfactions, even extending to an enthusiastic welcome to war which provides excitement and even livelihood where capitalist greed has produced mass poverty. Koeppen's insights into this form of enslavement derive from his own perception of the "Öde des Daseins" which afflicts his city-dwellers. "Viele zogen willig in den Krieg, weil sie ihren Alltag hassten, weil sie das hässliche, enge Leben nicht mehr ertragen konnten, weil der Krieg mit seinen Schrecken auch Flucht und Befreiung war, die Möglichkeit des Reisens, ... des Sich-Entziehens ..." ⁵⁷ It is as though technologised peace produces, by its alienation of man from man, the technologised totalitarianism of war, the passive quietism (Gehlen talks of "Konsumquietismus"⁵⁸) which succumbs (impelled in addition by traditional obedience to national mythologies) to militaristic authoritarianism. The appeals of all the earlier anti-scientist prophets of doom, Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky etc. are heard again; the city masses become, in Koeppen's phrase, "eine gefährliche Häufung von Nullen"⁵⁹ (the reference is to spectators at a football match), though they are so considered because they have "erregte Herzen", and "hohle Köpfe", this being an important qualification to the anti-rationalism we associate, for example, with most of the Expressionists. It is perhaps a reminder that not reason, but arid rationalism, reductionist rationalism, is what is the main target of the attack. Georg Simmel, another culture-critic concerned with "germanischer Geist" and its relation to concepts of individualistic freedom, has mixed views on the effect of city- and

living upon this freedom. The city offers "eine so überwältigende Fülle ... unpersönlich gewordenen Geistes, dass die Persönlichkeit sich sozusagen dagegen nicht halten kann. ... Die Atrophie der individuellen durch die Hypertrophie der objektiven Kultur ist ein Grund des grimmigen Hasses, den die Prediger des äussersten Individualismus, Nietzsche voran, gegen die Grossstädte hegen ..." ⁶⁰ The intensity of the hatred is produced by the dimension of the socio-economic upheavals taking place later in Germany than in most European countries, by their abruptness, and by the stark contrast they present to the organicity and the 'Innerlichkeit' of German social and cultural traditions. The conservative critique recorded throughout the whole of the twentieth century ascribes decisive, epoch-making importance to the transformations and transvaluations going on apace: "Diese 'Kulturschwelle' hat eine Bedeutung, die sich nur mit der des Neolithikums vergleichen lässt." ⁶¹

Schiller's earlier "Absonderung der Geschäfte und Stände" has gathered momentum but new forms of alienation have added to these categories of divisiveness. Man himself is reified: "... (dass) die gesellschaftliche Ordnung die humanen Werte vernichtet ... Sie entfremdet den Menschen sich selbst, indem sie ihn verdinglicht ... das Bild einer Welt, in der die Arbeit geteilt ist, in der jeder auf seine kleine Funktion beschränkt ist, während der Mensch als Ganzes verkümmert." ⁶² In Emrich's "konsequent durchrationalisierten und vergegenständlichten Industriegesellschaft" ⁶³ the individual subject becomes an alienated object himself, ("das Subjekt wird zum Objekt, zum entfremdeten Gegenstand selbst" ⁶⁴), wooed by the exploitation of social stimuli which treat him as a consumer of products and finally as a consumer-product himself. Society will provide for, will engineer his working and non-working activities, "Allerdings gerät nun diese Freizeit weitgehend unter das Diktat einer industriegesellschaftlichen Gesetzlichkeit: unter die Herrschaft der Konsumbedürfnisse." ⁶⁵ (Schelsky). Man reacts to pleasures and excitements as a machine reacts to work; the

bored unsatisfied worker demands a stream of fleeting (equally unsatisfying) impressions and sensations, which the capitalist mechanism will again provide for, where profitability is available:

Von der Flut zusammenhangloser Eindrücke bestürmt,
zwischen Langeweile und Interesse eingespannt,
eilig, rastlos, sorgenvoll und überbürdet,
leidenschaftlich aber lieblos wirkend, zehrt er
von Geist und Seele, ... so verfällt er der Erschöpfung,
die nicht Ruhe, sondern Genüsse verlangt ... pochen
die gequälten, unterdrückten Sinne an ihre Tore und
verlangen Berausung ... es entstehen Vergnügungen
sensationeller Art, hastig, banal, prunkhaft, unwahr
und vergiftet. Diese Freuden grenzen an Verzweiflung. 66

Many depictions of city-life by European and American novelists come to mind which are lengthy paraphrasings of Rathenau's own description, and which would include Koeppen's own evocations of restless urban societies in (say) Munich and New York. Not least important is the degradation of sexual experience to the level of a consumer activity, to "der verfügbaren Kompensation für die disziplinierte Abhängigkeit und Dirigiertheit, die sachliche Monotonie und Rationalität der Arbeitswelt, ja des gesamten organisierten Daseins."⁶⁷ Riesman's "inner-directed" personality becomes "outer-directed"⁶⁸ which links significantly with the core of the "conservative" attack we have been considering.

An important motif in Koeppen's "Weltbild" is the impotence of individual man before the arbitrary interventions of Schicksal, which develops into the impotence of society to control events or its own destiny, as the dimensions and the politico-economic character of society itself become vast and complex. The absurdity of this human situation and its uncontrollability become an integral part of the author's apocalyptic pessimism. A sociologist's caveat runs thus: "Die industrielle Entwicklung hat die Welt mit einem Kosmos von Organisationen überzogen, deren funktionale Verwicklung die Grenzen der Berechenbarkeit wohl schon überschritten hat ... Die wirtschaftlichen, politischen und sozialen transkontinentalen Wetterlagen sind unheilswanger ... an der Unmöglichkeit einer rationalen Erkennbarkeit der Determinanten dessen, was vor sich

geht, ist auch kein Zweifel."⁶⁹ Just as the "moralische Messbarkeit" of modern culture is found questionable, and old concepts of "Schutz und Gehorsam, Pietät und Treue, Zorn und Liebe" are no longer valid, or must be re-valued (Von Süde is concerned with a re-valuation of 'Pflicht'), so there is equal confusion or powerlessness to control or direct the "rationale Eigengesetzlichkeit der Wirtschaft auf der Basis der Marktvergesellschaftung"; "die Eigengesetzlichkeiten einer durchindustrialisierten Wirtschaft imponieren in der Vielzahl, Unvermeidbarkeit und Reichweite ihrer Auswirkungen ... als grandios überpersönlich, fast als 'metahuman'."⁷⁰ Moral issues relating individual to individual are overridden, subordinated to more abstract and more complex associations between the cipher-individual and remote institutions. What the critic of contemporary political morality - or amorality - calls "die durchgreifende Politisierung der Moral"⁷¹ lies at the heart of Keetenheuve's cynical revulsion at Restoration Germany, enmeshed in the network of opportunist world politics. So also information, not to mention experience itself, becomes second-hand; Günter Blöcker confirms: "Der sinnliche Kontakt zählt nicht mehr, die Wirklichkeit wird sekundär, wir nehmen sie in Form von Abkürzungen und Ersatzstoffen zu uns. Die fraglosen Erleichterungen, die uns die Technik gewährt, werden mit einer Verminderung des Realitätsgefühls bezahlt ..."⁷² 'Facts', events and opinions are processed by media and the "Bewusstseinsindustrie" (Enzensberger); their original 'truth' remains unknowable or is distorted beyond recognition in the processing. Solzhenitsyn, in his Nobel Prize oration, One Word of Truth, points to related difficulties of communication: "We are overwhelmed by a torrent of events; in the space of one minute half the world learns of any event, but neither radio nor newspapers bring us any yardstick by which we can measure these events and judge them according to the laws which prevail in parts of the world unfamiliar to us." Individuals and groups develop attitudes which bear no relation to realities, for the

latter are conveyed 'aus zweiter Hand'; technology, the rational means by which "überdimensionierte Verhältnisse"⁷³ operate in society, becomes the means also by which collective moods and passions are 'engineered'⁷⁴ and exalted in fascist movements. This relates to the foregoing discussion of the 'machine-technology-war' equation. For Keetenheuve in Das Treibhaus government had become "exiliert von der Nation, exiliert vom Naturlichen, exiliert vom Menschlichen".⁷⁴ Koeppen's characters are lost in vast urban, aimless complexes, they are disoriented in an age marked by "die Unübersichtlichkeit, Kompliziertheit und Künstlichkeit der zivilisatorischen Strukturen des technischen Zeitalters."⁷⁵ The truth remains inextricably embedded in a welter of contradictory impressions and opinions; only the subjective is knowable, and this area of experience is isolated and alienated.

The metaphysical props have gone; Emrich's pregnant phrase summarises neatly the traumatic development: "Die Welt ist in keinem Sinne mehr vorkonstituiert",⁷⁶ a situation which in this case is discussed in terms of its implications for new techniques and structures in literature. R. Taylor introduces selections of Lessing's work in language which reveals the nature of the transformation which has gradually taken place since Lessing's time when Ratio comprehended a stable and progressive ontological structure related to the triumph of moral virtue and harmony: the ideals of the Enlightenment were based on "a confidence in the power of the human reason to construct a total Weltbild on the data of experience: the natural moral order of things would emerge through the creative intervention of the human spirit preconditioned to the attainment of epistemological and ethical truth."⁷⁷ The twentieth century situation we have been discussing, certainly in its relation to Koeppen's own thought and work, appears to have lost all confidence in the power of human reason (at least in the way it has been misused), - or the likelihood of any other power to accomplish Utopia, and all belief that a 'moral

order of things' exists. "Ich suchte Utopia" writes the author in his Autobiographische Skizze,⁷⁸ but in his later years, by contrast, he quotes Kafka: "Es ist unendlich viel Hoffnung in der Welt, nur nicht für uns."⁷⁹ On the other hand, some belief in the creative power of the human spirit, when that spirit is the artist's, remains, and distinguishes the latter from the burgher, or society and civilisation in general. This is an important ingredient of Romanticist and later Expressionist thought and it belongs to Koeppen's view of the artist as essentially the 'Aussen-seiter'. It is important to emphasise that the author does not identify with all features of Expressionist thought; nor are we concerned with an analysis of the similarities and the dissimilarities, but rather at this stage with an investigation of the main features of the writer's view of the world and its roots in contemporary modes of thinking. Koeppen was fascinated as well as disenchanted with the 'Grossstadt', and saw his role as the anonymous and forever wandering observer of this centre of the human maelstrom - "Ich liebte Berlin, ich liebte seine Wärme und seine Kälte, ich liebte die Schönheit seiner hässlichen preussischen Strassen ... das Kraftfeld der grossen Stadt."⁸⁰ Hofmannsthal, on returning from the tropics to a Germany lacking integrity and a recognisable national identity - except that associated with the greedy search for possessions, compared his native land ("hier ist niemand gesammelt ... hier ist es nicht heimlich") to a "ruhelose, freudelose Herberge Wer möchte in einem Hotel sterben, wenn es nicht sein muss."⁸¹ For Koeppen the hotel becomes the traveller's sanctuary, the writer's temporary home from whose windows the unrest and seething turmoil of the aimless and 'lonely' crowd can be observed. A Viennese writer comments on the analogous society which frequents the Café Central (recalling the Romanisches Café Koeppen loved to visit in Berlin): "Seine Bewohner sind grösstenteils Leute deren Menschenfeindschaft so heftig ist, wie ihr Verlangen nach Menschen ... ohne die Sicherheiten, die das Gefühl

gibt, Teilchen eines Ganzen zu sein."⁸² The café offers an "Ersatztotalität" which invites the writer "zum Untertauchen und Zerfliessen". On the other hand, some more activist thinkers placed their hopes in political change and socialist mass-movements, from which - in their concretised collectivities - Koeppen felt alienated. These mass-movements became one of the darker sides of Romantic idealism which engulfed the individual for whose salvation and identity there was initially so much concern.

One writer considers the double nature of the aftermath, which is relevant to our study of the artist in German society; the image of the artist, solitary, despised, but independent, free, spiritually superior to his Philistine tormentors, is offset by the veneration of another artist, "the sinister artist whose materials are men", tyrants destroying and creating societies at whatever cost. The positive heritage of Romanticism stands for the "creative impulse, the unique, personal, undictated beliefs, individual conscience ... contempt for opportunism, regard for variety, scepticism of oppressive general formulae and final solutions", the negative for "self-prostration before superior beings and the exaltation of power, passion and cruelty"⁸³. We can associate Koeppen with the whole of the positive side as presented here, and with a revulsion from the power and cruelty of the darker side. But the traditional artist's struggle on behalf of the hungry and oppressed, on behalf of 'Geist' and against 'Macht', was often hindered by the ambiguities in the artist's 'calling' - a calling to assist mankind in its struggle against arbitrary power, implacable Fate or whatever, and yet conscious of its apartness, and its distinctness from all other professions and activities. Thus the exaltation of individual freedom, conscience and feelings, the positive side of the Romantic ideal, failed to prevent the irrational mass-hysterias which a more involved participation in the workings of society for the desired transformation of that society might have prevented. Roy Pascal sees this problem as being peculiar to the

Expressionist generation of writers: *become the focus of satirical targets*

Throughout the period we find this double attraction: on the one hand, a constant harping on the distinctive uniqueness of the artist, his dissociation from normal moral and social obligations etc.; on the other the accentuation of his representativeness, his social mission, that often takes the form of a claim to be called to redeem mankind. This polarity reaches its highest tension among the Expressionists ...⁸⁴

It is the paradox of the conservative thinker, particularly the German, it seems, who is in revolt against the prevailing socio-economic order in the name of spiritual freedom, and individual totality of being. Hence, as another commentator confirms, "diese Schriftsteller (vereinen) ... Konservatismus mit einer tiefgreifenden Sehnsucht nach Veränderung".⁸⁵

The problem also links with the fact that just as the modern experience of crisis, fragmentation, and estrangement we have been considering has attained universal validity, and is not peculiar to Germany alone, just as the "Erlebnis des Wirklichkeitsverlustes"⁸⁶ is a theme for world literature, - "national differenzierte historisch-gesellschaftliche Besonderungen oder geistige Völkerschicksale (können) nicht zu den ausschlaggebenden Bedingungen gehören"⁸⁷ - so the artist's appeal is addressed to humanity at large; in its generalised nature lies its strength and its weakness. Koeppen is interested in nothing less than the whole world; as an artist he represents a world ethic, which scorns the hybris of capitalistic power, communistic totalitarianism, - only the name of the economic structure makes the difference - and European racial superiority. But the writer is also "abgelöst",⁸⁸ to use Rosenhaupt's term, outside society.

Like Keetenheuve, the artist sees more of the game when the 'distance' is preserved. At first - we see abundant evidence of this in the section, "Early Life and Experiences" - the attitude is merely one of revulsion against conformism, material satiation and egoistic complacency; these

features of the burgher society, the stock in trade of satirical targets in European literature in the last two centuries, become merely elements in a broader aesthetic metaphysic in which the writer takes on sacred rôles. On one level, the contempt is directed to the self-chosen and self-imposed prison in which the burgher, cocoon-like, shuns the life and reality outside him or resists its intrusion: "Wenn die Grenze der bürgerlichen Welt einmal erkannt ist, erscheint diese nunmehr als ein Raum, in dem das Individuum eingekerkert und gepeinigt wird. Die Gefangenschaft wird das Sinnbild für das Leben in dieser Welt."⁸⁹ The prison has concrete manifestations, such as dullness and insipidity - in Koeppen's early novel, provincial boredom is summarised thus: "es ist ein Jammernest, um zwölf Uhr alles zappendüster."⁹⁰ Both early novels in fact contain emotional experiences which represent attempts to escape and overcome the prison. Von Süde's attempt brings a confrontation with police authority. "Insofern der Mensch die fest umgrenzten geistigen und sozialen Bezirke des allgemein Anerkannten verlässt, sich ... neue Ziele schafft, muss er notwendig die Missbilligung des bürgerlichen Menschen auf sich ziehen."⁹¹ Friedrich's passion for Sibylle, in the first novel, is described as a "Leidenschaft, die Friedrich erfüllte und der er sein Ich, sein Wesen unterworfen hatte"⁹² - other realities pale in comparison; but the burgher - "Er entgeht der Gefahr, sich in das Uferlose und Unverantwortliche zu verlieren."⁹³ The "Bürger-Mensch" antithesis becomes the extreme extension of the conflict; some aspects of the polarisation, with which Koeppen would readily concur, are presented by Theo Haubach:

Bürger; d.i. kümmerlicher Mensch mit vermoosten
Horizonten, enger begrenzter Nörgler am Leben,
Sattzufriedener oder hämischer Besserer ...,
ein Blutloser, Ordnungssüchtiger, Feind aller
Höhen und Tiefen, Vergreister, Steriler,
Botmässiger, nie ganz Reiner, nie ganz Böser
..... Doch Mensch: Ungebärdig und nie ohne
Chaos, Teufel und Gott, Tendenzloser, Sehn-
süchtiger nach Abenteuer und Rätsel, voll
tropischer und polarer Stürme in den Wettern
der Seele, oft Tier, oft Engel, Aufbäumender
zum gestirnten Himmel ...⁹⁴

The Promethean revolt, the defender of chaos versus order, of artistic spontaneity versus the uniformity of civilisation, the frequenter of heights and depths where reality is known in its beauty and terror, these facets of the rebel-outsider are cherished by Koeppen, and are intensified as time progresses and his alienation deepens. During a later visit to Stalingrad, - Gehlen's language recurs, "Ich kam mir wie eine Ameise in einem vollendeten Ameisenstaat vor"⁹⁵ - he is confronted with clinical urban architectural design, technical 'beauty', but "aus einer alten, nicht ganz verschütteten Ahnung wünschte man sich zwecklose Schönheit, unnütze Schönheit, die gab es nicht ohne Götter, die gab es nicht ohne Eros, nicht ohne Unordnung, Einsamkeit, Verwirrung, Ekstase, Trotz, Verzweiflung, Höllenfahrten."⁹⁶ A "puritanisch, konformistisch"⁹⁷ country leaves something to be desired, whatever its other achievements; and the artist's fear of the constricting, even deadening hand of utilitarian planning is again evident. The Utopia built on artefacts, "dem Wirksamen, Machbaren, und Zweckmässigen"⁹⁸ is again the Machine at work stifling the creative spontaneity in the individual. The latter is part of Geist which conquers and overrules determinism and necessity.

Hence the creative power and function of the artist; in an alienated society, dehumanised, mechanised and rationalised to the point of suffocation, the artist alone remains 'whole', or - as this also becomes less possible with time - alone cherishes and embodies the consciousness of unfragmented identity and the divine autonomy of man. For the Expressionist only the artist could create a better and more habitable world: "Ich bin das Bewusstsein, die Welt ist mein Ausdruck".⁹⁹ All hope of recovering the divine image is for Koeppen a tragic illusion; but the artist's creative powers remain a special endowment distinguishing him from the rest of society. Stefan George, a renowned exponent of this Romantic article of faith, had stressed the distinctiveness: "Der Künstler allein vielleicht auch der beruflose Betrachter der sich von diesen

allgemeinheiten unabhängig hält hat noch die Möglichkeit in einem Reich zu leben wo der Geist das oberste gesetz gibt. Daher seine absonderung und sein stolz."¹⁰⁰ Erich Kahler considers that the more functionalised and collectivised society becomes, "um so mehr müssen die echten Künstler gänzlich vereinzelt, vereinsamt, entfremdete Individuen werden".¹⁰¹

Kahler sees the artist as distinctive from society not in degree of height and depth as formerly, the contrast is "ein Gegensatz der Artung". On the other hand, Koeppen is too pessimistic to believe that even the artist has remained, as Kahler asserts, a "integrales Individuum".¹⁰³ It is part of the crisis of the author's developing situation that he is no longer such a being - just as Keetenheuve is countless personalities, mostly unrelated or contradictory, all residing in his own person. A review in which he discusses the modern French novel is entitled, Auf der Suche nach dem verlorenen Ich".¹⁰⁴ His constant search for novelty is no doubt part of this quest. Keetenheuve is not only alienated from society, he is totally estranged from himself also, even questioning what that 'self' is. The Machine, it seems, has done its work - "Es fällt auf, dass die Aussenseiter ... Wissenschaft und Technik ablehnend gegenüberstehen";¹⁰⁵ what Muschg calls "die gespenstische Unwirklichkeit einer Lautsprecherkultur"¹⁰⁶ (one recalls Edwin's experience with technical apparatus in Tauben im Gras) has made the world uncongenial if not artistically uninhabitable for the writer. We must now examine Koeppen's own attitudes and observations on the position of the artist (and in particular, his own position) in twentieth century society.

Despite the critiques of the earlier writers, the frenzied hatred of the Expressionists, for example, directed at the degradation of man, despite the longing of Hofmannsthal, "Ich sehnte mich ... fort aus Europa",¹⁰⁷ there was at least, after the first breakdown of civilisation which ended in 1918, a revolutionary fervour and a belief amongst many that it could be effective in calling man back to a re-discovery of his true self. It

is doubtful whether Koeppen ever entertained any high hopes of such a re-discovery, or believed in the effectiveness of any kind of revolution. He is aware, however, of the change in mood after 1945. "Der Geist ist rechts und links gleichermassen heimatlos ... Die Begriffe von rechts und links haben sich hoffnungslos verschoben. An den Weltfrieden glaubt niemand mehr. Jeder lebt ... in der Gewissheit eines Verhängnisses ..." ¹⁰⁸

Karl Horst comments on the spiritual vacuum which has intensified the sense of nihilism and the alienation which Koeppen feels: "Ein grundsätzlicher Unterschied zwischen damals und heute ist darin zu sehen, dass man in den zwanziger Jahren noch an die Möglichkeit einer Revolution glaubte, während unserer Generation dieser Glaube verloren gegangen ist. Aus der revolutionären Utopie der zwanziger Jahre ist die apokalyptische Utopie unserer Zeit geworden." ¹⁰⁹ It is as though the holocaust had effected a new and even bitterer traumatic caesura in national history, creating a havoc and a disorientation confirming the worst fears of those who linked technology and the Machine with war, fascism and mass-manipulation. "1945 zerriss das Band, das die Deutschen mit ihrer Geschichte verknüpfte." ¹¹⁰ The forms and dimensions of the artist's predicament in society as we have discussed them become magnified and his very confrontation with reality, his ability to explore and fathom that reality become more uncertain. The breakdown in the substance and structure of society, the weakening of organic communal ties, the tendencies to abstraction and reification, affect the artistic vision and the dialectical relationship between writer and the reality to be mediated; problems of communicability, the preoccupation with "das Sagbare", "das Erzählbare", the changing relationship between language and reality, these become matters of concern for Koeppen, affecting the writer's craft, just as they have concerned other German writers (Martin Walser, Uwe Johnson, Heissenbüttel, ¹¹¹ Heinrich Vormweg, ¹¹² to name some of the most prominent), not to mention the 'nouveau roman' school and their (epistemological)

radicalisation of the novel. Even in the nineteenth century, the 'realist' writer controlled his material, the world he described and created; he maintained his authorial 'distance' as a kind of Olympian observer,¹¹³ relating self-consciously to the realities observed. But Hofmannsthal had already noted: "es hakt nichts ins andere ein";¹¹⁴ fragmented reality is more difficult to control. Theo Stammen makes a lucid distinction between the nature of the writer's task (and hopes) in the nineteenth century, the age of the 'realist' and 'naturalist' novel, and the changed situation in the twentieth. In the former case, the approach is a scientific apprehension of reality, an achievement to which the writer gives patient but optimistic credence: "Dichterisches Erfassen der Wirklichkeit vollzieht sich analog zum wissenschaftlichen Erkennen: systematisch, objektiv, umfassend, empirisch, rational ... Ein Wille zur wahren Erkenntnis beseelt die Dichter ..."¹¹⁵ Scientific and psychoanalytic discoveries have destroyed the hope or the possibility of "wahre Erkenntnis", and the alienation has invaded art and literature. Stammen now speaks of "die Unfähigkeit des Menschen, die ihm gegenüberstehende Welt zu begreifen und sie geistig-ordnend zu durchdringen, auch und gerade da, wo das gesellschaftliche System - wie in der heutigen Zeit - im extremsten Sinne durchrationalisiert ist ... diese komplizierte Ordnung einer beängstigenden Manipulierbarkeit des Menschen, die das Gefühl des Entfremdetseins aufkommen lässt."¹¹⁶ (my underlining). The destruction of the "Adäquatheit von Abbild und Wirklichkeit"¹¹⁷ ensues, the writer seeks new forms and new language to fathom the unfathomable; "Dadurch wird jede Beziehung zwischen Ich und Welt, Ich und Du zu einem nicht aufzulösenden Problem".¹¹⁸ "Nicht nur das Ich ist atomisiert, sondern auch das Gegenüber".¹¹⁹ "Die Identität der Personen, das Unverwechselbare und Einheitliche ihrer Charaktere, ... ist damit aufgehoben".¹²⁰ Walter Jens refers to the new autonomy - and therefore uncontrollability, of the new realities: "das Ich verliert vor dem Zugriff des 'Ist' seine Macht, das Objekt entzieht

sich dem Subjekt, der Gegenstand beraubt den Autor seiner
'Schöpfer'-Funktion, ... die Einheit zerfällt."¹²¹ Hubert Becher sees
the effects upon literary presentation: "Die Dichter breiten ... ein oft
regelloses Wacheinander von augenblicklichen Erlebnisfetzen (aus)"¹²²
Koeppen writes: "... ich habe nicht geschlafen, ich war unruhig, es
ereignete sich nichts, ich erlebte viel, ich konnte es nicht fassen, es
entglitt mir, hundert Titel, es raste die Zeit."¹²³ The difficulties raise
the question of the function of literature - quite apart from the value
which contemporary society places on it:

Das war einmal anders, besser, es war einmal
eine lesende Zeit. Wenn einer vor der Katastrophe,
vor dem ersten Weltkrieg, noch etwas länger, ein
Werk vollbracht hatte, konnte er am Abend spazieren-
gehen und erhielt ein schönes Grab. Die bürgerliche
Epoche, die der Schriftsteller zersetzte, zerstörte,
die er in die Luft jagen musste, gewährte ihm diesen
Frieden. (my underlining) 124

The writer is seen here not merely as an observer of historical develop-
ments, but also as an accomplice - his very capacity to be such, to
influence people and events, has in more recent times been severely
questioned; the investigation of his role and function is seen as one
more token of the intellectual's estranged relation with society, for
which, or to which, he allegedly speaks. In a world where truth is
relativised, communication - of self, of truth, of private experience -
is problematic; in the wake of Nietzsche, we are reminded that "meine
Wahrheit ist die Wahrheit meines Augenblicks"¹²⁵

The experienced world has become less habitable and less congenial -
a typical symptomatic assessment is made at one point in Koeppen's latest
prose-item, Angst: the present setting is America, though the earlier
years recalled take the reader back to Germany. But the milieu is
representative:

Stille erzog das Kind. Die Welt war nicht laut,
die Lärmautomaten waren noch nicht losgelassen.
Die Welt war sehr böse. Nun ist die Welt sehr
böse und laut. 126

Koeppen's unease and melancholy, the source and mood of his "Moral",¹²⁷ develop into intensely felt scepticism over the solubility of fundamental problems such as that of ending world strife and destruction. The goddess, Nemesis, demands unending retribution for the follies and myopic obsessions of mankind. Not merely is the new message that there is no revolutionary renewal of the human spirit possible:-

Er wollte Jugendträume verwirklichen, er glaubte damals an eine Wandlung, doch bald sah er, wie töricht dieser Glaube war, die Menschen waren natürlich dieselben geblieben, sie dachten gar nicht daran, andere zu werden, ...¹²⁸

but when a political revolution is accomplished, there is the increasing fear, as Büchner already knew, (and Danton's cynicism is close to Koeppen's¹²⁹), that "Zuweilen flüchtet die Freiheit in den unterhöhlten Palast, und aus der Hütte tritt der neue Zwingherr".¹³⁰ In this cyclical dilemma man is abandoned, "einsam", "ungeborgen", left to his own resources, whilst the writer and artist rage against such a pitiless situation: "zornig gegen die grausame Natur und gegen den gleichgültigen Gott."¹³¹

Counterpointing this at times nihilistic pessimism is the writer's outraged moral sensitivity, his "Gegenanerzählen",¹³² the Utopia implicit in the profoundest disenchantment, the writer's anguished observation of the pain, the injustice, the "Zwänge", ("Mein alter Widerstand gegen jeden Zwang"¹³³), the cri du coeur of the enraged intellectual witnessing the folly of internecine extremisms, - which places Koeppen at times very close to the admonitions of Camus. But the standpoint is that of the resigned observer. As the world crowds in upon the inner sanctuary, the stronghold of individual freedom, the early proclamations of apartness and resistance become more vehement. The writer's position is more apart and isolated than anyone else's. "Ist nicht jeder Schriftsteller ein Eremit? Allein an seinem Schreibtisch?"¹³⁴ "Ich bin kein Mann des geselligen Mittelpunktes. Ich bin ein Zuschauer, ein stiller Wahrnehmer, ein Schweiger, ein Beobachter, ich scheue die Menge nicht, aber ich genieße gern die

Einsamkeit in der Menge ..."¹³⁵ The lonely cries of Job¹³⁶ are frequently identified with; Job in fact splendidly illustrates the critical and self-critical position of the writer as Koeppen sees this figure, seeing all points of view as an observer, and yet still sharing the sufferings of humanity: "Ijob geht scharf mit sich ins Gericht ... ein mit unbegreifbaren Gesetzesbüchern schlecht ausgerüsteter Richter ... Der Richter, der selbst auch der Ankläger, der Angeklagte und der Zeuge ist, empört sich gegen den Gesetzgeber ..."¹³⁷ To understand and document the variety of experience, one must preserve the isolating distance; two French writers are summoned to defend and justify the "Standort des Aussenseiters". Flaubert had proclaimed: "Wer selbst an einer Handlung beteiligt ist, sieht sie nicht in ihrem Zusammenhang; der Spieler sieht nichts von der Poesie, die im Spiel enthalten ist, der Wüstling nichts von der Grösse der Ausschweifung, der Liebende nichts von dem Gedicht der Liebe, und der Fromme nichts von der Kraft der Religion."¹³⁸ And Camus had pointed to the greatest and most central dilemma of all men of action, if they are also "sensitive, considerate and plucky", to borrow E.M.Forster's epithets:¹³⁹ "Nichts Grosses oder Neues ist möglich - zumindest in unserer abendländischen Kultur. Es bleibt nur die Tat. Aber wer Seelengrösse besitzt, wird sich zur Tat nur mit Verzweiflung entschliessen."¹⁴⁰ In the same context he records sympathetically the experience of being in, and yet not of the world, which was common to "Augustinus, Kierkegaard, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Dostojewski, Genet, and Michaux":

... haben sie doch gemeinsam ein verwandtes Gefühl des unwiederholbaren, stets verlorenen, verspielten Augenblicks, des von Grund auf Gefährdet-in-aer-Welt-seins, ein nicht abzuschüttelndes Fremd- und Ichgefühl, allen anderen entgegengesetzt und doch mit allen und allem verbunden, weltverflochten, gewiss, verwurzelt wie jeder, und doch mit Wissen und Wollen ein Unbehauster ...¹⁴¹

The phenomenology of the intellectual in society must include in this case statements of the author's regarding his own psychological responses to taking part in group activities of any kind: "Ich bin nicht

zuletzt deshalb Schriftsteller geworden, weil ich kein Handelnder sein mag. Ich liebe es nicht, mich auf den Markt zu begeben..."¹⁴² The artist intuits the cosmic forces in which man is enmeshed, "kein Parteigänger, und er freut sich nicht mit den Siegern,"¹⁴³ directing mankind through the Word ("Ich glaube an das Wort"¹⁴⁴) to a vague, mythical freedom, which has no blue-print, or possible practical realisation: "oft in der traurigen Lage der Cassandra ... er ahnt immer, wo die ewige Bastille steht und wie sie sich tarnt, und seine blosse ... täglich erkämpfte vogelfreie Existenz zersetzt doch allmählich jede Mauer",¹⁴⁵ pointing the way to an uncertain, open undefined future, to reach which requires courage and strength of purpose: "ein Aussenseiter, der letzte Unversorgte, immer zu einem Wagnis bereit, einer ungewissen Zukunft verpflichtet ..."¹⁴⁶ The "Sendung", - for there is no doubt that we are dealing with an artistic mission, however forlorn the cause, however "sinnlos" the rage and revolt - is rarely concretised (except when Utopian elements, or a "poetische Gegenwelt" is inferred from the castigation of realities); the "politischer Mitmensch"¹⁴⁷ is occasionally (but not always consistently) credited with "unberechenbare Wirkung", he is a "Vorahner", dictators fear him, but the strength and the weakness of the task to which the writer is "committed" (Koeppen dismisses the ascription to the term "engagierte Literatur" of anything conceptually new or revolutionary) by reason of his calling ("berufen", but "ohne Beruf") emerge from the following description:

... es ist der einzig mögliche Standort, ein anregendes Spannungsverhältnis. Ein wenig l'art pour l'art, gewiss, aber der Schriftsteller kämpft auch, nimmt Partei, nur für etwas, das noch nicht eingetreten ist, vielleicht nie eintreten wird.¹⁴⁹

The relationship is one of tension and dialectical opposition. The jealously defended autonomy of art preserves strong echoes of an earlier epoch, when a "Kunstwerk" represented both an integrated, stable identity of the writer himself, and an integrated relationship between the writer and a stable social order. Some politically "progressive" contemporaries,

not to mention those concerned with the "end of literature" debate which has taken place in literary circles in recent years, might view the special position and role accorded by Koeppen to the artist as dangerously expressive of conservative images of society. But the freedom of the artist becomes the ultimate freedom Koeppen is prepared to defend to the last. It is part of that wider freedom for which he has a deep-rooted "Heimweh". Repeatedly we are told that the reception of his work has no meaning for him, - except in terms of the commercial aspects of his own physical survival. Because of the latter factor he envies Proust, Gide and Flaubert¹⁵⁰ who were not dependent on publishers' advance payments, or market considerations. Nothing is more irrelevant or divorced from a work of art than the cash-nexus, "market" factors, or production figures. Again we are confronted with an echo of the earlier German antinomy between "Geist" and materialism, deeply rooted, as we have seen in the tradition of German life and letters.¹⁵¹ In this respect Koeppen asserts the virtues of asceticism, the rejection of the consumer-ethos: "... kein Wort gegen freiwillige Askese und gewolltes Mönchstum! Ich halte sie für die höchsten menschlichen Daseinsformen."¹⁵² Gehlen, preoccupied with the same ethos, observes: "die Askese (wäre) das Signal einer neuen Epoche".¹⁵³ The writer is different from the community, does not share their dependencies, their props, "der Schriftsteller arbeitet ohne Netz."¹⁵⁴ He knows that he is taking on "diese absurde, diese unmittelbare Existenz, diese Danebenposition in der Arbeitswelt, dieses Gegendasein in einer kapitalistischen Ordnung ..."¹⁵⁵ The reaction to the interviewer's question as to whether the writer could undergo a process of "Umschulung", "etwa auf Sachbücher, um der finanziellen Misere zu entgehen", (a question which tells us much about the interviewer as well as the new conditions under which the contemporary writer works), is as expected as it is forthright:

Das Schreiben, um das es hier geht, ist keine Frage der Erwägung, der Marktanalyse, der Berechnung, der Erfolgsaussicht ... vielleicht wäre gerade sein Schwierigsein, seine Nichtanpassung,

das Sichnichtfügen sein hoher Wert."¹⁵⁶

The modern discussion of a work as a "Ware"¹⁵⁷ has no relevance; for then its value is measured by public, impersonal and mechanical forces. The same horror and anxiety are experienced when Koeppen is occasionally invited to work on film or television scripts orientated to public taste and audiences - "Man engagiert den Narren, man bezahlt ihn."¹⁵⁸ On one level there is the conventional dismissal of conservative and institutionalised concepts of what is acceptable and "anständig" (one recalls Fritz Raddatz's press-series, "Droht eine Diktatur der Anständigkeit?"), in relation to repressive sexual mores, the obeisance to - Koeppen's recurring term of abuse, - "der allgemeinen Sitte".¹⁵⁹ On another level there is the sociological concept of the "public" as an abstraction, the dehumanising Leviathan which it was for Kierkegaard - "an all-embracing something which is nothing - a mirage".¹⁶⁰ The pedantic intellectualism of the misguided, misunderstanding literary critic and researcher are equally dismissed as offending the work of art which exists in its own right.¹⁶¹ The public's moralistic evaluation of the written word further alienates the writer:

Es gibt gute und schlechte Schriften, aber es gibt keine moralischen oder unmoralischen Bücher ... Ich zähle den Marquis de Sade durchaus zu den moralischen Schriftstellern und halte manchen moralischen Traktat für ein schlechtes und damit auch für ein moralloses Buch.¹⁶²

Walter Jens has recorded the public's or the "Establishment's" view of what is good or "positive" literature, and how the nonconformist writer stands in relation to the ideologically polarised world he inhabits:

... die klassenjenseitige Intelligenz - vom Weltkrieg bis zum Algerienkonflikt hat es sich deutlich gezeigt - ist längst schon zerfallen. Der Schriftsteller, als ein Archetypus des Nonkonformismus, hat weder in West noch in Ost einen Partner, an den er glaubt, und den er für wert, würdig und stark genug hält, seine Ideale zu realisieren ...¹⁶³

There remains nothing else but "die Sehnsucht nach einer verbindlichen Ordnung, der die Isolierten guten Mutes beipflichten können."¹⁶⁴ No

socialist would sit with Ulbricht, no writer, "diktatorenfeindlich und auf die Freiheit bedacht" can ignore "die Verbindung von Bombe und Kreuz"¹⁶⁵ (We sense that Jens would like to attach some "links" connotation to Koeppen's polemic, and we know the latter's response.) One recalls Jens' vituperative attack upon those who would seek to drive the writer back to the harmless ivory tower, make him the remunerated hack of Cabinets and clerisy, the devotee of "edle Einfalt und stille Grösse":

... der Prosaist hat, als schonungsloser Analytiker, in Diktaturen nur die Wahl zwischen Leben und Tod, in demokratischen Ländern immerhin die Entscheidung zwischen Missachtung und Ruhm. Wer, hier, das "Positive" verleugnet und, dort, den "sozialistischen Realismus" missachtet, wer, hier dem Optimismus abgeschworen hat und entschlossen den Fortschritt bezweifelt, gilt den Oberen als suspekt und zersetzend. Der Begriff "Intellektueller" ist - von Jahr zu Jahr mehr - wieder zum Schimpfwort, die humanistische Haltung des "auditor et altera pars" eine Beute der Verachtung geworden.¹⁶⁶

The commentary here on "Optimismus" and "Fortschritt" relates directly to Koeppen - the reactions to his post-war trilogy of novels are relevant, as is the failure of the public to understand its wider and deeper implications.

For the intellectual as Koeppen is presented here, the enemy is the label which falsifies reality, the critical judgment which categorises the author or the work or attempts to rationalise the artistic motivation or impulse; it is the metaphorical - or metaphysical - prison which stultifies the realisation of inner powers and freedom;

Die Begriffe links oder rechts sind ausgelaugt
... Ich bin für die Freiheit, für meine und
jedermanns Freiheit, und ich meine das sehr
direkt, noch im allerkleinsten, für jeden Tag
und nicht im Sinne einer nationalen Phrase.¹⁶⁷

Alfred Andersch has commented upon the "metaphysical", one might say meta-political dimensions of human freedom which for Koeppen are basic to social or political desiderata. An irreducible self is safeguarded against state and collectivity with the same fervour as the religious Reformer defended the "Freedom of the Christian Man" in an earlier age

when both State and private person were beginning to debate the areas of their respective jurisdictions:

Obgleich Koeppen sich betont areligiös gibt, transzendiert sein Unterbewusstsein den abstrakten Begriff des Politischen in das Sein einer konkreten bösen Macht an sich, der sich der Mensch zu stellen hat. Der Roman Koeppens ist damit ... nicht mehr humanistisch im Sinne der Aufklärung, sondern metaphysisch.¹⁶⁸

Typical prisons of the spirit, of the "Phantasie", are the social determinist's (always abortive) programming of future Utopias; like Colin Wilson's "Outsider" (quite a number of German culture-critics have noted Wilson's treatment of the theme), Koeppen has surrendered faith in the scientific humanist's "Aufklärungsglaube"; like the modern "Romantic", he disdains Cartesian aridities, preferring the indeterminacies of modern physics.¹⁶⁹ An obstacle to the endless search of the traveller is the frontier, "die Grenze", which hides the mysterious, the unusual, "das Neue", "das Fremde"; but he does not travel in order to arrive, and certainly not to stay. "Ich bin zu Gast ... Ich will keinen Besitz."¹⁷⁰ "Ich bin sehr gern Ausländer". He re-echoes Baudelaire's wish to be "là, où je ne suis pas." He seeks a "Heimat", perhaps even a "verbindliche Ordnung", to use Jens's phrase, so long as "verbindlich" remained a loose and general connotation. When asked to locate his "Heimat", Koeppen replied: "Ich habe keine Heimat ... Um nicht blosszustehen, nenne ich Städte. Berlin, Hamburg, Paris, Rom, London, New York, Tokio."¹⁷¹ (A personal apocalyptic vision consists of dying in an overcrowded Tokyo Underground as a result of an earth-tremor). As we have seen, the "Grossstadt" is the physical focus of the tensions in European culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and is - with its counterpart, "der Wald" - central to Koeppen's relation to the century as a whole. It is here that modern man achieves his ultimate self-alienation and moves towards a Koeppenesque nightmare of the final conflagration (unless he escapes to lunar regions in time). The writer's alienation from society

is measurable by the choice of direction which he feels society is taking. Most of Koeppen's characters are "Gescheiterte"; where they are artists, their failure reflects the world's failure. Cassandra knows there is no solution or meaning to it all, but the world survives by believing that there is. "Wer, wenn nicht der Schriftsteller, soll in unserer Gesellschaft die Rolle der Kassandra spielen?"¹⁷² The great uncertainty lies in the effectiveness of the written word, one of the discomfiting dilemmas of the late twentieth century intellectual. At the end of his oration, responding to the literary prize which linked him with Georg Büchner, he scourges the televised sample of Western "culture" offered to a hungry, emaciated Third World audience of viewers, the cocktail glass, the inferior pop song, the Hollywood siren. A bankrupt technology, could be rescued only by the writer's ("Dichter" is now used instead of "Schriftsteller") "ihm geschenkte Gnade". This revealing phrase, with its overtones of a bygone age, a phrase dear for example to critics of the Emil Staiger school, is the key to the artist's battle to preserve what is left of a culture, and therefore of a society - the residue, that is, that is worth preserving;

... ohne die ihm geschenkte Gnade werden die
Mittelungsapparate der Gedanken, der Worte,
der Bilder nur ein Geräusch erzeugen, Geräusch
und Schatten und Wind und den letzten Tornado,
der alles begräbt.¹⁷³

The state of alienated reclusiveness in which Koeppen now lives, has gathered new dimensions in addition to those we associate with the anger and frustrations of youth and early manhood. We shall first turn our attention to the early period before discussing the development of these various responses to society, as they reflect in his work, examining on the way the manner in which he pursued the aim he set for himself after his novel, Tauben im Gras, was published in 1951:

Ich möchte die Zeit, die von mir bewusst
erlebten Jahre einfangen, eine Essenz aus ihnen
zu destillieren, den Menschen schildern, den
Zeitgenossen, keine Partei nehmen, es sei denn

die des Menschen ... Mein Vorhaben ist nicht autobiographisch, aber man könnte es auch eine Fragebogen-Beantwortung nennen ...¹⁷⁴

Such a statement indicates how deeply rooted his work is in his own life and the age in which he lived; his work therefore documents the age and the ambiguities of the intellectual's involvement in it.

.....

A student of Koeppen's oeuvre, has written: "Wohl bei wenigen Schriftstellern lässt sich das Gesamtwerk so säuberlich und deutlich gliedern wie bei Koeppen."¹⁷⁵ Whilst one does not agree with the emphasis or direction taken in Erlach's overall appraisal of the author's work, supported as it is by Marcel Reich-Ranicki,¹⁷⁶ it is nonetheless highly appropriate to separate the pre-war novels from the later travel-books. But the whole oeuvre is of one piece; the same vision informs the work at any given stage, however much this might be disputed by some critical observers.

EARLY LIFE and EXPERIENCES - The Origins of Future Developments and Attitudes.

SYNOPSIS

The mood and attitudes of early years - the themes/features which dominate the writings concerned with this period, links with Expressionist writers - life in Masuren - early consciousness of social alienation - schoolboy's imagination hostile to tyranny and monotony of educational system - voracious reading an escape - school a prison, training ground for State machine, for militarism - its authoritarianism, claustrophobia - the burgher's self-centred materialism - 'Zwang' and 'Nützlichkeit' - the young repeat the errors of the old - clergy and the academics puppets of State ideology - society supports the same militarism, undermines the Republic - the mindless inhumanity of fascism - intensity of alienation from provincial scene (conveyed by sensuous imagery) - natural landscape a "Romantic" foil to the town and its gloom, ugliness and barbarism - alienation of the young outsider from the values of his environment, romanticised revolt, individualist anarchism - art and the spirit of revolt - sterility of bourgeois provincial theatre (symbolised by German-national female aristocrat) - provincial sexual mores, prudery, fear and repression - stigma of (unmarried) pregnancy - sympathy with sexual outcast - physical aspects of sexual experience, and associations of physical decay - escape to Berlin - types of employment, witnesses social conformism - foresees disasters - family: symbolic fate of grandmother, estrangement from mother - a life without meaning - Koeppen and unacceptable 'Daseinsformen'.

EARLY LIFE and EXPERIENCES - The Origins of Future Developments and Attitudes.

The first World War, the immediate post-war revolutionary turmoil, and the era of the Weimar Republic form the historical setting for the early germination of Koeppen's estrangement from country and countrymen, a development marked first by bewilderment, revolt and an overpowering sense of oppression, and later, nourished by a desperate resignation, by an intense desire to flee to a less constricting environment - "ich dachte an Flucht aus dieser Stadt, aus diesem Land, Flucht, Flucht ..."¹ The yearning for the freedom of body and spirit, the claustrophobia induced by the tyranny of the schoolroom, the unreal and cowardly platitudes of the puppet clergy, their determined conspiracy to worship the gods of war and destruction, the impenetrable class barriers, the hollow collusion of Throne, Altar and Sword, - these motifs link the author with contemporary Expressionist writers and thinkers and highlight the grounds of anger and despair evident throughout his work. Though scattered and highly fragmentary, the fictional, semi-autobiographical items published in recent years in Merkur and the collection in Romanisches Café² document the writers' isolation in and hostility to the Wilhelminian age. The relevant prose-pieces, Anamnese³ (1968), Jugend⁴ (1971), Von Anbeginn Verurteilt (1969), and In meiner Stadt war ich allein (1969)⁵, to name the main ones, largely composed in the stream of consciousness and paratactic styles of the post-1945 works, though they are part of the retrospective battle with the memory process distinguishing Koeppen's more advanced years, and although for this reason they contain commentaries fed on a lifetime of experience and cogitation, nevertheless they illustrate attitudes and reactions identifiable with the author in his youth, and even childhood. In any case some of the information is factual; it is impossible to construct any precise and detailed sketch of his youth and early manhood, but we are more concerned with "distilling the essence"

(to use Koeppen's own phrase)⁶ of his reactions to the German scene, pregnant with catastrophic possibilities. These prose-items relate to, but are not necessarily separate fragments of the "intended" autobiography Koeppen has promised for several years; but they are sufficiently authentic for our investigation, they are an "imaginäre Lebensbeschreibung",⁷ and though the "Ich-Erzähler" is not identical with the author, yet the fictional youth's experiences adequately reflect Koeppen's own - "er habe sich dabei immer nur einen jungen Mann zurechtgelogen, der sozusagen stellvertretend noch einmal seine, Koeppens, Erinnerung transportieren sollte.."⁸ What is significant is that the author of advanced years can plainly identify closely with the reflections, the rage, the bitterness and the irony of a young man living in provincial north-east Germany during the Republican and pre-Republican eras - though the despair, hopeless resignation, and of course hindsight are more the present author's own.

The child's voracious reading sets him apart from his contemporaries, his "Mitschüler", its early cosmopolitan character stamps the man and the writer of the future, and together with instilling conventional romantic yearnings for Rousseauistic experiences and climes ("Afrikas Küsten in Knabenträumen")⁹, activates the first powerful impulse to escape - to Berlin, Hamburg, lands envisioned from Greifswald's shores, which he had already visited in and through literature. At his uncle's house in Ortelsburg - the early years were spent either in Pomeranian Greifswald or in the eastern town of Ortelsburg in Masuren, where life with his uncle, architect and mathematician,¹⁰ provided experiential material for the novel, Die Mauer Schwankt,¹¹ - there was a library and a rich supply of journals and newspapers. The life at the house was hardly calculated to promote relationships with the community, or an understanding between uncle and nephew: "ein Junggeselle, der ein recht einsames Leben führte. Wir kamen nicht miteinander aus. Heute spreche ich mit grosser Achtung von ihm; es tut mir leid, dass wir uns, als ich Kind war, nicht verstanden haben. Wir

waren beide schon zu starke Eigenbrötler."¹² The sad divorce of the generations speaks here, but in the reminiscing interviewee we discern the respect accorded by one "outsider" to another; the personal psychological barriers between them were strengthened by Koeppen's own intuitive relation of the chaos of the age to arid rationalism, an element of which remained with him throughout his life: "Über jedem Tun wurde es Nacht, und meine Tante weinte. Ich fürchtete die Vernunft und misstraute den Gleichungen."¹³ But the relativisms of modern physics tell a different story, new frontiers of the cosmos are explored and extended with passion and concern: "Erst nach seinem Tode wusste ich, dass mein Onkel einsam gewesen war, und als ich de Broglie, Jeans, Rutherford, Einstein, Planck zu begreifen versuchte, bereute ich, die Gabe des strengen Mathematikers verschmäht zu haben."¹⁴ But the ironic "Schicksal" which plays tricks with human lives provided one common interest (rather than bond), that of the imported daily press. The household received not just the "Ortelsburger Zeitung", but also the "Berliner Tageblatt", which he valued for its "Feuilleton", "Vorwärts", "Kreuz-Zeitung", the "Königsberger Harungsche Zeitung". For any Ortelsburger this was "etwas Besonderes"¹⁵; for the child, it was the symbolic beginning of what became an extensive literary companionship. "Das war ziemlich ungewöhnlich; schon mit acht Jahren begann ich meine Laufbahn als Zeitungsleser."¹⁶ "Vorwärts" was an extreme Left publication, the uncle subscribed to it even before the war, "was seine Karriere belastete" - he worked in the Prussian bureaucracy, and Koeppen's commentary speaks for itself.

The boy attended the Hindenburg-Gymnasium in Ortelsburg. Wedekind's portrayals of school-life come to mind. Long before he read Kaiser, Toller and Jahn, he was a truant and educated himself in bed: "... ich mir mehr Wissen im Bett angeeignet als ich Kenntnisse von der Schule mitbekommen habe."¹⁷ His capacity to assimilate helped him to maintain some form of "progress" within the pedantic, alienating, educational ritual; but

this also produced boredom, and the precocious imagination starved:

"... das wichtigste Ereignis in meinem Leben war überhaupt, dass ich lesen gelernt habe."¹⁸ After the Easter "Versetzung", the boy devoured the contents of the new syllabus before the beginning of the new school-year, "was nun noch geschah in der Schule, wusste ich schon längst."

But this is not merely a zealous and predatory search for knowledge, it is already an escape, not so much to Arcadian idylls, though they are there also, and the whole experience becomes part of the transfiguration of reality which is enacted in the written word, which through the imagination becomes more real than reality itself, and is later to contribute to the constant sensation that his daily life is a novel¹⁹, as he transposes the doings of his "heroes" into his own encounter with generally hostile realities.

Ich war Zeuge, aber ich bin nicht dabei gewesen ...
 Ich sprach mit Macbeth im Bett, ein deutscher Wald war
 ein deutscher Wald, er war nicht Macbeth' Wald, ...
 Ich wanderte mit Hyperion über die arkadischen Höhen.
 Ich las ... Bann oder auch Becher ... Ich schiffte mit
 den Flusspiraten auf dem warmen lehmsuppigen
 Mississippi Auch Platon trat an mein Bett ...
 hatte ich Sokrates schon bewundert, doch nie so wie
 jetzt.²⁰

(It is difficult to locate precisely the "jetzt" in the time-span of Koeppen's life, to know whether it refers to the "Erzähler", or at a further remove, to the author, but the Sokrates figure becomes important in our analysis of Koeppen's view of the world). The writer's alienation - or the reader's - in society is underlined elsewhere by Koeppen: "Der Mensch allgemein ist ein unliterarisches Wesen, und das Bedürfnis nach Literatur ist eine Entartung."²¹ Another German expression of the post-Romantic Künstler-Bürger situation. In another fragment is recorded a retrospective "distillation" of the youthful period which is to be incorporated in the promised autobiographical novel, taking in the Bismarckian and Wilhelminian epochs: "Im Roman die Gehemmtheit, die Unkenntnis, das Zarte, Weltfremdheit, Angst und Torheit und die Belesen-

heit des damaligen Zustandes."²² By his fifteenth year Koeppen had accumulated debts with booksellers; poverty, the social divider, becomes a recurring feature. All the volumes of "Jüngster Tag" were in his possession; in the same year he received the impact of Kafka, an impact overshadowed by that produced by "Ulysses", toward the end of his teenage years. Joyce's style which significantly "entspricht unserem Empfinden, unserem Bewusstsein"²³, somehow related analogously to the pace of Koeppen's own voracious literary appetite: in reply to a question on which writers he had "in sich hineingefressen", he could only express the aimless hunger of the predator: "Ich mochte sie alle. Ich verirrte mich im Wald. Keine Bibliothek in der Stadt war vor mir sicher."²⁴ One of the naive, romantically arrogant aspects of the behaviour of the developing writer - he produced an article on Expressionism for the "Greifswalder Zeitung" - was a self-identification with the outcast and literary iconoclast, the poète maudit; against his class-teacher's warning, "wenn Sie so weiter machen, enden Sie hinter den Zäunen,"²⁵ came the reaction, "ich spitze mich mit hartnäckiger Ziellosigkeit darauf, wie Lenz in einer Strasse in Moskau zu enden ... oder wie Gérard de Nerval in einer verrufenen Gasse, den Strick um den Hals, an einer roten Laterne."²⁶ On another occasion he recalls the fifteen years old landmark, when he read Frank Harris's biography of Wilde, "und richtete meine Augen auf den Père Lachaise. Nichts schien mir erstrebenswerter als das Armenbegräbnis eines verrufenen Dicters," - and, to complete the divorce of self from contemporaries, - "doch meine Klassenkameraden wollten weiterhin General werden und für das Vaterland sterben."²⁷

School is presented as a stifling, debilitating prison, a factory where minds are coerced to become cannon-fodder and worshippers of State and Imperial mythology, buttressed by the sterile acquiescence of the pastorate. The "Gemeinschaftswesen" extolled by Herder²⁸, and sociologised by Tönnies²⁹ is yielding rapidly to the pluralistic

dis-integration of the "Gesellschaft" and early capitalism; nevertheless a composite unity of socio-political forces remains in the provincial areas which are not yet affected by cosmopolitan and liberating trends. School and pulpit, the remnants of feudalism - we have a lengthy and sardonic description of the castle and grounds of the prince of Putbus³⁰ - , the narrow and closed horizons of the Kleinbürgertum, sacrosanct class barriers which attempt to seal off a society hermetically from any 'wind of change', all united with a unanimous voice of obeisance to the Imperial dreams fostered by the glorification of the officer class - these are the features of society which dominate Koeppen's vision of the world he longed to flee, and darken his vision of what was to come. Whatever "organic" elements remained in this social unit, they provided no scope whatsoever for the individual freedoms which he saw as prerequisites for a habitable world - or, more especially, for personal fulfilment which the Romantic in him saw as a necessary precondition to a freer humanity.

It is congruous that a pastor should enquire whether a youth who reads so intently is politically dangerous - "du bist doch kein Bolschewist, und ich sah ihn an und zählte die Schmissee in seinem roten vollen Gesicht ..."³¹ Another less ideologically committed traveller, on the train to Stettin, on hearing he is reading "das entfesselte Theater", comments: "Du wirst dir die Augen verderben".³² Koeppen once identified the kind of residual hope he cherishes, slender and desperate though it is, in the effect his writings might have: "Es gilt, die Ohnmacht so zu schildern, dass der Ohnmächtige aufsteht."³³ It is certainly passivity and "Ohnmacht" which the reader meets in these evocations of the writer's early years. When Koeppen observes that his travel-books are "wieder diese Konfrontation des Einzelnen mit der Welt",³⁴ he is pointing to the general human situation of the individual's being in the world, his "Gefährdetsein", "Ungeborgenheit", the alienation of subject from object, the existentialist's concept of Otherness, 'altérité'. The author's encounters with the

school pedant and tyrant were his first confrontation with an institutionalised enemy. Standing before the Rektor, the boy is faced not with a person, but a system, an ethos, an authoritarianism which stifles doubt and sensitivity. Persuasively monotonous repetition in overpowering, obsessive imagery provides the essence of what Koeppen is seeking to convey:

Der Raum ist gross ... kalt ... auf eine kalte Art warm ... dunkel, die schwarzen Möbel machen den Raum dunkel ... die schweren schwarzen Möbel ... machen ihn zu einem Gebirge ... die schweren schwarzen Möbel bilden Fronten, der Schrank droht dem Tisch, ... die schweren schwarzen Möbel sind Festungen aus festem schwarzspiegelndem Holz, grosse schwarze Ritter und und kleine schwarze Gefangene spiegelfechten, ... der schwarze Schreibtisch steht auf schwarzen Löwenfüssen, die schwarzen Löwenfüsse krallen sich in den schwarzen Teppich ein, gerissen liegt die Wolle des schwarzen Lamms unter den schwarzen Füssen, die schwarze Polster-tür schliesst das schwarze Universum ...³⁵

There is advantage to be gained from the author's having delayed composing such pieces of more directly personal "autobiographical" content until he had developed stylistic techniques appropriate to "unserer Empfindung, unserem Bewusstsein". The product of this symbolic physical darkness, evoking heavy, oppressive claustrophobia, the satanic forces by which passivity and obedience are instilled, follows immediately, presented with the same paratactic, persuasive repetition, the spiritual and intellectual parallel to the physical ambience:

.... schliesst das schwarze Universum, draussen bleibt die leiernde lernende leidende Stimme der Klassen, bleibt das Geleier des ABC, bleibt das Geleier des Einmalens, bleibt der geleierte unbegriffene Lehrsatz der Mathematik, bleibt das geleierte schon durchlöcherete Gesetz der Natur, bleibt der geleierte zusammengesetzte Satz der nichts sagt, bleibt das geleierte von keinem Gott vernommene Kirchenlied, bleibt der geleierte vaterländische Gesang der den Sänger berauscht, bleiben die geleierten Siege Friedrichs des Grossen, bleiben geleiert die Siege Bismarcks, bleiben geschmettert die Siege des Kaisers ...

The barely disguised theological pronouncements, which point, if anything, to the meaninglessness of theology, are those, we must remember, of an older man and not of the boy in the Rektor's study. It is simply that

future tragedies, personal and national, authenticate the hopelessness of the picture as it was sensed by the half-defiant, half-despairing youth. The school scene - to complete the picture - is related, logically and inextricably, to events and attitudes in the surrounding world which both create it and are created by it:

... bleibt ungeleiert das Schweigen über dem Was
 nun, bleibt eingeleiert der Hass gegen das Jetzt,
 das ist die Republik, das ist Weimar, das ist
 Versailles ... die deutsche Schmach ..

A petty bourgeois conspiracy of power oppresses the poor, the hungry, the ignored outsider; the Rektor "sitzt schwer hinter seinem schweren Schreibtisch, riecht nach kaltem Zigarrenrauch. Das ist die Ausdünstung der Macht. Auch Kohlenhändler Kleuke riecht so. Auch Kaufmann Susemihl."³⁶ And from the latter and their social pretensions, their total unconcern for those without coal and food, Koeppen, as a poor, hungry outsider himself, was totally estranged. School represents for the author as it did for Rousseau a system alienating man from the rich, original, mythically primeval forces of nature, which once made of man a harmonious being, and are now directed to destructive ends. In a different context he refers to one of the few friendships he ever held dear, that with Max Tau (the sufferings of whose race became, significantly, a most poignant experience in the writer's life): "das möchte ich nicht nur eine literarische Freundschaft nennen, das ist eine urmenschliche Verbindung" (my underlining)³⁷. The nearest approximation to the harmonious "Urmensch" Koeppen finds historically concretised is in Greek civilisation,³⁸ - one more testimony to the enduring Hellenism we associate with Schiller and Hölderlin, which always remained the unattainable ideal, and accordingly all the more longed for, as it became less and less attainable.

The pedagogue personifies the "Zwang" - from which the youth flees to the heath and the lake around Ortelsburg - "ich habe nie wieder ein so mächtiges Gefühl von persönlicher Freiheit genossen wie in den Stunden, da

ich als Erst- und Zweitklässler selbst meinen Tag bestimmte, dem Zwang entkam."³⁹ A localised trahison des clercs, a betrayal of present and future generations is accomplished in the person of Herr Krüger, who, unlike the Rektor, did not forget his name, and with whom therefore the confrontation is more direct and prolonged: "Herr Krüger hat mich nicht in seine Herde getrieben, er hat mir nicht den Stempel der Nützlichkeit in die Haut gebrannt ... mich nicht für den Bismarckbund geworben ... mich zu keiner seiner festen Anschauungen bekehrt."⁴⁰ Even usefulness, accepted in more liberal and democratic regimes as having acceptable vocational connotations, is resisted; this is not merely a worthy dismissal of the warlike purposes to which a German's usefulness is (obsessively in Koeppen's writings) subordinated; being useful is frequently understood by the author as being usable, and the romantic individualist reacts accordingly against social impositions. In another "fragment" we read of the construction of a Wilhelminian Bürgerschule on the site of a monastery, the remaining part of which houses "arme, hilflose Alte";⁴¹ the old represent a scene of decline and decay which haunts and finally dominates Koeppen's apocalyptic visions, - "ein Professor für sich in der Nestwärme aus Schweiss und Vergehendem Fleisch der allmählichen Auflösung der Gattin, vom ersten Tag war Verwesung ..."⁴² - and coupled with this is the note of resignation that life was never lived, freedom never known, "Schicksal", "Zwang" and "Tod" won the day (a new Düreresque trinity, or quartet if one includes the individual). The impoverished and senile inmates, dressed in black - "was die lutherische Wohltätigkeit von ihnen erwartet" (clerical comforts with strings attached) - smelling of "Volksküchensuppen" as well as the grave, see the boys at work. The school was once a Lateinschule, "während die Bürgerschule sich den Nützlichkeiten verschrieben hat und eben Bürger, gute Rechner und ergebene Untertanen erziehen will ..."⁴³ Apart from the interesting recurrence of "usefulness", what is noteworthy here is the juxtaposition of "Rechner" and "Untertanen";

separately, they cannot be considered as equivalent, but in context together they point to the implication that the one produces the other, - the flaw inherent in a utilitarianism which serves the State. The crunch in the scene appears when the thoughts of each generation about the other are revealed; already the various smells each has to endure have made their lot a common one - in the classroom the "Geruch der Altleutekammer" invades and mixes with the "Knabenschweiss aus Angst und Heuchelei und Feigheit". The boys envy the old men taking exercise during their free hour, "ein Bild der Freiheit, das sie ihrer Gefangenschaft erst recht bewusst macht." But the young are condemned to repeat the errors of their elders, whilst society is ruled by the type of elders who could envy the boys their freedom at all - "das Bild unbeschwerter Jugendtage" - and rejoice at (or forget) what is ahead of them: "Es erschreckt sie nicht der Gedanke, dass dort Bürger erzogen werden, die ihnen gleichen sollen, die ihr trauriges, inhaltloses Leben ständiger Lüge und unerfüllter Wünsche, bis auch die Wünsche sterben, fortsetzen werden."⁴⁴ "Es war einmal und wird sein",⁴⁵ is the plaintive commentary the older writer makes on the meaning of experiences he underwent years ago. And "Von Anbeginn Verurteilt" is the very title of one of the "imaginary" autobiographical pieces we are studying.

The clergy are seen relentlessly as puppets in the masquerade; Luther's political theology, the stultifying power of "Obrigkeit", are given short shrift - "und es ist der Gott Luthers und des kleinen Katechismus und seiner ehebett-treuen sich vermehrenden Prediger und untertan der Obrigkeit und sie blickt zum Himmel hoch und weiss, dass dies ein Gestöhn der Hilflosigkeit ist ..."⁴⁶ The Professor-figure is half an object of pity, half an object of scorn. The fruits of historical research are invariably classed as "Hirngespinnste", his investigation into the realities of the past doomed to produce illusions and mirages. Whatever philosophic impulse inspired the historian, the empirical, or the

ideological, it is made plain that the researcher cannot seize or fathom the substance of living, either in history or the present. He is happy to appear "ordengeschmückt"⁴⁷, a reliable prop of the Imperial idea and its bloody sacrifices. His purpose is mocked by historical events. Obsequious ambition is the mark of his trade as it is that of the obedient civil servant, the cringing merchant-bourgeois, the lackey at the Imperial Court, or the "Hofprediger" at the castle of Putbus. But the Professor is also the victim of social schizophrenia - he has the prestige of "Geist" and "akademische Würde", but is poorly paid. His daughter may finally join an institution founded for "die mittellosen Töchter gebildeter Stände."⁴⁸

Brief vignettes of the "Spiessbürger" highlight the intellectual's now well-established distance and antipathy to them; the traveller of later years arrives in Rotterdam with a map of the city in his mind, studied during a visit in his home town to the overheated offices of a coal-merchant, where the boy, with frost-bitten hands and ears, dressed in the customary rags of those days, had asked for "einen Eimer Abfall und Staub für den Ofen der Mutter, ...während der Fettgeschmückte, vor hitzigem Behagen rot, die glühende Zigarre ..."⁴⁹ The "imaginary" mother of the fragments fears the snakes in the Rosental near Greifswald, but equally, given her poverty, her come-down-in-the-world trauma, she fears "den Händen, den grossen Händen den behaarten Händen den fetten roten beringten Händen, Männern, die man sehr bitten muss, Kolonialwarenhändler ..."⁵⁰ The daughter of the owner of the pickle-factory will be Frau Staatsanwalt, - "eine dumme Ziege, die sich dem Lebensstil der anderen dummen Ziegen, die schon Frau Amtsgerichtsrat sind, anpassen wird."⁵¹ "Nichts zählt ausser ihnen, die hervorragen."⁵² Importance depends solely on possessions. The shoemaker "ist kein Mann ... kein Mensch ... ist eine Funktion," making shoes because society, "diese sakrosankte Institution", requires them; on closing his workshop, he returns to the "Gesichtslosigkeit der Gemeinen".⁵³ Maria is compelled to realise: "Wer arbeitet, seinem Erwerb nachgeht, ist aus der

Damenwelt ausgestossen."

As Pomerania moves ineluctably to mobilisation, nobody heeds; "Professoren merken nichts und denken nicht ..." ⁵⁴ the Hunnenstrasse is for Koeppen the direct route to the harbour from whence the Emperor's troops embark for Chinese shores to butcher the Oriental "enemy". The Major fears death less than being superannuated and unemployed and spending tedious days with Frau Majorin. A community goes to war as if going to work; before the Rathaus, the "Scheune der Schildbürger", ⁵⁵ assemble the pompous self-important leaders of the local bourgeoisie, joined by the Landrat and the Graf, whilst the bookseller with, significantly, a monopoly of schoolbooks, joyfully hoists the symbolic flag; "in drei Wochen waren der Leutnant und seine Leute tot". If the soldiers' position is hopeless - in a myopic community governed by myopic rulers they cannot survive - the outsider's is even more so. The community is part of the conspiracy; Koeppen contrasts two funerals, one for twelve revolutionary Activists, the other for a member of the "Zeitfreiwilligen", one of the quasi-fascist forces of law and order, who had caught a stray bullet. In the first case, the coffins were in trucks, no firearms were carried, the community did not mourn, shops were closed to show disdain; in the second case, schoolgirls wore bands of respect, the "Burschenschaften" turned out, trade prospered, drums beat, Imperial troops were represented, "und Magnifizenz reiht sich ein in seinem Ornat". ⁵⁶ These fragmentary scenes, short gems of imaginative creation, contain deep wells of passionate feeling, bitterness and anger, - the resignation increased with time (even though the author asserts otherwise). ⁵⁷ "Die Revolution spaltete uns in Rote und Deutschnationale. Da es auf dem Gymnasium zum guten Ton gehörte, Monarchist zu bleiben, vertrat ich die Ansichten der Republik." ⁵⁸ So we know which funeral Koeppen would have attended. The Republic at least looked beyond German frontiers and sought an understanding with foreign neighbours. It seemed to promise an end to Verduns, to the "Fackelzüge zum Bismarckturm",

to rejoicings in dead heroes, which were listened to with wonder and astonishment by the young child at the graveside - a later report runs: "... und das wird sein, und das Staunen des Kindes, wieder und wieder."⁵⁹ Graves, tombs and sarcophagi were regular features of living and experience. In one context we have the social distinction of graves for the rich and those for the poor. "Es waren die wohlhabenden Toten, die Toten, die zu den Reichen gehört hatten, die nicht in die gemeine Erde gelegt wurden, nicht in den Keller, nicht in das feuchte modrige Loch, ... nicht zu den Würmern ..."⁶⁰ In another we have the constant mention of "Leichenfelder" and their association with German foreign policy, not to mention the "begehrte sichere Karriere" of the generals, "Der General ist tot, nein, der General ist unsterblich"⁶¹ - a whole fragment of a fragment is devoted to the ruminations of the writer (we may assume they are a mixture of raw sensitive reactions of the young writer and the even bitterer cynicism of the older one) on the lists of "martyrs" displayed at the Steinbeckertor.⁶² A final association is in the memory of fascist thuggery. No single, more alienating event is recorded in the imaginative evocations of remembered experience than the slaying and mutilation of the unnamed outsider, the intellectual polyglot, the embodiment of "reine Menschlichkeit", the Sermon on the Mount etc. The characterisation recalls Expressionist concerns; "die Schätze seines menschlichen Erbes Die Bergpredigt, Die Freiheit eines Christenmenschen, Tolstoi im Wintersturm ein armer Bauer auf Poljana und der ferne Sturm der O-Mensch-Rufe an Berliner Café-tischen ..."⁶³ One critic of the movement recalls Kurt Pinthus' assertion that in expressionist lyric poetry the words "Mensch, Welt, Bruder, Gott" have the highest frequency-count, adding: "Hierher wäre noch das Postulat der Liebe zu rechnen, das, in der Nachfolge der Bergpredigt und der Weltabkehr des späten Tolstoi stehend, einerseits als Zeichen eines umfassenden Heilzustandes, andererseits als Inbegriff innermenschlichen Durchbruchs zum 'Wesen' verstanden wird."⁶⁴

We are not spared the physical details of horror and sadism, the forces of naked power and mindlessness obliterate and bury in the moorland heath a human being, "der gehabt hatte womit sie nicht gesegnet waren, Einmaligkeit, Verstand, ein Herz, eine Zunge zu reden, den Glauben an die Unsterblichkeit seiner Seele ...". What was left of the body was exhumed for an inquiry; he - or it - is treated with the same graceless formalities a doctor would carry out on a body after an execution - "hinweg mit dem schüchtern im Hals würgenden Mitleid und ins stinkende chlorende Abflussrohr das Gebot, du sollst nicht töten, auf das sie sich beriefen wenn sie das Beil fallen liessen ...". The medical profession is one more pillar supporting the heartless mythologies, their German hearts are, significantly, "isoliert vom immerhin kommunizierenden Strom der Welt, entzogen einer Brüderlichkeit die sein sollte..", themselves dead and desiccated accomplices of the "Väterschuld". There is also here a body-soul conflict; the medical world is concerned with rotting flesh; the soul of man is not one of their considerations. The smell of antiseptic is often included in the range of smells which evoke communal living.

An unforgettable passage in the "Anamnesis" crystallises and sums up the impossibility of Koeppen's continued existence or survival in Greifswald;⁶⁵ the summary reckoning is presented by way of an impact upon one of the most sensitive elements in the writer's sensorium, the sense of smell. The transmission of the repulsion through the olfactory nerve system makes for strong sensuous imagery, and intensifies the force of the reaction to the environment. We have previously seen the mother gaze longingly and bitterly along the drive leading to the landed estates which once belonged to her ancestors - one of the earliest traumas the writer experienced in life, though far more of one for the mother, was a cruel dispossession of property and wealth, details of which are never revealed. "Meine Mutter blickte wie ins Paradies ..." - an important word for the Utopian dreamer, and of course a "Rittergut" might have endowed the writer with the comforts

for which he envied Flaubert and Proust. But now there are only snakes to horrify her; even she no longer belongs. For a moment we are given a glimpse of a natural foil to the city, - the kind of scene illustrated, for example, in Caspar David Friedrich's paintings of the Greifswald harbour, moonscapes and romantic evocations of human solitariness. The experience is highly revelatory. Koeppen discovered him in the art galleries of Hamburg during his temporary escape from Ortelsburg, "ich liebte ihn sehr. Seine Bilder haben mich beeinflusst."⁶⁶ As was to occur constantly in the future, he sees and lives reality through art in its widest sense. "Ich sah die See mit seinen Augen." A drunken worker drowns in the waters. This did not so much destroy as deepen "die Romantik". "Ich fühlte eine diesen Bildern verwandte Stimmung der Einsamkeit und der Melancholie in mir, was mich aber keineswegs unglücklich machte; ich war kein trauriges oder verbittertes oder ernstes Kind. Alles, was ich in diesen Bildern fand: Einsamkeit, Melancholie, ein etwas wehes Naturempfinden, selbst die Gewissheit des Todes, machte mich glücklich."⁶⁷ This form of "reality-transcendence", a "romantic reconstruction" which "seeks to spiritualise the present", to use Karl Mannheim's language,⁶⁸ becomes an element in Koeppen's utopian 'Heimweh'. He recalls at one point, amidst a stream of conscious-unconscious associations, moments of Expressionist 'Rausch' "auf den Höhen, am ernststen Felsenhange, wo so gerne mir die Träne rann, säuselte die frohe Knabenwange schon dein zauberischer Odem an."⁶⁹ It is as though the 'pathetic fallacy' uniting man with Nature, has been destroyed by the growth of a new technological landscape and philosophic materialism, whilst the poet or Dichter seeks to recall that union, to reconcile Ich and Welt, even if this is only possible for some poets by contraposing Nature against the city and its greedy divisive barbarism.⁷⁰ Returning to the "Anamnesis" experience, we see storm-clouds approaching the town, the renowned silhouette of the (unnamed) romantic painter, - "da waren die spielenden Fohlen auf der Weide, die einsamen

Männer, die traurig den Mond betrachten; die im Hafen ruhenden schlafenden Boote, mit ihren Masten zu Afrikas Küsten in Knabenträumen ..."

What is important here is not the attachment of this scene to a particular point or epoch in historical time, but rather a sweet melancholy reflection on a bygone condition of the world when Nature was organically related to man, even though this relation was marked by fear, awe and wonder at the dark immensities of the seas - here the foals evoke a picture of natural serenity and arational harmony. Now the scene changes: the theological constructions have failed, the churches are empty, churchtowers "drückten schwer die Gemeinde" (the foals were happier), "Festungen tollkühner Planung vergreist in Wüste, Wildnis und Sumpf"; the voices of the prophets had gone unheard - "der verlorene Aufstand begrabener Gewissen"; and finally, the overpowering revulsion of the senses, though there is more than physical odour involved:

... während es in den Gassen nach Abendbrot roch, nach Spickaal, ... nach bürgerlicher Bescheidenheit, tückischer Demut, familiärer Niedertracht in Furcht und Enge und blind in Dummheit, nach der verwelkenden Erinnerung an die armen Helden des Krieges, nach der konservierten Leiche des Kaiserreichs, nach dem Mensurblut der Studenten ... nach dem Blut der von tollwütiger Feme Erschlagenen, ins Torfmoor versenkt, ... nach Mädchenblut in versteckter Wäsche unter das Sofa der guten Stube gestopft, ... dem Schweiss der Kranken, dem Entsetzen der Sterbenden, der Angst der Examinierten und der schuldig Unschuldigen im Gefängnis ausgeliefert den Wärtern, nach dem Wahn der Irren in der Heilanstalt und nach den Witzen die man über sie macht, nach den verfaulten Blumen der Friedhöfe und dem Tod, den jeder in seiner Brust trägt, nach dem gasenden Schlick des Wallgrabens und der Abwässer, dem drängenden Atem der Liebenden unter dem Gebüsch, nach den Gespinsten der Professoren, den toten Herzen der Beamten, dem Staub der Gesetze, und dann die Armut der Langen Reihe und der grauen Schule verknöcherte Schmach, wie hasste ich die Stadt und wünschte die Schlangen herbei, eine gleitende Natter um jeden Pfosten, der ein Dach trug, ein Bett und den tiefen Schlaf all der Gerechten stützte.

With the 'Grossstadt' there is a love-hate relationship. It fascinates as well as repels; in this provincial, slumbering, closed-minded, faint-hearted, fear-ridden, moribund assembly of citizens, there is nothing to hold Koeppen, nothing to indicate that there could be any

hopeful communication between it and him. True, death and putrefaction, constant attenders in his writings, are not merely peculiar to a provincial community; but the body in the moor, the atrocities of the German-national groups, ('Blut' occurs three times in the above passage) lend to the German scene a violence and stark aggression which seem answerable only by a total destruction wrought by snakes - one thinks, more drastically, of Hans Nossack's wishing of annihilation upon his own city of Hamburg in Der Untergang. Though there is no comparison between the two scenes in terms of scale and magnitude of destruction being wished - or in Nossack's case, being accomplished by external powers, there is nonetheless perhaps a logical - and sociological - connection between the passivity, the greed, the petty bourgeois resentments against the alien, and the Jew, the docility of the academic community, the repression of normal sexual drives (which for followers of Reich and Marcuse has a totalitarian purpose), between these minor fascisms, on the one hand, and on the other the greater fascism which Nossack wished to expunge from the earth. For Koeppen the connection was never in doubt, which is why his own work has a basic consistency - for even the ambiguities remain the same up to the present time.

The more personal activities of the youth, as compared with the presentation of alignments and reactions, are contained in another fragmentary mixture of dream, reminiscence, imagined autobiography, In meiner Stadt war ich allein; here a contrastingly cold, lapidary staccato series of short grammatical sentences conveys a certain lassitude about the events, a wearying acceptance of what the drab outcome will be, each event being seen as important as the other. The youth is alone, not even conscious of being young, youth had no value for the community, "doch gab es in der Stadt keinen, der mir glich."⁷¹ We meet the recurring, vaunted aimlessness of the narrator; the recurring attack on the world's limiting concepts of usefulness - "Ich war unnütz; das gefiel mir;" the recurring

sense of defiant difference, of haughty non-participation in the game of filthy lucre - "Ich wollte nicht teilhaben. - Ich verachtete sie. Ich kannte die Kurse nicht." The world was set on the wrong course; "Ich wollte ausgestossen sein Das schulterlange Haar stand mir für eine bessere Welt." It is important to remember that Koeppen speaks of a better world, nebulous though it sounds. There was to come a time when he ceased to write such a phrase. Whilst the youth, partly from poverty, partly from defiance, walks bare-footed, around him are jackboots. "Sie hatten alle nur ein Gesicht." Then we have the paradox of the angry, frustrated outsider who is intensely capable of enjoyment, contrary to all the faces worn by despair - "ich wollte es bunt. Ich fand sie komisch". So the fun is also at the expense of the burgher. But in that society it cannot last: "Ich versagte mir das Lachen. Ich dachte an die Leichenfelder ..."⁷²

We are regaled with the usual romanticised, intensely wished for self-committal to the lives of Raskolnikov, Robin Hood distributing money and books - literature should not have to be paid for, we feel, and coins become the playthings of children, not tokens of social divisiveness. The Dostoevskian note is sounded of a descent into the murky and violent depths of chaos and destruction before a better order can be known - "Vielleicht liebte ich die Stadt ... Ich vernichtete ihre Ordnung."⁷³ Many other 'hippie' manifestations call down the wrath of the authorities upon his head. "Ich tat nichts. Ich tat keinem etwas. Das war verdächtig. Das war böse." Aggression is a law of the community to be obeyed by all. Symbolically, all representatives of the official public domains were vindictive against anyone who could dare to assert: "Ich wollte ich sein, für mich allein." Even one of Rudolf Steiner's votaries was alarmed. The position warmly defended is that of Lenz, who also appears in Von Anbeginn Verurteilt; he is the Communist turned anarchist. "Lenz wollte der Herde entfliehen". Whether because he once paraded the hammer and sickle, or

because he vaunts his new form of individualism, he is one more victim of the ritual on the moorland. The usual joyless ones, "die mit verkniffenem Gesicht", disposed of him.

Nonetheless the hungry and workless stir him when he arrives - in flight - in Stettin. "Die waren die Revolution". His card of allegiance is asked for; "ich stempele nicht" is the reply, itself an offhand gesture for a situation of social distress. But Koeppen gives his allegiance, and directs his energies in the direction which will both preserve his artistic identity, his "fürsichallein-sein", and assuage the hunger of his revolutionary conscience which feeds on revolt and protest - a bourgeois freedom and a bourgeois semblance of elitism which are devoted to the undermining of bourgeois materialism and capitalistic aggressiveness. Whilst the forces of law and order - instruments of bourgeois rule - dispersed the hungry, Koeppen's task and standpoint, those of the Expressionist writer at their most representative, are voiced with passion:

Mein Herz bebte. Es schlug hoch. Das war es nun, ich hatte es gefunden, das wollte ich zeigen, die moralische Anstalt, das entfesselte Theater, die Strasse, die Hungernden, die Frierenden, die Armen, die rote Fahne, das Lied der Revolte. Ich ging für eine Weile wie einer, der ein Ziel hat. Ich dachte an das Schauspiel "Gas" ...⁷⁴

Before boarding the train earlier, (at this stage in his life it is a fourth-class ticket, in the travel-books in the late fifties' it becomes a first-class), the driving artistic impulse to change the world by the creations of the human consciousness or the imaginative faculty, an impulse deeply embedded in Romantic thought, had been asserted, together with the moral purpose which informs the whole work of Koeppen and indeed underlies the writer's alienation. "Ich wünschte ein Schauspiel. Ich reiste vierter Klasse. Ich pochte auf die moralische Anstalt. Ich hatte zu viel gelesen." The real world was 'realised' for Koeppen in the work of Joyce, Faulkner, Baudelaire, Proust, Flaubert, Balzac, Jahn, Kafka and so many others, at different stages in his life. So important and powerful is the world of

the imagination that dream and reality can be confused, leading to hallucinatory experiences - as in the involuntary transfiguration of *Fräulein von Lössin* at the theatre into one of Baudelaire's creations.⁷⁵ In a revealing comment to an interviewer Koeppen endows art with a particular sacral status: "(dass) ich die Literatur für eine noch ernstere Sache halte als das Leben."⁷⁶ It is the morality of alienation which provides the "Ziel" referred to above by the author. Karl Horst describes Koeppen as a "Zyniker aus Moral", "Zyniker aus verhinderter Liebe", claiming that this tone was brought to literature in the twenties' by Joseph Roth, the young Hermann Kesten and Tucholsky among others. "Der Zyniker der zwanziger Jahre ist ein idealistischer Misanthrop, ein revolutionärer Romantiker."⁷⁷ And the 'Ziel' itself is the only kind of purpose Koeppen ever sets himself - all other worldly aims are usually discarded, like the concept of usefulness discussed earlier. A reminiscence of a dream-like state recording sensations of horror and flight hovers round the mood of aimlessness - and even that is too positive: "Ich hatte mir nichts vorgenommen, nicht einmal die Ziellosigkeit; nur steuerte ich beharrlich von den anderen fort, und das war es, worauf es mir ankam."⁷⁸

It is here that we learn about Koeppen's first encounters with theatrical troupes, his abortive amateur displays as an actor, his inevitable disillusionment with paltry plays, the burgher's theatrical fare, and paltry management which in certain cases cannot cope with or cannot risk staging polemical works or the plays of the avantgarde. But "Jugend galt nichts"⁷⁹, and the desire personally to produce successes which would bring Alfred Kerr and Ihering from Berlin to see them is stiffly resisted; "Ich blickte in die Gesichter von mürrischen kleinen Beamten, die ihrer Versorgung entgegenlebten ... (er sagte) die würden sich nichts sagen lassen, sie könnten Ihre Väter sein." So escape is the recurring solution. "Sie waren nicht meine Leute. Ich verschloss mich ihnen. Ich kroch in mich hinein." Returning to the sphere of inner life, inwardness, he takes his

'Einsamkeit' and 'Melancholie' to the burgher cemeteries, to commune with their forefathers; like a spook in the night he mocks those still living - as dead as those in the graves - conscious as ever of the final end of all human striving, an awareness which brings its own serenity - "Ich war einig mit der Welt." Starving, he begs for bread from the baker's wife, who is happy to give to a member of the cast of some trite humdrum operetta, but is petrified when he utters "Gas", or "Masse Mensch". Works which illustrate the chaos and turmoil of the age, the movements of men on the march through history, which destroy comfortable prejudice and the security of illusions - these, or an association with them, lead to starvation - if not the moorland grave. The boy is transformed, for the baker, into a 'Nachtgestalt, vermutlich des Irrsinns', a tacit commentary on the kinds of imagery required to express the chaos and madness of the age in question. In reality, - as opposed to a fictional anamnesis of the past - Koeppen attempted and failed to direct plays even in the more avantgardist Würzburg theatre, where plays were performed "more for the Berlin Press than for the town of Würzburg". In Berlin itself, he was close to but characteristically never became a member of the theatrical 'closed-shop' ("dramaturgisches Kollektiv") run by Piscator - "wir standen einander im Weg und hatten nichts zu sagen - eine unglückliche Situation."⁸⁰

The provincial theatre in these earlier years appears, in the recorded impressions we so far have available, to have been essentially a 'bürgerlich' institution, evidenced by its taste, its low and vulgar conception of Geist - acknowledging the artist in so far as he buttresses the prevailing social ethos, its sexual pruderies, and its ancillary social phenomenon, the hungry actor. We have vivid tableaux of the pettiness of the evening gatherings;⁸¹ the first person narrator in shabby contrast to the sartorial pretensions of the shopkeepers, "our creditors", who become the Maecenas of the arts by donating baskets of food to the actors in plain view of the audience; "nach fettem Abendbrot im Sonntagsstaat" they appear, competing

with the wives of the academics in ostentatious adornments; but the latter won, "(sie) hatten sich in taubengraue Schlichtheit gehüllt, in Tarnkleider, die ihre Mittellosigkeit in bare Vornehmheit verwandelten." For Koeppen the cultural sham is highlighted by the bullet-marks on the sandstone pillars, where conflict between the Right-wing Kapp (Putsch) volunteers and striking workers had raged, implicitly suggesting what theatrical art should be concerned with. But this is impossible, whilst the majority in the audience only acknowledged the heroic death of those who "die Republik und ihre verhasste Fahne abschaffen wollten." A model of bland irony and yet sardonic satire is provided in the vignettes of the two town critics who represent the gently divided politics of the community, the German-national press and the social democratic organ. Both came with wives,

unter deren Fuchtel sie standen, die sie aber in seltsamer Verblendung wie kostbare Beutestücke am Arm führten, beide schritten sie wie beliebte Klassikerbüsten, die ins Wandeln geraten waren und über zu engen Schwalbenschwanzröcken die Gesichter in strenge Falten aus vergeistigtem Gips gelegt hatten. Sie waren beide beachtliche Dummköpfe und pflegten den gleichen Geschmack ...

Not only the same taste was shared, not only an equal veneration of the local Bernhardt, but in mutual ignorance of each other's intended review, they both produced almost the same. A final - lowering of the curtain, one might say, rather than raising it, is effected by the appearance, or the apparition of Frau von Lössin, and the magic with which the imagination transforms her. She is blond, but becomes so "zigeunerschwarz, dass das Schwarz blau schimmerte". Not Baudelaire, we are told, - (though we know Baudelaire's complicity in all this) - has transfigured her, "ich war es, der sie verfremdete, dunkel färbte, in die Urwälder setzte, sie in die Tropen des Dichters übersetzte." The experience is rationalised by the suggestion that he wished her not to be what she is, or it was the love-hate emotional mixture which sought to break down her arrogance, "diesen

Rittergutsbesitzerstolz, denn schwarz, zigeunerhaft, tropisch dunkel war sie heimatlos und entkleidet, ein Geschöpf der Einbildung, eine mir verfallene Beute ..." This is an implicit allusion to the world this haughty, cold, unfeeling, savagely beautiful local aristocrat cannot inhabit, she is the antithesis to the warm, loving south (that German gravitation of T. Mann and G. Benn, both immensely admired by Koeppen), her Prussian glaciality would melt and she would become receptive once more to the harmonies of beneficent Nature. But the miracle is not repeated in the real world, and symbolically no communication is effected. Frau von Lössin remained a "Luftgeist aus nordischer Sage", another pregnant allegory - the mythology of northern Europe, like Wagner's, is used in Koeppen's work to represent powers of destruction and disharmony in man, in contrast to the constant resort to Greek myths where divine images of man had been preserved and weighed against the riven psyche of modern man. And so the aristocratic blond will become Frau Regierungspräsident, a high-born German-national, and for Koeppen there is only "Flucht aus diesem Land, Flucht, Flucht ..." ⁸²

A particularly humiliating and degrading aspect of provincial theatre is represented by the narrator's mother's experience as a prompter, - hot, sticky, "eine Schnecke in ihrem Gehäuse" ⁸³, she is the butt of abuse and invective by the actors, her attitudes become either 'Heldenfurcht' or 'Heldenverachtung'; she is a priestess in her temple, enacting a ritual which causes anger and bitterness, exposing the actor to ridicule - "aus Faust oder Mephisto ragt Herr Meier hervor"; and she too can receive the charity of the shopkeepers. The mood of Koeppen's own remembered expectations before the curtain rises is significant in that it is the doomed romantic's presentiment of the inescapable gulf between dream and reality, the picture preconceived by the creative 'Ein-bildung' and the human artefact displayed: "Wenn man die Aufführung sieht, ist es selten die Aufführung, die einem vorgeschwebt hat." ⁸⁴ Proustian associations are

effected by a photograph recalling baroque allegories on the proscenium curtain: "Sein Herz bebte, wie im Theater der kleinen Stadt seiner Kindheit, wenn er im Saal schon ... das Märchen erlebt hätte, vor dem sich dann das Tuch in einer beinahe enttäuschenden Weise heben sollte."⁸⁵ The discrepancy was somewhat attenuated when the quality of theatre was heightened when he arrived in the Promised Land of metropolitan culture in Berlin, "das gelobte Land erreichte vom pommerschen Acker her ..."⁸⁶

An abiding theme of Naturalist and Expressionist literature is the attack on the repression and the call for the liberation of natural instincts and energies, a special attack being made on the hypocritical sexual mores whether of town or country, though naturally conservatism reigned more repressively in the provincial and rural areas. In his post-war novels and travel records Koeppen's emphasis is as much on the unnatural and deleterious aspects of sexual exhibitionism and abandon as on the exposure of moralistic shams. But there is no contradiction here; the same morality of alienation is at work. The anti-human repression witnessed in the early years offends the image of 'wholeness', prevents contact with the fertile powers of unconscious energies (not to mention the artist's role in exploring the unconscious world for mythical and religious symbolism), and exploits these repressed forces for war and destruction. Sexual licence, the phenomenon of the cosmopolitan city life, is equally anti-human; "make love, not war", by all means, but love rather than venal sex is called for, and fleeting relationships are inimical to 'Wesen' or the soul of man. But in the period we are concerned with, the harmful effects of fear, ignorance and prudery are in the foreground.

Käte Kasch's situation illustrates the 'Angst' and church-ridden hypocrisy which meet her when her pregnancy is surmised; "von der ihr gesagt worden war, sie ist keine Freundin, nicht für dich, du darfst nicht mit ihr verkehren, sie hält nicht auf sich."⁸⁷ There is no doubt where the author's sympathies reside; the atmosphere reeks of smutty asides,

shame and confusion, "verhangene Fenster, ein Haushalten mit dem Entsetzen," the victim is sacrificed on the altar of the omnipotent and malevolent goddess, "Sitte". Nature, too, is seen here as no particular friend of the victim, - "untertan der einsichtslosen gebärsüchtigen Natur." It is important to remember this cruel indifferent side to Nature, part of a more comprehensive and hostile Schicksal, in fact, often linked with the concept of an absent God. It offsets the mythical image of pre-rational harmony we have associated with foals in meadows and even moonlit seascapes, which in any case is the "Wunschtraum" ignoring more cruel realities. Certainly the Nature we know and experience daily involves a Fate inimical to man - compare Koeppen's forthright assertion: "Die Natur ist grausam. Das Leben unfreundlich."⁸⁸ Paradoxically, and seen superficially, Käthe Kasch's problem might have been alleviated by resort to the rational fruits of technology; but when we are dealing with Schicksal, these considerations would no doubt be held to be inadequate by the 'Kulturpessimist'. The girl's anticipatory horror of the vulgar abortionist, the oppression of social stigma, produce thoughts of suicide, a regular indicator of social alienation. Sexual deviationism is often satirised in Koeppen's novels; one thinks of Messalina and the Lesbian Wanowski in Tauben im Gras. But here again it is the predatory, promiscuous abandon which is the target, a demonic evil which has no reference to the plight of humanity, though it is consonant with the disintegrating forces of the age. Tante Martha is more sympathetically treated;⁸⁹ it is irrelevant to enquire how imaginary is this transvestite (only privately), effeminate figure who presides over the juvenile court (as Amtsgerichtsrat); the writer has obvious sympathy with the embarrassment he endures, with the character's sense of guilt and self-abasement before an insensitive society, - "er steht ganz auf Seiten der geltenden Moral, findet seine Träume abscheulich." His own decency is plain: "Ein Lächeln aus echter Liebenswürdigkeit und furchtbarer Verlegenheit." His feelings and situation are expressed by such phrases as:

"Aussenseiter der Gesellschaft", and "Einsamkeit, in der allmählich Weisheit die Bitterkeit mildert." The only person who does not mock the alien figure is the other alien, the delinquent who also defies the 'Sittengesetz', who ambiguously confronts him.

The seediness and furtiveness in sexual behaviour deriving from the bürgerlich taboos and the unwholesome sexual ignorance they engender, are effectively conveyed by a lengthy passage concerning a spying at a key-hole upon a dressing-room full of the Berlin Hillermillerzillerrevue chorus girls in various states of undress. The authorial "Selbstentblössung"⁹⁰ (Koeppen's? or just the narrator's?) is placed at a slight remove by the use of a third-person narrator, so naked and intimate are the details. That such intense desires are stifled so ignominiously, so we conclude, is a token of barbarism. The sensorium is active again: "er roch sie, die ausgezogenen Schlüpfer, die Spitzenhemden, die Halter für Brust und Strumpf sie waren nackt bis auf die Binden vor der Scham, das Geschlecht herausstellend, fesselnder als ganz und gar nackt, er ahnte ihre unter Mull gepressten krausen Haare, er hatte sie nie gesehen, befeuchtet von ihrem Saft und wie Wassertropfen auf der nassen roten Scheide aus Döderleins Atlas der Gynäkologie ... Döderlein wusste Bescheid .." But the key-hole voyeur is not the gynaecologist, and learns by more sordid subterfuges. The onanistic release is the substitute for the happy integrated sexual experience desired. No doubt personal existential factors are relevant here as well as sexual mores. But as in the novels there is a deep disenchantment (here combined with the natural curiosity of the young and uninitiated) with the basic physical processes of our being, a disgust is discernible, as with many of the Expressionists, with the inadequacy of the purely physical and the decay and death inherent in the structure of life itself. Where physical life is at its most intense as in sexual experience, we meet repeatedly in Koeppen associations with death and putrefaction, especially when the experience is not

heightened by feelings of tenderness and concern - when the tenderness is present, significantly the physical intimate details are dispensed with. One of the sordid aspects of theatre life is the stage director's conventional affair with the soubrette; sleeping with her becomes a matter of grotesque carnality, characterised by tropical humidity and sweat, mixed with the auditory excitements of the landlady:

... die alte Bettstelle knarrt, die Fischerswitwe
erregt sich hinter der dünnen Wand, das steinschwere
Federplumeau wird von verschwitzten Gliedern zurück-
gestossen, die Nacht beklemmt in der Mansarde, wer
in den Tropen war, mag denken: Lianenwald, die Nacht
wetterleuchtet, das Schwein grunzt in der Witwe
kleinem Stall, trüffelt den nassen Soubrettenleib,
Quell unter feuchtem Moos, Moder wie in einer Grab-
kammer, das Stichwort nicht vernommen ... Rinnsale
von Hitze und Angst, kein Begreifen, natürlich
nicht, woher begreifen?⁹¹

There is no communication or understanding on this level; this animality is part of that larger brutish Nature to which man is subservient and in which extinction makes an overriding claim. The processes of love-making are reduced to the level of the farmyard. Birth and copulation are never envisioned without the third element of Eliot's trinity. In the scene with the voyeur there are allusions to the hair already clinging to the combs used by the girls, to the flushing of the toilet (this is even more grotesque in Das Treibhaus),⁹² which is - purposively? - followed by the orgasm. In one sense, this is all an affront to a comprehensive conception of Geist and a higher spirituality. One such affront is certainly personified in the figure of Göbel who has his own dressing-room nearby, for whom sex is a mechanical exercise, with basic hygiene as an essential; he is a philanderer, "er schlief sich durch .." The voyeur knows that this crudely scientific approach has nothing whatsoever to do with the deeper levels of human communication. Elsewhere in his prose-fragments Koeppen speaks of a meeting with a girl in the Stadttheater; shy overtures are made, the excitement is suppressed. "Dann im Buch (the conceived autobiography) die Erfüllung der Wünsche".⁹³ Art symbolically fulfils where reality fails.

This points to a deep problematic in the writer's own personal relationships, which bears fruit, for example, in Eine Unglückliche Liebe.

"Ich fuhr zur See und suchte Utopia".⁹⁴ Koeppen went to Berlin via the sea and Hamburg; but visions of distant foreign lands impelled him first to seek a ship which might take him on as chief cook - his knowledge of gastronomical arts being considerable - and transport him to India. On one ship in Stettin he discovered his hopes of preparing fine dishes were bathetically thwarted - "es kam ja nicht darauf an, etwas Lukullisches zu bereiten."⁹⁵ The Hamburg ship turned out to be an equal failure, the chief cook being "ein grober, gewalttätiger Mensch" which precluded association. But a deeper source of estrangement is discernible; he joins the ranks of the seafaring proletariat, in the queue for a job. But there was nothing romantic or revolutionary about this band of workers. He could not escape the burgher, who criticised his long hair. "Sie waren Bürger ohne Haus und ohne Besitz. Sie waren Bürger für nichts und wieder nichts. Sie nahmen es hin. Sie enttäuschten mich."⁹⁶ Not ripe for a revolution, but possibly ripe for a takeover. The clouds were darkening; on the way to Stettin he passes training-grounds where Mars and Thanatos were worshipped, graveyards smoothed over and forgotten: "Ich sah es wuchern. Ich ahnte es. Es war eine Pause. Sie hatten mich nicht. Es gab kein Entfliehen."⁹⁷ "They" never did have him; but equally the doom was inevitable, the right people could not control events, indeed there is a sense that nobody could control them. "Es war eine Pause" reminds us of another interval between disasters, one actual and one possible, - the events of Tauben im Gras take place during "eine Atempause auf dem Schlachtfeld", before the onset of World War III.⁹⁸ "Wes Brot ich esse, des Lied ich singe"⁹⁹ seems to be an eternal, ineradicable human situation. When the narrator signs on for a ship to Finland, he is told by the doctor, "Beware of women"; the doctor has the usual gashes across his cheek; two tokens of a cold, hostile, hard environment. There seems something relentlessly logical in

the story in the way the pieces and fragments hang together -- not as a jigsaw puzzle, or a tidy composition, but in the way an essence can be distilled. "Ich sah die grosse graue See. Eine unendliche Grabplatte, wie aus Blei. Ich sah Seeschlachten, Versenkungen, Bombardierungen. Ich sah die grossen Untergänge, die kommen sollten."¹⁰⁰

Berlin represents at least the fermenting cultural emporium which alone could quicken the heart and mind of the writer. There were even touches of professional success, on the staff of the "Börsen-Courier", which gave him thoughts of a possible assignment as cultural correspondent in Paris, a city whose 'revolutionary' ethos has always attracted him. But for developments in the thirties' we might have seen a sequel to Döblin's Berlin Alexanderplatz. In the Promised Land:

... ich lauschte den Dichtern und Philosophen,
hörte den Malern und Schauspielern zu, begegnete
den klugen Herren der grossen Zeitungen, ... ich
liebte die Anarchisten und die anarchischen
Mädchen und die Träumer vom ewigen Frieden, und
die Schwärmer von Freiheit, Gleichheit und Brüder-
lichkeit ...¹⁰¹

It is interesting that what is in question here is more of an atmosphere, a climate of cultural possibilities such as the Weimar Republic offered before its death-throes; on the personal level we see a miscellany of acquaintances, but few friendships of a close nature - by telephone and letter he contacted many writers of distinction with respect to the reviews he wrote for the "Welt am Abend" or the "Börsen-Courier", - "aber ich habe fast keinen kennengelernt und auch keinen Versuch dazu gemacht."¹⁰² But the Parisian slogans were to be vanquished; the Völkisch aspects of Geist were to conquer all other aspects of the Germanic concern for the higher artistic and spiritual values, indicating how vulnerable the latter could be when not rooted in more concrete human, and in particular, social realities. "The hunger for wholeness was awash with hate",¹⁰³ observes one critic more devoted to rationalist causes. In the same context he reminds us of the peculiarly German inclination to a "mixture of mysticism and

brutality." But from the start Koeppen had negated war and nationalism and could never have considered them as the way to an inner renewal as some of his older compatriots did before the first World War. Whatever notions of 'conservative' revolution he was attached to, they had from the start an internationalist character. It was almost too late, but he completed two novels before the final reckoning came; they reflect and focus upon the uncertainty of the age, and the intellectual's relation to that age, though because of the prevailing regime their milieux are transplanted, spatially, in the case of Eine Unglückliche Liebe, and temporally, in the case of Die Mauer Schwankt. The latter was written in Holland, that historical centre of tolerance and intellectual breadth, but its career was affected by the fate of his Jewish publisher, Cassirer. It also resurrects imaginatively much of the world we have been discussing in this section.

This world, from its beginnings on the domestic front even, had aroused feelings of both indignation and resignation; from the time when he knew that the traumatic reduction to poverty of his family had some origin in the excusable, nay, desirable escape to momentary freedom and happiness of the grandmother, a swift contact with paradise which society could not forgive:

... Mondkrater um die verweinten Augen ... eingegraben
in ihre Züge, eine Bestrafung, da sie über den Zaun
gesprungen war, über die Hecke der evangelischen Zucht,
über das Gitter des Herkommens, verlockt von Unordnung,
die aus der Behütung gesehen und für einen Moment der
Betörung paradiesisch geschienen hatte, gleich aber,
als der Sprung geschehen war, der Fuss aufsetzte in
Freiheit, und schon etwas gebrochen war, der Leichtsinn,
der jubelnde Entschluss, der hohe Mut, die kühne Freude,
erkannte sie, die eine Bäuerin war, wenn auch von den
Gütern, das brache Land ...¹⁰⁴

The emotive substantives strike chords of sympathy and fellow-feeling, 'Freiheit', 'Betörung', 'Leichtsinn', 'kühne Freude', existential leaps into realms where will and emotion and passion overrule the laws of causation and necessity, not to mention those of society. The most significant item is the primary impulse, "verlockt von Unordnung", an impulse

which if anything became increasingly stronger in Koeppen's life. His relations with his mother were marked by the usual rift between the generations; her death is poignant in that he cannot provide her with the hope she needs, the answer she demands - that her life, his life have a meaning, that he has a future; neither he nor the Lutheran God can fill the void:

der Himmel ... bebt Unendlichkeit, und sie erwartet das von mir, die Hilfe zum Sterben, eine Sinngebung nur, ihr Leben ... soll einen Sinn bekommen, den sie verstehen könnte, oder ich soll ihr Leben rechtefertigen, so wie ich dastand auf jener Brücke, in einem Mantel reif für den Müll, mit lange nicht geschnittenem Haar, existenzlos, jeder sagte: ohne Zukunft ... ich sage nichts, kein Wort ... ich bewege mich nicht auf sie zu, mehr von ihr weg, ich unterdrücke mühsam ein Weinen, und doch ist die Begegnung mir hinderlich (ich) blickte umher wie in die Enge getrieben, auf zum Himmel, mir ähnlich, er schwieg ... es war nicht mein Tod ...¹⁰⁵ (ich) an das Geschäft dachte, das ich nicht habe.

His mother's world had vanished some time ago; his has not yet arrived; her death severed finally the umbilical cord, but the cord had not been the symbol of a fruitful relationship. One reaction of the author abides in the memory which sums up the alienation he felt - and feels - with respect to living and functioning in society in general. The mother was afraid, when he left school prematurely not merely out of revulsion but also to try to earn something extra and alleviate their poverty, that the boy would mix with social inferiors, for her ancestry was of a different kind:

Sie begriff nicht, dass ich ohne Standesbewusstsein war, weder zu den einen auf, noch zu den anderen hinunter blickte, sondern in allen möglichen Daseinsformen nur Verkleidungen sah, die mir nicht stehen würden.¹⁰⁶ (my emphasis)

As the century wore on, many writers, and Koeppen in particular, became particularly concerned with the question of which "Daseinsformen" were open to them, how many of them it was possible to live, to "er-leben", the importance such changes of experience had for the writer in society, and

for his own sense of identity within it. One of the several reasons why Keetenheuve, in Das Treibhaus, fails to believe in the realisability of a "revolution" is that "er schwankte zwischen den Daseinsformen".¹⁰⁷ No utopia can confidently be built upon the shifting sands of unstable structures (either those existing or those to be achieved) in what one observer has called, Das Fragmentarische Universum.¹⁰⁸ At the beginning of the "Jugend" item, Maria, though by no means fully at ease, generally accepts her provincial situation; "Sie achtet nicht, wie eng die Verhältnisse sind, wie begrenzt der Spielraum, wie erstarrt die Regeln."¹⁰⁹ As the rules became flexible, the frontiers (in every sense) extended, the possibilities of situation and rôle boundless, the intellectual artist discovered that he was no more at home in the new world he had partly engineered than in the former one.

THE PRE-WAR NOVELSEINE UNGLÜCKLICHE LIEBE (1934) : SYNOPSIS

Thematic and stylistic features of early novels (become pronounced in later work) - 'anti-heroes' victims of hostile society - literature of alienation and crisis of individual identity condemned by totalitarian regimes - central theme failure of emotional relationship, burgher-artist conflict, background of war and revolution - intense, idealised emotions - the spiritualisation of beauty, stress on physical decay - autobiographical traits - routine the enemy of an enduring relationship - importance of psychological barrier - "divine", extraordinary attributes of Sibylle, contrasted with the bourgeoisie, Geist and the idealised woman - Expressionist language and exaltation - respect for mutual freedom and autonomy of being establishes the barrier between the two characters - the problematic ordained by Schicksal - 'Besitzwunsch' a longing for total knowledge of other - this, like union, an impossible invasion of another's being - sense of cosmic enigma, world unfathomable - Koeppen's characters 'Amokläufer', doomed to failure - insecurity of the age, uncertainty and fragmentation of human relationships - the artist and the apprehension of fleeting experiences and sense-impressions, its relation to style and technique, lack of meaning and structure in transient realities, relation of author and his characters to these realities - rootlessness and instability of characters, Friedrich's general 'Beziehungslosigkeit', part of recurring 'Unheimlichkeit' of universe - the 'Grenze' symbol, dream-world beyond frontier - questions of identity of self, of division of personality - alienating reality and the Utopian dream, conceptions of pre-rational, natural harmonies - burgher-bohemian antithesis a central basis for Friedrich's alienation - aversion to a 'bürgerlich' union and its dull, repetitive monotony - romanticism of the 'revolutionary' - Sibylle's experience of provincial

boredom, seedy bohemianism equally unsatisfying - romantic revolt
predominant mood of novel - alienation in a 'geistfeindlich' age -
attack on commercial greed and burgher taboos - 'Angst' in world of
constant change and movement.

THE PRE-WAR NOVELSEINE UNGLÜCKLICHE LIEBE (1934) - Romantic revolt and 'Beziehungslosigkeit'.

Most of Koeppen's basic attitudes and outlooks had been formed by the time he came to write Eine Unglückliche Liebe (1934) and Die Mauer Schwankt (1935), and historical events do much to confirm fears and intuitions which he claims to have experienced in the earlier years, or which find expression in his pre-war writings. In the first novel the central problematic is mainly of a personal psychological nature, but here also the character of the surrounding world, the turmoil and unrest which mark the lives of the protagonists, and which will intensify with time, the elements of romantic revolt and bitter resignation, the new stylistic modes which attempt to convey realities more difficult to establish or understand, especially when unconscious processes and highly subjective, imaginary experiences are involved, the questionings and self-questionings of tormented minds and souls, all these varied features already make their appearance, before they become even more magnified in later work. An anonymous journalist sees a similar consistency in the two early novels:

Schon waren die Grundzüge des Romanwerks erkennbar: die Protagonisten stehen einer feindlichen Welt gegenüber, sie verbrauchen sich im geistigen Widerstand, im Ringen mit sich selbst, sie resignieren vor der Gewalt der "Normalen". Die feindliche Welt war in den ersten beiden Romanen noch konstruiert, anonyme Landschaften und Städte, wenngleich erratbar, fungieren als Widerpart der einsamen und isolierten Helden.

In view of what is contained in the fictional autobiographical items concerned with Koeppen's youth and early manhood, it is not surprising that a state of alienation as described in the above commentary is fundamental and peculiar to the relations between the protagonists and the world which confronts them. Reactions to this condition differ; von Süde in the second novel builds a wall round himself and family to keep the world at a distance, whereas Friedrich attempts much of the time to find

ways of breaking down the barriers which prevent emotional fulfilment, before he surrenders to resignation at the end. Characters are victims of the vicissitudes of history, of war and unrest, and then have to do battle with their own devils, demons and other variants of Schicksal, - when Friedrich falsely believes he can triumph, "sein Teufel über den Geist des Mädchens Gewalt bekam ..." (151). In view of Koeppen's own precarious situation as a writer in the Third Reich, it is not surprising that his work did not find favour with the defenders of 'Blut und Boden' literature. One of the reasons why the author has some sentimental attachment to the first novel (and why he was happy to see a new edition appear in 1960 - "Ich hing etwas an dieser "Unglücklichen Liebe"²⁾ was that Bruno Cassirer, soon to be removed on racial grounds from the publishing scene, had published the work in difficult conditions, and "die gleichgeschaltete Presse schrieb über mich, da habe man T. Mann und H. Mann, Döblin und Feuchtwanger verjagt, und da wage es ein junger Autor, diese 'undeutsche Tradition' fortzusetzen."³ Reich-Ranicki equally cannot see in the first two novels "die geringsten Konzessionen zugunsten der neuen Machthaber"⁴, and Koeppen himself records that the first work "einen damals braunen, heute christlichen Kritiker nach dem Arbeitslager rufen liess."⁵ One of the many reasons why the above writers were scorned by the Nazis and their ideological puppets was that they faced the crisis of culture, portrayed man as a victim of dis-integrative forces in a technologically orientated mass-society etc., created fragmented characters in an increasingly fragmented world.

Böschenstein comments accordingly:

Anfang der dreissiger Jahre begann die Abschnürung der deutschen von der europäischen Literatur (a further ground for Koeppen's own alienation as a writer). Statt der belebenden Krise verbreitete sich eine tödliche Erstarrung; mit der freien Entwicklung des Menschen- und Lebensbildes war es vorbei. Der Befehl erging, Gesundheit zu mimen und handfeste Persönlichkeiten zu erfinden ... manche (sich) weigerten, die in Deutschland verbleiben mussten, solche Bälge zu stopfen und mit blondem Haupthaar

zu bekleben. Vergleicht man die damals offiziell geforderten kerngesunden unkomplizierten Roman- gestalten mit den neurotischen, zerfächerten Identitäten der Krisen-Dichter, so sehen diese neben jenen abgestandenen Popanzen geradezu vital und zukunftssträchtig aus.

No critic could view Koeppen's characters as 'unkompliziert'. In view of his gravitation to human types who are "Gescheiterte" in the main, it would be difficult to call them 'vital' - which is how Böschenstein sees his own ideal character-types developing when the "Ich-Krise" has been experienced and solved. There is no such solution for Koeppen. We could describe the protagonists, Friedrich and von Süde, in particular, and even minor characters in these early novels, as "Gescheiterte", as Koeppen describes Keetenheuve in Das Treibhaus. Given the struggles and resigned despair of his anti-heroes, we see why the 'Reichskulturkammer' indexed the two novels as "unerwünschte Bücher", for they confirm Konrad Kurz's reflections on the contemporary novel (the author's later works confirm them even more so):

Das epische Gebilde der Neuzeit, der Roman, hängt soziologisch und psychologisch eng mit dem Verlust einer tragenden Gemeinschaft, eines umfassenden Glaubens- und Weltverständnisses, mit der Individualisierung und Vereinsamung des 'Helden' zusammen.

We must now turn our attention to the first novel to see how this commentary applies.

The variety actors among whom Friedrich and Sibylle move are made up of political refugees and anarchists of varying brands living on the edge of society. The novel centres upon the psychology of the abortive and yet never-ending relationship between the two main participants in the love-drama, the questionings concerning its failure, and the more conventional social tensions generated by the burgher-artist conflict. These relationships and tensions are played out against a further background of the aftermath of war and revolution; fortunes have been lost and lives transformed, just as Koeppen's own family had been impoverished; Ania had seen

Russian cities burn, the child of a prince, the paradise of stability and wealth is recalled - "Oh, Schlösser und Besitz mit weiten Ausritten, Schlittenreisen über die Schneefelder im kleinen Licht der Ampel vorn an der Deichselspitze zwischen den Pferdeköpfen, und der blendende Glanz der Feste der hohen Herren im Kreml.." (62), all contrasted with the seedy ambiance of the Tante Male variety theatre. The fateful day when war was declared in 1914 is remembered as the apocalyptic event presaging the end of the world. "Propheten waren aufgestanden im Land und hatten es verkündet" (58). There are signs that turmoil and disaster are looming once more on the horizon, and that we are not living in that free, visa-less world Koeppen dreams of; in the foreign city, probably Zurich, "Man musste Scheuklappen tragen, man durfte nicht alles sehen; schon brauten im Seespiegel und Ufergras die Nebeldünste sich zu Gespenstern zusammen, um bald wieder, unheimlich und kalt, ihren Tanz über den Wassern zu beginnen" (88). The psychological twists and tensions, we may conclude, were known to the author first hand - he had experienced his own "Unglückliche Liebe"⁸. The intensity of the feeling, the aesthetic idealisation of the emotion Friedrich feels for Sibylle - "Haupt des Eros vor der Idylle der griechischen Inseln" (66) - are very highly-pitched and extreme, consonant with the writer who had lived through the Expressionist era; Friedrich Bischoff probably had this in mind when he described the novel as a "grossartiges, in seiner Vollendung im Hinblick auf die weitere Entwicklung des Dichters fast gefährlich erscheinendes Buch."⁹ We feel that the portraits of Sibylle sometimes owe much to contemporary aesthetic cults - the obverse side of the preoccupation with the seedy and vile aspects of living. In the first context we have, by way of example, "Dorisches Mädchen, schenkelzeigend! Worauf noch eine Flut von Assoziationen, Griechentempel, Stadien, Läuferglieder, Wein zum Trunk und Rosen im Haar über mich niederging" (37). An age which has lost its dedication to, even feeling for beauty, form, wholeness, must be redeemed or offset by the artist's vision of these

elements in past ages. The nearest approximation the writer can make to the picture of romanticised Hellenism follows immediately in this Lawrentian image of red evening twilight by a lake in Masuren against a dark forest hinterland, "die jungen Burschen die Pferde in die Schwemme ritten, nackt und glatt auf dem blendend nassen Fell der schnaubenden Tiere." Such is the "Einklang mit der Natur" which, according to Günter Blöcker,¹⁰ we have apparently forfeited. It is an important aspect of Koeppen's presentation of the artist's alienation in our time. His constant resort to art in order to apprehend the universe at all is part of the "Flucht nach Innen", or the search for the Utopian 'Gegenbild'. It is this which leads Reich-Ranicki perhaps to describe Koeppen's creation in this novel as a "autonomes poetisches Universum".¹¹ At one point, Sibylle's beauty is 'gesteigert' - "in das Reich des reinen Begriffs 'sie ist schön' und war überhaupt nicht mehr zu erfassen und nur noch zu verehren wie eine Gnade der Genien ..." (165) This idealisation relates to the contraposition of Geist to the physical body, - a kind of corporeal appendage - which becomes part of the psychological problematic for Friedrich; we are reminded, though it is hardly necessary, that his devotion is to her soul as well as her body; but the language used to present the body hardly recommends it as an object of love: "nicht nur dem fremden Leib verfallen, der hübschen Larve, die vergeht, den Brüsten, deren Rose welkt, der zarten Haut, die unter dem Schmelz der siebzehn Jahre schon das graue Pigment des Alters trägt, den Armen, Beinen und Schenkel und Leibteilen, deren festes Fleisch an einem Morgen schwabbliges Fett oder eine blutleere Dürre sein wird .." (151) Kahler, among others, traces the obsession of Baudelaire and the Expressionist poets with "Verwesung" to features of our world, "den Zerfall der sinnlichen Realität, des sinnlich Organischen, der persönlichen Identität."¹²

Eplach observes that Koeppen does not portray the age in which the personal conflicts are waged; "Er gibt kein Bild seiner Zeit, sondern ein

Bild seiner Existenz (i.e. des Aussenseiters); wir erleben nicht den Untergang der Weimarer Republik, sondern Not und Pein eines Aussenseiterdaseins."¹³

True, but apart from references to political happenings, we do have occasional insights into the sedate conformism of the bourgeoisie, much of it by way of the mockings and teasings of Sibylle who is for ever attracted to that which is "absonderlich". She has more humour and 'Phantasie' than any other members of the troupe; the pranks both protagonists played on the world of respectability (118-119) were the things which would have delighted the youthful Koeppen, himself attracted to difference and eccentricity. She is of course superior to the world she inhabits, the world of "Leidenschaft mimende Züge, verhärmte Münder"(16). "Koeppen" (the author is the same age as Friedrich, 28 years) is seen as a highly sensitive creature, vulnerable, doomed to conflict and the incomprehension of society: "ein guter Mensch, ein offener Charakter und somit ein wehrloser, nackter und jedem Gelächter preisgebener"(149). He is just the person to get entangled in an 'unglückliche Liebe', "jeder Erbarmung ledig" (84).

The psychological dilemma which lies at the centre of any discussion of the relations between Friedrich and Sibylle is the acknowledged value each has for the other, which prevents them from consummating a relationship which would spell the end of that relationship once it became a matter of routine and accommodation. The barrier - more painful for the male protagonist than the female - is thus the means of perpetuating an unfulfilled bond of friendship; it is highlighted with the customary metaphorical precision:

... sie wussten, dass nichts sich geändert hatte, und dass die Wand aus dünnstem Glas, durchsichtig wie die Luft und vielleicht noch schärfer die Erscheinung des anderen wiedergebend, zwischen ihnen bestehen blieb. Es war dies eine Grenze, die sie nun respektieren; und Sibylle blieb für ihn bestimmt; und Friedrich war der Mensch, der ihr gehörte. Es hatte sich nichts geändert. (237)

Koeppen frequently refers to quirks of fortune, slight changes of circum-

stance, the intervention of a malevolent Fate or a personal 'demon' which thwart human plans and intentions, and prognostications of the future; Friedrich feels that he is nearly breaking through the wall dividing him and Sibylle, when some 'Unvernunft' intervenes:

... vielleicht ist es wie ein Tunnelbau, Sibylle sollte da graben und ich hier, wir hätten uns begegnen sollen und dem Plan der Baumeister, aber dann sind wir uns nur nahegekommen; sie hörte den Schlag, und ich vernahm das Scharren ihres Spatens, die Erde bröckelte schon, fingerdünn war die Schicht, die uns trennte - da wurde ich mit Unvernunft geschlagen und änderte die Richtung meines Grabens, senkte den Weg in die Tiefe, dem Glückern zu, der Hölle, wie ... auf alten Bildern. (45)

The allusion to the absence of change in the circumstances surrounding the relationship or Friedrich's general situation, connects with the beginning of the novel, and the narrator's preoccupation with "frontiers", which, starting as concrete entities, take on added psychological, if not metaphysical significance. Before studying this extended significance and the light it throws on Koeppen's own relationship with reality, we will analyse more closely the confrontation of the two main actors in the love conflict.

First there is the undoubted strength of the feeling Friedrich has for the actress. In flashbacks we see Friedrich, having behaved out of character already at the first encounter with Sibylle, when tensions are experienced which are central to the general theme, going to work at the light-bulb factory where (though student by day) he earns extra money at night as a recorder of light-bulb behaviour:

Er benahm sich wie ein Tier ... er handelte nur in der ersten, natürlichsten Reaktion. Er taumelte und griff nach einem Halt: sie wird jung sterben, sie ist geboren, jung zu sterben, und das Mitleid, und die Liebe ... und jeder Wunsch sogleich zu ihr zu eilen, ... sie zu wärmen, zu füttern, zu streicheln, zu küssen, sie zu schützen mit dem eigenen Leib, oh, dein Gesicht, dein Atem ... unter meiner Brust! - Es war zu viel des Taumels und nicht mehr zu halten. (47-48)

The language, the grammatical ellipsis, match the strength and impetuosity of the emotion. Ironically, it is Friedrich who nearly dies from the

accident which ensues from this intoxication of feeling. Significant too is the supposition that such a "divine" creature cannot survive long in brutish mortal realms, a highly "romantic" feature of this state of exaltation. She is clothed by her lovers in ethereal attributes, a divine-Dionysiac creature, seductive, dominating, capricious, exhibitionistic, of imperious will, given to changes of mood, an arational, a pre-rational animal reminiscent of Wedekind's Lulu. As such she is an integral part of the theatrical ambiance with which Koeppen enjoyed such an ambiguous relationship. "Sie ist so gewachsen, dass sie vollkommen ist wie ein junges Tier. Sie ist Gott gelungen, das dachte Friedrich, indem er kniete."(145). The divine or the complete and perfect character of the instinctual and the arational is enshrined here in romantic idealisation - echoes of Kleist and the glorification of animal instinct. Together with the divine there are often elements of a dangerous and maleficent nature, reminiscent of Baudelaire's Hymne à la Beauté:

Viens-tu du ciel profond ou sors-tu de l'abîme,¹⁴
O Beauté? Ton regard, infernal et divin

She is a "Gazelle, die kühn über die Abgründe springt,"(121), a "Meisterin, die uns an den Schnüren hielt"(39), as Friedrich and Beck (who, like Walter, the theatre critic, escaped in time the tyranny of her seductive power) perform their marionette comedy in front of her. There is nothing ordinary about Sibylle; she distinguishes herself from the majority of conventional womanhood, which - it is made plain elsewhere in the novel - failed to stir Friedrich's imagination:-

Musste sie eines Mannes Opfer werden? Sie hatte selber wie ein Mann den Geliebten sich nehmen und jedem Begehren und jedem Halt entweichen wollen. War es dies, dass sie dem Schicksal der Frau zu entgehen wünschte und, regsamer und mehr vom Geist und seinen Einfällen besessen als andere Mädchen, selber den Ritter spielen wollte ... Hatte sie nicht Liebhaber sich gesucht und sie schnell verbraucht? (210)

One senses that Geist provides Sibylle with higher attributes and strength of personal autonomy - giving her features somewhat like Penthesilea's -

which raise her above the scorned images of the earth- and family-bound Hausfrau or the Frau Amtsgerichtsrat, a slave to the social code. The Gretchen-Helen typology is still at work. No conventional marriage with the typical female product of the German social system is likely to be a success in Koeppen's estimation, or so his writings indicate. In Die Verlobung im alten Salon we sense that Paul is averse to being embroiled in a family network - "in den Kessel der Konnexionen und Intrigen gerührt" - and he is heading for a "Schicksal, dem nicht zu entgehen ist". A union here with Christine would be so easy, unlike the union with Sibylle which is so desired. So the pull is away from the burgher marriage: "Bald werde ich heimgehen, die Strasse wird ruhig in der Nacht liegen, mein Zimmer wartet warm und hell, ich werde allein sein."¹⁵ It is the superior woman who provides the Rausch and intensity of attraction which become part of Friedrich's search in her - for a higher dimension of being, a search which for him, as well as the author, was inevitably doomed to failure. Friedrich's psychological problem in this regard had been adumbrated earlier, when, following the fracas with Walter, whose tortured jealousy and possessiveness had, for survival's sake, enforced his withdrawal from the overpopulated scene, he revealed with romantic coeur mis à nu to his bohemian actress-friend his youthful desires and frustrations:

... (er) berichtete von der Lust einer Bereitschaft zur Liebe, immer unter der Zucht des Willens gestanden ... Er beschönigte nichts. Er schilderte ... die Entsagungen und Entbehrungen, die Askese, die freiwillig war, weil sie zu stolz ist, teilzunehmen an den Vergnügungen der phantasielosen jungen Leute auf den Universitäten, und zu arm, die schöngliedrigen Tänzerinnen zu empfangen, die vom Olymp des Galerieplatzes aus angebetet werden. (150)

Friedrich thus from an early age stands between two worlds, finding contact with neither. The one fails to inspire, the other appears inaccessible, and yet the goal of his romantic yearnings, the imagined fulfilment. The response to the sensuous being tells of the instinctive need for immediacy and directness of feeling and experience denied by a conventional social

order. We witness the fears with which the response is made, the doubts concerning the seedier elements which often accompany the revolt against convention;—"Nicht, dass ich besonders liebte, was man mit einem dummen Ausdruck das Laster nennt. Ich hatte in meinem Leben nicht viel mehr mit ihm gemein als mit Generalen oder mit Gerichtspräsidenten"¹⁶; and finally the tragedy of unbridled passion itself. Because of these doubts and dichotomies, there are frequent questionings and self-questionings as to what mutual feelings amount to. She becomes "das Gesetz, unter dem sein Leben stand."(44). The Dionysiac inebriation feeds on poetic fantasy:

Ich kann trinken, kann den tiefen, befreienden
Trank tun, den Rausch von Götterwein erwerben,
aus dem es ein Erwachen in diese Welt nicht mehr
gibt! ... Er hatte es sich oft gewünscht, mit Sibylle
gemeinsam zu sterben Des Mädchens Augen ...
liessen in ihrem Spiegel eine Unendlichkeit sehen,
so weit und tief und gar nicht mit den Sinnen eines
Menschen zu erfassen, wie der Riss in einer schweren
Wolkendecke, die plötzlich über dem unter ihr dahin-
jagenden Flieger sich öffnet, so dass er, geblendet
von so viel Licht, selig und singend in das Trudeln
des tödlichen Sturzes gerät. (95-96)

The influence of Expressionist lyricism is again strongly felt, its language and its exaltations, which often verge on the mystical. "Sibylle weilte an aussermenschlichen Gestaden"(96). We are therefore prompted to agree with Sibylle's own ruminations on the subject of their relationship when she observes: "Mich liebst du überhaupt nicht, das bildest du dir ein; du liebst die Liebe zu mir!"(54). When he "verdurstete nach ihrem Mund," this untouched mouth also represented an idealised fount of life, a divine elixir which would vouchsafe a fulfilling Liebestod: "Ihre Lippen sind gespalten, wie bereit, zu laben ... Ihr Atem waht zu mir auf. Der Brunnen ist freigegeben. Der Quell fliesst."(95). But the fountain is to be denied.

The only contact which momentarily assuages the thirst is allowed on the penultimate page of the novel. In Venice they cannot join the young folk in a street dance for fear of sustained bodily contact. At her bedside,

Friedrich "war in einer Wüste vor der Wolke einer ständigen Fata-Morgana." (157)
 She - who was always "für ihn bestimmt", a constantly repeated refrain, -
 could not be "taken" against her will, she who had given herself to count-
 less lovers, who refused him, but went south to Venice to meet him, though
 the barrier between them was never to fall. At one point, she refused to
 embrace him, with the enigmatic remark, "nein, ich habe dich gern." (168)
 The wall between them, the "Grenze" which both thwarts and perpetrates the
 relationship, is itself partly a symbol of the divorce of the bohemian and
 burgher worlds, to each of which a part of Friedrich's being and personality
 belongs. After the shooting episode, for which he is temporarily banished
 to an island in the Baltic, the Bürger in him reacts, "er stürzte sich in
 Arbeiten", as Johannes von Süde was to do in Die Mauer Schwankt, after a
 romantic experience with a creature of a similar magnetism, Orloga; the
 difference being, that unlike von Süde, "er brüllte ihren Namen über die
 Acker ..." (164) But the "Missverständnis", as it is often described,
 ordained by malevolent Schicksal, Friedrich's own "Teufel", to whom is
 ascribed the intensification of Sibylle's magnetic power; -

... er war von dem Schicksal (dem oft dämonischen und
 teuflischen, immer aber den Menschen vernichtenden, so
 oder so) auserwählt, diese eine, unter allen anderen
 auf der Erde, zu lieben. (54) -

also derives from a psychological or existential problematic peculiar to
 the male character. But the problematic is also a mutual one; both
 characters are of a high quality, and enjoy a high quality of being, with
 all the exultations and sorrows it brings. He cannot infringe upon her
 arrogantly preserved independence and freedom; but he is the only person
 she knows who would understand her irritations and the sense of captivity
 which she suffers:

Sie dachte, wer von den Männern, die sie kannte,
 ihren nächtlichen Weg verstehen würde. Sie malte
 sich das Entsetzen, ... das Staunen, die Worte:
 'Du bist verrückt' aus ... Friedrich nur würde
 ihren Weg begreifen. Sonst war niemand dazu
 imstande. (211)

This is as much the key to an understanding of their relationship and its non-fulfilment in physical terms, as is the plainer fact of the burgher-bohemian antithesis. And this is a fate ordained by Schicksal.

Friedrich's romantic death-wish, a hyper-charged state corresponding to other experiences in which a highly sensitised imagination reacts to stimuli, is part of a yearning for total communion, unadulterated by contact with other realities. Another aspect of this yearning is the "Besitzwunsch", the desire to possess and "know" the life and soul of Sibylle. This is more than a conventional form of lover's jealousy; it is the hungry, consuming artistic temperament in search of the innermost depths of reality, the Ich seeking to resolve the divorce between it and the world or object. When this reality became Sibylle's mind and soul, she withdrew in fear, fear of "sich selbst zu verlieren", and the wall came down between them:

Einmal nur mit den Sinnen eindringen in die Wege ihres Hirns! Das musste der Schlüssel sein ... Er sah, wie sein Denken aus seinem Kopf heraus in ihren überstieg, und er verfolgte es, wie es die weissen Windungen ihrer Überlegungswege entlangfuhr. Es war ein Abtasten der feinsten Nerven ihres Wesens. Er wollte sie ergründen. Er wollte es erfahren: was bin ich ihr, was denkt sie, wo ist die Rettung, kann ich sie richten und einrenken (das Missverständnis!), sie gewinnen und alles zum Guten führen. Es war ein Verbrechen, das tun zu können er sich wünschte; das schlimmste Verbrechen überhaupt: Einbruch in die Seele Vielleicht war dieser tolle Besitzwunsch, der über jedes körperliche Erfassen weit hinaus ging, die Ursache, dass sie ihr Leben seinem Anspruch versagte, weil sein Verlangen zu tief und zu unheimlich war und Schauder über dem Rücken ihr erregte. (64)

This is no objective, disinterested inquiry, but an invasion into another's being, a conquest which would result in the resolution of the psychological conflicts and would enable Friedrich to remove her from the inadequate ambiance of the variety company to (presumably) the stage back home where she would play a hopelessly provincial "Juliet". The impossibility of a union on such terms needs no commentary, but for Friedrich it becomes part

of the incomprehensibility of the world as a whole. "Wenn sie diese Grenze respektieren ... konnten sie ein Herz und eine Seele sein"(84). There are parallels with Rilke and D. H. Lawrence for both of whom separateness and the preservation of distinctive Otherness were central to the psychology of love relationships. In the customary analysis of self and situation conducted by interior monologue, and 'erlebte Rede', Sibylle muses:

Sie vermisste ihn, wenn er fern von ihr war. Er war der Mensch, der ihr gehörte. Liebte sie ihn doch? Nein, nein, nein, sie liebte ihn nicht! Aber: wenn sie es nicht sehen musste, er liebt mich, er leidet, ... vielleicht liebte sie ihn dann. 'Er sieht mich an, und er stirbt daran'; sie sagte sich dies, und sie hasste ihn. War es ihre Schuld, dass er sie liebte? ... Sie glaubte ... mit jedem Mann von der Strasse schlafen zu können, nur nicht mit Friedrich. (230)

Even his suffering is a threat to her 'self' which must not be invaded. Equally she must not invade his 'self' - "ich habe dich gern" (168). Despite the joys, the wanderings through shops and arcades, the Venetian restaurants, the less trodden byways of the foreign city where strange atmospheres were enjoyed away from the "Geborgenheit der Zivilisation"(97), the 'unity of heart and soul' which crumbles before the consummatory gesture has to be seen in these terms of a mutual agreement not to possess each other. Her exasperations at his gestures, the irrational vituperations - "du bist wie eine Kröte, die auf meinem Rücken kriecht,"(83) - which nonetheless serve to express her fear of being possessed and deprived of her freedom to exercise her whims and caprices, are all part of a "misunderstanding", or a cosmic puzzle, - "O, rätselvolle Welt!"(72) - "Die Welt stand wieder gegen ihn auf. Es war ohne Sinn und Verstand und nie zu begreifen"(83). The "burgher" in Friedrich had been freed, the student in search of naked truth and sincerity - "es gab keine Sibylle der Lüge"(63) - of fulfilment in art and fantasy, ein "Amokläufer der Liebe, der wie blind gegen die Passanten der Strasse anstürmte und sie in den Schmutz des Rinnsteins jagte"(75), to use Koeppen's own striking metaphor. Reich-Ranicki comments on this feverish self-committal of Koeppen's characters

in diverse spheres of activity, a dedication usually ending in failure:

Die meisten Helden Koeppens sind Amokläufer - der Liebe, der Kunst, der Moral, der Politik, des Unglücks, des Frevels Die Charaktere, die Konflikte, die Milieus werden sich in den Romanen Koeppens ändern, immer aber sehen sich seine Helden von einer feindlichen Welt umgeben. Meist glauben sie, das Leben habe sie besiegt, und neigen daher zur Schwermut. Es sind melancholische Amokläufer.¹⁷

Friedrich, the unthinking pursuer ("Er hasste das Denken. Er misstraute ihm". 174) of incandescent bliss, will wander the streets in despair and blasphemous anger at the impenetrability of Fate and the unfathomability of the life it allotted to him. ("Er klagte gegen Gott!" (169); "er fluchte den finsternen Mächten dunkler Verhängnisse." (234))

Wolfdietrich Rasch stresses the insecurity the characters generally feel in a time of uncertainty and upheaval¹⁸, and the fact that it is this uncertainty which affects considerably the relations between the principal protagonists; the variety troupe is composed of refugees, mainly from Russia, or revolutionaries, and there are manifold indications that the future for any individual is either possibly non-existent or quite unchartable. "Der Boden, auf dem sie standen, wankte" (106). This phenomenon of social and political turmoil relates to that which Koeppen was living under at the time he was writing the novel; the insecurity and unease of human relationships is merely one central existential symptom of a broader disintegration taking place. The telling feature about the shake-up is the ensuing discontinuity and fragmentation of existence, coupled with the author's alienating awareness that after destruction there is only total oblivion - "wir sahen die Terrasse und das Kaffeehaus wegwehen, verschwinden mit seiner Geistesfracht, sich in Nichts auflösen, als sei es nie gewesen ... sie glaubten Zukunft zu haben oder wenigstens Dauer der Gegenwart ..."¹⁹ Rasch observes that both main characters see in the other a kind of "fester Punkt". The point has some validity, in view of the fact that Sibylle manages to escape the group in the lake city, and long for the telegrams which finally liberate her and enable her to join Friedrich in.

Venice. There is a period of marked apprehension, if not panic and near despair, before the communications arrive. And during the many analyses of the characters' thoughts we read, "obwohl sie das Gefühl brauchte, dass Friedrich sie liebte", (230) which may illustrate the anchor he could provide. A consummated union would conceivably end like all the numerous other affairs Sibylle has had. Friedrich also, whilst puzzled about his own markedly bourgeois behaviour towards Fedor, one of the refugee actors, - for "(er) als Kind schon einen Hang zu allem Zigeunerhaften empfunden hatte" (103) - led, we are told, "eine von jeder Bindung entbundene einsame Existenz". Sibylle would provide such an attachment; and for a romantic temperament such as his, one understands his feeling of happiness, "das Glück, von einem einzigen Begehren erfüllt zu sein," (195) which he regains once he decides in Naples to abandon the journey southwards, and instead to reduce the physical distance between himself and her.

The "tolle Besitzwunsch" ascribed to Friedrich has been related to the author's own fervent desire to discover or experience all the reality the senses can communicate. "Alles möchte er sehen und hören, riechen und schmecken, berühren und begreifen," writes Reich-Ranicki:²⁰

Seine Bücher strotzen von Licht, Schatten und Farbe, von Klängen, Lauten und Tönen, von Düften und Gerüchen, ihnen haftet das Aroma des Lebens an. Er ist der sinnlichste deutsche Prosaist unserer Zeit. Mit einer fast wollüstigen Leidenschaft versucht er, in die Gehirnwindungen seiner Gestalten einzudringen.

Walter Jens finds this search and capacity of Koeppen's the most arresting feature of his writings: "ein solcher Röntgen-Blick, der hinter den Fassaden die verschiedenartigsten Schichten, Ablagerungen und Formationen entdeckt ..." ²¹ Reich-Ranicki's words recall Friedrich's own metaphysical possessiveness in relation to Sibylle. And when he observes: "Mit allen Sinnen will er das Dasein spüren, erfassen und ergründen", one remembers Koeppen's own testimony: "Ich sehe, höre, rieche, schmecke Menschen, Häuser, Plätze, Kirchen, Friedhöfe, Amtsstuben, Gerichtssäle, Kneipen, ... ich trinke

die fremde Luft. Sie berauscht, reizt, ernüchtert, und immer macht sie wach ..."²² One recalls also one vivid and intoxicating experience of Friedrich in which his highly sensitised retina receives optical stimuli, which produce the impression of a "Orgie grosser Art", so abundant is the imagery, so intense the assimilation, so fertile the power of fantasy; he is travelling in the night-train south to Italy:

Wie die Zeitrafferaufnahmen in einem phantastischen Film stürmte die Nacht in Friedrichs Blick, der aus dem Innern des lichtlosen Abteils gegen das Viereck des offenen Fensters sich richtete. Seinen Sinnen wurden die Eindrücke zuteil vom Brausen und Wiegen der Fahrt, von eilenden Schatten und springenden Lichtern, von Schneefeldern, Eiswänden, kristallinen Wassern, veilchenfarbenen Nebelschluchten, ... von Wolkengaloppaden, von Sternen, von Signalen grün und rot, von weissen Ampelscheinen über den verlassenen Perrons einsamer Bergbahnhöfe, von den glänzenden Schieferplatten der Tunnel, ... von manchem Wirbel ... Es war eine Reise wie ein Rausch ... zu vergleichen mit dem Taumel, in den ein für die Wirkungen der Musik Empfänglicher beim Anhören gewisser Klangfolgen gerät. (136-137)

Kaleidoscopic visions, the real becoming unreal, conscious impressions turning into the imagery of the unconscious, semi-hallucinatory distortions of the concrete, make up this "Rausch"; the imaginative response to the sensory feast is likened to nothing less than the exultation induced by a musical phrase, the German reaction to which we know from our acquaintance with the Schopenhauer-Wagner-Nietzsche tradition. The abandonment of self to the sensory impression - orgiastic it is called here - is not only part of a characteristically Expressionist intoxication, or a brief surrealist activation of unconscious impulses, it is also one of the earliest indications of the response of Koeppen's sensorium to the fleeting nature of reality. There are hints of the style and technique the author admires in other writers, for example Claude Simon.²³ Dieter Wellershoff has commented on the kind of passage we are discussing in Eine Unglückliche Liebe as it occurs in the modern novel:

... Im modernen Roman sind Schreibweisen entwickelt worden, die an die subjektive Optik der bewegten

Filmkamera erinnern, also die konventionelle Ansicht eines Gegenstandes oder Vorganges verzerren oder völlig auflösen durch extreme Einstellungen der Aufmerksamkeit. Es gibt bei Claude Simon ... Darstellung eines Attentats, den Blick aus einem rasend fahrenden Auto, zerlegt in kaleidoskopisch vorbeiruckende, teils taumelnd bewegte, teils schnappschussartig erstarrte Bilder, es gibt weiche verschwimmende Überblendungen, ... übereinanderprojizierte Bilder wie bei einer Doppelbelichtung ...²⁴ Verschiebungen vom Realen ins Hypothetische, Imaginäre ...

Reich-Ranicki continues the parallelism by noting in addition Koeppen's own failure to find meaning and structure in the world, the world which his senses apprehend so acutely and relates this failure to the failure of the protagonists to 'find' each other - "Und so wie Koeppens Helden nicht imstande sind, die Welt zu begreifen, so können sie auch nicht zueinander kommen."²⁵ "Sinnlosigkeit", "Kontaktlosigkeit", the tokens of alienation, are a thematic thread running through Koeppen's work - one thinks of Koeppen's reply to the interviewer of Deutsche Zeitung:

"DZ: Was heisst das denn eigentlich für Sie: schreiben?

KOEPPEN: Qual, Freude, sinnlose Sinngebung des Sinnlosen."²⁶

We recall autobiographical statements which point to the attraction to an opulent, teeming world and the sense of bewilderment before its incomprehensibility: "Ich umarmte die Erde und empfand sie als einen Ball, der mich in rasender Fahrt durch ein unheimliches Universum trug."²⁷ Thus Koeppen's "anti-heroes" are invariably confronted with hostile forces, either of society or of Fate, which they seek to evade often by travel or escape, moving from one experience to another. Benno von Wiese intuits the same dichotomy:

In seinen späteren Werken finden wir die gleiche Zwiespältigkeit: eine fast überschwengliche, phantasievolle Hingabe an alle sinnlichen Erscheinungen des Lebens, aber ebenso das verzweifelte Sich-Herumschlagen mit dem Unheimlichen, ja Sinnlosen dieser Welt.²⁸

From this derives the dominant mood of resignation which pervades Koeppen's thought and the failure to establish contact, the sense of isolation

experienced in personal relationships marks other characters in the novel, in so far as these are delineated at all. The itinerant troupe is symbolically composed of mainly rootless refugees whose insecurity first began with revolutions, the 1917 one in particular, whose livelihood is threatened at any given moment by their statelessness, and who are described in one of Sibylle's own ruminations as "ein Anziehungsabgrund für Menschen, die ... ihrem Untergang entgegen gehen." (193) The changed character of the age undermines the sense of stability or permanence; the owner, by direct descent, of the lodging house, "Für Die Verfolgten Aus Allen Ländern", a Doktor Magnus, is not the reliable trustee or guarantor of social liberty his father was, and cannot necessarily intercede with the authorities on behalf of the seekers of temporary asylum:

Er (Magnus) ist ein Sohn ... und mit Söhnen hat er zu verhandeln. Da wird es keine Hoffnung für die Truppe geben. Die Söhne haben sich nie der Verfolgten angenommen in einer Welt, in der sie täglich selber verfolgt werden können. Denn wer von ihnen weiss, wenn er am Morgen sich erhebt, ob nicht in den Geschicken der Länder, in den Unordnungen der wirtschaftlichen Gesetze und in den Angstträumen der Oberen und Herrscher über die Gruben und Fabriken - ob da nicht auch ihr Todeslos gefallen ist, ohne dass eine Botschaft ihnen zuteil wird? Die Söhne meistern das Leben nicht mehr, und ihr Gewissen liegt unter dem Alp ihrer Furcht begraben ... Sie sehen weg von der Not ihres Nächsten, denn Not ist schon Verworfenheit, und trägt den Bazillus des Todes in sich ... (107-108)

This situation points to the insecurity of tenure of life itself amidst the changes and vicissitudes of fate and fortune, a phenomenon which gathers momentum until we reach the restless, pan-demonic world of Koeppen's post-war "trilogy". This is uncertainty and instability on a concrete social and political level; but it is part of a wider canvas of personal psychological insecurity, and a central contributory factor to the "unheimlich", "sinnlos" character of the world-stage on which human beings play out their (sometimes many) predestined rôles. Friedrich's relations with other characters are like shifting sands. His encounters with the troupe

in general, and Fedor in particular, indicate primarily the barrier between the "burgher" and the bohemian outsiders. His relationship with Ania never gets off the ground, nor does he intend it to. Travelling with her southwards, he reduces their friendship - itself contrived and organised by Sibylle - to the basic need to remove the appearance of loneliness; "Vielleicht sind wir nur zusammen, weil wir keinen Hund zu uns genommen haben, der ... uns die Täuschung geben würde, geliebt zu werden."(175). Ania is not the one to give love, it seems, too bent on survival, nervously chain-smoking, - she had seen Moscow burn, - "Sie sind gehetzt, diese Mädchen, gehetzt von irgendeinem Drang, der sie ausser aller Welt stellt."(58) "Waren sie nicht im Grunde alle eines Krieges Kinder?" Ania hardly appears as a satisfactorily formed character; in her first lover, Magnus, she sees merely a provider of nationality, "eine Art von Umsteigebahnhof mit vielen Gleisen, auf dem man mit Aussicht auf das Kommen von Zügen warten konnte;"(199) she is rootless, but open to all possibilities; she floats easily, expectedly, into the arms of the returning Japanese diplomat. Friedrich, in her presence, is "hart vor mich und die Leere in der ich hier schwebte, gestellt" (175).

The Ania experience, the ambiguous and hesitant encounter with the Diana-Variété company, the experience with the Italian procurer, whose enticements to the brothel scene made Friedrich feel even more inept, and his relation with reality all the more unsatisfying: "Er war nie neugierig nach diesen Dingen gewesen, und jetzt fühlte er sich, in seiner eigenen Trauer, ihnen nicht gewachsen. Sein eigenes armer-Hund-Sein stand vor seinen Augen. Nie war die Hoffnungslosigkeit so allumfassend"(182) - the Sibylle adventure, all focus upon some basic "Beziehungslosigkeit", an alienation destroying the fabric of being and the divine image in man. On the one hand we have the usual sexual offering which reduces the human experience to the mechanical act as describable by the scientific materialist, the reductionist, aptly named, - "das entehrend Unwürdige der käseweissen

Fleischschau stumpfer Sexualautomaten," - and on the other hand, the "Grenze" dividing dream from its fulfilment. One feels that at the heart of the problem are the old insoluble or irreconcilable German antinomies of 'Körper' and 'Geist'. The phenomenon of the frontier is nothing new to Friedrich. The very beginning of the novel informs us of the type of frontier with which he is already acquainted. The one was a block of houses, in a war-devastated village, near to which was a frontier in flames; the other, equally concrete in identification, but promising less concrete realities, was the red buoy boundary in the harbour of his native town, beyond which ships passed into the seductive unknown. The escape motif, the seduction of "das Fremde" recall the poésie des départs of Baudelaire and Mallarmé "... die andere (Grenze) wie ein Traum lockte, der uns dem Nachbarn entführt in ein seliges Reich"(5). The geographical dimension has already been left behind, and Utopian visions have come into play. The dream element is one of the most recurrent features of the experiences of the protagonists, particularly Friedrich's though Sibylle too has nightmarish imaginings. Rational thought does not provide solutions to the dichotomies. As the dream-world skirts on the edge of normal realities, identity of self becomes unclear:

"Bin dieser Mensch ich, der mit einem Mädchen vorbeifährt an der Kulisse der historischen Jahrhunderte ..?" (173)

he asks himself when in Rome with Ania.

"... war es, dass aus ihm ein Gehen kam, ein Vorwärts oder ein Seitwärts, ein Sichbewegen in Richtungen, wie Irren im Dickicht eines Waldes ..? Er träumte ... Es war kein Alpdruck, der ihm die Luft klemmte. Es war der Traum einer Ohnmacht. Die verschwimmenden Bilder am Rande der Wirklichkeit."

In psychological terms, a dissociation of the personality is taking place; the dividing line between reality and dream, the concrete and the imagined, becomes blurred. Questions of the wholeness of the personality are being asked; the latter is increasingly fragmented by a multiplicity of situations and demands. There are suggestions here that only part of the personality

is engaged in the walking process, and that this fragment is itself autonomous, or at least that the no longer composite 'Ich' cannot control the situation - "wie Irren im Dickicht eines Waldes, wenn man fühlt, ich gehe einen falschen Weg, aber den richtigen Pfad dennoch und jedem Gefühl zum Trotz nicht einzuschlagen weiss." Hence we are confronted with - though only in the imagination here - the recurring phenomenon of 'Ohnmacht' which afflicts Koeppen's characters. It becomes one of the most important aspects of the characterology of his anti-heroes, and has roots in the inability of an increasingly spurious and fragmented 'personality' (no longer what was once described as "Persönlichkeit") to understand, never mind control, an increasingly disorientated world - "es ist der Prozess einer fortschreitenden Zersetzung, so wie er von Hofmannsthal vorgespürt war."²⁹ The increasing speed and mobility of life, involving an energetic response to a freer and wider range of possibilities, nonetheless intensifies the dis-integrative process. There are mixed feelings about Ania's own response to life: "Sie waren in Rom, und Ania lebte, wie sie rauchte, mit Hast und Gier, und sie nahm jede Stude als die letzte (das Kind des Fürsten, das Moskau hatte brennen sehen ..) und suchte ihren Gehalt an Lust bis zur Neige zu erschöpfen."(172) This combines a vaguely romantic enjoyment of the Here and Now, squeezing the last drop out of experience, oblivious of all other considerations, with the sense that her life and experiences are no longer attached to an 'organic' self, each experience is a discrete fragment of that self, her being is, like the world which made her so, "zersetzt". A similar ambiguity is seen in the sailors' visit to the brothel; their particular choice of mindless amusement he would naturally avoid, as we have already seen. But he envies their dedication to the pleasures of the moment, - "Er hasste das Denken. Er misstraute ihm". Both the rational process and the mechanical lusts fail to satisfy the tormented and alienated being which Friedrich is; indeed, in the mind of the "conservative" thinker they are aetiologically related, both

manifestations of the machine at work.

Peter Laemmle speaks of a central desire which underlies all Koeppen's work: "Es ist der Wunsch, aus der bestehenden Ordnung auszubrechen in eine paradiesähnliche Zukunft oder Vergangenheit Nahezu alle Protagonisten seiner Romane scheitern an der Unvereinbarkeit ihrer utopischen Wunschbilder mit der Gegenwart."³⁰ Sibylle turns on Walter, scorning his possessiveness, petulantly demanding his exit. Was this the revengeful cry of a seduced woman? The thought could hardly have been a conscious one: "Aber das Unbewusste? Brach hier eine Sehnsucht nach einem Zustand durch, der, einem Irrtum zufolge, nicht mehr vorhanden und auch nicht wieder herbeizuführen war?"(155) A projection of "einer nicht entfremdeten Ordnung", is seen in a picture of a primeval nature: "Es muss im Nordland so sein, dort, wo die Ostsee zu Ende geht, wo einsame Föhren die Heide überragen und in den weissen Juninächten den Schwestern winken, dort, wo Rentiere weiden, sattellos und von Menschen ungemolken, dort ... im weichen Wehen des Sommerwindes die Luft so rein geht, wie dein Atem flutet ..."(55) We are back in the territory of Caspar David Friedrich whose importance was discussed earlier. Horses seen in wearisome captivity indicate a frustration of Nature's original purposes, an abandonment of hope of fulfilment: "so aller Hoffnung auf das Glück entblösst wie der Trab der schwachen Droschkenmähren, wenn sie spät in der Nacht heimwärts gelenkt werden, nach einem Tag vergeblichen Wartens vor dem scharfen, zugigen Loch der grossen Bahnhofshalle."³¹ One recalls "die müden Ackerpferde" in Anamnese.³¹ The horses represent an extended simile, being likened to the inevitably disenchanting spectator waiting for the strip-tease act in the fleshpots, itself a mere mask for the general "Lebensangst". A vivid parallel is drawn between an old sailing-ship in the harbour, waiting for the warning breeze, which, when the time comes for raising anchor, creaks and groans, "trotz aller Sehnsucht"(53), - and Friedrich, now in the same city as Sibylle, having arrived but hesitant at venturing forth to see her

- the divorce of thought and action, desire and will. A rare moment of tranquillity, of perfect, balanced happiness is enclosed in the vision of sailors in the train, one of whose girls is laid out, sleeping, across a row of sailors' knees. When the girl awoke, they laughed and joked in a collective embrace. To Friedrich, she was beautiful, but "weniger seinen Sinnen als seinem Gefühl nach". The simplicity of the language is concordant with the basic elements of the situation - a pristine order, naturalness and sanctity:

Die Liebe verklärte sie. Sie ruhte in einem heiligen Schein. Sie liebte und wurde geliebt (the harmony of desires sought by T. Mann's Tonio Kröger) und war ein gefälliges Ding in der natürlichen Ordnung der Welt. War sie nicht ein Kind in einer Wiege, über das die Männer sich andächtig beugten? Und wie unterworfen waren sie alle dem schönen Gesetz einer guten Liebe, indem sie alle das Mädchen wohl begehrten mit Blicken und Gefühlen, und doch sie dem einen liessen, dem sie folgte, statt gegen ihn vorzugehen in der gemeinen Gewalt der Gier mit Fäusten und Mord, sie ihm und jedem zu entreissen. (206)

This 'gute Liebe' is Geist in action; the physical appetites are not discounted, but held in check. From Friedrich's point of view there is little physical desire at all - "weniger seinen Sinnen als seinem Gefühl nach fand Friedrich sie schön." So there are no problems here as when body and spirit are both intensely attracted to the object, especially when the object is Sibylle. The contrast with Friedrich's own complex and forlorn situation is made clear: "er wünschte sekundenlang wieder wie sie zu sein, einfach und begnadet und seinem Schicksal entkommen." And, as always, to complete the Utopian idyll, the girl's features are transformed into Sibylle's, - just as the imagination, for ever seeking its erstwhile embodiment of Utopia, harmony, perfection, ideal beauty or whatever, had transformed Fräulein von Lössin in the theatre³² into one of Baudelaire's creations, the dark and langorous La Chevelure.³³ Only the imaginative faculty can create a Utopia. Something of the Tonio Kröger envy appears

when he sees the sailors and soldiers (symbols of the "voyageur sans bagages"?), destined for the brothel: "Wäre ich wie sie, auf einem Schiff in Arbeit, und im Hafen voll Vertrauen zu den Vergnügungen der Stunde." (174)

Mythical pre-rational harmonies are conjured up, either where there are no frontiers to cross, or where they have been successfully crossed.

The burgher-bohemian antithesis is the central structure of the novel as well as the narrative basis for the disorientation and alienation discussed above. A conclusion must be attempted as to where Koeppen stands in this antithesis, whether or how far he defends either one of the items in the equation. Friedrich's behaviour from the start, at the first encounter with the bohemian characters, is defensive, in an unprecedented fashion. On the first occasion he meets Sibylle, she invades his private - and quite desolate - world: "ein leerer Tag begann und würde leer zu Ende gehen" with the "du" form, whilst he wards off this hint at intimacy with "Sie". "Es war das einzige Mal in meinem Leben, dass ich in konventionellsten Bahnen dachte und handelte." (35) He is suddenly excruciatingly aware of the poverty of his surroundings, his own unshaven state, the unkempt appearance of his room: "Ich nahm das alles wichtig, was sonst nicht meine Art war". His "Sie" is deliberately harsh; "ich versteifte und verpuppte mich". "Ich nahm ... die Gewohnheit an, in Augenblicken der Unsicherheit zu lahmen." This represents no advocacy of the bourgeois position, nor particularly of its antithesis - though some implications of a psychological nature follow from this behaviour - by responding to her at that moment he might have become "ein Seefahrer, oder ein Empörer, ein Held des Volkes" (41), instead of what he did become, "grau, ein unscheinbarer Reisender." Hermann Kesten declares summarily: "Er spielt die Impotenz auf den ersten Blick"³⁴ For Kesten, Friedrich was already renouncing the liaison (despite all that followed): "Er hoffte auf die Nichterfüllung seiner Begierden und Wünsche." Was this part of the natural aversion to a 'bürgerlich' union even though the latter would hardly be consonant with a Luluesque Sibylle? The renunciation of the bourgeois routine, its dull,

repetitive monotony, which for Expressionist writers were death to the freedom of the body and spirit, is given prominence more in relation to the encounter with Ania, with whom a more settled existence is conceivable, even though she did regard her lovers as transit-stations where she could catch trains for happier climes. His thoughts are understandably stimulated by the contrast (in terms of his own fulfilment) between the two females, the lips of the one reminding him of the lips of the other, with the resultant unbearability of a prolonged relationship; but the motif of repetition and uniform monotony dear to the critic of the burgher life is clear:

Er sah die Nacht kommen wie einen Nebel. Es erschreckte ihn ihr bürgerlicher Verlauf, der sich sicher voraussagen liess. Wieder würde er neben Ania liegen; wieder würde das Fenster offen sein wieder würden sie auf die Rufe der Strasse hören wieder würde sein Mund den Mund des Mädchens finden ... und wieder würde er an einen anderen Mund denken Erschlafften sie nicht in einem lauen Wasser und waren sie nicht schon alt ... Er wollte kein weiches Lager mehr. Er wollte die Erregung einer Weiterfahrt und einer anderen Stadt. (176) (my underlinings)

The anaphora with "wieder" leads to the psychological motivation behind travel, basic to Koeppen's own psychic needs; a kind of post coitum tristitia is metaphorised and will be alleviated by "das Fremdsein ganz und krass", when "der Schein der Vertrautheit ist gewichen, die Welt ist neu."³⁵

A similar defensive reaction to the presence of Fedor takes place, as it did during the first meeting with Sibylle. There are, it is true, additional complicating factors here. The Russian nihilists and revolutionaries had disposed of the Tsar - from what were they fleeing therefore? The defensive behaviour of the burgher, angry at being attracted to the unconventional, draws thus on other self-vindicating motives: "Es war etwas wie Widerwillen und Unbehagen in Friedrich. Er fühlte sich als Bürger, was er bisher nicht recht getan hatte, als ein Mann, der nach Sinn und Verstand handelt." (20) Here we have polarised alignments - the burgher

acting rationally in contrast to his counterpart. There is at one point an imminent threat to the security or livelihood of the actors, unless Magnus intervenes; simply because Friedrich does not wish to be considered as in any way identifiable with Magnus, he censures the latter for inaction - "Es war aber nur die Gier, die ungestüme Gier, auf keinen Fall Magnus zu gleichen."(109) He soon loses confidence, however, in his attack, and it loses credibility in his own eyes: "Er wurde unsicher, rückte aus der Anführerpose, und versuchte sich in den Hintergrund zu schieben."(111) There is a suggestion by Fedor that Friedrich should take Ania away with him, this being the duty of a Bürger to provide for her safety; Friedrich's reply is one of the most revealing "political" passages in the novel. There is no attempt to defend the "Bürger" position, but the reply becomes an attack on the revolutionary who should, it is alleged, be back in the country where the revolution has succeeded. Some lines merit attention, as they relate interestingly to the author's own views:

"Sie, der Sie das Wort 'Bürger' als Schimpf gebrauchen ... warum leben Sie in den Ländern bürgerlichen Stils, ... die Sie hassen, statt heimzukehren in Ihr Land, das unbürgerlich ist, (um) die Welt zu bauen, die Sie in tausend Worten fordern? Erschöpfen sich Ihre Kräfte im Tragen eines symbolischen Sweaters? Sie leben in der Revolutionsromantik des Emigranten, der sich vor jeder Revolution scheut, weil sie ihm seine Welt der Dämmerung zertrümmern würde, die Stunde in den kleinen Lokalen mit der heißen heimatlichen Suppe" (115)

Here we have Koeppen's attack upon a revolution founded upon a materialistic ideology imposed by a totalitarian system. For again, Friedrich doubts the credibility of his own speech: "Er wurde rot wie nach einer getanen Lüge". And then we see why Friedrich's position is untenable: the latter's accusations were "vernünftig und sauber und grade darum verwerflich". For Koeppen's own "Revolutionsromantik" had much in common with that of a Fedor, just as Friedrich's sympathies lie with the company of actors who are social outsiders. When the outsider becomes an insider, or the revolution has succeeded, the "symbolic sweater" must not be discarded.

But though there can never be with Koeppen any pronounced sympathy with the burgher, there is no glorification either of the bohemian life as represented by the theatrical troupe. The autobiography states: "Ich wollte mit dem Zirkus fliehen. Ich bewunderte die anmutige Amazone ... doch die bunte Nymphe enttäuschte mich, als ich ihr mein Leben anbot."³⁶ We know Koeppen's own theatrical experiences: "Wir waren da junge Leute, die mit dem Blick auf Berlin die Provinz skandalisierten."³⁷ Sibylle's experiences represent no advocacy of bohemianism as she came to know it. Her first association with theatrical life was in the administrative section of a provincial Court theatre, where dull decorum reigned, and where her rented rooms were owned by dull, respectable people. "Die graden Strassen ihrer Engagementsstadt waren Sibylle wie die sauber gefegten Gänge eines Zuchthauses zwischen den Mauern von Beton erschienen."⁽²⁰⁰⁾ To escape the oppressiveness of the official hierarchy, she visits the low music hall performances in the unexciting provincial "Jammernest", as Fedor might have called it, one of the "Vorhöllenöfen der Mittelstädte",⁽²⁰²⁾ and meets the somewhat guileless and wretched-looking Fedor; with him she escapes to foreign parts - the theatre whose "ungeordnetes Dasein" looked more inviting, or "seltsam", to use the successively repeated figure describing the Russians, Magnus etc. But the realisation dawned that this ambiance too was alien to her, "der schlampige bunte Pfad der bohemehaften Kunstübung in dieselbe Einöde unbefriedigender Arbeit führen musste." Even Magnus, the owner, had expressed the view, "Wir zehren von der Dummheit"⁽⁹⁸⁾, when commenting on the clientele. Sibylle found herself finally in nothing less than captivity: "Nun sass sie drin, war sie gefangen, war verstrickt in Dinge und Verhältnisse, die ihr fern und fremd waren wie Königszwiste in der Mandschurei, und - war sie dann noch die Sibylle, die jeder Behinderung ihrer Freiheit sich bis zur Todesnähe widersetzt hatte?" And now we can hear the author's own voice, the same protest against the constrictions of milieu, profession, social groupings, theatre troupes etc., everything

which came under the rubric of 'Zwang'.

Thus romantic revolt (together with the insoluble existential problems it produces) is the predominant mood of Eine Unglückliche Liebe; it is a revolt of the social outsider, the romantic poised between antithetical attractions, and certain only of uncertainty and ambivalence. Friedrich wished to meet Sibylle in a friendly, well-lit café, not in the theatre where he would be "Erleuchtungen, ... Blitzen ... ausgesetzt ... und geblendet wieder in den Strudel schrecklichster Not (zu fallen)"(11). When he does reach the theatre in the basement cellar, "Ein Abgrund tat sich auf ... Er klammerte sich an die Haltung des gleichgültigen Herrn, der vorüberreist."(66) We are concerned with subjective ideals, psychological states and phobias - the language reveals recurring nightmarish and somnambulistic experiences of reality and relationships: "Vom schwarzen Spiegel des Wassers stiegen Schwaden zu ausgelassenen Tänzen gespenstischer Gestalten auf."(9) "Sibylles Bett war ein Floss auf einem Tümpel voll Morast. Sie hörte es um sich glucksen von hohlen, bäuchigen Geräuschen, und die verwelkten Gesichter uralter Krötenhäupter tauchten aus dem Schlamm auf und glotzten sie an mit gewaltig aufgeblähten Augen".(213) Such is the intensity of Sibylle's alienation from her surroundings. The 'toad' figure is brought into play whenever her being is threatened; she does not shrink from investing Friedrich himself with the toad's attributes when this occurs, and he is beating against the metaphorical wall dividing them: "Du bist wie eine Kröte, wie eine Kröte, die auf meinem Rücken kriecht, wie eine schuppig-schleimige, perläugige Kröte im Sumpf!"(83) There are times when the charge of linguistic excess and maudlin romanticism may be levelled at Koeppen, when the Ekstase, the intoxication of vision produces, at the sight of a woman descending stairs: "so überirdisch schön, so engelzart, ... dass er die Augen hatte schliessen müssen, im Gefühl, blind zu werden vor solchem Licht, während ein Tränenmeer, tief wie die See in den Tropen, ein süßes Meer des Glückes ... von dem Bett seiner

geschlossenen Augen ihm in das Herz fiel ... so dass es wie ein Tod war, eine Ohnmacht, ein Versinken, das Sterben eines Gotteskindes ..." (65) A similar "Liebestod" experience occurs with Orloga in Die Mauer Schwankt, when she is shot in the graveyard. Sibylle's father had introduced her to Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, George, Stendhal, Baudelaire; Koeppen's own reading of Benn no doubt accompanied him on his journey to the warm south - "Ich war zum ersten Mal in Italien, und das Italien-Erlebnis war für mich zu gross und zu schön."³⁸ For Erich Franzen the novel represents a "Zuflucht des schaffenden Geistes - in einer geistfeindlichen Zeit",³⁹ but it is also a love-story which extends into a study of isolation and alienation, at various levels, personal as well as societal. The "geistfeindliche Zeit" never ceased to be inimical for Koeppen. These are recurring motifs throughout Koeppen's work; Reinhard Döhl sees them as originating with this novel - "das Motiv der Vergeblichkeit des Reisens, sei es nun Flucht oder Heimkehr; das Motiv der Fremdheit ... verschärft zum Motiv der Entfremdung; das Motiv der Resignation, der Vergeblichkeit aller Versuche, verbunden mit der Erkenntnis, dass sich eigentlich nichts geändert habe ..." ⁴⁰

Part of the "Entfremdung" takes the form of satire, informed by the urge to Utopia: a dehumanised society is the implicit target in Sibylle's "variety" act, she is a Red Riding Hood figure, but the wolf is a commercial exploiter, the wolf of Wolf and Co. Ltd., driving the typists to work for his coffin-manufacturing enterprise, and Ania plays the part of a goblin, who is ill by having devoured all the grain seeds in the land - "die Tragödie eines Satten." (123) As Friedrich seeks to obtain money from any possible source, he naturally tries the antique dealers who emerge from the dealings in the same light as they do in Tauben im Gras:

Die Althändler betrachteten die Ware ... wie ekle Kröte-tiere, die man mit Feuerzangen sich vom Körper fortzuhalten hat. Friedrich war zu unerfahren im Handeln an sich, um zu erkennen, dass die Althändler nach dem Brauch ihrer Geschäfte vorgingen und seine Sachen zu kaufen beehrten. Als sie ihm am Ende einer Schmähere

Pfennige - aus Mitleid - anboten, war er so überrascht, dass er sich überschwänglich wie für ein reiches Geschenk bedankte. (141)

There are satirical portraits of provincial mores, of the oppressiveness of taboos and respectability. Whatever the shortcomings of the bohemian life here displayed, "Ich wende mich entschieden gegen die bürgerlichen Tabus."⁴¹ Political earthquakes are already rumbling; man is like an ant, helpless in the crowd. "Friedrich sah sich als Ameise in einem Termitenbau"(131). There is nothing new in this vision of the human ant, known and described so intimately by Kafka, Canetti, Rilke, Döblin and the American novelists of the city; Walter Muschg, like many culture-critics, sees these conglomerations developing new alienating life-styles of the kind discussed above which render them insensitive to the voice of the 'Dichter'; the dominant moods are 'Angst' and fear of 'das Nichts' from which they flee:

Sie wollen die Tagesneuigkeiten aller Kontinente kennen und geniessen in nie erlebter Weise das Glück der Bewegung und Zerstreung, das ihnen eine ganz neue Beziehung zur Wirklichkeit verschafft. Die Vereinsamung und Langeweile des Individuums im Termitengewimmel unserer Städte wird, wenigstens scheinbar, durch die Beweglichkeit des Einzelnen wettgemacht ... Der Nihilismus ist sein Alpdruck des Nichts, vor dem es auf der Flucht ist ... Anonyme Mächte erobern die Welt ...⁴²

It is the same nihilism, the search for fleeting pleasures, the flight from the constant abyss of nothingness which Koeppen sees in the daily antics of his fellow-men.

Other motifs appear in Koeppen's text which point to the estrangement already felt between God and man, creature and Creator. The supplications are mechanical rituals, the warmth and passion of communion with a higher Being no longer exist, as is evidenced by the litany sung by the very old choristers ("weisse, verknitterte Greise") in the Venetian church:

Auch sie gehörten zu den schon Gestorbenen in dieser Stadt. Konnten sie ihm helfen? Die Kälte toter Herzen wich nie mehr aus diesem Kirchenraum. Das Fliesenmosaik des Bodens war eingedrückt von den Knien zahlloser Beter, die

lange schon nicht mehr lebten. (224)

People who are themselves so spiritually "entfremdet" could hardly be in a position to give him strength or inspiration to solve the dichotomies with which he is struggling. The fast rhythms of language already make their appearance, long periods, corresponding to the writer's awareness of the changing nature of reality; the first person now intrudes upon the third person in the narrative; flashbacks, filmic devices, are consciously contrived - especially in the closing stages of the novel, when we alternate consistently between Friedrich and Sibylle, the one in southern Italy, the other in the "Fremdenstadt", before their paths deliberately cross. We are - as in the film - regaled with constant movement as it communicates itself to the conscious mind, the deeper layers of the subconscious, movement enshrined in the nature of the language itself - one recalls Karl Horst's comment: "Die Bewegung ist in jedem Buch von Koeppen das Bezwingende."⁴³

DIE MAUER SCHWANKT

Difficulties of writing novel under Nazi tyranny - political critique - polarities basis of conflict, burgher-artist etc. seen against new disruptive socio-political forces circa 1914 - concept of 'Pflicht' questioned, part of 'shaking of foundations', von Süde senses 'Unsicherheit und Unheil' - Nazi tyranny model for repression in Balkans - von Süde's 'romantic' revolt relates to artistic impulses (as architect/painter) - elements common to pre- and post-war novels - father-son conflict (generalised), author's sympathy for youth, forever victim of failures of elders (recurs 1945 onwards), - human incorrigibility - Orloga, 'romantic' seductress, dream-figure, identifies with rebels - mood and language of romantic revolt, artistic exaltation, emotional attraction - failure of an 'Amokläufer', divorce of real and ideal - Orloga an Expressionistic symbol of all past and present brotherhood of man - dream-motifs: revolt against 'prison' of burgher existence, of 'civilisation', in favour of heroic liberation of will, freedom, open seas; revolt against money-mongering, which destroys Geist and de-humanises - Johannes challenges notions of duty and obligation, family code, order, rigid obedience to State, centre of artist-burgher conflict, artist's love of 'das Fremde' - Emilie victim of cold, rigid social precepts - Johannes deserts rebels, takes over father's (family) responsibilities; totally alienated from town he rebuilds, its materialism, philistinism, narrow-mindedness, militarism, concepts of duty, resistance to change - Johannes accepts work as penance for deserting rebels - his doubts and self-questionings, re- rôle and identity, dictate mood of novel - difficulty in communicating with the young - 'Amokläuferei der Moral' fails, like 'Amokläuferei der Liebe' - Johannes questions service to State, practises it to hide personal failure - ambiguities in concept of 'Heldentod' - Johannes' doubts extend to alienation from Transcendent,

atheism, lack of meaning in life or work, absence of rational ethical basis of universe - father's joyless, abstract ethic (positively) re-interpreted for new age - ambivalence of emotive Expressionist language, without defined political aims, analogies with T. Mann, thematic and linguistic features underlying von Süde's uncertainty concerning new movements (factory uprising), ambiguities of artist's response - von Süde's withdrawal and scepticism like Koeppen's, importance of rôle of youth, characters failures as alienated artist fails to support social revolution - early stylistic experimentation matches writer's changing 'Weltverhältnis'.

DIE MAUER SCHWANKT. - Artist rejects old values, questions the new.

In the second novel the artist's alienation from and in the "unheimliches Universum" is masked as well as revealed - the writer's confessed failure to write the novel which should and could have been written being ascribed to the political climate of the day. The writer's situation is such that he must be dissatisfied with the final product, even though it brought little comfort or support for the prevailing regime. "Dieser Roman wäre wahrscheinlich nie geschrieben worden oder er wäre ganz anders geschrieben worden, wenn nicht das Dritte Reich gewesen wäre was ich gerne geschrieben hätte, hätte man unmöglich (bei Cassirer) veröffentlichen können."¹ The author's recollections betray "die Schwierigkeiten, die Wahrheit zu schreiben", and the confusion of aims in which he became involved; with Max Tau waiting at all costs for the next novel, he conceived the idea of a 'Kleinstadt-Roman' - "es fand also eine gewisse äusserliche Angleichung statt, zu der ich bereit war, die ich aber nicht durchführen konnte, und so wurde das Buch anders, kam zunächst in eine gefährliche Richtung, bis ich dann auf diesen Kleinstadt-Roman verfiel, der aber auch wieder voll von Ablehnung der herrschenden Weltanschauung war."² It is this confusion together with the natural antipathy to the "herrschende Weltanschauung" which prompts the observation of Reich-Ranicki that Koeppen's early novels "zeugen zumindest von der Isolation und der Depression des Künstlers im 'Dritten Reich'".³ The setting in Die Mauer Schwankt is the Masuren type of settlement where the young writer first consciously confronted the adult world - and where his uncle lived estranged from the local community as does von Süde from the town he is rebuilding. The title points to new social and political configurations soon to make their mark on society as a whole, and the reactions of the main male protagonist to these developments becomes a central issue, rather

than the psychology of the heart (as in the previous novel), - this is involved too in Die Mauer Schwankt, but its existential significance is related here to wider social themes on which it has repercussions. In the chronology of von Süde's life and experiences the existential conflicts which bear close similarity to Friedrich's occur expectedly in early manhood; we follow the tensions of rationality and romanticism, disciplined order and freedom of will and imagination, we observe again the North-South polarities, the pull of southern climes, Italian resorts, and the Balkan regions (for the stirrings of political freedom); the alienation of artist from burgher is again presented in its spirit of angry revolt and frustration.

The main tension resides in the ambiguities experienced in confronting the new constellation of forces disrupting and renewing the fabric of society - how does the individual fulfil himself, how does the human spirit achieve its fullest freedom in the new situations? What part shall be played in order that these freedoms are attained? There is a clear indication that:

.... die Erde nicht eine Ruhe, sondern Geschichte war, dass man sich getäuscht hatte in der sicheren Behausung der Zivilisation, und dass noch weit mehr als schon geschehen war, geschehen würde. (247)

Whatever direction social and political change was taking, at the time of the outbreak of the first World War, - and ambiguities in language and uncertainty in the mind of the main character provide no reliable interpretation of them - the latter was in no doubt that an age was reaching its end and giving way to an indefinable other:

Dem Baumeister Johannes von Süde widerfuhr es, dass er die Zeit, die nachher kommen sollte, und die das Ende einer alten Zeit war und vielleicht auch ... die Geburtswehstunde einer neuen ist, dass er diese Zeit im voraus erlebte dass er den Umsturz ahnte, ... und dass ihm die Zukunft das Herz erschrak. (7)

The presentiment is linked with the architect's own encounter with Orloga and the revolutionaries in the Balkans, and the effect conveyed is one of fear if not horror. But this emotion is alloyed with others - whilst

Johannes von Süde's reactions to certain implications of the coming transformation of society are equivocal and even at times self-contradictory, yet he is tormented with the thought that his departure from the Balkans represents a missed opportunity, a "versäumte Pflicht". Die Pflicht became the title of the second edition of the novel, and it has a central importance in the whole work. But it is a misleading title, and the concept is subject to all kinds of interpretations. One fact emerges from the analysis - Johannes fails to fulfil the claims of duty wherever these claims assert themselves in a meaningful context. In practical terms he is one of life's failures, his insights, intuitive or emotional, never issue in concrete action. The concept of duty is frequently questioned and only at the end of the novel is final insight expressed. The process of questioning duty and obligation - to the State, to "die Höheren", one's superiors, to whom von Süde's father gave unreserved obedience in deference to traditional bureaucratic codes of behaviour, even to one's sisters ("Das Gesicht des Vaters. Die Verantwortung stand vor ihm. Er würde die Schwestern zu sich nehmen Er würde seine Pflicht tun." (105)), - is both part of the architect's own state of doubt and uncertainty, and also represents a characteristic aspect of the shaking of the foundations to which the structure of society is being subjected. Von Süde is despatched during the war to Masuren, to rebuild a small Eastern provincial town destroyed by and then recaptured from the Russians; but his own life and being, the near neurotic addiction to a Puritanical severity and alienation, become part of the ambiguity and uncertainty:

.... es wird zu einem Roman der Einsamkeit, zum Roman eines Baumeisters, der ... mit der Stadt nichts zu tun hat, allein lebt, ein Fremdkörper in dieser Stadt ist ... und an diese Stadt nicht mehr glaubt. Daher der Titel Die Mauer Schwankt. Er ahnt Unsicherheit und Unheil.⁴

"Unsicherheit und Unheil" - these are the constant features of the lives of both Koeppen himself and his characters. There is never evidence of

hope of the solution of conflict, the clarification of ambiguity, the sense that the transformation will renew and heal. The author's witnessing of the brutality of the prevailing fascist regime provided material for the portrayal of a repressive society in south-east Europe:

... ich war erschrocken über das, was in Deutschland vorging, und versuchte, das Entsetzen getarnt darzustellen, indem ich den Anfang des Buches in einem Balkanstaat spielen liess, wo sich Dinge der Unterdrückung und der Verfolgung ereigneten.⁵

He returned from Holland where the book was written to Berlin, where a new publisher was to justify his existence there by re-issuing the copies Cassirer was unable to sell.

The general spirit of radical revolt we associate with von Süde's Balkan experience is very much a matter of momentary, ecstatic commitment, and links with the artistic experience the architect undergoes at the vision of Mediterranean sun, the splendour of Palladio's buildings, and the burst of creativity with the paintbrush which his father had scorned. It is this basic intellectual revolt which unites the Koeppen of the thirties' with that of the post-war writings. The search for Utopia is basic to both - but in the second instance there is really no hope left of a 'revolution', and Koeppen's depiction of the contemporary world then becomes the obverse - "das genaue Gegenbild der Utopie".⁶ But the unease and the sense of danger and coming catastrophe were there from the beginning; as one observer of this thread of consistency remarks: "In dieser literarischen Situation (i.e. of the thirties') liegen die Wurzeln der Dichtung Koeppens, seiner Thematik und Formensprache, seines Weltverhältnisses." And the post-war novels represent "die Weiterbildung der damals wirkenden Impulse."⁷ The absence of activist resolution and participation remains an important aspect of the writer's own intellectual and existential dilemma. The father-son conflict, a popular theme with Expressionist writers, has a particular importance on the stage of German history - Koeppen is writing in 1935, about an earlier era, 1913-1918, and the questions are raised of the duty and obligation (concepts increasingly

cleansed of their cold and senseless rigidity) von Süde's generation has towards the young:

Die Aufgabe war Gert; die Aufgabe war der Kalinesohn;
die Aufgabe war immer das heranwachsende Geschlecht.
Der Baumeister fühlte es. Er fühlte auch sein Versagen.

(336)

The "Versagen" is not merely a central element in the main character's psychological make-up, it also takes us into the thirties and the fruits of the failure of the fathers to provide against future tragedies. And we can also extend our vision into the post-1945 era, to see how once again the young have been cheated by those who were themselves cheated⁸; in the post-war novels there is the same sympathy discernible for the young, bewildered, encaged, warring with the myopia and insensitivity of the old. "War dies die Pflicht, die versäumte Pflicht gewesen?"(378). Wolfdietrich Rasch comments appropriately:

Dass dieses Versäumnis später verhängnisvoll wirkt,
dass nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg auch die Söhne jener
ihre Aufgabe verkennenden Väter versagen, das wird das
zentrale Thema in den Nachkriegsromanen Koeppens⁹

The failure to give guidance to younger generations, the complicity in making Europe into a graveyard become obsessional features in all Koeppen's post-war writings, coupled with his inability to believe in a corrigible humanity or foresee the possibility of averting the apocalypse. But at this earlier stage it is the "Pflicht" towards humanity and its struggle for freedom and independence which drives von Süde to side with the "unreife Schwärmer für dumme Ideale" in the Balkan state - as the revolutionaries are pejoratively described by the police official. Indeed, the use of the term "Ideale" as representing the notions of the enemy camp places the blame squarely on the oppressive regime. What Orloga, the temptress, who unites in her person both physical seductiveness and a political magnetism, represents, is worth closer analysis. She identifies unreservedly with the rebels, and is classed by the authorities as a spy, even though she is released later, just as von Süde is released - and

recommended to an "impersonal", "cosmopolitan" and metaphorically "cold" hotel. "Die Zivilisation hatte den Baumeister wieder". (78). Orloga represents the basic and original attraction of "das Fremde", the mysterious, the vivacious, the unknown and always unknowable, the incarnation of all the romantic aspirations and dreams of the burgher - and she often behaves and appears like a dream-figure, just as Sibylle evokes dream-like effects in the preceding novel. At one point Johannes, surrounded by police and troops, considers whether these dangerous adventures and associations are "das wilde Leben, von dem viele in den Amtsstuben, über die Akten gebeugt, träumen." (60). It is the coalescing of these elements in the person of Orloga as well as in the cause and activity she identifies with, which determines the nature of the attraction experienced by von Süde. It is a different kind of attraction from that felt towards the more ugly and brutal, more prosaic and materialistic revolt germinating in the minds of the workers in the cement-works at the end of the novel. Here there are only raw and harsh realities, without glamour, significantly without an Adriatic or Balkan setting, without the artist's enchantments, the architectural setting which accompanied the relationship with Orloga. True, when von Süde laments that he had "failed his duty" towards the new revolutionary generation in Southern Europe, he connects this failure with the need not to "fail" the generation represented by Gert, his nephew. It is also true that he fails both. But there is no doubt that he is more drawn to the movement or the person which provides for the artist an emotional and existential release and fulfilment - and the language conveys a sensation of nothing less than fulfilment. "Welch ein Rausch ... zu fühlen." "Ich verwildere." (63). "Es war eine Wollust, so müde zu sein, so fremd, so unwissend" (57). With Orloga he is ready to travel anywhere (this is the mood of constant movement and activity):

"Nie hatte er einen glühenderen Brand und nie Verzehrenderes und niemals eine offenbarere Schönheit gesehen." (84). She is a "Göttin des Krieges,

denn alles schien ihm in ihr verkündet zu sein." (103). She is described as "Eine Fee und Furie zugleich" (100), combining the wild and the idyllically ingenuous in her nature. No mere sympathy with the underdog, however much of this sentiment is repeated in this novel, accounts for the extreme language used to convey the surrender to an emotional appeal:

Er war in einen Strudel geraten, und benommen
 von Lärm, Gerüchen, Überraschungen, Erregungen
 - fremden Welten - taumelte er, schwindlig geworden,
 und sah am Ende nur das Haar, diese helle Woge
 über der Menge ... (45)

The artist has surrendered more than the political revolutionary, even though the twin components of the personality are intended to coalesce in an emotional identification with the "immature zealots". The intensity of the experience conveys the impression of a romantic individualist whose "Denken ... sich in Extremen bewegt", and we are not therefore surprised when von Süde devotes later equally intense Teutonic energies to a disciplined and Puritanically arduous life of a civil servant. Marcel Reich-Ranicki's comment applied to Friedrich in the preceding novel is relevant again: "Die meisten Helden Koeppens sind Amokläufer, der Liebe, der Kunst, der Moral, der Politik, des Unglücks, des Frevels."⁹ It is this kind of "romantic" intensity of quest and longing, or even activity which must end in dissatisfaction or failure, a token of the gulf between the real and the ideal.

The symbolic ideal in this context is represented by a female figure with associations calculated to move Johannes to action or sympathetic identification. Orloga becomes more than a single identity, rather a symbol of a wider brotherhood of Man, an aesthetic image rather than a politico-ideological one, but uniting in its attraction all men at all times: as Orloga's hand seeks his,

... und sie streichelte mit spielerischen, unendlich zärtlichen, wenn auch von weit herkommenden, aus Urgründen vielleicht aufgestiegenen und gar nicht ihn, den Einen, suchenden oder meinenden Bewegungen der Finger. (62)

"Von weit herkommend", "Urgründe", these expressions have a Jungian ring about them, uniting the participants with former heroes and warriors who had engaged in the vast collective and immemorial struggle to free Man from all existing forms of oppression. This is the traditional German intellectual revolt on behalf of the generalised abstraction, "Menschheit", lacking programmatic specificity, and in this context going beyond 'den Einen' and reaching out to revolutionaries everywhere. We are not concerned with social meliorism but with a semi-mystical exaltation not unlike that reflected in exhortations to communal unity and oneness dear to conservative ideologists and 'revolutionaries'. But such ambiguities are characteristic of German intellectual history. Orloga's experience here contains reminders of a more glorious past in which personal adventure and the wide open seas are as important as the liberation of the oppressed, even though they do not mutually exclude each other. Listening to Orloga's narration of her childhood and youthful experiences, one is reminded of Max Frisch's earlier works, Graf Üderland and Santa Cruz. In these plays the same motifs occur which one associates with the dream-like figure of Orloga - an aversion to the comforts and snares of civilisation, the cage and prison of settled burgher existence, the attachment to dreams of conquest and heroic action in the name of the liberation of the will and the assertion of personal autonomy, involving self-questionings concerning identity and personality. Orloga knows the secrets of the stars, she whose eyes are "zwei Seen von ungeahnter Tiefe", - a Professor in the observatory at the Cape of Good Hope studied the stars with his mathematical tables, and therefore failed to discover their true meaning. At the age of six we learn she had a score of slaves; and her memorable visits to the court of the Emperor of Abyssinia recall "das letzte Schauspiel von Grösse in der Welt." With her is associated, as with the artist, the hatred of the tyrant and the love of freedom and diversity; "Ich hasse die, die andere knechten" (94), says the lover of Peter Marr (the brother of von Süde's brother-in-law),

who also captured the hearts of Reinhold Marr and Johannes himself. Orloga's father fought Swedish oppressors, though in the style of the Vikings rather than of a twentieth century anarchist; but the chief enemy were the merchants and traders:

... die geleckte Welt der Kaufleute, die gleich und langweilig die Erde machen will, zu einer Seite im Hauptrechnungsbuch des Lebens nach Angebot und Nachfrage in Aktiven und Passiven geteilt. Der Krämer ist unser Feind(91)

The same repugnance is felt here as it is later by Johannes when he confronts the owner of the cement-works whom he cannot, however, prevent from making an immoderate profit. Materialism as the primary motive force in human endeavour, and the cash-nexus seen as the criterion governing relationships, are rejected as destroying quintessential humanity, paying homage to alienating possessions, and militating against spiritual quality and the diverse joys of living - rendering the fabric of society 'gleich und langweilig'. This is to be distinguished from the brand of anti-capitalism espoused by the factory-workers involved in the organisation of labour for material improvements, - Johannes could appreciate the demand for these improvements, whilst remaining distant from the satisfaction of this demand. The hostility to money-mongering which the two "revolutionaries", Orloga and von Süde represent, is rooted as we have already seen, in earlier romanticist German ideology. A Puritanical sense of virtue, allied to a disgust with grasping and self-satisfied materialism, caused Johannes to refuse to indulge in the black market trade in rationed foodstuffs, even to the extent of declining a meal offered by a friendly clergyman and obtained by devious means. "Das allgemeine Denken war bürgerlich und egoistisch."(252) This corruption can not be part of a better and freer world; its more universal application becomes the ground for a deep, melancholy pessimism which underlies the failure of nerve or achievement peculiar to Koeppen's anti-heroes. To understand this failure, the character and activities of Johannes von Süde merit closer attention.

Central to his life and his being is the concept of duty and its connotations - and the changing interpretations of this concept. In the history of German national life and thought the 'Pflichtbegriff' ranks high in the scale of social and spiritual values. One of the most 'revolutionary' elements therefore in Die Mauer Schwankt is the questioning of the absolute character of notions of duty and obligation. The doubting of the father's obedience to and interpretation of duty is correspondingly the core of the father-son conflict already alluded to. The father's allegiance to the values of discipline, social order and industriousness, service to the State, seen as the highest of social principles and the cornerstone of social morality, this allegiance is treated in some detail, as is its effect on the tenor and cohesion of family life. Whatever apprehensions there are later regarding the threat posed by the forces of chaos and disorder, the exercise of duty at an early stage is parodied and the bureaucratic virtues of exactitude and regularity are shown to be wanting and hollow. Johannes' father wears military medals for church-going (the familiar alliance of clericalism and militarism), but the impulse operating here is "nur der Stolz auf den Beweis einer getanen Pflicht"(15). The rigidity of manners, mores, principles and education, provides the usual testimony to the reign of unbending rules and codes of behaviour; the marriages of the old Süde family were "standesgemäss", daughters married civil servants or clergy, they were "nett und sauber" (Koeppen is often repelled by the prosaic and deadening connotations of "Sauberkeit"), developed the "vergeistigten Ausdruck des Gesichts", made devoted wives, but were rendered "unselbständig und zögernd" by their husbands' despotic behaviour (16,17). The male line of the family had invariably served the State without reservation. At school, - again serving the state with an unimaginative educational fare - lessons consisted of "das Auswendiglernen des vorhandenen Wissens"(18), parrot-learning, and the corollary with which we are concerned, "Dennoch war es ... seine Pflicht zu bestehen."

Such a concept of duty relates beyond the content of education to the ethos of society. Its rigidity frowns upon the son's ambition to become an artist, and the Künstler-Bürger antagonism is rooted in it. Hence the artist's love of "das Fremde" - Johannes, once arrived in Venice, turns to painting, which conjured up visions of the "demonic" for his father, and feels "verjüngt und wie übermütig" in "die Fremde, wo niemand ihn kannte."⁽²⁶⁾ As the author himself comments on his own encounter with the unknown: "... ich wohne nicht, ich bin nicht eingestuft, man erwartet mich nicht ... Es liegt Freude in den Begegnungen ohne Namen, in dem Anheimgeben an den Zufall."¹⁰ The women figures offer contrasting aspects which reflect the tensions later to develop in society. Mary marries the future theatre-manager, Emilie remains cold, self-sacrificing, but repressing all outward show of the instinctual life inside her; even Johannes is affected - but then he is already a dichotomous mixture. "In Emiliens Gegenwart nahm er an Schwere zu."⁽³⁵⁾ Emilie gives her brother paintings as Christmas presents, - "Mary schenkte ihm nur ihr Lachen. Er wusste nicht, welcher Gebenden er dankbar war."⁽³⁵⁾ This serves to illustrate Johannes' uncertainty which grows as the novel proceeds. Emilie is the incarnation of sisterly duty and sacrifice; we admire - and even pity - but we know she is a victim of devotion to a desiccating ideal. Symbolically, she reads the letters of Heinrich von Kleist and his sister Ulrike. The sensual pleasure she derives from stroking a cat repels her (150 ff). Towards the end of the novel, she would dearly wish to kiss the gypsy, but is then repelled by his advances. These are a few of the psychological insights into the effects of rigidly conventional social precepts. They contribute to what Stephan Reinhardt claims Koeppen is attempting in this work - a "Vivisektion des bürgerlichen Zeitalters",¹¹ - and the writer himself was confessedly interested in composing a "Kleinstadt-Roman", to be used as a framework for the playing out of a personal problematic.

The central theme is the deepening uncertainty of the architect over

the concept of duty itself and the form of one's allegiance to it. In the Balkans he had feared the effects of loss of reputation upon his career and position - for were not these insurrectionists criminals and social pariahs? But the human appeal of the revolutionary cause had captured his imagination, though it already contained a conflict with his father's notions of duty, discipline and order. The 'Expressionistic' utterances of Orloga had evoked in the artist a response to an inner need to break the constricting shackles of a dull and unquestioned society; they both stood "in einem brüchigen Reich, das Sehnsucht hat, aus seiner Form zu fallen, und eine neue, ein neues Leben zu finden."(99) The cause of the young becomes momentarily the call of duty itself: "Man schickt Agenten hin. Man lässt Geld rollen. Man will sein Geschäft machen. Nur nach dem Leben und dem Willen des Volkes fragt man nicht."(99) This highly charged last sentence, acceptable, paradoxically, when taken out of context even to a National Socialist of the thirties', appeals to the critic of oppressive and self-satisfied philistinism. The impulse to duty remains a dominant motivation, but this time it is on behalf of the victims of persecution:

Mitleid mit dem Misshandelten, mit dem Verfolgten, Wut gegen die, die ihn verfolgt hatten, erfüllte ihn ... so war es doch seine natürlichste Pflicht, als Mensch, als Mitlebender, ... hier einzuschreiten, hier Stellung zu nehmen, hier das Recht und die Würde des Menschen zu wahren. (65)

He demanded care for the wounded - "er tat seine Pflicht." This reverse direction of duty torments the architect at a later period, when he is occupied in rebuilding the provincial town; the call to serve the State, and a Prussian administration in particular, was the highest call his father conceived. But from the beginning he was restless and disturbed, and recalled and relived the moments of passion and adventure: "Die Liebe - einmal war sie ihm möglich gewesen ... Einmal war er ausser sich und über sich gewesen; und dann hatte er sich mit dem Alltag bescheiden"(246). The

contrasts of mood and language are revealing. There is guilt felt at having deserted the rebels, and chosen the path of duty towards an ordered society and a career which would protect the family he was now responsible for, including his bereaved sister and her child. Much of the novel is the story of Johannes coming to terms - if he ever does - with this decision.

His psychological unrest produces a state of alienation from the citizens whom he is "serving". Basic also to this estrangement is a feeling of antipathy to the materialistic values they represent, his awareness nonetheless that this world is crumbling before the onslaught of creative and yet dangerous forces about which - like everything else - he is in a state of almost paralysing uncertainty. This uncertainty is reflected in the frequent analyses made by the main character of his own situation and that of his family, and in the frequent use of the "erlebte Rede" stylistic (not yet expanded here into the much more disjointed "interior monologue"). Dietrich Erlach comments on this style (with a view to indicating that despite these self-analytic moments, the syntax and narrative style are comparatively orderly and traditional):

"Nirgends wird die Er-Erzählung von innerem Monolog durchbrochen, und wechselt die Perspektive vom Erzähler zu einer Person, geht also der Bericht in erlebte Rede über, dann wird das angekündigt durch Hinweise wie: "er erkannte", "es schien ihm jetzt, in der Erinnerung", "er dachte" etc.¹²

Nevertheless, one student of the general writer's stylistic repertoire and its considerable significance for the exploration of the newer twentieth century realities of the unconscious, considers the "erlebte Rede", the third person indirect form of the interior monologue, a useful instrument for conveying "die Schicht des Unformulierten und damit teilweise schon Unterbewussten"; the much more traditional "er sagte zu sich selbst" followed by direct speech, being less able, "jenen Aspekt des schweigend bei sich seienden, in sich versunkenen, seinem Fühlen oder Denken hin-

gegebenen Menschen zu vermitteln, wie die Form der erlebten Rede ihn jedenfalls hervorrufen kann."¹³ Thus this technique is appropriate at least to convey the tormented musings and doubtings of the main character as he toils, isolated and alienated, in the provincial outpost. Existence is often Spartan, always industrious to the point of arduousness during the war years. There was no thought of participating in the Sunday walks to the town perimeter, or listening to the café orchestra; the distance maintained between self and inhabitants was part of the self-castigation imposed on von Süde in acknowledgement of the fact that he was perhaps being punished for some aberration. The despatching of an official to the Eastern border was considered "als eine Strafe, die Unschuldigen zuteil wurde. Mürrisch dienten sie ihre Zeit ...". The routine of life, the tastes and practices of the citizens, their sly murmurings and narrow-mindedness, their ostracisation of Kaline, von Süde's housekeeper, for living unmarried with a road-worker and their son, their refusal to have their dreary provincial backwater rebuilt, after the Russians were driven back, on the basis of new architectural models, their failure to welcome change and to see flaws in their obedience to their rulers - these factors reduced von Süde to a plodding, irritated silence, and later to a growing dissatisfaction with his own identity and way of life. Like a twentieth century Savonarola, he inveighs against the speculators and traders who present inordinate claims for indemnification after the town is destroyed. Koeppen does not provide details of individual sufferings during the campaigns - though he does dwell on the reaction to the call to arms which was answered with typically Prussian zeal. But the citizens, for the rebuilding, desired a return to the status quo: "Die Hausbesitzer wollten ihre alten Häuser wieder haben provinziell und von einer gestrigen Bürgerlichkeit"(268). What Koeppen was later obsessively to chastise his fellow-countrymen for, after the Second World War, equally arouses the angry frustration of von Süde: they sought to disguise the catastrophe, "zu tun, als ob nie ein

Ungewöhnliches sich ereignet habe." We read that the architect's failure to have his plans accepted is endured as a retribution for his failure to act decisively on behalf of the Turkish rebels. He now carries out his duties as a State employee, against his own principles and beliefs. "Johannes gehorchte, aber er zweifelte."(249)

It is this abstract sense of duty towards the community, filled with tension and conflict for the reasons outlined above, which renders impossible for Johannes any meaningful contact or relationship with the community. The frontiers dividing himself from them point to a later and more generalised "Beziehungslosigkeit" extending to the structure of a whole society, and undermining any positive conception of personal relationships. It precludes "Verkehr und Geselligkeit" between von Süde's whole family and the other citizens, though the most remote and distant are Johannes and Emilie. Even Johannes' relationship with Kaline, which is brought into focus after the latter's accident on the ice, is essentially master and servant, even though expectedly her non-marital relations with her lover he finds utterly blameless. Kaline had attempted to reach the von Südes punctually for work; she herself was faced with two conflicting "duties" - one towards her employers, the other towards her son, for whom she was composing an urgent letter to the authorities, a son who was in need of humane guidance, and who was to take up arms against the established structure of society as the novel closes. She fell through the ice, was saved by her son's invincible courage (which outshone that of the surrounding elders), and Johannes is faced with a further self-analysis and self-questioning. Kaline had been a victim of an abstract sense of duty, "dem Zwang des Stundenplans zum Opfer gefallen". He in turn is faced with the realisation that this concept is hollow, and hides estrangement and indifference: "Er hatte sich nicht um den Menschen gekümmert". This "Kontaktlosigkeit" extends naturally to Johannes' relations with the young, even those near to him. At an earlier stage he invites Gert to walks, a

form of exercise he usually takes alone:

Der Mann und der Knabe sprachen wenig auf diesen Wegen. Der Baumeister hätte sich gerne mit dem Jungen unterhalten, aber er wusste nicht, wie er es beginnen sollte. In gewissen Redewendungen stockte er. Sie kamen ihm, dem kindlichen Verstand angepasst, albern vor. Zudem glaubte er zu bemerken, dass der Knabe ihm widerstrebte, was des Baumeisters Unfähigkeit, das Passende zu sagen, zur Verlegenheit werden liess. Es kam schliesslich dazu, dass er, in Anwandlungen der Gereiztheit über diesen Zustand, einen schulmeisterlich belehrenden Ton anschlug, was die Situation nicht verbesserte So war es nur das Ziel, das ihre Schritte vereinigte. (132)

The schoolmaster's didactic tone becomes the mask behind which Johannes conceals his inability to make meaningful contact with the younger generation, just as later he was to adopt a harsh and severe attitude towards his employees in the architect's office in Masuren, forbidding contact or any other than purely professional communication. His stoical self-imposed severity demands of his sisters the same self-sacrifice during the war crisis as he endured - but then at the end came the questionings concerning the performance of this duty and whether it was all justified in terms of human self-fulfilment. Certainly it was the stringent code of living, the oppressive austerity (the "Amokläuferei der Moral") which emptied the relationship between Gert and his uncle of feeling and warmth, to the extent that any activity or task which required application and self-discipline reminded him of his uncle's example and were accordingly neglected or abandoned: "Sein Hass und sein Widerstand neigten dazu, sich auf jede mögliche Ersatzgestalt des Baumeisters zu übertragen" (263) This had particular effect on behaviour in the classroom, but then it became evident that even the orderliness and repressive constraints of school-life during the Wilhelmine period were yielding to more urgent demands of reality and war. But for Gert the effect of the deprivations ordained by Johannes was that:

die Tätigkeit und das Nützliche wurden immer mehr als die zu bekämpfenden düsteren Zwänge und immer weniger als das Fördernde und Führende angesehen. (263)

A characterological insight shows the effect of natures distorted by rigid manners and attitudes - Emilie and Johannes walking together, a most unusual experience, promoting unease and a sense of strangeness: "Ungewohnt und fremd war es ihnen, mit einem anderen den Schritt zu halten."(278) The strangeness in this case is increased by the fact that a world of changing values and purposes envelops them: "Sie wussten, die Ziele und Werte des Lebens sind in weitere und gefährlichere Höhen gerückt" (278) Other characters - not sceptical and questioning as is von Süde - betray also the effects of narrow, provincial notions of living. Schmidt, the director of the local postal services, suffered comparison with the architect, with whom he exchanged few words over the years: they were both classed as "Junggesellen, Büromenschen, Pflichtmenschen ... verschroben, freudenlos, menschenscheu ..." (116) The head of the village school astonishes the population by announcing his forthcoming journey to England. He arrives at the planned destination, but after a time (and before the outbreak of war when he is interned as a potential spy) finds himself missing the warmth of friends and family at home. But the abstract duty of study and application, of acquiring further information, holds him till the allotted and planned period has elapsed, which in this instance incurs his internment: "Was ihn zu bleiben zwingt, das ist das Gefühl der Pflicht - er muss das Pensum erledigen." (193)

Even before Johannes is invited to return as the town architect responsible for supervising the reconstruction of a war-ravaged town centre, he had won a reputation as "eine unmenschliche, gespenstisch knöchernerne Maschine der Pflicht im Dienst des Staates" (225). He obeyed, but he doubted. Mary observes him coldly evaluating the traders' estimates:

... dass diese übertrieben bürokratische Art ihres Bruders mehr eine Geste, eine schützende Tarnung und ein Zeichen seiner inneren zweifelnden Unruhe und Gefährdung war. (208)

He is "endangered" because the severity is rooted in a tenacious clinging to a system of increasingly suspect social notions, obligations, and even structures, a tenacity which has become for him almost the last possible response to life and the means of coping with its demands, as well as facing up to his own failure of nerve:

Johannes wusste, dass er die Pflicht, in der er lebte und die seine letzte ihm noch mögliche Haltung zum Leben war, dass er diese Pflicht nur als die Strenge weitergeben konnte; als die Strenge, weil er an der Pflicht, die hinter ihr stand, zweifelte. (264)

Though he was following his father's precepts, "Handele der Pflicht gemäss," in fact because he was following them, in letter if not in spirit, he could not be an example to his nephew's generation. The pedantic daily round, the devotion to the common task, such procedures satisfied his father's generation: "... das Nächste, das Aufbauende, ist immer die Aufgabe, das Werk; tue das Kleine, denn es ist das Grosse ..." (248). What was being "aufgebaut" was rarely questioned, what was "aufgegeben" was performed with reverential obedience. Heroic self-sacrifice was considered an arrogant and unnecessary illusion - except possibly in the name of the Prussian State. The pragmatism his father preached scorned the emotionality and the dangerously revolutionary ardour of the "Heldentod", - and would have scorned in particular an act of self-immolation by his son on behalf of the Turkish rebels. (The paradox and ambiguity we face here is that the prosaic obedience of the elders produced a situation in which later a call to a heroic death was made in the name of the same higher authority, the State, as von Süde's father gave unconditional allegiance to. Such are the peculiar and suspect associations which the concept of "Heldentod" has borne in the history and literature of the German people. In Johannes' experience it is contrasted with the dull and prosaic "Alltag" - "und dann hatte er sich mit dem Alltag beschieden". (246) But the ambiguity in question is forcefully exemplified in the choice open to Johannes to take

the position of Baumeister in the East Prussian town, or engage in a conflict side by side with the "Freiheitskämpfer" who are repulsing the Russian invader, much as Fichte's "Freiheitskämpfer" were to liberate Germany from Napoleon. The choice of heroic action has a qualitative superiority of which we are left in no doubt, and is contemplated in almost the same breath as the reminder to himself that Orloga's death had left him with an uncompleted task. This is of course a total confusion of aims, the soldiery fighting an invading army having a most dissimilar end in view from Orloga's accomplices.)

Part of von Süde's uncertainty leading to a renunciation of the paternal code of beliefs is of a specifically philosophic stamp. It is significant that his father is quoted at the beginning as being a church-goer, and for him the ecclesia sanctions and sanctifies his service to the State and its 'Obrigkeit'; whereas during the single walk on which Emilie and her brother accompany each other, they pass by a church and neither dares to enter. There are moments of intense metaphysical doubt in which it does not seem to matter either way which course of action or life might be chosen, whether that of the confined architect in a confined provincial setting, or that of emancipatory sacrifice in a movement or cause:

... von einer höheren und unpersönlicheren Warte gesehen, war es gleichgültig und kam auf das Gleiche heraus, dass er wie ein Staub war, ohne Wert oder auch mit Wert an irgendeiner Stelle, doch immer nicht unentbehrlich, sondern tausendfällig in der selben Art von ihm nicht gefühlten Existenzen lebend und ohne Spur hinter sich und ohne ein Ziel ... vor sich zu sehen. (147)

Friedrich in the preceding novel had seen urban man as "eine Ameise in einem Termitenbau"¹⁴; man is reduced to being an expendable and exchangeable cipher. He is obsessed by his own insignificance in a world which seeks a meaning - and Koeppen writes this before the coming holocaust. Von Süde's thoughts are echoed by many 'kulturpessimistisch' commentators concerned about the functionalisation of man, the loss of individual identity and separateness, the lack of relationship with those with whom

and on whom one lives - ("von ihm nicht gefühlten Existenzen"). Freyer speaks of "ein Lebenssystem, das den Menschen auf klare Funktionen abstellt, das alle persönlichen in sachlichen Bezüge transformiert ..."¹⁵ Curt Hohoff's traditionalism is endangered by the lack of any binding scale of values or common beliefs: "... dass die Welt als verstandenes System, aus einem Glauben, aus einer Ideologie, als Einheit von gedacht und gedichtet, nicht da ist."¹⁶ Kahler sees a consequence of collectivisation as "ein Zurück-sinken des Individuums in Bedeutungslosigkeit, Ohnmacht und generelle Unwissenheit".¹⁷ Helmut Braem, speaking of the concerns of post-war literature and the impulses and grounds of pessimistic satire, includes in his list: "(verweist auf)...die Reduktion der Vernunft, auf die Disharmonie zwischen der Technik und ihrem Erfinder, dem Menschen, auf die Kollektivierung, ... auf die seelenlosen Leben in den Gemeinschaften, auf das mangelnde Verhältnis zum Du, auf die Vernichtung der Glaubenskraft ..."¹⁸ Von Süde's alienation from a world in which he is "ohne Spur hinter sich und ohne ein Ziel ..." is a personal experience of the author's also, and it becomes much more magnified in Tauben im Gras and other post-war writings, where life and death become a wholesale affair of chance. His cogitations on God represent an important feature of the breakdown of traditional beliefs:

Er war gottlos ... ohne das Bewusstsein eines Mangels oder den Stachel einer Schuld davon zu haben ... Gott gab es wohl nicht. Wenn es ihn aber gab, war er unerreichbar, und sie führten kein Gespräch. (117)

We seem to be past the stage where the rage of the atheist proves the existence of God. A nothingness has replaced the picture of an aggressive all-powerful Titan directing or waging war with mankind, a void consonant with the colourless, drab routine of primitive existence:

Um gegen einen Überirdischen sich aufzulehnen, gegen einen Allmächtigen, und den Leiter der Geschicke anzuklagen, ein Tun, zu dem in dem Baumeister ein Drang war, war es notwendig, an die Macht, die man zerstören wollte, zuerst zu glauben ... Johannes von Süde wäre zu einem Titanenkampf bereit gewesen, wenn ein Titan sich ihm gezeigt hätte. Er aber blickte in ein

sehr nüchternes graues Licht. Es war gar nichts da neben Tisch und Bett, neben der primitiven Installierung des Menschen in der Welt. (117)

The optimistic progressivism of the Enlightenment had now yielded to a metaphysical void; life had become a seedy affair, a disenchantment which perhaps only a passionate involvement such as von Süde had once known could temporarily remedy. There are no "Überirdischen", no Gods, with whom a battle would ennoble human existence and lend it a tragic dignity. When the architect is praised, at the very beginning of the novel, for his successful design for a Psychiatric Clinic, the language of consecration is a eulogy upon civilisation itself, guided by the rational hand of scientific advancement:

Der Redner lobte die Wissenschaft und den Fortschritt.
Die Zeit nannte der Redner human
Die Zeit war gross und erhaben
Die Zivilisation hatte ihren Gipfel erreicht. (10)

Johannes' emotional response to this event was never adequate or satisfying, it contrasts with the occasion in Venice later when the act of drawing turns to painting, and in retrospect the whole affair of the clinic suddenly appeared stupid and unreal. A final example of his philosophic musings may be drawn from his encounter in a churchyard where his father lies buried, with an old woman occupied in adorning a grave. She had evidently lived a harsh life; "Ihr Leben war die Mühe gewesen." How could he justify this hardship to her? The mother-figure in Anamnese needed the same justification. His own wisdom was in no position to perform this service, only his kindness. "Lohnten das Leben und das Alter sich? Gewiss war der Tod, und dem Tode ging es zu. Warum aber sollte man den längsten Weg zu diesem ... Ende gehen?"(244) Koeppen's characters often seek - or question - metaphysical props to their existence. As is now clear, for Johannes there is no prop available. Scepticism is intensified by the awareness that doing things for the right reasons can lead to wrongs being

done:

Wusste man irgend etwas? Man wusste nichts. Ein jeder Schritt war ein Schritt in das Dunkle hinein. Abstürzen konnte man in jeder Sekunde, und wenn man das Gute wollte, war man noch mehr in Gefahr, das Unrecht zu tun. (246)

One of the basic tenets of Enlightenment philosophy was that the virtuous impulse, guided by the light of Reason, would bring its own reward. Now we are more concerned with the Mephistophelian twist to the argument - or rather the parody of Lucifer's agent. Now he who "stets das Gute will, stets das Böse schafft." This Manichaeian universe in which the powers of Evil triumph has a modern application; the scene is America, and not even the Kennedys can hope for a better world:

Doch vergessen wir nicht, ... vorausschauend in die Zukunft, neben dem Pentagon, wachsend, gedeihend, gross, grösser werdend, den Arlington Heldenfriedhof zu erwähnen, wo Kennedy begraben liegt, zwei Kennedys von jener Kraft, die stets das Gute will und stets das Böse schafft.¹⁹

The ethical structure of cosmic being has disintegrated.

But at least the paternal belief in rigid and formal conceptions of duty has also been debunked in the process of the self-questionings and doubts. For this does not *only* paralyse action, it also humanises. He rages against father's injunction to act according to the dictates of the traditional duty ethic; should he rebuild a town when the foundations of civilisation itself were shaking, for the "Umbruch" under way was no temporary, parochial affair? New existential dilemmas, problems of choice and decision - germane, in fact, to the existentialist's twentieth century situations - confront one.

Vater, ihr hattet es leichter, gelassen zu sein und zu bleiben; und wir werden es immer schwerer haben, uns zu entscheiden, denn bald wird der rechte Weg wieder ein Kreuzweg sein! (248)

In terms of daily activity, service to God or even the social unit, "Ordnung und Fleiss und eine genaue Rechnung, - sie schienen dem Baumeister wahrlich nicht die höchsten Güter des Lebens, nicht die Erfüllung der

menschlichen Möglichkeiten zu sein."(271) He will endure these activities for nothing else or better is allotted to him, and he will perform them "ordentlichst, gewissenhaftest, und genauestens in den denkbarsten Superlativen". But he is humane and sceptical enough to be concerned that his sisters should not forfeit the richer blessings of life. Emilie, when not overworked in the surgery, toils in the fields, and Mary is hunched perpetually over the drawing board:

Nahmen die Frauen ihr Schicksal hin? Hielten sie es für Schicksal, in dem immer noch Grösse ist? Einst waren sie behütet und bewahrt gewesen. Bewährten sie sich nun in der Änderung ihres Lebens? Hatten sie überhaupt vor diesem geänderten das Leben gekannt? Wurde ihnen nicht jetzt erst die wahre Daseinsform des Menschen zuteil und offenbar?" (369)

"Schicksal", "Grösse", "Sich-Bewähren", "die wahre Daseinsform", - the problems under review are inseparably bound up with this traditional language, and Koeppen, from his earliest writings, is preoccupied with the implications for individual and community alike of commitment to these concepts. And there is much of the author in the doubts held by Johannes. The world would no doubt approve of Mary's absorption in the architectural documents and drawings, but Johannes himself had become persuaded that "in allem Spiel noch eher die Wahrheit zu finden sei und der Sinn, und dass so ihm diese, der Sinngehalt des Lebens immer und immer wieder entgangen waren."(370) The reference is partly to Mary's former playful activities, when she was preoccupied with Gert as a young child, but we can detect a wider significance, particularly as Johannes is now alleged to have lost the essential "Sinngehalt des Lebens". It is as though there is renewed insight into the superior claims of Schiller over and above the imperatives of Kant. The fulfilment of these claims was not for him: "Es gab für ihn nur die Pflicht; die kleine für den Tag wirkende Pflicht."(336) This exercise can no longer be seen as adequately fulfilling. And insight is finally won and conveyed at the end of the novel; it is sensitive to less dogmatic claims, provides guidance for the new decision-makers, the

leaders of the new forces which confront each other as the novel closes, and at the same time opens the way to the pluralisms which these confrontations engender:

Die Pflicht allein - sie kann das volle, das ganze, das wirkliche und das Ganze umfassende Leben nicht sein Man muss um den höheren Sinn jeder Pflicht wissen; er allein ist die Weihe."

(374. my italics).

We have already seen some of the linguistic and thematic ambivalences surrounding von Süde's intentions, and possibly the author's. An author's style and language are influenced positively by the powerful cultural undercurrents of his time - and negatively, by what he is not allowed to express, or what literary forms are closed to him. There is also an unconsciously assimilated influence, of which language is an important part.

Manfred Koch summarises this point thus:

Die Mauer Schwankt enthält jedoch, über die Bezüge zum Stil der Expressionisten hinaus, eine Reihe stilistischer Elemente - vor allem semantisch-begrifflicher, semantisch-expressiver und phraseologischer Art, die wider den Willen des Autors, die Ausbreitung des nationalsozialistischen Sprachgebrauchs bezeugen. (my italics)²⁰

We are not surprised therefore to meet phraseology which has the emotive charge and the same verbal content and expressiveness of language dear to the Expressionists who longed for a new Man, a resurrected humanity, the Nietzschean transvaluation of values, the "Untergang" leading to the "Übergang" or transcension of constricting realities, in some communal and "revolutionary" (conservative revolutionary? socialist revolutionary?) movement - nor therefore should we be surprised that some of this ambivalent language could be attractive to even (say) the devotees of the National Socialist cause. National Socialism and Expressionism have little in common qua movements, but they often use similar emotive vocabularies, vocabularies rarely designed to promote a more rational, progressive humanitarianism founded on concrete social and political issues. Examples in Die Mauer Schwankt which point to the suspect ambiguities can be taken

at random: Johannes, having read a lengthy tract on the town's history, is prompted to lecture his employees in the drawing office:

Einst ... standen die Ritter und die Priester in einer gemeinsamen Front. Hand in Hand ... werkten sie an der Vollkommenheit des Menschen, auf dass er Gott ähnlich werde. Im Dienst dieser ihrer menschlichen, von Gott gebilligten Idee und dergestalt gefestigt konnten sie der Verführung des Chaos und dem Ansturm der barbarischen Horden die Stirn bieten. Ihre Kirchen und ihre Burgen, Denkmale eines Triumphes des Geistes über die Wildnis stehen noch, einig in ihrem Stil, als die ... mahnend in das Land schauenden Siegestürme der Kultur vor unseren Augen. Heute dagegen sind die Kräfte der Ordnung, des Menschlichen, des Aufbauenden und der Gesittung zersplittert. Sie stehen für sich oder gar feindlich zueinander, und die Mächte des Chaotischen gewinnen heimlich ... den verlorenen Boden zurück. (345)

The "barbarische Horden" disrupting and destroying the procreative powers of social order and civilisation are characteristically not identified. 'Geist', 'Gott ähnlich', 'Priester' are part of the traditionalist's symbolic imagery pointing vaguely to a legendary communal order and cohesion now in danger of being "zersplittert" by new and unknown forces, socialistic, fascistic or whatever; we know of the author's own somewhat ambivalent reactions to the transformations overtaking the world, and von Süde's can be seen in a similar light. Konrad Kurz sums up the modern situation succinctly: "Die gesamte Glaubens-, Wissens-, Gefühls- und Werthaltung des Menschen hat sich verschoben, verkompliziert, differenziert, aufgesplittert."²¹ The language used by Johannes at another point in the novel, as he faces future developments, abounds in ambiguities:

Er wusste, dass er das Neue nicht schaffen konnte, weil der grosse Umbruch sich noch nicht vollzogen hatte. Draussen geschahen die Kämpfe. Aus den Kämpfen würden die Werte kommen. Und mit den Kämpfen vielleicht das lebenswerte Leben. (271)

Such language has no precise orientation, no defined political involvement. Conflict is even justified as engendering a situation from which some mystical rejuvenation, a life worth living, might emerge. This is hardly an authorial pronouncement. Indeed, the above "erlebte Rede" of Johannes

might stand rather as an indictment of the architect himself. But the latter is a product of his age. This is the age of Thomas Mann's "Non-political Man"; a growing number of commentators have seen this figure as dominating the stage in modern German history. J.P. Stern, in his introduction to his studies of various nineteenth century literary figures, writes: "And the claim that the true life of Germany is non-political - that too I have taken as part of the political atmosphere in which, both before and after 1848, much of German literature came to be written."²² Thomas Mann writes about this mental disposition - one which is not by any means alien to von Süde, in view of our discussion of the Orloga experience - in his Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen:

.... dass Demokratie, dass Politik selbst dem deutschen Wesen fremd und giftig sei ich bekenne mich tief überzeugt, dass das deutsche Volk die politische Demokratie niemals wird lieben können und dass der vielverschiedene "Obrigkeitsstaat" die dem deutschen Volke angemessene, zukömmliche und von ihm im Grunde gewollte Staatsform ist Trotzdem wird damit nicht nur nicht dem deutschen Volke irgendwelche Geringschätzung im geistigen oder sittlichen Sinne ausgedrückt - das Gegenteil ist die Meinung - sondern auch sein Wille zur Macht und Erdengrösse (Welcher weniger ein Wille als ein Schicksal und eine Weltnotwendigkeit ist) bleibt dadurch in seiner Rechtmässigkeit ... völlig unangefochten Es ist die "Politisierung des Geistes", die Umfälschung des Geist-Begriffes in den der besserischen Aufklärung, ... was die Gift auf mich wirkt. (my italics)²³

What Mann calls the "Umfälschung des Geist-Begriffes in den der besserischen Aufklärung" has affinities with the reaction of von Süde to the materialist and rationalist revolution represented by the factory-workers. In this sense Koeppen has grasped and illuminated some fundamental traits of the Bürger's outlook. An article in Die Zeit in 1969 sought to outline basic analogies between the NSDAP and the later NPD movements;²⁴ the emotive language retains interesting similarities:

NSDAP: "Darum verneinen wir den Intellekt, darum stützen wir uns so stark auf die Werte des Gefühls, als deren Grund wir die Werte des Blutes erkannt haben." The authors continue with: "Gegen die

Werte des Liberalismus, des Materialismus, der Ratio" stellte man "die Revolution der Seele, als deren Träger wir Nationalsozialisten uns fühlen."

NPD: Wie einst die NSDAP, so macht sich die NPD zum Sprecher des "gesund fühlenden Volkes". "Gesund ist, wer noch Kraft zu Innerlichkeit, romantischem Empfinden und mystischer Steigerung aufbringt, unabhängig von den sogenannten 'pluralistischen' Tendenzen bindungsloser, in Nihilismus sich verlierender Rationalisten".
(my italics)

One or two further examples of the language in question will conclude this aspect of the study of Die Mauer Schwankt. In Orloga's highly emotional narration of her father's life and its purpose, she observes: "Es gibt ein paar Menschen in der Welt, die immer dort zu finden sind, wo das Schicksal ist und das Geschick eines Landes, eines Volkes, einer Nation sich vollzieht." (98) The enemy had been driven back from the Eastern provincial town: "Geschehen war endlich die im Sieg über die fremde Horde triumphierende Schlacht; und geschehen war die Heimkehr der dem Sieger Dankbaren zu den zerstörten Stätten." (234). The architect and his sister "wussten, die Ziele und Werte des Lebens sind in weitere und gefährlichere Höhen gerückt (278). The past and its tyrannical splendours are glorified, heroic deeds are recalled, the 'Geist', the struggle, the courageous exploits in history which still live on in the air we breathe, these are evoked in a passage describing the amphitheatre seen as von Süde approaches the Istrian coast:

... mit einer Pracht, die noch im Verfall war, noch Macht in der Ruine, noch stark genug, den Sinn zurückzulenken in die vergangene Zeit ... da ... die grossen Cäsaren das Zepter ihrer Herrschaft dort errichtet hatten ... Unterlegene hetzten sich und den Menschen und das Tier. In einem erhabenen Rahmen, der erhalten geblieben und zum Mal geworden ist für die Nachkommen der Jahrhunderte; und wenn nur der Rahmen ... sichtbar geblieben, war der Geist, der die Hetzen wollte, die Lust am fremden Sterben, die das Theater füllte, ... der Blutgeruch, war er für immer verweht? (54)

Visiting Greece the author is still overawed by what remains of myth and mystery, "die Ablagerungen der Geschichte"²⁵ despite (indeed because of the contrast) the superimpositions of a commercialised and tourist-addicted ethos. "Ein Hauch von Ewigkeit und um so klarer das Bewusstsein der Vergänglichkeit"²⁶ Our seedy, vulgar and comfortable civilisation lacks even the majesty of the tragic ruins.

Wer sehen will, wie Marmor lebt, wie der Gott aus dem Stein leuchtet und der Mensch blühte, der sich den Göttern nahe fühlte, eile ins archäologische Nationalmuseum... Die Kolosse, die Götter, die Heroen, die Athleten, die Knaben, die Weisen, sie überragen die Jahrtausende und uns. Der Übermensch? Hier ist sein Bild. Die Schönheit? Hier steht sie nackt ... Dieses Glück war und ist verloren.²⁷

Fate, the victory over the foreign "hordes", the leader history provides at a given moment, the emotional appeal of exploits, heroism, the expectation of "new values", collective ideals without specific political aims, these became the basis of Volkish thought and ideology. As George Mosse comments:

... Volkish ideas showed a distinct tendency towards the irrational and emotional ... intellectual systems and rational ideologies of the eighteenth century had been inundated by what many men took to be inevitable social and historic forces. ... the intellectual discipline of the Enlightenment (was) succeeded by the ideal of revolution, and the concept of an intelligible God gave way to a pantheistic view of the universe.²⁸

Manfred Koch provides a number of quite different sources which corroborate this process of linguistic assimilation, the absorption into the social and individual psyche of the "Gedankengut der Lebensphilosophie"²⁹ There is no doubt that it is this absorption which contributes to von Süde's uncertainty and failure to provide leadership or guidance for the new generation represented by Gert and Werner, and the son of Kaline. He can only confess, "Wir müssen abtreten". (264). A final thematic, as opposed to linguistic, illustration of von Süde's conflict with new social realities

which do not harmonise with his emotional needs and responses, is the occasional nostalgia for the rustic life, the "einfaches Leben"; he enjoys his excursions into the countryside made during the course of his professional duties, often uses a bicycle instead of the horse and carriage, and is especially moved when he is taken into a house by a fifteen year old girl and shown the simplicities of rustic domesticity. The "Brautschrank" item impresses him - made the day she was born, for the time when she would marry, exquisitely made to last for centuries. No strong ideological association need be made with this love of the rural life and setting; it is a common human experience; but Mosse's comments make their point:

The utopias were effectively removed from the real world, rural islands in a sea of industrialisation. Basic to the utopian movement was the urge to return to the land ... to root the Volk in the soil once more ... to reconstruct a natural rhythm ...³⁰

W. M. Simon writes of the impact of industrialism in the late nineteenth century: "... a large number of voices were raised regretting the process of industrialisation itself and yearning for an (idealised) agricultural past."³¹ The NPD or National Democrats have proclaimed: "Einst war bäuerliche Lebensart Urgrund und Nährboden für die deutsche Kultur schlechthin. Im bäuerlichen Brauchtum offenbarte sich die deutsche Seele."³²

Von Süde's thoughts and reactions betray the types of cultural influence and assimilation exemplified above. The literature of the period testifies also to the same cultural and linguistic phenomena. In an otherwise misleading and inadequate presentation, R. D. Gray develops at length his somewhat baldly presented theory that the Germanic obsession with certain romanticist antinomies (Life-Death, destruction-re-birth etc.), which he sees as fundamental to imaginative literature of the period, engendered a mental preparedness for the acceptance of fascist barbarism by a whole people.³³ It is interesting that Koeppen would not allow this novel to be reprinted after 1945, - unlike Eine Unglückliche Liebe. An

author is not to be "identified" with any given situation or proclamation. There are obvious instances where his sympathies are certain: the Russian pilot considers the dropping of bombs a senseless exercise, and would prefer to be wining with his officer-comrades. His plane catches fire, his comrades toast "der Tod!" Koeppen makes the episode more senseless still. Von Süde stands between two or more worlds; his own uncertainties and ambiguities are those of his age. He is an architect and at the same time a certain kind of revolutionary, directing impassioned energies to either rôle. As Erich Heller observed; - significantly, in respect of the "Non-Political Man":

Germany, the country of the unquestioning discipline and the undisciplined ecstasies, of soldiers and mystics, of the desire to possess the world and the urge to withdraw from it into lyrical privacy, of engineering and romantic music, of aggressive energy and metaphysical excess.³⁴

The historian, A.J.P. Taylor begins his study of German history: "The history of the Germans is a history of extremes."³⁵ The extremist cannot always cope with the middle ground, where compromise effects the most fruitful action. There is also much in von Süde's character and experiences which reflects Koeppen's own existential conflicts - the romantic character of the freedom-fighter, the artist's revolt against bourgeois life-styles and notions, and repugnance at the hollow materialism of the money-monger. When it comes to practical and effective action during the rebellion in the Balkan state, there is perhaps something of Koeppen's own withdrawal, not merely before violence, but even before an active participation in human affairs, which is manifest in Johannes' self-doubting: "Ich bin nicht vorbereitet, nicht geübt Ich werde durchfallen. Wenn dies ein Examen ist, werde ich es nicht bestehen." (61). As we have seen the frenzied devotion to work as an architect which follows is von Süde's escape from this awareness. He can neither participate fully in the revolt, nor give himself to the mass-movement heralded by the factory-uprising,

the specificity of whose material claims and demands robs it and its cause of spiritual heroism; nor can he realistically accept the Christian and communistic gradualism of Kaline's lover, which relies too heavily upon the goodness of human nature. This abrogation of faith in human nature as such represents for some culture-critics the central pivot of the attack upon the superficialities of Enlightenment philosophy; for Gehlen, when this faith has been undermined, only the confidence of science in its own hypotheses and findings remains:

Die meisten anderen Prämissen der Aufklärung sind inzwischen abgelebt und vergessen, so vor allem die Axiome von der Güte des Menschen, von der inneren Zweckmässigkeit des Naturverlaufes, von der Gleichheit des moralischen Antriebs in allen Menschen ...36

It may be significant that Kaline's friend is now resident in the lunatic asylum - always one of the items included in any 'inventory' Koeppen makes of a provincial urban settlement. But Johannes does little more than speculate on the emerging forces and the changes they will bring; "Die alten Lehren weisen die Richtung nicht mehr." Not merely his transvaluation of the sacred ethical precepts such as duty recommends him to us, but also his awareness that youth must have its chance and its say. "Wir müssen abtreten, oder wir müssen uns ändern." (264). They are part of the onward march of history, the "Notwendigkeit der wirkenden menschlichen Geschichte". Again we suspect it is the latent heroism, the power and audacity of the revolutionary impulse, which attracts him in this direction - it is essentially his youth which he associates with Orloga ("Es war dies das Ende seiner Jugend ... Ein Glanz würde ihm bleiben. (104) He is correspondingly sympathetic to Russian prisoners of war who "den Revolutionsgerüchten aus ihrem Heimatland lauschten", and even escape captivity. In his vague hopes for a better mankind, he aligns himself passionately with those who pillory the commercialist greed of the opportunists who "die Konjunktur der Trümmer witterten." In a separate episode his nephew Gert prevents a pig from being sacrificed to the

carnivorous appetites of the mother of his schoolfriend; whilst the latter is incensed, we support the feelings of the young. Koeppen's profound disillusionment with any older generation - and it becomes part of his confused attempt to grapple with the aetiology of the collapse of the 1914 order (and the later failure of the Weimar experiment) - attracts him (and in his later work resignation becomes the dominant mood even here) to the one source of hope remaining; he sees the children at school, during the war, insensitively rebelling against the substitute teacher, - "Kinder sind egoistisch; oder sie scheinen es zu sein, weil sie vielleicht vernünftiger und ehrlicher sind als die Erwachsenen." (275) Like the young author himself, they were "jeder Auflockerung des im Gleichmass laufenden Provinzlebens dankbar". (156). When Orloga dies Johannes pronounces a curse upon a world which for her at least had become "eine spukhafte Welt - phantastisches Gefängnis." During the earlier part of his schizophrenic life he identified with a female revolutionary whose father believed he had sinned, because he was dying a relatively comfortable death (from cholera!) in a hospital - "er glaubte, sich versündigt zu haben, weil er so zivil und bürgerlich in einem Spitalbett sterben musste." (97) But this revolutionary ardour or sympathy was tempered, not merely by its psychological obverse, the relentless dedication to the service of the State, but by a certain fear of forces unknown, "die Mächte des Chaotischen"; as we have seen, "die Aufgabe war Gert ... die Aufgabe war immer das heranwachsende Geschlecht", (336) but the Baumeister's participation in this task was negative:

Der Baumeister fühlte es. Er fühlte auch sein Versagen. Er wusste, dass er das jenseitige Ufer der jungen Zeit zwar ahnte - dass er selber aber am diesseitigen Ufer gebunden war und stand. Es gab für ihn nur die Pflicht; die kleine für den Tag wirkende Pflicht. (336)

Thus, on the one hand, we have the presentation of oppression and persecution in a Balkan state, the ostensible transference of the scene of action from

the Nazi state in the thirties', where the message is fairly transparent:

Nach aussen kein offenes Gespräch, kein offenes Antlitz. Man zwingt sich zum Gleichmut in der Miene und tut, als ginge man seinen Geschäften nach. Und doch lebt ... immerwährend der Blutgeschmack auf der Zunge eines jeden, der an die Getöteten ... und die Erniedrigten denkt. Jeder aber misstraut auch jedem. Überall droht Verrat ... und nur noch die, die durch schon vergossenes Blut miteinander verbunden und verschworen sind, gestehen sich die Wahrheit ihrer Gedanken. (103)

As the critic said, "nicht die geringsten Konzessionen zugunsten der neuen Machthaber in Deutschland"³⁷ are visible in the early works. But for a critic such as Stephan Reinhardt, this is not enough:

Deutlich wird an diesem Roman, und das bestätigen seine folgenden, dass sich Koeppen moralisch für die Unterdrückten engagiert, dass er gefühlsmässig auf das "Volk" setzt, dass er aber in unauflösbare Widersprüche gerät, wenn er sich der Frage revolutionärer Gewalt zu stellen hat - und er steht darin Camus näher als Sartre.³⁸

We are tempted to think of the Camus of L'Homme Révolté where the resort to arms, violence and revolution is measured against the cost to humanity in the final analysis and the value of what is ultimately achieved. It seems germane to Koeppen's vision that he will produce in his writings anti-heroes, who are, as the author said of Keetenheuve, "Gescheiterte". It remains a novel of an alienated artist, "voll von Ablehnung der herrschenden Weltanschauung."³⁹

Stylistically, Die Mauer Schwankt is still rooted in traditional norms of syntax and narrative presentation. The third person dominates, the distance between narrator and narrated is maintained. It was the last time in any major work that Koeppen followed this stylistic canon which he already felt was inadequate to mirror changing social and psychological realities, as we saw in the discussion of Eine Unglückliche Liebe. But occasionally we are given glimpses of what was to come. At the end of the above reference to the Istrian amphitheatre and its evocation of past historical splendour, we read: "war der Geist war er für immer verweht?"

Der Baumeister wusste es nicht. Er wusste es nicht, als" The scene changes abruptly, by means of the repetition, to a description of naval exercises being conducted offshore. This kind of repetition was to be used constantly and self-consciously in later works. The naval exercises themselves are described in broken syntax, a series of impressions held together by a chain of nouns, epithets and participles lending an expressionistic effect:

Es war die Flotte, die übte. Brummend und wie rasend gewordene Delphine, Schaum vor dem Bug, eine Wolke von Petroleumrauch, bitterschmeckend und fett, aus dem geduckten Breitschlund ihrer Schornsteine stossend, jagten, kleine meergraue Zerstörer hintereinander her, an des Baumeisters Schiff vorbei und zwischen den Kreuzern durch, die, drückende Burgen auf den Wellen die Lichtgarben ihrer Scheinwerfer aussandten, um die Meute der Kleinen zu beleuchten, die wie Versteck spielende Kinder zu entkommen suchten. (54f.)

This is a relatively unlengthy rehearsal for the stylistic experimentation which was to follow after the war when Koeppen broke his silence. A final example illustrates the filmic technique being used to alternate events in the narrative. When Frizzien, the director of the school in Masuren, embarks in Holland for London, we switch at once to the soldiers on manoeuvres in East Prussia. When the headmaster has breakfast in London we move at once to the soldiers having breakfast in Pomerania. When the London police visit the traveller in his boarding-house, we read: "Sie sind der Spionage überführt". But the latter declaration does not concern the traveller at all - it is directed at a certain Tschellowski in Pomerania by the garrison commander. This in turn is followed by "Sie sind also hergekommen, um London anzusehen?" Whereupon Frizzien is interned till the end of the war in 1918. This technical ploy of alternation is used to advantage later. This was the direction which Koeppen, inspired by his mentor Joyce, in particular, was to take decisively - one of the reasons why he was dissatisfied with Die Mauer Schwankt. As he observed to Horst Bienek, - commenting on the stylistic of the works he knew had

to be written, and probably would have been - "... vielleicht hätte ich mich in meinem ersten Roman, sicher in einem zweiten schon ganz den Versuchungen des neuen Stils, der Annäherung an neue Ausdruckshorizonte hingegeben. Das unterblieb in der schlimmen Zeit."⁴⁰ Even on the novel discussed in this section he remarks, to a later interviewer, "Nach der Unglücklichen Liebe hätte ich einen Roman schreiben mögen, der ungefähr im Stil meiner späteren Tauben im Gras gewesen wäre."⁴¹ The new stylistic modes are to embody a new "Weltverhältnis", to use Rasch's word, - 'embody' being used here in the early Wittgenstein sense of language being and limiting the world it also describes, being an integral part of our conception of reality and not merely expressing this conception. A new intention of the writer, never realised, reveals other facets of the artist's relation to the world and of the way he conceives himself in relation to it; at the end of his discussion of Die Mauer Schwankt he ruminates, "Ich möchte diesen Roman neu schreiben und gleichzeitig die Situation des Schriftstellers beschreiben, der in den Haag sitzt, fast als Flüchtling, und diesen Roman einer deutschen Kleinstadt schreibt."⁴² (my underlining). The artist's own life and being have become an inextricable element in any perspective of the reality to be mediated; the autobiographical character of the work becomes more pronounced; the alienation is no less intense, in fact it is more so, but is differently structured.

THE POST-WAR NOVELS: SYNOPSISIntroduction

Koeppen's 'Weltbild' confirmed and strengthened by events - post-war scene, concept of 'Nullpunkt', destruction of traditional norms and values, diverse types of literature mostly unable to confront moral and physical void and chaos - Koeppen and 'international literary tradition', testimonies of Hofmannsthal, Borchert, Koeppen's pessimistic vision excludes belief in regeneration, processes of alienation and fragmentation intensified, loss of symbolic 'centre' - the post-war scene as illustrated in trilogy - social and political events and tendencies confirm author's vision, triumph of 'Macht und altes Unrecht', threat of war, of repetition of old tragedies etc.

TAUBEN IM GRAS

Communal alienation resulting from war and aftermath - pandemonic activity, indifferent 'Schicksal', frenzied search for fleeting experiences, 'reality' uncontrollable, directs human destiny, individual faces hostile world - introductory description operates on several levels (historical, political, individual), mythical elements - 'Trägheit' and 'Hetze' of Munich inhabitants - diverse grounds of disillusionment and alienation, patients (psychiatric) fail to relate - rootlessness of pawns.

Emilia's history, material losses, self-centred contempt for own rulers who brought disaster, passive resignation, her 'society' and the intellectual, her shallow Bohemianism (true artist's 'Boheme' now degraded to tourist attraction), nihilist linking of sexual fantasies with unselective intellectual opiates, bankruptcy of European culture, use and significance of 'stream of consciousness' stylistic, disordered, subjective world of anti-hero; Frau Behrend's disorientation, narrow provincialism, reactionary snobbism, divorce from realities, nostalgia for Nazi past, hates American 'invasion' of German life and society,

absurdity in collision of old and new worlds - negative and positive aspects of American contribution to the new Germany (Richard, Kay), Richard's pacifist (German) father, German society (contrast to America) 'gescheitert', Richard and Kleinbürgerin grocer in comedy of misunderstandings; Washington, victim of Aryan racism, Carla's involvement, her 'white' American Dream, Negro's experiences of being 'unerwünscht', - fragile basis of human relationships - Washington's hopes triumph over Carla's illusions, Paris symbol of 'niemand unerwünscht' - confusion during stoning of Negro Club reflects cosmic disorder, irrationality of racist myth, Washington's dream survives; Josef, aged victim of exploitation and misfortunes of history, a life without reward or meaning, a 'Gescheiterter', lost son in war, now porter for Negro in Occupying army, uncomprehending acceptance of vicissitudes of Fate, a flotsam washed up by history - stylistic representation of this aimless process of history and conflicting greeds - Josef's death paralleled by 'death' of European culture; Henriette, of Jewish parents (Nazi victims), alienated from German society, sees salvation in America with American husband, (she now in Paris, he in Germany) - absurd meaninglessness of parents' (as Germans) lives, ended in concentration-camp, illustrated by repetitive anaphora, 'es ging/es ging nicht'.

Freedom as liberation from the past, convention or the 'system' - Philipp's attraction to Kay - his intellectual aversion to fixed principles, ideology which erects barriers, or political polarisations - liberating effect of pluralism, E. M. Forster's individualism, its epistemological significance, idealism of open society without 'Zwang' - literary and stylistic consequences of this rejection of 'closed' values and attachments, art subjectivised, reality interiorised, conveyed by new forms of expression and structure, indeterminate, anti-ideological; Behrend and Vlasta renounce past, achieve freedom 'gegen die Welt' - Emilia liberated by gift to Kay, repudiates commercialist principles and greed, 'gegen Vernunft und Sitte'.

Alexander, superstar, sham celluloid image, bored, played-out actor, alienated from self and truth by inflated public persona, loss of personal identity - Messalina, Lesbian wife, fleeting satisfactions of show-biz world, sexual snobbism - Susanne leaves sham entourage, mates with Negro, Odysseus, re-enacts ancient myths, embodies Circe, the Sirens etc. all in one, union of Negro and white, 'gegen die Welt'.

Relation of writer to mechanised, rationalised society, mass-culture etc. - Edwin cherishes continuity of spiritual heritage - the author's own difficulties in expressing fleeting nature of reality - irony of Kay's respect for traditional 'Dichter' (projected on to Philipp) - intellectual's incapacity to sell adhesive patents - artist mocks self-importance of professional life - writer and salesman both superfluous - writer's ineffective 'Gefühlskommunismus' - sense of 'Urväterschuld' - alienation produces nostalgia for childhood security - artist and 'Lautsprecherkultur', 'Technik und Geist' (experiences of Philipp, Edwin), language of artist and of mass-society - writer's self-alienation, involvement of 'fragmented' self with fragmented reality, of 'Ich' with 'Dingwelt', problematic of identity of self - Koeppen and Edwin, failure and irrelevance of European cultural heritage and élitism - Philipp's rejection of past and its associations - theme of 'pigeons on the grass' (Koeppen versus Edwin).

.....

Language and reality, style and epistemology, changing nature of self and consciousness - first person narration - fragmentary nature of manifold, explosive, transient realities, alienating yet pregnant with possibilities - literature and concepts of relativity - observer's relation to 'objective' reality - cosmic events less governable - structure of novel unpredictable - analogy of atomic movements and their observer - the 'Ich' part of incessant flux - registered by unpunctuated prose.

In T.G. diversity in structural simultaneity - imposed 'order' reflects disorder of simultaneity and mutual alienation - equal weight and

importance of all characters and events - stylistic devices, 'absurd'
juxtapositions, convey simultaneity and unrelatedness, fragmentation of
experience, (cyclical) repetitiveness of folly and tragedy in history.

THE POST-WAR NOVELS : TAUBEN IM GRAS, (1951), DAS TREIBHAUS, (1953),
DER TOD IN ROM, (1954)

Introduction - 'Alles steckt im Alten'.

"Denn sein Schreiben war immer autobiographisch"¹, writes Christian Linder, and "wohl noch nie in der deutschen Literatur hat sich ein Schriftsteller so nahe dem Ort des politischen Geschehens genähert."² It is this very involvement which engenders increasingly the difficulties of writing at all, when the distance and the distinction between the narrator and the narrated diminish and become blurred, as is characteristic of the 'international literary tradition'³ Koeppen cherishes and subscribes to. It is also the origin of the anguish and the alienation acutely experienced by the writer who feels himself and his fellow-citizens to be the victims and pawns of anonymous and uncontrollable powers. The exhaustion of living through the Nazi tyranny was over, but the disaster was not curable overnight, and nobody knew how it was to be cured. A publisher stumbled over the ruins during the Berlin holocaust, and said "Sie werden das schreiben, und ich dachte, ich werde es schreiben, und wusste, dass ich starb, in dieser Zeit, in diesen Jahren, auch wenn ich nicht gehenkt würde oder erschlagen oder verbrannt ..."⁴ Small wonder that for Koeppen there is no such activity as writing "für die Schublade" ("eine Laienidee, das kommt fast nie vor"⁵); the situation, and the total estrangement from it ("ich war fest entschlossen, für Hitler keine Uniform anzuziehen, und es ist vielleicht die grösste Leistung, die ich in meinem Leben vollbracht habe, dies durchzuhalten"⁶) precluded this possibility. His involvement with the human condition imposed a silence. For the writer is participant and estranged observer; "dieses merkwürdige Bewusstsein, ein Einzelner in der Menge zu sein, das Leben der Menge zu teilen und doch ein Wesen für sich zu sein ..."⁷ Reinhard Döhl relates this awareness not merely to the relevance of Koeppen's work to contemporary society and history, which we have already underlined, but also to the writer's personal response to this situation, as well as the way

this response is presented: "dass er in seinen zeitkritischen Romanen ... nicht einfach nur eine das Grauen veranschaulichende, die Hintergründe dieses Grauens aufdeckende Erzählung schreiben konnte, dass er sich vielmehr, Betroffener und Getroffener zugleich, als Erzähler miteinbeziehen musste in den Versuch seiner zeit- und selbstkritischen Prosa".⁸ This is the basis of Koeppen's "Unbehagen" which found expression in the post-war trilogy of novels ("Ich gab meinem Unbehagen Laut"⁹); for the author it was a perpetuation and deepening of a "Weltempfindung"¹⁰ which dated back to before the war, a view of the world, extending into the domains of epistemology, which produced its own stylistic media. The paradox is that the delineation of an absurdly chaotic and disintegrated world came rather late for the author himself, and yet too early for the society in question. What von Wiese sees as "Dieser ekstatisch mahnende, dem Expressionismus verpflichtete Stil bei gleichzeitig sehr genauer, illusionsloser Beobachtung der Wirklichkeit"¹¹ did not meet with the approval of those who sought escape or wish-fulfilment in asocial inwardness, ideological rhetoric or the war memoirs of generals. The public reaction to Koeppen's savage disillusionment underlined his own alienation - "Es war damals für die deutsche literarische Kritik schockierend",¹² but the artist is unmoved by the ripostes of the complacent, the greedy or the embittered fascist.

There were certainly angry criticisms directed at the shallow belletristic alternatives by concerned thinkers who had hoped for better things. But the situation was fraught with ambiguity from the start; the very term "Nullpunkt" could be used to imply a fresh and regenerative start, or be misused to hide past crimes and tragedies, and hence suppress the analysis of them. There is a widespread feeling that the moral bankruptcy of the 'ältere Generation' is irredeemable, and yet the younger remained speechless and unmoving from sheer incomprehension. The gulf is unbridgeable but the possibilities of creative thinking seem enormous, now that total destruction has removed outworn beliefs and superannuated prejudices. The

hope, however slender was cherished even by Koeppen, whatever misgivings also attended. The scale of the psychic collapse and its regenerative possibilities was underlined by Hans Werner Richter:

Der moralische, geistige und sittliche Trümmerhaufen, den eine wahrhaft 'verlorene' Generation zurückgelassen hat, wächst ins Unermessliche und erscheint grösser als jener real sichtbare. Vor dem rauchgeschwärzten Bild dieser abendländischen Ruinenlandschaft, in der der Mensch taumelnd und gelöst aus allen überkommenen Bindungen irrt, verblassen alle Wertmassstäbe der Vergangenheit.¹³ (my emphasis)

For Richter there is no profit to be derived from reviving the pre-1933 traditions. The only survivor from the turmoil and the comprehensive threats to existence and its material trappings is "der Mensch, der lebende und sichtbare Mensch", all other matters having revealed their "absolute Relativität".¹⁴ The economic 'Machine' had failed, as any atomising, dehumanising process was expected to do. Consonant with Koeppen's own thoughts, the passage in Der Ruf continues:

Die Mechanik der ökonomischen Gesetzmässigkeit, die das menschliche Sein bedingen und bestimmen soll ... wird sekundär. Mag diese Mechanik ... die ökonomische Entwicklung bis in das Chaos unserer Zeit vorgetrieben haben, in ihrer letzten Auswirkung atomisierte sie nicht nur den Menschen, sondern auch ihre eigene Gesetzmässigkeit. Mit der Zerstörung der Dinge und in der Nivellierung des Menschen hob sie die Klassengegensätze auf, zermalnte sie ihre eigene ökonomische Basis und liess den Menschen mit dem Menschen allein. So tritt der Mensch, brüchig geworden in seinen Bezügen zur Umwelt, fragwürdig und irrend geworden in seiner Existenz vor Gott, vor dem Universum, vor sich selbst, wiederum in den Mittelpunkt des Lebens ...¹⁵

This is language which would well describe the existential situation of Koeppen's own character-creations, except that most of them are already "Gescheiterte", as he often observes, and show little sign of emerging from their 'brüchig', 'fragwürdig' and 'irrend' condition. Even in Tauben im Gras where a few figures appear to have won through (at least in respect to their own insights), the analysis of the moral and spiritual debilitation which has taken place is bitter and prophetic.

H.W. Richter, long after Der Ruf had been suppressed, was to comment:

"Das Wirtschaftswunder, Ausdruck eines ungeheuren Nachholbedarfs, hat die Deutschen der Nachkriegszeit erneut um den Bezug zur Wirklichkeit gebracht, um den man in den ersten Nachkriegsjahren rang."¹⁶

Richter's language in the above passages testifies to the range and dimension of the possibilities of a spiritual renewal, and thus once again to the scale of the tragic disenchantment which ensued for the type of "Kulturpessimist" we have discussed in earlier pages. But one did not have to be a conservative critic to participate in the satirical attacks directed early at popular mood and reaction. At a time when Andersch and Richter, editors of Der Ruf (described by Schwab-Felisch as "ein Kapitel aus dem grossen Lesebuch der unbewältigten Zukunft"¹⁷) were advancing programmatic concepts of the "Mensch mit dem Menschen allein" such as internationalism, pacifism and a re-united Germany, and Andersch was looking to the new young Europe, ("In dem zerstörten Ameisenberg Europa ... allen pessimistischen Voraussagen zum Trotz bilden sich neue Kräfte- und Willenszentren"¹⁸), Horst Lange was also writing in the same journal: "Bücher nach dem Krieg - ... wir waren nicht darauf gefasst, so vielen Bekenntnissen schöner Seelen zu begegnen ... es scheint, als seien die Städte umsonst zerstört, die Hekatomben umsonst geopfert worden, als sei das Gefüge der europäischen Ordnung umsonst zerborsten."¹⁹

H. Vormweg attacks the poet Emil Dichter for appealing to 'Innerlichkeit' as a way of coping with the guilt and the crimes of the German nation, and laments that Rilke and Benn were so popular in the immediate post-war years, and that Thomas Mann found nothing attractive in the 'Gruppe 47'.²⁰

Another critic sees dangers and even irrelevance in the literary "kontinuitätsbewahrende Rekonstruktion des alten Ordnungsgefüges" on the one hand, and a wallowing in a Heideggerian Angst or a Spenglerian call for the Apocalypse, on the other. "Deshalb wird die Gegenwartsliteratur als im tieferen Sinn wirklichkeitsfremd und zeitfern empfunden", a literature

which "verstaubte Plüschmöbel aus der Zeit Wilhelms II in engen Notquartieren zertrümmerter Städte aufstellt"²¹ Frank Trommler's retrospective analysis²² sees the beginning of the fifties' as "die Hochblüte der restaurativen Politik und Ästhetik";²³ he sees the concept of the "Nullpunkt" used by some practitioners of Germanistik to prevent a confrontation with historical realities, and hide their "Geschichts- und Gegenwartsmüdigkeit",²⁴ "man feierte das Ästhetisch-Formale als Selbstwert",²⁵ "Deutsche Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts" was little concerned with the history of that century, in the DDR also there was "das Fiasko der ideologischen Abhängigkeiten",²⁶ and he welcomes the "totale Ideologiefreundschaft" which Hans Mayer associates with the names of Böll, Huchel, Nossack and Koeppen,²⁷ however different they may be in other respects. Another analogous reviewer recalls the words of the self-exiled poet, Walter Bauer, emigrating to Canada in 1952, "Betrieb und Nachfrage halten sie am Leben. Ich sehnte mich nach frischer Luft. Ich wollte nicht vor Scham, Ekel, Zorn und Resignation ersticken",²⁸ and himself - apparently ignoring the appearance of such works as Koeppen's trilogy, for example - sees "das Antlitz der deutschen Literatur schon wieder von der faschistischen und militaristischen Ideologie verzerrt",²⁹ alluding in particular to the popularity of the self-vindictory memoirs of Nazi officials and generals. Wolfgang Weyrauch joins the chorus who attack the illusionists, the "Abständler, die schreiben, was nicht ist",³⁰ the Oberbürgermeister who forbids the exhibition of abstract art,³¹ the publishers who foster romantic Kitsch and anaesthetising Pop lyrics. "Die Restauration marschiert mit ruhig festem Schritt. Die Demokraten helfen, leider, mit"³² Weyrauch esteemed the foreign models who influenced Koeppen from the earliest days, so long as there was no slavish imitation: "Wir achten die fremden Wegweiser", but a prose must be discovered "welche die unsre ist".³³ For Koeppen these models are the truest expression of the inescapable political, historical and existential realities of this

century; because of the literary fare offered to the people on the lines outlined above, his early post-war work could only be bitter, alienating, even shattering, and raised controversy beyond any, not least his own expectation. "Ich gehöre zu einem Stand, der vor allen anderen berufen ist und sich nicht scheuen darf, wenn es sein muss, ein Ärgernis zu geben."³⁴ Censorship and political tyranny had ensured that the younger post-war generation were unfamiliar with Kafka, Hofmannsthal, Joyce, Camus, Hemingway, Sartre etc.³⁵ Koeppen's Joycean stylistic, combined with his "political" involvement (i.e. his human concerns which lie at the centre of his work, not his political partisanship - "ich halte auch den Schriftsteller für ein politisches Wesen, egal ob er es sein will oder nicht ... Zu Zola gehört sein 'J'accuse'"³⁶) and his disturbing, at times nihilistic vision, became, in the form of the trilogy, a political as well as a literary event which confirmed Koeppen's position - or non-position - in society. The impact of other writers after the war, such as Marie Luise Kaschnitz, E. Kästner, H.H. Jahn, and even Jünger and Benn³⁷ (ignoring for the moment their political involvements, as Koeppen himself does when he discusses these two writers,³⁸ separating these involvements from other intellectual considerations) was not as abrupt and deeply felt as this combination of Koeppen's, concerned with, as Kasack expresses it, "die Problematik des Schreibens und damit die Problematik des Seins".³⁹

No particular event or cumulation of events altered radically the Weltbild we associate with Koeppen, though some developments intensified somewhat his premonition of further tragedy. The constituent elements of the conservative critique lost none of their relevance by the view of the "zerstörter Ameisenberg", as Andersch described Europe. Of course there are notes of hope at the outset; the end of the Berlin nightmare inevitably brought some relief; "Ich hasste. Das nahm mir den Tag. Die Humanität kam wieder, die literarische Welt. Als die Zeit da war, ent-

täuschte sie mich. Die Stunde bedrückte auf andere Weise. Welche Wandlung hatte ich erwartet? Aus dieser Situation, Hoffnung und Abscheu, ist der Roman entstanden."⁴⁰ Hofmannsthal's earlier analysis receives more abject confirmation, and post-war developments soon diminish the hope that "der Mensch mit dem Menschen allein" will triumph. The Austrian writer lamented "den zersplitterten Zustand dieser Welt ... alle Elemente des Daseins blossgelegt: den Mechanismus des Geistes, körperliche Zustände, die zweideutigen Verhältnisse der Existenz, alles wüst daliegend wie den Materialhaufen zu einem Hausbau ... Desintegration dessen, was zusammen den hohen Menschen bildet."⁴¹ It was as though nobody knew how to build the 'Materialhaufen' into a habitable form; later cataclysms produced Wolfgang Borchert's analysis in 1946: "Wir sind die Generation ohne Bindung und ohne Tiefe. Unsere Tiefe ist Abgrund. Wir sind die Generation ohne Glück, ohne Heimat und ohne Abschied. Unsere Sonne ist schmal, unsere Liebe grausam und unsere Jugend ist ohne Jugend. Wir sind die Generation ohne Grenze, ohne Hemmung und Behütung." The outlook seemed bleak, the deprivations many, experience of humane living minimal; but the frontiers in Borchert's analysis are at least open and the territory for manoeuvre limitless. But Koeppen's description of events proves more conclusive: "Macht und Besitz und altes Unrecht wurden gefestigt und bestätigt."⁴² The incorrigibility of the human condition imposes itself; there is no attendant belief that a solution can be found for Borchert's Man "waiting outside the door", or that his own trilogy could remotely affect political development or effect change. The novels were written with no "die Geschichte revidierende Absicht Dazu bin ich viel zu pessimistisch ... Schön, es sollte betroffen machen."⁴³ The outsider role is preserved, with its uncertainty and ambiguity. "Mein Schreiben ... ist bei mir nie ein politisches Programm gewesen ... (das Wirken eines Einzelnen) der gefühlsmässig den Sozialisten helfen möchte."⁴⁴ (my emphasis)

The author had no illusion in writing Das Treibhaus: "dass ich die Verhältnisse in der jungen Bundesrepublik hatte ändern können oder es auch nur wollen. Es war der Roman eines Politikers, der scheitert, oder eher noch eines Menschen, der scheitert."⁴⁵ The world being constituted as it is, and its 'constitution' being itself increasingly ungraspable and uncontrollable, the failure of man as man and not merely as politician becomes significant. Koeppen's Expressionistic hopes of 1945 could not compete with the intensification of the processes of alienation and fragmentation long since in operation: "Wenn ich an 1945 denke, meine ich, dass von dort und damals eine Bewegung der Geschlagenen hätte ausgehen können, ein Glaube der Gewaltabsager, der Reumütigen, der Fahnenlosen, der Übernationalen, endlich der brüderlichen Menschen guten Willens schlechthin."⁴⁶ This could never - as we saw in the interview with Krüger above - have been much more than a temporary 'Nullpunkt' impulse, an automatic Nietzschean type of response to wholesale destruction. Indeed, the very scale and the indiscriminate character of the destruction are seen as the inevitable end of the pathologically dissociated psyche of Western Man. Concrete instances of human perversion, criminality and absurdity receive the author's attention, as does the German nation's response to an almost unprecedented individual and social situation (Gerhart Binder expresses it summarily: "... seit dem Dreissigjährigen Krieg waren Zerstörungen dieses Ausmasses in Deutschland nicht mehr geschehen und hatte es einen ähnlichen Mangel am Notwendigsten nicht mehr gegeben"⁴⁷); he would no doubt agree, as the Mitscherlich's argue, "dass sich der Mord an Millionen schutzlos Verfolgter aus sehr vielen schuldhaften Entscheidungen zusammensetzt",⁴⁸ the guilt being ascribable as much to collectivities as to given defendants; he would equally lament, like the same authors elsewhere, that in the taboo imposed upon free discussion of Germany's present-day frontiers hides the wishful dream, "es könnte sich doch noch durch unabsehbare Glücksfälle fügen,

dass zurückzuholen ist, was sträflich Hybris aufs Spiel gesetzt und vertan ist."⁴⁹ But behind this historicity is a more comprehensive obsession of Koeppen's with the powers which control human fate and action, with the inextricability of good with evil, with the loss of a centre from which to take one's bearings, with the 'sinnlos' (a favourite word of his artist figures) character of the human endeavour to find a meaning in that which is 'sinnlos'. His satirical vignettes do not detract one iota from the guilt of (say) his military (never less than militaristic) characters; it is equally true that he ponders as much on the more abstract and metapolitical 'Urväterschuld', il mal seme d'Adam, which continues to create havoc and confusion. He thus becomes a novelist of the type Helmut Braem has in mind, who, as distinct from the 'Blut und Boden' or the 'Gartenlaube' 'Literat' discussed earlier, "zum Deuter der Geschichte wird. Als Deuter empfindet er sich als Fragender und Gefragter: als Gefragter unserer aus den Fugen geratenen Zeit und als Fragender nach dem Urgrund des Seins. Er spürt die dämonischen Kräfte auf, die das Lebensgefühl der Angst aussäen. Und er findet diese Kräfte teils in der fortschreitenden Mechanisierung, in der Zersplitterung des Ich, teils im Fehlen der geistigen 'Mitte', in der Umkehrung der Werte, im Schwund der Symbole und im Abbau der menschlichen Substanz."⁵⁰ This is a succinct and yet eloquent description of Koeppen's own concerns throughout the whole of his work, and explains why Kafka, Faulkner, and Joyce are such important antecedents.

Tauben im Gras wurde kurz nach der Währungsreform geschrieben, als das deutsche Wirtschaftswunder im Westen aufging, ... die ersten neuen Versicherungspaläste die Trümmer ... überragten, zur hohen Zeit der Besatzungsmächte, also Korea und Persien die Welt ängstigten und die Wirtschaftswundersonne vielleicht gleich wieder im Osten blutig untergehen würde ... viel Bedarf war nachzuholen, der Bauch war endlich zu füllen, der Kopf war von Hunger und Bombenknall noch etwas wirr, und alle Sinne suchten Lust, bevor vielleicht der Dritte Weltkrieg kam.⁵¹

It is small wonder that Philipp, representing the author in this instance, "kam mit der Zeit nicht zurecht" (T.G. 22), for this sums up the author's own reaction to the world situation as described in the above Preface. He had already tangled with the American administration, with "ahnungslosen Vernehmungsoffizieren"⁵² who presented questionnaires he had never answered even during the Third Reich. His war-time "career" hardly fitted their formal enquiry or their "Besatzungsschema" (This leads him to a statement on the existence of two Koeppens, the one who is confirmed 'erkennungsdienstlich',⁵³ and the 'surrealistic' artist who lives the life of a literary character, and is beyond the reach of administrative categorisation). The writer's further distaste for those who were intended to re- if not transform German society and restore its spiritual vitality lay in his aversion to the re-education programme of the victors. "Ich war kein Freund der Entnazifizierung ... Sie bewahrte viel zu viel und verfolgte Leute, die überhaupt nichts begriffen hatten..."⁵⁴ One regrets he does not specify the content of the 'viel zu viel'. What interesting residuum of National Socialism was preserved by the victors? The background to what one critic has called the "Trilogie des Scheiterns"⁵⁵ can be covered briefly. It presents a picture of a nation gradually and arbitrarily divided, a pawn in a politico-economic struggle, too hungry and disillusioned to know or even care too much that it was involved in a polarised situation, becoming even potentially explosive when it was unbelievably called to re-arm again. The war game is played in remote parts of the globe - with repercussions for countries hardly risen from the ashes; 'Alles steckt im Alten' becomes Koeppen's refrain. It is another game, but the rules and even the ideologies do not change. Power-constellations are again established, the lesson learned from history is that, as Hegel observed, nothing is learned from history. The young are cheated again; the old cling to illusions, live in and even seek to revive the past; the fascists and the anti-semites re-occupy positions

of power or prestige. Such are some of the concrete motifs which make up the canvas of the trilogy, and supplement the more abstract metaphysical despair and resignation which underlie Koeppen's work. Today's foe is tomorrow's friend; concepts of nationality and identity become blurred; coherence and continuity are destroyed. Such experience is not even peculiar to Germany alone, but here it is given added significance as a result of the German tragedy. Germany becomes the milieu for Koeppen's particularisation of an "unheimliches Universum"⁵⁶ Where frontiers are destroyed with the other trappings of civilisation, as Andersch observed, and as solitary indications in Tauben im Gras testify, there is hope for something new to emerge, more fascinating and liberating than anything previously known. But the going will be hard and the outlook unclear; for "Unheil ist unser Gefährte." (T.G. 67)

"Die Auflösung aller überkommenen Ordnung"⁵⁷ marked the end of the millenarist dream in 1945. Statistics speak volumes: "In Köln lebten von rund 730.000 Einwohnern der Vorkriegszeit nur noch 40.000 in Kellern und Abstellräume, die Kegelbahnen und Bunker als Wohnräume zu bezeichnen."⁵⁹ The rootless "Displaced" person lived by the (black and grey) exchange market - "Damals wurde fast ein ganzes Volk straffällig"⁶⁰ A Gehlenesque nightmare of ignorance and non-communication prevailed as Potsdam and Paris decisions lacked all relevance for the man in the street, uncertain "wie er sich schützen konnte vor dem Wasser, das ihm in seine Kellerwohnung rann!"⁶¹ The initial programme agreed by all sectors offers a hopeful contrast to what came later: "Demilitarisierung, Entnazifizierung, Bodenreform, Dezentralisierung und Lntkartellisierung"⁶² Uprooting of communities, refugee existence, political manoeuvrings, cessions of territories (G. Hauptmann died in the Polish occupied Riesengebirge, saying "Bin ich noch in meinem Haus?"⁶³) completed the social disintegration, created the feeling of being the pawn of both visible and invisible powers. Bodies superintending the disarmament process were resolved upon "die

Verhinderung des Wiederauflebens militärischer Organisationen und militärischen Geistes".⁶⁴ But soon the revitalisation of the German economy through the Marshall Plan became part of the ideological 'Cold War' confrontation - "Wenn die Amerikaner nicht ein verelendetes Europa den Sowjets überlassen wollten, mussten sie handeln."⁶⁵ The Truman Doctrine (1947), the Currency Reform followed by the Berlin Blockade, were the beginning of polarised alignments whose absurdity, taken in a broader and more abstract context, gives rise to Koeppen's vision:

"vielleicht ist die Welt ein grausamer und dummer Zufall Gottes, keiner weiss warum wir hier sind, die Vögel werden wieder auffliegen ..." (T.G.176).

There was no 'Dolchstoss' legend this time: "Weil eben die Bundesrepublik Tochter des kalten Kriegs ist ... Die Berliner Krise erklärt heute noch vieles."⁶⁶ Koeppen's concern for those who get short shrift in life

recurs: "Es war die Zeit in der die Sparer den Krieg bezahlten."⁶⁷ The

Grundgesetz claimed to act "auch für diejenigen Deutschen, denen mitzuwirken versagt war," and was endorsed doctrinally - receiving the

artist's comment: "Eine Doktrin, die nach einem Herrn Hallstein heisst, leugnet ... dass nicht sein kann, was nicht sein darf."⁶⁸ We know that

the unfreedom of the individual within both the capitalist and communist systems is for Koeppen a matter of kind rather than degree; "Sozialismus

und Kapitalismus sind auf der ganzen Welt in einer Angleichung begriffen, die nun wirklich zur totalen Öde ... führt".⁶⁹ There is no political

partisanship; "Selbstverständlich soll man Hunger und Not besiegen. Aber eine allgemeine kleinbürgerliche Zufriedenheit ... wäre die Zufriedenheit

der Schafe."⁷⁰ His attack on Hallstein focusses upon the closing of

frontiers, the refusal to compromise or communicate. "Glauben wir nur an das Schlechte? Warum nehmen wir den Kommunisten nicht beim Wort?"⁷¹

is no endorsement to embrace Communism, but an attempt to preserve what residual humanity remains. When the author sees the Korean War being

used as a pretext for a surrender to Western manipulations ("Ihr Ziel

(i.e. of the Western military governments) war die Angleichung des westdeutschen Teilstaates in seiner politischen und ökonomischen Struktur an die der westlich-kapitalistischen Staaten."⁷²), if, as another reviewer sees it, "es den Vereinigten Staaten nicht primär um die Aufrechterhaltung von Freiheit und Unabhängigkeit ging ... die Unterstützung der Diktaturen in Guatemala, Südvietnam, Südkorea, dem vorrevolutionären Kuba ..."⁷³ these events merely confirm - though with more apocalyptic possibilities than ever before - man's age-old tribute to the War-Gods whose thirst for human blood is never assuaged, they confirm man's irredeemable drive for the unscrupulous exercise of power, "sie redeten von Aufbau und bereiteten den Abbruch vor" (T.G. 12.). If, as a given critic alleges, the opposing forces in the West and the East of Europe are "jetzt in einen Wettstreit verwickelt, der nicht mit Waffen, sondern mit ökonomischen Ressourcen, mit Idealen und Ideen ausgetragen werde"⁷⁴ Koeppen's reaction would believably be that expressed in relation to the memorial of the Electoral Prince (the 'Pious') who had fought in the Wars of Religion for 'den rechten Glauben', whilst his enemies had also fought for 'den rechten Glauben': "In der Frage des Glaubens gab es dann auch keinen Sieger. Vielleicht war der Glaube allgemein besiegt worden, indem man um ihn kämpfte." (T.G. 77). The Prince became so 'Pious' and therefore so powerful, that "seine Untertanen nichts zu lachen hatten." The "verdammtes Schlachtfeld" Koeppen envisions (T.G. 12 and 234) evokes the memory of the Religious Wars. For Koeppen the grievous aspects of "Eisenhower inspiziert in Bundesrepublik, Wehrbeitrag gefordert, Adenauer gegen Neutralisierung" (T.G. 12) are the incorrigible folly of ignoring the existing graveyards of Europe, the subjugation of individual freedom to the insane myopia of war-mongers ("Aber ich entsetze mich, an anderer Leute Einsichtslosigkeit zu sterben ... Manchmal möchte ich über die zarte Pflanze unserer Demokratie weinen."⁷⁵), the closing of doors to a pacific conception of uniting the scattered sections of a community - "Es war

zugleich der Weg eines stufenweisen Verzichts auf die Wiedervereinigung",⁷⁶ the repetition, expected and inevitable, of power dressed in its old historical costume, the garb of the clerisy,⁷⁷ the surrender to economic bondage and materialism (however justified at the outset) which engendered the surrender to the political manoeuvrings,⁷⁸ and finally, what all these concrete phenomena implied in the abstract, the eternal repetitiveness of human folly and villainy, the impossibility of spiritual regeneration or belief in it. This is what Peter Laemmle describes as "Stillstand"; "... denn neben der Wiederherstellung des Alten (gegen die Erfordernisse der Zeit) und neben der Herrschaft der ewig Gestrigen bedeutet Restauration vor allem das eine: Stillstand".⁷⁹ The central existential experience of Philipp, Keetenheuve and Siegfried is that all attempts at the awakening of the 'revolutionary' impulse to true human freedom fail "an dem zähen Schlick des Untergrundes, der den Strom des frischen Wassers hemmte und alles im Alten stecken liess, in einer überlieferten Lebensform, von der jeder wusste, dass sie eine Lüge war." (T.H. 247). The whole of the debate on re-armament in Das Treibhaus, like the throwing of stones by an incensed and (again) misled and confused populace at the Negro Club in Munich (T.G. 224) represents just such a lie.

TAUBEN IM GRAS - Fragmented reality; a social and metaphysical vacuum.

"... ich wollte das Allgemeine schildern, das Gültige finden, die Essenz des Daseins, das Klima der Zeit, die Temperatur des Tages, und ich scheine, ... das Verbreitete und das Bezeichnende getroffen zu haben ..." ⁸⁰

The author is speaking of his first post-war novel and is replying to the howl of offended criticism it incurred. The point of the 'Essenz' and the 'Klima', however implicit and indirect, is for Karl Korn "die stumme Klage darum, dass wir drauf und dran sind, den Gewinn der geistigen und seelischen Erschütterungen von 1945 zu vertun im Taumel einer fragwürdigen Restauration." ⁸¹ It is above all the vision of the 'Taumel' which predominates, which holds a community in thrall, the vision of a hectic, seething, sensual, greedy, hopelessly lost humanity, unable to come to terms with itself or its history, abandoned to its dreams and longings to the extent that the latter become the only reality, eternally repeating former tragedies, looking back on wasted lives, with nothing (except in important isolated cases) to look forward to, apart from the possibility of total annihilation once again. The whole picture of communal alienation remains oppressive; a contrived orderly structure of composition conveys the skilful paradox of disorder and aimlessness. The characters assemble together, the narrative strands are interwoven, and each figure remains entrapped in his or her lonely isolation. The Joycean cosmos becomes here - as in the second novel also - a bustling panorama of the hectic pandemonium - "Ich sehe die Welt pandämonisch" ⁸² - which Koeppen saw post-war Germany to be. The feeling is induced that invisible demonic powers - not to mention the more tangible ones in the form of rulers and governments - witness and mock abortive human pretensions; in one of the most bitter rantings against the 'Gleich-gültigkeit' of Fate and the cruelty experienced through being alive amidst other humans, the lament at the imminent death of Max Tau, Koeppen evokes the malevolent demons: "Sitzen Dämonen am Rande der Welt wie Zuschauer um die Manege im Zirkus. Du bist der Clown." ⁸³

In an 'ungeborgene Welt' man is 'ungeborgen', masking his fears in a frenzied search for hasty, fleeting satisfactions; "(da) der Haltverlust sich mit der Vergnügungssucht paart, und so die 'Sekunde zum Atem holen, Atempause auf einem verdamnten Schlachtfeld' krass abbildet."⁸⁴ The frenzy is part of the uncontrollable and unfathomable speed of events and experiences, and this leads us into the more directly autobiographical elements: "Philipp kam mit der Zeit nicht zurecht. Der Augenblick war wie ein lebendes Bild ... Zugleich aber raste dieselbe Zeit, ... dieser Augenblick ... glich dem Wind, war etwas und nichts ... es formte den Menschen und entfloh ungreifbar, unhaltbar: woher? wohin?"(22 f.) Reality cannot be understood, certainly not by any rational process or analysis, it can only be lived, 'mitemlebt', and even this is qualified: "Carla hielt nichts von ihrem Leben ... sie litt es, sie führte es nicht (122). Life is not lived, it 'lives' us; this is part of a more comprehensive impoverishment of the quality of the lives of the characters in the novel. And when apparently trivial but in fact enormously important decisions are made - autonomously - (Emilia's gift to Kay), a new existential dimension is achieved. These decisions are made also 'gegen die Welt', the world being part of the total conspiracy directed against human freedom - one recalls again the author's statement concerning the slightly less poignant travel-books, "Sie enthalten wieder diese Konfrontation des Einzelnen mit der Welt."⁸⁵

One of the most unforgettable openings to a work of imaginative fiction to have faced the German post-war reader is to be found in this novel, for this introduction is no mere 'scene-setter', it conveys the whole tone and mood of the work, and a direct representation of the author's Weltbild:

Flieger waren über der Stadt, unheilkundende Vögel
 ... Übungen des Todes ... Ein Erinnern in den Ruinen
 ... Noch waren die Bombenschächte leer. Die Augen
 lächelten ... Öl aus den Adern der Erde, Steinöl,
 Quallenblut, Fett der Saurier, Panzer der Echsen, das

Grün der Farnwälder, versunkene Natur, Zeit vor dem Menschen, vergrabenes Erbe, von Zwerge bewacht, zauberkundig und böse, die Sagen, die Märchen der Teufelsschatz, er wurde ans Licht geholt, er wurde dienstbar gemacht. ...Krieg um Öl, das Öl den Eingeborenen, die Flotte ohne Öl, Truppen schützen Bohrtürme, Schah heiratet, ... die Russen im Hintergrund ... Das Öl hielt die Flieger am Himmel, es hielt die Presse in Atem, es ängstigte die Menschen ... Mit klammen Händen, missmutig, fluchend, windgeschüttelt, regennass, bierdampf, tabakverbeizt, unausgeschlafen, alpequält, auf der Haut noch den Hauch des Nachtgenossen, des Lebensgefährten, ... Rheuma im Knie, empfangen die Händler die druckfrische Ware ... Spannung, Konflikt, man lebte im Spannungsfeld, östliche Welt, westliche Welt, man lebte an der Nahtstelle, vielleicht an der Bruchstelle, die Zeit war kostbar, sie war eine Atempause auf dem Schlachtfeld, und man hatte noch nicht richtig Atem geholt, wieder wurde gerüstet, die Rüstung verteuerte das Leben, ... Atomversuche in New-Mexiko ... sie redeten von Aufbau und bereiteten den Abbruch vor ... Deutschland war in zwei Teile gebrochen. Das Zeitungspapier roch nach heissgelaufenen Maschinen, nach Unglücksbotschaften, gewaltsamem Tod, falschen Urteilen, zynischen Bankrotten, nach Lüge, Ketten und Schmutz. Die Blätter klebten verschmiert aneinander, als nässten sie Angst. Die Schlagzeilen schrien: Wehrbeitrag gefordert, Adenauer gegen Neutralisierung, Millionen Zwangsarbeiter ... Die Illustrierten lebten von den Erinnerungen der Flieger und Feldherren ... warben sie ein Heer?

(pp.11-12)

Already life is seen and experienced from several levels and perspectives, the historical-mythological, the contemporary political, the individual where the struggle against the elements is waged; the individual is lost and of no account in the advance of time from pre-history to the present era when Shahs with fortunes, powerful nations with atom-bombs and opposed ideologies, and press-lords, themselves manipulated by the former, now delude and confuse the individual even further, who, avid for their printed wares, seeks to no avail to discover some elucidatory thread or meaning in the maelstrom of events. Oil becomes the link between mythological 'truth' and phenomena - "versunkene Natur, zauberkundig und böse" - and contemporary apocalyptic possibilities. Like the Machine, it was "dienstbar gemacht" and now seems to control the destinies of nations, "es ängstigte die Menschen". The mythological link is significant;

new forces in the cosmos have become "zauberkundig und böse", we are reminded that myths and legends ("die Sagen, die Märchen" - Koeppen has called the novel Das Treibhaus 'ein deutsches Märchen'⁸⁶) may change their name but not their power and meaning, and this meaning is more important for the author than any documentary presentation of contemporary realities. The latter, in any case beyond clear recognition or definition, would be more fitting for the politically engaged writer, i.e. the ideologically committed. We have already seen that any such commitment is for Koeppen entirely irrelevant - "ich halte das immer weniger für die Aufgabe des Schriftstellers"⁸⁷. One critic writes recently of the "naturhaft-mythischen Geschichtsbild" in the post-war novels,⁸⁸ observing, "Ist es demnach Koeppen gar nicht um die Darstellung der Zeitgeschichte zu tun ... so geraten paradoxerweise die bis ins Akribische gehende gesellschaftlich-topographische Authentizität und die Konkretheit der Schilderung in seinen Romanen in den Sog des Mythischen"⁸⁹. The generalised human import extends beyond the particular span of twenty four hours in Munich; "Die Zeit des Romans ist jede geschichtliche Stunde, die lediglich der Erinnerung und der Ahnung Daseinsrecht zu vergönnen scheint."⁹⁰ Both the sense of possible, even impending doom and further catastrophe - "Die Bühne schien zur Tragödie hergerichtet" (113) - and the contents of the newspapers, "Lüge, Ketten und Schmutz", intensify the picture of the trapped, forlorn individual cursing the pains of toil and living, represented here by the news-vendors. This later becomes more widely applied to the inhabitants in general of Munich; Richard, the American pilot, experiences a similar bewilderment as did Hofmannsthal: "... unten in der Strasse ... lebten sie in einem kranken Ungleichmass zwischen Trägheit und Hetze ... Richard hatte das Gefühl, dass hier verschiedenerlei nicht stimme, in der ganzen Konzeption nicht stimme, und dass diese Menschen für ihn undurchschaubar waren." (126) Both the 'Trägheit' and the 'Hetze' denote a strange - and estranged - mental and spiritual condition, either that of numbed passivity in the wake of the wholesale disorientation

the war entailed, or a feverish, haunted searching for ways of coping with the alienating pressures of living and surviving. All the characters in the novel (excepting possibly the touring American schoolmistresses, and they also are subject to more conventional illusions and are the victims of their own education) are alienated, uprooted, frantically seeking or despairingly resigned, victims of cataclysmic events of such a magnitude that the shaken cosmos is 'nie wieder gutzumachen'⁹¹, as the refrain often goes. They either rage against the progenitors of the débacle, as does Emilia, or cannot understand why the German Dream was so hollow and so unsuccessful (Frau Behrend), they are victims of racist ideology (Carla and Washington) and confused propaganda, or they are 'Kleinbürger' unable to cope with imported American culture and mores, or intellectuals unable to find a suitable or satisfying identity and role in society (Philipp), or produce any meaningful interpretation of the tragedy or direction for the future (Edwin). Josef is the flotsam washed up in the big city by the storms of two world wars and economic disasters, surviving, penniless and uncomprehending, as a less than nimble porter to the Negro soldier from across the Atlantic. The psychiatrist's cases, "die Geängstigten und Untüchtigen"(27) increase as more and more 'individuals' fail to relate or belong. The past is forgotten - or its errors again extolled - by means of Hofbräuhaus beer. No possibility of regeneration is conveyed - a few individual insights point the way wherein hope might lie. Worshippers in pews are 'verhärmte Mäuse'(17), receiving sacerdotal manna, "Vergeblicher Traum der Alchimisten". The description of the throng before the Municipal Pawn Shop - "sie trieben ein gespenstisches Wesen"(96) - has a more general application. All continuity with the past has been shattered; the crowd in question, grasping the further span of life granted by the proceeds of the pawned goods, eke out an existence which has no relation to life as previously lived, pawning "die Habe eines anderen Lebens, das

mit ihrem gegenwärtigen Leben gar nichts mehr zu tun hatte, eines Lebens, das sie geführt hatten, bevor sie ertrunken waren."(96). The description of Philipp's hotel, a brothel in all but name, as a "Bienenstock des Teufels", is referable also to the wider cosmic framework and to Koeppen's own largely cynical diabolodicy.

For Emilia there is no extant social grouping to which she can or wishes to relate; her withdrawal from society is marked by a fondness for animals who link her with the happy, undisturbed affluence of childhood as granddaughter of the elevated Kommerzienrat, and also represent for her a contrast with the duplicity and knavery which she associates with the society of humans, and especially those who have assisted in her downfall; "Die Tiere waren ihre Freunde ... sie waren die Gefährten der glücklichen Kindheit, aus der Emilia nun vertrieben war ... sie waren die harmlose und dem Augenblick ergebene Kreatur ohne Falschheit und Berechnung ... Die böse Emilia wandte sich gegen die Menschen."(33) The sincere gratuitous actions of the animal companions are welcomed as a foil to the more rational and contrived machinations of man which have destroyed 'heile Natur', and in this case banished Emilia from the cherished Paradise - a very Koeppenesque motif. Her particular degradation and disorientation are tellingly conveyed by the descriptions of the pawned goods whose proceeds become necessary for survival, goods now deposited like pearls before swine, "die Kunst des Silberschmiedes nicht geachtet"(96): "Hände von Kommerzienräten, Bankiers und Ministers hatten die Griffe gehalten, hatten sich mit Salm und Forelle bedient: fette Hände, ringgeschmückte Hände, verhängnisvolle Hände ..." (97). The fish cutlery have become the link between the stable, orderly past when tragic decisions were being made at a high level, and the chaotic present where the transformation is of such a magnitude that no comprehension of the course of history is possible. "Toren! In Gold hätten sie's anlegen sollen" is the only inadequate, myopically self-centred response Emilia can make to the

situation. The latter's tragic import escapes her so totally that her social alienation is complete. But then her initial fortune is likened to the German tragedy and the paths of history in general; just as the pigeons of the title appear and disappear at random from the grass - "die Vögel sind zufällig hier, wir sind zufällig hier, ... Hitler war ein Zufall ... vielleicht ist die Welt ein grausamer und dummer Zufall Gottes, keiner weiss warum wir hier sind ..." (176) - Emilia's view of events is a passive resignation, "zufällig war's geschehen, gewiss zufällig, aber es war ein völlig geistloser, ein dummer, ein ganz bedeutungsloser Zufall, der sie an Güter gebunden hatte ... Emilias Erbe war dem Zeitgeist verfallen ..." (93). People do not control their lives, events are dictated by Zufall, Schicksal, the Zeitgeist, constellations of unknowable forces. Thus her present inheritance is like the new age itself - "die Geburt der neuen Weltzeit nicht weniger vom Grotesken, Ungeordneten, Anrühigen und Lächerlichen umrandet." Paradoxically, she relies upon the barely possible and certainly improbable creations of Philipp's typewriter to produce the only return to Paradise she knows, wealth and the associated good life, paradoxically, because the relationship with Philipp incurs association with intellectuals, "die bei Emilias Eltern zwar Freitisch und Narrenfreiheit, aber nicht Achtung genossen hatten." (94) The traditional severance of Macht and Geist is here recorded, and is confirmed by the presence of ancestral libraries which had survived the holocaust, but which had been owned by high ranking society "die Geld verdient und nicht gelesen hatten"; the contrast with Philipp's collection is marked, "des unermüdlichen Lesers", "Büchersammlung voll Unrast und Zergliederung, das entblösste Herz, der sezierte Trieb" (35), whilst the ancestral display boasted 'unberührten Goldschnittausgaben, die deutschen Klassiker, Bismarck's-Gedanken-und-Erinnerungen für das Herrenzimmer ...' Significantly, Emilia stands threatened from all sides, 'im Niemandsland'; unable to utilise what precarious wealth remains, enmeshed as it is in

mortgages, tax payments and property preservation, she is alienated from the 'working world' and its discomforts and constrictions, she seeks spurious palliatives in the false and shallow contemporary modes of Bohemianism, anathema to Philipp, the writer (and character nearest to the author). The reader is treated again here to Koeppen's lament at the death of the true spirit of revolution, which is basic to Keetenheuve's failed existence in the next novel. It is congruous that Emilia should surrender occasionally to the insipid and socially meaningless substitutes which have replaced the 'Romanisches Café' and similar targets of the fascist tyranny; for her the 'mittellosen Geistigen', the 'lebens-untüchtigen Schwätzer' had always been the irrelevant fringe dangerous to the order of 'Macht und Besitz'; now Philipp avoided their successors, not Emilia, the 'Boheme' was dead, simulated by those who wrote advertising copy by day, or the 'Tabu-Mädchen' whose masks concealed the routine conformist secretarial duties by which they indifferently connived at the continuation of the social order. Koeppen's lampoon is bitterly directed at this masquerade which hides a spiritless obeisance to burgher convention and materialism: "Was nach Lenin blieb, war im Grunde konservativ, war konservative Pubertät, konservative Liebe zu Mimi ... konservativer Bürgerschreck ... von einer konservativen zu einer konservierten Angelegenheit wurde ... eine Attraktion für den Fremdenverkehr"(95) Such a spiritless attraction was a shallow refuge for an equally spiritless Emilia, who seeks to preserve a residue of her youthfulness in the atmosphere of the "Tanzgeschöpfe und dem Glas-Wein Mäzenatentum der Geschäftsleute", "die Luft der Ungefühle"(95), where debased feelings and debased musical rhythms attend each other, "dieses Gusses aus Rausch, Alkohol und Synkopen".

Her alienation and withdrawal find a further outlet in private, onanistic fantasies; Geist is debased in a nihilistic enumeration of all the confused and unrelated intellectual and spiritual opiates and refuges which are conjured up to accompany the retreat into self-gratification.

A fitting, frenzied, stream of consciousness interior monologue style, an asyntactic collage of allusion and associations is employed to illustrate the tortuous imaginings of the deserted Emilia figure, and represents at the same time - by its absurd juxtapositions of Heidegger, Rimbaud, Proust, the Upanishads, thoughts on the mutation of atoms, the empty luxury of the Promenade des Anglais in Nice, all culminating in 'dunkele süsse Onanie' which has its own Thomas Mann associations, - a profoundly pessimistic statement on the meaning of European culture, and its meaning, or non-meaning for European history:

... er (i.e. der Geist) war ein neuer Retter,
les fleurs du mal, wie-hasse-ich-die-Poeten,
 ... Geist Trost in verfallenen Villen, ja-wir-
 waren-reich, ... Benn Frühe Gedichte, ... dunkele-
 süsse Onanie, les paradis artificiels auf den
 Holzwegen, Philipp auf den Holzwegen, ratlos
 im Gestrüpp in den Fussangeln Heideggers, der
 Lido von Venedig, ... der Organismus kein
 physikalisches Laboratorium, ... die Seele,
 ... die Seelenwanderung, komme-als-Tier-wieder,
 bin-freundlich-zu-den Tieren, ... Kierkegaard
 Angst tagebuchschreibender Verführer nicht zu
 Cordelia ins Bett ... Onanie, das Selbst ...
 Millionärin, es-war-einmal, ... Beginn der
 Sozialversicherung, ich-sollte-kleben-für-mein-
 Alter ... die Nierenkur des Kommerzienrats ...
 Gide l'Immoraliste Liebe ohne Namen ... wer liebt
 mich? ...

The kind of mental disorientation displayed here is most usefully conveyed through the interior monologue, and the implications of the latter for twentieth century literature and conceptions of man are in evidence here. The only reality is that subjectively experienced, and there is no linear logic in this experience, the substance of the experience, its discontinuity and fragmentation as in Emilia's monologue, is the content of the novel - "Das Was des Erzählens wird immer weniger wichtig. Immer mehr kommt es auf das Wie an"⁹² - destroying again traditional narrative forms which do not relate to modern 'realities'; - "Nicht ein kausal geordnetes und in ursächlicher Folge enthülltes Geschehen steht im Mittelpunkt ihrer Romane, sondern die Assoziationen, Erinnerungen ... die Trieb-, Imaginations- und Gedankenreflexe, welche die scheinbar kausale Logik in die anders

geartete Logik des menschlichen Bewusstseins verwandeln, welthaltiges Geschehen durch Bewusstseinslogik spiegeln." Hence world events themselves lose their clarity and continuity, reflecting the disordered or the questioning state of mind of the monologising 'anti-hero'. Another critic philosophises thus on the theme of the stream of consciousness technique: "... es steht ... in unmittelbarem Zusammenhang mit dem Wesen des modernen Menschen selbst. Damit rückt die moderne Literatur und Kunst in den umfassenderen Zusammenhang einer Anthropologie unseres Jahrhunderts ... (dass) es dem Geschehen gegenüber keinen festen Standpunkt mehr gibt, dass das Geschehen nur noch fassbar wird als subjektiver Reflex ... Alle den Menschen umgebenden Rätsel werden Folgeerscheinungen der Beschaffenheit des Ich, ... seiner Erlebnis- und Denkweise."⁹³ It is because the world is seen and described - in order to mediate it at all - through the physical and psychological mechanisms of the characters, because the world is conveyed through the cogitations and imaginings of Emilia, Philipp, Edwin, Carla, Washington, Frau Behrend, down to the afflicted and stifled child, Hillegonda, that more conventional narrative statements are able to take over occasionally from the monologues without disturbing the 'realism' or the truth the author is seeking to present. The monologues are part of the realism; as Stammem succinctly expressed the meaning of the twentieth century approaches, "Der Wille zur Genauigkeit, zur Wahrheit verhindert das Erzählen alten Stils".⁹⁴

To the same group of uncomprehending and outraged victims of the war belongs Frau Behrend whose disorientation seeks a return also to 'die gute alte Zeit' when 'Sitte und Anstand' reigned supreme, no negroes or American invaders sullied German streets, "der Ariernachweis war lückenlos", as she proudly boasts of her family; a reputation now degraded by her daughter Carla's pregnancy by an American Negro soldier. Her narrow, stifling provincialism cannot see beyond the illusory ideology of a blinkered nationalist masquerade; the self-conceit and snobbism which remain out of touch with new realities cannot bend to consider with

sympathy the wretchedness of Carla's situation - though the daughter too day-dreams film-fantasies of the shallow American Dream. Frau Behrend is sufficiently 'gescheitert' that the affront to German tradition and civilisation represented by Carla's 'tragedy' (the only accommodation the daughter can find is in a brothel) is expressed as "Schande der Zeit und Verlorensein in Unordnung, Irrwegen und moralischen Abgründen"(147), a stigma which closes all frontiers and channels of communication between mother and daughter. It is of course the opening of new frontiers which symbolically attracts Koeppen - the final acceptance by Carla, under Washington's persuasion, of the challenge to start a new life, hypothetically in Paris, where the maxim 'niemand unerwünscht' is accepted. The mother's afternoons of bitter-sweet reminiscing in the Domcafé were to remain undisturbed, like Dr Behude's patients she too lived in a private and banished world, "'stör mir meine Ruhe nicht ... meinen Glauben nicht', und ihr Glaube war, dass anständige Frauen wie sie irgendwie erhalten werden mussten, dass die Welt niemals so aus den Fugen geraten konnte, dass nicht ihr der Nachmittagsplausch mit Damen ihrer Art als Trostpreis bleibe."(130-131) (my underlining). Carla's response - which might have been equally applicable to some of her own wishful longings - is relevant for most of the characters in the novel: "sie weiss nicht, dass es ihre Welt nicht mehr gibt". The narrator's supplementary commentary - or Carla's continued monologue, by implication, runs: "Welche Welt aber gab es? Eine dreckige Welt. Eine ganz und gar gottverlassene Welt."(131). Frau Behrend's provincialism is shared by the Kleinbürger and the grocer, the charwoman's daughter and other odd figures. With splendidly contrived irony the insensitive and closed world of provincialist attitudes - even though the setting is the Grossstadt - which engendered the German tragedy in the first place, are set against the youthful adventurousness and the open frontiers (of the mind, in particular) embodied in the figures, for example, of Richard, and Kay, both representatives of the New World. Even the

American forces are favourably contrasted with German militarism -- in so far as figures in military uniform can be favourably treated by Koeppen at all. Frau Behrend's husband has deserted her for a younger, more sensitive girl in one of the German occupied countries who helped him escape the attentions of the invading Russian army. He was, significantly, an Obermusikmeister in the army - for him Orpheus is more dominant than Mars; Frau Behrend groups him with her own daughter - "sie hat das von ihm, das Musikerblut, sie sind Zigeuner, nur die Wehrmacht hielt sie in Zucht, ... was war er für ein Mann wenn er dem Regiment voranschritt, der Krieg machte ihn schlecht"(124-125). Her regretful commentary on the war here is hardly relatable to Koeppen's own pacifism - she sees the army as a Zuchthaus, preserving the inflexible, hierarchical authoritarianism governing the fabric of German society. It is within this context that she reads romantic Schmalz novels, where innocent young damsels are threatened by villains - "voll Fallgruben (war) der Weg der Anständigen"(22) - "Aber im letzten Kapitel triumphieren die Guten." It is Koeppen's penetrating insight which relates this taste in literature to a general Weltbild and to a woman who asks in bewilderment, surveying the ubiquitous ruins, "warum mit Bomben beworfen? mein Gott, warum geschlagen?, für welche Sünde gestraft?"(21). The invasion by American families, "siebenjährige Mädchen, die Lippen wie Huren geschminkt, die Mütter in Schlosserhosen" is as destructive of her social order as any wartime bombardment. The soldiery do not march like the Wehrmacht, they are "fahrende Leute, unernste Menschen"; they ride whilst her cherished German officers queue for trams, they occupy Imperial mansions, "inmitten der Pracht der achtziger Jahre, die Beine auf dem Tisch, und leerten ihre Konservenbüchsen, die Fliessbandnahrung Chikago packt ..." (21). Koeppen has no special liking for tinned goods - he is in fact a sophisticated gastronome, with a repeated aversion to the 'Allerweltsspeisekarte'; here he highlights the absurdity of the meeting of old and new worlds,

the alienation each feels towards the other. German Imperialism and the American twentieth century are brought together, each surveys the other with incomprehension, the collision is part of Koeppen's own alienation, and the absurdity is underlined by the random insertion of newspaper headlines, in the 'international tradition' of Dos Passos and Nathaniel West, Chikago packt tausend Ochsen pro Minute. As in Emilia's bedroom monologue above where intellectual and spiritual items are strung together indiscriminately and interspersed on the same level with autobiographical content, so where the elegance and splendour of German Kaisertum are confronted with the products of mass-culture and mass-production, the measure of the disorientation is felt. On the other hand, allusions to the New World in this novel have a generally positive valuation, in so far as the looser freedoms of American culture are concerned.

Thus Richard's pilot uniform is seen in a different light from that of the Wehrmacht - "Er reiste dienstlich, nein, das hätten die unten gesagt, die Kasernenhofsippe, er reiste aus Nützlichkeitsgründen"(40), this century is America's "das Jahrhundert der gereinigten Triebe, der nützlichen Ordnung, der Planung, der Verwaltung und der Tüchtigkeit". In themselves these are not predicates which endear any culture or era to the author, as we have observed in earlier sections. But the condition of 'Unbefangenheit' is expected of him, and this is considerable as a sine qua non in the present context. Richard's father was German born and bred, and had fled the militarist manias even before they took on their 1933 complexion. His Reichswehr training produced the disgust and revulsion which remained with him in America, and caused him to seek exemption from American engagement in the war: "die Beibringung der glatten, raschen Art, den Feind zu töten"(127) had convinced Wilhelm Kirsch of the futility of solving problems with guns. Any affirmation of the New World is qualified in this novel also by a reminder of American militarism, (and we have already

reviewed its role in immediately post-war developments); for Richard's father even America's role in the war itself represented "eine Erschütterung seines in einer deutschen Kaserne errungenen Glaubens an Vernunft, Verständnis und friedliche Gesinnung"(127), and he lost faith in "der Wahrheit der alten Ideale Amerikas". The positive side of Richard's mission lies in his youthful disinterestedness: "Richard fühlte sich frei von Feindschaft und Vorurteilen, nicht Hass und Verachtung belasteten ihn. Die Missgefühle waren Giftstoffe, von der Zivilisation überwundene Krankheiten ... Richard war geimpft ... hygienisch erzogen ..." This relates to the description of Kay, the schoolmistress touring Germany with colleagues; "Kay wirkte so unbefangen, so frisch, sie war von einer Jugend, wie man sie hier kaum noch sieht, sie war unbeschwert, das war es wohl, sie kam aus anderer Luft, aus herber und reiner Luft, wie es Philipp schien, aus einem anderen Land mit Weite, Frische und Jugend und sie verehrte die Dichter."(104) No doubt the fact that she still respected poets and thinkers distinguished her from the society amongst which she was touring, and reminded Philipp the writer of a faith and an enthusiasm which had been routed from German soil thus engendering his own total estrangement and sense of superfluosity. But Richard's mission is nonetheless to be qualified; though the occupying forces are "Ritter der Vernunft, der Nützlichkeit und angemessener bürgerlicher Freiheit"(41), though, most important of all, "sie suchten kein Heiliges Grab", for Koeppen the only right role and solution is that of Richard's father, already the questions unroll in another interior monologue, "wo werde ich ausüben, was ich lerne ... wen werde ich bombardieren?"(42). "Wilhelm Kirsch hatte nicht im Krieg gekämpft. Richard Kirsch war bereit, für Amerika zu kämpfen."(128).

Discounting, however, for the moment the author's attachment to the mythological resurgence of 'Macht und altes Unrecht'⁹⁵ and the American involvement in this new historical masquerade, the youthful members of the

occupying elements are used to convey the picture of how 'gescheitert' is the German nation and society. Richard is confronted with the Kleinbürgerin who runs the grocer's shop; a language problem makes communication problematic, and since the worlds are conceptually divided, a most ironic and absurd scene results. "Mit Neger'n mussten wir uns einlassen, um nicht zu verhungern."(138) What means this for somebody who flies with negroes? The enormity of the comedy of misunderstandings which ensues (Richard wonders at one point whether Frau Behrend has had a daughter by a negro as a result of rape) is good reading for those who dismiss Koeppen's work as merely prophecies of doom. Hearing "Mit der Tochter verkehren wir nicht mehr", the American pilot senses why his father left, "es ist die Herkunft, das alte Zuhause des Vaters ... die Enge, es sind Sümpfe."(138). The shop becomes "eine Mischung aus Not und fetten Speisen, aus Missgunst, Mangel und Illusionen"(139). The bell-jar covers decomposing cheese; on being lifted, "ein Fäulnisgestank erhob sich"(148), and this must surely be also metaphorical. By way of contrast, Richard's girl-friend for the evening is totally weary of all her own society now stands for and can offer to a girl of her age. She sells socks at a store; the capitalist economy is already revived on the old lines - "Das Warenhaus verdiente an den Socken. Das Fräulein verdiente wenig. Es gab das Wenige zu Hause ab."(203) Three pithy statements which speak volumes, though as yet the situation need not be peculiarly German; such a qualitatively impoverished life is for Koeppen a universal phenomenon, a regular feature of his lamentations. It becomes German when the father, forgetting the girl's lost trousseau in the ruins, recalls nostalgically, "Bei Hitler war's anders". Ludicrous social convention still survives - the daughter cannot dispute father's rulings, as he, as a bank commissioner, is 'ein angesehener Mann". This is all the more pitiable when we read: "Die Eltern waren gescheitert. Sie waren arm. Sie waren unheiter, unglücklich, vergrämt. Sie sassen vergrämt in einer grämlichen Stube bei grämlich munterer Musik." American youth

brings release, escape, a promise of a new world, a chance to forget domestic constrictions and making ends meet, "die völkischen Ressentiments, das nationale Unbehagen, das moralische Missvergnügen." They were less "mit Schicksal, Angst, Zweifel, Vergangenheit und Aussichtslosigkeit belastet"(204) than German youth. A moving bitterness informs the description of the young compatriot the girl will eventually marry, "einen überarbeiteten, enttäuschten, schlechtangezogenen Mann." Another depressed life is lived by the daughter of Frau Behrend's charwoman; this time the fault lies with an addiction to unbridgeable hierarchical social divisions, which nevertheless she will transcend when Prince Charming arrives, and the horoscope prophecies are fulfilled - from possible fairy-tale saviours Americans are excluded in this case, they represent looser, more democratic social thinking - Koeppen italicises: "Demokratischer Gedanke in Deutschland gefestigt"(135). For such marionette victims - of life, Schicksal and their own delusions - no hope is entertained: "Sie hatte die mechanischen Bewegungen einer Puppe".

The lives of Carla and Washington are enmeshed in the cross-currents of racial fear and hatred, in the alienation of one colour from another. The Negro discerns the obvious truism: "böse ist die Welt ... weil alle sich fürchten"(66). In a world in which we are all 'zufällig', in which no particular rhyme or reason attends the decrees and principles adopted by a given society at a given time in a given place, the way the cards fall determines our fate and situation. "Carla war in den falschen Zug gestiegen"(131). All negroes sat in the wrong train, Carla cannot change the world; even the stars of the jazz band sat in the wrong train, but at least in the luxury compartments. Abortion would release her from captivity - after Washington refuses this, "Es war nie wieder gutzumachen". Her sufferings are not merely socially imposed, though they are rooted in the fear and envy of racist ideology; Carla is first the victim of a post-war deprivation; a job as a secretary in a negro barracks is the only answer to starvation, which is further remedied by gifts from occupying forces; but she is also

infatuated with the white man's American paradise, "Bing Crosby erschien in jedem Heim ... im schwellenden Polster des Pullmanwagens ... Sicherheit jeder Art von Tablettenfabrikanten und Insurancegesellschaften angeboten ... keine Angstträume ängstigten mehr ..." (52) In America as in Germany Carla sees doors closing upon the sybaritic and anaesthetising comforts and satisfactions of the imagined Garden of Eden. In contrast to the 'Traumwelt der Magazinbilder', "Washingtons Amerika war dunkel und schäbig, so schäbig, so dreckig, so von Gott aufgegeben wie die Welt hier" (131-132). For Washington 'die Welt hier' was still nourished with illusions of Aryan supremacy, which drove Carla to the brothel (for accommodation) whose inmates - "domestizierte Raubtiere; sie witterten noch das Wild" (88) - can only add to the confusion and misunderstandings surrounding the Negro races, "Sie begriffen nicht, dass er kein Bordellgänger war." He was aiming for a serene and happy nuclear family life; "leider war er durch unglückliche Zufälle vom Wege und in diese Wohnung ... in Schlamm und Dschungeln geraten." (89) 'Schlamm' is used elsewhere by Koeppen as a forceful description of disorder and disarray in which characters or mankind in general struggle to survive, unable to understand or master or change the forces to which they have fallen prey. The radio carried across Munich by Josef records the ungovernable progress of the course of history: "Der Strom der Geschichte floss ... Er liess Ertrunkene zurück, er liess den Schlamm zurück ... Josef folgte klein und blinzelnd, auch er im Schlamm, noch immer im Schlamm, ... Wann war Blütezeit? Wann kam das Goldene Zeitalter?" (87). Again, as at the beginning of the novel, the two levels meet, the general and the individual, the personal and the collective; where the impersonal triumphs, the individual, like Josef, is left aimless and directionless.

Washington is from earliest years in the Mississippi region oppressed by a social code of "unerwünscht", the frontier which discounts human and humane categories in favour of vested interests and principles. Baton

Rouge represents black hatred and prejudice against white - all the more ironic when the 'lost' son telephones the States for money for Carla's expected child. How would Carla fit in the 'Strasse der Apartheid' back home? The "Christian" States of America fought against the fascist banner, 'Für Juden verboten'; but back home, the same 'home' which decorated him for bravery, "behaupteten sich die Schilder des Hochmuts, die Denkweise des Aftermenschen, ob plakatiert oder nicht, blieb stehen 'Für Schwarze verboten'"(66). The Negro surveys Carla's ancestral portrait gallery. This enables Koeppen to indulge his taste for brief, revealing historical vignettes, where consistently one traces the fatalistic thread, the historical inevitability of hindsight. Carla's husband died by the Wolga - "vielleicht hatte das Rassenkreuz dem Mann nie etwas bedeutet. Vielleicht hatte Washington nie gegen dieses Kreuz gekämpft. Vielleicht waren sie beide betrogen worden."(90) People are seduced into fighting for abstract principles, which can only be a masquerade, and hide the true motivations of governments and ruling powers. The perception of this truth unites all manner of men with all manner of men - it is the same voice which says "Ich sah den Dichter als Mitleidenden, als Empörer, als Regulativ aller weltlichen Ordnung, ... engagiert gegen die Macht ..."96 So Washington is united momentarily with the former 'enemy', united one might almost say, like some more ambitiously hopeful characters in the novel, (Susanne, Behrend and Vlasta) "gegen die Welt". Even bitter envy creeps in: "Zuweilen beneidete er ihn darum, dass er's hinter sich hatte." At the end of the historical panorama, which includes the devoted oblation by deluded citizens of their unsuspecting young to the Reich, "Kinder Reichtum der Nation, Ehestandsdarlehen für junge Leute" (italicised), Washington is faced with a grotesque parody of historical continuity, a disturbing intrusion into the ethnic purity and cohesion of Imperial designs - his own framed portrait. Armed with food parcels and flowers, a mixture of the trappings of traditional romantic chivalry and

the instruments of gentle bribery, his mirror-reflection strikes an 'absurd' posture, tragic because of his own seriousness, "... empfand er die ganze Hässlichkeit des Daseins. Die Erde war bestimmt kein Negerhimmel"(92). It is natural that Carla, despite her Bing Crosby candyfloss dream with its own obvious dangers, should not wish to build a relationship like her mother's - the bombs which destroyed this marital tie had after all exposed the basic fragility of the relationship - another glimpse is gained of Koeppen's view of the deadly convention and conventionality of marriage, the mistaken premises on which it is mostly enacted: "der aus Zufall, Irrtum, Fehlentscheidung und Toren Sinn geknüpft Strick der Gewohnheit". He appreciated Shelley's aversion to this convention: "Seine Tugend verbot Shelley die Ehe als einen freier Menschen unwürdigen Zustand der Besitzgier und der Sklaverei ... eine Fessel aus Konvention, eine Fessel für den Geist und für die Leidenschaft."⁹⁷ Carla is aware too of the alienating circumstances which have driven her to form any bond with the Negro - "war es nicht nur Zweisamkeit, Verzweiflung der in die Welt Geworfenen, ... das nah-fremde Wesen in ihrem Leib, war es nicht ... Frucht des kleinen Ausgehaltenenseins, Frucht der Furcht, des Nichtalleinbestehenkönnens, die wieder neue Furcht gezeugt hatte, wieder Furcht gebären wollte?"(117-118). Different premises perhaps from those of the mother's, but no less precarious, given the turmoil, mobility and vicissitudes of the age, given the overpowering nature of cosmic happenings, the "unordentlich gewordenen Zeit"(122); analysing her own life, she decides, "sie litt es, sie führte es nicht ... Sie glaubte. An Gott? An die Konvention." The only God who would sanction a Negro husband would be a God for all seasons, not the "Feiertagsgott" her mother had introduced her to.

For once belief and faith overcome despair; Washington's plea, "wir lieben uns doch, warum sollen wir's nicht durchstehen? Warum sollen wir's nicht schaffen ... Wenn alle andern uns beschimpfen ... Noch als ganz alte Leute müssen wir uns lieben."(171), irresistibly appealing in its simple

supplication for a redemptive gesture, and achievement ('schaffen' is used) in the face of and against the blinkered environment, his plea is heard, and with it comes Carla's freedom, not from the child or the problems it will bring, once born, but freedom from enslavement to a dull and illusory opiate which had earlier been the limit of her horizon: "Jetzt war sie befreit ... von dem Traum an die faule Glückseligkeit des Daseins, an den Schicksalsbetrug durch einen Knopf ... Sie glaubte wieder."(183) The sheep-like passivity against which Koeppen launches his frequent diatribes, which is an affront to true freedom and true democracy, a passivity which the author sees as an established feature of modern democracies, and Restoration Germany in particular, is here implicitly spurned. A new dream, 'Washington's Inn', "niemand unerwünscht", hypothetically in Paris, becomes at least a possibility. "All diese Nationalitäten sind Unsinn"(183), asserts Christopher, soon to join Henriette in Paris also.

A story of skilfully and deliberately contrived confusion is narrated at the end of the "day's" events, a confusion intended to mirror the nature of events in which people are involved in modern society, and the nature of their reactions to events - there is a dangerous and frightening congruity between the uncertainty in the minds of the participants as to what is happening, as to whether a taxi-driver has been killed at all (it is in fact Josef, the companion and now innocent victim of the deluded Odysseus), as to whether children have been assaulted, (Ezra and Heinz's private brawl has been transformed into a common terror before the crumbling masonry of a bombed out ruin), an uncertainty which reaches its climax in the mistaken accusation pointed at Washington and Carla, "der Mörder und seine Hure", - there is a congruity here between the inability to disentangle the truth of events, increasingly characteristic of our "unheimliches Universum", and the proneness of the mob to irrational fears, the resurgence of social myths, the violence and ferocity to which these fears lead, even when history and experience have already taught

their lesson: "Mit Scherben hatte es damals begonnen, und mit Scherben hatte es geendet"(222) occurred to the minds of the older spectators, as the 'bald-headed businessmen', impelled by "ihre Jagdinstinkte, die Verfolgungswut und das Tötungsgelüste der Meute"(224), hurled stones at the windows of the Negro Club, and then at Washington's limousine: "die ruchlos geworfenen Steine trafen Amerika und Europa, sie schändeten den oft berufenen europäischen Geist, sie verletzten die Menschheit, sie trafen den Traum von ... Washinton's Inn, ... aber sie konnten den Traum nicht töten, der stärker als jeder Steinwurf ist"(224) ... The stones in fact hit the child, Heinz, Carla's son, - we thus have a rare assertion of faith in a Shelleyesque dream, coupled with a bathetic realism and a symbolic reminder that the young are the most innocent victims of society. But for the author's faith in Washington, this mistaken attack on the boy might have been construed as terminating all hope for the 'dream of Paris'.

The Odysseus-Josef relationship (or encounter, as they hardly 'relate' to each other), Negro soldier-porter (and general 'Dienstmann'), black American-white German, is another token of the vibrant, even hopeful, life-affirming youthfulness, of body and mind, which America is temporarily depositing on tired German soil, and which serves as a foil either to worn out German ideals and mores, or, as with Josef, to a character who has played out his time, whose average moral sensitivities are outraged by conventional murderous demands made by the society it was his mischance to be born into, whose menial activities remain unchanged from the cradle to the approaching grave, whose unillustrious career symbolically reflects and parallels the unillustrious history of twentieth century Germany, and even Europe. In its undrastic, modest dimensions, Josef's life is magnificently that of a "Gescheiterter":

Was hatte Josefs Rücken gebeugt? Die Koffer der Reisenden, das Gepäck der Jahrzehnte, ein halbes Jahrhundert Brot im Schweiss des Angesichts, Adams Fluch, Märsche in Knobelbechern, die Knarre über

der Schulter, der Sack mit den Wurfgranaten, der schwere Helm, das schwere Töten. Verdun, Argonnerwald, ... er war heil herausgekommen, und wieder Koffer, Reisende ohne Gewehr, Fremdenverkehr zum Hotel, die Olympischen Spiele, die Jugend der Welt, und wieder Fahnen, wieder Märsche, er schleppte Offiziersgepäck, die Söhne gingen ohne Wiederkehr, die Jugend der Welt, Sirenen, die Alte starb, die Mutter der vom Krieg verschlungenen Kinder, die Amerikaner kamen mit ... leichtem Gepäck, die Zigarettenwährung, die neue Mark, das Abgesparte verwehrt, Spreu, bald siebzig Jahre, was blieb? Der Sitz vor dem Bahnhof, das Nummernschild an der Mütze." (31)

This is an early example of a structural feature in many of Koeppen's writings,⁹⁸ in which a historical panorama is presented - here it is comparatively brief and is attached more to the life of a character - in which the meaning and purpose are, by implication, undiscoverable and non-existent. All the items are stylistically concatenated in such a way as to endow them with equal weight and importance. The equality of attribution lends to the ensemble of events and experiences a distinct element of absurdity and incomprehensibility. The continuity - and this is much more palpable in later historiographical items by Koeppen - is inorganic, merely chronological. Josef's modest sense of the absurdity is increased by his own wonderings on whether he had killed in the Argonnerwald any of the tourists whose baggage he had earlier portered around the city. Small wonder also that he questions the point of a life or a job in which, near its end, he carries, "zusammengeschrumpft, gebückt, alt, müde und pfiffig, doch", for a lusty Negro giant, "King Kong, der ihn überragte, unergründlich sind die nie geschlagenen, die uralten Wälder"(31), a conqueror who, "jung, lendenstark, unschuldig, tierhaft"(43) had fought with the forces who had destroyed his son. But Josef does not seem to be concerned with apportioning blame - rather is he resigned that societies do not decree that war is to be "polizeilich verboten". The language of the narrative of events highlights the Schweik-like situation of the little man, exposed to the accidents of political misfortune: "sie (i.e. die Pest = war) hatte ihm den Sohn genommen, und für heute hatte sie

ihm einen Neger gegeben ..." (119). He has no choice or say in the matter. Concordant with this passive endurance is the tacit and yet bewildered apprehension of contemporary realities, the same kind of realities, but now even more accelerated, impersonal and perplexing, which had invaded and determined for Josef the course of life during the last seventy years; these realities - or the usual half-baked selection and attenuation of what is considered 'real' by the technical media - are transmitted at regular intervals on the portable radio carried by the old warrior and are the inescapable reminder of the nature of human history, as well as providing a commentary upon modern methods of registering it. The impressionistic itemising of world events ("Fallschirmjäger nach Malta") becomes "nur ein Lautrauschen für Josef und weiter nur eine Brandung der Geschichte, eine Brandung aus dem Äther zu ihm gespült, unverständliche erlebte gärende Geschichte, ein Sauerteig, der aufging. Namen wurden hineingerührt, ... die Namen der grossen Spieler ... der Manager ... der Konferenzplätze, Schlachtplätze, ... wie wird der Sauerteig aufgehen?" (86) Baumgart's comments on the changing human situation reflect Josef's experience: "Das heute sich immer beschleunigter ausbreitende Wissen ist individueller Erfahrbarkeit längst entlaufen ... die schon denkbare Weltvernichtung ... überspringt seine Vorstellung ... So gründlich haben sich objektive Welt und private Erfahrung auseinandergelebt, dass sich das isolierte Ich schon wieder als fensterlose Monade empfindet ..." ⁹⁹

The subjectivisation of experience is of course germane to the stylistic features which have invaded the novel since Woolf and Joyce, the monologues and agrammatical structures which have become the very content of the novel itself. The apprehension of the world becomes a series of internal events, psychological experiences - Max Frisch's "Erfahrung ist ein Einfall ... nicht ein Ergebnis aus Vorfällen." ¹⁰⁰ (This becomes more pronounced in the case of Keetenheuve, whose whole life is seen as a private sketch, "ein Entwurf" (377), a series of privately invented rôles).

With Josef there is no such sophisticated intellectual awareness, but his apprehension is no less subjective, solitary, and without points of reference. The seething, pandemonic appetites with which life is conducted, in which the Dienstmann is part participant, part victim, part spectator, are conveyed at various levels conjoined by stylistic devices. "Ihre Triebe machten Treibjagd, Lustjagd auf den weissen Hirsch des Selbstbetruges." (86). This could certainly be an allusion to the machinations of politicians and rulers; but in fact it refers to the dice stakes being played for by Odysseus and other Greek inmates of the 'Glocke' inn. A band in the 'Glocke' is playing "Ich schiess-den-Hirsch-im-wilden-Forst". A group of former German soldiers are boasting of their exploits in Crete, "Wir sprangen in sie hinein." This is followed by "Da war der Hirsch! Jetzt hatte er's durchschaut, Wildtöteraugen." This denotes the success of Odysseus in the frenzy of the poker game: "Der Tisch war die Front. Er feuerte Serien ins Holz, ein Bombardement des Glücks." Events, dialogue, unrelated experiences, are brought together to illustrate the universality of basic fears and greeds, the jungle warfare which operates at different levels of human activity, the incorrigibility of the human condition; Odysseus' fortune is followed by further asseverations of how the 'White Mountains' were 'cleaned up', the radio voice tells us that Teheran is the new hot spot of conflict ("Die Stimme kannte Hafis den Dichter nicht"), and whilst Josef sits by the banks of 'the stream of history' - "unverständlich war der Strom, unverständlich das Geplätscher", - the central metaphor uniting the separate areas of activity appears again: "Der weisse Hirsch war ihnen entwischt". Odysseus had escaped from the losers. Commentaries upon this universal pandemonium have recourse to further metaphorisation, 'Sauerteig' and 'Schlamm', as we have seen, pointing to the crucial questions of what will arise from the fermentations of history, or from the mud and slime left after the streams have burst their banks. In the saddening cycles of human repetitiveness the relevant questions are: "wie wird der Sauerteig

aufgehen? ... Wann war Blütezeit?" Josef's pre-cognitive dream of dying in a charity hospital fulfils itself, his time of fruition is symbolically attended by - one of Koeppen's most inventive sleights of hand - a last transmission from the radio in which Edwin, the American guest-lecturer (the lecture is the focal centre of the novel to which all the separate and disparate strands lead) abortively holds forth upon the immortal and indestructible validity of Europe's intellectual heritage. This heritage, like Josef's life, so Tauben im Gras seems to indicate, has run its course, expiring "in einem Zustand des andauernden Zuckens und Bebens"(191).

Another of the victims of the death of this heritage is Henriette, daughter of the Prussian-Jewish government official, administrator in charge of a Berlin museum. She is a peripheral figure, who merely adds to the previous documenting of a psychically shattered post-war Germany which has become for varying types of victim (some of whom are also co-responsible for the débâcle) uninhabitable. For some - those not co-responsible, for example - wider vistas offer themselves beyond Germany's frontiers - Philipp, Edwin, Behrend and Vlasta, Carla and Washington, and Henriette belong to this group, and most of these are prepared to renew themselves and re-organise their identity elsewhere. Henriette's revulsion recalls Hofmannsthal's:¹⁰¹ "Sie sehnte sich fort aus Europa"(75). The Austrian writer's "ferne gute Länder" have their equivalent here in Henriette's California: "Am stillen Ozean war Frieden, war Vergessen für sie. Die Wellen waren das Symbol der ewigen Wiederkehr ... die Pazifische See gab ihr etwas von der Ruhe und Sicherheit der Kreatur, die sich dem Augenblick hingibt, ihre Trauer wurde eine in die offene Weite hinausschwingende Melancholie ... es war nicht Zufriedenheit, es war Bescheidung, was sie erfüllte, etwas wie Schlaf, die Bescheidung auf das Haus ... auf diesen einen ... erreichten Punkt in der Unendlichkeit"(75-76). The Romanticism of Caspar Friedrich is again recalled in the 'Melancholie' and the 'offene Weite', the ocean and its eternal recurrence. In a world where the past is best forgotten, and the future

insecure, if not

threatening, (Andersch had spoken of "dem schmalen Raum zwischen einer apokalyptischen Vergangenheit und dem Alptraum eines nahen Untergangs",¹⁰² and Martin Walser of "die aus Drohung gemästeten Horizonte"¹⁰³), the Jewess has come to terms with the passing moment of time, is content with whatever security it can bring - one of the positive fruits of an age of turmoil; the existential abandon or unconcern of 'die Kreatur' has also Romantic associations - with Kleist and de Vigny. Henriette will not, can not return to her American husband in Germany, but awaits him in Paris. The view of the Tuileries cannot rival the 'Hellenic-Prussian' architecture she once loved as a child. Her mother, already before the inevitable fate, was "im Schatten von so viel Preussentum unselbständig und willenlos verkümmert", her father, 'korrekt, stäubchenfrei', preserved the rules of decorum, forbade her to shout after the boys in the street - "das geht nicht". What was the point of this respectability? What was the point of the correct attire? Philipp ponders on the facade of a Jesuit church, it was "human, klug und von karnevalistischer Ausgelassenheit. Wohin aber hatten Humanität und Klugheit und schliesslich noch Ausgelassenheit geführt?"(174) Sometimes the question is presented by the indirect language of irony, by a succession of items prefaced by the same repetitive refrain, which reduces their totality to an absurdity; in the following example the anaphora 'es ging/es ging nicht' introduces a miscellany of successive comments and observations on events in Henriette's and her parents' lives, which range from veiled satire on narrow and life-denying puritanical morality, details of what an aspiring actress in a Prussian family might or might not do, to a disappearance to a concentration-camp. The latter is presented as merely a final social event, its relation to foregoing items is left to the reader to ascertain, the anaphora conveys the removal of an Oberregierungsrat, still - another unnerving repetition - "korrekt, stäubchenfrei" and his distressed wife to their deaths ("die Gesichtslosigkeit des Schicksals") as a chronological termination of a series

in which no particular meaning, pattern or organic relationship is discernible. What occurred depended on whether 'es ging' or 'ging nicht'; some items merit enumeration:

Es ging, dass sie den Reinhardt-Preis als beste Schülerin ihres Jahrgangs bekam; es ging nicht, dass sie in Süddeutschland ... die Liebhaberin in den Freiern von Eichendorff spielte. Es ging, dass sie ... mit einer Emigrantentruppe in Zürich, Amsterdam und New York tingelte. Es ging nicht, dass sie irgendwo eine unbefristete Aufenthaltbewilligung ... ein Dauervisum bekam. Es ging, dass sie mit anderen Mitgliedern der Tingeltruppe aus dem Deutschen Reich ausgebürgert wurde. Es ging nicht, dass der korrekte Oberregierungsrat weiter im Museum arbeitete ... Es ging, dass sie in Los Angeles ... die Teller abwusch. Es ging nicht, aus Berlin der Tochter Geld zu schicken ... Es ging, dass sie, aus dem Tellerwischjob entlassen, auf der Strasse stand ... hungrig die Einladung eines fremden Mannes annahm ... Es ging nicht, dass ihr Vater seinen Namen Friedrich Wilhelm Cohen behielt, es ging, dass er Israel Cohen genannt wurde ... Es ging, dass sie zu den ersten Juden gehörten, die abtransportiert wurden ... man hörte nichts mehr von ihnen ... (74-75).

Henriette has found her way, her escape, her 'Bescheidung' in America. Escape beyond Germany's frontiers, a new relationship in which individuals see each other as such and thus liberate themselves from the past and from social conventions, a gesture of defiance against orthodox opinion or the 'system' - these are the avenues along which some characters find a measure of hope and freedom. Part of Philipp's attraction to Kay, the American schoolmistress, is similar to what Richard's girl was seeking in Americans; "Nicht das Mädchen, die Freiheit verführte ihn"(219). "Ich will gar nicht sie, ich will das andere Land, ich will die Weite, ich will die Ferne, einen anderen Horizont, ich will die Jugend, das junge Land, ich will das Unbeschwerte, ich will die Zukunft und das Vergängliche, den Wind will ich ..."(229) Conventional Romantic symbols abound in the writer's imaginings of a world where the past and the present can be obliterated and discounted; the young alone have a future, they lack the burdens of guilt, of responsibility, of possessions, of hardened beliefs and encrusted prejudice. (Kay, for her part, impelled by "Trotz ... Über-

druss an der Reisegesellschaft ... die Erregung der Fremde'" and longing for "Romantik ... dem Ungewöhnlichen ... Abenteuer ... Degeneration ... Opfer, Hingabe ..." was bound for the disenchantment awaiting any hungry enthusiast of Koeppen's). The 'Vergängliche' element in Philipp's list of desiderata above deserves attention. Here the alienating features we have associated with the breakdown of tradition, rootedness, continuity and inherited identity in society are welcomed - just as new cosmopolitan attitudes and forms of behaviour were welcomed by Koeppen when he left the suffocating provinces for Berlin. For in the end it was nationalism, and not cosmopolitanism which seized and destroyed Germany, and whose aftermath is now lying heavy on the German people. Philipp is approaching here an anarchistic nihilism, redolent of the call to critical scrutiny and freedom made by Andersch after the war; the latter demands a "kritische Untersuchung aller Wertsysteme, die uns von den grossen Weltmächten sowohl wie vom Nationalismus präsentiert werden". He scorns those who use ethical principles and postulates to prepare for "die tiefste Entwürdigung des Menschen: den Krieg"; he proposes, "ein temporärer Nihilismus wäre nicht das Schlechteste" in view of the abortive tedium of 'werthaltig' literature.¹⁰⁴ It is as though the intellectual, Philipp, can no longer inhabit or tolerate fixed positions or entrenched beliefs and values; for him, as for the author, the latter erect frontiers and create preconceptions. These in turn are unrealistic and irrelevant for our world of restless change and flux, in which uncertainty and doubt are more fitting human responses, and all 'truths' and convictions have lost their absolute character.

One of Philipp's diatribes - delivered as usual by sustained interior monologue, 'erlebte Rede', direct speech, indirect question (all within the monologue) - is directed at the society which demands dedication to one party or principle, one truth or ideology. Like André Gide, Koeppen is conscious of what is omitted, un-experienced by reason of choice,

what possibilities remain untested. Gide's individualism, though more optimistic than Koeppen's, finds an echo in the latter's work: "Jette mon livre; dis-toi bien que ce n'est là qu'une des mille postures possibles en face de la vie."¹⁰⁵ Polarised fronts are for politicians and journalistic hacks who think in "längst jedes Begriffes baren Schlagworten"(174). Gerd Gaiser has commented on public language and on the generalised unrealities it incorporates: "If a language is forced to become all-inclusive; if its terms and expressions are bandied about rapidly within a society whose external homogeneity cloaks a multitude of inner divergencies, then the ideas which are associated with the words inevitably grow more inexact, colourless, and even contradictory ... Such words are similar to currency that has been taken off the gold standard and allowed to rush headlong into inflation."¹⁰⁶ The death of the language reflects the death of human individuality. "Sie sahen feste, unverrückbare Fronten, abgesteckte Erdstücke, Grenzen, ..." (174) Man is seen as a member of a football club to which he has surrendered himself from birth. "Sie irrten: die Front war nicht hier und nicht dort und nicht nur bei jenem Grenzpfahl. Die Front war allüberall, ob sichtbar oder unsichtbar, und ständig wechselte das Leben seinen Standort zu den Milliarden Punkten der Front. Die Front ging quer durch die Länder, sie trennte die Familien, sie lief durch den Einzelnen: zwei Seelen wohnten in jeder Brust ..." The pluralistic society contains the pluralistic individual; as Theo Stamm has observed: "Der Mensch hat (in diesen Dichtungen) aufgehört, ein In-dividuum, ein Unteilbares zu sein."¹⁰⁷ Given the picture of an aimless and disoriented world which has lost its certitudes and seen that former values do not correspond to new-found realities, this pluralistic conception is presented here as a force for liberation at a time when old fronts are seeking to re-align themselves, old heresies to be resurrected, a frontier-consciousness to re-establish itself in the minds of men. E.M. Forster's views on the human condition are in many ways akin to Koeppen's - in particular, in his views on

the necessary illusions for society to continue to survive, on Force, on Belief, ("I do not believe in Belief"¹⁰⁸), on Great Men, ("They produce a desert of uniformity around them and often a pool of blood too"¹⁰⁹), on rulers, ("The more highly public life is organised the lower does its morality sink"¹¹⁰); his stress on individual relationships as having prior significance and value, i.e. truth, over the public domain - "I hate the idea of causes, and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should ... betray my country"¹¹¹, is analogous to Koeppen's view of new positions and alignments, new loyalties and relationships cutting across imposed public demarcations, "die Front ... trennte die Familien". This is relatable to worthier conceptions of 'der Mensch' - Carla's new acceptance of her father and his relationship with Vlasta is prompted by the realisation, "Sie waren Menschen. Menschen dachten anders." (208) It is also relatable to a more sceptical epistemology. Philipp is less 'wetterwendisch' than most, 'leidlich immun gegen Verführungen', (175), but "selbst er hätte ... mehr als tausendmal am Tag seine Meinung zu den Verhältnissen in der Welt ändern können." (174) At one level, the secrets and strategies of rulers remain hidden from the masses - "alle wurden sie ständig belogen und betrogen", at another, the rulers are themselves at a loss - "und die Auguren, die sie belügen und betrügen, waren nicht weniger blind als die einfachen Leute" (175). One of the reasons why Philipp qua writer "kam mit der Zeit nicht zurecht" (22) is the speedy and incoherent succession of unrelated events, and its effect upon the artist's apprehension of the world and the 'Verwandlung der Welt'¹¹² into a literary creation - Koeppen talks of his own engagement with less tractable reality, having got under way, "kommt die Weltgeschichte daher und macht mit ihren viel grelleren Farben meine Manuskripte zunichte".¹¹³ It is thus an epistemological decision, as well as an existential humanitarian one, to tolerate all opinions except those of intolerance, all truths which expose to the

people "wie billig man sie kaufen wollte"(175), "ich spiele immer die lächerlichen Rollen, ich bin der alte Tolerante", refusing to play for any team 'im Hemisphärenfussball". He enjoys the defector - 'Verrat aus Idealismus' (italicised) - who "die Karten etwas durcheinanderbringt", causing consternation amongst those who think they have all the leading cards to play. Understandably, Axel Kaun sees this novel as a "selbstbewussten Kontrapunkt einer unvoreingenommenen Individualität gegen die langsam über den ganzen Erdball kriechende Kollektivgesinnung."¹¹⁴ For Keetenheuve, as for Philipp, the open horizon, the "Intuition des Augenblicks" (284), the readiness to agree with a government, if that intuition demanded it, against which one stands technically 'in opposition', offer a greater chance of social salvation. The part of the day most enjoyed by the writer is what Parisians call 'l'heure bleue', when at dusk shops close, workers leave factory and office, an interval of 'relative freedom', 'die Stunde des Träumens', when the masses are "noch nicht eingefangen von den Ansprüchen der Gewohnheit und dem Zwang der Familie. Die Welt hing in der Schwebe. Alles schien möglich zu sein."(173) Work, habit, custom even family, are 'Zwang', they trammel the human spirit, subordinate it to convention, to the 'system'.

This Weltbild relates integrally, in turn, to the new literary forms and stylistic devices Koeppen cherishes in the 'international tradition'. The disintegration of conventional, classical narrative techniques belongs to the same attack upon system, normative values, a closed world reflected in a closed narrative. As Trommler succinctly expresses it: "Die Erfahrung ist durch keine vorgegebene Norm mehr strukturiert."¹¹⁵ Experience takes on new, wider dimensions, these are often registered in subjective domains, such as the subconscious, where reality is interiorised, complex, uncontrolled and uncontrollable. The so-called narrative is opened out to receive all forms of experience and - since thought is subconscious as well as conscious - the recording of that experience; Konrad Kurz comments:

"Wenn die Reflexion und denkerische Analyse überhand nimmt, wird die Fabel zum Problem."¹¹⁶ Trommler sees extending from Faulkner through Gide, Woolf, Mann and on to Beckett a rich gamut of new possibilities of expression: "In ihr löst sich die Realität aus der Determination des wissenschaftlich-konstatierenden Denkens und wird wieder zum Entwurf, an dem der einzelne teilhat."¹¹⁷ Reality is seen as merely one of many possibilities; as in the desired political arena, so in the literary imaginative creation (and not merely reconstruction) of reality, frontiers and demarcations are disposed of. The lives of characters become 'Entwürfe', like Keetenheuve's. The novel becomes 'reality in progress', "wo das Wirkliche sich ereignet, wo es noch nicht determiniert ist".¹¹⁸ Significantly, Trommler considers that the new Weltbild and the new literary forms associated with it are themselves antiideological, they resist all normative constructions, real or ideal, of society - "Der Roman ist in dieser Form darum mehr als Wagnis, er ist Argernis."¹¹⁹

Behrend and Vlasta cherish the hope of better things by a total severance from the past and its associations. This involves a collision with the prevailing mores, they were happy 'gegen die Welt', "sie hatten den Kreis des Vorurteils, der sie einengen wollte, gesprengt." (199) Love had transformed them, had overcome, as E.M. Forster would have it, national and military loyalties - she had helped him to escape the invading Russians when the German armies were fleeing Bohemia. "Vlasta hatte sich von allem losgesagt ... Behrend hatte sich von seinem ganzen bisherigen Leben losgesagt ... sie waren frei." (200) This freedom is attempted by Emilia - and achieved - during a momentary gesture of impetuous generosity; "sie suchte die Freiheit. Für einen Augenblick wenigstens wollte sie frei sein" (165). The seedy, deadening parsimoniousness of the pawnbrokers in this novel recall the best pages of Maupassant; Emilia's financial straits bid her sell heirlooms, and precious jewellery, to characters like Schellack whose greed is so pronounced that it triumphs

over his bodily lust for her. He is the unrelenting parasite who feeds on the endemic hunger and deprivation of the early post-war years. His cellar becomes a museum where the relics of history are stored, social misfortune and humiliation recorded - the diamonds Emilia has brought were first bought at the conventional astronomical price by her grandmother from Schellack's father; 'Kommerzienratsschmuck' - 'Nichts wert' says Schellack. To endow Kay with the pearls, who is also seeking the illusion of a bargain, would confound the pawnbroker, and release Emilia however temporarily, from enslavement to material necessity and satisfaction. The higher satisfaction would be gratuitous freedom, the freedom of Gide's acte gratuit. "Sie wollte eine freie Tat tun, die von keinem Zwang und keiner Notwendigkeit bestimmt und mit keiner Absicht verbunden war, ausser der Absicht, frei zu sein; auch dies war keine Absicht, es war ein Gefühl." (165)

A highly emotional encounter takes place. The existentialist deed has produced for both participants (Kay gives Emilia a hat in remembrance) an opportunity to rebel, happiness consists in "gegen Vernunft und Sitte zu rebellieren." After all, for Emilia Vernunft and Sitte, the Schellacks, the mindless, imperialistic materialism of the society she saw around her, - and of which she had been a part herself - had not provided any form of liberation in which she could have confidence. Even now she knows, as the reader of Koeppen knows, this moment and its joy cannot last: "Sie war frei. Das Glück würde nicht währen." But the fleeting sensation, involving a heightened dimension of personal relationship, releases her from the realm of time and necessity.

Susanne's salvation is with Odysseus, the other union of white with black. She already lives on the fringes of society, frequents the sleazy bars - in an atmosphere of 'Schweiss, Unsauberkeit, Bratwurstrauch, Tabakschwaden, Alkoholdunst, Pissgeruch, Zwiebelbeize und schalem Menschenatem' (161), she is "eine Blüte von Gerlainduft in einer Unratgrube" (she has borrowed Messalina's perfume, the wife of 'Superstar' Alexander; the

latter invited her to one of the never-ending parties, and abandoned her to his wife and her Lesbian throng). Alexander's domestic scene as well as his own identity are presented as a perversion of civilised living and relationships. To the world he is the celluloid opiate, lulling the bored, exhausted and deprived populace into mental slumber with illusions of 'Erzherzogliebe ein Erlebnis auch für Sie'. The gulf between the symbolism of his screen attire and the hollow shell it covers is strongly and savagely emphasised: "Der Erzherzog wurde ... hergestellt. Hier ein Orden, da ein Band, ein Kreuz, ein strahlender Stern, Ketten der Macht, das Goldene Vlies ... zum Lob und Ruhm des Erlösers, ... zur Förderung des Glaubens ... zur Vermehrung guter Sitte ... Alexander schwitzte. Übelkeit quälte ihn. Das Blech ... engte ihn ein."(pp.12-13). He is of no use to Susanne, as all his love-performances are on the screen. Of any other performance he is incapable. "In Alexander war keine Wollust. Er war nur müde. Er hatte es satt ... Satt das geborgte Heldentum"(158). During the war he filmed the part of an air ace - "Er fürchtete sich schon, wenn er eine Verkehrsmaschine benutzen sollte." Air raids drove him to a bunker for V.I.P.'s, which was closed to 'Landser auf Urlaub'. Hitler Youth sought his autograph as they cleared away bomb debris. The inflated public image alienates the wearer from his true self, and from normal people with normal desires, who become corrupted by false promises and the fictions of imagined Paradise - "Man verwechselte Alexander mit seinem Schatten."(158) Identity is no longer certain. More than merely professionally, he is playing a series of rôles. "Wer war er? ... Er war ausgeheldet ... wie ein ausgenommener Kapaun: fett und hohl." For Konrad Kurz this is but one of the many types of anti-hero who belong to the modern novel: "Der degradierte Held wurde vielerorts zum 'star' avanciert. Der 'star' ist eine lautstarke, bildstarke, spektakuläre, weniger anspruchsvolle Supermarktausgabe des einstigen 'Helden', ein Held auf Stunden"¹²⁰. What he offers the public recalls the sample of television culture Koeppen mentioned

at the end of his 'Büchnerpreisrede'. So Messalina becomes the predatory, unsatisfied, restless hunter of women, of excitement and fleeting gratification. "Alleinsein war schrecklich"(179). Instant relationships and instant sensations are discovered in a sequence of unsatisfying encounters - this becomes the recurring experience in city life, in the novels and in the travel-books, wherever human flesh is traded and paraded. Like Malraux, Koeppen sees the sexual hunger as a symptom of Western Man's alienation from the deeper springs of his being; a journalist reporting the writer's self-vindication for being so concerned with the carnal appetites: "er betrachte die geschlechtlichen Begierden und Funktionen als etwas sehr Wesentliches unter den offenen und verdrängten Komplexen, ja, an ihnen demonstrierte sich die Einsamkeit und Welttraurigkeit des Menschen auf eine besondere Weise."¹²¹ Messalina is sufficiently corrupted and misdirected that her sexuality becomes class-related; she never loses contact with the 'gute Gesellschaft', the 'gesittete Gesellschaft' was a prop amidst her total, aimless disorientation. From such areas she commutes to those of the 'Proletariat' with which she has "eine vorübergehende Sinnenverbrüderung". Even her sexual sadism is less vulgar than that of the lower classes. The obfuscation which clouds her vision is underlined by reference to Philipp's regret at the puritanism of the working-classes. He regrets equally, with Flaubert, the disappearance of the 'Freudemädchen' who has been replaced by the modern city prostitute, the 'Trauermädchen'. Even in sex - but the connection is establishable - the quality of life has been attenuated.

From the physical and mental perversions of this particular 'show-biz' entourage, Susanne escapes, though no model of virtue herself, and willing to endure a sexual relationship with Alexander if it brought her prestige. In some ways she belonged to the 'Unratgrube' - "sie war von den feinen Leuten enttäuscht"(161). Like all other 'Opfer des Krieges' she had to survive; she steals Odysseus' winnings, Josef becomes an indirect victim

(falsely accused), an absurd ending to an absurd life, she wished to avenge the shabby disenchantment with Alexander, and fate decrees that "man rächt sich immer nur an den Falschen"(171). As the crowd turns on its prey, pursuer and pursued act out their archetypal rôles, and Susanne, half-willing, fearful, and also impelled, driven by natural, historico-mythological forces, is drawn into a powerful, biologically and psychologically highly charged union with Odysseus. A fatum ineluctabile attends this fulfilment; the cycles of repetitiveness are enacted in their unchanging inevitability and are here mythologised. "Susanne war Kirke und die Sirenen ... und vielleicht war sie auch noch Nausikaa ... (dass) andere in Susannes Haut steckten, uralte Wesen; Susanne wusste nicht, wer alles sie war, Kirke, die Sirenen und vielleicht Nausikaa; die Törichte hielt sich für Susanne, und Odysseus ahnte nicht, welche Damen ihm in dem Mädchen begegneten"(162). C.G.Jung would have appreciated the 'collective unconscious' personae at work here. The myths are so powerful that Susanne deludes herself if she believes that she is still in charge of her will. "Sie musste ihm gegen alle Vernunft folgen". Mythology does not ask if a course of action is rational. "Sie war mit Odysseus verstrickt. Sie hatte es nicht so recht gewollt."(169). 'Verstrickung' was used by Washington's parents when the black hero did not return to seek a black girl. Primitive, unconscious, archetypal impulses and drives rule and determine human history; "Aber die Dämonen - wer kannte sie besser als Dostojewski? - die Dämonen und Gott und der Trotz im Kopf und die Revolte im Herzen sind allgewaltiger als des Menschen guter Wille."¹²² Susanne's loyalty nullifies the theft - a true Dostoevskian trait. For in Koeppen's world these unions, though not made in heaven ('es war kein Negerhimmel' said Washington), are made in self-defence against the world. "Susanne musste zu ihm halten, 'wir müssen gegen die Schweine zusammenhalten'. Susanne hasste die Welt, von der sie sich ausgestossen und missbraucht fühlte ... liebte jeden, der sich gegen diese hassenswerte Welt wandte, der ein Loch in ihre kalte

grausame Ordnung schlug. Susanne war treu"(201). As two black and two white limbs entwine each other in perfect unison, snake-like, we know "die Schlange war ein Wesen gegen die Welt."(209).

The writer and intellectual has special problems arising from a changing relationship with society, ranging from the traditional resistance to social and political processes which seek to delimit and control human efforts to assert individuality - this was seen in connection with Philipp's impulse to free himself from all values of permanence - and now extending to a vision of the superfluity of the writer in society, of the obsolescence and irrelevance of the artist's message for a mechanised, rationalised mass-culture and the directionless 'Treibhaus' atmosphere of collectivised living. There are levels of alienation in the situations occupied by Philipp, Edwin, Keetenheuve and Siegfried. But they share a conviction that society does not wish to be changed, apart from responding more avidly to the dreams of the advertising slogans, or that there are no formulae to be discovered to provide the change, and all traditional answers have so far failed. What are the right questions? The psychiatrist, Dr. Behude, metaphorically tranquillises his patients with illusions of 'schöne Urlaubstage' - "Urlaub vom Wahn, Urlaub von der Einbildung, Urlaub von der Angst, Urlaub von der Sucht, Urlaub von den Konflikten"(150). What arouses the modern artist's ire and revolt are the forms and methods by which the 'Urlaubstage' are offered and effected. In any case the writer's alienation allows of no such release: "Er (i.e. Philipp) hatte noch nie in seinem Leben Urlaub gehabt. Das Leben beurlaubte Philipp nie"(149). He had brought Emilia from the realm of "das ewige Recht des Besitzes" to an antithetical situation, "das Reich der Intellektualität, der Armut, des Zweifels, und der Gewissensnot."(225). Where intellect is wealthy, runs the implication, it has sold itself to the Devil, to the advertisers, the false prophets (Biblical references are common with Koeppen, as they are with Brecht). It is not wealth or poverty that Edwin (his associations with

T.S. Eliot have been surmised by critics) is concerned with; rather it is the lack of rootedness, of continuity, of belief in the Platonic heritage, which he sees in the resurrected city; the change is too rapid, the foundations must be sand, the new insurance offices are built without reference to any deeper cultural heritage, everything is quickly "aufgeräumt, geordnet, verpflastert, schon wiederhergestellt und grade darum so schrecklich, so hinfällig: es war nie wiedergutzumachen"(47-48).

References to Philipp and Edwin are of course highly autobiographical, though differently so - Koeppen is much nearer to the German writer than to the conveyor of the last remnants of once-prized cultural treasures. With Philipp we are concerned also with the "Schwierigkeiten, zu schreiben" as the modern parlance goes. This is not so much here the justification or otherwise of the poem or novel which might be written after Auschwitz¹²³ (though the point of literature is a related theme), - admittedly, Koeppen is concerned about what can be written after My Lai, or how it can be written, because of the way the media mediate My Lai in the first place¹²⁴ - but rather the problem of apprehending (in several senses of the word) reality, fixing it sufficiently to be able to verbalise it, recognising that in a moment it will have disappeared for ever, rather like the Romanisches Café itself, which was to "sich in Nichts auflösen, als sei es nie gewesen".¹²⁵ The speed with which history becomes buried and forgotten haunts Koeppen and is an essential element of his sense of the absurd; but it has its fascination: "Keine Sekunde ist auszuschöpfen. Nicht die Dürre, die Fülle ist es, die erschreckt ... Die meisten Einfälle verschwinden wieder ..." ¹²⁶ And again we read: "... ich war unruhig, es ereignete sich nichts, ich erlebte viel, ich konnte es nicht fassen, es entglitt mir, hundert Titel, es raste die Zeit." ¹²⁷ (Koeppen in the earlier interview goes on to explain how - as a result of this speedy and unremitting succession of events, impressions and 'Einfälle', his conception of Der Tod in Rom changed once he found himself inside the Italian capital. ¹²⁸ In this

connection one thinks of Trommler's awareness of the changes going on in the author himself who becomes "einer historischen Erscheinung, die sich von Werk zu Werk verändert und nicht in wenigen Formeln fixierbar ist."¹²⁹ We shall have more to say about this later, and the connection between Koeppen's own abandonment of the novel-form and the refusal to become 'fixierbar' will be observed). In one of the characteristic exercises in anamnesis Philipp recalls having dreamt as a Gymnasiast the destruction of his own town (in Masuren), school and all - "Die Dekoration des Traums war ins Leben gestellt"(23), the dream had been fulfilled; as in Martin Walser's attempts to recapture the past in Das Einhorn, reality eludes the seeker, "Zugleich raste diesselbe Zeit, dieser Augenblick ... glich dem Wind ... messbar durch List, aber niemand konnte sagen, was er da mass, ... entfloh ungreifbar"(23). Philipp has no conservative desire to maintain the established order or disorder of society as it stands, and some of the ambiguities of his position have been underlined, naturally analogous to those we have associated with the author himself. But his encounter with Kay brings out the underlying chagrin and bitterness of the writer's position; Kay has been 'inoculated' with traditional assumptions concerning Germany's 'Dichter und Denker' (a sure sign that all is not up-to-date in the American educational system, or the real truth dare not be told, or cannot be conveyed - "Rilke starb sechsundzwanzig, wen haben sie jetzt?"(55) she asks herself). She mistakes Philipp for Edwin - countless ironies suggest themselves, or at least feels she is addressing a 'Dichter' (instead of a salaried reporter of an imminent lecture with an expense-account). The false identification and the false assumptions lead to a scene whose comic irony and sardonic humour remind one of some of the best features of Koeppen's writing; they also tell us something about Philipp. He is attracted to her "unbefangenen Achtung vor Werten, die auch Philipp achtete, Qualitäten, die er besessen und verloren hatte. Ein bitterer Reiz lag in allem Missverständnis mit Kay"(107). His changed situation is revealed through the

language - formerly "ursprünglich auf einen Posten gerufen, einen ehrenvollen Posten", phraseology employable by (say) Emil Staiger, with particular stress on 'ursprünglich', he now finds "dass ihm schwindlig wurde und dass er gar nichts beobachten konnte ... nur ein Wogen sah"(24). In the raging sea of events, artificial chronology divides time into locatable units, "schwankendes Menschenmal auf den ungebändigten Wellen", a certain event is accorded particular importance, but even this is doomed by its own transitoriness: "aus dem Wasser der Unendlichkeit hob sich ein gefrorenes, nichtssagendes, dem Gelächter schon überantwortetes Bild".

His practical ineptitude, roughly corresponding to Koeppen's own is illustrated in the scene with the typewriters, another of the great 'humoristisch' samples of Koeppen's narrative art. It was consonant with the "dürre Gräfin Anne's" lineage, one which had, as a 'politische Kulissenfamilie' connived at Hitler's ascendancy only to be destroyed by a movement speaking in the name of the Volk, and which had connived at the perversion of Geist for the sake of that same ascendancy, that she could offer opportunities to the 'writer' to sell an adhesive patent, if he could not first succeed in writing a film scenario for 'Erzherzogliebe'. This aristocratic version of Frau Behrend, "eine überaus geschäftstüchtige, gewissenfreie, herzlose und aller Welt bekannte Dame" lacks the sensitivity and integrity which would hinder her commercial enterprises. It is this very endowment which becomes part of Philipp's consciousness of his superfluosity. On one level it is a case of "Mir fehlt der Sinn für die Wirklichkeit, ich bin eben kein ernster Mann, ich kann das, was alle treiben, einfach nicht ernst nehmen, ich finde es komisch, dem Mann etwas zu verkaufen ..."(60). On another level he has nothing to say to those who sell typewriters, or adhesives for packages, who have this earnestness of purpose in the daily exercise of their duties. For Koeppen too art is a much more serious matter than 'life' or 'Wirklichkeit', and the difficulties of reconciling the two in the contemporary world are expressed at the end of his talk with

Horst Bienek thus: with Brecht he agrees, "Die wir den Boden bereiten wollten für Freundlichkeit, konnten selber nicht freundlich sein."¹²⁹

He adds, by way of explanation, "dass ich die Literatur für eine noch ernstere Sache halte als das Leben". At the end of a series of observations on God and religion, he records the statements of Kierkegaard that the professional clerisy are "ernste Leute", whilst the apostle Paul was 'kein ernster Mann'. He joins forces, "Auch ich bin kein ernster Mann"¹³⁰.

It is as though the professionalisation of life engenders a ludicrous earnestness which kills the spirit of living, or the division of labour severs contact with the concept of the whole. We have the artist's view of this division in a capitalist society, a scathing and disturbing intellectual inquiry into the point or non-point of producing and selling typewriters: "Warum klebt er Plakete? um seine Maschinen zu verschicken, warum verschickt er sie? um Geld zu verdienen, um gut zu essen ... und was tun die Leute mit den Maschinen, die sie bei ihm gekauft haben? sie wollen mit ihnen Geld verdienen ... sie stellen Sekretärinnen an, schauen ihnen auf die Waden und diktieren Briefe"(60). Like Keetenheuve, the questioner and dreamer is 'sicklied o'er by the pale cast of thought'. So the salesman is 'nicht weniger überflüssig und komisch als mich'; the difference is that only the artist is aware of the true nature of the comedy. The salesman can take part in the drama and feel useful; the artist does not relate - "(dass) ich mir's nicht zutraue, den Geschmack der Leute zu ändern"(61). The machines leer at him, waiting for the message they can despatch to the world; "Philipp wusste das Zauberwort nicht ... Er hatte nichts zu sagen ... Die Leute waren verurteilt. Er war verurteilt ... Die Zeit hatte diesen Ort verurteilt. Sie hatte ihn zu Lärm und Schweigen verurteilt. Wer redete ...? Wie Emmy Hermann Göring kennenlernte..."(60). Either a Beckettian near-silence is an apt response, or one adds to the 'eindringliches Rauschen' which crackles through Josef's radio. The more absurd, the more 'komisch' the situation, the less Philipp will have to say.

Keetenheuve has the same problem; from the earliest days, people playing at living, taking themselves seriously, the situations in which this earnestness came into play, were all individual instances of grotesque and abortive attempts to attach importance to events and society, attempts which would soon be 'dem Gelächter überantwortet', to use an earlier image: "In der Schule hatte er, statt dem Lehrer zuzuhören, an Lächerliches gedacht, in den Ausschüssen, im Plenum sah er die würdigen Kollegen wie Clowns in der Manege agieren, und selbst in der Lebensgefahr war ihm das immer auch Groteske der Situation nicht entgangen"(239).

A feeling of guilt also attends the resignation and the awareness of society's rejection of the artist intellectual. Keetenheuve feels guilty at his apparent acceptance of the Kanzler-Demokratie, after having at least emigrated during the Nazi era. Philipp is aware that his 'Gefühlskommunismus' never wrought noble and effective action - he sat in the Romanisches Café instead of going to Spain, and when addressed as 'Genosse' countered with 'Herr Kisch'. The fates of Spartacus, Jesus and Thomas Münzer reinforce the despair. Burckhardt is paraphrased: "mit Leuten dieser Art (i.e. himself) ist kein Staat zu stürzen"(157). He characteristically prefers to express his humanitarian impulses, ineffective though they are, by a hatred of oppression rather than a penchant for social science and dialectical ideology; "immer auf der Seite der Armen sinnlos empört." More concretely, he feels Emilia should be better protected against hardship; "ein versoffenes Gespenst der Verzweiflung, meine Schuld? ja, meine Schuld, Jedermanns Schuld, alte Schuld, Urväterschuld, Schuld von weither ... alles verfehlt"(157). Now, more realistically, the guilt is widened, and the human story is better told - though the confusion in the attribution of guilt and innocence, in the designation of good and evil, becomes intensified; "was war gut und was war böse auf diesem Feld, das sich weit in die Zukunft ausdehnte ...?"(300) asks a world-weary, politics-weary Keetenheuve. The peace desired by Philipp is perhaps not dissimilar to that of Henriette;

both he and Emilia are patients of the psychiatrist, their marriage is described as more a 'Perversität als eine Ehe'(151), "aber grade dass sie beide nicht für eine Ehe taugen kittet sie zusammen" and stream of consciousness images unroll (as an element in the professional treatment itself as well as in the stylistic medium) which betoken the artist's plight, with ironical references to Rilke and Proust, the real as well as the mythical Eve, shades of Hans Castorp, a deep, subconscious yearning for the illusions of childhood, or what the fantasy could salvage of them: "keine Hoffnung, für mich nicht mehr, Behude sagt für mich gäbe es Hoffnung, Rilke-Lyrik; von-einer-Kirche-die-im-Osten-steht, verschwommen, kein Weg, der Osten in mir: die Kinderlandschaft, meine recherche-du-temps-perdu, suchet-so-werdet-ihr-finden, Gerüche, die Bratäpfel, ... das Knirschen der Holzschlitten auf dem Eis, die einsam auf dem See ... tanzende nacktbeinige Eva; Schnee Frieden Schlaf -(157). But the only contact with the past will be through the induced hallucination, and the only sleep for Philipp will be that finally chosen by Keetenheuve himself. The recollection of snow and the attractiveness of winter recurs here when youth is recalled. One suspects this has roots in a more general view of nature and life; the patient rejects the suggestive soothing balm of summer days, "ich hasse Wiesen ... die Natur ist mir unheimlich ... es gibt nichts Böseres als die Natur, nur der Schnee ist schön ..." (150). This is much in line with Koeppen's own 'Naturbild' we discussed earlier, the Nature which is cruel and indifferent to man.¹³¹

The alienation the writer experiences in the stationer's shop is brought to a climax with a simple, disturbing experiment. Philipp tries out the self-recording dictaphone, rehearses an embarrassing opening with Edwin, the comic and bitter irony of which escapes the salesman, and is shaken by the playback of his own voice: "Die Stimme befremdete ihn. Was sie sagte, beschämte ihn. Es war eine Exhibition, eine intellektuelle Exhibition. Er hätte sich auch nackt ausziehen können. Seine eigene

stimme, die Worte ... erschreckten Philipp"(62). This is partly a distortion wrought by technology, the natural voice is interfered with, the playback is an experience in miniature of a 'Lautsprecherkultur', (even though the voice is his own), where language and its message are mutilated by an intervening medium which depersonalises the communication. It was this 'Kultur' which had destroyed Philipp's early work even during the Nazi exploitation of mass impulses and hysteria - "sein erstes Buch war im Lautsprecherbrüllen und im Waffenlärm untergegangen"(108), and the association of the Lautsprecher with the fascist assault on Geist is not accidental. Edwin has a similar daunting experience; this is largely because the technology fails, and thus the whole meeting of one mind with whatever other minds might be present is nullified. "Die Technik rebellierte gegen den Geist"(197). And because, as Edwin realises, and Hofmannsthal might have concurred, "wir sind keine Menschen mehr, keine ganzen Menschen", a communication on the European heritage becomes yet another grotesque incident. A Greek figure is recalled again to stress the decline in the quality of the communication itself - Demosthenes would have needed no 'Blech', 'Draht' or 'Sieb' to exercise his oratorical skills - and the language would have meant the same to the hearers as to the speaker. Horst Krüger suggests to Koeppen that 'Nichtkommunikation' underlies all forms of social and political relationship throughout his work; "Ja ... das ist das Leben"¹³² - to this assent belongs the mechanised standardisation and debasement of language, important for an age marked by the control and the institutionalisation of mass behaviour and responses. (This is one significant reason why the language as well as the whole apprehension of reality in the type of novel we are discussing deviate from cliché and jargon, the public language, to a degree common only to this century: Erich Franzen, an admirer of the new literary experiments, writes: "Die Verfasser moderner Romane werden zu abseitigen Spezialisten ... Weder ihr Weltbild noch ihre Form des Ausdrucks entsprechen den Vorstellungen,

die der Masse als Antrieb dienen.")¹³³ Philipp, whilst witnessing the technical disaster, meditates upon its implications: "Alles zerbricht, wir können uns nicht mehr verständigen, nicht Edwin bedient sich der Lautsprechersprache, oder die Lautsprecher, diese gefährlichen Roboter, halten auch Edwin gefangen: sein Wort ... wird zu dem Weltidiom, das jeder kennt und niemand versteht." (215). Such a language has no meaning for individual relationships; any attempt to transmit the meaning of a cultural heritage, even if this heritage still had a meaning, and a heritage, moreover, which was rooted in the liberal concepts of civilised individualism, is necessarily doomed, - the scathing and amusing irony employed to describe the reception of the lecture illustrates more than a mere divorce between artist and society, it confirms the experience of Chaplin which Philipp recalls whenever he hears a lecture: "Chaplin bemühte sich, seine Gedanken zu äussern, Erkenntnisse zu vermitteln, freundliche und weise Worte in das Mikrophon zu sprechen, aber die freundlichen und weisen Worte stürzten wie Fanfarenstösse, wie laute Lügen und demagogische Parolen aus den Schalltrichtern. Der gute Chaplin ... hörte nur seine Worte ... er lauschte seinem Seelenklang, aber er vernahm nicht das Brüllen der Lautverstärker, es entgingen ihm ihre Simplifikation und ihre dummen Imperative" (216). The speaker was thus astonished to find that his audience at the end was not "zur Besinnlichkeit geführt", but instead "Heil riefen und sich zu prügeln begannen". Geist is again in combat with Ungeist, the former is already, in Edwin's recitation of Virgil, Dante, Aquinas, Goethe and Kierkegaard, reduced to 'Staub und Moder' by the time the words are received, and the Ungeist of the applause, 'des rühmlichen Ruhmbetriebes' (to which Edwin's own vanity is sensitive) is the conventional degrading conclusion (226).

The alienation Philipp feels when playing back the dictaphone, similar to Siegfried's when he hears his taped voice for the first time - "das bin nun ich, dieser aufgeblasene Geck, dieser Lügner, Gleissner und

eitle Fant", - is more than an awareness of the relationship between self and society, it is an alienation from the self as well, and certainly the self when it has been distorted and falsified by the machine.

Heissenbüttel sees the concern with the self and revulsion from it as being germane to Koeppen's whole work. "In dem Moment, in dem das Subjekt sich als etwas Objektiviertes wahrnimmt, wird es durch sich selbst befremdet und beschämt."¹³⁴

We have already observed the autobiographical nature of his writings; and this is confirmed by Heissenbüttel's comments:

"Er ist doch einer Selbstentblössung auf der Spur ... In seinen Figuren sucht er das Selbst auf, um es zugleich blosszulegen und blosszustellen."¹³⁵

But there is also a fear of this exposure and withdrawal from it - for Heissenbüttel, though not necessarily for Koeppen himself, this is one of the keys, and the main one, to an understanding of the author's failure to produce in the last few years the quasi-autobiographical works promised for so long. Since Woolf, Joyce and Faulkner etc. the concern with an analysis of the self and its relation to the world, has been paramount, and as we have seen, the unsystematic novel which creates itself has developed from the increasing doubt that we know anything about the objective reality surrounding us, or about the self which experiences it, or the way it experiences it. Koeppen has expressed his allegiance to these doubters: "Es gab, es gibt vielleicht noch Schriftsteller, die Wirklichkeit einzufangen meinen; wir anderen forschen verzweifelt, was Wirklichkeit sei und wie man sie erzählen könne ... Wer ist 'moi'? Wir wissen es nicht mehr ..."¹³⁶

The reason for the alienation the writer feels in the face of undiscoverable realities is also that the less fathomable self is increasingly involved, 'verstrickt', in the external world, is essentially a part of it, and the novel, the imaginative creation, has the task of uncovering the essence of this relationship (it is the province of the physical and social sciences to present objectivity as they know it, whereas, states Adorno, "der Versuch, das Rätsel des äusseren Lebens zu

dechiffrieren, ... geht über in die Bemühung ums Wesen, das ... doppelt fremd erscheint.")¹³⁷ The very instability and fictitiousness of the self which once, in the time of Balzac and Flaubert, commanded and controlled reality with authorial distance and omniscience ("...unverrückbar war die Distanz des Geschichtenerfinders zu den erfundenen Gegenständen"¹³⁸ affirms Baumgart), relates to, if not derives from the speedy succession of incoherent or unrelated events and impressions which is part of Philipp's dilemma. Adorno elaborates thus: "Das dichterische Subjekt, das der Konventionen gegenständlicher Darstellung sich entschlägt, bekennt zugleich die eigene Ohnmacht, die Übermacht der Dingwelt ein, die inmitten des Monologs wiederkehrt".¹³⁹ Questions of the artist's - or anyone's - identity are involved; Koeppen, "auf der Suche nach dem verlorenen Ich", as his article testifies, is concerned, according to Heissenbüttel, with what happens to the self, eo ipso a fluid element, when it becomes part of the overpowering 'Dingwelt'; the latter enumerates the questions which follow: "wohin geht das Selbst des Subjekts unter, wenn es sich entfremdet, wenn es sich selbst erschreckend ... wird? Wohin verteilt es sich, wenn es, objektiviert, in die Sachen übergeht, und was wird aus der objektiven Welt, in der wir uns trotz allem, unorientiert, befinden? Wie lässt sich das beschreiben, worin ich nur noch ein Teil-Ich bin, aber zu Teilen auch Anderes, wo aber Anderes, Entgegenstehendes auch immer schon etwas von mir enthält ... Was ist rekapitulierbar?"¹⁴⁰

Despite the fellow-feeling of a fellow-author before a microphone, - "sobald ich mir das Mikrofon vor den Mund halte, verstumme ich"¹⁴¹ - and despite an analogous relationship with the world and a sense of its disorder and doom, Koeppen of course has no message, like Edwin, of a Christian, Hellenic and traditionalist flavour, and his presentation of the American writer is not so much a sensitive one as one of comic and mocking banter and also tragic irony. They share an awareness of "das Fragwürdige und Komische der eigenen Existenz"(110), Koeppen is ready to

admire and appreciate the trappings which set the artist apart, and in particular the overtones of asceticism - "er lebte in Zucht, in der strengen Zucht des Geistes"(111), at his desk, "wie ein Weiser Indiens gekleidet"; we recall the author's own appreciation of spiritual and artistic self-discipline: "kein Wort gegen freiwillige Askese und gewolltes Mönchstum! Ich halte sie für die höchsten menschlichen Daseinsformen".¹⁴²

But the desire to stay in 'altmodische Unterkünfte', to sleep in beds once occupied by Platen, Humboldt or Hofmannsthal is not shared by Koeppen, for whom the concept of a European elite is groundless and irrelevant; for Koeppen the barbarism of fascism and totalitarianism, the resurgence of "die vertriebenen Gespenster des Grausam-Absurden"(112) are merely contemporary forms of self-repeating, eternal human folly, whilst for Edwin the new 'Dämon' has simply to be overcome (whilst not lacking its own all the more disturbing 'Genie und Grösse') by a revival of faith in the 'creator Spiritus' of Western civilisation. Some brand of 'Kulturpessimismus' dominates the vision of Munich; it had seen 'Chaos', 'den Sturz in die Ungeschichte'(112), 'das abgeschlagene Haupt der Medusa', and now hovered again over the abyss, with the possibility of remaining true to 'das Alte und immerhin Bewährte' or developing into a Piranesi nightmare of steel and concrete. For Koeppen the myth of the directing force of Dante, Aquinas and Kierkegaard has been debunked - it is illustrated mordantly at the lecture when references to the myth are interspersed by allusions to Alexander's comments on Philipp's sexual potency, the strongly homosexual elements in the audience etc. (There are repeated indications of Edwin's homoerotic tendencies, as well as more general allusions to these 'perverse' instincts being characteristic of literary personalities - Messalina says, "Sie wissen schon, was ich meine, alle Schriftsteller sind so"(108) - and since such proclivities are given an inferior profile in Koeppen's writings, their association with notions of cultural elitism serves further to debase this phenomenon

and manifest its absurdity). Philipp stands nearer to Koeppen; if he were to write at all, it would be a more fitting mediation of present realities. He knows the truth of Edwin's fears - "er sagt uns nicht was er sieht, was er sieht ist furchtbar, er versucht einen Schleier vor sein Gesicht zu ziehen"(219) - but his personal salvation and answer to the vision of Medusa's head is, as we have seen, an attempt to reach or imagine 'die offene Weite ... die Jugend ... das Unbeschwerte'(229), to be rid of all encumbrances of a totally disenchanting past whose cultural ballast did not prevent perdition. The most emblematic divorce between the author and the American writer is visible in the approach to the 'pigeons on the grass'. Edwin attacks Gertrude Stein's image and its metaphorical significance, those who are engaged in "das Sinnlose und scheinbar Zufällige der menschlichen Existenz blosszustellen"(221) - for him pigeons have Thomas Mann's Venetian associations, and are all safe in God's keeping. A direct elitist diatribe is launched against Stein and Hemingway, "Literaten, Boulevardiers, zweitrangige Geister"(220) who in turn charge him with modelling his creations on "der grossen toten Dichtung der grossen und toten Jahrhunderte". And Dr. Behude's reaction to the lecture - a different reaction from the businessmen and dignitaries, the sleeping 'Modeschöpfer', the 'circus' performers (Alexander) - but equally and more profoundly alienated, is that of the disorientated and lost questioner, "wusste Edwin eine Deutung? wusste keine, ... er führte auch nur in eine kalte finstere und ausweglose Gasse"(230).

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style and form, a Weltbild and its expression, language and reality, the one has always related to, if not mirrored the other, though it is more in this century than others that we have become aware of the relationship, - a writer like Heissenbüttel leans to the view that the language is a considerable part of the reality eo ipso. Susan Sontag affirms pithily: "... every style embodies an epistemological decision, an interpretation of how and what we perceive".¹⁴³ (She comments on some of Gertrude Stein's stylistic features which are of interest in view of Edwin's concern).¹⁴⁴ Since Bergson, Freud and Jung, new conceptions of human consciousness, of Time, of reality past and present, and how reality past influences and inhabits reality present, have transformed science and art, its interpreter. The perceiving consciousness is seen as part of the perceived reality, and the activity of the consciousness is as fluid and unstable as the perceived reality itself. Heissenbüttel relates this new situation to the medium of expression: "Der Unterschied zwischen dem, was ich als mich bezeichne und dem, was ich nicht bin, verwischt. Wie wird geredet? Formelhaft. Wie reagiert? Wie auf Signale. Gar nicht (oder von aussen her) orientiert. Kann ich darüber reden?"¹⁴⁵ And earlier, in the same context; "(dass) das alte Grundmodell der Sprache von Subjekt-Objekt-Prädikat nicht mehr standhält ... es ist bereits starr ... abgenutzt."¹⁴⁶ Private and public languages, like private and public relationships, have become more than ever divorced from each other. The divided selves of the writer are inextricably bound up with the public arena, itself a miscellany of divided entities. The language of social discourse is the 'Lautsprecher-sprache', and this has lost all important and personal meaning. Hence, says Heissenbüttel, "Kann ich darüber reden?" In the same volume where he is commenting upon his own poetry, he points like Koeppen to the epistemological problems underlying the newly evolving linguistic structures: "... die Erfahrung, von der geredet wird, (steht) ausserhalb der eindeutigen Subjekt-Objekt-Beziehung. Nur die Formulierung, die eins der Glieder im

alten Grundmodell offen lässt, vermag darüber etwas zu sagen. Zusammenhänge bilden sich nicht in ... logisch-syntaktischer Verflechtung, sondern aus Nebenbedeutungen, aus Zweideutigkeiten ..."¹⁴⁷ (my emphasis). Reality breaks the bounds of a hypotactic ordering of the world; the first person narrator - used in fact very little in Koeppen's novels, where the narrator holds the threads of the 'non-plot' together, suggesting disorder paradoxically through contrived order - is brought into play to illustrate the delimited view the individual necessarily has of the world; the loneliness of this limited subjective perception was voiced by Virginia Woolf: "To believe that your impressions hold good for others is to be released from the cramp and confinement of personality."¹⁴⁸ But Woolf also found the "materialists" wanting in their failure to capture the inward vision; "Whether we call it life of spirit, truth or reality, this, the essential thing, has moved off, or on, and refuses to be contained any longer in such ill-fitting vestments as we provide."¹⁴⁹ This volatile, explosive material which we are, like the sensations we receive, resembles Schnakenbach's world (a science teacher, now another of Dr. Behude's patients): "eine mikrophysikalische Welt, bis zum Bersten angefüllt mit dem Kleinsten, und freilich, sie barst, barst fortwährend, explodierte ... entfloh in den endlich unendlichen Raum"(T.G.217). Though the threads of the past and of history are gathered up in the often italicised stream of interior monologue, the emphasis is on the rich activity of the present moment which alone is graspable, if anything is at all; Wolfgang Kayser rightly sees this focus of attention as being the key to the new forms and structures: "Richtet sich die Darstellung konsequent auf den erfüllten Augenblick, so wird deutlich, wie sich nicht nur Begriffe wie 'plot' auflösen müssen ... sondern auch alles Dauerhafte in der Vorstellung vom Menschen".¹⁵⁰ This concentration on the moment is an element in Koeppen's own appreciation of Gertrude Stein's work: she carried the novel, he ventures, beyond Proust to our own day, "unsere Zeit, die, je universaler unsere Raumvorstellung,

je unendlicher unser Vergangenheits- und Zukunftswissen wird, nur noch im winzigsten, allenfalls im Augenblick zu begreifen ist."¹⁵¹ But this essentially fragmentary constitution of the world can be richly and momentarily rewarding, even though it is also alienating, and "entspricht unserer bitteren Erfahrung".¹⁵² It is favourable to the traveller, whom Andersch in his own travel-books calls 'ein Jäger des Augen-Blicks.'¹⁵³

In a review-article on the magnum opus of Proust, Koeppen brings art and science together, making forays into the realm of intellectual history; a kinship is established between concepts of relativity in physics and the relativisation of the situation of the narrator in literature. Since Proust, writes the reviewer, the premises and procedures of literary creation are differently structured: "Sie (i.e. die Gesetze der Dichtung) haben sich geändert, wie sich die Gesetze der Physik, unsere Vorstellungen von Raum und Zeit, geändert haben, und zwischen der neuen Physik und dem neuen Roman nach Proust gibt es Berührungen ... die der Ausdruck eines neuen Weltempfindens, eines gewandelten Daseinsgefühls, eines anderen Sehens, erweiterter Möglichkeiten des Denkens (sind)."¹⁵⁴ No reality is "objective" any more, events depend on the observer, the Ich is inseparable from the processes in which the observed reality behaves. Modern events and situations, when experienced and studied, are, as Nathalie Sarraute corroborates, "wie jene Phänomene der modernen Physik so empfindlich und flüchtig, dass kein Lichtstrahl sie beleuchten kann, ohne sie nicht auch gleichzeitig zu stören und zu deformieren."¹⁵⁵ There is a sense here in which the controllability of events decreases, cosmic movement is unfettered and unpredictable - like the novel which creates itself, is 'reality in progress'.¹⁵⁶ Erich Kahler describes the modern scientific picture, as well as the new social and psychological structures the novelist is confronted with, with peremptory brevity: "Es gibt nichts mehr, das wir als restlos stabil annehmen dürfen"¹⁵⁷ (*italicised*). Kahler also significantly reminds us of the inadequacy of the naturalistic

empiricism, "unser Sensuomorphismus",¹⁵⁸ which cannot cope with a world whose essence is now 'Untersinnlich', like the stone, "unser letzter Anhalt an Festigkeit und Stabilität", which is revealed as simply a practical makeshift concept hiding "nichts als Bewegung und Verwandlung". Schnakenbach, in Tauben im Gras, ironically a figure of fun dependent on the psychiatrist's drugs, is the scientist for whom "das überlieferte Weltbild" is obsolete jargon. His speculations take us into the more rarefied air of theological metaphysics, but the reductionist formulae tend in the end to computerise the Deity. First is the dismissal of the old cosmos, and the old society which based its rules on finite and orderly systems; Einstein, Planck and de Broglie taught Schnakenbach to see a world "in der Gottes Austragsstüblein aufgehoben war. Entweder gab es Gott gar nicht oder Gott war ... überall ... gestaltlos ... eine Formel, ein Abstraktum, vielleicht Einsteins Theorie."(217) The world is in flux, we are moving collections of atoms with explosive power, "es kam auf die Betrachtungsweise an, erklären liess es sich nicht"(218). The observer with a comprehensive view of the situation expressible in the subject-object relationship, like the omniscient narrator, is an unrealistic anachronism. "... vielleicht hatte der Mensch abgedankt" ponders Schnakenbach. This would no doubt depend on what we are to make of the "allerkleinste Kraftstationen von allergrösster Kraft" which we are, "wie Sand in diese Form geweht, die wir unser Ich nennen"(230). This is a return to the image of the pigeons, "wir sind ganz zufällig hier", but fascinating as well as disturbing for the novelist is the behaviour of the pigeons, the unpredictable atomic and sub-atomic activity, the conscious and sub-conscious energies which create their own reality; "Nicht die Dürre, die Fülle ist es, die erschreckt."¹⁵⁹ Change and movement are the essence of the new physics, the new Weltbild, the new prose of the twentieth century. How is this demonic activity to be seized, known, recorded? "Falscher Schein der unerforschten Wirklichkeit, der schreit, der zuckt, der brennt und nicht verstanden werden kann und in jedem Moment wie nicht

geschehen ist."¹⁶⁰ Perhaps only the monumental diary capable of registering impulses and experiences as on an electroencephalograph, an instrument, "das nicht Wörter, sondern das Denken selbst aufzeichnete. Ein ganzes Leben lang und mit allen Empfindungen und Sensibilitäten ... Der Dichter ist ein unausgeschöpftes Wesen."¹⁶¹ Hence we encounter, in the whole of the trilogy of novels, in numerous later articles and travel writings, long, sustained tracts of hardly punctuated prose; characters, 'plots' or non-plots, and syntax are all open-ended, uncircumscribed - one critic informs us that many passages in, if not the whole of Tauben im Gras were originally intended to be "völlig ohne Satzzeichen".¹⁶²

But with Koeppen's first post-war novel a Joycean paradox also occurs. Wolfgang Kayser quotes Joyce (in translation) as introducing a supplementary aesthetic which will highlight the eternal, seething flux and reflux and yet enclose it in a framework of artistic order even though this order may itself be based on a structure of simultaneity; uncircumscribed experience, thought and sensation are surveyed in a circumscribed span of time. "Irgendwo münden die fragmentarischen Augenblicke in eine Ganzheit, erscheinen die zusammenhanglosen Momente als Teil eines weiten Zusammenhangs." It is the artist's task to assemble the sensations and impressions in such a way as to "die chaotische Strömung von Vorfällen und Eindrücken in eine zeitlose Zuständlichkeit zu überführen."¹⁶³ Despite the endless juxtaposition of discrete narrative features, caricature, reportage, and subjective analysis at various levels of consciousness, the haphazard nature of experience, the chance assaults of outrageous (mis)fortune are conveyed by film techniques, a constant switching of the camera to take in several threads of action, constantly interrupted and constantly renewed in an overall framework of simultaneity. And Bungter comments appropriately: "Das scheinbar zufällige, planlose Sich-Überkreuzen und Durcheinanderlaufen spiegelt sich in der formalen Anlage ... Was auf den ersten Blick unübersichtlich wirkt, ermöglicht doch die Übersicht über das Ganze, indem es

verhindert, dass ein Einzelschicksal in den Vordergrund tritt ... Dabei
 aber sprechen wir nicht mehr von der Unordnung, sondern von der Zuordnung."¹⁶⁴
 (my emphasis). No values, no event and no character has more significance
 than any other in the human story, a situation reflected in the novel,
 where the 'camera' is cruelly indifferent and neutral. We must bear in
 mind that the apparent order contrived with consummate skill is a
 reflection of disorder, disorientation and alienation. One can only cite
 a few examples of the technique involved. Repeated phrases link different
 sections, as they do in Joyce's Ulysses:

Die Stimme war jetzt sehr eindringlich ... Josef
 verstand nur hin und wieder ein Wort ... ferne
 Namen, fremde Namen ... Moskau, Berlin, Tokio,
 Paris -
 In Paris schien die Sonne. Paris war unzerstört. (72)

The scene has moved to the Paris of Henriette, and the story of her life.

Die Händlerin lüftete die Käseglocke ... ein
 Fäulnisgestank erhob sich.
 Philipp dachte an die Oderbrücke ... eine Brücke
 unter Glas ... Philipp rief: "Jetzt sind wir unter
 der Käseglocke." (148)

Richard's experience in the shop has changed to the journey of Philipp and
 his mother to the Eastern sector. Since the mother hates this sector now,
 the bell-jar has unpleasant associations in both contexts.

... Rilke-Lyrik, recherche-du-temps-perdu, ... die
 einsam auf dem See tanzende Eva: Schnee Frieden
 Schlaf -
 Schlaf, aber keine Heimkehr ... Wie ein schwerer
 Stein ... sank Alexander in seiner Wohnung in Schlaf. (157)

The neurotic yearnings of a psychiatrist's patient are 'absurdly' juxtaposed
 with the very different kind of emptiness and weariness of a played-out
 shell of an actor.¹⁶⁵ There are 106 sections in the novel, of which about
 half are successively related in this manner. Another section relates
 Washington's concern for his unborn child, which concludes: "Er brauchte
 Geld. Gleich -" This is followed by: "Gleich aus der Linie sechs in die
 elf." This is the beginning of Carla's journey to the abortionist - the
 whole section is characteristically devoted to her past and dreams for the

future (as H. S. Reiss would comment: "Die Abschweifung wird ein organischer Teil des Geschehens"¹⁶⁶). At the end of the section we meet the same refrain: "Dr. Frahm musste ihr beistehen, musste es nehmen, gleich -" (53). The sections 20 to 28 (pp. 45-58) are all semi-biographical studies of characters and their history achieved by the usual mixture of direct speech, 'erlebte Rede', and a 'düsteres Selbstgespräch', as Koeppen once remarked of the mood and impulse of his later 'autobiographical' writings; but they are all linked by the feature of the traffic lights, where they are all stationary waiting for the go-signal (the motif of vehicles driving off in various directions suggests even more effectively than would pedestrians the separateness and 'Entfremdung' of the actors in the social comedy). An anadiplosis may be a repetition separated by a whole section;

Sie gingen hinein, gingen in die alte zerstörte
wiederauferstandene 'Glocke', Arm in Arm, tranken:
der Schaum lag wie Schnee auf ihren Lippen ... (58)
- wie Schnee auf den Lippen. Sie wischten sie ab
und tauchten wieder in die irdenen Krüge ... (62)

The incoherence of disorder, the incoherence of simultaneity produce the illusion of unity and continuity, "die ebenso äusserlich bleibt wie die meisten Begegnungen zwischen den Gestalten des Romans."¹⁶⁷ Koeppen's own fascination with the truth of simultaneity and the huge difficulties of accomplishing and transcribing this god-like vision of multi-dimensional and multi-temporal perspectives is illustrated in his fragmentary jottings: "Versuch einer Aufhebung der Zeit zu einer Gleichzeitigkeit allen Geschehens. Jeder Vorgang gegenwärtig ... kein Vorher und kein Nachher."¹⁶⁸ (Martin Walser's problematic in Das Einhorn recurs: "Das radikale konsequente Heut der Vergangenheit ist schwierig und tückisch"¹⁶⁹). Certainly the fragmentary nature of writing corresponds to the fragmentary nature of reality, in which, as readers of Freud, Bergson and Jung well know, past and present and future have no clear demarcation lines, nor do they follow conventional chronological sequence. Perplexing and disturbing though this may be, other possibilities become explorable.¹⁷⁰ "Die Zukunft von morgen war schon

gestern ..."¹⁷⁵ Philipp's guilt and responsibility are therefore not just his own, they are, as the dream and psycho-analytic sequence testify, "Urväterschuld".(157) This could naturally have liberating implications - for Joyce it does have. But for Koeppen it becomes embedded in a comprehensive conception of man and history in which we cannot escape the cycle of error and tragedy. Much of the trilogy is devoted to the illustration of this conception. All the stylistic devices, repetition, anaphora, epiphora, the montage of juxtaposed items, the 'Verfremdungseffekt' of italicised headlines, or commentary, - in the gossip columns, "Kater des argentinischen Konsuls entlaufen, André Gide gestern verschieden", or the grotesqueness of cosmic discrepancies, "Aga Khan mit Edelsteinen aufgewogen, Tribut der Gläubigen, Industriediamanten kriegswichtig. (italicised) ... Herr Schellack, der Juwelier sagte, 'Nein'"(162) - the neutral imperceptiveness of the musical scene (Hitler's favourite 'March' competes with Boogie-woogie in the Bräuhaus), the semantic import of a sequence of selectively placed, italicised injunctions, ("Für Juden verboten, ... Vorwärts christliche Soldaten ... Für Schwarze verboten"(66)), all these features underline the absurdity, incorrigibility and inevitability of the self-repeating motifs in human nature and history.

A sense of the cyclical nature of this repetitiveness is partly conveyed by initial and terminal events in the first two novels of the trilogy. Das Treibhaus begins with Keetenheuve returning from the funeral of his wife, Elke, and ends with his own death. The twenty four hours of concentrated activity in the first novel (Joyce's Ulysses concerns one day in June 1904 in Dublin) are both prefaced and concluded by almost identical commentary:

SPANNUNG, KONFLIKT, man lebte im Spannungsfeld, östliche Welt, westliche Welt, man lebte an der Nahtstelle, vielleicht an der Bruchstelle, die Zeit war kostbar, sie war eine Atempause auf dem Schlachtfeld, und man hatte noch nicht richtig Atem geholt, wieder wurde aufgerüstet ... (II)

and similarly:

BEDROHUNG, VERSCHÄRFUNG, KONFLIKT, SPANNUNG ...
 Doch niemand entflieht seiner Welt ... Deutschland
 lebt im Spannungsfeld, östliche Welt, westliche
 Welt, zerbrochene Welt, zwei Welthälften, einander
 feind und fremd, Deutschland lebt an der Nahtstelle
 an der Bruchstelle, die Zeit ist kostbar ... eine
 Sekunde zum Atemholen, Atempause auf einem verdammten
 Schlachtfeld.

Koeppen reminds us in his review of Proust that the first sentence of the latter's opus stood in relation to the last "in der Verbindung des Grundsteins zur hohen Spitze eines Turms"¹⁷⁶ - though they were not identical as in his own novel. But as we have seen, the Proustian conquest of Time by art and the imagination was repudiated; here the cyclical structure lends authenticity to the events of the 'day' - the change of tense makes the threat of disaster more palpable for the reader and for the narrator - and reinforces the impression of apocalyptic doom serving as an epilogue to the changeless pattern of human activity.

.....

DAS TREIBHAUS: SYNOPSIS

Central theme, Keetenheuve's alienation, its German background and also its universality - ineluctability of repeated folly, characters marionettes, nations cages, artist isolated between them - blind (politicians) leading the blind; dream-like evocations, surrealistic visions, actuality merges with dream situations - reflects Keetenheuve's disordered psyche - spectral visions in the ruins, of living and dead, nightmarish parody of political figures - trance-like state of mental alienation - objects ghostly abstractions - characters unreal, 'gespentsch', 'outer-directed' - symbol of labyrinth, maze-like complexity of human affairs - youth eternally cheated - symbolism of 'Bienenkorb', image of social activity, its mechanical functionalism - alienation from decision-making process - mechanical sexuality.

Concept of revolution extinct, root of Keetenheuve's alienation - government remote from governed - committees remote and abstract - economic laws abstractions - pluralistic interests conflict and fragment - politics a labyrinth, a jungle - the masses rule (qua abstract masses) - Keetenheuve refuses allegiance, condemns propagandists of specious 'Schrebergartenglück' - Nazis build again - human vitality destroyed by idealised, synthetic consumer-images, functional sex. Analogies with Marcuse's defence of individual freedoms against 'repressive tolerance' of capitalistic totalitarianism, manipulative structures of powerful institutions etc. - police protect Bundestag from people - political parties suppress individual dissent - war a liberation from dull drudgery of daily life - alliance of Cross and Sword evidence of abstract rationalisation of social relationships - people become the stereotypes which media exhibit, lose personal identity.

With Keetenheuve private relationships only salvation - Elke (now dead) sole anchor in spiritual desert of social and political life (though bourgeois marital life spurned) - with Lena, love 'a formula' -

protagonist's ambiguous relationship with masses, opposes Macht, yet also collective inertia - all politics evil, evil demands confrontation - Keetenheuve's own ironic 'Utopia', 'Das Glück in der Verzweiflung', comfortable solitary contentment last achievable goal in mass-technological society, isolated, individual cells - Keetenheuve's revulsion against flags, banners, social and political prostitution - becomes psycho-somatic neurosis.

The intellectual questions his identity (ies), rôles in society, each one inadequate per se - cohesive, organic personality anachronistic - rôle-playing and social 'Vereinzelung' - all rôles and values relativised - pluralism replaces defunct bourgeois moralities - all Keetenheuve's preoccupations fragmentary - art sold like commercials - all human activities reduced to common denominator - Keetenheuve's 'alien rationality' - common denominator produces grotesque juxta-positions, levelling absurdities, life mocks all human pretensions, reduction to basic animality - Keetenheuve contrasted with Frost-Forestier, technocrats - dark, Nordic myths resurrected.

DAS TREIBHAUS - Intellectual alienation from an abstract social and political machine.

In our discussion of this novel we shall pay attention to the state of total and irremediable alienation of the central anti-hero, Keetenheuve, the relationship of this alienation to Koeppen's deepening pessimism studied against a German background which serves as, in the words of one critic, "als eilig-sorglos hingepinselte Kulisse"¹⁷⁷ and as a backcloth for the delineation of an aimless, fragmented, passive, and possibly future-less society. We have already made reference to Keetenheuve in varying contexts which have highlighted his situation and underlined its typicality. Despite the apparent 'eminent politisch'¹⁷⁸ complexion of the treatment of the new 'provincial' capital in post-war Germany, Koeppen's vision is cosmic, Keetenheuve would not be at home anywhere in the world's largest cities: "er würde sich als Abgeordneter in Paris, in London, in Stockholm oder in Bern nicht minder heimat- und hoffnungslos vorkommen als in Bonn, er wäre genauso Aussenseiter, Ausgestossener, Gescheiterter ..." ¹⁷⁹ Over the capital and the activities of its characters hangs the dead weight of the past, imposing a stamp of inevitability ("man hörte ... das Gras der Uneinsicht und des Unabänderlichen wachsen" (299)), or incorrigibility, ("die Menschen waren dieselben geblieben, sie dachten gar nicht daran, andere zu werden"(247)). These remarks relate to the experience of the deputy returned from exile in 1945, and the people in question are those scattered throughout the Federal Republic, or otherwise more precisely, employed in the exercise of governmental administration. The narration oscillates at random between these social reference points and others which comprehend mankind in general; thus the war correspondent with a long private history of disenchantments, Philip Dana, can testify to a universal condition of long standing which is merely repeating itself currently in Germany: "er hatte die Dummheit der Diplomaten mit Schaufeln geschluckt, er hatte Blinde als Führer gesehen und Taube vergeblich vor heranbrausenden Katastrophen gewarnt, er hatte tollwütige Hunde erlebt, die sich Patrioten schimpften

.... und stets hatte er die Niederlage des Menschen konstatiert."(299).

In the rearmament debate there is a tragic ineluctability which engenders once more in Koeppen's writings the sense of the playing out of a grotesque charade which history, "ein tolpatschiges Kind oder ein alter Blindenführer"(279), has devised, and whose ending was prefigured in its beginning: "er verachtete das oratorische Theater, in dem er mitspielen musste ... Der Kanzler-Schauspieler wirkte auch als Regisseur (392) ... Es war alles zu Ende. Es war nur Theater gewesen; man konnte sich abschminken."

(400)
But structurally, this parliamentary scene is merely the event to which all the preceding 'non-activity', the 'non-plot' lead, as was the lecture in the earlier novel. Thus the events wear an air of unreality, characters, like nations, are held on strings, obeying the impulses and dictates of either visible masters, such as the Chancellor and the Opposition Leader, Knurrewahn, or invisible powers which themselves controlled the visible ones. "Und wieder sass man in dem Käfig, in den man hineingeboren war, dem Käfig des Vaterlandes, der zwischen anderen Käfigen mit anderen Vaterländern diesmal an einer Stange hing, die von einem der grossen Käfig- und Menschensammler weiter in die Geschichte getragen wurde."(297).

It is this enslavement which we have seen to be a recurrent feature of the author's conception of alienation. The people in the cages are alienated, cut off from external and in this case fertilising influences - "Die Grenzen öffneten sich nicht. Sie schlossen sich wieder"(297) - and the artist is isolated: "man stand zwischen den Käfigen, dort, wo kein Hausen war, man rieb sich ... an allen Gittern ..." And the picture inside the cage is congruous with related targets of attack in the novel: "das war ein furchtbares Bild der Unfreiheit auf der weiten Erde". Populations, assessed statistically, are economic factors; they are destined for certain ends; "Wer wusste, wohin er ging? Und gab es eine Wahl?" There is a general bewilderment experienced by the discerning, such as Keetenheuve, at least anxiety by the guilt-ridden, such as Korodin, whilst the mechanical

instruments of social and political engineering, the administrative and executive functionaries, follow the blind leaders into the eternal snares of human folly.

The prevailing mood corresponds to that of a dream-like stance, and there are mental experiences, sometimes italicised in interior monologue, at other times merely an imagined flashback, in which present reality glides into an ironic evocation of past events, which promote the impression of the main character's disorientation and growing conviction that nothing worthwhile can emerge from the ruins of the literal and metaphorical landscape to which he has returned. One recalls again that Koeppen considered the novel to be a 'Märchen' - with strange prophetic overtones. Myth and fairy-tale, as we have seen, accompany many of the author's 'poetic' creations. The physical ruins are one source of surrealistic disorientation; like those in Nuremberg, they lack all traditional Romanticist associations - "von Romantik war keine Rede. Diese Nürnberger Ruinen waren unromantisch"¹⁸⁰ - and evoke "versteinerte Visionen"(411), such as the miscellany of shadowy figures and spectres from past and present which march past an imagined Presidential aide at the end of the novel, a final, confused, recapitulatory (of German twentieth century history) and compelling vision of Keetenheuve's which provides a fitting end to his abortive and "verzweifelte Bemühung, sich in den Brei zu mischen"(415), an end which precedes the physical end, the liberation of death ("ein Sprung machte ihn frei"). Like the sudden random interruption of more conventional, even grammatical narrative prose by italicised asyntactic monologue, actuality fades here into the dream situation without warning - grammatical or otherwise. This accentuates the impression of a disordered imagination, a distressed psyche warring with experiential realities. He talks to Lena, the Salvation Army girl whom he might conceivably assist to rehabilitate herself in an aimless and decadent Western society. "Auf geborstenen Steinen sass Frost-Forestier". This is

the onset of the nightmarish assemblage of State officials; of the youth of two wars, even of their mothers, of the S.A. and other supernumeraries in the tragedy here being commentated; they are all "schattengleiche Gestalten", "alles war unwirklich und überwirklich zugleich"(411-412); blood mixes with the dust of the ruins, "... aus den Höhlen ringsum ... aus den Verstecken der Not und der Verkommenheit wisperte es und kroch hervor und robbte heran wie zu einem Schauspiel". It is as though a Greek Fate drama is to be enacted, with the chorus provided by the marchers past, or by the spectral victims who emerge from the ruins, "aus dem Mörtelgrab krochen die Erstickten, aus ihren Kellern wankten die Unbehausten, aus den Schuttbetten kam die Liebe, sie sich verkauft ...". The poignancy of the situation is underlined by the fact that both the living and the dead make their appearance, and their situations are highly similar. The presiding statesman, master of ceremonies, inspects the macabre workshop of the future, sees 'Teufel' and 'Gewürm' (the symbolic controllers of man's destiny - "Der Teufel hatte jede soziale Gemeinschaft geholt und hielt sie fest in seinen Krallen" (338)) at work on a homunculus. This creation will no doubt inhabit a 'super-world-state', with 'lebenslängliche Wehrpflicht', as a defence against other planetary enemies. Where the statesman's rose hits the ground, dark blood issues, "Keetenheuve lag im ewigen Blutfluss, er lag mit dem Thüringer Mädchen im Kreis der Staatsmänner ...". Parodies of Wagnerian symbolism - the whole 'event' is a nightmarish parody - feature in this imagined surrealist vision of a character (himself) in company with a real Salvation Army girl and abstract State officials, to be joined by the usual deluded or self-deluding thinkers, Hegel and Marx in this case, - "Mephistopholes des guten Willens", one might say - whose banners follow those of the S.A., Frost Forestier, and, very conceivably, those of a statesman, who is addressed, in thought if not in deed, during the rearmament debate; "... wie ist es mit Ihrem Traum, Herr Kanzler, auf einer Lafette beerdigt zu werden? ... Ihrem Ehren-

sarg werden Millionen Leichen folgen."(396). With Koeppen, the dead are always trying to speak to the living, even though the myth traces the vanity of their warnings.

The ruins are naturally fitted to induce trance-like states and conditions of spiritual alienation. Shortly before this disordered landscape gives rise to the disordered imaginings outlined above, Keetenheuve observes the bizarre phenomenon of a tram seemingly suspended on the central arch of a bridge over the Rhine; like himself, like many of the inhabitants of the city, the tram stands like a phantom, unrelated to its surroundings, divorced from purpose or direction and destination: "Die Bahn war wie aus jeder Wirklichkeit herausgehoben, für einen Augenblick das überrealistische Abbild eines Verkehrsmittels, ein gespenstisches Abstraktum. Es war eine Todesbahn, und man konnte sich nicht vorstellen, dass sie irgendwohin fuhr. Die Bahn war so, wie sie auf der Brücke stand, gebannt, versteint, ein Fossil oder ein Kunstwerk, eine Bahn an sich, ohne Vergangenheit und ohne Zukunft. Eine Palme langweilte sich ..." (406). Even the organic vegetation seems truncated from surrounding activity. The 'fossil' symbolism relates to the earlier 'versteinerte Visionen' in which the phantom images of Frost-Forestier and his like are evoked. People wear an air of unreality most of the time; the impression they convey is often 'gespenstisch' as they move about their life and work. They are unreal either because they drift aimlessly in isolation from each other, or they await passively direction from external and abstract sources, being 'outer-directed' rather than 'inner-directed', to use the phraseology of Riesman. These separate qualities of unreality are admittedly different, but they have a common or at least a related aetiology. The city again is the milieu where at night tormented souls escape drab and noisy domesticity and wander in the search for other non-communicating solitaires: "Es begegneten ihm Einsame, die einen verzweifelten Bummel durch die Stadt machten. Was dachten sie? Was litten sie? ... Suchten sie Partner für

die Geilheit, die in ihnen gärte. Sie würden die Partner nicht finden. Die Partner waren überall. Sie gingen aneinander vorüber, Männer und Frauen, sie tränkten sich mit Bildern, ... in dem gemieteten Bett würden sie sich selbst befriedigen. Einige hätten sich gern betrunken. Sie hätten gern ein Gespräch geführt"(357). Emilia's solitariness in Tauben im Gras is now generalised. Keetenheuve's isolation is even more deeply felt because it has also an intellectual dimension. The 'outer-directed' mass are hungry for the basic necessities, or, if not poor, succumb to the advertiser's blandishments, consuming what they do not need. The physical landscape, as we saw with the ruins, connives at the psychological alienation; the twentieth century Theseus often loses his way in the labyrinth of disorder: "Der Verkehr verknäuelte sich, von Bauzäunen, Kabelgräben, Kanalrohren, Betonmischern, Teerkochern bedrängt und behindert. Das Knäuel, das Labyrinth, der Knoten, das Verschlungene, das Geflecht, Sinnbilder des Verirrens ... der Verknotung, des Unlösbaren ... schon die Alten hatten den Fluch gespürt ..." (274). This is a recurring symbol for the maze-like complexity which surrounds human problems, as well as envelops man in a metaphysical fog of obscurity; emerging from the Parliamentary debate, Keetenheuve is the 'Theseus der den Minotaurus nicht erschlagen hat', a designation italicised as is customary with a statement of one more rôle which the character is adopting. People are lost in these labyrinths, and seek hungrily for either some spurious physical and emotional gratification, or take employment which does nothing to fill the emptiness and cure the unreality of their lives. The youth outside the cinemas await some celluloid opiate which will cheat them again; "Es waren Menschen, die nicht wussten, wohin sie gehen sollten. Sie wussten nicht wohin, auch wenn sie ein Zimmer hatten ... Sie wussten mit sich nichts anzufangen. Vor dem Kino standen Halbwüchsige ... sie warteten auf das Leben, und das Leben blieb aus ... Die Langeweile hauste in ihnen wie eine Krankheit ... Sie gähnten."

Like the street-urchins in the first novel, they are ripe for fascism, or

a rearming democracy such as the Federal Republic. As we have seen in previous writings of Koeppen, the young are cheated of fulfilment by being seduced into "Horsälen, in Streberseminaren, auf Büroschemeln und am Arbeitsplatz der Laborantin"(375). He divides the blame between the 'system', the primeval curse on Adam, and also the lack of belief and will in the young themselves, a lack which is basic to Keetenheuve's own dilemma.

Unreal surroundings and unreal lives - these two features of socio-psychological alienation are brought together in one illustrative situation in the part of the 'Bundeshaus' allocated to the American High Commission. The building stands as it might in a fairy-tale, a construction of glass and concrete in a wood, with countless tubes of neon lighting, "sie erhöhten den unwirklichen, den magischen Eindruck."(326). It is described as a 'magician's palace', and also as - the recurring image of an alienating machine - an "ungeheurer Bienenkorb, in dem die neonerleuchteten Fenster wie aneinandergeschichtete Waben wirkten." We recall the brothel-hotel in which Philip stayed being likened with its mechanical, dehumanised sexuality to the beehive. Here the offices buzz. "Die Bienen waren emsig. Keetenheuve ging mutig in das Zauberreich ... Aufzüge stiegen und fielen durch das Gebäude wie der Blutkreislauf eines Lebewesens". This powerful simile which captures the significance of the exercise extends its biological analogue, its reductive import: "Herren und Damen liessen sich geschäftig mit kleinen Akten in der Hand hinauf- und herunter pumpen, Bakterien, die diesem Körper zu eigen waren ..." The corridor one enters is again 'geisterhaft, unwirklich und angenehm' - a cocoon-like fabrication designed for frictionless functionalism - and this leads to an office resembling an illuminated aquarium. The biological metaphors remain with us: "Was waren sie doch für gezüchtete, in Aquarien und Treibhäuser gesetzte Wesen!" We recall also the titular metaphor of this novel used to describe the social and political face of the new Germany, a

nothouse which lacked even the 'Mark und Jugend'(268) to deserve the
 description. There is something eminently cold, mechanical and sterile
 about a political apparatus directed to impersonal ends. In another part
 of the 'Bundeshaus' where Keetenheuve himself is stationed, we read that
 the rooms were floored with 'staubfrei gewachstem Linoleum', and "Sie
 erinnerten in ihrer blinkenden Sauberkeit¹⁸¹ an die aseptische Abteilung
 einer Klinik, und vielleicht war auch die Politik, die hier am kranken
 Volk geübt wurde, steril"(302). We have already associated 'staubfrei'
 with a Prussian Jewish Oberregierungsrat in the first novel and noticed
 its connotations. Returning to the American administration we discern some
 implications of this almost Kafkaesque setting. The question for which
 Keetenheuve seeks an answer has been consigned to a series of ever remoter
 levels of authority. The 'Sinnlosigkeit seines Tuns' is further reinforced
 in his mind, but this conviction brings a clear serenity compared with the
 knowledge that the fates of thousands might depend on the decision. This
 item becomes part of a larger thematic preoccupation with the divorce and
 the distance between rulers and ruled - an alienation which is only
 slightly less than that separating Keetenheuve himself from the people.
 The employees and the secretaries, mere unthinking or confused and doubting
 accomplices in the game, "kratzten an der Existenz". In their thoughts on
 America, the Rhine and Europe, "bohrte der Wurm, war Zweifel, Unwirklichkeit
 und Ekel." This is also the consequence of the drastic social disorientation
 brought by the war and new political alignments. It would be incongruous
 for Koeppen to ascribe to these people any existential passion which would
 give meaning or direction to lives lived amongst these aseptic surroundings.
 Their sex is the chemical operation - and mentalised in the form
 D.H.Lawrence so vehemently apostrophised - which leaves them as empty as
 do the memoranda they write and type: "Keetenheuve sah ... ein düsteres
 Bacchanal der Vermischung ... und geschäftig, wie mit den Akten in den
 Fahrkörben und Gängen, waren sie nun in einer allseitigen Geschlechtlichkeit."

He knew "dass es nicht Liebe und Leidenschaft war, was sie bewegte, sondern nur die hoffnungslose Befriedigung eines immer wiederkehrenden Juckreizes (er erkannte), dass ihre schönen Gesichter gezeichnet waren, gezeichnet von Leere ... von blossem Dasein. Es war nicht genug ..." (329)

When Keetenheuve sees the lack of communication which has become a paralysing feature of party and national politics, and which applies therefore also to Opposition parties which are alleged more positively to represent the people, a failure which he describes as "die Wurzel des Übels" (387) - "Aber wo kam er (der Parteiwille) her? Aus den Büros. Er war impotent. Von den Samensträngen der Volkskraft war der Parteiwille abgeschnitten" - he knows this to be one of the manifest reasons why the 'revolution' is dead, its conception obsolete. "Keetenheuve wollte die Revolution nicht, weil er sie gar nicht mehr wollen konnte - es gab sie nicht mehr ... Ihre Möglichkeiten waren nicht genützt worden. Jetzt war sie ein Leichnam, ein trockenes Blatt im Herbarium der Ideen, ein antiquiertes Wort aus dem Brockhaus ... die blaue Herbariumsblume der Romantik" (337-338). Thus this situation is both the root of his own 'Beziehungslosigkeit' (415) with the people, and also of a more general alienation between government and governed, and of the failure of the people to be anything other than cheated, passive recipients and instruments of the sterile social and political process. From this generalised aetiology issues a picture of generalised repression, which has affinities with the 'repressive tolerance' castigated by Marcuse in his successive variations on this theme.¹⁸² For Keetenheuve, the will, capacity and possibility of the people achieving the desiderated existential freedoms have been vanquished (in 1945 there was still hope: "Er wollte Jugendträume verwirklichen, er glaubte damals an eine Wandlung" (247)). The unfreedoms which prevail reside in the labyrinthine structures we have already discussed - the image of the world as no longer controllable even by totalitarian systems, in fact less and less controllable because they are totalitarian -

as well as in the benevolent but still capitalistic repression of mass-societies. A central exemplifying situation in the novel where these motifs of alienation obtain is the committee which discusses the allocation of resources to housing and accommodation. The immensity and unsolvability of the task are stressed. They were gamblers playing economic roulette, "das Spiel um Menschen, um grosse Summen und um die Zukunft"(332). The Basic Law still defies Proudhon and defends property, the already complex problems of tax-laws, the capital market, rates of interest, indemnification of war victims are exacerbated by the predatory grabbings of the profiteers, - "wie durfte man enteignen, wenn das Grundgesetz das Eigentum bejahte" - and the intricacies and ungovernable technicalities of the system, remote, abstract and totalitarian. "... wenn man sich dennoch entschloss ... behutsam zu enteignen, so war wieder neuem Unrecht die Möglichkeit gegeben; geriet ein Ungeschickter in den Verhau der Paragraphen, war vielem Missbrauch das Tor geöffnet." The millions which Korodin recites have the same effect on the ear as previous examples of non-communication, "das Rauschen einer Wasserleitung ... nichtssagend". Conjuring metaphors recur, the whole is 'Zahlenspek'. Nobody had seen, including Korodin, nor would see the millions in question, "nur auf dem Papier wurden sie verteilt". Through countless machines and balance statements the figures would circulate, "aber sie blieben Papier, ... bis sie sich materialisierten in einer Lohn-tüte"(334). This is a fair commentary on the fiscal machinations of the managers of the economic structure, conventional though it may now appear, and possessing a frightening realism peculiar to the 'Märchen'. "Die Lohn-tüte blieb immer schwach gefüllt. Das war ein ökonomisches Gesetz oder das eine Gesicht der Relativität." A social radicalism which confines itself to the enlargement of the pay-packet naturally fails to inspire Koeppen, for there is no freedom in this per se; but the economic laws which hold man in thrall and enslave ruler and ruled become now enmeshed in a larger structure of being from which there is no escape. Though the villains are

named, Heinweg and Bierbohm, who will build the prefabricated sheep-pens for their 'flock', and, in the government party, Korodin, plagued with guilt and anxiety in case he has not reconciled God and Mammon, a few decisions by concrete personalities are a kind of Kulisse to a pluralistic and fragmented chaos of conflicting interests and warring factors, in which the few seek to hold power over the many and have the illusion they are in control.

For good and evil are no longer separable, or even discernible. Justice engenders injustice. No transcendental being can be in charge of all this, and if he is, he or it must be charged with the crimes and follies perpetrated, "schiebe die Schuld nicht auf den Menschen"(395). Elsewhere we encounter statements which have analogous import with reference to the unmanageable complexity and ambiguity of everyday reality: "An jeder Entscheidung hingen tausendfache Für und Wider, Lianen gleich, Lianen des Urwalds, ein Dschungel war die praktische Politik."(248). This awareness is a basic ingredient of Koeppen's pessimism; the 'Urmächte' ("ein törichter Ritter gegen die Macht, die so versippt war mit den alten Urmächten"(248)) behave differently, the circumstances are more ambiguous, but Adam's curse, il mal seme d'Adamo, a quotation at the beginning of Der Tod in Rom, triumphs still. A new kind of power has developed with new systems and structures. "Der Bürger hatte nur noch zu wählen, unter welcher Diktatur er leben wolle."(399) Montesquieu's dream of the healthy and dynamic division of powers has yielded to a conquest of the individual by the mass. "Die Mehrheit regierte. Die Mehrheit diktierte."(399) And such a majority rules by its representatives who have become remote abstractions. It is in this sense that Hans Freyer conceives mass-society: "ein präziser Begriff der Masse ist nur von dem der Entfremdung her zu gewinnen."¹⁸³ He highlights the dangers of the workings of a system such as Koeppen delineates with bitter irony in this novel: "Mit der Vervollkommnung der Maschine hat das Innere des Menschen Schritt gehalten. Der

Motor ist uns nichts Fremdes mehr, und vor der Masse ist uns nicht bang, weil wir gelernt haben, in diesen Kategorien zu denken, und weil wir begriffen haben, dass beiden gegenüber keine seelische Beteiligung verlangt ist, sondern ein freizügiges Mitspielen nach Zweckmässigkeit und nach Spielregeln."¹⁸⁴

The victim of Heineweg and Bierbohm, of the Chancellor's decision to rearm, of corporations and advertising agencies, is what Freyer calls "der mit Haut und Haaren ... an den Zivilisationsapparat angepasste Mensch."¹⁸⁵ Keetenheuve's riposte and one which divorces him from the people for whom he has an emotional and yet abortively inactive concern, is an angry and bitter withdrawal, "nicht mitmachen, den Pakt nicht unterschreiben, kein Käufer, kein Untertan sein."(362).

He cannot condone the domestic dreams deceptively canvassed by hire-purchase propagandists, especially the shacks built for the miner who cannot escape the 'Geschrei, Gekeif, Fluch, Klatsch und Gebuller' of his neighbour and his loudspeakers - "drang als Iphigenie auf Tauris und Totoansage durch des Sachverständigen Billigstmauern"(335), - and becomes the fascist's or the democratic nationalist's war recruit, "weil sie ihren Alltag hassten". The sham 'Schrebergartenglück', nourished by competitive class-consciousness, and the bishop's anaemic blessings and admonitions over the radio - "was waren denn diese Siedlungen anders als die national-sozialistischen Siedlungen ... nur billiger, nur enger, nur schäbiger, nur dürftiger?" Those who had built for the Nazis were building again their totalitarian utopias. The Catholic, Korodin, who flirts with the worker-priests' more primitive Christianity, despatching cheques which the Bishop would dearly wish to have sent elsewhere, an abstract act of "reine Opposition gegen die bestehende Ordnung"(277), but who thanks his God that he is not as other men are, and the two Social Democrats who build the paltry habitations for profit - "Gemeinsam hatten sie die Religion und die Revolution entmannt." The Papal Encyclical, the menstrual calender, the contraceptive have sapped and regularised vital life instincts, the

image of onanistic impotence and sterility recurs to indicate submission to social injunctions - "dann war es Onanie die schwächte und zufrieden legte sich der Epigone ins breite Ehebett der gesetzlichen Ordnung"(338). It recurs again in the image of Keetenheuve's relationship with the people: "Als Politiker war er ein Heiratsschwindler, der impotent wurde, wenn er mit Frau Germania ins Bett gehen sollte"(353). Allegories of conjugal union - or non-union - are part of Koeppen's figurative repertoire in the presentation of alienated being. Ideal abstractions were sought by the media; the 'ideal' family was a sales image of the window-dresser - like truth, one might say, which according to Mergentheim, the wily opportunist who sailed close but never too close to the political wind, who survived by the only means possible, by having no convictions at all, - truth was what one wanted it to be at any given moment, "Die Wahrheit ist oft nur eine Frage der Aufmachung"(293). The shop window models "führten ein ideales, sauberes und billiges Leben." Keetenheuve's reaction is one of bewildered, invincible estrangement: "Selbst der frech herausgestreckte Unterleib der mondänen Puppe, der kleinen Hure, war sauber ... ideal ... synthetisch"(360). The nightmare culminates in the most frightening of realisations: "in diesem Schoss lag die Zukunft." He too could buy an ideal abstraction, have an 'ideal' child. Just as armies might be God's "verworrene Schöpfungsgedanken"(294), so consumer products were the machinations of the Devil, delighted at man's greedy competitiveness to increase his possessions, "die Unterschrift, die er dem Teufel gegeben und mit der er sich die Zaubersachen aufgehalst hatte."(361). 'Hygienic products' were sold like cars and furniture and insurance policies; a nauseating skeleton, a typical 'Gespenst', devoid of genitals, inhabits a window advertising contraceptives, "es stand impotent in einem Lager hygienischer Artikel"(362). The impotence here is more than a physical manifestation. Near a stork effigy, reminiscent of the descending figures in Heinrich Böll's Und Sagte Kein Einziges Wort, stands the illuminated

message, Hier finden Sie das Beste für unsere Kleinen.

Alleman sees this situation in 'Restoration' society as illustrating the "Überwiegen des Rational-Ökonomischen über die konservativ-gebundenen Lebensformen wie über die revolutionären Idealismen jeder Art".¹⁸⁶ We have already witnessed the ambivalent reactions to the destruction of the 'konservativ-gebunden' societal structures; we are now witnessing again the reactions to the destruction of the possibilities of revolution as Keetenheuve had conceived it. Marcuse's pained diatribes seem apt: "A comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom prevails in advanced industrial civilisation, a token of technical progress. Indeed, what could be more rational than the suppression of individuality in the mechanisation of socially necessary ... performances."¹⁸⁷ "For the world of human freedom cannot be built by the established societies, no matter how much they may streamline and rationalise their dominion. Their class structure, and the perfected controls required to sustain it, generate needs, satisfactions and values which reproduce the servitude of the human existence."¹⁸⁸ "Mass democracy ... not only permits the people to choose their own masters ... it also allows the masters to disappear behind the technological veil of the productive and destructive apparatus which they control, and it conceals the human (and material) costs of the benefits and comforts which it bestows upon those who collaborate. The people, efficiently manipulated and organised, are free; ignorance and impotence ... is the price of their freedom."¹⁸⁹ Koeppen does not share Marcuse's faith that a 'liberation' is possible, but subscribes to the same diagnosis. There is a parallel here also with Koeppen's resistance to 'Macht' in earlier days (still theoretically maintained), and his profound disillusionment with the newer, more abstract forms of power and domination. The revolt is the same, but is now attenuated with an overwhelming sense of the insuperable immensity of the new enemies of freedom. The freedom itself has been incorporated insidiously into larger structures,

an ontological dimension has been forfeited in the levelling process, in the making of all things - the most private, vital, free and instinctual even - public. "Die Literatur der Revolte ist zugleich die Literatur des Wunsches nach reinen, vom Gedanken der Macht nicht befleckten Ordnungen",¹⁹⁰ writes Andersch à-propos of Koeppen's work. The 'Macht' is now institutionalised. There are tonal and thematic similarities between Koeppen's vision, abstract, nightmarish and doom-laden, and the "Welfare-Through-Warfare State"¹⁹¹ discussed by Marcuse. "Once institutionalised", writes the latter, "these rights and liberties shared the fate of the society of which they had become an integral part. The achievement cancels the premises."¹⁹² The bogus realities of the 'Lautsprecherkultur', which we have seen to be the alienating force in the reactions to mass culture of Koeppen's artist anti-heroes, are targets of the same attack - an attack which takes in all sources of alienation: "... the great words of freedom and fulfilment pronounced by ... leaders and politicians, on the screens and radios ... turn into meaningless sounds ... The assimilation of the ideal with reality testifies to the extent to which the ideal has been surpassed. It is brought down from the sublimated realm of the soul or the spirit or the inner man, and translated into operational terms ..."¹⁹³ This is the contribution of Korodin, Heineweg and Bierbohm to mass culture; "Sie hielten sich für Feinde. Aber sie waren Brüder. Sie berauschten sich an der gleichen wässerigen Limonade." (337).

The people pursue, and are told to pursue illusory freedoms. Police and security forces surround the 'Bundestag', whereas at one time they defended the ruler against Parliamentary or popular opposition. Knurrewahn's scientific humanism, - "brauchte der Mensch nur noch alles sachlich zu ordnen", - "leugnete das Dasein der Seele" (304). Even he cannot understand the complexities of party and intra-party alignments, (nor endure them, as they interfere with party oligarchy), so little hope remains for the people to understand them: "so lief im politischen Leben alles wild durcheinander,

die Winde wehten kreuz und quer durch die Parteien, und nur Wetterkarten, die keiner verstand, rätselhafte Verbindungslinien zwischen Punkten gleicher Wärme (die weit voneinander entfernt liegen konnten) zeigten die Fronten ..." (308). This political pluralism could on the other hand revitalise the dull and totalitarian uniformity of the political scene, if welcomed and fostered - the 'Democrat' leader cannot do this, and finds Keetenheuve solely useful for his characteristic knowledge of minority groupings. All panaceas sold from time immemorial to the Volk have become the dust of history - the principal character has a dream of four hills, topped severally by memorials to dead recipes for human salvation, the Protestant and Catholic churches, an Imperial war memorial, and a Trades Union. The dream enjoined him to achieve the impossible, approach one of the symbols and cry out, "Ich glaube". People go to war, "bestenfalls für Ideen, die sie nicht begreifen, und deren Konsequenz sie nicht übersehen" (294), hoodwinked by the callous, the ambitious and the myopic. People not used to freedom will not be ready or able to use it when it comes: such is the fate of Elke, cosseted and enslaved by the authoritarianism of her 'Gauleiter' father, who when left to her own devices falls a prey to the Lesbians: "Sie wusste mit der Freiheit nichts anzufangen. Sie verlor sich in ihr. Das anscheinend pflichtlose Leben war ... ein Ozean der Leere, dessen unendliche Öde allein vom Gekräusel der Lust ... belebt wurde" (245). The emptiness is sometimes filled by the exercise of war; such is the form of liberation Heineweg's miner is left with, "der Krieg mit seinen Schrecken auch Flucht und Befreiung war, die Möglichkeit des Reisens, die Möglichkeit des Sich-Entziehens ..." (336). Defeated German soldiery are thus seen as victims of a larger cosmic game, of the great demagogic deluders of mankind, rather than - more parochially - as the warriors seeking world conquest: "sie stanken nach ... Furcht, nach ... Überdruss und Tod, sie stanken nach dem Wort Unrecht und nach dem Wort Vergeblich" (243). Other reasons besides the primarily economic, - "Schneider

wollten nähern"(307) - engender conflict. Aggression becomes the outlet for psycho-social alienation. It is fed by characters such as Sedesaum who chants 'Christ und Vaterland' instead of 'Christ und Welt'(396), Dörflich whose maxim is eternally 'Kriegsverbrechen nur auf Feindseite', and Korodin, "Er würde das christliche Abendland ins Feld führen".

Conventional targets such as the perverted alliance of the Cross and the Sword, though treated with all the savage unmellowed irony and bitterness of which the author is capable (and even more so in the third novel of the trilogy), are placed here in a wider, more comprehensive perspective of an abstract, unfeeling misdirection of mass society by remote, technologised apparatus, the leaders themselves being part of this abstract rationalisation of human relationships into a social mechanism. On one level, this is described as a German problem: The Elder Statesman "verlor den Überblick, er litt ... an der deutschen Krankheit, unter keinen Umständen von einer einmal gehaltenen Vorstellung von der Welt zu lassen ..." (392). But a more universal aspect of the alienation process is the assimilation of the personality and personal identity to an abstract stereotype image. One behaves like the image, the self has become the image - a related theme to Max Frisch's concern with the social imposition of individual identity. The youths awaiting cultural manna outside the cinema will take the screen fantasies as reality, and will seek to live the fantasy rather than their own reality - and what that reality is becomes less clear. This is part of the wider question of people acting out rôles in varying situations. In the debate Knurrewahn looks like Hindenburg, or more aptly, like an actor playing the part of Hindenburg. Even a miner looks like "ein Kumpel, der dargestellt wird." "Das Jahrhundert artete seinen Filmschauspielern nach." (394). The guide leading the tourists round the Bundeshaus is a physical duplicate of the Chancellor, "er sprach mit dem Dialektanklang des Staatsmannes."

As an intellectual figure, Keetenheuve cherishes whatever might be his

individuality, this taking multiple forms and assuming hypothetical rôles. We have noticed his scorn for the blandishments of the advertisers of spurious anaesthetics and material comforts - Koeppen's reaction was naturally parallel: "Ich habe dieses schöne Gefühl, dass ich all die Sachen, die da angeboten werden, gar nicht brauche."¹⁹⁴ We know his rejection of slavery to the ideological flag and his questioning, like von Süde's, of the meaning and obligations of 'Pflicht': "Fahnen bieten sich immer, zerknitterte Prostituierte. Die Fahnen zu hissen, ist jeweils Pflicht. Ich hisse heute diese Fahne und morgen die andere Fahne ich erfülle meine Pflicht"(253). The venality of these prostitutes is less excusable than that of the street whore, - but equally fickle and unsatisfying. Keetenheuve knows that the Parliamentary arena is the best chance left for survival, despite the level of self-degradation to which it has been abused by the ideology-fixated 'sheep' who inhabit it - like Christ chastising the money-mongers in the temple, the deputy dismisses the mindless fascist recruit, 'der Bierbanknationalist', who in turn dismisses the 'Bundestag' as a 'Quasselbude' whilst touring (and therefore desecrating) its domains. The monologue runs: "Ich weiss nichts Besseres, selbst dieses Parlament ist das kleinere Übel"(284). The one sphere in which the artist's values have a hope of survival is the highly emotional personal relationship such as Keetenheuve once enjoyed with Elke. A relationship between two people is so precious that even a public contribution to the establishment of the relationship is deplored - bourgeois institutions, we remember, for the Expressionist, are seen as the antithesis of that which is most valuable and cherishable in the individual: "Und da er sich im bürgerlichen Leben nicht gefestigt fühlte, erschreckte ihn der Akt der Grablegung, so wie ihn auch Kindtaufen und Hochzeiten entsetzten und jedes Geschehen zwischen zwei Menschen, wenn die Öffentlichkeit daran teilnahm und gar noch die Ämter sich einmischten."(238). Fate had played its hand in this relationship; an analogy is established between Keetenheuve's discovery of love and of

the first real opportunity to engage in fruitful political activity - for both he was too late, history had ensured that they came too late - "jetzt war all sein Eifer der Verdammnis preisgegeben der Lächerlichkeit eines grau werdenden Jünglings"(248). In any case marriage - as opposed to love - was not for this brooder on the fate of mankind. "Er war ein Junggeselle, ein Alleingänger, vielleicht ein Wollüstling, vielleicht ein Anachoret ...,"(245) - recalling the artist-outsider figure of the Tagebuch essay, "eines die Ehe, das Konkubinat, das Freudenhaus nicht immer meidenden Zölibats, verliebt ins Lieben, mit allem Leiden an der Liebe ..."¹⁹⁵ And consonant with this alienation from the dull habituality of the marital life is the depressed psychological condition attending the coital experience, - as with Friedrich in the first pre-war novel, there is "das Todtraurigsein nach vielen Vereinigungen"(245). But this love nonetheless was the one hope, the one fountain of life which could have provided an anchor for even this disoriented intellectual, "ihm war das Liebste genommen". And this is to be contrasted with the 'Juckreiz' we associated earlier with the employees in the 'Bundeshaus', and also with the expectations relating to a hypothetical affair with Lena, the engineering apprentice - a fine and tragically depressing insight into the (non-) emotional relationship one assumes is alone possible with a trained technologist, an assumption deeply embedded in German Expressionist thought: "Lena Doktor der Ingenieurwissenschaft - Aber was tat man mit einem akademisch gebildeten Brückenbauer? Schief man mit ihm? Was empfand man, wenn man ihn umarmte? Die Liebe eine Formel."(411) But a relationship with Elke surpasses the formula, is a reminder that individuality is to be cherished and preserved in the face of the abstract, - and also results, as it did between Philip and Emilia, in the betrayed and abandoned spouse crying, "Ich hasse dich, Ich lieb ja nur dich."(250) The crucial importance of this relationship emerges from the contrast it makes with the overpowering 'Öde' of the surrounding world and its activities. Images of an anchor in

a sea of troubles, of a boat being moored to the shore serve to strengthen the value of the bond, now severed by her death - "die Bande der zärtlichen Empfindung ... ein fester Punkt in der zerfliessenden Flut ... Ein Mensch genügte, dem Leben Sinn zu geben. Die Arbeit ... die Politik ... schützten ihn nicht vor der ungeheuren Öde des Daseins."(331). The uniform character of this spiritual desert allows for no meaningful relationship to be established by means of which one could identify with a cause, the work of a committee, the life of a city (Korodin's situation is somewhat reversed, the family habitation and its doings are a hell, and he hides in the vacuum of politics and prayer): "Die Öde ... würgte ihn nicht. Sie war nur da ... Sie war das Nichts, und sie hatte kein Aussehen. Sie sah wie alle Dinge aus ... wie der Ausschuss ... wie das Parlament, wie der Rhein, wie das Land, alles war die Öde, war das Nichts in einer schrecklichen Unendlichkeit, die unzerstörbar war, denn selbst der Untergang berührte das Nichts nicht. Das Nichts war die wirkliche Ewigkeit"(331). The existential nausea is so all-enveloping that it has the same effect as destruction even when there is no destruction, what purports to exist is already a nothingness.

Disillusionment in this novel is multilateral; the people are disenchanted with their representatives, "einfältiger Chor zum Solo des Diktators"(266), they are unimpressed with Keetenheuve also, "Als Redner überzeugte er nicht. Die Menge ahnte, er zweifele, und das verzieh sie ihm nicht. Sie vermissten ... das Schauspiel des Fanatikers ..."(255). They too are 'einfältig', they desire the empty pre-election promises, "Fata Morgana für Einfältige, die sich nach jedem Plebiszit in Rauch auflöst". He, in turn, would like to help - but first, he is "der Masse negativ entgegengestellt"(352), and second, he is horrified by the cataclysmic possibilities of mass humanity, "Wollt ihr den totalen Krieg? ja ja ja ... Sie waren vereint, eine gefährliche Häufung von Nullen, eine explosive Mischung ...". The tragic paradox of this situation is that the sensitivities which engender a natural sympathy with the common people, especially as

individuals or unorganised minorities - "auf der Seite ... der Sonderfälle, er stand den Unorganisierten bei ..." (256) - which make Keetenheuve the one person who might hold 'Macht' at bay, "weil er sich für einen der wenigen hielt, die ihr Mandat noch als eine Anwaltschaft gegen die Macht auffassten", these sensitivities engender also a revulsion from the passive apathy and collective inertia in which he can have no part. "Keetenheuve stand abseits", and hence his own conception of Megalopolis is a parody of a human Utopia. This intellectual has no desire or capacity to achieve any end in political activity, where there is no escape from complicity in one or more of the complex, interweaving threads of action - "Alle Politik war schmutzig ... ihre Mittel waren dreckig und zerreissend" (300); Ernst von Salomon, in a review of the novel, sums up this dilemma by keeping the two worlds apart: "Das Gewissen darf keine Kompromisse kennen, die Politik lebt davon. Die Politik drängt zum Erfolg, das Gewissen zur Erfüllung."¹⁹⁶ Such statements naturally beg other questions, and are reinforced by ancillary comments such as "... die Umwelt im Recht ist, gar nicht anders sein kann."¹⁹⁷ But with Koeppen the world is not in the right nor to be vindicated, and though Keetenheuve's suicide has its ground in the realisation that it apparently decided not to be other than it is, the problem has to be faced, the dream must be dreamed, even though "die politische Gegenwart (erscheint) als das genaue Gegenbild der Utopie".¹⁹⁸ "Keetenheuve war nicht für Beschwichtigung. Er war dafür, der Gorgo ins Gesicht zu sehen." (338). It is as though - as with the French poets of the nineteenth century, whom the deputy is engaged in translating, amongst his other authorial activities - the vision of Hell if not a descent to it, is a necessary prelude to the vision of and entry to the allegorical Paradise. "Der Utopist ärgert seine Zeit. Dabei nährt er sie mit Hoffnung",¹⁹⁹ as Koeppen said of Erich Franzen.

Keetenheuve's own resigned despair still endeavours theoretically to provide a blue-print for a comfortable society of isolated human beings,

which would clear away the physical destruction, the landscape of ruins, the polluted air, the industrial effluents and all the symbols of man profiteering against man. The bondage of woman to the chores of living, of man to the constantly pilloried family, are to be removed in the provision of "das Glück in der Verzweiflung"(338). This is the last reasonable goal to aim for; the 'Verzweiflung' is already in attendance, the 'Glück' is a long way off - the artist's own contentment with this experience is described elsewhere: "Unter dem Glück der Verzweiflung verstehe ich: Unter Mördern zu leben, vor dem Café zu sitzen, den Wein zu geniessen, die Schönheit zu erkennen, den Tod zu fühlen, der Verwesung gewiss zu sein."²⁰⁰ This comfortable and solitary contentment which he would happily realise for all mankind is the last achievable 'Utopian' desideratum in a technological society - a measure of the artist's alienation from such, and a measure of the kinds of limitation which are imposed by the technocratic city. It is not necessary to freeze and starve as well as 'despair', in the midst of pondering on the metaphysical nothingness which attends the human condition one may inhabit dust-free, air conditioned Corbusier type dwellings, all arrayed together in a gigantic complex of hermetically sealed habitations, "das profane Kloster, die Eremitenzellen für den Massenmenschen"(339). The indirect accomplishment of urban collectivism - "so wie die grossen Städte den Menschen aus der Nachbarschaft heben, ihn allein sein lassen, ein einsames Raubtier, ein einsamer Jäger, ein einsames Opfer" - is extended to make the city habitable and its society restfully content, at least devoid of illusions, of the necessity of hope or faith, each one isolated with his work, his idleness, his thoughts, his loves, and his resignation. In this alienating techno-Utopia these conditions at least provide for a modicum of individualism - it now involves being cut off from every other individual and his particular form of self-expression. (It is this 'Glück in der Verzweiflung' which impels Koeppen to buy four first-class tickets to ensure privacy on

the Moscow train, N.R.132). However parodied it may be, as in this blueprint, this individualistic isolationism is the sine qua non for a habitable future, and relates back to the more conventional liberalism which is the cornerstone of all Keetenheuve's thinking, "wer war das eigentlich, das Volk? ... Wesen ein jedes für sich, die für sich dachten, ... die sich voneinander fort dachten, ... die nicht zu lenken, nicht einzusetzen ... waren? Keetenheuve wäre es lieber gewesen."(265). With these thoughts the deputy cannot but be a 'Bazillus der Unruhe'(237), a 'Stein des Anstosses' (357), without a friend in East or West, evoking in daydreams the shades of Stendhal, Hitler and Chamberlain the outcome of whose conversation is the triumph rather than the defeat of the big battalions(322-324). (This reverie provides some of the best mocking humour in the novel; sympathetic links are established between Hitler and Senator McCarthy, and Chamberlain observes how a General, 'der putschen will', is no friend of the United Kingdom, whilst a General, 'der erfolgreich geputscht hat', will be received at St. James' Palace.) Goebbel's techniques will be used by a 'democratic' government to frame him if need arises (294), (one thinks of the kind of criticism to which Willy Brandt was exposed after the war). Like the flags and banners mentioned earlier, the briberies, the sycophantic network, the dolls and vied for secretaries, the expense accounts are extended forms of social and professional prostitution which sour the deputy's vision: "Die Zeit lief zurück, die Kriege waren nie gewesen"(348). The revulsion approaches a condition of neurosis and disequilibrium as he arrives at 'Bonn' station - the odour of provinciality already speaks of history gone awry, of defeat and disorientation; Keetenheuve is assailed by intense physical discomfort which is of course of psycho-somatic origin; "ein eiserner Reif legte sich ihm um die Brust ... der Auftritt seiner nun steifen Beine ... war wie ein Hammerschlag, der Nieten in ein Wrack hämmerte auf eines Teufels Werft ... Leere, Leere dehnte sich gewaltig in seinem Schädel aus..." (271). His head is compared to a balloon filled with nothingness, an incomprehensible

'Unstoff', which rises till it bursts. The balloon turns out to be - like the political atmosphere of the town and his own head when it is engaged in its activities - an empty shell; like the balloon the deputy feels 'schrecklich entblösst' as he passes through the barrier.

Some of the reasons for this revulsion and also for his pessimism concerning what is achievable have been underlined; but part of the intellectual's dilemma is his inability to identify with any particular aspect or activity amongst the multifarious possibilities offered or the manifold dictates imposed by a pluralistic structure. On one level this is the social situation experienced by all people in day to day rôles. But the intellectual has to know what they add up to as well as why they exist and the effect they have on the quality of that society, and finally, the effect they have upon his own personality and the way it relates to the wider structure. Most of the characters in the novel, even those like Elke who finally disintegrate, relate positively to one or more of the rôles and do not question them. It is Keetenheuve's questioning of them and what they make of him which produces the irremediable alienation. Most of the rôles are conceived in the usual italicised monologue, pointing to the self-questioning that is going on, - even for Elke it is disagreeably disturbing and becomes an element in their estrangement; in the company of the Lesbians "war Wärme ... war nicht die entsetzliche, die bedrückende, fließende, springende, sprudelnde, nie zu fassende Intellektualität Keetenheuves"(249). Certainly the numerical enormity of the possible, hypothetical rôles itemised by the deputy's disturbed consciousness must needs raise the problem of identity: Keetenheuve Gesandter Keetenheuve Exzellenz (the Guatemalan bribe to remove the 'Gewissensmensch' from the local scene)(318); Keetenheuve Käufer und Konsument, Normalverbraucher. Nützlich (first he is 'gefangen' - he is obliged to wear clothes, then he has 'entwischt', as he does not smoke)(351); Keetenheuve Asket ... Jünger des Zen, (a Buddhistic renunciation relating to the previous rôle)(362); capable of being at least

two people with Lena, and antithetical people also, Keetenheuve schlechter Mensch (capable of seducing her), Keetenheuve ein guter Mensch, (finding employment for her, 371); the disturbing dichotomy already mentioned, Keetenheuve Mann des Volkes kein Mann des Volkes (384), Keetenheuve Hausvater, Keetenheuve Kinderfreund, Keetenheuve Heckenschneider (280), (the awareness of a natural tenderness in him which will conflict with its 'institutionalisation' in the form of marriage, "für Keetenheuve eine perverse Lebensform"(291)); Keetenheuve Schulmeister (relationship with Elke), Keetenheuve Possehl Witwer (the respectable widower figure to whom he cannot relate, not being himself 'achtbar'), Keetenheuve Moralist und Lüstling, Keetenheuve Ritter der Menschenrechte, Keetenheuve Mörder (252), Sir Felix Keetenheuve, Royal Officers Club (he called upon Germany to resist Hitler). As Horst Rüdiger comments in a review, "er entscheidet sich für keinen, weil er, grundsätzlicher Skeptiker, die Fragwürdigkeit eines jeden von vornherein gewahr wird."²⁰¹ The cohesive organised personality, rooted in cohesive organic social structures, is obsolete, for, as Vormweg asserts, "eine Persönlichkeit ist eine Persönlichkeit dank erfolgreicher Kaschierung."²⁰² The picture of society which literature is now presenting centres on "ein überwältigendes Bild der Vereinzelung in einer sich im Verstand der Technik immer perfekter konsolidierenden Umwelt." This destructive and divisive process of 'Vereinzelung' no longer rests upon "die Vorstellung vom Individuum, damit auf Teilnahme an einem allgemeinen Ganzen, auf die Vorstellung, der einzelne repräsentiere das Ganze ... Dieser Zwiespalt ... ist virulent bis in die banalen Alltagssituationen."²⁰³ Vormweg relates these observations to a wider discourse on how language and form are changing to correspond to these effects in society - the new literary realism is "eine Summe von Wahrnehmungsdaten, die einer Bewegung zuschiessen"²⁰⁴ which lends weight to the discussion of stylistic technique at the conclusion of our study of Tauben im Gras. This 'Vereinzelung' process, a by-product of the technology of mass-society, is part of the

target of the conservative critique of social development - we recall Koeppen's own words on the effect of city life, "ihn allein sein lassen, ein einsames Raubtier, ... ein einsames Opfer"(339). At any one time, only part of man is brought into play, "so dass die Gruppierungen ... kein eigenes Schwergewicht, kein eigenes Recht und keinen eigenen Geist entwickeln können",²⁰⁵ as the same critique runs. As Freyer brilliantly and yet pithily elaborates: "Weil der Sachgehalt, der die Menschen zusammenbringt, nur eine Dimension hat, werden die Motive ... und die menschlichen Eigenschaften ... gleichsam eindimensional; aber aus Zwirnsfäden kann man keine Brücke von Mensch zu Mensch bauen."²⁰⁶

This is a commentary on a general human situation. The situation of the intellectual, as stated earlier, is more complicated still. The common cultural and spiritual bases of society have disappeared; now there are many different criteria and values which determine or could determine behaviour. No one value or standpoint is weightier than another. A choice for Keetenheuve becomes impossible and meaningless, quite apart from the fact that his alienation is total. "Allgemeine Standpunkte, die von den Intellektuellen wirkungsvoll dargelegt und verteidigt werden konnten, sind so unsicher und schwankend geworden wie die moralischen Imperative der frühbürgerlichen Epoche. Was bleibt ausser der Massengesellschaft, dieser wertneutralen Genossenschaft von Konsumenten ...?"²⁰⁷ Keetenheuve, like Koeppen, has dismissed the moral imperatives of a once stable bourgeois society, to which Franzen alludes. We saw how the author responded to these bourgeois moralisms in the writings concerning his youth and early manhood. Keetenheuve equally cannot be "in Eintracht mit einer geordneten Welt", as was the 'widower' Possehl, ("Witwer war ein komisches Wort, ein verstaubter Begriff aus einer geruhsameren Zeit"(239)). For both author and character nothing has succeeded in filling the void when the metaphysical props and the social cohesiveness have been destroyed. Keetenheuve's own work is of a fragmentary nature - his desk reflects his multi-faceted, unintegrated

being, covered as it is with unanswered letters, half-composed memoranda, half-read minutes, half-translated poems etc. - corresponding to the pluralistic and fragmented nature of the world in which he performs real and hypothetical rôles. The poems have no relation to the political manoeuvres or the petitions which find an equal place in his briefcase. If they were ever finished - it belongs to this 'Märchen' that they cannot be - they would be sold alongside other 'commercial' items and household gadgets. Marcuse, once interested in the 'liquidation of high culture', (but centrally because of its own non-relation to, and even obstruction of vital social and political forces), observes that nothing worthwhile has taken its place if values have become confused: "The greatness of a free literature and art, the ideals of humanism, the sorrows and joys of the individual, the fulfilment of the personality are important items ... The fact that they contradict the society which sells them does not count."²⁰⁸

It counts to the intellectual who sees in the situation a manifest absurdity. "If mass communications blend together harmoniously and often unnoticeably, art, politics, religion, and philosophy with commercials, they bring these realms of culture to their common denominator - the commodity form. The music of the soul is also the music of salesmanship. Exchange value, not truth value counts. On it centres the rationality of the status quo, and all alien rationality is bent to it."²⁰⁹ The contest in the football stadium is more important than the conflict and the armaments debate in the Bundestag; the popular press has a vested interest in fostering this illusion. An "alien rationality" - such as Keetenheuve's - will be, in the words of Mergentheim, the unprincipled opportunist, "schlachteif"(292). The "common denominator" of which Marcuse speaks, the levelling of values which Kierkegaard had pilloried, produce the disorienting absurdities we have seen at times in Koeppen's writings. When "allgemein-gültige Standpunkte"(Franzen) have been vanquished and have yielded to a miscellany of equal-ranking possibilities, the most grotesque juxtapositions are discernible, the most unselective denominators are accomplishable.

Keetenheuve himself can be involved in them; in the Bundeshaus, where the American administration works, a conversation is overheard concerning the great new world of promise to be found in America, "das neue Rom". "Keetenheuve war sehr für neues Werden." This is followed by "Die Mädchen im Dachcafé hatten dünne Nylonstrümpfe an ..." (328), and a discussion of the inadequacy of the relationships which the male and female employees form with each other. It is a feature of the world's meaninglessness, i.e. its lack of cohesive, structured meaning, that atom bombs, (the final evidence for Keetenheuve of the folly of his own small country, "wie klein war das Vaterland, in dem er lebte"), "Todespilze", are the lethal fruits of the most creative intellect, "den zartesten Gehirnen entreift." (389). A female deputy of the ruling party supports the military defence pact with the West in the name of security for all housewives, "ein schöner Slogan, der nur allzusehr an die Anzeige einer Fabrik für intime Tampons erinnerte." (379) This is the football match and the Parliamentary debate all over again. And since Frau Pierhelm is broadcasting her message through loudspeakers to the nation, we are again reminded of the cultural significance of the 'Lautsprecherkultur' (Muschg). It is an ironic and absurd twist of blind Fate and the indifferent, sense-less course of History, that Knurrewahn was once an internationalist d'après Lassalle, who then saw his dreams vanquished by the National Socialist aberration, and now has become a nationalist in the cause of a reunified and peaceful Germany - when the internationalist slogans of the ruling party are gaining prestige and ground, chanted in the name of defensive rearmament and the inevitable division of Germany. (304-311). Keetenheuve, like Jonah emerged from the whale, would happily tell the King of Ninive, alias the Chancellor, how to avoid destruction, how to amend one's ways (yet another rôle, Keetenheuve Prophet von alttestamentarischer Strenge); this very Koeppenesque resort to (Biblical) mythology is concluded by a reference to a twentieth century, more flippant concern with the sea-mammal, children waving flags enjoining one to "Esst

Busses vitaminreiche reine Walfettmargarine"(404-405). The representatives of the Salvation Army, an Army which is more Army than Salvation, are hardly discussed in the terms in which they are supposed to operate, and more in terms of the predatory Lesbianism of one of them. Life and Nature make nonsense of human pretensions and hopes. The elementary functions of the lavatory are highlighted to make all pretensions absurd; "Die Neger pissten in zwei hohen Strahlen in das Gras unter den Bäumen"(243); "Parfum kitzelte die Nasen und mischte sich hinter der Tür mit des Interessensvertreterers strengem Ablauf am Abend genossener Bockbiere"(267); a jeremiad on the poisonous corrupting luxuriance, a luxuriance 'ohne Mark und Jugend' of the 'Treibhaus' which Germany now is, is concluded by "Besetzt ... und hinter der Tür pinkelte das Mädchen ... die Schwellen an"(268). "Forestier ... latriniert mit Landsern ... Pisst Wellen in den Äther ... Hakenkreuz an der Wand"(317). The reduction to basic animality marries well with symbols of Nazism, or other forms of social behaviour which degrade and even exploit the humanity in man; a group of businessmen and their wives, who reduce all relationships to the cash-nexus, "sie wussten, was jeder wert war", "reichten sich unter falschem Lächeln die fetten Hände", retire for the night, "die Frau gähnt, der Mann furzt."(368).

Where man and society are such 'Mischwesen' Keetenheuve cannot find a hold to cling to - his psychological distress at the railway station is conveyed in these terms, "wo war ... eine Mauer sich anzuklammern?" His "Scheitern", to use Koeppen's description of the universal condition of man ("Betrachten Sie die Geschichte, wer ist nicht gescheitert? Nicht einer."²¹⁰), is partly a personal problem, of the author's own kind: "er hatte gedacht, statt zu handeln"(241); he contrasts with Frost-Forestier, the product of the technical age, monitoring foreign radio stations, whose room is described as a factory, "ein Ablauf ausgeklügelter Bewegungen, rationell und präzise, und Frost-Forestier war das Werk, das in Gang gesetzt wurde. Er eiferte den elektronischen Gehirnen nach."(258). Keetenheuve, on the other hand,

"war unordentlich"(260). Forestier is happy to listen to his recorded voice; here there is no intellectual revulsion or self-questioning. In the 'Treibhaus' society, in technological Utopia, in the democratisation of the individual Keetenheuve can have no part. With Elke's death begins the road to his own death. A reviewer describes the Germany which horrified him as one which "sich wie eine zweifelhafte Dame nach stürmischer Nacht mit Puder und Schminke restauriert und ein modisches Kleid überzieht, als sei nichts geschehen."²¹¹ Dark Nordic myths, associated with Elke's lineage, (reminiscent of Wagner's heroes, "eine hinterlistige und grausame Götterwelt"(242) - "Fememörder Hagen hatte sich's bequem gemacht" observes the deputy, sharing the Nibelungen-Express with Cardinals and politicians) are waiting to be resurrected, or their worshippers hide behind the mask of forgetfulness. Koeppen becomes more obsessed with this mythology in the next novel. For Keetenheuve the situation cannot be mastered, there is no escape, "Ihm war das Rückgrat gebrochen"(257). For Koeppen a problem is emerging; his work is now "aufs Schweigen, aufs Verstummen hin angelegt",²¹² and its future course will depend on how the author will conduct his "ständiger Kampf mit den Erfahrungen Ihrer Romanfiguren."²¹³

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DER TOD IN ROM: SYNOPSIS

Nazism a self-perpetuating evil - meaninglessness of history, repetition of error and folly - pluralistic moralities - Judejahn and his predecessors (Inquisition) - influence of the weight of history - investigation of past for understanding of tragedy - bitterness at loss of human potential, at cultural and material devastation accomplished by own country - spectres of the past alienate and engender author's 'Angsträume' - Märchen elements, phantom-characters act out a destiny, embody mythologies, ideological puppets pronounce 'Phrasen' - psychology of slogans and rhetoric - Adolf meets 'Gespenst', Jewish boy, joins Catholic Church out of disgust with man.

Rome locus of grotesque and sublime history - contrasting contributions of Christian and Greco-Roman culture - decline in quality of inmates and visitors to Pantheon - reverence of Siegfried and Kurenbergs for ancient Gods, beauty, 'das Mass', consonant life-style of Kurenbergs, "vorchristlich und nachchristlich" - Adolf's disbelief in Church, his 'refuge' - Roman Church's historical alliance with established power and tyranny - why destroy old Gods? - commercialism of religion, impersonality of Church's grandeur - Church embodiment of both good and evil (indistinguishable), Curial libraries adjoin dungeons, moral and cultural schizophrenia - power of Church defeats individual - masses sheep-like - decline in quality of sheep and shepherds - Greek myths celebrate beauty, totality of man, Adolf's religion excludes him - modern sexuality evidence of fragmentation in human being.

Art and its relation to the nature of modern reality - traditional 'lie' of art unmasked - relation of cognitive faculties and the 'word' (Wittgenstein) to reality, fragmented universe difficult to convey in art - futility of art to change man or influence history - the 'lie' of beauty - twelve-tone music (and analogous interior monologue) in conflict with political tyranny, musical dissonance a response to tyranny - a Heimat

acceptable to the artist - belief in brotherhood destroyed by Fascist
experience - Jewess's reaction to 'Neutöner' - Siegfried's music not
arid intellectualism, concern with "modern" death, nostalgia for a
'Gegenwelt', the music of 'ein Ringender' - Pfaffraths' reaction to the
symphony, 'culture' versus humanism, aestheticism linked to barbarism
(aspects of fragmented culture), further cultural and moral schizophrenia
- crippling effect of early education, Ordensschule, perversity of sexual
outlooks - Siegfried and physical procreation, a nihilist's view of
eschatological inventions.

DER TOD IN ROM - Fragmented psyche - cultural and moral schizophrenia, alienation and futility of art.

In a review of a novel by Horst Krüger, Koeppen quotes and comments:

"Der letzte Satz aus dem Bericht einer 'Jugend in Deutschland': 'Dieser Hitler, denke ich, der bleibt uns - lebenslänglich.' Ein bestürzender Gedanke; ich fürchte, eine Binsenwahrheit."²¹⁴ Krüger sees the future defendants at the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt enjoying the fruits of post-war prosperity and prestige in the community in which they are re-established, - and, moreover, difficult to distinguish from the tribunal judges and counsel convened to judge and sentence them. The situation is reminiscent of characters and features in Koeppen's third post-war novel, where the Pfaffraths are happily forgetting and hiding their complicity, often indirect and all the more frightening for its impersonality, in the atrocities enacted in the name of racist ideology. A blank wall of incomprehension faces the investigator of the tragedy, according to Koeppen's interpretation of the Krüger novel - "es ist ein Grübeln, eine schwere Rechnung, die nicht aufgehen will, ein Versuch zu begreifen, am Ende eine Verurteilung in Zorn und Trauer."²¹⁵ And though this third item in the trilogy is a study of how the spectres of the past live on in the body and soul of a former S.S. general in Rome, who performs and behaves as though hostilities had never ceased and the 'final solution' had been inadequately accomplished, we never learn why the human consciousness still cannot see the perversity and meaninglessness of the aims and purposes envisioned (unless the enormity of this perversity would so stun and demoralise that the mind constructs defence mechanisms of which the participants are totally unaware). Interwoven with the absence of meaning in history, concretised typically by the usual co-existence of the sublime constructions of the human mind with its grotesque destructions at human expense, and the failure of art to provide this meaning or prevent the same destructions (even worse, it served at times the forces engaged in these destructions), is this paralysing awareness in the novel that

error and evil repeat and perpetuate themselves, myths are re-enacted, especially here the cruel Nordic ones again which usurped the life-enhancing ones of ancient Greece. Recently Winifred Wagner has been reported as confessing that the Bayreuth-centred friendship she enjoyed with Hitler was more important to her than any world-wide political reputation the tyrant earned for himself. Perhaps this is a consequence again of a fragmented and pluralistic society, the fact that acting persons have many selves to deploy in the world, some of which contradict and oppose each other. If it is not a matter of fragmented selves, it is society itself whose moral unity and harmony - the universal categorical imperative of Kant - is divided and ruptured: there will always be an Austerlitz, the agent with whom mercenaries or the racistically and ideologically motivated (Judejahn) can negotiate for the selling of arms; "Austerlitz war korrekt und vertrauenswürdig, und seine Beziehungen zu allen Regierungen und zu allen Umstürzern in aller Welt waren wie sein Kredit sagenhaft"(546). For this reason Judejahn could say, "er war wer, war immer wer gewesen und war es wieder"(435). No monistic scale of values prevails, ethics has become increasingly relativised, and even if this had not occurred with the changing and loosening fabric of society, history had always provided its own evidence of human turpitude, even masquerading as cosmic (and unified) moral law - as the very city of Rome attests. Indeed, as Judejahn, the S.S. specialist in twentieth century sadism, comes to realise when visiting the Papal dungeons, "nichts Neues gab es aus alter Zeit zu sehen, er kannte das, er war nicht überrascht, er fühlte sich in seinem Handwerk bestätigt und ging wirklich selbstsicher und gelangweilt ... in die Verliese hinunter."(542) The instruments of fascist dictatorship continue the inquisitorial traditions of God's so-called representatives on earth - the affront to humanity, and we may add, to Geist, which is common to both, explains why both could even countenance a partnership. Behind all this is the daunting conviction that

no change is possible in the general human situation (there are various references in Koeppen's writings to the fact that the individual might effect a change within himself); and that when it comes to communicating with the Judejahns, total estrangement, even between mother and son, Eva and Adolf, is the end result: "Siegfried hatte recht, es gibt keine Verständigung"(559). Siegfried ponders on theoretical possibilities of hope, which cannot lie with Germany as a whole: "schien es mir nicht mehr möglich zu sein, Deutschland zu ändern, man konnte nur sich ändern ..."(536). In a virulent attack upon prevailing evidence of anti-Semitism, in line with the novel itself, Koeppen allows that a personal transformation might take place: "Ich bin der letzte, der leugnen möchte, dass ein Mensch sich zu wandeln vermag, dass Saulus Paulus wird, dass Erschütterung und Erkenntnis aus einem SA-Mann einen Hüter der Verfassung ... machen können."²¹⁶ But Rome and its vast and powerful history, not to mention the doings of an S.S. general who was very close to Mussolini, - as the later travel-books tell us, "Die Welt war immer nur die Peripherie dieser Stadt"(N.R.290) - give little cause to believe that the picture of venality, folly and aggression can foreseeably be amended.

It is the whole weight of history - even Judejahn's own recent activities in the capital - which hangs overpoweringly over the scene presented to us, a past which has brought to the present its multitude of spectres and phantoms which paralyse most of the executioners and their victims still, the only exceptions being the Kürenbergs, the conductor and his Jewish wife, Ilse, who manage to survive by their very physical mobility, another of those couples who escape their private heritage, like those in Tauben im Gras, by travel and the crossing of frontiers, always with Koeppen a symbol of liberation. It is of some significance that German writers, especially those of Koeppen's generation, are obsessed with the burden of the past, whether or not they feel, as does the author himself, that a return to it or an attempt to 'distil its essence', whilst bearing its

own artistic justification, cannot however provide any real understanding of that past, all the more disturbing in view of the nature of modern German history; equally, it cannot provide a key to coping with the future, a future which for Koeppen is either totally obscure, or lugubrious in the form it will take, or non-existent, as in his short prose-item, "Landung in Eden" - "Im Paradies wohnen keine Menschen"(N.R.337). But the bitterness and the trauma are so great that the artist is haunted by the sheer dimensions of pain and suffering that were experienced, by the senselessness of it all, and - seen personally as well as socially - by the dire waste of precious reserves of human potential, energy and love. The artist has an additional loss - manuscripts are destroyed, the conscience is silenced, writings - however much they represent a "sinnlose Sinngebung des Sinnlosen"²¹⁷ - are suppressed, and the writer is tormented by the thought of what might have been written (his first post-war novel was "die Folge eines aufgestauten, eines zu spät verwirklichten Stil-experimentes ... vielleicht hätte ich mich in meinem ersten Roman ... der Annäherung an neue Ausdruckshorizonte hingegeben. Das unterblieb in der schlimmen Zeit."²¹⁸) Hence Siegfried's anger and hatred directed at his own parents and their accomplices, an intense insurmountable revulsion and indignation at the waste involved: "weil sie aus unserer Heimat ein Land der Intoleranz, der Dummheit, des Grössenwahns, des Zuchthauses, des Richtblocks und des Galgens machten"(551). Such an accomplishment demands an investigation, however inextricable the clues; history, one's own past, the writer's youth and early youthful experiences, become a compulsive obsession; Koeppen refers to Horst Krüger's own - as well as fictionalised - return to the place where the trouble began, "... sucht seine Jugend, weil ihn die Frage quält, wie das eigentlich war, was wir heute alle nicht mehr begreifen können."²¹⁹ We have already explored in some detail the early origins of Koeppen's alienation and related these origins to the disasters to come; in the present novel the malformations accomplished in and through early educational experience influence the destiny, affect the attitudes

of Judejahn, Siegfried and Adolf among others. These experiences become part of 'Schicksal' which figures hugely in the author's view of the nature of things. "Denn bis zu einem gewissen Grade war es Schicksal, ob einer nach Auschwitz kam, um zu sterben oder um zu töten."²²⁰

It is the ghosts of the past, or of the dead, who haunt the living, - and in this novel, inhabit the nightmares of the creative artist himself. "Die Luft in Rom war gerade sehr geeignet für Gespenster", he observes, recalling the very brief time he spent there, intent on writing a very different novel, whereupon he was assailed with the villainous spectres of the fascist regime: "Ich nahm mir die Freiheit, auch meinerseits noch einige Gespenster in Rom anzusiedeln."²²¹ Some of Stephen Spender's remarks on the 'poetic' novel (as opposed to the 'prose' novel) are applicable to the process of composition here, where what we have already described as 'Märchen' elements predominate in the artistic vision, and where the poetic method, to use Spender's words, "reveals a moral situation in life by stripping away the surface of actuality and showing the processes of thought, motive and feeling underneath."²²² In the novel under discussion 'the processes of thought and feeling' are felt so intensely as the very substance of the writer's alienation that they are considerable as "Projektionen der Angst- und Wunschträume ihres Schöpfers."²²³ This description explains the spectrality of the figures who play out their allotted rôles in the 'events' of the novel - encounters, monologues and dialogues as usual - and the acting of a rôle is asserted as part of a 'Märchen'. In the earlier novel the child Ezra, having had Jewish grandparents, tells his child-'adversary', Heinz, 'Ich bin Jude', even though he is baptised in the Roman Catholic faith, like his father: "Aber es gehörte zum Stil des Märchens, dass er Jude war" (T.G. 83). In the same way Judejahn is predetermined to act out his final destiny by shooting another member of the enemy race, and a highly civilised one at that, - Ilse Kürenberg had come to terms with

the turmoil and chaos of her time, forgiving without forgetting, her very rootlessness enabling her to achieve a measure of poise and rare self-sufficiency. Phantoms bearing the tragic weight of the crimes of history tend to be stereotypes, and there is little that is unpredictable in the ex-general's behaviour and ideology. Just as there are strong elements of fatalism in Koeppen's writings, so here the ghosts of the past behave like marionettes on the string of the author's imagination:

"Die Figuren sind als psychologische Phänomene nicht eigentlich durchgebildet, vielmehr mit der Erinnerung an ihre Vergangenheit und mit Reflexionen und Instinkten wie Marionetten mit Kostümen behängt."²²⁴

For another commentator the author, the manipulator of the strings,

"ist in Wahrheit die einzige Person der 'Handlung'".²²⁵ The phantoms

plague and torment the living, reminding them as it were of the unchanging and unchangeable thread of human fate and fortune; Ilse is confronted at last with the harbingers and perpetrators of murder and chaos at the concert where Siegfried's symphony is competing for an award, her own background and suffering are inextricably interwoven with the racist decisions made earlier by those now in attendance: "Ilse Kürenberg kannte sie nicht, und doch kannte sie diese Leute, und es war ihr, als bräche eine Mauer auf, hinter der man Gespenster eingemauert hatte. Sie hatte sie nie wieder sehen wollen; sie wollte sich an die Gespenster nicht erinnern, und nun waren die Gespenster da, waren durch die Mauer gebrochen, Feuerkobelde eines brennendes Hauses, die Mordlemuren eines alten Vaters."(579). The whole of the 'Judejahn-Klingspor-Mief' ("Die Schwestern Klingspor waren unsere Mütter, und das bedeutete ein Jahrhundert nationaler Dummheit ... deutschbürgerlicher Begrenzung ..."(535)) wear an air of unreality, cardboard figures left behind by history, as they group together after the concert, "Sie standen seltsam beziehungslos in diesem Raum, der nun gespenstisch wirkte oder sie zu Gespenstern machte. Hatte das Leben sie aufgegeben ...?"

It is as though the characters are incorporations of enduring mythologies, pronouncing phrases and slogans which atrophy their autonomous individuality and make of them mouthpieces of ideological puppetry, attended by the goblins and lemurs of the underworld. Germane to the phenomenon of a Judejahn, the bullying tyrant, is the need for the dictator whom he slavishly and mindlessly obeys. He is not so much afraid to die as to live. "Er fürchtete die Befehlslosigkeit, in der er leben sollte" - such is his fear of so-called peace, and the reign of the disgustingly content and disgustingly venal 'Biedermann'. "... seine Rede 'auf meine Verantwortung' war Phrase gewesen ... denn in Wahrheit hatte er immer nur gehorcht ... (dass) er ein Trabant geblieben war, ... eine magische Null". (456-457) Eva is no normal mother-figure, disdains her son insofar as he fails to fulfil the Nordic Aryan mythology of which she is the lost and defeated protagonist; she is a phantom, "das nach Rom verschlagene Gespenst aus Nord- und Nebelland die wahre Wahrerin des Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts ..." (543).

These particular myths allow no dissension or defection; they do not affirm the life of the individual or the thinker as did, for Koeppen, those of ancient Greece. "Denken war nicht seine Art", we learn of Judejahn, "das war Treibsand, gefährliches, verbotenes Territorium." (483) These dark and cruel myths bring death and destruction by the rituals through which they are served, and especially the phrases and slogans which are part of the liturgy. "In Wahrheit hielten ihn Phrasen zusammen, die Phrasen eines Pennälers." (436) And in Judejahn's case the reference to schooldays is apt, as the 'Ordensschule' has left its mark on all its victims, from the general down to Siegfried and Adolf. The power of sham rhetoric is almost impossible to subvert; the Pfaffraths made their murderous contribution from the 'Stammtisch', "in altdeutscher Bierstube, die germanische Phrase auf der geschwätzigen Zunge, die Phrase ihrer Nietzschedeutung im Hirn, und Phrase, an der sie sich berauschten, war ihnen selbst Führerwort und Rosenbergmythus ..." (470) Siegfried's

conventional defence of his self-liberation from his parents' manias and self-delusions is unjustly evaluated by Adolf's criticism: "Du bist in Phrasen befangen wie all die anderen ..." (550) One recalls the words of that psychologist of the masses, Gustave Le Bon: "La raison et les arguments ne sauraient lutter contre certains mots et certaines formules ... Beaucoup les considèrent comme des forces de la nature, des puissances surnaturelles ... Avec un petit stock de formules et de lieux communs appris dans la jeunesse, nous possédons tout ce qu'il faut pour traverser la vie sans la fatigante nécessité d'avoir à réfléchir sur quoi que ce soit."²²⁶ Men are the victims of or are obedient to historical or socio-psychological forces which engender and dominate the stage on which they act out an allotted destiny. The characters in this novel are incapacitated anti-heroes unable to change the course of events or the direction of their own lives, and seem ready to be invalidated out of history without any further contribution to it - with the possible exception of the artist, Siegfried, whose creative powers look forward to a fructifying encounter with African cultures, and Kürenberg who will conduct the music which will spring from it. One of the most unforgettable scenes in the novel, in human terms, is the meeting between Adolf, having just left the 'Ordensschule' which towards the end of the war had at last discerned its own inanity, and the Jewish boy who had somehow survived both the fate of many of his race and an attack on the train on which he had been abandoned;

In dem Gebüsch hatte sich aber ein Gespenst versteckt, und das Gespenst beobachtete Adolf. Das Gespenst war genau so alt wie Adolf ... Doch als das Gespenst Adolf weinen sah, nahm das Gespenst den Knüppel, der neben ihm lag und kam aus dem Gebüsch ... und das Gespenst in seiner blauweissgestreiften Zwangsjacke hob den Knüppel, und seine Nase stand gross und knochig in dem Hungertodgesicht, und Adolf Judejahn erblickte das Stürmer-Bild und sah zum erstenmal einen lebenden Juden, ... und das Gespenst den Knüppel erhoben in der zitternder Hand, schrie nach Brot. (490)

This debilitating, alienating experience affects Adolf in the same way as Keetenheuve was affected by his approach to the barrier on arrival in Bonn station: "Vorerst war sein Kopf nur leer, ein leerer Luftballon, der schlapp über dem Gras hing."²²⁷ The Jew is not merely a ghost-figure because of his emaciated condition; repetition is a common feature of the author's stylistic, as we have frequently seen, and its effective deliberateness is again in evidence here. What is interesting in this instance is the weight of alienating tragedy felt by character, author and reader, the intensity of the experience is such that no concrete flesh-and-blood creature makes its appearance, but a spectral shape is encountered which represents a race, a cause, a problem, a crime of mankind. The realm of verisimilitude and probability has little to do with these events in history which bring us face to face with the absurdity which for Koeppen is the essence of the human condition. It is significant also that Adolf's conception of a Jew had up to this moment been borrowed entirely from the Stürmer; the sham 'Phrasen' and the mutilating, obscurantist mythologies had wreaked havoc and destroyed any sense of true realities. It is not surprising that we soon read: "Er glaubte den Menschen nicht mehr. Er wollte dem Herrn dienen. Gott Vater Sohn ..." (493) But the Church he was to serve can hardly stand up to the test, and so another spiritual venture becomes a failure.

Rome, once the spiritual home of the Western cultured aristocrat, the fertilising ground which formerly allowed the European intellectual - the bearer of a monistic or integrated culture - to regain contact with the sources of a life-affirming spiritual heritage, is again chosen as a suitable locus for surveying the sublime and the grotesque panorama of human history, for underlining this fascinating and confounding admixture which is the stuff of which this history is made; amidst the obsession with the invariability of this admixture lies a strong

attachment to the Greco-Roman past and a severe questioning of the contribution of so-called Christian civilisation. There is at times a confrontation between these two differing cultures which provides a measure of the author's alienation from the society of his time and some of its cherished institutions. "Es war einmal eine Zeit, da hatten Götter in der Stadt gewohnt." (419) So begins the novel, with a comical and yet despairing glance at the decline with time of the Pantheon, and of the quality of its inmates, supported by a counterpart decline in the quality of the tourists who throng inside it. The whole ensemble represents a decaying culture, the mark of a moribund religion, a society without faith or vitality, looking on, bewildered and unfeeling, at the very cold and dead remains of past epochs:

Jetzt liegt Raffael im Pantheon begraben, ein Halbgott noch, ein Glückskind Apolls, doch wie traurig, was später sich ihm an Leichnamen gesellte, ein Kardinal vergessener Dienste, ein paar Könige, ihre mit Blindheit geschlagenen Generale, in der Karriere hochgediente Beamte, Gelehrte, die das Lexikon erreichten, Künstler akademischer Würden. Wen schert ihr Leben? ... Danae lässt sich von Cook und vom Italienischen Staatsverband für den Fremdenverkehr wohl führen; doch Lust empfindet sie nicht. So hebt sie auch nicht ihr Kleid, den Gott zu empfangen. Perseus wird nicht geboren. Die Meduse behält ihr Haupt und richtet sich bürgerlich ein. Und Jupiter? Weilt er, ein kleiner Pensionär, unter uns Sterblichen? Ist er vielleicht der alte Herr in der American-Express-Gesellschaft, der Betreute des Deutsch-Europäischen Reisebüros? Oder haust er hinter Mauern am Stadtrand, in die Irrenanstalt gesperrt? Unter dem Kapitol hat man eine Wölfin hinter Gitter gesetzt, ein krankes verzweifertes Tier, fern davon, Romulus und Remus zu säugen."

Some of this playful and yet earnest banter showing the bathetic degradation of idealised heroic figures, or their absence, points forward to the more restrained style and tone of the travel books - but in this novel the venom, anger and despair generally reach unsurpassed heights. We are regaled with the occasional rapturous passage on the beauties and glories of the city, either through the

composed and cultured conversation of the Kürenbergs - "sie lieben das alte, das antike, das römische Rom" (464) - or through a lengthy monologue of Siegfried's with its rhythmic anaphora, 'Ich liebe ...'(464-466). This monologue is a hymn to the richness and vitality of the life of the capital, - "wie es ist und mir sich zeigt" - and one wonders whether it is Koeppen rather than Siegfried who is composing it. But this confession of love also begins: "auch ich liebe sie, liebe die alten Götter, liebe die Schönheit, die, lange in der Erde verborgen, wieder ans Licht kam, liebe das Mass ..." It is fitting that the Kürenbergs who dine and drink with a gourmet's distinction, like the author himself, "sie assen andächtig", who eat in silence, "doch liebten sie sich sehr", who walk "sicheren Schrittes und gewandt im unruhigen Gewimmel der römischen Strasse"(431) - Ilse is elsewhere described: "Ihr fester Körper stand fest auf dem festen Boden. Sie hatte standgehalten,"(605) - it is fitting that they should shun barbarism in all its forms (this becomes part of the difficulty Ilse has in coming to terms with Siegfried's music which echoes the despair aroused by contemporary barbarism), and rejoice in architecture and sculpture which once glorified the body and soul of living and thinking man as, for example, the Christian religion has never done. "Sie liebten die Antike. Sie liebten die erhabenen Gestalten, die der Mensch nach seinem Bilde schuf ... Sie besuchten die Erosen, die Faune, die Götter und die Helden." (432). This ambience is contrasted with the hotel they inhabit, a "langweilige Allerweltsherberge" - where the gastronomanes will, however, devise and cook their own evening meal when the composer is entertained. Their sexuality delights unashamedly in itself, and they make love as they believed the ancients did, in harmony with their surroundings: "Sie dachten an die schöne Venus und dachten an die springenden Faune. Sie genossen ihre Gedanken; danach genossen sie sich ..." (433). The counterpart activity and life-style congruous with

such reverence and harmony can only be travel across the earth's frontiers, with time only for civilised and cosmopolitan (in the best sense) pursuits, without identification with any of the world's narrow, divisive factions. The lost composer, the seeker after an identity which can emerge from the alienation induced by his own country's débâcle, ("Es war nicht Gott, der aus diesen Klängen sprach, es war ein Ringender ..." 574) envies the persona they have won for themselves. "Sie waren der Mensch, der ich sein möchte, sie waren sündelos, sie waren der alte und der neue Mensch ... antik und Avantgarde ... vorchristlich und nachchristlich, griechisch-römische Bürger und Flugreisende ... die sich's in einer vielleicht unwirtlichen Welt wirtlich gemacht hatten und sich des Erdballs freuten" (459). Perhaps Koeppen himself shares some of this envy - though he too is always happiest when crossing frontiers.

Between the 'vorchristlich' and the 'nachchristlich' lies the 'christlich' and it is significant that the Kürenbergs have no strong attachment to this culture except perhaps for some of its musical manifestations. It is in and through Adolf that the spiritual poverty and weakness of the post-Roman religion is illuminated. His journey towards the priesthood is seen as an escape from mankind, not a glorification of man's joys and sorrows as in Greco-Roman times, a renunciation arising from despair of the world - discernible both as a failure to stand alone and to contribute to an alleviation of the world's sufferings. The Church is seen as a refuge for such as Adolf - but basically he disbelieves in his own belief, as well as in the capacity or the willingness of the Church to make the world more habitable for man. "Er brauchte Gemeinschaft, aber er zweifelte an ihrem Wert"(532). This refers to the society of the world at large, but is referable also to the Church. Koeppen's message rings clear; Adolf despairingly clutches at the possibility of changing the nature of man, but the better

armed sceptic recalls the truth of history: "Sie sind nicht zu ändern ... Deine Kirche versucht es seit zweitausend Jahren"(551). Adolf's quandary must lie in the suspicion that he has not after all seceded from the tale of woe and affliction, of murder and complicity, a tale in which his Church is heavily involved, "eine Organisation, die mit allem Mordgesindel unwillentlich, aber zwangsläufig grotesk und tragisch verbunden blieb"(532). He wonders why the worshipped Deity has still left such a chaos of ambiguity and evil around, "warum wehrten seine Diener sich nicht entschiedener gegen der Welt unglücklichen Lauf?"(516). The Via della Conciliazione leading to the dome of St. Peter's is a showpiece of "kluger Bodennutzung und gelungener Spekulation", no resort for the meek who shall inherit the earth, "ein Triumph dieser Welt, und ein spätes Siegesmal Simons des Zauberers, der mit Petrus in dieser Stadt gerungen hatte"(530). The Church's history, by being a continuation of the system and process which crucified Peter rather than a denial of the same, has finally accomplished its own meaninglessness. Thus from a tacit detachment of civilised persons such as the Kürnbergers from any putative association with institutional Christianity, we move to a despairing condemnation of the latter's rôle and practices. Generals had been honoured by Popes, many a Judejahn had been paid by the ecclesia, the same Popes had absurdly and fruitlessly prayed for peace; the stark truth bewilders: "Zweitausend Jahre christlicher Erleuchtung und am Ende lebte Judejahn! Warum dann die Vertreibung der alten Götter?"(496)(my emphasis). A customary note of fatalism creeps in as we see that monarchs, diplomats and popes who have conspired to perpetuate the process, could perhaps do little against "die dräuenden Wolken des Verhängnisses."(496). Where the Church aspires to be a world Power like any other political constellation, religion becomes a business; on one level, the Vatican is offered to the tourist "für wenig Geld in

wenigen Stunden", or the confessional boxes in St. Peter's are displayed like market stalls, presided over by functionaries chanting their slogans and promising highly marketable goods, which unfortunately cannot be tested; on another level, the Vatican plays dirty political games like any other national power: "Warum liess die Kirche sich mit Kaisern und Generalen ein? ... Warum erkannte man sie nicht, die sich für schmutzige Händel, für Fresslust und Fickgier, für Gold und Landbesitz und gemeine Herrschsucht mit Gott verbündeten und das Kreuz missbrauchen wollten?"(533). Adolf is reminded by the thoroughfare leading to the Dome of a similar approach route to the Party platform in Nuremberg, the majesty and impressiveness of the Roman road match that of the 'Aufmarschfeld', - and perhaps wonders whether the intentions are comparable. Certainly the enormity and the impersonal grandeur of this ecclesiastical power-house do nothing to assuage Adolf's fears or strengthen the already faint belief in its ministrations. In the 'prächtigen Erhabenheit' of the Dome he feels 'einsam', 'von Gott und von seinem Glauben an Gott verlassen', 'von Zweifeln bedrängt'; it is only when he beholds 'Pietà' that a feeling of warmth returns, or the prisoners' dungeon that he can utter or understand Ecce Homo. (534, 539).

This majesty is non-human or impersonal; it allies with a past and a renown which enable Judejahn, on seeing the dungeons and the instruments of torture, to feel "in seinem Handwerk bestätigt". They enable the Vatican also to embody a characteristic feature of Koeppen's conception of cosmic absurdity - the presence of good and evil in the same institution, or evil masquerading as good, with the certain effect that the two are indistinguishable. The meaninglessness of history, the futility of art are not only sensed by Siegfried - as well as art's own difficulty in expressing its own futility! - in the context in which he is working, they are also demonstrated by the contiguity of the Curial libraries with their testimony to the artistic and intellectual achievements of man, and the dark, cavernous prisons and torture-chambers

below. The misuse of spiritual power is not only an affront to the Transcendent, if there were any, but, more important, to man's reason and understanding. The moral and cultural schizophrenia inherent in the nature and history of ecclesiastical dominion is attacked with unmellowed bitterness such as we associate with, say, Heinrich Böll. It becomes in this novel part of a larger canvas of psychic derangement which Koeppen witnessed nearer home with respect to that very German celebration of the joys of music, which is discussed below. The juxtaposition of sublime creation and pursuits with evil machination and merciless invention is conveyed with alienating irony and concreteness by the ease of transition from one to the other: "... Grabesluft ... Falltüren zeigten noch finstere Löcher, bodenlose Abgründe schreckten, Mordgruben, Todesbrunnen, ... Kettenringe ... Fangeisen ... Stachelschnallen ... Martergerät ... Streckzüge, Knochenbrecher ... Steinbetten, auf denen die Gefesselten verfault waren ..., und oben waren die Festgemächer, die traulichen Wohnungen, die geschmückten Kapellen, ... schöne und fromme Bilder, geschnitzte Betschemel, die silbernen Leuchter Cellinis, in der Bibliothek freute man sich an Büchern, nahm Weisheit auf, erbaute sich, hörte Musik, ... und oben schwebte der Engel über der Burg ..." (539). Though times have changed in respect to what is permitted, though the dungeons lie unused, Power and its alliances remain the overriding features of the world scene; the amoral Dietrich, the opportunist son of the Pfaffraths, waiting in the wings to follow a resurgent Judejahn if the time is ripe, cautiously remembering that Adolf might be useful if he became a Cardinal, is feared in the political context by his brother Siegfried who warns the aspiring priest: "Wir werden gegen Dietrich unterliegen. Mein Bruder Dietrich siegt immer über uns. Und du wirst auch als Priester unterliegen. Du wirst unterliegen und dich mit Dietrich als dem Vertreter der Ordnung, des Staates und der festen Hand auf Verderb verbünden -

oder du wirst eben untergehen"(552). Adolf, armed with the money his scoffing father proffered him in order to taste the physical delights of the brothel, hesitates before the impersonal alms-box; "Er vertraute der Armenpflege der Kirche nicht ... das Geld zerrann in Bettelsuppen. Adolf wollte ... Freude bereiten." He leaves the money in the palm of a woman-beggar outside the church, a gesture towards personalising, one might say humanising a powerful abstraction. There are of course two complementary sides to this picture of power and manipulation; Koeppen has no love for the masses qua masses; whilst it may be true that "gern gibt sich der Wolf als Schäfer aus, kleidet der Räuber sich als Hirte"(531), the herd nevertheless follow the shepherd and will often follow any kind of shepherd; the rationalists who preached liberation from the enslaved herd - one thinks of Kant's phrase, "selbstverschuldeten Unmündigkeit" in his short essay, Was ist Aufklärung, - did not allow for the strange and irrational workings of the herd-instinct: "in welche Wüste trieben sie die Herde, die sich nach dem heimlichen Geruch des Stalles sehnt und vielleicht auch nach dem Blutdunst des Schlachthofes"(531). In view of the decline in quality both of the tourists in the Pantheon, and also of the inmates of the Pantheon they come to inspect, Koeppen does not seem to hold much brief for either the sheep or the shepherds of the future.

We may conclude this comparative study of the 'christlich' and 'vorchristlich' cultures with a last brief look at the very end of the novel at Adolf's further doubts and confusions in the Diocletian Thermal Museum. For reasons unclear and undefined he had refused the offer of Laura's body - this 'amateur' prostitute, cashier at the Via Veneto bar, found it consonant with her religion to offer herself as a kind of duty to this monastic figure. But the world and the harmonious union of the Kürenbergs is not for him. In the museum he is surrounded by the Fauns, satyrs, hermaphrodites. Cold marble, yes, but

a delight in the beauty of the body, serene and unselfconscious. "Da war die Venus von Cirene. Sie war makellos. Und dann die Faune ... Sie verfaulten nicht ... Sie waren nicht von der Hölle bedroht. Selbst das Haupt der schlafenden Eumenide sprach nicht von Schrecken. Es erzählte von Schlaf; auch die Unterwelt war freundlich gewesen, die Hölle war anders. Sie hatten sie nicht gekannt. Und war es recht, mit Schrecken zu drohen, um die Seele zu retten, und war die Seele verloren, wenn man die Schönheit erkannte? ... Er war ausgeschlossen aus ihrer Gesellschaft, sein Glaube schloss ihn aus, für immer. Er weinte"(615).

We cannot accept any diminution of the horrors of Styx and Hades, but we can enjoy the glorification and exaltation of beauty and the wholeness of man as one of the highest of human achievements. The 'Märchen' decrees that Judejahn, revolted by a city devoted to beauty and happiness, to whom, by contrast, Rome is "eine tote Stadt ... reif zum Abservieren, der Duce war geschändet,"(476) should destroy a female figure who represents this beauty and happiness. Consistently, the exaltation of the physical, its serene joyousness, and sanctification by temple ritual are recalled by Koeppen - in a later visit to the Greek islands - by way of contrast with our modern, commercialised bathetic simulation of the joys of the flesh, the unfeeling product of a 'technical' age, in which the seedy back-street striptease performer has replaced the hetaira of the divine temple: "muffige-biedere Lokale einer technisierten Striptease-Prostitution, eines traurigen Gewerbes, fern dem Treiben der Hetären, entfremdet der den Gott suchenden Hingabe von Eleusis.²²⁸ Koeppen joins an extensive line of German writers, including the more prominent names of Humboldt, Goethe, Schiller, and Hegel, who see in the Greeks a natural, unselfconscious embodiment of an unfragmented totality which by differing routes and in the wake of differing developments has been vanquished - theological, philosophical and finally socio-political developments, which have produced psychic disruption and social division and estrangement. The historical alliance

of a religion, which divides the human psyche in the first place, with the forces of political division and tyranny, is seen as a particularly destructive form of human society.

The successor to Philip, Edwin and Keetenheuve is Siegfried. In Thomas Mann's Dr. Faustus we have a precedent example of an intense concern with the problem of artistic creation in a world in which art has lost the capacity to glorify man and his deeds, as the praiseworthy deeds become fewer in number, and the antithetical barbarism increases, and has also lost faith in its own capacity to affect or change man and his destiny. What is the rôle of art in a world which has lost obvious or discernible meaning? How can the artist represent in his creation his own loss of faith, or point the way to an emergence from the tortuous problematic of our social existence? After Nietzsche art becomes knowledge, by "Erkenntnis", after the discovery that traditionally it was always intended to hide this knowledge. Adrian Leverkühn is reported as saying: "Schein und Spiel haben heute schon das Gewissen der Kunst gegen sich. Sie will aufhören, Schein und Spiel zu sein, sie will Erkenntnis werden."²²⁹ What other age could have produced a Wittgenstein who was concerned centrally with the relation between the word and the reality it was supposed to mirror or represent?²³⁰ The disturbance of that harmonious union between the cognitive faculties and the nature of external or any other reality, belongs, as we have already observed, to Koeppen's vision of a fragmented universe, of the disorientation of the individualist amidst a plethora of often conflicting data and information, and not least, of the artist's increasing inability to transform the latter into the stuff of art. In Der Tod in Rom we are faced with the extended theme of the futility of art. Nonetheless, though Leverkühn may have 'unwritten' the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven, Siegfried Pfaffrath thinks beyond the dissonances of his disturbing 'Rome' symphony (it is not in fact given a title) to a more satisfying work based on African life and art which would receive the approbation of the very Gods in Rome:

"die schwarze Symphonie des schwarzen Erdteils würde ich den weissen Engeln von Rom auf dem alten Götterhügel vorspielen."(607)

We have noted the emphasis above on the Greco-Roman attachment to beauty; it is surely the awareness that art can no longer indulge in this exaltation, that the traditional aesthetic can no longer serve or respond to our society, which is fundamental to the artist's, and Koeppen's in particular, alienation in our time. Leverkühn again had seen this aesthetic as a 'lie': "nun fragt es sich, ob bei dem heutigen Stande unseres Bewusstseins, unserer Erkenntnis, unseres Wahrheitssinnes dieses Spiel ... noch geistig möglich, noch ernst zu nehmen ist, ob das Werk ... noch in irgendeiner legitimen Relation steht zu der völligen Unsicherheit, Problematik und Harmonielosigkeit unserer gesellschaftlichen Zustände, ob nicht aller Schein, auch der schönste, und gerade der schönste (my emphasis), heute zur Lüge geworden ist."²³¹ But the dissonances which unmasked the lie become for Siegfried a form of liberation from all the evil he associated with his countrymen. It is as though rich traditional chromaticisms and measured melodies spoke only of an association with this evil instead of a revulsion from it. His first composition had been in remembrance of the death of his grandmother who would not have been impressed by the unfeeling and clinical procedures with which a technological age buried her with all Nazi hygienic comforts: "mit wieviel Technik und Komfort, wie hygienisch und bequem, wie kaltschnäuzig und gewandt gepredigt sie aus der Welt geschafft wurde."(421). It was the second version of this work which spoke of his revolt against the war, the barbed wire camp he was a prisoner in (in England), and the crimes of his elders. The twelve-tone scores of Schönberg and Webern, being outlawed by the tyrants, became for the composer, "eine neue Welt, ein Tor, das ihn aus einem Käfig liess ..." (422). We have already noted at length the implications of a representation and expression of experience by means of techniques such as the interior monologue; one writer - though being a critic in the D.D.R. he hardly

gives his unreserved approbation to these techniques - agrees with the view of a certain minor composer, Alois Melichar, that the musical representation of reality inherent in the twelve-tone scale had affinities with the registering of experience in the literary monologue, "Beziehungen zwischen der Darstellungsform des inneren Monologs und der Funktion der Zwölftonmusik (sind) zu erkennen."²³² The same composer rejects atonal music as the "musikalischer Schizophrenie unserer Zeit", adding that "die immer weiter fortschreitende Zerspaltung des musikalischen Materials symptomatisch dem Zerfall der schizoiden Persönlichkeit entspricht."²³³ No doubt Mittenzwei fails to grasp that a dissociated personality is a price worth paying for the preservation of freedom from a totalitarian tyranny, and in any case is the direct consequence, expressible in art, of the exercise of that tyranny. The Schillerian wholeness of man has been affronted; the totalitarian creed, by a dialectical paradox, intensifies the fragmentation. The discordant revolt, the discordant music, is a subjectivist reply and an artistic mirror-image of the discordant and barbaric worlds which differing even conflicting forms of tyranny accomplish. It is of central significance that both a Marxist critic and the fascist-minded Pfaffraths feel considerable unease when hearing the compositions of the 'Neutöner'; to both parties the latter are diseased creations.

Siegfried is an outsider and this partly because of his despair and retreat inwards, "weil mein Entmutigtsein mir das Aussenseiterdasein sichert, die Panflöte am Sumpf" (553). And the answer to the 'totalitarian' critic given by the alienated intellectual is that he would gladly surrender the excesses of his discordant subjectivism if a suitable homeland could be found - "ohne Geschrei, ohne Fahnen, ohne Aufmärsche, ohne betonte Staatsgewalt, eine gute Verkehrsordnung nur unter Freien, eine freundliche Nachbarschaft, eine kluge Verwaltung, ein Land ohne Zwang, ohne Hochmut gegen den Fremden ... Ich werde sie nicht finden. Ich glaube nicht daran"(553). His music does not speak for any union or

relationship with persons, parties or factions; the dream of uniting worker and intellectual is vanquished, "Hitler, ... meine Sippschaft und der Dienst im Heer hatten mir den Glauben an jede Vereinigung genommen" (565). The futility of his situation is voiced in his repeated self-description, 'nackt, bloss, machtlos'(509). Ilse is the one figure who both understands and is also disturbed, if not resentful. The Jewess 'knows', senses the import of the new composition, but feels that the agony and distress are too intense for survival and must be suppressed; she heard "ein Suchen ohne Ziel, kein Gedanke mochte weilen, alles war von Anfang an brüchig, von Zweifel erfüllt ..." (429-430). A fragmentary work mirrors a dis-integrated world. "... diese Töne waren, ihr zwar zuwider, in all ihrer Zerfahrenheit ein Schicksalsbild und damit unabänderlich ..." (431). But this is not arid intellectualism, an abstract playing with forms, or passionless formulae - though such aridity has its own message. Ilse detects "trotz aller Modernität ein mystisches Drängen, eine mystische Weltempfindung", though naturally the dominant mood is that of death (for Judejahn power was death, "Die Macht war der Tod. Der Tod war der einzige Allmächtige" (471)). Even our modern death is lugubrious and fearful compared with that of the ancients, "ein Tod ohne den heiteren Todesreigen auf antiken Sarkophagen" (571). Koeppen had already, in the first novel of the trilogy, referred to the 'Landläufigkeit und Gesichtslosigkeit des Todes'. George Steiner's equivalent statement to the compositions of Adrian Leverkühn and Siegfried runs: "Needing Hell, we have learned how to build and run it on earth",²³⁴ and "The numb prodigality of our acquaintance with horror is a radical human defeat".²³⁵ For Ilse, the music is "Todesangst, das war nordischer Totentanz, eine Pestprozession" - language of dark Reformation days, though now the deaths are mass-deaths, technologically accomplished. For Adolf's ears there are the same ambiguities, a searching and struggling for a solution of the conflict between the heritage of the past and the hope for the future, oxymoronic pairings of motifs and impulses: a brave fearfulness combines with a

sweet bitterness, the suggestion of flight with its rejection, the antitheses of irony. Hence too, as part of the irony, memories of better things, the 'romantic' nostalgia for 'die Zeit vor aller Schuld' (one recalls the quotation on the title-page of this novel, Il mal seme d'Adamo, taken from what is for this novel a most apt source, Dante's Inferno), and its corollary of lament for the destructiveness in the world, and "Sehnsucht nach Schöpfungslob"(573), the supreme implications, one assumes, of man's being made in the divine image. Despite the alternation with anarchistic excesses, for Adolf a Dostoevskian note is sounded, "Es war nicht Gott, der aus diesen Klängen sprach, es war ein Ringender ..." (574) - the artist striving perhaps for what Peter Laemmle earlier called "die Universalität einer poetischen Gegenwelt",²³⁶ perhaps the pre-rational Paradise 'vor aller Schuld', "eine Annäherung an die Wahrheit der Dinge, die nur unmenschlich sein konnte, eine Erinnerung an einen Garten vor aller Geburt" (420) which is intended as a description of Siegfried's music in an earlier context. Koeppen says of Erich Franzen, "Er glaubte an die Dichter. Er sah in ihren Werken Annäherungen an die Wahrheit, die nicht erreichbar ist."²³⁷ There are occasional references in Koeppen's work to the mere possibility that there is a way, albeit invisible, which might take us nearer to the 'Wahrheit der Dinge', and even then it may be too terrible a truth for us if we found it. Keetenheuve had meditated on the way back to the Paradise from which man had been banished: "Zu sehen war auch nicht der schmalste Pfad, aber vielleicht war er unsichtbar, und vielleicht gab es Millionen unsichtbarer Steigen, die ... darauf warteten, begangen zu werden" (T.H. 312). Siegfried is prompted at one point to doubt his doubt, to experience the terrifying 'Zweifel des Ungläubigen an seinem Unglauben' (582). This is followed by a brief discourse on the possible regions to which we have no access, but if we could penetrate the wall, we would see all things and ourselves differently. The language has a biblical ring, as is customary from one who has rejected the letter but not the spirit of the law. "Vielleicht wäre es schrecklich. Vielleicht

könnten wir es nicht ertragen." We have moved so far away from our once 'divine' image that the revelation would overwhelm. Of Franzen Koeppen continued, "Er suchte den Spiegel, in dem wir unseren Anblick nicht ertragen können."²³⁸

The artist's most intense alienation is from those who are themselves alienated by his music, those who further the dehumanisation of man, and even, in the case of the Pfaffraths, mask this by a specious reverence for a totally asocial culture. Ilse knows why she is disconcerted by the "Neutöner"'s confrontation with contemporary realities. One of the principal facets of Koeppen's conception of human incorrigibility - at least on any effective social scale - is his awareness of the inability of others to see the evil even after the event. Friedrich Wilhelm Pfaffrath who at least sanctioned the murder of Ilse's father during the early anti-Semitic onslaught and the burning of his stores, invites Kürenberg to return to the old town as an honoured guest conductor. The forces of democracy have accomplished the daunting fact that this amoral phenomenon is now an elected 'Oberbürgermeister'. Because of the self-perpetuation of myth, the Pfaffraths cannot endure or understand (Ilse can at least understand) Siegfried's symphony - they expected Beethoven's or Wagner's chords; we know that Adrian Leverkühn has already refashioned Beethoven and thereby become a literary and cultural symbol - and the irrelevance of traditional musical idiom is highlighted when we witness their confusion and read the language in which their expectation is couched. They missed "den Edelklang, den hohen erhabenen Ton oder die eingängige Harmonie", "den wohligen Fluss der Melodie", the "Sphären-gesang aus höherer Region", intimations of an ethereal music of the spheres, shorn of all connection with the sober, rational and brutish (a brutishness they furthered and ignored) course of normal earthly living: "unten (the archaic, pseudo-theological topography speaks for itself) auf der Erde hatte man nüchtern vernünftig und, wenn es sein musste, hart und Rechnung tragend allem menschlich-unmenschlich Gemeinen zu leben, doch

um so erhabener hatte der rosa Überbau über dem Menschlich-Allzumenschlichen zu schweben"(572).²³⁹ Here art has no correlative in social or political reformism, here, in this "Begeisterung für alles Schöne", there is no conscious concordance between the private vision of beauty in art and a more comprehensive conception of beauty in man and the whole natural world. This rupture in the human psyche is basic to Koeppen's twentieth century brand of pessimism, for the scale of the damage wrought by the schizophrenic divorce between high culture and advanced literacy, on the one hand, and social and political behaviour, on the other, is unprecedented. "Musik war ein Aufruf zu gebildetem Schöngefühl und zufriedenen Dösen." Though an S.S. general occupied the stage at a certain time in a certain place in history, the psychic division and concussion in question is not confined to Germany, whatever particularised applicability this novel may have. The closeness of aestheticism and barbarism is a mark of fragmented man, of the fragmented personality, and represents a positive end to the humanistic faith of the Enlightenment. So Siegfried's music naturally offends the 'deutsch-bürgerlichen Sitte'; an attack is implicit here also on the narrow taste and outlook of provincialism, for the jazz-rhythms of the wider international scene, and the 'Negerkral voll Entblössung und Gier', both of which are detectable in the music, are anathema to the 'Klingspor-Mief'. "Das Werk! Es ist Trug. Es ist etwas, wovon der Bürger möchte, es gäbe das noch."²⁴⁰ The jazz-rhythms are disconcerting entrances to new, freer and more open worlds, art here performs a kind of Brechtian alienation, removing illusions and pointing the way to change rather than the perpetuation of traditional norms of acceptable knowledge and behaviour. "Es war Überlegung in den Dissonanzen, und das beunruhigte Dietrich"(573). One of the manifestations of the artist's disenchantment with prevailing realities is the impulse to create 'pure art', to participate in an act of 'pure' creation which can theoretically avoid being enmeshed with the vicissitudes and compromises of these realities. One critic, writing about Salammbô by Flaubert, whose

work and outlook were very much appreciated by Koeppen, comments: "In an art-form which, being tied to the behavioural, cannot escape emotional and moral meaning, he is attempting a 'pure art' which will 'prove nothing' and even 'say nothing', a kind of non-meaningful monumentality."²⁴¹ Siegfried had been attracted by this conception: "Ich hatte von reiner Schöpfung geträumt, aber ich war verführt worden, in die Erdkämpfe einzugreifen ... die unbefleckte Empfängnis aus dem reinen Nichts, ich träume von ihr ..." (574). We have seen in the foregoing how this arid if not impossible abstraction had not been achieved in the symphony composed for the Rome contest - the "Ringender" had gone beyond any act of 'pure creation'. There is in fact an explicit qualification expressed with regard to the artistic and asocial soarings of an Icarus whose endeavours are compared with the morally neutral investigations of the 'pure' physicist: "Ikarus muss arrogant sein. Es ist die Arroganz der Physiker in den Laboratorien, ihre phantasielose Klugheit zertrümmert die natürliche Welt ..." Perhaps the neutral creation would have pleased the students in the gallery who now hissed and booed, - "meine jungen gefährdeten Atomforscher". At least this young contingent makes a positive response of some kind; most of the assembled company sit "gesittet da, ... und einige mimten Versunkenheit" (573). Art is supposed to disturb: "Ich sah keine Seelen. Vielleicht waren die Kleider zu teuer ... Sie (die Musik) würde keinen hier beunruhigen" (564).²⁴² The concert-goers are contrasted by Kürenberg with those ancient figures of heroic stature who according to St. Augustine, at the end of a day's toil, listened to music expressly, "um ihre Seele wiederherzustellen" (468).

Ilse, in contrast to the sham addiction to the 'lie' of art of the fascist fellow-travellers, sees through the illusions of both life and art, and half regrets that an artificial barrier of music and learning was interposed during her youth by her wealthy father between herself and the busy marketplace, "eine Bastion, die trog, einen milden Lampenschein, der für immer erlosch ..." (467). The holocaust had called in

question the cultural treasures of her Jewish home, and somehow their value is now 'für immer erloschen'. But life too is a self-deluding lie, the whole edifice of human reconstruction, of the process of material accumulation, is founded upon the illusion of society's eternality, "sie sah die Mysterienspiele des Handels, auch diese auf den Wahn von Ewigkeit, Vererbbarkeit und Sicherheit gegründet ..." Ilse has the Nietzschean insight into the masquerade man devises to hide the emptiness of the metaphysical fraud, "sie durchschaute die Konvention, den Tod nicht zu sehen, das allgemeine Übereinkommen, den Schrecken zu leugnen ..." (467). Some of Koeppen's best descriptive writing is devoted in the travel books to the depiction of the contrived perpetuation of the American Dream in the after-life, as illustrated in burial rites and ceremonies. (Amf.pp.174 ff.). Eros and Thanatos wage an eternal conflict with each other; in the worship of these Gods man's destructive and life-affirming energies alternate; perhaps he never destroys without the knowledge that he will rebuild, nor build without the knowledge that the building will have to be replaced, the myth of cyclical recurrence is obeyed. In her insights Ilse is contrastable with Friedrich Wilhelm Pfaffrath whose leather-bound volumes of Goethe stand on the shelves juxtaposed with legal and tax reference-books; he does not see the incongruity which is analogous (in its bearing on fragmented personality) to that of the potential evil embodied in the parading of high culture, "die säuberliche Scheidung zwischen Kultur und Politik ... zwischen Konzert und Strasse."²⁴³ Admittedly, there are strong innuendoes that even Goethe is disapproved of - "einem verdächtigen Burschen, aus Weimar kam nie Gutes" (441); but the wording here seems to have a post-war political flavour. The figure of Friedrich Wilhelm recalls what the author has to say in an earlier novel about the technical bureaucrat and the meaning such a professional phenomenon has for society: "die Kinder ... wurden müde, wuchsen auf und liessen sich als Fachanwälte für Steuerrecht nieder, was alles über den Zustand der Welt sagt" (T.H.312). It is such a

phenomenon which wages war from a desk, fearing the direct encounter with the horror and suffering which are inflicted (and endured), which can practise ideology by the pressing of a button - an alienation which, accomplished by mathematics and technology, though in a much less advanced form, even Herder long ago had castigated as the perverted fruit of rational and analytic methodologies.²⁴⁴ Even Judejahn joins the chorus of criticism, but not because of the suffering that is inflicted, rather because of the shallow, cowardly, and venal timorousness of those whose "raubtierhafte Gelüste, verborgen unter der Maske des Biedermanns"(456) drove them to employ the gangsters to do the villainous work for them. An interesting ambiguity arises in a discussion of the warrior's anti-bourgeois sentiments. "Judejahn hatte dem Tod gedient. Er hatte ihn reich beliefert. Das entfernte ihn von den Bürgern, ... von den Schlachtfeldreisenden; sie besaßen nichts, sie hatten nichts ausser dem Nichts, sasssen fett im Nichts, stiegen auf im Nichts, bis sie endgültig in das Nichts eingingen, ein Teil von ihm wurden, wie sie es immer schon gewesen waren."(471). Koeppen would even agree with this evaluation of the burgher, taken out of context. But the context remains important - for it includes the fact that for Judejahn and for the burgher the solution is the same and the means to the solution is commonly sanctioned.

It is worth underlining how clearly rooted in the past, in the education of the earliest years, in the social and ideological impositions inflicted in these years, are the disorientation, or folly, or aimlessness of some of the principal characters. Judejahn is by no means to be excluded from exemplifications of this aetiology. The doom-laden career had its beginnings at the hands of an unimaginative schoolmaster-father, who impressed on the academically untalented boy the scale of the latter's stupidity, reducible though it was to "du hast deine Aufgaben nicht gelernt". Thus it was that this backward pupil, 'eine Null' grew up to revere illusory but impressive grandeur, "er ... im Schatten eines Grösseren ... ein Trabant geblieben war"(457). The brilliant sun of

which the young Gottlieb became a satellite was also an unrenowned pupil, 'eine magische Null'. The crippling effect of the educationist's ineptitude is extended by the training of the 'Ordensschule', its Spartan discipline and militarism, its preparation for the grand nationalistic design. It is this experience which either promotes the homosexuality which still causes Siegfried anguish and the prickings of conscience, ("Pöstchen für Invertierte ... klassisches Sparta der Pädagogen ..."),²⁴⁵ and becomes a mark of social alienation and non-adjustment, or it destroys all sensitivity and fine feelings, not to mention a capacity for independent thinking and charitable action. Certainly Judejahn, whilst being hostile to any form of 'Manneserweichung', whether of a sexual nature or a political (e.g. the gospel of the Rights of Man), is incapable of any relationship with a woman outside the purely mechanical one of sexual release; she was always the whore, "das zu allen Zeiten dem Eroberer zufiel, dem Überwältiger, und dessen Besitz ein wollüstiges Symbol des Sieges, ... der Macht und der Unterjochung war"(595). The "Zwangs- und Soldatenjacke" of the Ordensburg maltreated the young, "voll Sehnsucht nach Liebe und Zärtlichkeit"(593), as it did Siegfried and Adolf. Dietrich also had not escaped the poison of pedagogic mutilation; one wonders what kind of relationship he could ever forge with a woman, for power and sex are again inextricably bound together. The position is not quite so extreme as Judejahn's; the latter "brauchte eine Frau, um sie zu hassen"(506). But Dietrich's pornographic (magazine) model, the attraction to which is itself seen as a sexually alienating experience, drives him to seek the seats of power where venal sexuality is at home: "Machtlos war er gegen den Trieb, aber mächtig trieb es ihn zu den Mächtigen, denen er dienen wollte, um im Haus der Macht zu sitzen ..."(507). It is significant that in the final dénouement to the Judejahn tragedy, when the latter enters the Thermal museum in a near apoplectic state, he discerns through the fog of his own mental confusion (the 'Nebel' metaphor is frequently used in this novel to indicate aberrations of mind or vision)

various naked forms and statues which remind him of the localities he is wont to inhabit: "Lauter Nackte standen im roten Nebel. Es war wohl ein Puff. Oder es war eine Gaskammer"(616).

Siegfried's incapacitation in the context of human relationships impels him to renounce all belief in, if not the perpetuation of the human race, at least his own contribution to it. Outside any possible meaning his work might have for society, itself highly dubitable and uncertain, Siegfried has no relationship with this society, and cannot experience any desire to produce a being who would, in turn, have such a relationship. A disgust with the physical processes of procreation, a divorce between these processes and aesthetic idealisations, the constant reminder of the chain of operations, birth, copulation and death, the analogy of death with sexual union, these motifs, familiar in the writings of twentieth century artists, have made of Siegfried a special kind of alienated intellectual, for whom the German nightmare, itself execrable and poignant for him, has produced more generalised aversions. Thus for additional reasons a fruitful relationship with woman is impossible.

"Körperliche Zeugung schien Siegfried ein Verbrechen zu sein ... Der Same befleckte die Schönheit, und die Geburt war dem Tod zu ähnlich ... die fleischliche Lust, die Verschmelzung im feucht Organischen mit Schweiss und Stöhnen, in Todesnähe lag ... der warme Urschleim des Anfangs"(589).

In the beginning was life, but this 'life' is not being celebrated. How can the artist reproduce himself, if he does not believe in himself?

"Woran soll ich glauben? ... ich kann nicht an mich glauben ..."(528).

The enormity of the twentieth century revocation of both the medieval theodicy and the optimistic credos of the Enlightenment is illustrated by the allegory of the donkey and the hay, which are related to man and the eschatologies devised for his continued struggle for existence. At a certain point in time the 'hay of religion' ceased to provide an inducement for the donkey to continue the struggle; the animal's unsatisfied hunger had to be "auf ein irdisches Paradies gelenkt, auf einen Sozialpark, in

dem alle Esel die gleichen Rechte haben werden, in dem die Peitsche abgeschafft, die Last geringer, die Versorgung besser wird"(581). But the Garden of Eden is a long way off, and the restive donkey is provided with blinkers, so that he does not notice that the path he traces is not a straight, progressive one, but that of a merry-go-round. This allegorisation of the earth's or the donkey's "progress" is concluded by nihilistic ruminations of the kind we have encountered in earlier novels by Koeppen: "vielleicht sind wir eine Belustigung auf einem Festplatz der Götter, und die Götter haben nach ihrem Fest vergessen, das Karussell abzubauen, und der Esel dreht es noch immer, nur die Götter erinnern sich nicht mehr an uns." The two powers in Rome, or the whole world, contending for man's body and soul, the ecclesia and the Communist ideology, not to mention the never-ending mission of Judejahn, cannot compete with this nihilism which in any case is born of the bankruptcies of those contending powers. Then why continue to create art, what paradoxical drive impels the artist to work, to produce what Koeppen calls 'die sinnlose Sinngebung des Sinnlosen'? Adolf asks this very question of the alienated artist; "aus Angst, aus Verzweiflung ... schrieb ich Musik ... ich stellte Fragen ... es gab keine Antwort."(551). But though there is no answer, and though music is now a secret arcanum, "zu dem es keinen Zugang mehr gab oder nur noch eine enge Pforte, die wenige durchliess", it might, with time - if time is seen in terms of millennia and not in terms of our own fleeting glimpses of it - "zu grossen Veränderungen beitragen." And Kürenberg's counsel to the composer, not to sell himself to any prospective buyer, "Bleiben Sie einsam"(468), is qualified by a social awareness nonetheless; the ivory tower is no place for art, "Gehen Sie auf die Strasse. Lauschen Sie dem Tag!" Whatever the difficulties art encounters in mastering contemporary realities, it can at least be said that Koeppen has continued to heed the point and truthfulness of this injunction.

TRAVEL-WRITINGS : SYNOPSIS

Various interpretations of Koeppen's work after post-war novels and its relation to the novels - artist's fragmented consciousness and problems of artistic creation, coalescing of autobiographical and fictional elements, author's relation to his characters; travel seen as movement and change - 'Distanz' and non-involvement - escape from monotony of the known, escape from provincialism of Germany to 'das Fremde', sense of freedom, encounter with new lands, frontiers and possibilities, rootlessness; analogy with writer's need to change mode and direction of writing. Child's imagination 'travelled' in search for escape.

Travel and 'das Bild der Zeit'; some common approaches of other travel-writers; Andersch on travel, its motivations, liberates Geist, 'das gesteigerte Leben'; Reisebücher not factual reportage, interest in 'den Zusammenhang der Dinge'; Andersch's tourist-figure; Koeppen's attention to a people's fears and traumas; common motifs:- threats to intellectual freedom, alienated 'outsiders', tramps, ascetics, - Sardinian women (Andersch), - light, seascape, landscape - Andersch and polluted Rome, turns to forest, icefields, 'uncivilised' regions; Koeppen and early Greek civilisation; abstractness of modern war, of sexual entertainment; modern Athens; Schiller's alienation; urban society totalitarian. Contrast of natural elements with urban; contrast with ancient Hellas - its false simulation in Stalingrad - 'Technik' and 'Seele'; Greek sponge-diver and modern urban traveller; past versus present, qualitative living versus democratic tastes, personal ties versus rationalised communication; lost excitement of exclusiveness, eroticism professionalised, urban 'Einsamkeit', ideas reduced to clichés; effects of Puritan and Kleinbürger ethics, of abstract and levelling processes.

Burgher idyll in Russia, spiritual inertia, totalitarian consciousness;

'Kulturpark'; return to Spiessbürgertum, death of revolution; imposed collective burgher morality; factory and home subscribe to socio-economic progressivism, planned uniform society. Moscow Underground and New York Central Station compared and contrasted, variants of mass-society. Author's happier instances of individualism in Russia; his artistic concerns foreign to Russian literary establishment; motifs of 'Sauberkeit', 'schmutzig'.

Unbridled materialism of unplanned society; democracy of the dollar; cultural and spiritual 'goods' profit-oriented; size of urban complex, its uncontrollability; man an urban animal; religious imagery in worship of Mammon, temples of profit-making; abstract nature of economic processes; size of architecture; man's vulnerability amidst vast open spaces and also technologised conurbations.

Themes of domination of man by man (synchronic and diachronic); negro slavery, racialism in America. Two schools in New Orleans contrasted. Effect of material comforts on vitality and adventure. Negro aping of white man's technology, life-style, capitalism, loss of indigenous naturalness. 'Geist and Geld' problem; absorption of intellectual by state or society. Religion sold as consumer-product, conducted as a business; Forest Lawns, immortality a capitalist investment, art prostituted, psychology of the bourgeois burial; these 'Kulissen' set against other authentic realities; Père-Lachaise a contrasting symbol.

French provinces - spiritual torpor of old burgher idyll, closed horizons; rural beauty, urban squalor, provincial boredom; tedium of changelessness; twilight sleep of towns; illustrations of monotony; narrow prejudice, educational aridity, provincial religious morality. Dangers of this void and boredom, of passivity - bored youth, militarism, fascism, (Algeria), 'La Question', censorship, fascist mythology of the soil; torpor and prejudice perpetuate folly of war and conflict, desolation of landscape, cemeteries; behaviour of visiting tourists. Urban squalor of northern towns; work part of boredom; workers' dwellings - their peace

after the war.

Variants of the oppressive burgher idyll in Europe, America etc.

TRAVEL-LITERATURE: The Global canvas; Artistic Alienation in Mass-Society.

A study of the thematic and stylistic features germane to Koeppen's alienated response to contemporary society (seen in a more global and less parochially German dimension) takes us directly to the travel books, "Nach Russland und Anderswohin: Empfindsame Reisen" (1958, N.R.), Amerikafahrt (1959, Amf.), Reisen nach Frankreich (1961, R.F.) and other mainly later travel-articles where the continuity of authorial vision and pronouncement is unbroken, despite the attenuated tone and diluted irony in which they are presented - the resignation being all the more emphatic. A failure to see the continuity incurs a failure to see Koeppen's alienated stance in its comprehensive perspective, and finds its roots often in the apparently obsessive speculation over the author's abandonment of the "Kleben an deutschen Problemen"¹ in the earlier novel-form, interpreted as a disappointed reaction to fellow countrymen's sensitivity to his own political satire. A distorted and misleading perspective is visible in this context in the interpretations of (say) Dietrich Erlach², and Marcel Reich-Ranicki who generally stress the centrality of radical political 'Zeitkritik' in Koeppen's oeuvre, lacking any consistent connection with the 'Weltbild' of the travel-books. Reich-Ranicki states baldly that after the public response to the political satire of the novels, there was for Koeppen "nur noch die Möglichkeit, sich anzupassen oder sich zurückzuziehen", and that the travel-books testify, perhaps not to accommodation to the political climate, but at least a compromise, "einem Rückzug ins Unverbindliche"; "der Seitenpfad des Romanciers ... hat sich als eine Sackgasse erwiesen"³. The critic recalls Siegfried Pfaffrath's confessional ruminations - "ich stellte Fragen, eine Antwort wusste ich nicht", and suggests that Koeppen produces more questions. Karl Korn discerns a political volte-face; the writer of Das Treibhaus "scheint sich, was den politischen Anspruch des Intellektuellen angeht, zu den Entsagenden geschlagen zu haben"⁴. A reply to the first critic would state that from

the moment Koeppen sets foot on foreign soil he remains the questioning observer his calling impels him to be, his critique of social mores and attitudes being extended beyond national frontiers, with the unbroken pessimism receiving an additional historical dimension which the novels did not so easily provide. One critic at least sees in the chapter on Russia more than the Baedeker information Reich-Ranicki claims to have discovered in the above review (admittedly the latter was concentrating on some items in the less vibrant passages of the final book on the French journey): "Das Grauen lässt sich nicht überhören. Es klingt in jedem Satz mit - und dies trotz der sichtbaren Bemühung des Reisenden, alles so objektiv (und das heisst hier fast: so 'positiv') wie möglich zu sehen"⁵. It is this objectivity which misleads, or masks the quiet irony of the texts we are considering. As for Karl Korn's commentary, we have already seen where the 'outsiders' Philipp, Keetenheuve and Siegfried stand. Korn admits that in the traveller's portrayal of Russia, "Die Götter sind ausgetrieben, Sitten und Lebensstil hygienisiert, es herrscht die Langeweile und Geistlosigkeit eines Ingenieurs- und Massengüterzivilisation"⁶. This brief and fitting recording of Koeppen's insight provides its own commentary on the artist's resigned alienation from the social and scientific positivism of our time. But such a reading of the world's "progress" is quite consistent with the regret and bitterness of a Keetenheuve confronted with the constellation of social and political forces and developments into which his country was being drawn.

The confused debate - and certainly irrelevant and missing the mark, as far as the author himself is concerned - over the importance we should attach to the 'Reisebücher', is only of value for us insofar as the discourse concerns the nature and substance of the artistic alienation which is the subject of our attention. Koeppen's own references to the books - characteristically tentative and delivered almost as an aside - as "Umwege

zum Roman Ich glaube, ich reise etwa wie eine Romanfigur"⁷, and "Die Bücher sind Ansätze zu Erzählungen"⁸, have fuelled the fire of speculation, and even of controversy when it is a matter of Koeppen's protracted 'silence' and failure to produce the long-promised further novel, in which Keetenheuve is to be reborn and renamed in an American setting with political overtones; this polemical 'novel' has also been linked with a promised 'autobiography' - naturally not a chronologically linear presentation; the "raunender Beschwörer des Imperfektivs" has, as was discussed earlier, been debunked, and the recent prose-pieces, "Jugend" and "Anamnese" point technically and stylistically to the problems of the modern writer as Koeppen sees them, problems which relate to the 'Schweigen' in question. Critics who generally reject the "Fall-Koeppen" associated with Reich-Ranicki stress rather the linguistic and epistemological problems of the artist when confronted with the fluid and ungraspable realities of the contemporary world, and the artist's own preoccupation with his fragmented consciousness apprehending, observing and participating in a fragmented society. Heissenbüttel links his interest in Koeppen's writings with his awareness of this artistic dilemma; he writes of the difficulties of recapturing past realities at all - (Koeppen is most aware of these when attempting 'autobiographical' recapitulations) - "(dass) es schwer, wenn nicht unmöglich ist, über das etwas zu sagen, was nun tatsächlich gestorben ist. Die Erkenntnis ... stellt den Tod dessen fest, was zum Mitteilen, zur Literatur den Antrieb gab Ist das die Absage an Literatur, ja an Mittelbarkeit überhaupt?"⁹ He also thinks Koeppen, from his earliest writings onwards, whether consciously autobiographical or not, is engaged in a search for the 'Ich' and the linguistic means for its revelation: "Er ist doch einer Selbstentblössung auf der Spur"¹⁰. But the writer's own personality shuns this revelation and thus impedes again the process of artistic creation. The travel-books are seen therefore as a

presentation in the 'Ich'-form of subjective experience formerly projected into the 'anti-hero' protagonists of the earlier novels, "mit ihrer Hilfe näher an die Wahrheit des unverstellten, unübersetzten Subjekts heranzukommen glaubte, dass er unmittelbarer von sich selbst reden zu können meinte ..."¹¹. But Heissenbüttel recalls the fundamental alienation which underlies any encounter between Koeppen and external reality; the latter hopes to mediate whatever remains of 'das Sagbare', by making contact, an "Einverständnis mit dem, von dem er weiss, dass nichts so unmöglich ist wie unreflektiertes Einverständnis mit ihm. Und so mischt sich der unverhoffte Optimismus seines Ersatz-Ichs immer wieder merkwürdig mit der Erinnerung an die absolute Verfremdung"¹². With certain qualifications Reinhard Döhl shares Heissenbüttel's view of Koeppen's development, and attaches importance to the problematic of a literary aesthetic confronted with "die Grenzen der künstlerischen Gestaltung"¹³.

For Koeppen all imaginative creation is in some sense autobiographical, - Dostoevsky is Raskolnikov and all his other heroes. "Jeder Schriftsteller, seine Werke sind eine Art fortlaufender Biographie"¹⁴. In his own life the autobiographical and fictional elements are inextricably entangled - the commentaries of Heissenbüttel and Döhl are thus highly relevant. "Es gehen bei mir auf die natürlichste Weise Dichtung und Wahrheit durcheinander"¹⁵. "Ich lebe literarisch ... und dann lebe ich auch etwas wie eine Romanfigur"¹⁶. He attributes this to his own alienation from normal burgher life and activity. It also illuminates the assertion that for him writing is not a profession or a job, but "ein Zustand". "Mein Tag ist mein grosser Roman, mein Leben ist es, die Welt, das Universum, die Mathematik, das Geheimnis dahinter, die Unlösung, das Unheimliche, die Freude, Furcht, dies aufzuschreiben. Viel schlimmer daran als Hiob. Unmöglich, den Teil für das Ganze zu nehmen. Das geht nicht mehr"¹⁷. (The two last sentences corroborate Heissenbüttel in the

conclusion to his own "Koeppen-Kommentar"). The entanglement of the autobiographical and the fictional makes writing a more serious problem; on one level the personal problem is that of too close an identification with the 'anti-heroes' in the post-war novels; if their final word is silence, such becomes Koeppen's. The interviewer reminds the author that "ihr ganzes Werk aufs Schweigen, aufs Verstummen hin angelegt ist ... so muss Ihr jetziges Schreiben ein ständiger Kampf sein mit den Erfahrungen Ihrer Romanfiguren". The comment received the unreserved approbation of the writer. On the other hand, directly confessional writing, despite its attendant epistemological limitations, leaves open the door for imaginative creation: "Oder Ich kann nur noch von mir berichten, der ich versuche, den Menschen zu begreifen, sein Bier, seine schmutzigen Teller, meinen Nächsten, meinen Feind. Falscher Schein der unerforschten Wirklichkeit, der schreit, der zuckt, der brennt und nicht verstanden werden kann und in jedem Moment wie nicht geschehen ist"¹⁸.

It is arguable that the 'Reisebücher', with their more 'objective' tone, served to keep - spurious illusion though this may be - the seething welter of impressions at bay, paradoxically through the use of the first person narrator which controls otherwise ungovernable experience. This is perhaps the literary analogy with Koeppen's reaction to travelling in foreign countries: "ich fühle mich sehr wohl im Ausland, weil zwischen mir und allem eine Distanz ist, eine Barriere, und zwar nicht nur eine der Sprache ... Es ist ein schöner Zustand"¹⁹. Certainly the globalised canvas on which the artist is operating facilitates the more objective remove; the synchronic treatment both confirms the universality of the alienating environment and also serves to dilute the acerbity of the artist's anguish and bitterness - or appears to do so. There is also something inherently attractive for Koeppen in movement and change, and even the non-involvement they bring. There is the ingenuous delight in new sensation and the avoidance of ossification this incurs - Doris Stephan

observes: "Das Thema der Reise wird äussere Begleiterscheinung inneren Geschehens"²⁰. There is the artist's joy in observation and assimilation, the consciousness that he is more than ever performing as an artist; with the observational stance comes the attraction of inaction. One recalls the writer's encounter with the clochards of Paris, and he is momentarily drawn to these worthy specimens of estranged humanity, exposed to the vagaries of fate and fortune, "dass ich in meinen Gedanken für diesen Augenblick so sein möchte, ... ein Anachoret der Strasse, ein aus dem verhängnisvollen Kreis der Tat, ein aus dem ständig Schuldigwerden Getretener ..." (N.R. 209). Koeppen's nihilism, whenever it is in evidence, stems from this quasi-Christian awareness that all decisions, all actions, incur guilt and, to use his favoured term, 'Scheitern'. Travel thus brings the opportunity to reach a new world of experience, "die Welt ist neu, sie ist mir nicht Freund und nicht Feind, ich wohne nicht, ich bin nicht eingestuft, man erwartet mich nicht"²¹. It is as though being 'eingestuft' is a form of imprisonment, which suppresses spontaneity and autonomy of will. (The 'clochard' is one of the least 'eingestuft' members of the human race). Like the literary traditions he most esteems²², Koeppen's horizons are international. And when alienation from his own country is so intense, the pull of 'Das Fremde' is all the stronger. (The journey into France is prefaced by a brief scrutiny of some of Germany's metaphysical and social anathemas he longs to leave behind; "ich träumte von Frankreich, von einem lieblichen Garten von Daseinsheiterkeit, von Lebenssüsse und freundlicher Frivolität" (R.F. 6). Though it is equally significant that such dreams remain - like all dreams - totally unfulfilled, the desire to escape from the German scene is comparable to Hofmannsthal's. All provincialism, and German provincialism in particular, suffocates, and is savagely lampooned whenever it is resurrected - as in New York). The need to escape from the oppressive, if not claustrophobic confines of his own country explains

perhaps the change of tone from that of the descriptions of (say) even the lifeless tedium of French provincial societies - a relatively mild and sober tone - to that of bitter disenchantment which is heard in "München oder die bürgerlichen Saturnalien" or the much later "Proportionen der Melancholie". Both the latter leave little room for hope, though the first of the two is a more unalleviated diatribe, whilst the second serves as a melancholy epitaph to German history. Symptomatic of the enduring revulsion against his native land is his comparison of Germany with other countries whose writers had preceded him on a visit to Russia: "Nur Deutschland war wieder provinziell; in Deutschland galt es als ein Verbrechen, sich in der Welt umzusehen, und wer nach Moskau reist, ist für den beschränkten Verstand einiger Leute gleich ein sowjetischer Propagandist" (N.R. 146).

Non-categorisation ('nicht eingestuft') defends against commitment and prejudice, existentialist (and not merely existential) possibilities accompany the death of the familiar. "der Schein der Vertrautheit ist gewichen"²³, the creative transcendence of the 'Stirb und Werde' motif accompanies the flight from the ennui (and our particular 'Romantic' traveller is intimately acquainted with Baudelaire's nineteenth century experience with its capital 'E') engendered by repetition and uniformity; even expectation, with its attendant note of familiarity, dulls the appetite and the rapture of the unknown: "Ich will neu geboren werden, ich will vom Himmel fallen; gibt es, wo ich lande, Menschen, denen ich empfohlen bin, so meide ich sie Ich trinke die fremde Luft. Sie berauscht, reizt, ernüchtert, und immer macht sie wach, weckt Erwartung, lässt suchen, setzt auf eine Spur Es liegt Freude in den Begegnungen ohne Namen, in dem Anheimgeben an den Zufall"²⁴. One of the attractions the city has for Koeppen - and we have already met the other side of the medal, the horrifying monstrosity life can become in its midst - is the promise of a pluralistic diversity, and the anonymity, the 'Distanz' he can secure for himself amidst this diversity. "Die Grossstadt gibt mir

Frieden"²⁵. (As a German, fully conscious of the historical legacies of philosophical Romanticism, his relationship with landscape and country ambience is attended by equal ambiguity as are his feelings about city life; "Mein Verhältnis zu Landschaften? Gespalten. Nicht blind für Schönheit. Aber unheimlich. Angstgefühle. Da habe ich die Vorstellung, nicht wieder wegzukommen, bleiben zu müssen. Die Melancholie Holsteins, die Ostsee"²⁶. But away from the Caspar David Friedrich territory, in the landscapes of the Loire, or the open wastes of America, the reactions are different, and differently grounded, even though - as in Texas and New Mexico - the 'Unheimlichkeit' still persists). One could justly substitute the word 'fascination' for Koeppen's word 'Frieden' to describe the feeling induced by city life, for the 'peaceful' condition alleged here is more physical than mental in its connotation. One could understand its referring to the ascetic and monastic solitude of the hotel room the writer is known habitually to use. It is obviously the city where the 'Begegnungen' and the 'Zufälle' abound in all their unpredictability. Geno Hartlaub comments on Koeppen's aversion to living outside a city: "er liebt Steine mehr als das idyllische Grün von Gärten und Parkanlagen. Brandmauern, russgeschwärzt und kahl, regen seine Phantasie an"²⁷. Hartlaub here touches inferentially upon another dimension of the city which for ever draws Koeppen, that is, the historical, the ruinations and restorations and further ruinations which lie hidden behind the surface-object of the traveller's attention. Whatever rootedness may accomplish for most members of the human race, here it palls, inspires fear, a sense of danger, spells partiality, involves more loss than gain, promotes boredom and lassitude, imprisons: "Ich bin überall zu Hause und fremd auch in meiner Strasse, auf dem Markt wo ich mein Brot kaufe"²⁸. The Romantic attachment to the concept of travelling without arriving naturally obtains here; "Warum ich reise? Jedenfalls nicht um anzukommen ... Weil ich wahrscheinlich nirgendwo zu Hause sein möchte; aber manchmal hat man.

auch ein Verlangen, irgendwo zu Hause zu sein ... Bei mir stimmt das jedoch nicht ganz ..."²⁹. A dim longing for a 'heile Welt' perhaps succeeds the conviction that there is no such thing? These are not merely abstract statements of the theoretical traveller; the texts of the journeys provide concrete exemplifications. A rapturous sense of freedom attends the arrival in New York, a thrilling sense of encounter with the unknown: "Dies ist der Moment, da der Einwanderer sich die Kleider vom Leib reißen und all seine mitgebrachte Habe verbrennen möchte, um nackt und von nichts beschwert, doch mit der Aussicht auf eine andere, glanzvollere Ausstattung in das neue Leben zu treten ... Ich stand in New York ... Der Traum hatte sich erfüllt ... Ich war auch hier zu Hause ... Ich spürte Freiheit. Die Freiheit war der Wind. Niemand fragte mich, wohin ich gehen, was ich tun, was ich beginnen wolle vom Atlantik bis zur pazifischen Küste, vom Golf von Mexiko bis zu den Eisbergen Alaskas" (Amf. 17-18). And on the few occasions when he feels momentarily at peace with the world, the author is quick to confess a temporary sense of belonging, as when he sees students flocking to bookshops, in New York, or on the Boulevard St. Michel, "Der Platz des heiligen Michael umarmt ... Er empfängt wie eine Geliebte ... Ich bin zu Hause" (R.F. 200). The second noteworthy instance of the joy deeply felt at the first encounter with 'das Fremde' is the arrival in Brest, the first contact with that prodigious Eastern European domain. It is another new 'world' and again we meet the phenomenon previously discussed in relation to Koeppen, the 'Grenzen', the crossing of which, in dream or in reality, heralds, if not fulfilment, the exploration of a world of open possibilities. "In solchen Momenten empfindet man wahrhaft das Wunder des Reisens! Es war Fremde, in der ich weilte, es war Abenteuer und doch des Menschen Erde ... Ich kam nicht als Feind. Es war ein Augenblick des Glücks, und die Welt schien ohne Grenzen zu sein" (N.R. 139). A Koeppenesque disenchantment was soon to mar the intoxication and new Russian forms of burgher convention recall

the conformism of his own Masuren days. Apart from the characteristic social critique the disenchantment is also part of the Romantic's repertoire of polarised experience, and in Koeppen's case, the inevitable end of all experience. The entry into Spain, albeit the crossing of another frontier, is a qualified fulfilment of the traveller's dream - its oppressive bureaucracy is as totalitarian as any in Russia; and it serves to illustrate the truest of all Romanticist tenets, "Es stimmt wie alles Erreichte melancholisch" (N.R. 19). "Warum ich reise? Jedenfalls, nicht um anzukommen".

The necessity of movement, change and diversity which travel affords has its counterpart in the liberating effect of changing one's literary mode and direction. And in the polemical debate over an illusory 'Fall-Koeppen' it is well to heed the author's own feelings, attractively simplistic, concerning the abandonment of the novel-form for a very personal recording of 'sentimental journeys'. "Nach diesen drei Romanen trat ein gewisser Überdruß an der Romanform ein ich mag mich nicht wiederholen oder in eine Routine geraten"³⁰. "Die Reisebücher sollten zu keiner Routine werden"³¹. The repetition on a different occasion serves to underline the sincerity of the commentary. He refused invitations from the magazine Stern to visit Japan,³² - formerly a cherished ambition - to avoid the writing of Reisebücher degenerating into a ludicrous routine, or the 'Phantasie' declining into hack journalism (one detects the onset of declining creative verve and power as the author journeys through some French provincial regions, before the spark is re-ignited at the end at the spectacle of (for Koeppen) the most fascinating city of all). Equally, the writer feels repelled by any constriction imposed by the concept of an awaiting public determining the author's next move, whether waiting for the next novel (as during the last decade) or the next travel-book - "Da ist ein Anspruch, den ich gar nicht erfüllen will ... Mein alter Widerspruch gegen jeden Zwang"³³. It is true that the first person narration,

the confessional process, is facilitated by the removal to unknown regions, and perhaps Koeppen's own words, "dass ein Aufenthalt, irgendwo in der Welt, es leichter mache, von sich zu sprechen. Es sind andere Spiegel, vor die man sich stellt"³⁴, relate to and confirm Heissenbüttel's interpretation, "Er ist einer Selbstentblössung auf der Spur"³⁵. The artist is seeking different ways and techniques to interpret and communicate his changing 'self', the changing relationship of that self with the world, a world which itself moves and changes with ungovernable rapidity. The mirrors, "vor die man sich stellt", change also, and travel thus becomes part of a process of self-knowledge. Are Siegfried's words perhaps relevant: "... ich will nicht bleiben, wie ich heute bin, ich will nicht dauern, ich will in ewiger Verwandlung leben, und ich fürchte das Nichtsein?" (T.R. 514). Frank Trommler discusses the novel and its relation to contemporary reality in the same context as the novelist and his relation to this reality, his own changing modus vivendi determining the changing style and nature of his art: "Bedacht auf die dargestellte Realität, kommt die Romaninterpretation von selbst zum Dichter als zu einer historischen Erscheinung, die sich von Werk zu Werk verändert und nicht in wenigen Formeln fixierbar ist"³⁶. Substitute 'Kunst' for 'Roman' and we can relate this observation to Koeppen's oeuvre as a whole. John Wain joins the critics who see art and life in these fluid if not Protean terms: "I don't believe that there is one fixed reality. I think there is the huge flux of raw experience, - personal, political, philosophical, physical, emotional experience ... All you can do is to select the bit you feel you can handle at the moment, and devise some means of handling it. So many writers write the same book over and over again ... the great danger is ... they will begin to feel that the kind of reality they are presenting is something genuinely fixed"³⁷.

For Koeppen the journeys represent - whatever the pain, disenchantment or the sad reflections they predominantly contain - the fulfilment of the dreams of childhood when the imagination visited the lands in the

literature he devoured so early in life; like Philipp he often longed for "die Weite, ... die Ferne, einen anderen Horizont, ... die Jugend, das junge Land, das Unbeschwerte" (T.G. 229), and the American journey is partly the realisation of Philipp's dream. As much as, probably more than any other contemporary German writer, Koeppen's literary imagination has fed on travel and voyages and apprehended the world through the proxy of art. Art is a concomitant of travel, and was often a substitute for it, art being, as the author said, a "Verwandlung der Welt", the most 'real' way of seeing reality (so we still see Delft through Vermeer, certain French river-scenes through Maupassant, and Chicago is not completely observed without Dreiser. Alfred Andersch similarly sees Holland through Vermeer.³⁸ More interestingly still, he recalls Huizinga's observations on the superior efficacy of visual art to mediate history for us.)³⁹ It was through the imagination that Koeppen the child 'knew' 'das Fremde', foreign lands and peoples. "Als Kind wollte ich ... immer woanders sein ... Was ich, Bücher verschlingend, empfand, war grenzenlos. Was ich mir, den Atlas studierend, vorstellte, war das Herz der Fremde, die Seele des Windes ... japanischer als Japan selbst." Baudelaire did not need to have been to India in order to write about it, and Conrad was never in the jungle darkness we associate with him. Travel and the imagination both liberate; working in unison they are potent forces. How the youth's heart and fantasy were inflamed we learn from reviews: "So bot Jack London die Aussicht auf Freiheit, die Lust zu entkommen, das Mitfahrenkönnen ohne Geld, das Weglaufen, die Flucht vor der Schule und den Zwängen des Kindseins, Veränderung, Weite, sein eigener Herr, der Schmied seines Glücks zu sein, das waren verwirrende, verführende Gefühle"⁴⁰. The substantives speak powerfully of the drives and impulses which actuated Koeppen from the start, and how the most central and dynamic of all impulses, that of freedom, the freedom to maintain or seek out new vistas of possibility, is inseparably bound to the imagined or undertaken journey.

Kurt Werner Peukert, discussing several examples of Reisebücher, including those of Koeppen, Marie-Luise Kaschnitz, Max Picard, Reinhold Schneider and Heinrich Böll, aptly provides a simple psychological motivation for the increasing popularity of this 'genre', - at least of the journeys, if not the books written after them: "Das Reisen ist die freieste, die am wenigsten durch Gesetz, Methode und Ballast eingeengte Möglichkeit, dem Leben, der Welt und dem Menschen zu begegnen"⁴¹. The three final substantives here may cover a multiplicity of objects of attention, but the 'voyageur sans bagages' concept, including all metaphorical baggage, is, apart from its being supremely relevant and vital for Koeppen himself, a concept which would win favour with most contemporary travel-writers, concerned, as Peukert summarises it, to present "ein Bild der Zeit"⁴². It is much more the latter purpose which prevails today than the earlier one embodied (say) in Goethe's 'Italienische Reise', - "Goethe kam als ein Verwandelter aus Italien zurück"⁴³. Such transformations are for Peukert hardly conceivable today, and not merely for the mass-tourist, but even for the more aware and discerning traveller, (say) the 'unzeitgemässer Individualist' as Koeppen describes himself (N.R. 17). The common product of the travel literature being analysed by the above reviewer, the presentation of a picture of the contemporary world and society, significantly rests on common features of style, method and theme - in brief, Peukert highlights the now conventional mixtures of reflection and description, melancholy mood and affirmation of modernistic motifs, the contrasting juxtapositions of the 'wirklich' and the 'gespenstig', reality and the dreamed reality, the frequency of the antithesis between 'das Wilde, Skurrile und Unberechenbare' and 'das Überorganisierte und Berechenbare unserer Zeit',⁴⁴ the common confrontation with the whole problem of technology (which links Koeppen particularly with artists of his own time), "das Kolossale und das über den Menschen sich Hinausentwickelnde der Technik wird gesehen,

beschrieben",⁴⁵ and finally, that the formal features of the books under discussion, such as the *mélange* of styles and methodologies, reflected 'die Richtungslosigkeit, Verwirrung und Standpunktslosigkeit der Zeit',⁴⁶. This dislocation of formal structures and of conventional descriptive narration which we have already discussed at length in connection with the twentieth century novel, now invades the travel-book arena; the novel had become a journey of the subconscious, a subjective stream of experience, and the *Reisebuch*, using the first person narrator, continues this function, offering a view of the world limited to this 'person', a limitation congruous with the twentieth century apprehension of reality. Of course the diversity of the external world is primarily the object in view in the *Reisebuch*, and the nature of the narrating and apprehending consciousness does not occupy our attention as it does in the novel. The externalisation of the reference-points accounts for the more objectivised treatment in the story of the journey, but at times the subjective experience or reaction to a given environment is sufficiently 'gesteigert' to produce the impassioned, unpunctuated prose we associate generally with Koeppen - we may cite here the three-page sentence which begins Amerikafahrt, describing inimitably the political and cultural presence of America in post-war Europe, the attempt to savour the essence of the spacious and boundless desert of Arizona and Texas (Amf. 139 ff.), the brief distillation of the flavour of Italy round the Trevi fountain at night (N.R. 309), or, more angrily and disconcertingly, the lengthy, paratactic 'Bild der Geschichte' which introduces "Proportionen der Melancholie".

For Alfred Andersch the journey offers both for the traveller and the reader who later imaginatively travels with him, a sense of 'gesteigerte Leben',⁴⁷ in view of the adventure and the novelty which are in store. It is this pleasure which is offered by many prima facie informational travel-books (such as Darwin's voyage in the 'Beagle') which are more than objective, factual reporting, being 'Zeugnisse des Lebens schlechthin, grosse Paradigmata einer absoluten Energie',⁴⁸. This energy seeks liberation

- Andersch's own arduous and challenging journeys to Finland and the Arctic, the adventures in the Rapa valley⁴⁹ point to his intimate knowledge of this form of self-liberation - and the impulse begins with a feeling of unease and dissatisfaction; "In Wirklichkeit reist man aus Ungenügen, aus Neugier, aus Unruhe"⁵⁰. The escape, like the unease, is creative; "Jede Reise ist ein kritisches Unternehmen, eine Form der Selbstkritik, der Kritik an den Zuständen, in denen man lebt, der schöpferischen Unruhe, des Zwanges, sich der Welt zu stellen." Andersch comments elsewhere on the 'Flucht' motif constantly ascribed to him in his work, and prefers the term 'Rettung';⁵¹ it is difficult to think of Koeppen's journeys as being a form of 'salvation', but we have already underlined the 'escape' motif in his life and work, and we know how like-minded he is with his German fellow-writer, when the latter discovers the true meaning of travel in the 'Begegnung mit dem Unbekannten, ein magischer Moment"⁵². It is as though the writers conspire to agree that contemporary society presents dangers to the human spirit, inducing passivity, acquiescence and self-surrender in return for material comforts and paternalism; the 'Reise' is the antidote, and thus a form of salvation for Geist and artistic freedom. The unknown, the unseen, the unreported, the unbeaten tracks not traversed by the mass-tourist (an object of callous disdain for almost all writers), - in Andersch's case, Spitzbergen and the Arctic wastes, the moving polar ice expanse stretching into a virginal, apparently limitless infinity, in Koeppen's case, the 'Altstadt', the quaint narrow streets, the unusual bookshop or restaurant, or the more conventional route seen anew, for the reader as if for the first time, by reason of the artist's gift of insight and selection - these tracks, and the unknown or not sufficiently known objects which come into view, stifle passivity and are the essence of life, 'das gesteigerte Leben'. By the Arctic shore of Bock Bay Andersch tries to describe the redness of a certain stone: "Sein Rot meine ich, wenn ich von der Beschreibungskrise rede ... ich stehe vor einem unbekanntem Ding"⁵³. (Here the phenomenon of

linguistic novelty is added to the prior experiential novelty, and the linguistic problem is both richly challenging and also serves to remind us, d'après Nietzsche, of how our naming procedures rob objects of their individuality). Karl Korn, in his otherwise differently styled report on problems in America (problems as seen by him to be problems), also stresses the overriding value of novelty and diversity in maintaining the vitality of the human consciousness: "Aber in dieser Subjektivität des Reisenden, die durch das Neue gesteigert wird, und also besonders wach ist, liegt so etwas wie eine Chance"⁵⁴. Korn also deems the travel-book additionally useful in enabling the peoples under discussion to see themselves as others see them, and to understand 'das Elementare ihrer eigenen Lage'.

The best Reisebücher disclose the unknown, or convey the rapture at encountering the new, distil the essence of a country or a people, read between the lines, see between or beneath the stones (as Koeppen does whenever he lingers over ruins, as is his wont), transmit the sense of freedom or escape, or convey, as again so often with Koeppen, the anguished disillusionment which follows the failure of the traveller's original hopes or expectations. No Statistical Yearbook is envisaged, no Public Record Office document is the end in view; speaking of literature in general (and by association, perhaps of his own 'silence', and certainly the difficulties of writing at all), Koeppen is painfully aware that: "Die immerwährende Information, die Public Relations des Todes, das Fernauge im Bett lässt den Erzähler verstummen, sein Publikum liegt betäubt, wie könnte einer My Lai beschreiben, wenn der Leser My Lai am Abend in seinem Sessel mit einem Wurstbrot gegessen hat Der Schriftsteller muss seine eigene Wahrheit suchen, die Wirklichkeit seines Sehens, um töricht zu hoffen, sehen zu machen"⁵⁵. Quite apart from the author's own increasing conviction that the literary exercise, the presentation of the writer's 'Sehen', is 'töricht' and 'sinnlos', we see from these remarks why such (in general) a fascinatingly subjective picture emerges in his travel

writings, though deeply marked by a tragic alienation from most of the universal condition of mankind. Though Andersch, for example, launches a scathing attack upon what contemporary civilisation has done to Rome,⁵⁶ so vehement in its brevity that he decides not to bother with the city qua city, but rather with (e.g.) conversations with important cultural personalities, though he decides that, apart from its art treasures, Bruges is intolerable ("Es muss schwierig sein, in Brügge zu leben, wenn man jung ist"⁵⁷) and stifled by clericalism, these alienations are offset by the esoteric journeys already mentioned, in which much of the ballast of the European heritage is discarded or does not exist, and there is no all-pervading disenchantment of the kind we find as Koeppen journeys from European city to European city. In personal statements of what each writer is pursuing we discover hints which help to explain the dissimilarities. Both would pursue what Andersch considers even photographers (or the best of them like his wife who produced the visual and colourful appendages to the written word) aim to capture, "die Welt zwischen den Sehenswürdigkeiten ... die ganze Welt, den Zusammenhang der Dinge"⁵⁸.

In a review-article - and most of Koeppen's reviews become such - composed with cool and muted irony, the latter finds fault with Axel Holm's reporting of life in the DDR, in Mecklenburg and Neustadt in Holstein. "Holm schuf Dokumente ... Was hört man nun, wenn man liest, was er wiedergibt, was sieht man, was schmeckt man und riecht? Wenig. Es ist Material gesammelt. Es wird Rohstoff vorgelegt. ... Zola schweifte durch Paris, horchte, äugte, notierte Schauplätze, Menschen, Reden, dann schuf er die Welt neu. Seine Romane waren keine wahren Geschichten; sie hatten ihre Wahrheit; sie waren Kunst"⁵⁹. Though Zola is alluded to here as a novelist, Koeppen is not suggesting that Holm should write novels, but that his travel literature should manifest the power of 'schöpferischer Verstand' as much as a novelist's imaginative evocations, just as Koeppen's own 'subjektive Momentaufnahmen'⁶⁰ on the journeys possess an artistic and

visionary element beyond that of a 'Protokoll', vouchsafing a view of the 'Zusammenhang der Dinge'. For Andersch's tourist, described as 'eine Schlüsselfigur des Jahrhunderts',⁶¹ as for the artist in general, the guide book and the priming informational document, relate little to the reality to be experienced. "Die fressende Unruhe, ...die Lust nach der Fremde"⁶² which drives him on, is dissatisfied with the discrepancy, if not the incompatibility between the mental preparation and the existential experience; the technical data fail to catch or convey 'das Wesentliche, die Minute der Wahrheit'. Hope returns when, after the ballast, as it were, of impersonal, intellectual cognition is discarded, the tourist is "von Stimmungen berührt, von Farben, von Gerüchen, von Formen, von der Essenz fremden menschlichen Lebens oder von der Substanz toter Steine"⁶³. Colour and geological morphology are for Andersch an important part of the 'Geist der Länder'. Whatever the relationship between environment and people - and some of the cameos and vignettes in the "Aus einem römischen Winter" section⁶⁴ are almost archetypally rooted in the village or soil - which Andersch can intuit, it is distinguishable from Koeppen's obsessive and compulsive orientation towards a people's dreams and phobias which are not a little influenced by the author's own fears and apprehensions. "Ich erkenne so bald die Furcht einer Stadt oder eines Landes, spüre den Drachen auf, der die Bewohner schreckt und quält. Wenn man begriffen hat, wovor die Menschen sich ängstigen, weiss man, wie sie leben, wie sie lieben, wie sie sterben, wie ihre Richter, ihre Priester sind und ihre Psychiater, wie hart die Gesetze drücken und wie beschränkt die Regierung ist..."⁶⁵ And despite Andersch's sojourn in London, Bruges and the environs of Rome, we do not feel the seething bustle and activity of cosmopolitan or metropolitan centres which Koeppen seeks out, which impels the impassioned vigour of his enumerative and ungrammatical prose, and with which, according to the particular city and its contemporary state of development (even Paris is not what it was) the author communicates his

love-hate relationship. "Die Zeit raste hier. In hundert Jahre war gepackt, was sonst Jahrtausende beschwerte" (Amf. 45). Such an experience is not to be found in Andersch's travel-pages. It is often the alienating fascination of hell; its rich and frenzied plenitude and diversity awaken the artist's creative response.

There are many common elements and motifs which invite our study. Both Andersch and Koeppen naturally defend intellectual freedom wherever it is menaced - they have an eye for the restrictive bookshop, or the lack of any worthwhile bookshop at all: "Die leeren Buchhandlungen und die lauten Gebete von Brügge lassen schauernd ermessen, wohin der Sieg einer neuen Gegenreformation Europa tragen würde"⁶⁶. And in West Berlin, with thoughts directed upon Rome, the next metropolitan arena for the meaningless, changing historical pageant, Koeppen laments: "Buchhandlung neben Buchhandlung bot Ranke und Treitschke an, die Werke Friedrich des Grossen, Bismarcks Erinnerungen, selten das Wort Trakls, des Dichters, des Sehers, von des Krieges Bosheit und der Menschen Blindheit zerrissen..." (N.R. 287). Lorca's works are no longer performed or printed in Spain. In Moscow's larger bookshops German literature is synonymous with DDR literature: "Mitteldeutschland vertritt hier allein die deutsche Literatur und den deutschen Geist; es vertritt sie vor dem Forum der halben Welt" (N.R. 160). The individualist deviation from the societal norm, the lonely rebel-figure who scorns the blandishments and debilitating material comforts of more 'civilised' herds is noted with expected admiration and a concomitant lament for the loss of a certain 'Ursprünglich' element in our character and intercourse. Through the unforgettable sketch of a fifty-year old Sardinian, Domenico, living and working in contact with the primeval landscape, in an unspoken harmony with Nature, however hard and Spartan the conditions imposed by Nature's forces, we savour the primitiveness and self-sufficiency of a cattle-raiser cut off from the normal conventions and accoutrements of civilisation. No electric lighting

exists for his cabin on the pasture-land; he lives largely on bread, milk, the wine he presses himself, the figs he also peels for his own donkey. The wind and the surging sea are the main sounds reaching the pastures. His basic literacy enables him to maintain contact with political events via the newspaper. "Er verabscheut den Krieg, und der Gedanke des Imperiums hat keine Spuren in seinem Geist hinterlassen, aber er mag auch die Demokratie nicht; sie ist ihm nichts als ein Geflecht römischer Intrigen. Den Kommunismus hasst er als Teufelswerk ... Er ist ein Hirtenbauer, er weidet Rinder, erntet Oliven und Wein, tauscht Milch und Früchte gegen Fische und Brot - er braucht keinen Staat"⁶⁷. He writes to Andersch, "Als Euer Brief kam, war ich allein. Ich war es nicht mehr, als ich ihn las". Koeppen's counterpart 'outsiders' are represented by tramp-figures or ascetic nonconformists who disdain the race for worldly success and the means employed to achieve it. Unlike Domenico above, they inhabit the very world from which they have chosen to be alienated, and in their self-presentation to the world there is generally a mixture of proud defiance and also resignation; they are lonely, not on pasture land and the wide prairies, but in the urban crowd. The authentic but self-consciously intellectual nonconformists, those whose nonconformity has not degenerated into a conformist cult of nonconformity, are represented by the 'Beat' groups of Venice in California, the acolytes of Kierkegaard, 'die müde oder die geschlagene Generation' inspired by Kerouac and James Dean, who have renounced the seductions of Madison Avenue, the sinecures of academic employment and the easy lucre of the mass-media, "um eines geistigen Aufstandes oder auch nur um einer Verneinung des konformistischen Denkens oder Nichtdenkens willen" (Amf. 166). In San Francisco the mood is even more 'weltabgewandt' and 'amerikafeindlich', with unsympathetic portraits of Nixon, but already here the most interesting of the revolutionaries or nihilists is one dressed as a Rubens' cavalier and not like the 'uniformierten Nonkonformisten' (Amf. 187).

The less self-consciously intellectual outsider is the variant tramp whose significance relates to the socio-historical context. In Spain the beggar is an integral part of the urban landscape, often a victim of the fascist forces of 1936; in a seedy street in a workers' suburb of Madrid, a totally grey figure in rags compels the writer's attention: "Im Pariser Clochard vermutet man zur eigenen Gewissensberuhigung den Lebenskünstler ... den Sokrates in Lumpen, hier gibt es keine Beruhigung, hier steht ein unter uns lebendig Verstorbenen" (N.R. 45). If it were not such an unrealistic and because of its subject such an inappropriate procedure, we might attempt to construct a typology of the tramp-figure in Koeppen's writings. Certainly the 'clochard' has his own special distinction, and must be seen against the city which has a traditional reverence for dissent and diversity. There is a sense in which the 'Lebenskünstler', although in rags, belongs as part of the cultural richness of a city and its people - in the same sense that all radical opposition belongs as integrally to Parisian society as the Establishment it opposes (the 'Ecole Normale Supérieure' has always produced "tapfere Kämpfer gegen die Tabus und gegen die Beschränktheit der herrschenden Gesellschaft, zu der sie - wir sind in Frankreich - gehören" (R.F. 222). This is also the reason why Paris is Koeppen's city, if he has one at all, and why the alienation he feels in any urban mass-society is here offset by so many other elements which breathe hope, vigour and vitality. No such hope and vigour (in fact, hardly a tradition or a history at all) communicates itself amongst the Chicago poor, where the desolate outsiders live on the very fringe of survival; to these 'Gescheiterte' he is characteristically drawn, the drop-outs, the human wreckage of the economic rationalism of a get-rich-quick society, "ich fürchtete nur, Schwäche zu fühlen, zu fallen, denn nie würde man sich aus diesem Abgrund des Lebens wieder erheben, das Elend würde in alle Ewigkeit mit seinen abertausend uralten Beinen über einen hinwegschreiten" (Amf. 235). To fail, to feel the slings of outrageous

fortune, is, we are reminded, 'uralt' and 'ewig'. But in Soho, another traditional refuge (as Karl Marx knew, less dangerous and more tolerant than Paris) for the revolutionary, an individualist, albeit in tatters, asserts his dignity and independence, "als gehöre ihm zumindest ein Schloss", accepting the proffered coin "mit der übertriebenen Höflichkeit eines sehr grossen Herrn ..." (N.R. 267). The outstanding figure of proud desolation has taken residence in the porch of a church in Rome. This 'Vagabundin' is surrounded by cardboard boxes containing the memories of her seventy years. "Weisshaarig ruht sie in nicht anmutloser, altjüngferlicher Würde auf alten Zeitungen wie auf einer Chaiselongue in dem Boudoir einer galanteren Vergangenheit. Wer ist sie? Vielleicht die letzte der Vestalinnen. Geld weist sie zurück und beschämt den, der es ihr geben wollte" (N.R. 300). The contrast is all the more emphatic and the moral explicit, when the rejected alms-giver is pursued in three languages by an opportunist profiteer, selling "das wundermilde Jesuskind zu Saisonpreisen". Nothing could highlight with clearer irony the Koeppenesque absurdity of this Manichean vision befitting the historical centre of Christendom. In Russia, significantly, beggars are seen as an anachronism, a useless remnant of the social fabric of the nineteenth century, of Dostoevsky's time, "Fehlkörper in der Organisation der Gesellschaft". Bernardus, Koeppen's sympathetic interpreter, like the burgher of old, summarily dismissed the beggar as responsible for his own ostracisation; "Er fühlte nicht mit den Bettlern" (N.R. 175). It is in the same context that Koeppen recalls the chilling words of Ilja Ehrenburg: "Moskau glaubt nicht an Tränen".

The above portraits, Andersch's Domenico and the 'Vagabundin' are part of the 'Bild der Zeit' which Peukert in the foregoing described as the achievement of the Reisebuch. Any sympathetic gravitation to the characters in question constitutes a critique of or some position of alienation from a passive, docile, greedy and itself (unknowingly)

alienated society. Böll's attraction to Ireland was rooted no doubt in the fact that, as he states at the beginning of his travel-diary, in that country "Armut war nicht nur 'keine Schande' mehr, sonder weder Ehre noch Schande: sie war - als Moment gesellschaftlichen Selbstbewusstseins - so belanglos wie Reichtum"⁶⁸. Here too we have a cattle-minder, taciturn, incommunicative, self-sufficient, whose profile becomes rejuvenated in proportion as he recedes into the distance.⁶⁹ Andersch of course does not fail to remind us that the young urchins catching the various booty from the sea, poor and illiterate, are exploited by the bosses on the Sardinian coasts, "jungen ausgebeuteten Götter mit den griechischen Gesichtern"⁷⁰. Hence the relevance and the incongruity of the Communist Party banner waving in the window in Sassari of Sardinia; knowing what revolutions have accomplished, what have they to do with "die weiten, weissen und gelben Plätze. Um sie ist Leere"⁷¹, which are Sassari? ("Sassari wirkt weiss, weit, gelb und leer"). Twentieth century political ideology seems strangely alien to the softly moving female forms who cross these squares, "sarazenisch oder genuesisch schön". To Andersch the women who inhabit these primitive Mediterranean villages are the real embodiments of a pre-technological naturalism with its pottery, handcrafts, its unsynthetic cloths and fabrics, its totally unsynthetic civilisation: "Die Genialität der biblischen Hirtenlandschaft des Nuorese scheint sich einzig in den Frauen aufzubewahren. Die jungen Männer zeigen sich amerikanisiert, die Alten kostümieren sich museal. Die Frauen hingegen haben das Kostüm in zeitlose Klassik gewendet ... Sie sind fast alle sehr schön, auch die Frauen in mittleren Jahren, antilopenhaft schlank und seltsam ... Dies müssten Frauen für altertümliche Leidenschaften sein, wie sie dem Jahrhundert fremd sind ..."⁷² One is tempted to say such women are 'whole', not fragmented beings in a fragmented, technological society in which our own passions and instincts attempt to find a meaning. Andersch's evocation of 'altertümliche Leidenschaften' recalls Marcuse's attack on

the socialised mechanisation of man's instinctual energies (as part of his wider notion of 'repressive desublimation'); in a mechanised culture areas of human activity are de-eroticised, dimensions in which formerly libidinal experience, the contact of natural body with natural environment were possible, have now contracted. ("This is the kernel of truth in the romantic contrast between the modern traveller and the wandering poet or artisan, between assembly line and handicraft, factory-produced bread and the home-made loaf ... True, this pre-technical world was permeated with misery, toil and filth, and these in turn were the background of all pleasure and joy. Still, there was a 'landscape', a medium of libidinal experience which no longer exists"⁷³). Whatever else Sardinia offers to the traveller's eye, the dominant impression we receive is of light, open land, open sea, open sky, colours, shapes, space and emptiness, silence, sound of wind and water, inhabitants working with land and water, all human energies and instincts and faculties seeming to operate in unselfconscious unison and in perfect congruity with exciting if not beautiful landscape. Even women's clothes merge with the landscape, their colour with the sea: ... "die Frauen im grellen karthagischen Rot ihrer langen Gewänder, ein gelbes Rot, eine Farbe in C-Dur ... eine vorchristliche Farbe, nur an den Rändern von schmalen kobaltblauen Borten eingefasst, als grenze sie ... an die Unendlichkeit wie an ein Meer"⁷⁴.

These environs are for Andersch the refuge from Rome; Koeppen will linger on the sources of alienation he intends to lacerate, - but will include a salute to the noisy vitality of the Roman populace around the fountains in the lit-up squares. But from the former writer there is to be "Nichts von der Beton-Woge der zukünftigen Slums, in der Rom erstickt, nichts vom Inferno des Autos, nichts von der Vernichtung der Albanerberge, der Campagna, und des Strandes von Anzio bis Fregene, nichts von Politik"⁷⁵. This is the second Fall of Rome, and - as Koeppen would sadly agree - the

'politik' of every Party will connive at the Fall. One feels that for Andersch the 'Beton-Woge' is too daunting a phenomenon for close analysis, indeed the city as a topographical and socio-psychological phenomenon in general - Bruges after all becomes bearable through its pictorial art-treasures, despite the spiritual violence and fanaticism which was in the air one breathed.⁷⁶ The 'Wald' is more congenial, not the Romantic German one so much as the Scandinavian, "den grossen schwedischen Wald, den, der nirgends mehr aufhört, den endlosen, langweiligen, wunderbaren Wald"⁷⁷; though some mechanisation is involved, the study of forest growth enables a close contact with immediate natural processes; Nature which serves Man is in turn treated respectfully, even though a future-oriented pragmatism is not lacking - and the old, experienced expert in the development of wood-varieties, Leif Ekelund, deliberately avoids his birthday reception, which is interpreted as the "Versuch eines alten Mannes, aus dem Zwang des Werkes, das er geschaffen hatte, auszubrechen"⁷⁸. If not the magnificent, overpowering, primeval and monotonous forest, it is unexplored icefields, further open tracts of water and sky which attract Andersch, whose pessimism has deepened by the time he came to write Hohe Breitengrade - the territory of walruses, seals and polar bears at home in their habitat, and not removed to the artificial ambience we accord them. An encounter with a walrus, discussed anthropomorphically, conveys a spiritual dignity and depth we might conceivably associate with Koeppen's Roman 'Vagabundin': "Es war ein ungeheures Vieh mit gelben Stosszähnen. Es war das Ur-Vieh. Zugleich war es der Ur-Mensch. Wie ein Mensch hob es ... eine Flosse über die Augen, um uns besser betrachten zu können. In dieser gelassenen Gebärde lag etwas unendlich Überlegenes ... es raffte sich zu dem Entschluss auf, in uns eine Störung zu sehen. Wie waren eine Belästigung! Wir störten eine Philosophie! Wie unterbrachen Sätze, die zu Ende gedacht werden wollten, Sätze vom Sein! Ja, wir missachteten die Klausur des grössten aller Seins-Denker! ... Es delectiert sich an Mollusken ... Ein.

Ungeheuer mit der Seele eines Dandys"⁷⁹. A special meaning and function of travel emerges when the territory is so isolated and removed from normal human activity and even civilisation. Physical hardship in extreme conditions becomes a new challenge. The exploits and the psychological motivations of arctic explorers like Nansen are sympathetically recalled, Nansen having achieved in his lifetime a remarkable union of physical and intellectual endeavour. For him strength lay in individual character, and self-knowledge was considered to be possible only "im Schweigen und in der Einsamkeit der Wildnis, allein mit der Natur ... Flucht (war) für Nansen eine Notwendigkeit"⁸⁰. It was a necessity because, as the historian relates, only in such arctic solitude could he be freed from the 'Zweifeln und Ängsten' which beset him 'in der ruhelosen, chaotischen zivilisierten Welt', and only there could he encounter ice, "tief und rein wie die Unendlichkeit, die schweigende Sternennacht, die Tiefen der Natur selbst, die Fülle des Lebensgeheimnisses, das ewige Kreisen des Universums und seinen ewigen Tod".

Koeppen spends much of his time telling us that the cities of Europe and America which constitute the focal point of attention in the travel-books, are hardly places where the 'Fülle des Lebensgeheimnisses' is currently to be experienced. But before we analyse the substance of this disenchantment and alienation which underlie the ennui and hopelessness of the human condition as he sees it, we will pause momentarily with Koeppen's counterpart to Andersch's Sardinian coasts and villages, though even here, in Greece, the fount of our civilisation, decay is spreading fast, and technological civilisation is importing its abstractions and its fragmented living. For it is supremely Koeppen's theme and song that here, if anywhere, lived once, man who was 'whole', with body and spirit in union, however inimical the Fates might be, living with mountains, valleys, open sea and sky, and temples, all of which were "eins in einer nie wieder erlebten Unschuld der Natur, die den Menschen und sein Werk einschloss"⁸¹.

We meet the arrival of contemporary civilisation, often narrated with deadening bathos, in various forms which announce that the harmonious concordance of man and Nature, of body and spirit is no longer in evidence - Koeppen here follows the line of the notable Hellenist tradition in German thought and letters. The ad-man and mass-tourist have taken over the role of Odysseus; "So sind die Götter gereist, mit den Winden, von den Lüften getragen im Licht ... Dädalus' Triumph, Ikarus' Traum, Merkurs Gewinn. Geschäftsleute, Touristen. Langeweile der Blasierten. Das Standardmenu: Kalbsschnitzel in Tomatensauce"⁸². This travel-article is in a direct line of continuity with the introductory visit to the Roman Pantheon at the beginning of Der Tod in Rom, - "Es war einmal eine Zeit, da hatten Götter in der Stadt gewohnt". We have killed the Gods, and in so doing have destroyed the divine image in and of ourselves. "Die Titanen arbeiten als Physiker in Göttingen, in Princeton und in Moskau. Die Götter haben Studienratsstellen angenommen"⁸³. At one time armed combat, as at Salamis where the defeat of the Persians inaugurated Western civilisation, was personal and hand-to-hand; now the customary NATO warships guard against the impersonal, the abstract enemy. (An important feature of our 'unwhole' world, and the most central element of Koeppen's apocalyptic vision, is the potentially lethal abstractness of our meditations on war, not even exercised by remote generals in the field, "eher von Absolventen des Instituts für fortgeschrittene Studien oder von Robotern der Naturwissenschaft hinter Polstertüren geübt" (Amf. 94). The menace of the Pentagon is likewise treated in one of Koeppen's latest fictional fragments⁸⁴).

Here Koeppen aligns himself with a critique of Enlightenment rationality applied to social and political activity (such as war) which goes back to Herder. The mental dissociation which describes the condition of the psyche of Western man expresses itself in alienating activities such as contemporary modes of aggression practised by abstract entities against abstract entities; it is similarly expressed in the division of mind and body

contained in the reification of libidinous energies impoverished to the level of a 'technisierte Striptease-Prostitution, ... entfremdet der den Gott suchenden Hingabe von Eleusis, dem gastfreundlichen Tempeldienst ..."⁸⁵

In the cities at least an unserene earnestness prevails, of activity, demeanour and expression. "Ein ernstes, ein geschäftiges Volk. Ein hektischer Verkehr ... keine Zeit, keine Zeit! ... Kein Flirt. Eher ernste Verhältnisse ... Die jungen Mädchen gaben sich brav und schienen noch nichts von dem Glück zu wissen, Teenager zu sein. Sie schleppten ihre Schulmappen ..."⁸⁶. Subjective impressions contain as always the image of learning divorced from a happy and harmonious application in adult life, or not designed for the development of a 'whole' personality - the learning, like the adult life, is specialised, fragmented, divisive, and utility-fixated - not in the Rousseauian sense, where personal satisfaction and fulfilment issue from the exercise of practical, useful skills, but in the sense of the Puritan ethic directed to material accumulation, - echoes of Schiller's "Der Nutzen ist das grosse Idol der Zeit"⁸⁷. As Koeppen surveys modern Athens, its miniature Westernised commercialism - "Die Hauptstrassen sind sauber. Es lässt sich nicht mehr über sie sagen ... zaubern die Automobile noch das Bild der grossen Boulevards. Aber schon die Gehsteige sind provinziell. Bieder die Cafés, unelegant das öffentliche Leben, glanzlos die Auslagen der Geschäfte. Gesichtlose Grossstadtfassaden", - its spiritually impoverished aspect relating to and emanating from its spiritually impoverished activities, he can only make Schillerian comparisons with notions of earlier Greek civilisation, reflecting how once public institutions and activities expressed man's highest and united faculties, how what he built and created grew organically out of his environment, to use the earlier poet's language, "nur weil das Ganze den Teilen dient, dürfen sich die Teile dem Ganzen fügen"⁸⁸. For Schiller the basic mental and psychic dissociation, (germane to the whole tenor of modern Western philosophy, and the core of the many fashionable critiques

of the latter and its Cartesian origins) was expressed in all social and public life and relationships: "Warum qualifizierte sich der einzelne Grieche zum Repräsentanten seiner Zeit, und warum darf dies der einzelne Neuere nicht wagen? Weil jenem die alles vereinende Natur, diesem der alles trennende Verstand seine Formen erteilten ... so zerriss auch der innere Bund der menschlichen Natur, und ein verderblicher Streit entzweite ihre harmonischen Kräfte"⁸⁹. So Koeppen takes flight to the Archaeological National Museum where the Gods, the titanic heroes and athletes recall to us the true meaning of 'Übermensch' - "Hier ist sein Bild. Schönheit? Hier steht sie nackt"⁹⁰. The images and effigies embody the unity now lost: "Der Geist ist Leib, der Leib ist Geist geworden!"

Equally relevant, and indeed part of the organic relationship enjoyed between man and his environment, stemming in turn from the unity of mind and body, spirit and matter, reason and imagination, "der intuitive und der spekulative Verstand"⁹¹, of the intellect and the senses ("die Sinne und der Geist (hatten) noch kein streng geschiedenes Eigentum"⁹²) - is man's active self-creation, individually and communally, arising from the fertile relatedness of self and the community: "Der Athener schuf sich selbst. Er schuf sich aus dieser Erde"⁹³. For Koeppen, as for the social philosopher, the contemporary variant of homo sapiens is the 'one-dimensional man' of our technologised cities, facing abstract, 'gesichtslos' realities, being lived rather than living - one recalls Carla in Tauben im Gras, who for additional reasons of her personal situation, endured life, "sie litt es, sie führte es nicht" (T.G. 122), - a situation in which Wilhelm von Humboldt's "Ehrfurcht für die Individualität selbsttätiger Wesen"⁹⁴ has been lost, and in which in its place what Raymond Williams calls a "shared consciousness of persistently external events" prevails, a "set of one-way relationships", "an external, willed reality"⁹⁵ - based, for Williams, upon modes of production and their determination of our lives and energies. The structures which threaten are totalitarian - we have witnessed Koeppen's repeated philippic against private capitalism and State capitalism

(communism) for their common assault on human freedom; to Adorno and Horkheimer, "Aufklärung ist totalitär"⁹⁶. Marx's analysis becomes relevant - man is alienated from the state, from other men, from Nature, the object to be possessed, and from himself. "Die Menschen bezahlen die Vermehrung ihrer Macht mit der Entfremdung von dem, worüber sie die Macht ausüben. Die Aufklärung verhält sich zu den Dingen wie der Diktator zu den Menschen"⁹⁷. Man treats Nature as the machine which he himself has become - as he is treated by the abstract forces governing his life. Andersch sees the extermination of whales in the seventeenth century as a precursor to the modern exploitation of the earth's resources going on apace - his bitterness and anguish have intensified by the late sixties': "Wir vermehren uns weiter wie die Kaninchen. Der grosse Fortschritts-Phallus stösst sein Sperma aus, und der grosse Gedanke der Askese ist noch nicht gedacht ... Grenzen sind dazu da, überschritten zu werden: dies gilt als Lehrsatz und als Schicksal, am unerbittlichsten bei denen, die von Freiheit sprechen ... Freiheit wäre da, wo wir an einer Grenze sagten: es ist genug. Es reicht uns"⁹⁸. The new mythology binds its worshippers as fatally as did the Nordic, Aryan myths pilloried elsewhere in Koeppen's writings. The dreams of Kaplan, the successor to Keetenheuve in "Angst", contain visions of the "ständigen Vergewaltigung des Lebens, der unaufhörlichen Erniedrigung der Erde"⁹⁹.

In the Greek journey Koeppen moves away from the faceless, modern aspect of the city, from the tourists who 'consume' Delphi in a day as they consume any other mass-product, to temples and tragic ruins, to the Plaka, the 'Altstadt', the Epidaurus theatre - "das Erhabene ist hier das Schweigen"¹⁰⁰, the stonemasons working with the same tools as their illustrious forebears - "Ein Hauch von Ewigkeit und umso klarer das Bewusstsein der Vergänglichkeit", he approaches the Acropolis on foot, "seine Füße spürten den Sand, die Steine, den Fels, er roch den Saft des harzschwitzenden Gestrüpps ... dann spürt er auf der Höhe plötzlich die

frischen Winde. Das ist Hellas!"¹⁰¹. Again the natural elements, open sea and sky, and the light these conspire to produce - particularly, the light - fill the artist with ecstasy; "ein nie vorhergesehenes, ein wahrhaft beglückendes Licht, in einen weiten Horizont leuchtend ...". Characteristically, this intensity of unpolluted light is associated with ancient civilisations: the light of Rome 'transfigures', it is the impressive feature on all prints and paintings of the city, it inspires the writer to a rare evocation of Romantic Geist, and recalls the symbolic traveller of a lost age, the visit of Goethe in 1787: "es ist das Licht, das wie eine Zauberessenz Rom zu blosser Romantik, zu rein spiritueller Existenz und schönem Glücklichsein läutert. Die Stadt dieses Lichts hat nichts Irdisches" (N.R. 288). (Some of the more earthly and temporal features of Rome and its history Koeppen then introduces by reference to Piranesi - a pointed contrast of man's doings with the light and beauty of primeval natural elements, "Schwarz lebt ein dunkles Rom in den Veduten des Meisters ... Kein Licht verklärt."). And in San Francisco and the Californian coast, the only American region where Nature and man seem reconciled and live together in happy and beautiful agreement, there are reminders of ancient landscapes: "San Francisco war ... eine goldene Stadt in einer Landschaft aus der antiken Welt, und Wasser, Erde und Luft, selbst die Menschenwerke boten sich so rein, so licht, so verklärt ..." (Amf. 190). Goethe's arrival in Sicily is produced as an analogy, landscape, seascape and sky are 'in ein Element aufgelöst'. The coastline reposes in "der Unschuld des ersten Schöpfungstages" (Amf. 182); and when this line reaches Los Angeles, we see colour for the first time, "leuchtendes Blau, wahres Grün, echtes Rot, und einen wirklich weissen Strand", (a further point of contact here with Andersch, though not treated with the same scientific precision and even academic approach that we see in the latter's "Ästhetische Flaschenpost"¹⁰²). It is perhaps not without significance that here - despite slums, despite the ambiguities attending

any materialist paradise, labelled a 'Schlaraffenland' (Amf. 162) - problems germane to the contemporary urban malaise no longer exist, "das Problem, Städter zu sein und Freiluftmenschen, Arbeiter zu sein und Musse zu haben" (Amf. 161). Warm, southern seas surrounding former Dutch colonial territories are contrasted with the constricting atmosphere of the Northern European Protestant mainland from which the conquerors set sail, "man friert ein wenig zu Hause und findet es eng ... die Heimat der Väter kalt und trist, neblig und hart ..." (N.R. 94). And behind Asteria, the Palm-Beach of Athens, with its tourist bikinis and processed music, "erst hinter dieser letzten Wegmarke der Zivilisation beginnt das Altertum, das Unverlorene, die stehengebliebene Zeit"¹⁰³, the bays, the unvisited coast, the smell of pine and resin, the traveller might be Orestes, the distant valleys, sea and mountains compose the "nie wieder erlebten Unschuld der Natur". The images embody the divinity we have lost in and through civilisation, what Schiller, for example, calls 'Kultur', - here "Man glaubt, dem Gott zu begegnen". Significantly, Koeppen senses that the Greek temples and columns erected - transplanted - in Moscow, and especially Stalingrad do not belong. In the death-city they represent 'Hellas ohne Götter', a new humanism, "der den tätigen Menschen und seine Technik anbetete, den Homo faber und seine Zeit, und noch keine Form gefunden hatte, das neue Daseinsgefühl ästhetisch auszudrücken" (N.R. 209). The statement becomes part of the broader problem of the artist's difficulty in finding appropriate symbols to mediate contemporary reality. The planned bridges and factories, the new humanist future, lack vital elements of the Hellenic past, still vital for the artist's emotional response: "aus einer alten, einer nicht ganz verschütteten Ahnung wünschte man sich auch zwecklose Schönheit ... unnütze Schönheit, die gab es nicht ohne die Götter, die gab es nicht ohne Eros, nicht ohne Unordnung, Einsamkeit, Verwirrung, Ekstase, Trotz, Verzweiflung, Höllenfahrten ... Schönheit war nicht nach einem Plan zu

schaffen ... man war blind dafür, dass das Haus unbewohnt blieb, dass Pan nicht kam, dass die Steine, die Säulen keine Seele hatten" (N.R. 209-210). But the rationalised 'Ameisenstaat' (N.R. 210) - nor even its art and literature, as Koeppen came to discover - cannot cope with, understand or utilise such elemental human impulses and private conceptions of being. Such a future, for this writer, can only be "gewaltig, voll Leistungen aber eben ohne Seele".

Two symbolic examples come to mind which implicitly illustrate the deformations which have accompanied the advance of civilisation from early Grecian times to our present urban condition. Koeppen observes a sponge-diver, reminiscent of Andersch's Domenico, peddling his sea-booty in the cafés in Athens, a figure resurrected from the life of ancient Salamis. His 'commercial' enterprises, bartering his sponges, are to be reckoned against the daily encounter with death or danger, "wie grausam des Tauchers Tod, und das poröse, seinem Element entrissene Wesen soll im gefahrlosen Wannenbad aufleben"¹⁰⁴ - which neatly puts our culture in perspective. This creature, though cunningly intent on the best price, is "Zeus auf Handel aus", "ein wahres Fabelgeschöpf, ein gefallener Mond, ... ein Glück für die Träumer". He belongs naturally to his natural environment, and perhaps evokes memories of ancient days when "Der Athener schuf sich selbst. Er schuf sich aus dieser Erde". No starker contrast could be conceived than the rootless, care-worn, bored figure of a small-time businessman travelling to Chicago from Minneapolis to execute some miniature business transaction (Amf. 246-249). The whole style of this fascinatingly wearisome passage is attuned to the drab, monotonous comings and goings from his hotel - the short, arid sentences reflect the bleak and arid existence led by the protagonist in question. The latter remains throughout the three pages as 'der Mann', which intensifies the sense of mechanical meaninglessness which accompanies his actions. He passes the Hilton, "vorbei an Türstehern, Orgelklang, Blumenbeetmatronen, Callgirls,

den Börsenberichten von heute, den Wahlparolen von morgen", all of which fail to interest. A grey cement block contains his hotel, 'Christliche Junge Männer'; he registers, "ging durch Wabengänge ... fand seine Zelle unter tausend Zellen". He goes out, goes through the motions of consuming a tasteless snack, insures his life for tomorrow's return flight (the compensation his wife collects would be 'die Lösung aller Probleme'), returns to his hotel, observes a sailor being tattooed, is approached by the vendors of female flesh, watches television whilst drinking at a bar, returns to the hotel - Chicago, and its enormous spectacle failed to interest. One feels invited to ponder on the meaning and value of this anonymous existence and the abstractness of living in a strange and gigantic urban complex. Social and cultural fragmentation find their fullest expression, as here, in the city; "the city is the metaphor, the only adequate metaphor, through which relational problems can be expressed", observes one contributor to the theme of "Modernism"¹⁰⁵.

The time-dimension becomes an important part of any equation defining or describing contemporary social malaise, the technology-rooted crisis of consciousness, new forms of alienation between private and public experience. The past becomes increasingly the repository of that which is to be preserved, and the future, with its mass complexity and one-dimensional abstractness, the time-span to be feared, if not - as is implicit in Koeppen's writings - from the outset rejected. Even a culture-critic whose hopes are still staked on the future, discussing historico-cultural development in terms of the country and the city, is confronted with a situation where "unalienated experience is the rural past and realistic experience is the urban future"¹⁰⁶. It must be borne in mind that across the earth's surface human history for Koeppen is primarily a story of domination, exploitation and suffering, imposed by man or by destiny; but within this 'absolute' description, some 'relative' evaluations are possible, and in the general qualitative decline in the human fabric which is readable in the travel-

books and articles under discussion, references are frequently made to the price paid by the advance of mass democracy or large-scale processes of production. Examples in these contexts indicating superior modes of living in past epochs would be the decline of the Café de la Régence in Paris from pre-Revolution days, when it was a meeting-place for 'den Adel des Blutes und des Geistes' (R.F. 259) who prepared the Revolution, to the rise of the bourgeois in the nineteenth century, and finally to the emergence of "das gar nicht mehr revolutionäre Volk" which inhabits modern Paris. Leningrad is almost the only Russian city which the writer finds attractive, partly because "Die Stätten der Geschichte waren ehrfurchtsvoll bewahrt", and the 'Europa' hotel had also preserved 'den Glanz des Adels' (N.R. 233), an interesting duplication of substantive. Koeppen, the champion of the oppressed, defends exclusiveness, just as he bitterly defends privacy, in the name of individualistic freedom. A typical conventional example of the qualitative loss incurred, in terms both of product and human values, by the advent of mass technologised production, is the making and selling - contrasted with the manufacture and distribution - of cheese in certain Dutch towns. In Alkmaar a small-scale market is erected in which connoisseurs taste and barter for the locally farm-made brands. Heraldic signs support the proud claims. Formal weighing takes place, handshakes seal the transaction. "Hier ist die Historie nicht Kulisse, der Brauch noch lebendig und zweckmässig, der Käse wird umgesetzt" (N.R. 98). Strong social ties prevail here; quality and authenticity are assured. "Die Käsefabriken aber sind durchrationalisierte Industriewerke mit bakteriologischen Kulturen, automatischen Mischkesseln, flinken Fließbändern und sterilen Warmlufthallen, hygienisch und gänzlich unromantisch" (N.R. 97). These have no individuality - like the furnaces at Ijmuiden which are duplicated and replicated in Stalingrad, the Ruhr and Pittsburgh. 'Romantik' provides and guarantees diversity and differentiation. The most monotonous occasions on Koeppen's journeys are provided by the

alienating and spiritually enfeebling experience of standardisation - of life, work and activity - which egalitarianism has accomplished. 'Einheitspreisgeschäfte', 'Allerweltsküche' are - with memorable exceptions - the constant refrain, they dull the appetite and thwart the aims of travel itself, which seeks, we may recall, 'das Neue', 'das Fremde'. The 'Kaufhof' equals the Dutch 'Bijenkorf' equals Galerie Lafayette equals Woolworth. Where the same wares, the same 'Geräte der Bequemlichkeit und der Unterhaltung' are exhibited, there is "Masse, nicht mehr der Kunde, der von des Kaufmanns Klugheit umworben, von seiner Ehrbarkeit beeindruckt werden musste, es ist der anspruchsvoll anspruchslose Konsument ..." (N.R. 101). This is why Koeppen appreciates the cheese-episode above. He is explicit with his time-location - "Schwermut, Schönheit, Vergangenheit in der Heerengracht ... alte Patrizierpaläste aus dem siebzehnten, dem goldenen Jahrhundert der Stadt" (N.R. 103). The reference is to Amsterdam's regal merchants whose word was their bond, whose signature was gold itself. Bourgeois capitalism has removed them from the scene; and they are counterpointed here by the noisy loudspeakers of the tourist guides outside. We remain aware of the Koeppenesque ambiguities, which in the end make nonsense of any coherent and meaningful interpretation of history - for the patricians' wealth was founded on the conquest of foreign lands; but for the moment the writer leaves us with a sense that a valuable social code, a concreteness of relationship, have been lost.

Certainly, in view of the pessimistic colour of this writer's world-picture, his lament for the disappearance of a certain quality of human happiness cannot go unmentioned. The Revue-theatres in Paris have become degraded and professionalised strip-tease, Eros has become a titillation for the bourgeois at season prices, the secret charm of the forbidden has evaporated before the hypocritical moralisings of democratic society. With the extinction of the categories of heaven and hell the 'Zauber der

Verführung' (R.F. 198) has been lost - "Die Erwachsenen haben die soziale Unschuld verloren". Again exclusiveness, or individualist eccentricity has yielded to a new social consciousness, which, in its desire (unfulfillable) to ape the former, degrades it - the gossip vendors have the rôle of "das Fest der Grossen gehorsam den Kleinen malen, wie überall in der Welt". The tourist crowds dutifully consume the sterile offerings, "nach den Wünschen ins Parlament gewählter Damen sittenpolizeilich überwacht" - which affords an insight into Koeppen's view of certain other social developments. Koeppen, the true moralist, regrets: "Die Moralisten dürfen frohlocken". The desolation wrought by the democratised spectacle produces one of the many unforgettable images - the artist's metaphor telling more than pages of abstract analysis: "Diese Räume ähneln lange schon weggeworfenen gefütterten Bonbonnieren." (R.F. 199). The former art has declined to being a paid job invested accordingly with the 'Ehrbarkeit des Broterwerbs', and it vies successfully with the 'Arbeitsumstellungskurse' offered to the girls in Montmartre. The hollowness and seediness is nowhere more abject than in Pigalle, universalised and standardised on the Reeperbahn or Broadway; physical horrors of Benn-like intensity reflect the alienation of body from body, and of body from soul: "Die Mühlenflügel der Moulin Rouge sind ein Gebilde aus einem Metallbaukasten, das ein schon gelangweilter Knabe dem Rost überantwortet hat. Das ganze Revier der angelockten, der listig provozierten, der kommerziell genützten, der schliesslich gründlich abgekochten Begierde zeugt bei Tag von einem schäbigen Irrsinn" (R.F. 282). And in the daylight the 'butterflies of the night' resemble coloured bats, mixing 'kleinbürgerlich' with the other Kleinbürger of neighbouring streets. The Benn-like grotesqueness is manifest in the 'burlesque' quarter of Broadway where the animal corpses hanging in butchers' shops near to the striptease fleshpots portray the vanity and mortality of human flesh and desire. The "verzweifelt Sichanklammern

an die Körperlichkeit" is to Koeppen the urban dweller's attempted and of course abortive escape from the urban disease of 'Einsamkeit' - one of the fears and phobias we saw earlier as being central to Koeppen's preoccupation with the human condition. The loss, cultural and intellectual, incurred by the advent of the mass spectacle is exemplified in Montparnasse, where even the kinds of sexual titillation compare unfavourably with those of the past. But the famous boulevards announcing the Dôme, the Rotonde, and the Coupole once boasted the presence of Joyce, Hemingway, Lenin, Henry Miller, Blaise Cendrars, Cocteau, Stravinsky and the wretched Modigliani: "wo sind die Schwärme der Ekstatischen, die freien Gestalten der bilderstürmenden Zigeuner geblieben? ... Die Begeisterung ist gestorben, die neuen Ideen sind zur Fliessbandproduktion und die alten Laster zu teuer geworden"(R.F. 236-238). (One remembers Keetenheuve's chagrin that revolution had become "ein trockenes Blatt im Herbarium der Ideen" (T.H. 337)).

With mild but sincere irony the traveller through Wolsk looks back nostalgically to days when the Russian town, as an important centre of the grain harvest, received from far and wide actresses, singers and adventuresses who entertained the grain merchants before returning home to establish their own 'maisons Tellier'. We are bathetically informed in a characteristic Koeppenesque conclusion that nothing remains in Wolsk of this 'schönem Unternehmungsgeist'. And the Praga restaurant in Moscow his uncle had often quoted, though still resounding with festive noise, had lost its high-kicking dancers as well, and now celebrates the attainment of production figures and factory output. "Tobten hier Gelage, ereigneten sich Orgien? Es war Kantinenübermut, der hier sprudelte. Es war Herzlichkeit, es war Biederkeit, es war keine Sinnenlust, keine Ausschweifung. Das Essen war das Intourist-Essen" (N.R. 229). Despite the atrocities in Haarlem's history the era of Frans Hals knew its merriment and feasting, but the scene is now workaday, "man lebt bescheiden von der Textilienherstellung ... von Blumenzwiebeln, von der

Verwaltung der Provinz ..." (N.R. 110). With the destruction of Amsterdam's Jewish quarter there disappeared "ein echtes Märchen, ... ein Stück ... Weltgeschichte, Geistesgeschichte, Leidensgeschichte" (N.R. 106). Now the streets are commonplace, "voll kleinem Glück und kleiner Not", they lack what Koeppen seeks everywhere, 'das Besondere ... das Auserwähltsein'. There is a tone of condescension in the comparison made between the no longer visible heroes and giants of the gambling tables in the casinos of Monte Carlo and the multifariously dressed vulgus, "die kleinen, schmuddligen, rechnenden, papierverschmierenden, behutsam 20 Francs setzenden Systemspieler" (R.F. 107); but it is really a disenchantment, part of a Nietzschean critique of the decline of vitality, courage, heroism and autonomous freedom, a scorn for that which is metaphorically 'klein', and particularly the 'Kleinbürger'. Generalising his feelings about Paris (not in the same travel-book, but the timing is similar) the author feels that something irrevocable has happened, the past considered here is not the Flaubertian era, or Rastignac's in the Palais Royal, but a mere twenty years ago: "Ich war zwanzig Jahre zu spät zurückgekommen, und alles war verfehlt, und alles war falsch geworden, das Leben war gerettet, aber das Leben war vertan, versäumt, vergeudet, wie Sand aus eines Narren Hand gegen die Sterne geworfen"¹⁰⁷. The use of Blake's imagery conveys perhaps the intensity of the dismay at the loss incurred with the passing of time. The second World War had inflicted its wounds. The war had also destroyed cities like Rotterdam - the supreme absurdity of modern existence being that such human and environmental complexes can be annihilated so quickly by technology. This Dutch city is one of the few in Europe where for Koeppen the rebuilt architecture is an aesthetic success. Only the harbour disappoints, and partly because "Die Seemannsromantik stirbt aus" (N.R. 120). The new glass and steel erections demolish the associations with rum and gin treasures, and the Flying Dutchman, the old sea captains' bars have gone. In Leningrad - and this becomes highly representative

of the whole country in countless respects - the writer learns that no traditional sailors' bars remain, only a 'club'. Gone are the wild female company, the unwashed barman, the motley merry band of down-and-out drunkards (N.R. 236). Qualifying notions of collective progress are remarks made in an interview with the editors of the Literaturnaja Gazeta in Moscow; the visitor reminds his interlocutors of the eternal necessity for the writer anywhere to fight for justice and joy - the reply astonishes: "In ihrer Welt sei kein Leiden mehr, und wie es mit der Freude war, das blieb unerörtert" (N.R. 170). Gone for Koeppen here is the comedy and spontaneity of existence. These are all pointers to the threat imposed by the abstractifying tendencies in modern social development and intercourse, threats to romantic and even anarchic individualism, a levelling process which diminishes the quality of living.

These threats are truly magnified in Russia. The paradox obtains here that whilst in general the spontaneity and 'Romantik' have been vanquished, devoured by the Revolution, to use the author's own phrase, there is everywhere in evidence a return to a kind of pre-Revolutionary burgher idyll of the kind that Koeppen knew himself in his early Masuren days. A spiritual inertia becomes dangerously linked to a totalitarian consciousness in life, art and society. Koeppen's divorce from all this is symbolised - even though it is before the journey - by the rejection of earlier attitudes, "Ich reiste vierter Klasse"¹⁰⁸, by the purchase of four tickets to have a compartment to himself and not to be disturbed by a delegation of mine-workers, "Es ist ein kapitalistischer Ausweg. Träume und Einsamkeit sind teuer" (N.R. 132). The ubiquitous 'Kulturpark' becomes for the artist the symbol of a people in captivity, a bucolic scene of passive, burgher contentment, dull to the point of suffocation, "ein Gemälde aus einer stillen Provinz" (N.R. 140) - provincial is one of Koeppen's most derogatory terms. Surrounding Stalin's statue are other plaster cast images of athletes "in züchtigen

Trikots", of "sittsame junge Mädchen, gütige junge Mütter, aufrechte Arbeiter bei ihrem Werk". In the Moscow hotel the room-maids are dressed "wie Zofen der bürgerlichen Zeit". People talk, dance and dine 'sittsam', in such a way that the centre of Moscow presents the atmosphere of a suburb. On one occasion the Wachtangow theatre in the capital was a 'spiessbürgerliche Anstalt'; it presented a "reicher Bürger in eines reichen Bürgers Garten, der reiche Bürger hatte einen Sekretär, der reiche Bürger hatte eine Hausdame", and a son is born, the mother seeks to 'bürgerlich ordnen' her relationship, and after serious discussion, "Die bürgerliche Moral siegte" (N.R. 177). The tedious bourgeois melodrama is followed by the drinking of wine or cognac in nearby cafés by 'sittsame Paare' to the sound of processed music. "Ich zweifelte, dass die Revolution stattgefunden hatte". In the hotel in the health spa of Sotschi a socialist democracy reigns - without irony it is appreciated that generals, an ambassador, officials and workers dine in the same conditions. But "Sie assen alle das gleiche, reichliche, lieblos zubereitete Essen. Am Abend spielte die Jazzkapelle, sittsam, langweilig, bürgerlich. Die Gesellschaft tanzte. Sie tanzte sittsam und bürgerlich" (N.R. 220). The workers, Koeppen is informed, can relax better after a strenuous working day with this Palm Court orchestra than with true jazz - the jazz of the oppressed negro! The performance of Mayakovsky's "The Bedbug" gives occasion for thoughts on the contemporary intellectual climate, and the response to an artist who himself was ambiguous and enigmatic in his work and life. For despite Stalin's later acclaim the poet and satirist was not a constant and consistent upholder of the mass-democracy the Revolution (he once welcomed) had produced. But the 'Eremitage' park in which the play was performed, "eine bürgerliche Idylle" with its military bands and sedate pathways, corresponded for Koeppen with some of Mayakovsky's fears, the spectators "entsprachen gar nicht der entfesselten Gesellschaft seines frühen Enthusiasmus" (N.R. 163).

significantly, they were "ein Abbild der bürgerlichen Welt von 1912". The duplication is naturally qualified, and the black and white picture is credibly amended by recalling that though the Gods had vanished from the new society, an odious caste-system had died with them, as also 'das fatale Geltungsbedürfnis' of a perniciously unequal society, and the misplaced esteem for the officer breed. But again the deadening moral codes are triumphant, gone are the "Versuchung zum Abenteuer, der Flirt, das sexuelle Vagieren, die Jagd ... nach dem gesellschaftlich Verbotenen". Hypocrisy would have been a positive gesture. A certain boredom results, Koeppen's obsessive 'Langeweile', but here it is not alleged to be part of the community's own experience, - the imposed collective consciousness is too successful - it is the author's own sense of a loss of communal vitality, distinguishable from the social aridity of (say) Winslow in the cactus country of Arizona produced by the historical geography of the area, its Main Street peopled by Wild West figures looking constantly apprehensive - "Was konnte man auch sonst am Abend in Winslow tun, als sich zu fürchten?" (Amf. 144). It is distinguishable too from the claustrophobic ennui of the French provinces where age-old traditionalism has produced mental torpor, a variant of the burgher idyll with its own local differentiations.

This is the mental passivity of the 'Kulturpalast' in Stalingrad, which belongs literally and metaphorically to the tractor factory, and the worker's home forms here a third element in this trinity of apparent nation- and future-oriented activity. The burgher contentment integrates here with a work ethic which in its inclusiveness offends the Romantic artist jealous of his individual identity. The piano in the drawing-room, the crocheted doilies, the trinkets (one thinks of the Lübeck setting in "Die Verlobung im alten Salon"¹⁰⁹) together with more modern items belonging to the electronic age, are listed with other features of the work-leisure complex, assembly line, tanks, tractors, the imitation Greek.

pillars, the whole range of leisure-centre apparatus, the smiling library assistants, the "Helden der Arbeit ... sie hatten das Soll überschritten" on the factory floor, the children in state-care whilst both parents built tractors, Stalin's stone effigy at the station, Koeppen's hotel room with its alabaster model of the Russian farmhouse, this unity of items is characteristically and meaningfully enclosed in a single sentence of three pages, (N.R. 214-217), the author's unifying vision forbidding the full stop which would break the coherence of the enumeration. The piano and the 'Gemütlichkeit' are recognised as providing a "menschliches Mass in der Gigantenwelt der entfesselten Technik und des sozialistischen Aufbaus". The 'entfesselte Gesellschaft' of a Mayakovsky has yielded to the unbridled technology of a rationalised socio-economic system. The freedom from drudgery, the resulting freedom of the spirit have been forfeited in the name of a mechanised social progressivism. "Wofür hatte die Arbeiterbewegung gekämpft ... für Freiheit, für Musse, gegen die Peitsche des Akkordes". The Puritan work-ethic matches the total absence of 'Eros and Dionysos' from the evening festival in Stalingrad; as the shrapnel flies from the rockets and fireworks, even in this city "sie erinnerten an nichts"; despite the bourgeois victory in Paris after 1789, Flaubert's era had borne the mark of the Bastille. "Hatte man hier keine Bastille gestürmt? Dies war die erfolgreiche Revolution ... Man tanzte züchtig". The author feels such a deep emotional alienation from the proceedings that when dancing he intuits: "Sie tanzte nicht mit mir; sie tanzte mit Deutschland". In Sotschi, "Eros besuchte den Strand nicht", the health resort is described as a "Stalingrad der Erholung, ... eine geplante Landschaft, eine geplante Natur, geplante Stille" (N.R. 219). On the beaches the writer feels the weight of an abstract consciousness invading behaviour: "Weib war hier Weib, war eine Gattung, zur Mutterschaft befähigt, nicht mehr". In Saratow placards show irate mother-figures, "sie trugen Diplomingenieurs-Gattinnen-Pelze

und hatten Schafsgesichter" (N.R. 207), concerned that their sons are taking to Rock and Roll. In Moscow satire turns to elegy as the streets and main thoroughfares present 'eine Wüste der Lieblosigkeit', a uniformity of goods and shops and foodstuffs combining with a paucity of restaurants and coffee-houses (N.R. 159-160). Koeppen is astonished to find himself seeking advertisements as an element of diversity, and gossip in newspapers to relieve the boredom of reading in a paper specially published for foreigners of norms of production, output levels etc. (N.R. 151). The sanatorium at Sotschi boasts of its therapeutic record in preparing people again for work; they are described as 'Kurmaschinen' (N.R. 221). There is praise for the therapy and the medical concern and free treatment; but even here the worker does not escape the 'system', "er war nicht allein mit seinem Leiden".

A village near Gorki had received the benefits of the Revolution, basic schooling, electricity, as well as radio and possibly television. Moscow University becomes a possible goal. But the ends are as important as the means, and to Koeppen the village "hätte zur Zeit der Zaren, in der Epoche der Leibeigenschaft nicht elender sein können" (N.R. 199). The boats moored here on the Wolga are called 'Duschegubka' - 'Verloren ist meine Seele'. Acceptable, contemporary Russian artists paint the burgher idyll - already passé in the 1880's, only revived by Hitler (a most significant aside), - "sie zeigten, wie das Sowjetvolk sich sah oder sich sehen sollte, verklärt, fröhlich, sauber, brav, sittsam, der Arbeit, dem Plan, dem Aufbau, dem Vaterland hingegeben ..." (N.R. 238). The Moscow Underground and its anonymous throngs offer a telling contrast with Central Station and Times Square in New York. A momentary scrutiny of the descriptive imagery is revealing. The rapidity of movement is similar, the feverish endeavour to be doing or arriving somewhere. But the Moscow scene is more like that in a satirical epic of Chaplin, or an Expressionist drama:

... Hunderttausende schienen unterwegs zu sein ... als kämen sie aus einer Fabrik, in der sie arbeiteten oder hergestellt wurden, eine Gleichheit fiel auf, viele gute Gesichter ... unverbrauchte Gestalten, aber ihr Ausdruck und ihr Wesen schienen mir von einem höheren Willen geprägt zu sein, vielleicht war es Idealismus oder ein Kantscher Imperativ, nach dem sie leben, sie wirkten gar nicht östlich-mythisch, gar nicht slawisch, weder Rassen von Dostojevskij noch von Gogol ... sie erschienen mir nüchtern, klar, überaus diszipliniert und allzu vernünftig, sie waren altpreussische Traumgestalten, selbstlose Staatsdiener, Münzen in eines Mächtigen Hand, der Kirgise aus der Steppe und ein blonder Mann aus Leningrad sahen einander ähnlich. (N.R. 151-152).

(my underlining)

A heavy price seems to be paid for the otherwise commendable feature that generals travel on foot and dine on equal terms with factory hands ('hands' being appropriately abstract, but that is not peculiar merely to a communist state). And the Slavophil would readily appreciate the damage wrought by the paradoxically Westernising techniques and rationalisations which have accomplished the above scene - and which here have eliminated the Western colour and diversity to be seen in Manhattan. We know how Koeppen is both nauseated and fascinated by certain recurring motifs in this Western metropolitan ambience. Metaphors of labyrinths and vacuum-cleaners abound ("Die offenen Portale von Rockefeller Center waren wie das Maul eines riesigen Staubsaugers; sie saugten die Passanten wie Treibsand ein". Amf. 28) to highlight the size and monolithic aspect of moving crowds, as in any concentrated mass-society. In the Under-ground, the confined space, the situation is analogous to Moscow's: "Nach dem Passieren des Zählkreuzes verlor ich die Willensfreiheit. Ich war Teil eines Teiges geworden, der zäh, doch unaufhaltsam durch den Schacht floss" (Amf. 63). But in the centre of New York colour, diversity, the freedom to maintain some appearance of individual or national identity, the sheer variety of teeming life, the preservation of minority communal cohesion (despite their provincial aspect - another ambiguity), the very variety of forms of materialistic indulgence (pace the Marcusean critique which is not invalidated either) - these enrich

the texture of the social fabric whatever the intellectual's qualifications of it. Beggars babble in many tongues. The frontiers are open - unlike Moscow's - for the importation and distribution (after processing) in Times Square of the world's "Furcht, (die) Torheit und (das) Unglück". It is a different structure of social being which diminishes the individual; the mechanisation is if anything magnified because of the sheer immensity of the operation: "die mechanisierten und doch gargantualischen Abfütterungsstätten, die metallglitzernden Massentränken. Zitruswälder, Gerstenmeere, Branntweinteiche, Viehherden wurden verschlungen" (Amf. 64). Here we have the kernel of the artist's ambivalent response to the gigantic Western metropolis - or megalopolis; the hordes participate in a prodigious, collective animal process, the less refined feeding troughs provide "etwas chemisch Notwendiges, vom Stoffwechsel und der Erhaltung der Kraft her Bedingtes" (Amf. 51), typists queue "um aufgetankt zu werden". Koeppen's fascination for New York's pluralistic gaiety is qualified by the summary statement: "Das Getriebe der Massengesellschaft funktionierte reibungslos" (Amf. 51). Koeppen's revulsion here is no less marked than it was when it was projected on to his earlier intellectual anti-heroes; it only appears more muted as it hides behind the mask of more 'objective' narrative reportage - the general tenor of the travel-books. But in this Western 'Getriebe' a superficial 'bunte Freiheit' (Amf. 64) dazzles the eye, and a revelling in the delights of the senses on all levels obtains - here it is the desired escape from the 'Kontrolluhr der Betriebe' which, such is the work-pleasure dichotomy in Western technological society, provides no grounds for a Stalingrad type of celebration.

It is significant that Koeppen's happiest moments during his stay in Russia are spent (apart from the Leningrad visit) on the Volga where he meets a variety of individuals who seem temporarily divorced from the geometrically precise gardens and parks, the immaculately clean pathways.

in the 'Kulturpark', the Botanical Gardens where guests of the sanatoria "erholten sich planmässig" (N.R. 221); he enjoys conversation with elderly governesses who taught French before the Revolution - this French is now dead, and cannot cope with new technical achievements (N.R. 191), or with the cook on the boat who almost shares the author's own apocalyptic fears; he enjoys the individualist from Iran, the 'last capitalist' in Kostroma, a shoeshiner who belonged to no co-operative, "er war sein eigener Herr" (N.R. 190), with his human King Lear-like story of filial maltreatment. He appreciates the withdrawal of artists such as Pasternak to the rural surrounds of the capital (a different 'Wald' again, with a different history from the German 'Wald'), the flight from urbanism, the "Wegzug aus dem Bezirk der Macht" (N.R. 165). He enjoys the talk with the writer Simonow because it omits all reference to literature, socialist realism, literary prizes, the interlocutor's journal 'Nowy Mir', his defence of prohibited books, his own publications (unlike Andersch's talk with Antonioni), and is mainly concerned with his visit to Ceylon's primeval forests and the spectacle of the Himalayas (N.R. 230). It is the Russian forest that preoccupies Enze, the brilliant sculptor, disdaining or failing to understand the Lenin Prize and the battery of photographers - what has art to do with fame or the populace? - "ärmlich gekleidet, mürrisch, gestört, nach Schnaps und nach Alter und nach Schlaflosigkeit und langer Wanderschaft riechend" (N.R. 241). He sculpts in wood uncanny and disturbing forest figures, a magic forest is created in the cellar-studio of a prosaic Moscow apartment block, it has a haunting primeval brutality, "ekstatisch, leidenschaftlich, urbildlich, verworren", a touch of the demented, 'russisch-genial', unrelated to the pedestrian realism of the Kleinbürger. These discrete fragments of experience are warm human touches amidst expanses of desolation and whole (psychological) areas of abstract living. A fifteen minute visit to the church, now a museum, castle and coffin of Ivan the Terrible's

son in the town of Uglitsch (N.R. 186), - the son murdered by Boris Godunow - means more to Koeppen than all the effigies of a twentieth century Lenin and his like, the new erections in the town, for these are more unreal than churches saturated with the blood of history. In such bloody history there is the human drama he still seeks behind collectivisation, five-year plans and what he interprets as socialist realism. The writer who consistently rants against silent heavens and once pondered, "Vielleicht ist die Welt ein grausamer und dummer Zufall Gottes" (T.G. 176), is here drawn to the ecclesiastical anachronisms. In the Moscow church are mainly the old, the poor, the shabby-looking; even the few young belong to the most sacred of categories, the 'Aussenseiter der Gesellschaft', resembling early Christians, 'unbürgerlich und aufregend' (N.R. 246). For in this context only the ecclesia, or a lone avantgardist would be concerned with the nineteenth century novelist's problems - outlawed by the literary establishment in Moscow - "Fragen der Einsamkeit des Menschen, sein Alleinsein in der Menge, ... das sexuelle Verhalten des einzelnen, dunkle und abseitige Triebe ... die Tiefen, das Verhängnis des Daseins" (N.R. 169), questions unrelated to particular social orders, interpreted by Koeppen as perennial issues of the naked, irreducible self. Hence his concern that this materialistic idealism, and idealistic materialism, this vaunted collective 'Selbstlosigkeit' betrays also a fatalist's unconcern with individual destiny, "eine Gleichgültigkeit gegen das Glück des einzelnen" (N.R. 227). The naked man, the naked truth, the basic nakedness of man amid the trappings of civilisation, these form the centre of the writer's attention; where and when the trappings differ, the fate and condition of this nakedness differs. In the surrounds of Salt Lake City, as the 'California Zephyr' speeds towards Chicago, the traveller feels the unreality of men and things, the spectrality of the train itself, when seen against the salt earth, the aridity, thirst and death. A recurring term in the

'reporting' of the journeys is 'Einsamkeit'. It is a subject in itself; there is a Spanish kind, an American variant, it is in the streets of Amsterdam. This student of the city is even driven to observe:

"Amerika war kein Land der Massen. Es war ein Land der Einsamkeit" (Amf. 148)

- it is of course both, the two being interrelated in the Riesman sense, but here it refers also to the immense uninhabited expanses of America.

We have had earlier instances of the meaning for Koeppen of 'Sauberkeit', and the antiseptic imagery of smooth-running functionalism is much in evidence on the Russian journey. The heavy repetition marks the artist's uncontrollable repugnance at the assault on the free, wayward spirit of man: "Stalingrad ist aufgebaut ... Saubere und breite Strassen, saubere grosse Plätze, saubere, grosszügige Grünflächen, saubere, helle Springbrunnen, saubere, hohe Häuser, saubere, eintönige Fassaden, saubere, immer aufgeräumte und immer menschenleere Balkone" (N.R. 212). And the consequences of this hygienic creation: "Eine geplante Stadt. Eine unheimliche Stadt. Eine Millionenstadt und doch tot. Ein Ort des imponierendsten Lebenswillens und doch traurig". The suppression of the utilisation of creative, human energies, as (say) in Franco's Spain, is one thing, the unvarying and comprehensive direction of these energies is an equal anathema; it is part of the author's picture of the universal human condition, the ambiguities which qualify axiomatic notions of social meliorism. Theodore Roszak, seeking for the point "where the wasteland ends", would seem to support the general tenor of Koeppen's elegy: "It is Chairman Mao who, instead of socialising the long-restricted wisdom of his people's heritage, crowds it out of awareness with the cult of industrial discipline and the crude mystique of the dynamo"¹¹⁰. It is against this discipline that Koeppen evokes an antithetical dream, having heard of the legend of the Holy Mountain; he dreams of an oasis with "eine verfallene, alte schmutzige Hütte, ich sah in der alten, schmutzigen Hütte einen alten, schmutzigen Tscherkessen

an einem schmutzigen, rauchenden Herd in schmutzigen, verbeulten Pfannen köstliche Gerichte braten" (N.R. 223). The reality turns out to be an Intourist temple with the ubiquitous petty bourgeois ritual and decorum. The Prometheus of the dream had become the mayor of a perfectly organised health resort. Some of the author's final words on this planned society speak of a technological, moon-seeking paradise intellectually in quarantine, with frontiers closed to contamination, "behütet vor neuem Wind, vor der Unruhe der Geister rings um seine Grenzen" (N.R. 239).

What of the unplanned society, its unplanned and therefore all the more hectic and voracious materialism? As Keetenheuve saw, the dollar, the enslaving dollar allegedly buys freedom, it buys people, it buys countries and sells the American way of life - this new invading culture is summarised in a lengthy paratactic sentence expressly designed to illustrate the rich, dangerous, fragmented, and fascinating character of this culture (Amf. 5-7). The democratisation process spells freedom for all to buy and sell more goods from and to more people; with arresting simplicity Koeppen points to the ambivalence of the situation - "Welche Sprache du auch sprichst, und sei es keine, der Dollar reiht dich ein, macht dich gleich" (Amf. 41). Fraudulence and dishonesty are still the rules of the game - in Piräus, the harbour in Athens, young urchins bring their wares across the water knowing they will be cheated, "sie fügen sich wie ihre Ahnen, unsere Urahnen in den unehrlichen Lauf der Welt"^{lll} - the game is now standardised as well as universalised, and the scope for exploiting the rules more magnified. In London, Paris or New York the cash-nexus is more than ever the alienating process it had already become in the earlier stages of our industrialised culture, but it extends now to all races and classes, the two societal divisions in those earlier stages; "die gleichberechtigte Rasse der Käufer war ... bereit, hofiert und betrogen zu werden". The white assistant in the Madison Square stores selects shoes for 'die weisse Miss, die schwarze

lady, die gelbe Schwester' (one recalls the bored assistant in Moscow who declines to offer more than one pair of shoes to any customer for selection. N.R. 180). Certain subsidiary rules of the game take time to change; in Harlem the goods are shabbier, more expensive, customers and assistants negro, but shop-owners are white, and the window models are white. And the superficial, momentary fascination of the displays palls. We live in one world, but its parts are becoming more like each other, when mass-production becomes greater mass-production, and 'Palmolive bleibt Palmolive'.

Amidst this feverish materialism there is, implicitly, a corresponding spiritual impoverishment. There is a problem here of size, of sheer immensity, of the fact that cultural and spiritual experience is sold on the same level and as part of the same profit-oriented process as any other material goods. (In "Angst" the Encyclopaedia Britannica is sold on this basis; the author mocks in this case both the product itself and its inability to solve the world's problems, as well as the way it is sold; the way it is sold is a pointer to the fact that it and the Enlightenment it represents - the salesman is seen as a somewhat disenchanting representative of D'Alembert, with a Ph.D. and a diploma in theology! - have failed in their civilising task, "er bot die Welt auf Raten an", God's creation and plan "unverbindlich in vierundzwanzig Bänden"¹¹²). There is a problem of individual identity, of that to which a relationship can be established apart from the consumption of materials. There are problems of controlling the size - which in Koeppen's apocalyptic fears and premonitions becomes an impossibility (this is another key element in his conception of the 'absurd'). This is naturally not peculiar to American society, but the latter is accepted as the paradigmatic prototype of mass urban constellations where such problems become acute. (A recent press-article describes the vulnerability of New York, this 'supernova of a city': "Its human ecosystem is as defence-

less against the marauding catastrophes of nature and man as a coral reef is against preying starfish or a beehive against a blast of DDT¹¹³. The beehive adds weight here as it is Koeppen's own repeated metaphor). And the imagery of juxtaposition and association speaks of the aesthetic alienation, if not actual danger and threat, which this jungle activity and mass indulgence inspire. An Expressionist nightmare combines with Düreresque evocations: "Ein Leuchtfeuer strich wie die ausgestreckte Hand des Todes über die Stadt hin" (Amf. 35). Sounds of music, voices, of 'Begattungen' in parks and automobiles are heard against skyscrapers shining like gigantic, illuminated trees or towering like dark, gigantic rocks. Lobsters engage in a death-combat, "In ihren dunklen Panzern glichen sie von Dürer gezeichneten Rittern", the non-survivor presumably to be devoured by the "immer gierige, immer durstige Münder" of humans equally and precariously engaged in the battle for survival, prestige, wealth or whatever. The animal associations - ants, the beehive, honeycombs, lobsters, reveal the shallowness of man's civilised pretensions. And of this religion, the religion of materialism, the worship of Mammon, there are few non-adherents. The secular towers and skyscrapers, - with offices described by Lewis Mumford as "vertical human filing cases, with uniform windows, uniform façades"¹¹⁴ - are the new cathedrals which twentieth century Fausts¹¹⁵ have erected. Wall Street begins with a traditional church and cemetery, symbols of where it all ends, whatever gods are worshipped. The girls in the New York Stock Exchange are the Vestal Virgins of high finance (Amf. 49), teaching visiting children the secrets of how to become a Vanderbilt, the magic, uncanny world of the telex tape and the share market, the entry to the new Garden of Eden - "Das Paradies hiess Stock Exchange". The girls listen 'andächtig wie in der Kirche'. In Chicago the stores-king Marshall Field is offering to the negro population fair shares and equal rights to all things in the form of "das Evangelium der Pelze und der Unterhosen" (Amf. 241). The secularisation process takes in the agent of mobility and speed, the

train becomes the 'feste Burg', as also do the Cadillacs driven by Hollywood stars (Amf. 170), God now becoming a paragon of air-conditioned comfort, not protecting the individual from temptation, but rather enticing him into it. In Los Angeles one stands in awe before the altar-like offices of an Oil Company, "den dividendentragenden heiligen Schrein ... Goldene Linien strebten gotisch fromm in die Höhe" (Amf. 150). Other social philosophers and economists have discerned the true nature and religiosity of this socio-economic development and its sacerdotal aura; J.K. Galbraith discusses national and multinational corporations: "The corporate people are the new and universal priesthood - those who serve not the universal church, but the universal corporation. Their religion is business success, their test of virtue is growth and profit, their Bible is the computer print-out, their communion benches the committee room. Alcohol is under interdict as an intoxicant, but useful as an instrument of ... persuasion. Recreation is for regeneration of the business spirit. Sex is for better sleep. The Jesuits of this austere faith are the graduates of the modern business school"¹¹⁶.

Mammon is all-powerful, but not omniscient and by no means 'God only wise'; this God is a demon, wayward and unpredictable. In Wall Street "wird das Rad gedreht, hier wird die Welt beherrscht, hier liegt die Entscheidung über Krieg und Frieden, über Leben und Tod ..." (Amf. 47). The mocking voice of the newspaper-vendor shouting 'Depression' gives the lie to the wisdom of the Vestal Virgins. But the whole menacing abstractness and uncontrollability of the gigantic economic machinery becomes palpable here; a summary indictment of the continuing 'Absonderung der Geschäfte' (Schiller's phrase) when some of the 'Geschäfte' consist of utilising and purveying that alienating commodity, money, which others across the globe have earned by toil and sweat. Marx's apostrophes come to mind: "The power (i.e. of money) to confuse and invert all human and natural qualities ... resides in its essence as the

alienated and exteriorised species-life of men"¹¹⁷. The Corn Exchange in Chicago operates as a high temple of business activity and speculation, it is the centre of "einer unheimlichen, anonymen, das Leben verteuernenden, Not und Krieg bringenden Weltherrschaft" (Amf. 225). These pregnant phrases with their import for abstract, unknown masses relate to a mode of business conduct in which both product and purchasing currency are invisible, speculation concerns harvests not yet sown - what could be less 'ursprünglich', less immediate and personal than this relationship with a product? "Das eigentliche Geschehen blieb unsichtbar, die Macht anonym" (Amf. 226). Abstract or not, Mammon triumphs. With playful yet resigned irony we are shown the stockbrokers gazing intent at a television broadcast of a burial mass for a Cardinal in Chicago. Church bells ring out as people hasten to drugstores and restaurants. The situation is reminiscent of Munich, though here the heavy satire has a bitter tone, with bells resounding over the Viktualienmarkt when a pope dies, a "den Bauch nicht vergessende Frömmigkeit"¹¹⁸; here we learn Chicago is 'keine unfromme Stadt'! Whatever the stifling piety in Salt Lake City, we know that Zionsbank has the last word.

One cannot overestimate the importance of size and its consequences in conservative critiques of mass society, for this feature relates integrally to both the abstract nature of living and human intercourse, as seen above, and also to man's diminishing ability to control operations in which he is engaged or of which he is the victim. There is also the psychological effect of being surrounded by gigantic, overpowering buildings and institutions. All these phenomena attend Koeppen's journey through New York. Mass technological society, planned or unplanned, alienates the intellectual artist by this remoteness and all-inclusiveness from which he cannot escape and yet to which he cannot relate. (Norman Mailer relates modern architecture to what he calls the "totalitarian geist, enormous power without detail, commitment, curiosity, mystery ...

every large building ... represents the social process that made all that possible"¹¹⁹.) The ascending of the Empire State Building causes Cologne Cathedral to shrink. From the summit Manhattan is dwarfed, grassed areas resemble 'Gebetsteppiche', ocean liners toys, traffic highways the veins and arteries on a diagram of the blood's circulation - and then an astute insight, a postcard is scribbled to bring the known world nearer to one, such is "das tief Unheimliche dieser Höhenschau, die Ahnung, das Vergängliche im Gigantischen gesehen zu haben" (Amf. 39-40). Frequent references are made to Nature's fundamental hostility to man, which becomes especially palpable in the enormous open spatial extensities in the American continent. A train-ride across the Rockies and the Sierras reveals another size and immensity, fraught with other dangers, and which contain their own 'Einsamkeit' and impenetrability; Koeppen marvels at and also feels daunted by this "Grösse ... Leere ... Einsamkeit ... Gegensätzlichkeit ... unmenschlichen Erhabenheit und natürlichen Masslosigkeit" (Amf. 141). In another context, the antithetical urban, he suddenly senses man's impotence in the face of the enormous odds of technological power; surrounded by police sirens in a Chicago street, with simulated war in the skies (an air display), he feels "ohnmächtig, ich konnte der Entwicklung nicht in den Arm fallen. Der Mensch hatte es nie gekonnt. Er war ein Verurteilter von Anfang an ..." (Amf. 232). And in another context still, technology provides spurious comfort against mighty, natural elements which may ravage the untamed continent - the very size makes blizzards and tornados all the mightier. This becomes the origin of the 'Main Street', visible at intervals on the way to Washington, the supermarket community develops seeking protection in the "trägerischen Sicherheit unseres technischen Jahrhunderts" (Amf. 71). Both in the large conurbations and the prairies man is naked and vulnerable. The untranslatable 'Einsamkeit' is part of this vulnerability; what the author calls 'die besondere amerikanische Einsamkeit' is not

merely the kind which seeks the striptease sideshow for its alleviation, though that is included, it is not merely the urban disease, "Die Stadt focht ihren verzweifelten Kampf gegen die Einsamkeit" (Amf. 36), for which television baseball becomes the recurring and temporary panacea in bars and hotel bedrooms, Baudelaire's "Multitude, solitude: termes égaux et convertibles ..." ¹²⁰, it is also an overpowering sense of isolation in large tracts of open, deserted country (as on the journey to New Orleans, Amf. 110-112) which produces the 'Drive-in' cinema and motel, the prefabricated, mass-produced 'Main Street'. It also engenders the hectic activity and mobility, the avid indulgence we have already noted, as though, in the author's words, "Man führte ein Schauspiel vom Glücklichsein auf" (Amf. 30). Perhaps too the constant attendance of the author's daunting teleological imagery, such as directions to the nuclear air raid shelter to be found in large, busy stores is a reminder of the importance of enjoying the here and now, and also of man's vulnerability and impotence in the face of remote decision-making institutions where figures drop bombs and discuss trade output as part of the same day's work. This is for the author a contemporary intensification of man's traditional, historical impotence to control events, win or decide wars and the eternal conflict of history - the mocking memorials to the fallen in battle, to peace or victory not only portray the wastage of humans, but also man's fallibility to plan or direct history: "Wie viele bissen ins Gras, und die Verhältnisse regelten sich nach ihren eigenen unkontrollierbaren Gesetzen" (R.F. 255), a response to the Arc de Triomphe, and whilst the International Court at The Hague adjudicates on minor squabbles between nations, "die grossen Katastrophen gehen ihre eigenen Wege" (N.R. 115).

The domination and exploitation of man by man which is one of the unifying threads in an otherwise meaningless continuum of events called history, is the subject of commentary wherever the travel-books take us -

Rome's clerical monstrosities, Spain's fascist religion and its scandalous treatment even today of young females (N.R.52), the Catholic bigotry of the church of Saint-Sulpice which is part of France's own lengthy 'unbewältigte Vergangenheit' (R.F. 241), the life-denying and 'Geist'-denying ethos of Salt Lake City, the work-ethic of Stalingrad, the expulsion of Jews from Toledo, and - here we return to the American scene - the doctrine of white supremacy. Contracts between the European powers for the despatch and use of black slaves form part of the undivine purpose of history and are recorded in a moderate, subdued tone which stresses the tragedy, meaninglessness and waste of it all (Amf. 112); brief, bitter, elegiac, the story, "ein Alpdruck der Enkel geworden", carries the sins of the fathers to the future. The picture in the South is presented simplistically - when the artist dreams, man is in his nakedness; two bars facing each other across a street, differently coloured humans drink the same drink separately (Amf. 128). In the north, in Harlem, history finally dictated a different structure - a typical elderly American woman plays a church harmonium, a Negro woman in a Negro church in a Negro community - there is both a kind of integration here as well as a communal distinctiveness (Amf. 55). There are rich and poor Negroes, and Negroes who exploit Negroes - which makes them all the more "Menschen wie du und ich". Koeppen feels shame when he is thanked for honouring the black community with his visit. "Der kleine weisse Mann" rules New Orleans, "Es herrschte Gerechtigkeit und Gott wohlgefällige Sitte" (Amf. 120) according to him. The author's view of the situation is pictorially concretised in the contrasting presentation of two schools, a Louise S. McGehee school for girls in a wealthy district of New Orleans and a negro school by the station. The first is a white mansion, built according to the standards of the Ecole des beaux arts, iron hooves and tennis balls are heard; items in the passage need to be quoted for the contrast to be savoured and understood:

the balls and the hooves are "langsam, nicht schnell in ein Spielfeld geworfen, und ich sah unter Palmen und unter mit grünen Schleiern behangenen Paradiesbäumen auf teppichgleichen Rasenflächen sehr hübsche, sehr träge, sehr schön geschminkte und gänzlich blütengleiche Mädchen in Liegestühlen lernend ruhen, das Schulbuch lässig ... in der von keiner Arbeit geschändeten Hand" (Amf. 135). Their being so well-born enables these inheritors of the fruits of slave-work on the cotton and sugar plantations to appear cool and composed in the hot midday sun. The second school, in a street of proud and defiant black citizens, has a bare courtyard, a surrounding brick wall, "ich sah schwarze Kinder mit Lehrbüchern, die sie fest im Arm hielten, und andere wie Staub im Staube kriechen, und Läden voll Schund, und Kneipen der düstersten Räusche". He saw black taxi-drivers who were forbidden to drive him, a negress sitting in view of a car-cemetery, aping her white counterpart with a flower-hat and 'räudig wirkenden' mink stole.

'Progress' has brought the freedom which the North accords, it will eventually rightly destroy the 'intakte Welt von gestern' (echoes of 'die heile Welt') which certain Negro servants still inhabit in (say) Tennessee Williams' 'Garden District', "sie waren wohl gar Hinterlassenschaft, dem Sohn, der Tochter wie ein Ding vermacht" (Amf. 133).

But it has also brought a depreciation of Jazz, Basin Street is already covered with petrol-filling stations, "Dass muss damals eine fröhliche Gotteswelt gewesen sein trotz aller Armut und allen Unrechts" (Amf. 125).

And on the Mississippi a decline in the intensity of living is in evidence to match the examples of decline we discussed earlier; the nineteenth century American adventure of pirates, slavery, plantations, has degenerated to steamer trips with human cargoes of "unleidenschaftlicher Liebe, gefahrlos nachempfunderer Abenteuer, bürgerlicher, touristischer Routinelust ..." (Amf. 122). Some of Koeppen's best and most exciting travel-pages, breathless in style (the single sentence

extending over three pages) and content, brings alive the days of conquest and discovery, the dangers from man and nature encountered between California and Chicago, over parched earth, death valleys, deep canyons and high ridges; the author admires what we do not and could not emulate, relishing vicariously the former traveller and huntsman's crossing of continents and frontiers, or even the absence of frontiers; the air reeks "nach Freiheit, nach Mut, nach Unabhängigkeit", of valleys of lawlessness; 'rivers of gold and death' is immediately followed by "es gab eine Austernsuppe zu Abend, Martini Extra Dry, eisgekühlte Früchte ... sanft schaukelte das Bett auf federndem Stahl, die Schlacht am Roten Berge" (Amf. 206-207). The parataxis brings home to us our present loss of mystery and personal adventure, our enfeeblement by material comforts.

The woman in the hat and mink stole above points to the saddest decline in American society, one of the most lamentable aspects of the American capitalist brand of materialism. Having seen the most abysmal dereliction in the negro quarter in Chicago, he views the opposite arriviste professional negroes not far from the slums. Negroes adopt white manners, appear on advertisements with the white man's whisky, "Ebony" is the counterpart to "Life", advocating the unreserved acceptance of white bourgeois mores, of white man's capitalism, his materialism, his television, art, tastes etc., yet remaining in the ghetto of social apartheid. The house publishing the magazine is a smooth-running machine, not unlike what one might meet in Moscow: "Saubere Säle, aufgeräumte Schreibtische, glatte Maschinen. Auch die Menschen waren sauber, glatt, aufgeräumt"(Amf. 244). Nothing could be farther from Basin Street. Koeppen's standpoint is clear: these negresses in the packing-room "waren der weissen Sitte angeglichen, sie waren domestiziert und hatten an Temperament verloren". Such imitation can only spell the abandonment of rich native elements, 'das Ursprüng-

liche' in negro culture, and diminishes the attainments in the battle for freedom. The chief editor sought no change in the world, his world was the American doorstep, he had no interest in Africa or Europe, or how negroes elsewhere might wish to preserve their culture. 'Ebony' was edited by the true black conformist.

Mammon triumphs even if not specifically worshipped. Nobody enjoys more than the author the sight of libraries such as those on the university campus in Berkeley; the alliance of wealth and intellect is always an ambiguous phenomenon, whether financial support derives from public or private sources - and here the private sources predominate. In Harvard the whole ambience reflects the ambiguity on a typically American prodigious scale; Shakespeare first editions speak of the "Verwandlung von Geld in Geist". But the spectacle of graduates returning to Alma Mater laden with the spoils of social and professional careerism indicates how prone Geist is to be "in Geld zurückverwandelt" (Amf. 263). The diluted irony is even more diluted by the musing, "Vielleicht war der Kreislauf gesund", and the reader is left with the ambiguity. Here there is no specific allusion to the necessity for 'Geist' and 'Geld' to remain in separate territories or for the former to exert its power over the latter. But we know of Koeppen's concern that Geist should not be subordinated to vested interests and worldly power - in "Angst" Kaplan is fearful that his successful academic son has already 'sold out' to the Establishment, "Die Macht meines mächtigen Sohnes ist von den Zwängen geborgt"¹²¹. In a fragmented culture such as ours the range of ambiguity in which the intellectual is involved is considerably extended. Saul Bellow comments: "There's hardly anything that can be invented by any American rebel which won't be incorporated into the general cultural effort of the country and be richly rewarded; it's one of the paradoxes of American life"¹²². He observes that the new middle class of bureaucrats, the scientific groups and administrators

need to be entertained - the intellectuals provide "a certain degree of seriousness. But it's not the sort of seriousness that has any sort of applicability socially". Karl Korn's lament has a more universal ring: he speaks of "eine Aufsaugung aller unabhängigen Elemente, aller intelligenten 'Aussenseiter der Gesellschaft' durch die kommerzielle und politische Bürokratie"¹²³. For Koeppen Geist cannot be heteronomous, and certainly not in this way. With all this wealth, - because of it? - the campuses he visited did not produce a Socrates of any kind; and the Professor who wanted to study in Munich, was interested in Geibel and Heyse. What this wealth does produce - and on the campuses also - is Billy Graham.

For in this society religion becomes another business, the worship of capital means the salvation of body and spirit is likewise purchasable, religion becomes a commodity to be bought and sold, like sex and any other consumer-product. This is for Koeppen the final self-degradation of this matter- and technology-oriented society. Graham has Public Relations agents, adapts his message and style according to the 'consumer', he sells insurance on behalf of the Bible-Shareholding Company, a polished image and handsome suits increase the number of 'sales' to the unconverted, religion is a "nach kaufmännischen Gesichtspunkten rationalisierten Unternehmen" (Amf. 195). And of course - like the bought intellectual, the state-owned scientist in his laboratory, this religionist ensures, in Saul Bellow's words above, that there will be no "applicability socially". More positively, Graham sometimes appears as a hysterical, demonic figure reminiscent of fascist demagoguery; listening to this business executive, Koeppen feels he is listening to a probable 'künftigen, amerikanischen Hitler'. Technology is the means and the instrument of the present-day tyrant and dictator. The connection with Forest Lawns - Evelyn Waugh did not exaggerate, we are told - is immediate. Here immortality is sold, with all the aids of technology,

to the highest bidder. The businessman becomes God's emissary, the camel and the needle's eye are dismissed as superstition; "die Gräber waren ausschliesslich für Kapitalisten bestimmt" (Amf. 176). The insurance offices which evaluate our mortal lives on their sliding scales of life and death (R.F. 12), are now surpassed by a financial grading of man's immortal state. The vulgarity, philosophical and aesthetic, of Forest Lawns can only appeal to those whose lives are entirely emptied of spiritual content or satisfaction. Koeppen is exhausted by Cathedral Drive, the Mountain of Remembrance, the Hill of Meditation, the Whispering Glades, the Flowers of Eternal Love, the River of Fidelity, Vesperland, Dreamland and whatever, appalled by the transportation to this show-place of simulations of Leonardo's 'The Last Supper' - the painting becomes a film transparency synchronised with commercialised heavenly choruses and other abstract, technical aids. The intensively beautified corpses may hear Mozart and Bach for up to two hundred years if relatives pay now by large instalments. Only a society which produces living symbols of our shadow-consciousness, 'Schattenbilder', like those created by the neighbouring dream-factory of Hollywood, can tolerate the perversions of an artificial Gethsemane (Amf. 154), a masquerade hiding a profiteering enterprise. The dreams are part of a gigantic Disneyland, in which amply rewarded finance companies transport people from the true realities of everyday life into false, expensively simulated 'Kulissen', into comforting associations with death, venal inspirations and meditations which all stem from the same longing: "einem Fluchtversuch aus der Zeit, dem Unbehagen der Stunde, beklemmender, unerträglicher Todesfurcht und dem verzweifelten Verlangen nach bürgerlicher Dauer, nach einer Seligkeit und Ewigkeit in den gewohnten Kleidern und dem vertrauten Mobiliar" (Amf. 180). For the true realities, as opposed to the 'Kulissen' (an antithesis Koeppen used in connection with the 'cheese-episode') are contraposed here also:

the neighbouring ocean coastline, Japanese drinking green tea in their own, unsimulated restaurants, poor Mexicans taking their children to Communion who are "für ein armes Leben Christus vermählt" (Amf. 181), the boring towers of the oil companies in Los Angeles, and the nearby desert where lethal weapons are tested. Here is authentic naturalism instead of spurious and comforting fabrications - there is no perversion about this Christ-figure of the Mexicans, whatever one's theology. Contrasting also with the monstrous burial spectacle above, one might quote Paris's renowned cemetery at Père-Lachaise. "Die Stadt hat Totenstrassen, Totenalleen, Totenhäuser" (R.F. 276). And though the local undertakers prosper with their byproducts, a minor provincial capitalism at work, there is here a natural acceptance of death, a chaotic disorder and diversity, a personal simplicity or a personal grandeur surrounding the remains of the celebrated artists and outcasts - "Colette liegt unter einem blanken Leichenstein, sehr würdig, sehr schmucklos: 'Ici repose Colette'". This burial ground belongs to a past culture, as much as do the Dôme and the Coupole some of whose former habitués now reside here - standardised cremation belongs to the technological era, and Père-Lachaise is indeed a symbol of why Paris was the only city which even after the war Koeppen could still cherish.

The picture he draws of the rest of France reveals in general an intense alienation from a provincial society decaying in a state of mental and spiritual torpor, still living as did Balzac's sacrificial women in Balzac's provincial dwellings (R.F. 16), still rooted in unthinking prejudice, still at times in the grip of clerical authority, the old burgher idyll whose only confrontation with the styles and values of a wider, cosmopolitan society is in the form of traffic problems and the transistors and vélos the young parade in the market squares, or the strike of the postmen as in Bordeaux (R.F. 181). Occasionally the Communist flag is seen hoisted, the range of world literature is displayed

in a bookshop - but then, as in Nancy, we read "wie immer in der französischen Provinz, wirken sie wie verlorene Vorposten von Paris" (R.F. 119), and we are reminded in a town like Lyons¹²⁴ of the creative, turbulent history of protest and insurrection which are not dimmed by evidence of fêted Presidents and other Establishment figures. We meet also the spectacle of Nature itself, the beauties of rural France, of the Loire valley, and - though the murky history of Orléans and the country castles is never forgotten - these worlds, like Proust's at Illiers (R.F. 160 ff.), evoke moments and memories of quiet rapture - "Die Loire ist einfach Glück" (R.F. 166), which are contrasted with experience of urban fumes, industrial smoke and workers' dwellings hugging the factories as in Lille and the northern towns. Koeppen can best appreciate the Proustian settings, the castle of Châteaudun, through the transfiguring literature, but the two sister rivers, the Loire and the Loir, provide some of the happiest pages of the French provincial journey. The rebuilding of war-ravaged towns, as in Orléans (R.F. 164), has not happily fused the old and the new - an abortive reconstruction not peculiar to French towns. In Orléans the past wins again over the present; after idyllic streets (it is idyllic people who bore and are bored), "dann aber wird alles hässlich, ungestalteter Städtebau, eine wirre Anlage, fast ein Chaos. Allerweltspläne nicht vollendeter, höchst durchschnittlicher Reissbrettarchitektur scheinen zu gähnen" (R.F. 165). In a metropolis there are always possibilities of compensatory experience by reason of its diversity. In modern European social history the provinces become introverted communities with closed horizons. When Koeppen sees a bookshop offering Villon and Rabelais, as in Mâcon, he sees this as "ein einziges Bemühen um Klarheit und Menschlichkeit" (R.F. 54). This follows a brief description of bored youth on motor-bikes with the usual rather vacuous female accompaniment, "Auch das provinzierische Gehabe, auch die Langeweile und die

Geilheit sind international". Laforgue's Sundays are still as empty, and they may be filled with dangerous thoughts - of keeping the frontiers closed, of ridiculing the Arab - Algeria is the political theme of the French journey in and outside of Paris - or the Italian worker, of marching again behind a national Tricolore, disdaining even the best, the informal sense of a European community. Some of these dominant motifs merit illustration.

The tyranny of boredom haunts provincial environs. Though the author disdains modern 'Reissbrett' fabrications (in the Nuremburg article he imagines himself being buried in a seedy grave near the Supermarket in a 'Reissbrettsatellitenstadt'¹²⁵) he equally deplores the provincialism von Süde attacked which must rebuild on identical lines as before: "lächerlich in dem aussichtslosen Versuch, den Schrecken ... den Tod, die unbarmherzig fortschreitende Zeit zu leugnen" (R.F. 24), - a reference to the surrounds of Strassburg. And this inability to change is part of the tedium. In Colmar the repetitive procedure occurs: at sunset the streets are empty, "Sie liefen in ihre Häuser wie Mäuse in ihre Löcher" (R.F. 26). To the sound of the loudspeakers, young girls "schmorten in der Langeweile". Only newspapers indicate the possibility of 'Frühlingserwachen' scandals. Besançon, being a 'Stadt der Priester und Kirchen', will experience little change, and is not too happy about associations with Stendhal and Proudhon. And for Koeppen the ubiquity of 'poulet rôti' completes the picture, and puts in truer perspective France's gastronomic reputation. Auxonne reminds one of the sleeping community in Reinfeld in Holstein (N.R. 7), the subject of a study in its own right. "Kleine Stadt Auxonne, wie ein Schneckenhaus um die alte Kirche gelagert, ein Wehrgemäuer des Glaubens, der spitze Turm wie ein Pfeil gegen den Himmel gerichtet, sechstausend Einwohner, Schweigen" (R.F. 40). In Beaune, where a Christian hospital survives on the proceeds of the one engrossing concern, the wine-trade,

a plough rusts in a corner, "die Luft schien jahrhundertlang stehengeblieben und die fromme Zeit bewahrt zu sein. Das Mittelalter atmete ..." (R.F. 45). In Vienne a brief but savage disenchantment assails the writer; stone-masons are working on the remains of a Roman temple, but in a place where "Das Leben in den Strassen stagnierte. Man arbeitete, man ass, man trank, man schlief und starb", and metal flowers are deposited on graves, one wonders how they spend their money. The pagan temple, when illuminated at night, is the only divine image in the town, rising "aus kleinbürgerlichsten Verhältnissen, und Vienne duckte sich am Tempelplatz in den Schatten ringsum, und die Menschen duckten sich in den niedrigen Häusern, duckten sich in den engen Kammern, duckten sich selbst noch in den ererbten kleinstädtisch-bäuerlichen Betten, nicht unzufrieden mit ihrem Los, von kommunaler ... Lebenslust vortäuschen sollender Lautsprecher-musik berieselt ..." (R.F. 63). In Tarascon the social mores oppose all turbulent winds of change; only the waste-bins outside the houses indicate that there is life inside. Cave-like shops appear deserted. The town is ruled by the self-centred ambitions of old families who maintain "die Enge und Starrsinn" of provincialism, cultivating educational discipline and, significantly, "eine für die gehobene Gesellschaft von Tarascon zugeschnittene Religion" (R.F. 72). Even in Aix, with its intensely Roman past, repressive sexual codes hinder natural development. Old women dressed in black are the unflinching supernumeraries in this self-repeating provincial drama - or so they appear, but they really rule the spectacle, presiding grandmaternally in restaurants where family celebrations of (say) a First Communion are conducted - in Dôle, in Burgundy, where this occurs, we read: "Nach dem Mahl führte der Weg durch eine tote Stadt" (R.F. 38). The tedium exuded by so many of the pages of this section of the French journey fills the author with chagrin and disgust, for these communities, typical in some ways of other burgher provinces - Masuren, Russian towns, Salt Lake City, simulated revivals and transplantations in the 'New World' - are

devitalised, spiritually impoverished, not least when priestly dominion maintains its grip. Whereas in New York man plays at being happy - 'das Schauspiel vom Glücklichsein' - here one plays at not being at all. And for this writer the dangers attending the need to fill the void are incalculable, and menacing for society as a whole. In Orléans even American soldiers "schlagen ... den Sonntag tot" (R.F. 165). In Mauberge bored youth spend Sundays surveying football results or listening to de Gaulle. Well-dressed people have nowhere to go (R.F. 136). Koeppen sees this as a possible breeding ground for militarism and fascism. Idleness, passivity and the absence of, even suppression of intellectual vitality further the cause of social manipulators, propagandists and demagogues.

The recurrence of the theme shows its universality. In Chicago - hardly a provincial setting - the American Legion, 'Frontkämpfer' veterans march on parade; their emotions are mixed and confused, they were reacting to the 'eintönigen Ablauf der Tage', they liked the memory of an eventful life, of comradeship, of foreign ports and girls, thus ignoring the cost to human life (Amf. 231). The cost is ignored because of the alienating tedium at home. The bourgeois cannot see the causes of the disease and even connive further at its existence - they are glad to see the destruction in Marseilles during the war of its greatest asset, "Das alte enge, wilde, ungesunde und doch tausendundeinenachtgleiche Hafenviertel der Strandräuber, der Deserteure, der Schmuggler, der Gangster, der Bordelle, der Mischtiel aller Rassen des Mittelmeeres.." (R.F. 79). The attempt to simulate this to attract the tourist - a bourgeois concern - produces Kitsch and pastiche, bouillabaisse which is 'Allerweltsgeschmack' and so on. In Nice - on the Riviera there is the harmless boredom of the Jet-set, the 'Langeweile des angestregten Nichtstuns' (R.F. 95), the same problem as that of the soldiers in Orléans, but with money and freedom to make it all tolerable, and the less harmless of the indigenous population - the black leather jacket brigade, rightly

scorning the unreal and dull offerings of the educational system, those repelled by "der Familienenge, vom Hausvatertum, solider Lebensplanung und Heuchelei", even those disturbed by Rimbaud, Sartre and Malraux, may turn in reaction to the environment to brutality (R.F. 104). A reminder of France's fascist history, of its potential fascist present and future is provided by forts and fortresses throughout the French provinces, and Koeppen's 'Paris' section contains many references to the 'Ultras' (some are on trial for atrocities, R.F. 268) and the mental climate produced by a right-wing press and returning 'colons'. The forts at Marseille evoke associations with paratroopers, torturers and the intellectual conflict over 'La Question', questions of censorship and complicity by silence. The author's old protest against 'Zwang' and 'Macht' is heard. The atmosphere is bourgeois, apolitical, generally passive in the provinces, and therefore all the more precarious:

Aber diese Bürgerruhe, dieses sonderbare französische Biedermeier, diese geduldige Hinnahme der Entmachtung des Parlaments, das stumme Anhören der ... unlösbaren Widersprüche des Generals, der ausbleibende Protest der Volkstimme gegen das Verbot von Zeitungsartikeln ... die ganze farblose Einmütigkeit und lächerliche Kritiklosigkeit der Presse geben den zweifellos vorhandenen rechtsextremen Tendenzen in einem Teil der wollüstig Befehle erwartenden Jugend ... eine finstere Chance. Wer wird, wenn die Dämme brechen ... sich der Flut der blinden Nationalwut entgegenstemmen?

(R.F. 81)

A miniature and localised version of Koeppen's apocalypse, a reminder of the sleeping passions which - as in Reinfeld - can cause bloodshed. These emotions link with others - Fénelon's cruelty to the Protestants (R.F. 241), the executions of the Huguenots in the castle at Amboise (R.F. 169) extend to Dreyfus, to Barrès and folk-centred, peasant-oriented conceptions of the fatherland - what Erich Fromm calls "incestuous ties to clan and soil" - to Protestants saying 'lieber jüdisch als katholisch' (R.F. 242). As in Germany, the cohesive rural community becomes most dangerous when closed to notions of wider brotherhood. As we have seen in earlier chapters, the intellectual defending this brotherhood is, for Koeppen, an impotent

figure, increasingly impotent in our society - with such figures "nach Burckhardt kein Staat zu machen ist". Rimbaud seems to have had no effect on Charleville, he is good for an examination subject; the mayor is mocked for closing the museum to prevent thieving of the poet's letters which are a commercial investment. Despite the 'poète maudit' the children still experience in school "die schnell erlöschende Genialität der Kindheit" - that alienation of mind from reality which is a particular aspect of our culture. France honours its poets and artists, names streets and hotels after them; but though Voltaire lives successfully on in Paris, defended by avantgardist theatres who mock the world's money-lusts and -fears, the French idyll deceives, "Gott hat es auch in Frankreich schwer" (R.F. 216), the "hübschen Kulisse des weisen Lebensgenusses" is a rarity. The worker-priests, in Marseilles or in Paris, who freed the Church from its 'bürgerliche Gefangenschaft', have as difficult a time as God himself, most especially with the Curia.

The provincial torpor and lassitude connect with a failure of man - both in the provinces and in more exalted places which dictate to the common herd - to see, understand and cease his eternal folly and aggression. At various places throughout the French journey intolerable military music resounds; faces still wear Clemenceau's expression in 1914; bitter memories of the Somme, but also going well beyond this century, mar the hopes of peaceful communication. Memorials to the fallen seem to exalt conflict rather than lament it. War-decorations are on sale. The NATO forces are active on the soil around Verdun; "Man übt wieder den Krieg auf einem Boden, der ... mit Menschenfleisch gedüngt war" (R.F. 127). The sight of the normal everyday desolation of villages makes the 1914 war into a surrealist tragedy, and its purposes incomprehensible. "Die grosse Zahl löscht das Leid". In a sunken hollow in a certain embattlement a 'hostess from Hades' gives statistics of the slaughter. Discharged hand-grenades advertise local specialities. Schools

still educate and train for the French army - 'dachte man europäisch?' asks the author. The whole nightmare remains a lesson to what Koeppen repeatedly stresses, "die Unzulänglichkeit menschlichen Planens". This becomes part of a more comprehensive theory of history and makes the human wastage more meaningless still. Cold, bitter, controlled irony describes the river Somme: "sie war einen Spaziergang, aber sie war keine Tragödie wert" (R.F. 150). The abundance of cemetery crosses, as in Tréport, testify to a European trauma even deeper in its incisions than the next war it was meant to prevent. The weight of this, Koeppen finds, still hangs heavy over the present. The depiction of these places is rarely complete without a reference to the clicking cameras of sheep-like tourists - as on the famous hill in Stalingrad - who see war memorials as additions to the scrap-book. For most of these followers of the parrot-like guides are the same burghers as those being visited. They come with clichés, they impose clichés on that which they see, - but then they have already become clichés themselves. (One of the most withering descriptions of tourist behaviour is during the visit to Les Halles, R.F. 264, where "die zu scherenden Schafe" drink their soup and cocktails, "erschöpft von uneingestandener Langeweile"; one of the most angry attacks by the author refers to the visitors to Amsterdam and neighbouring islands. Their victims are "ein elendes Volk, das von Blinden lebt, Städte werden serviert ... durchlaufen ... man erlebt sie nicht mehr" (N.R. 96). And on the islands the inhabitants behave as if in a film spectacle, they are reduced to the status of supernumeraries in a drama of the 'eingeweckten guten alten Zeit').

Koeppen's picture of industrial and social development in the northern towns is a counterpart to the burgher idyll in the sense that conditions and urban ugliness have hardly changed since Zola and Van Gogh. The work done here is also part of the boredom. In Forbach, near Saarbrücken, workers' houses are 'enge Schlafstätten' darkened by factory

smoke, reminiscent of Krupps' 'Arbeitersiedlungen' which Keetenheuve saw rising again. Provincial sterility follows: "Alle Männer scheinen zur Schicht gefahren, alle Kinder brav in der Schule zu sein" (R.F. 115). The coal-mining and steel-producing areas around Lille are a land of 'black pyramids', the villages, blackened with age and pollution, are 'fremdes Menschenwerk'; coal heaps, the coal allowance, stand before the houses; "Die Strasse ist menschenleer. An ihrem Ende verriegelt eine Grubenpyramide die Welt". Between the mines lie cemeteries and charnel-houses. After the alienating war, this was the alienating peace to which one returned.

These then are the French variants of the theme of the burgher or the bourgeois in European culture and society, a theme which naturally extends to exported brands as in America, or is a relatively new growth as in Russia. Wherever society or the environment is moulded on this model, Koeppen feels intense alienation, senses constricting codes of behaviour, the tyranny of Mammon, a devitalised Eros, a hatred of the life instincts, an addiction to life-destroying goals, a disregard of the freedom of the spirit; the confident self-preservation of this model is for Koeppen a form of continuing self-imprisonment. The German 'Bürger' could commit few greater crimes than to transport himself to New York, and in such a freely moving, freely thinking environment preserve the misdirected, misshapen identity he once sought to escape, "deutsche Enge, deutsche Kleinstädtereie, eine trutzige nationale Muffigkeit" (Amf. 60-62), and turn 86th Street into a German nightmare. Driving with a General through Salt Lake City, Koeppen sees the American middle-class dream fulfilled - this overpious, teetotal community, (though Brigham Young had nineteen wives), immobilised by the mid-Western heat and aridity as well as by its stringent religious codes, tolerated no diversity or individualism - the children, the cats and dogs, the washed car, the houses, the music of each family "Ähnelten einander wie

zwei Schuhe eines Paars, und ich dachte, wehe dem Menschen, der sich in diese wohlsituierte, freundliche und zweifellos immer hilfsbereite Nachbarschaft nicht einfügen mag und seinen Rasen verwildern lässt" (Amf. 217). The 'bourgeois idyll' syndrome is universal, natural and perverted, and always oppressive, if not dangerous. In Holland the author surveys ambitious youth, and sees them heading for good professional jobs, "den Maschinen zu dienen", heading for the car, family, the career cachet, participating in the rites of middle-class conformism (N.R. 107). He remembers the 'Depression' days when the bankrupt threw themselves from windows "hinaus in das Nichts, in dem sie immer schon gelebt haben". Without his money, the business man was a nothing, - a notion from Expressionist days. And in Spain, where a Cardinal forbids - what power! - girl typists from working with bare arms and legs, a girl is ostracised from her code-dominated family for merely frequenting the company of a foreign salesman. One recalls Koeppen's phrase, "mitgeboren - mitgefangen". Hence the attraction of the great city, attested by the lengthy sections devoted in the travel books to Paris and New York in themselves. Though foreign workers and immigrants sometimes appear lost and uprooted in European cities, this is mainly because these smaller cosmopolitan centres have not yet adjusted to world developments as has the megalopolis. In the New York bookshops and on the Boulevard St. Michel Koeppen is confessedly 'zu Hause'. He is the alienated artist in such enormous urban societies also, but here he can at least enjoy the alienation.

CONCLUDING PHILOSOPHIC POSTSCRIPT

The multiplicity of objects, persons and phenomena seen and discussed in the travel-writings as a whole allows the author to exercise his predilection for irony, the cutting thrust of the bathetic sentence which concludes a paragraph of commentary (or an item such as the cemetery crosses at Tréport, resembling black ravens on the hill above the fishing harbour, which terminates the description of a small, closed community); or his predilection for ambiguity, the juxtaposition of contrasting if not antithetical phenomena which reflects the element of absurdity in Koeppen's apprehension of reality, or his fondness for associationism intended to highlight the universality of the human condition, weak, foolish and incorrigible as it mostly is. Questions are being tacitly asked about the meaning or the non-meaning and incoherence of the ensemble of facts and circumstances. Symbols of domination recur in widely differing situations and point to their own moral; the Escorial in Madrid resembles the Kremlin, "Beide sind Zeugnisse eines autokratischen Stils, Gleichnisse der Furcht, der Menschenverachtung, und der Berufung auf eine höhere unansprechbare Macht" (N.R. 62). The means and structures by which the autarchy is imposed vary, but as yet the relationship between ruler and ruled is in essence similar. Similar modes of indoctrination may be detected in social situations which would otherwise claim little affinity: watching public school boys on the ship 'Discovery' listening to stories of Scott and polar adventures, the author is reminded of young counterparts on the cruiser, 'Aurora', in Leningrad, absorbing stories of national glory, "auch sie trugen Uniform, und hatten das Zuchtgesicht einer Klasse", faces which boasted 'das gleiche fanatische Bekenntnis zur Elite' (N.R. 277). And in Koeppen's Weltbild these educational items do not remain harmless for the future. In New York, in Savile Row (N.R. 274), in the Avenue Montaigne, ("Nymphen einer weltweiten Verherrlichung ... Die Mühsal

wohnt im fünften Stock" (R.F. 251)), seamstresses toil, unseen, unknown, for the glamorous models and publicity shows. It is not merely in London that newspapers fail to dispel the boredom of a Sunday (they might intensify it): "die Langeweile zwischen allgemeiner Weltgefährdung, roten Monden, versagenden Raketen, und sozialen Sicherheit" (N.R. 266) - for Koeppen pension schemes¹ and journeys to the moon are both inimical to individual and social vitality, the latter of the two being the final absurdity of the meaningless charade of the earth's history², as well as being the aimless product of a technological, planned society. The poverty of the outskirts of Madrid, the Park Vittorio Emanuele in Rome, the East End of London, of Belleville and Ménilmontant in the nineteenth arrondissement (memorably described at length, R.F. 279-282), of certain small Russian communities, of Maxwell Street Market in Chicago, all attest a changeless human story and situation. A synchronic panorama of universalised circumstance bears the mocking or saddening pessimism of the author - and the mockery is a transferred mood and attitude, for it is mostly 'Schicksal' which is the tacit or confessed target, the origin of the malaise, mocking human endeavour.

Sometimes the search for a meaning or co-ordinating principle is invalidated by features which offset or relativise each other. American sailors do much to enliven the Rambla in Barcelona, "sie sprengen die Mittelmeerlandschaft bürgerlich anständiger Gemütlichkeit" (N.R. 38); but they represent at the same time the alliance with a fascist regime, and confirm rather than imperil Franco's autocracy. A conventional conservative questioning of political liberation occurs: "Afrika ist frei. Aber ist man menschlicher geworden?" (R.F. 198). The Dutch East Indies are remembered by those now repatriated who once enjoyed the tropical climate, the luxury and comfort of rulership of the islands; these are contrasted with "die neuen Greuel aus dem Reiche des rebellischen Soekarno" (N.R. 114). The author is not likely to forget the

exploitation involved in that rulership, but - like von Süde in a different context - he is not allowing the new values to pass unquestioned. There is a credit and loss account which comes from Fate's dealing a different hand of cards - even in the almost Arcadian Place Vendôme we learn that "die Gespenster sind, obwohl unsichtbar, nicht gestorben und mischen die Karten des Schicksals, die hellen und die dunklen Lose aufs neue" (R.F. 257). True jazz, it seems, is born of suffering and hardship; it has nothing to do with the life-style of the 'Ebony' magazine. (Tennessee Williams once observed: "... the struggle for me is creation ... Luxury is the wolf at the door ..." ³). The whole cause of female emancipation is fraught with dangers; the arranged marriages in Spain, the family tyranny, though it offers food and shelter, "heissen für ein Mädchen Unterwerfung, Anerkennung der alten, strengen Hierarchie des Dorfes. Es gibt keinen Ausweg, kein Entrinnen" (N.R. 50). But the professionalisation of woman's rôle in society is seen as a perversion of her naturalness, disturbing primeval natural balance; the cost of emancipation, if on these lines, is immense - witness the reaction to seeing Russian women doing heavy work (N.R. 175), and near the Gare St.Lazare, "Frauen, für Umarmungen geboren, eilten mit ernstem Berufsgesicht zur Arbeit" (Amf. 9). ⁴ A planned society will deprive man of his precious individualism, and for Koeppen "die Freiheit zu verhungern ... das ist absolut eine Freiheit" ⁵, must be preserved, and not merely for the artist. On the one hand, an unchanging human situation continues today as it always did, albeit operating in superficially different contexts: the Strand Palace in London (an item in a single sentence of two pages displaying with Erasmian irony the follies and foibles represented by a small area of the metropolis) conjures up "ein neuer Hogarth-Reigen in alter Angst vor Alter und vor Tod" (N.R. 276); the rôle of Don Quixotte in Spain retains its essential character of spiritual rebellion, of "Geist gegen die Materie, die Poesie

gegen die Prosa, das Ideal gegen die Wirklichkeit", the rôle of combatting worldly forces and that which they throughout history have relied upon, "das Übel des Schafsinnns" (N.R. 20). (There will always be target windmills; the Hotel Ritz in Paris will always be populated by representatives of ill-gotten affluence, or monarchs without a country, - it once entertained Scott Fitzgerald, Hitler probably called in there, Mammon does not worry about who worships at her shrine, so long as she is worshipped, and the Hotel will eternally celebrate the 'Union der festen Werte' (R.F. 256). The Lyons Bank, like the Zionsbank in Salt Lake City, is the real Rock of Peter: "der Crédit Lyonnais steht fest, er überdauert die Zeit, er überlebt die Glaubenskämpfe die Königskämpfe die Aufstände die Revolutionen die Unterdrückung die Diktatur die grossen Kriege die grossen Siege die grossen Niederlagen der Crédit Lyonnais stirbt nicht ... er honoriert nicht den Heldenmut des einsamen Verlorenen ..." ⁶). On the other hand, as we have seen from Die Mauer Schwankt onwards, the good and the bad elements, or whatever may be evaluated as such, are succeeded with time by, respectively, the bad and the good (where of course the bad is never the same bad, and the good is never the same good). All notions of progress are thus heavily qualified. A symbolic illustration of the credit and loss account which nullifies teleological speculation or sanguine conceptions of linear progress is provided by a typical 'development' programme in Holland:

Eine alte Landschaft war noch immer Kinderdijk und ... ein holländisches Märchen. Dreiundzwanzig hohe Windmühlen drehen sich dort an einem sanften Wasser ... Hier hätte des Müllers Kind wohnen können, das sich mit seinen Tränen so rein wusch, dass der Teufel keine Macht über es hatte, oder auch die andere Müllers-tochter, der Rumpelstilzchen das Stroh zu Gold spann. Das Panorama ist Verzauberung, das Licht Ewigkeit, das Wasser Mysterium. Der Angler konnte die Jahrhunderte zurück träumen ... Nun hat ein Konzern das alte Mühlenland gekauft ... er will mit Bulldozern die Schönheit des alten Bildes für immer zerstören. Da fand sich ... ein Don Quichotte ... (er) stand

auf, schlug Lärm und kämpft seitdem gegen die Windmühlen des Konzerns, die Schlagflügel des Geldes, der Macht, der Obrigkeit und des Fortschrittes, für die Unantastbarkeit ... der reinen Idylle. (Er) wird seinen ehrenwerten Kampf verlieren. Er wird ihn auf jeden Fall verlieren. Ein Naturschutzpark ist keine Natur mehr; zweckgebunden, eine Kraft-durch-Freude Wiese, ein Ort nach dem Unmenschwort 'Freizeitgestaltung', liegt er einkalkuliert zwischen den Fließbändern einer Zukunft, der wir nicht entgehen werden ... Aber war es Paradies? War Kinderdijk nicht auch Enge, Erstarrung, Angebundenheit, Erhaltung eines Gott wohlgefälligen und von ihm nie, nie, niemals beachteten, von protestantisch calvinistischen Predigern mit verkniffenem Mund und Kindersegen gebilligten Oben und Unten der Wohlgeborenheit und der Krippe im Gesindestall, des Standes und des Dienstes, in die man sich zu schicken hatte? Was dachte des Müllers Knecht?

(N.R. 120-122).

The dream-world of the child and the angler is destroyed in the name of commercial interests, 'progress' and collectivised entertainment; but the fairy-tale was also an illusion, serf-like bondage, buttressed by an imposed religious ethic, suppressed basic human freedoms and capacities. As we have seen, remnants of this bondage survive in provincial settings where modern planners and speculators have not yet invaded.

There are no eternal verities, only relative situations. Hopes and dreams merely change their form. When one has lost its use or validity, it is forgotten; in Nuremberg the author reacts coldly to cold church interiors, to physical and cultural features of past ages, which "liessen mich kalt an diesem kalten Mittag. Ich ging zu Woolworth hinein ... dort war es warm, dort waren Gläubige". A pop singer screams "ALLE TRÄUME WERDEN WAHR"⁷. It is not merely that a cold, irretrievable past has lost its function and leaves schoolchildren equally cold, but the monotonous 'Kaufhof' and the inflated bogus pop star offer a terrestrial paradise which is just as illusory and probably less effective than preceding ones. Two temples of spiritual and material gratification will both fail to change man or the world.

As at Forest Lawns, the dream is to thwart death and decay - the original builder of the Lorenzkirche had sought salvation "vor dem Tod, vor der Endlichkeit, vor der schrecklichen Verwesung ..." ⁸

Women waiting near Barcelona Cathedral wait as women do in the queue for the bakery: "Auf welches Brot warten sie?" (N.R. 38). The cathedral becomes a "Schlaraffenturm für Beter" - the Epicurean religiosity described by Büchner's Danton. In a church in Moscow, "Die Armen gaben Rubelscheine. Lenin lächelte, und Hammer und Sichel schwebten hoffnungsvoll durch die Kirche" (N.R. 179). Koeppen's alienation is expressed in the detached incredulity with which he surveys both the old and the new remedies. In the historiographical-autobiographical prose-item, Romanisches Café, the twentieth century Teutonic dream takes abortive shape yet again: "... die Bewegung bewegte sich zur Kirche oder in die Kirche oder in die Kinos, es war kein Unterschied, die Bewegung wurde in der Kirche empfangen und gesegnet und im Kino gefeiert ..." ⁹. Here we are already venturing upon the absurd which is attained when the relativisation process is complete; the Church's reaction in this reference is reminiscent of the cultural schizophrenia we associated earlier with dungeons beneath the Curia in Rome. The antithetical juxtaposition of church and cinema denudes both of lasting or meaningful value. Antithetical dreams and beliefs do not affect the course of history, or cancel out each other - in the same bewildering passage, "... träumten die Gäste den neuen Traum, dass Gott tot sei, oder sie träumten den alten Traum, dass sein Name über alle Namen sei".

The very passage is apocalyptic, and history mocks all beliefs. In Rome are two cemeteries; one, in the 'Villa der Cäsaren', evokes Dante's Inferno - 335 press-ganged victims of the S.S. chief Kappler were shot as reprisals for an attack on a German military car; names and photographs are on display. Opposite stands another cemetery where lie the remains of the representatives of the polar force in the dualistic Manichaeian universe, - Shelley, Keats, Goethe's son "kamen und starben

als Freunde" (N.R. 327). Culture - high culture - exists alongside mindless cruelty, in the very same person, as well as in the same institution. In Rome, "Matronen und Dirnen ... gehören ranggleich zur Kulturgeschichte des Ortes" (N.R. 289), and Condorcet's dream of mathematically measuring quantities of good and evil in history becomes a nonsense. In the Tower of London it is not without significance that the wax effigies displaying mass-murderers juxtapose notorious Jack the Ripper figures with more well-reputed ones, the victors of the wars with the vanquished - there is no way of justly accrediting guilt (N.R. 278). History uses man as man uses (say) silk, as neutrally, as multifariously, for beautiful and for criminal ends.¹⁰

The Colosseum in Rome, admired by architects, is the scene where people urinate, where the loudspeaker emits a discordant cowboy song (N.R. 301). In Amsterdam the prostitutes' quarter adjoins the respectable residences of the church-going bourgeoisie (N.R. 108). On the deck of the ship on its way to New York people dance, play games, have a gala-evening, above an ocean which hides in its depths remains and debris of persons and ships, graveyards for the bombed and the torpedoed, the sacrificial victims of the 'Flag'. It is a meaningless endeavour - when one thinks of Pearl Harbour and Hiroshima - that twelve hundred poorly paid Japanese girls produced by arduous toil a large silk embroidery for the International Court at The Hague (N.R. 116).

This vision of present-day and historical events and experiences with its occasional elements of grotesque ludicrousness (when, for example, sublime endeavour or speculation is devaluated by bathetic reminders of our basic crass animality), is an integral part of a more comprehensive awareness of the fragmentation of all human experience, which this text has sought to show is the lynch-pin of Koeppen's alienation, a fragmentation ranging from the nature of social and economic processes which rule our daily lives, affecting our relation-

ships in all areas, affecting the nature of the content and mode of apprehension of reality, down to the nature of the social and individual psyche involved in this disconnected and dissociated apprehension. Language and form of composition match the disorientation of the vision. Koeppen's 'fragmented' historical vision produces the occasional historiographical panorama, in which order, meaning, organic development are undiscoverable. The single sentence extending over two or three pages which we have witnessed in previous discussions of both the novels (Emilia's interior monologue, T.G. 35 ff.) and the travel-books (Amf. 5 ff.), operates on the historical plane. In the 'celebratory' article addressed to Dürer and Nürnberg fragmented human experience (fragmented from the point of view of the retrospective observer) is characteristically mirrored by disordered syntax and punctuation. The opening preamble to the 'melancholy' tale, twenty-five lines, then a colon, thirty-three lines, then a full-stop, presents a succession of collective communal experiences throughout German history which are all given the same weight and importance, which means the same non-weight and non-importance, with the possible qualification that an unbroken and unreserved faith in the 'Reich', the sword, supported by the Cross, and 'Obrigkeit' forms a link between the disasters, till the doom at the end. The absurdity of the concluding journey to the moon is part of a more comprehensive absurdity in which human folly is repeated and perpetuated and negates all higher aspiration. Included is the absurdity of all past occasions when children thronged round the 'Christkindlmarkt' unaware of the darker, more victorious powers governing history. The paradox of belief returns; without it nothing is achieved, with it error and dis-illusionment ensue; the people asked Pilate's question, but too late, "Sie retteten sich zu spät in die Skepsis"¹¹. In Romanisches Café the history is traced of a particular location, initially a Romanesque church, through Carolingian, medieval, Reformation and finally Imperial days, with the erection of the Café

on the site in modern times. The added interest in this item is that the author is involved in the later stages, in the demonic succession of events, the passage commenting implicitly on a modern writer's difficulties in registering, not to mention interpreting the dizzy speed of these events. A sentence of four and a half pages, lacking all pretence to normal narrative structure and syntactic order, presents through an enumerative phrase and clause structure 'God's' view of the successive phases of human turmoil, transitory empires, national blindness and vainglory, the resort to arms and dupery to support the claim to salvation or omniscience. There is again no difference in importance accorded to the individual links in the chain of events, people and empires simply vanish and are relegated to oblivion, "als sei es nie gewesen". No doubt a German writer's presentation of history is influenced somewhat by his sensitive reaction to and bitterness over the tragedy of his own country, the scale of this tragedy, and the scale and speed of its disruptive effects - though to associate the concept of 'one's own country' with such a 'European' writer as Koeppen is probably out of place ("... hier war ich Europäer, und ich wollte es bleiben", Amf. 8).

With a stunning economy of style and content the impotence of man and history to change or improve the world over the years, and the philosophic corollary this implies, are conveyed in the 'story' of Reinfeld in Holstein, at the beginning of Nach Russland und anderswohin. Four short paragraphs relate the metaphorical sleep in which the provincial community has been enveloped for a couple of centuries. The changelessness of the physical and the socio-cultural scene is underlined by repetition of corresponding motifs:

... und der Mond steht wie 1740 über der Gemeinde ...
 Wie ist die Welt so stille, als eine stille Kammer,
 wo ihr des Tages Jammer verschlafen und vergessen sollt!
 Der Mond ist aufgegangen. Reinfeld war ein Ort, zu
 verschlafen und zu vergessen ...

This is followed by a summary description in a mere eleven lines of the cosmic (non-) significance of the life of Matthias Claudius, 'ein Gescheiterter, ein Träumender', who dreams, angry, disillusioned, by the banks of the carp-pond.

Der Mond ist aufgegangen. Reinfeld war auch noch nach dem ersten Weltkrieg ein Ort, zu verschlafen und zu vergessen ...

Unimportant events which might have presaged a rosier future for the nation, Weimar, the 1918 Revolution, attempts at republican democracy, did not disturb the sleep of Reinfeld; but we already conjecture what did - the flags and banners, sirens and swastikas, the recurring refrain of the post-war years - 'die gute alte Zeit', and the ineluctable consequences, the burning towers of Lübeck seen from the same banks of the dreamy pond, refugees from the East, and the strange emergence of passions and emotions dormant in the slumber of the two centuries, 'Hass, Gier, Neid, die Habsucht und die Herzensträgheit'. But the epanaleptic moon rises again:

Der Mond ist aufgegangen. Selbst in Reinfeld war der zweite verlorene Krieg nicht so leicht zu verschlafen, aber vielleicht gelingt es, ihn zu vergessen.

The war is forgotten by "absurdly" antithetical opiates which we have encountered so repetitively in Koeppen's writings, celluloid, processed entertainment etc. But when the pond has dried out, the people devour the trapped carp in the traditional feast and recall the days of:

... der Versammlungen, der Fahnen und der grossen Zeit. Der Mond ist aufgegangen. Eine neue grosse Zeit wird ihre Begeisterten und ihre Mörder finden.

Der Mond ist aufgegangen. Der Chor sprach zu Oedipus: Morgen, Kithairon, erfährst du's - morgen abend, da leuchtet der Vollmond.

Wherever there are zealots, there will be murderers, henchmen with flags and standards, celebrating national greatness and aggression. Substitute for national, sectarian, clerical, class or whatever, and the picture gains wider validity: in Anarchie, we read:

glatte blanke Messerschneiden façonnierter blanke
 Fallbeile glatte und façonnierter Bajonette geknüpfte
 und geschmalzte Galgenstricke das schöne alte
 ehrwürdige traditionsbewusste aristokratische
 bürgerliche proletarische klerikale soldatische
 polizeiliche juristische mörderische wohlerhaltene
 gutbewahrte sich verjüngende sich fortentwickelnde
 sich treubleibende Arsenal der Folter Säbel Latten
 Spiesse blutig Polizeiknüppel in die legislative
 und exekutive Hand genommen ...

A lexical and syntactic arrangement which indiscriminately reduces all high-sounding names and 'plebeian' movements to a common level of murderous criminality and bigotry and the elimination of any corrigibility of the human situation. The mythological allusion at the end of the Reinfeld story emphasises even further the repetitiveness of human behaviour or situations, and recalls the resigned pessimism of the fate of Oedipus. Death and nemesis have been prescribed; given these panoramic montages which end as we know them to have ended, it is not surprising to witness the apocalypse at the very end of the travel-book of which the Reinfeld saga is the beginning - man has created artificial suns, "Ich bin ihr Schöpfer" (N.R. 337), the zenith of technological achievement, the sleep of Reinfeld ends in the 'absurd' sleep of an annihilated world. Eden is parodied, "Im Paradies wohnen keine Menschen". In a story published just after the war, a girl has a brief 'fairy-tale' dialogue with a fish intended for the midday meal. The animal cries out: "Töte mich nicht, ich bin ein Flüchtling aus dem Atoll von Bikini"¹². The adults awaiting the meal remain unmoved and imperceptive. They are the kind who for long inhabited sleepy Reinfeld. In such a terrestrial hell, "Wohin wandern wir aus?" It is the cat and mouse situation referred to in an earlier chapter, "Spiel der Katze mit der Maus in einem Raum, der kein Mäuseloch hat"¹³.

It is self-evident that in a fragmented mass-society the chance possibilities of annihilation, of 'absurd' disruptions of normal activity are considerably increased. And the fortuitousness of all

historical development, - the ways the cards are dealt - of all happenings, of our lives and deaths, is a subject of perpetual fascination for Koeppen. His main interest in Alfred Andersch's new novel Winterspelt centres upon the figure of Schefold, an art expert, who becomes involved in the possibility of negotiating a surrender of the German forces led by the German commander, Dincklage, to the American forces before the Ardennes offensive in 1944¹⁴. Dincklage had joined the Wehrmacht, "um den Nationalsozialismus auf halbwegs saubere Art zu überwindern", and the American commander, Kimbrough, had joined up out of boredom with his legal practice. Interesting characters, in themselves, and Schefold 'happens' to be near Winterspelt at a certain time, he had escaped to Belgium before 1939 in pursuit of an art treasure. He did not fear, love or hate Nazism, but lived and dined unconscionably well at all times. He is shot by Reidel, one of Dincklage's marksmen, when the latter is supposedly conducting him across the German lines. Reidel knows the superiority of the Schefolds, he used to serve them in hotels, and sought the vengeance of the humiliated. Even if he had suspected possible treasonable activities, he had no intelligence to understand them. His bullet is not that of the patriot or the revolutionary - a Reidel is always an indifferent servant of the leader, "der staatterhaltende Mensch" - "es ist die Mordlust eines Gequälten". So is history made, so do people die. The whole event is wrapped in mystery and uncertainty, its effects remain unknown, the motives and even thoughts of the German commander remain dubious. And Koeppen is driven to ponder like Tolstoy on the origins of history, on the part played by free will and necessity. It is foul chance that terminates the life of the avantgardist writer, Friedo Lampe, whose works were outlawed by the Nazis. In 1945 he got entangled near Berlin with a group of S.S. fugitives and was encircled and died with them¹⁵. "Hitler war ein Zufall ... vielleicht ist die Welt ein grau-

samer und dummer Zufall Gottes" (T.G. 176). The story of the Berlin Café is related as though it was an aimless, directionless sequence of chance events concluded by a grotesque phantasmagoria. But then, "Die Katastrophen gehen ihre eigenen Wege". It is as though we shall never know what Schnakenbach's atoms will do at any given time; "Schnakenbach sah eine mikrophysikalische Welt, bis zum Bersten angefüllt mit dem Kleinsten, und, freilich, sie barst, barst fortwährend, explodierte in die Weite ..." (T.G. 217). Proust was wrong when he thought he could recover even in and through imaginative art past knowledge and experience. Koeppen has disdain for the academic scholar who attempts to do the same, whether historian, literary critic or whatever. We shall never really know what occurred just as we shall never know what will occur.

This scepticism is built into a fragmented world-picture. (It is also part of a thoroughgoing anti-positivism with which this 'Romantic' artist can be associated; some words of the 'Critical School' are relevant, in a recent preface to a new edition of an old work: "The prognosis of the related conversion of enlightenment into positivism, the myth of things as they actually are, and finally the identification of intellect and that which is inimical to the spirit, has been overwhelmingly confirmed"¹⁶ (my emphasis)). The Modernist deals with relativities, with fragments of immediacy, the spontaneous 'Now'; as Daniel Bell observes: "With the repudiation of unbroken continuity, and the belief that the future is in the present, one loses the classical sense of wholeness or completeness"¹⁷. And Koeppen's own observations of recent years indicate his preoccupation with this character of reality and the artist's problems in dealing with it, and the artist himself is concerned about the totality of fragments which he is: "Ich glaube, mich zu erinnern. Aber wer ist das, der sich erinnert? Der Unbekannte in diesem Zimmer, an einem Tisch, vor Briefen, die an einen

anderen gerichtet sind, der einmal gewesen ist? Vielleicht erinnert sich einer an mich. Oder ich erinnere mich für einen. Du bist es, den Erinnerung überfällt. Du erduldest Erinnerung. Vielleicht sind die Bilder wahr. Doch Lügen wären nicht weniger wahr. Ein intensives Studium hat mich dazu gebracht, nicht zu wissen, wer ich bin Ich handele, du handelst, er handelt. Ich handele nie. Er, sie, es handeln mit mir"¹⁸ (my emphasis). Not merely are the edges of reality blurred, but its very core and substance. Hence the attachment to the 'fragment' by the author himself: "Mich fesseln Lebensläufe in Fragmenten, innere Autobiographien wie all die Notizen von Novalis ..."¹⁹ This is also why Koeppen sees much of interest in André Malraux's "Anti-mémoires"; "Malraux malt Träume vom eigenen Leben"²⁰. The mythical 'autobiographical' Malraux depicted is a true alternative to any conventional, 'realistic', and shallow chronological narrative, - the 'lies' are not less true. His own literary aspirations are deeply rooted in the Joycean problematic: "Versuch einer Aufhebung der Zeit zu einer Gleichzeitigkeit allen Geschehens ... die Zukunft von morgen war schon gestern und vorgestern und von Anbeginn ... Das radikale konsequente Heut der Vergangenheit ist schwierig ... Der konservative Roman eine Sinngebung des Sinnlosen, die Versuche konstatieren die Sinnlosigkeit des Seins"²¹. The refusal of Robbe-Grillet to impose order or meaning on reality, the authorial stamp, even by metaphor, would be appreciated by Koeppen, even though the 'nouveau roman' credo is rejected by him on other epistemological and artistic grounds. 'Sinnlosigkeit' is of the essence of the new 'ontology' of fragmentation. No 'Bildungsroman' is possible here. (Is there not a connection between the author's rejection of the totalitarian character of communist, planned societies and the fact that this type of society is attached to notions of 'character' and 'personality', and the 'Erziehungsroman' genre?²²). The nature of the world-picture we are discussing is such that charac-

ters in novels and in real life do not attain 'completion', whatever that might be, or fulfilment, or success as developed personalities. We recall that Philipp, Keetenheuve, and Siegfried, are all 'Gescheiterte'. "Die Natur hat es mit der grossen Zahl. Einer wird überleben. Wer, ist ihr gleichgültig ... Ob sich einer, der geboren wurde, im Leben vollenden konnte, schert nur ihn, der törichterweise an so etwas glaubte und gescheitert ist"²³.

The artist is only different from the rest of humanity who also fail, and the world's 'stars' and success-figures most of all, in that he is the Cassandra who knows he has failed. The word 'success', achievement by worldly standards, but also by any standards, for to 'achieve' or 'complete' requires definition and qualification, "es schmeckt mir nicht, und ich bin überhaupt auf der Seite der Leute, die scheitern"²⁴. In that intensely and poignantly sympathetic appreciation of T.E. Lawrence,²⁵ we read that the latter knew not merely the hell of the life and language of the barracks, the hell and dehumanisation of modern soldiery abstractly organised to murder abstractly, but that he belonged to the company of Rimbaud, Shelley, Trakl, who knew failure and the curse and freedom this knowledge brings; "sie lebten asketisch, verachteten bürgerliche Beschäftigungen und die fleischliche Liebe"²⁶, and, quoting Lawrence himself, "Misslingen erscheine als die dem Menschen von Gott gewährte Freiheit"²⁷. The 'absurd' extremism to which this leads is the recognition that, given the pain and anguish of moral and spiritual failure, of a universe in which man is doomed to experience the eternal gulf and incompatibility between will and action, dream and reality, the truest, the only freedom is extinction: Keetenheuve's suicidal leap from the bridge "machte ihn frei" (T.H. 416); and in contrast to de Gaulle's hopes of bringing freedom to Paris in 1944 (limited but desirable in the context of the time, in its ametaphysical sense), we learn that the Unknown Warrior of 1919 "hat die einzig mögliche, die bittere Freiheit gefunden" (R.F. 254).

The 'Scheitern' in question goes beyond (say) Heinrich Böll's terms of reference - for he too is attached to the underdog, the exploited, and despises the compromises of the successful, the 'Welttüchtigen' - and in any case there are no theological panaceas for Koeppen. It gains added significance and importance in a world whose increasingly fragmented structure increases the range of ambiguity, moral and otherwise, intensifies doubt and uncertainty, a society whose complexity has engendered abstractness and reification, of structure, relationships, values and language, a complexity which has naturally magnified the totalitarian, 'organised' character of that society, but not thereby produced individual 'wholes' of its parts, but rather individual fragments. And even these fragments are 'sub-fragmented'. The burgher-artist conflict which was an important thematic motif in the early pre-war novels, a central element in the artist's personal confrontation with life, was itself (and remains) a symbolic dichotomy, and a first hand experience of the fragmented structure of being represented by burgher life and culture, a divorce of 'Geist' and 'Leben', of 'Geist' and 'Technik', which was to intensify with the further growth of a technological, industrialised society. One may recall Theo Stammen's awareness of this alienating condition, which we cited earlier: "... die Unfähigkeit des Menschen, die ihm gegenüberstehende Welt zu begreifen und sie geistig-ordnend zu durchdringen, auch und gerade da, wo das gesellschaftliche System - wie in der heutigen Zeit - im extremsten Sinne durchrationalisiert ist ... diese komplizierte Ordnung einer beängstigenden Manipulierbarkeit des Menschen, die das Gefühl des Entfremdetseins aufkommen lässt"²⁸. Angels fear to tread amongst these complexities; and the attraction for Koeppen of the 'clochard' figure is that he stays outside them, "der Ausgestossene, der Verneiner ... ein Anachoret der Strasse, ein aus dem verhängnisvollen Kreis der Tat, ein aus dem ständig Schuldigwerden Getretener ..." (R.F. 209) (my emphasis).

New features are added to the old ones - 'Macht und uralter Besitz' - which mock and plague the artist. He turns inward, seeks private sanctuaries and even a private language which might express the felt alienation - but intensifies that alienation even further. He seeks to preserve what can be salvaged in a world in which, in G.Steiner's words, "the individual 'I', the concept of the human person as an irreducible mystery, is under pressure"²⁹. It is the final end, the 'absurd' end of a philosophic and scientific development which centuries ago sought to discover the universe by empirical analysis, which, whatever its other important virtues, fragmented that universe in order to explore it.

Doubt, confusion and perplexity operate on different levels. There is the case of the French officer in Algeria, a modest, localised example, who stands in a situation of disturbing political ambiguity, and therefore does not really know where he stands. He is against the 'colons', the 'pieds noirs', the rich planters, against de Gaulle, against Paris intellectuals, the whole bourgeois fiasco, against war - but also for it, since he has to eat. The Moslem élite for whom he once had respect have been demoralised by the French. He is disenchanted with French colonialism; he is no longer a soldier, but an administrator who is not sure what he is administering. "Wer ist eigentlich dieses Algerien?" (R.F. 269). He finally proclaims he is an Algerian. The 'Paris' section of the 'French journey' contains several references to foreign students of all races from colonial territories who are studying French politics and administration in order that they may be able better to govern their own undeveloped territories, which are rebelling against French rule. How will the allegiances mix? On a different level, but still arising from a confusingly disconnected and ungovernable complexity in human affairs, there is the possibility of the apocalypse. But the two levels are not unrelated. Any one of the parties in the Algerian (or Indo-Chinese, or Middle-Eastern etc. etc.) dispute, viewing

the problem purely from its own isolated, self-centred situation, could create another 'absurd' catastrophe. Any 'fragment' can now destroy the whole - this is a new element in the situation. The artist sees the fragments operating in unison, if only in his mind (the last spark of that divinity he once claimed to possess?); on these grounds he is rejected by the world - as Thomas Mann has written, "Love of truth is a weakness, according to any absolutist partisanship"³⁰. But the parts do not and cannot operate in unison. The Enlightenment dream is debunked: "Viele Franzosen träumten so; an mindestens ebenso vielen Franzosen scheiterte der Traum. Abgesehen davon, dass Traum und Plan aus ganz anderen Gründen und nach dem Gesetz des Verhängnisses von Anfang an zum Scheitern verurteilt waren; denn das Schicksal will wohl die Verwirrung, die feste Feindschaft der Stämme, Rassen, Hautfarben, Nasenformen, Gewohnheiten, Gebete ..." (R.F. 223-224). According to the reviewer, T.E. Lawrence, though no pacifist, had discerned the fundamental nature and problematic of human aggression and its hopelessness; "er durchschaute die Zusammenhänge, er blickte hinter den Vorhang, der kein eiserner, sondern das Gewebe des Verhängnisses ist"³¹.

Crossing (appropriately) the Place St. Michel, the author has a dream³². He imagines being young once more, and as a medical student he befriended a mixture of races and social types, the son of a Kukawa chieftain who aspires to teach in a Russian faculty of philosophy, "den Sohn des Präsidenten und das bürgerliche Frankreich bei Tisch", the thief who steals from concubines who is writing a treatise on the 'Sinnlosigkeit aller Lyrik', conspirators of all races, the discontented youth in dictatorships and democracies, a Chinese girl from Saigon, a Communist girl from Clignancourt, a mannequin from the Place Vendôme; the dream continues as he becomes a ship's doctor, a forest doctor with a negro community, a psychiatrist to desperate criminals in New York, a practitioner in a Chinese village. Wherever necessary he would betray

the white man. Back in Paris, he would succour the down-and-outs, "Jeder Bettler kennt mich, die Huren sind meine Schwestern". The details of the dream are a symptom of Koeppen's intellectual and social alienation; its unfulfillability - "denn das Schicksal will wohl die Verwirrung, die feste Feindschaft der Stämme ..." - is a measure of that alienation.

Notes and ReferencesGENERAL

The following abbreviations are used throughout the text for references to main works:

- U.L. - Eine Unglückliche Liebe, 1934, (Goverts 1960 ed.)
- M.S. - Die Mauer Schwankt, 1935, Cassirer Verlag, Berlin.
(also pub. as Die Pflicht, 1939, Universitas Verlag).
- T.G. - Tauben im Gras, 1951.
- T.H. - Das Treibhaus, 1953.
- T.R. - Der Tod in Rom, 1954.

(The page references for the three novels, T.G., T.H., and T.R. relate to the combined edition, Goverts Verlag, 1969).

- N.R. - Nach Russland und anderswohin: Empfindsame Reisen, 1958, Goverts.
- Amf. - Amerikafahrt, 1959, Goverts.
- R.F. - Reisen nach Frankreich, 1961, Goverts.

Where a section is devoted to a single work, references will be given by the page number only (indicated in parentheses).

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Verlobung im Alten Salon
Am frühen Morgen
Melancholia
Der Sarkophag der Phädra
Zum ersten Mal in Rotterdam
In meiner Stadt war ich allein
Anarchie
Thanatalogie
Schön gekämmte, frisierte Gedanken.

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27. For example, in the review of Benn, loc.cit., Koeppen refers to H.Mann's essay, "Geist und Tat", in which the latter argues, "Wollwarenfabrikanten sich nicht ein Übermenschentum einzureden hätten, während ihr Menschentum noch rückständig sei."
28. W.K. in Tagesspiegel, loc.cit., 25.12.1958.
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124. Interview with Angelika Mechtel, Süddeutsche Zeitung, 26/27, Feb.1972.
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126. "Angst", in Merkur, Nr.309, 1974, H.2., pp.145-146.
127. Cf. title of Walter Jens' article on Koeppen, "Melancholie und Moral", Die Zeit, 26.10.1962.
128. T.H. p.247.
129. Cf. Koeppen's "Rede zur Verleihung des Georg-Büchner Preises 1962", loc.cit.; "Büchner ist unser Dichter, er ist es heute ... Georg Büchner war mir am deutschen Himmel immer der nächste von allen Sternen". (p.108).
130. Ibid. p.113. This recurring aspect of the cynical crusader's Thematik is related elsewhere to the post-1789 era; in his introduction to an edition of a selection of Shelley's poems, he writes of the immediate post-Revolutionary decades: "Die Freiheit gebar die Wehrpflicht, und die Revolution frass ihre Kinder." ("Shelley: Das Brennende Herz. Einleitung von Wolfgang Koeppen", Desch Verlag, 1958, p.8.)
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132. A term used by Ernst-Peter Wieckenberg in: "Der Erzähler Wolfgang Koeppen", in Geschichte der deutschen Literatur aus Methoden, Bd.I, Ed. H.L. Arnold, 1972, p.199.
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136. Cf. "Der Schriftsteller als moderner Hiob", interview with C. Linder, in Rheinische Post, 26.2.72.
137. "Unlauterer Geschäftsbericht", in Das Tagebuch und der Moderne Autor, Hanser Verlag, 1965, p.8.
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149. "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.17. (The Romantic inflation of the artist's rôle and mission, as associated with Shelley, comes to mind: "Der grosse Gesetzgeber der Welt schien ihm nun der Dichter zu sein, und der wandelte nicht die Ordnungen, sondern die Seelen." - Shelley: Das Brennende Herz, op.cit., p.34.
150. Arnold Interview, loc.cit., p.116.
151. Cf. inter alia, T.W. Adorno's analysis in "Was ist deutsch", (T.W. Adorno : Stichworte; Kritische Modelle 2, Suhrkamp Nr.347, 1969, pp.102 ff.); historical-ideological aspects of the theme which includes and goes beyond the present context are more comprehensively studied in G.L. Mosse's "The Crisis of German Ideology", (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964). Vide also Pascal's study of G. Simmel, loc.cit.
152. Bienek, loc.cit., p. 66.
153. Gehlen, op.cit., p.54.
154. Interview with Angelika Mechtel, loc.cit.
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157. Cf. Arnold-Interview, p.137: "Das Buch wird immer zu einer Ware, dazu verderblich. Das Buch, das zu Weihnachten herausgekommen ist, ist nach dem Fest wie verfaultes Obst."
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11. Benno von Wiese, Die Zeit, loc.cit.
12. Arnold, p.133.
13. Der Ruf: Eine deutsche Nachkriegszeitung, ed. H. Schwab-Felisch, dtv.1962, pp.31-32.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. H.W.Richter, Bestandsaufnahme: Eine deutsche Bilanz 1962, Kurt Desch Verlag, 1962, p.565.
17. Der Ruf: Eine deutsche Nachkriegszeitung, op.cit., p.10.
18. Ibid., p.21.
19. Horst Lange, in Der Ruf, H.10, 1947, quoted in: Deutschland: Kulturelle Entwicklungen seit 1945, ed. P. Schallück, Hueber Verlag, 1949, p.198.
20. See H. Vormweg, "Deutsche Literatur 1945-1960: Keine Stunde Null", in: Die deutsche Literatur der Gegenwart, ed. Manfred Durzak, Reclam, 1971, pp.14-30. (esp. p.14, 15, 17).
21. Ernst Alker, "Die gegenwärtige Situation der deutschen Literatur", in: German Life and Letters, Nr.5, 1951/52, pp.99-100.
22. F. Trommler, "Der Nullpunkt 1945 und seine Verbindlichkeit für die Literaturgeschichte", in: Basis I, 1970, pp.9-25.
23. Ibid., p.23.
24. Ibid., p.12-14.
25. Ibid., p.15.

26. Ibid., p.21.
27. Ibid., pp.23-24. The reference is to H.Mayer's Deutsche Literatur seit Thomas Mann, rororo 1063, 1967, p.74.
28. Bert Holl, "Die Troglodyten der Literatur: Ein Abriss der literarischen Restauration in Westdeutschland", in Geist und Zeit, H.2. 1956, p.83.
29. Ibid.
30. W.Weyrauch, "Die Schuld der Literatur an der Restauration in Deutschland", in: Aussprache, Nr.3, 1951/2, p.350.
31. Ibid., p.346.
32. Ibid., p.347.
33. In W.Weyrauch's Introduction to his anthology, Tausend Gramm, 1949.
34. Büchnerpreisrede, loc.cit., p.111.
35. See e.g. Urs Widmer, 1945 oder Die neue Sprache (Studien zur Prosa der Jungen Generation), 1966, (Düsseldorf), pp.20 ff.
36. Koeppen to C.Linder, "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.17.
37. Cf. Hermann Kasack, "Das Literarische Leben in Deutschland", in: Jahrbuch der Deutschen Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung, Nr.58, pp.113-131 (ref. here pp.117 ff.).
38. See (for Benn) Deutsche Zeitung, 15.12.1962, and (for Jünger), Merkur, 1974, pp.1175-1180.
39. H. Kasack, loc.cit., p.119.
40. Krüger Interview, p.58.
41. H.von Hofmannsthal, Die Berührung der Sphären, op.cit., p.62.
42. Krüger, loc.cit., p.58.
43. Arnold, p.132.
44. Ibid., p.122.
45. Ibid.
46. W.K., "Wahn", in: Ich lebe in der Bundesrepublik, ed. W.Weyrauch, List, 1960, p.36. (also published in Die Welt, 11.6.60, as "Wunder sind nicht beständig").
47. Gerhart Binder, Deutschland seit 1945. Eine dokumentierte gesamtdeutsche Geschichte in der Zeit der Teilung. Seewald Verlag, 1969, p.66.
48. Alexander und Margarete Mitscherlich, Eine deutsche Art zu lieben, München, 1970, p.36.
49. A.and M.Mitscherlich, Die Unfähigkeit zu Trauern, Piper, 1967, p.15.
50. Helmut Braem, "1945-1953", in: Deutsche Literatur im 20 Jahrhundert, p.422.

51. In 'Vorwort' to Tauben im Gras.
52. Arnold, p.128.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid., p.131.
55. Julius Mader, "Ein Schwieriger über die Malaise der Welt" in: Die Furche (Wien) Nr.30, 22.7.1972.
56. "Autobiographische Skizze", loc.cit., p.65.
57. Deutschland 1945-1963, ed. Herbert Lilge, (Edition Zeitgeschehen), Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1967, p.3.
58. Ibid.
59. Paul Noack, Die Deutsche Nachkriegszeit, Olzog Verlag, 1966, p.17.
60. G.Binder, op.cit., p.72.
61. Paul Noack, op.cit., p.17.
62. Franz Wurm, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft in Deutschland 1848-1948, Lecke, 1969, p.272.
63. Walter Muschg, Die Zerstörung der deutschen Literatur, Francke Verlag, 1956, p.45.
64. Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit, Westdeutsche Innenpolitik 1945-55, ed. Theo Stammen, dtv dokumente, 1965, p.256.
65. G.Binder, op.cit., p.214.
66. A.Grosser, Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bilanz einer Entwicklung, R.Wunderlich Verlag, 1967, p.13.
67. In 'Vorwort' to Tauben im Gras.
68. "Wahn", loc.cit., p.35.
69. Tagesspiegel, 25..2.58.
70. Ibid.
71. "Wahn", p.35.
72. Der Erzwungene Kapitalismus by Schmidt/Fichter, Berlin 1971, p.65.
73. Geschichte und Ideologie, ed. R.Kühnl, Rowohlt, p.133.
74. Schmidt/Fichter, p.75.
75. "Wahn", p.36.
76. Konsequenzen oder These, Analysen und Dokumente zur deutschen Politik, ed. H,Albertz und D.Goldschmidt, Rowohlt, 1969, p.157. (The developments by which the doors were closed, and reactions to them - though themselves only peripheral to our discussion of Koeppen's work - can be followed in: e.g. H.Lilge, op.cit., (p.104 ff.), chapter by W.Euchner

- "Der permanente Selbstbetrug", in: Politik ohne Vernunft, ed. C. Nedelmann und C. Schäfer, Rowohlt, 1965, Das Geteilte Deutschland, eine Dokumentation der Meinungen, ed. K. Tudyka, Kohlhammer 1965, and Waldemar Besson, Die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik, Ullstein, 1973, p.120.).
77. This receives special treatment in the trilogy in Der Tod in Rom; we can compare contemporary reactions and views in: e.g. the review by Heinrich Böll of K. Adenauer's Erinnerungen 1945-53, in Deutsche Literaturkritik der Gegenwart 1957-68, ed. H. Mayer, Goverts, 1972, and also Gustav Heinemann's speeches on foreign policy, in Verfehlte Deutschlandspolitik (Irreführung und Selbsttäuschung), Stimme Verlag, 1966.
78. This was elsewhere described by Heinz Friedrich in language which Koeppen would have approved of: "Aber längst haben die wirtschaftlichen Machtverhältnisse die politischen und menschlichen Voraussetzungen von einst liquidiert und für die politische Beweglichkeit das Konsum-establishment eingetauscht mit flachem Wohlstandsdenken und billigem Glück in der trivialen Sozialidylle". ("Die mit dem schlechten Gewissen; Jahrgang 1922: Eine schweigende Generation" by Heinz Friedrich, in Christ und Welt, 19.5.72.) The writer laments that the young generation of 1945 were tied to the material assistance of the Allies, instead of "im Erlebnis der Freiheit" (Andersch) "das eigene soziale Schicksal (zu) formen", and sees the resignation of the 'Väter von heute' (the youth of 1945) being repeated in their sons today, a picture of eternal repetitiveness which is close to Koeppen's own thinking.
79. Peter Laemmle, "Innenansicht der Restauration", National Zeitung (Basel), 22.7.72.
80. "Die elenden Skribenten", in Die Literatur, Nr.1, 15 März, 1952.
81. Karl Korn, "Ein Roman, der Epoche macht", in Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 12.10.1951.
82. Bienek, p.60.
83. "Thanatologie" (für Max Tau) in Romanisches Café, op.cit., p.110.
84. E.T. Rosenthal, Das Fragmentarische Universum, op.cit., p.78.
85. Arnold, p.131.
86. Bienek, p.62.
87. Interview with C. Linder, "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.16.
88. Klaus Haberkamm, "Wolfgang Koeppen: 'Bienenstock des Teufels' - Zum naturhaft-mythischen Geschichts- und Gesellschaftsbild in den Nachkriegsromanen" in: Zeitkritische Romane des 20 Jahrhunderts, ed. H. Wagener, Reclam, 1975, pp.241-275.
89. Ibid., p.264.
90. Wolfgang von Einsiedel, "Ein dichterischer Zeitroman", in: Merkur, Nr.6, 1952, pp.1181-1183.
91. Cf. Carla's view of her own situation (131) and Edwin's thoughts on the post-war German scene.
92. Konrad Kurz, Über moderne Literatur ..., op.cit., p.28.

93. Doris Stephan, "Der Roman des Bewusstseins und seine Spielarten", in: Deutschunterricht, Nr.14, 1962, (pp.24-38), p.36.
94. Theo Stammen, "Das Bild der gesellschaftlichen Wirklichkeit im modernen Roman", loc.cit., p.225.
95. Krüger-Interview, p.58.
96. Büchnerpreisrede, loc.cit., p.110.
97. Koeppen's introduction to Shelley, Das Brennende Herz, op.cit., pp.12 and 15.
98. Examples of this feature abound in his later work, in the travel books, in prose pieces such as "Proportionen der Melancholie", "Romanisches Café" etc.
99. R.Baumgart, "Theorie einer dokumentarischen Literatur" in: Theorie und Technik des Romans im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert (ed. Steinecke), op.cit., pp.113 and 114.
100. Interview with Max Frisch, Bienek, Werkstattgespräche, op.cit., p.29.
101. Hofmannsthal, "Die Briefe des Zurückgekehrten" in Prosa II, p.301:
"Ich sehnte mich wie der Seekranke nach festem Boden fort aus Europa und zurück nach den fernen guten Ländern, die ich verlassen hatte."
102. A.Andersch, Deutsche Literatur in der Entscheidung, ein Beitrag zur Analyse der literarischen Situation, Verlag Volk und Zeit, 1948, p.30.
103. Martin Walser, "Vor dem Schreiben" in Konturen, H.4. 1953, (pp.1-4), p.4.
104. A.Andersch, loc.cit., pp.28-29.
105. André Gide, Les Nourritures Terrestres, Gallimard, (1947 ed.) p.186.
106. Gerd Gaiser, "The Present Quandary of German Novelists" in: The Contemporary Novel in Germany, ed. R.Heitner, Univ. of Texas Press, 1947, p.77.
107. Theo Stammen, loc.cit., p.222.
108. E.M.Forster, "What I Believe", in: Two Cheers for Democracy, (Penguin), (pp.75-84), p.75.
109. Ibid., p.80.
110. Ibid., p.82.
111. Ibid., p.76.
112. Arnold Interview, p.134.
113. "Bonjour Tristesse", interview with Claudio Isani, in: Der Abend, (Berlin), 3.12.73.
114. Axel Kaun, "Schicksale fragmentarisch gebündelt", in: Stuttgarter Zeitung, 10.11.1951.

115. Frank Trommler, Roman und Wirklichkeit, Kohlhammer, 1966 (Sprache und Literatur Nr.30), p.38.
116. K.Kurz, op.cit., p.24.
117. F.Trommler, op.cit., p.35.
118. Ibid., p.43.
119. Ibid., p.45.
120. K.Kurz, op.cit., p.20.
121. "Wolfgang Koeppen und sein Kronzeuge Hiob", (anonymous 'Z - i') in: Sonntagsblatt, 19.12.54.
122. Koeppen, "Unlauterer Geschäftsbericht", loc.cit., p.14.
123. Cf. inter alia Wolfgang Hildesheimer, "Die Wirklichkeit des Absurden", in Theorie und Technik des Romans ... (ed. Steinecke) op.cit., pp.116-118, where he discusses "Adornos Wort, dass nach Auschwitz ein Gedicht zu schreiben barbarisch sei ...".
124. Cf. the author's comments on this in C.Linder, "Im Übergang zum Untergang", loc.cit., pp.48-49.
125. "Romanisches Café", loc.cit., p.10.
126. Bienek, pp.60-61.
127. C.Linder, loc.cit., (note 124), p.48.
128. Bienek, p.61.
129. F.Trommler, op.cit., p.49.
130. "Schriftsteller antworten auf die Frage: Wie stehen Sie zu Gott?" in: Die Welt, 24.12.1951.
131. Cf. also a reference to winter, when discussing Nature, the 'Wald' and its 'Romantik' associations. (Despite the Romantic features of his own outlook, Koeppen is aware, like T.Mann, of the ambiguities and dangers for German life and thought of the pull of Romanticism.) "In der Ungererstrasse ist mir die Natur zu nahe." The interviewer writes: "Die grösste Gefahr für die deutsche Dichtung, so überlegt Koeppen, liegt im deutschen Wald - Wald aber ist ein anderes Wort für Romantik. Wenn schon Natur, dann soll es das Land sein, im Winter, wenn es klirrend kalt ist." ("Die Flucht vor dem deutschen Wald", 1/2 Juli, 1961, Die Abendzeitung, interview with H.F.Nöhbauer, after award of the Munich 'Förderungspreis für Literatur').
132. Krüger, p.61.
133. Erich Franzen, "Der Roman und die Wirklichkeit", in: Aufklärungen, Essays, Suhrkamp, 1964, p.51.
134. Helmut Heissenbüttel, "Wolfgang Koeppen-Kommentar", in: Merkur, Nr.239, März 1968, (pp.244-252), p.245.
135. Ibid., p.246.

136. "Auf der Suche nach dem verlorenen Ich", loc.cit.,
137. T. Adorno, "Form und Gehalt des zeitgenössischen Romans", in Theorie und Technik des Romans ... (ed. Steinecke), op.cit., p.78.
138. R. Baumgart, "Theorie einer dokumentarischen Literatur", loc.cit., p.115.
139. T. Adorno, loc.cit., p.80.
140. H. Heissenbüttel, loc.cit., p.252.
141. C. Linder interview, "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.31.
142. Bienek, p.66.
143. Susan Sontag, Against Interpretation, Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1967, p.35.
144. Miss Sontag writes: "Stein's insistence on the presentness of experience is identical with her decision to keep to the present tense, to choose commonplace short words and repeat groups of them incessantly, to use an extremely loose syntax and abjure most punctuation. Every style is a means of insisting on something." Ibid., p.35.
145. H. Heissenbüttel, in: Mein Gedicht ist mein Messer (Lyriker zu ihren Gedichten), ed. Hans Bender, List, 1964, p.92.
146. Ibid., p.91.
147. Ibid., p.92.
148. Quoted in: The Novel and the Modern World by David Daiches, 1960 ed. Univ. of Chicago Press, p.3.
149. Ibid., p.7.
150. W. Kayser, Entstehung und Krise des Modernen Romans, Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1954, p.29.
151. See his review of a book by J.M. Brinnin on the work of Gertrude Stein, "Die dritte oder die vierte Rose", in: Merkur, Nr.162, 1961.
152. Bienek, p.59.
153. A. Andersch, Wanderungen im Norden, Diogenes, 1970, p.218.
154. "Die Summe der Sensibilität", in: Texte und Zeichen, 3, 1957, (pp.418-421), p.418.
155. Nathalie Sarraute, "Das Zeitalter des Misstrauens", in: Akzente, Nr.5, 1958, (pp.33-44), p.40.
156. F. Trommler, Roman und Wirklichkeit, op.cit., p.43.
157. E. Kahler, "Untergang und Übergang der epischen Kunstform" in: Die Neue Rundschau, Vol.64, 1953, (pp.1-44), p.2.
158. Ibid.
159. Bienek, p.60.

160. Linder, "Im Übergang zum Untergang", loc.cit., p.49.
161. "Unlauterer Geschäftsbericht", loc.cit., p.15.
162. Georg Bunter, "Über Wolfgang Koeppens 'Tauben im Gras'" in: Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie, Nr.87, 1968, H.4, (pp.535-545), p.543.
163. W.Kayser, Entstehung und Krise des Modernen Romans, op.cit., p.30. (For Kayser himself this aesthetic provides a solution to a problem he sees has developed in the modern novel - "Der Tod des Erzählers ist der Tod des Romans", Ibid., p.34.)
164. G.Bungter, loc.cit., p.539.
165. Some of the many examples of this filmic anadiplosis are as follows (page ref. with repeating item): 70 (Hand), 48 (er hält sich), 50 (gleich), 62 (Schnee auf den Lippen), 124 (Nutte), 128 (kämpfen), 116 (nichtstuend), 182 (gähnte - müde), 184 (totschlagen), 197-198 (Es ist Zeit), 209 (Schlange),
166. H.S.Reiss, "Stil und Struktur im modernen europäischen experimentellen Roman", in: Akzente, Nr.5., 1958, (pp.202-213), P.210.
167. G.Bungter, loc.cit., p.541.
168. "Vom Tisch", loc.cit., p.11.
169. Ibid.
170. Cf. note '154' above.
171. "Vom Tisch", loc.cit., p.11.
172. Arnold, p.129.
173. See Introduction, "Vorsatz", to T.Mann's novel Der Zauberberg.
174. Arnold, p.130.
175. See note '171' above.
176. "Die Summe der Sensibilität", loc.cit., p.419.
177. F.R.Allemann, "Treibhaus Bonn im Zerrspiegel", in: Die Tat, 9.1.1954.
178. Karl Korn, "Satire und Elegie deutscher Provinzialität", in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 7.11.53.
179. F.R.Allemann, "Restauration im Treibhaus", in: Der Monat, H.2, 1953/54, (pp.81-85, p.84).
180. "Proportionen der Melancholie", Merkur 276, 1971, H.4, p.343.
181. Koeppen is often mindful of what a clinically clean world lacks - apart from its aesthetic deficiencies, it is cold, inhuman, unfeeling and therefore dangerous. In Stalingrad he longed for "eine zwecklose, unnütze Schönheit, die gab es nicht ohne die Götter, die gab es nicht ohne Eros, nicht ohne Unordnung, ...Verwirrung, Ekstase ..." (N.R. pp.210-211). Heinrich Böll shows a similar distrust and aversion to order and meticulous cleanliness: in the short story, "Mein Trauriges Gesicht", we read of

- "Gärten, die voll Sträucher gewesen waren, schön von Unordnung ... alles dieses war nun planiert, geordnet, sauber, viereckig ... Nur der Himmel war wie früher und die Luft, da mein Herz voller Träume gewesen war." (Böll, Wanderer, kommst du nach Spa, Erzählungen, Ullstein, 1964 ed., p.157). Fred Bogner prefers dirty-looking to clean-looking priests, "ich weiss, dass es keines Menschen Schuld ist, wenn er sauber ist, die Sauberkeit liebt ... doch hält mich die tadellose Weisse seines Kragens, die Präzision, mit der der violette Rand über die Soutane hinausragt, davon ab, mit ihm zu sprechen." (Böll, Und sagte kein einziges Wort, Ullstein, 1969 ed., p.144).
182. Cf. i.a. H.Marcuse, Introduction to Essay on Liberation, Beacon Press, 1969, Pelican 1972, the 1966 Preface to his Eros and Civilisation, Beacon Press, orig. 1955, and the general thematic thread of One Dimensional Man, 1964.
183. H.Freyer, Theorie des Gegenwärtigen Zeitalters, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1967, p.221.
184. Ibid., p.232.
185. Ibid., p.228.
186. F.R.Allemann, Der Monat, loc.cit.
187. H. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, Sphere Books, p.16.
188. Marcuse, An Essay in Liberation, Pelican, p.15.
189. Marcuse, Eros and Civilisation, Beacon, 1966, pp.xii-xiii.
190. A. Andersch, "Choreographie des politischen Augenblicks", loc.cit., p.256.
191. Marcuse, Eros and Civilisation, loc.cit., p.xiv.
192. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, loc.cit., p.16.
193. Ibid., p.58.
194. "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.13.
195. "Unlauterer Geschäftsbericht", loc.cit., p.13.
196. Ernst von Salomon, "Gewitter in der Bundeshauptstadt", in: Die Welt, 21.11.53.
197. Ibid.
198. Peter Laemmle, "Annäherung an die Wahrheit der Dinge", loc.cit., p.52.
199. "Nachbemerkung von Wolfgang Koeppen" in: Erich Franzen, Aufklärungen, Essays, op.cit., p.182.
200. See Linder interview, "Im Übergang zum Untergang", loc.cit., p.45.
201. Horst Rüdiger, "Wespennest im Treibhaus", in: Der Standpunkt, 11.12.53.
202. H. Vormweg, "Die Wörter und die Welt" in: Akzente, Nr.13, 1966, (pp.72-84), p.80.

203. Ibid., p.84.
204. Ibid.
205. H. Freyer, op.cit., p.137.
206. Ibid., p.138.
207. E. Franzen, Aufklärungen, op.cit., p.74.
208. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, op.cit., p.58.
209. Ibid.
210. "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.31.
211. Rolf Seeliger, "Wolfgang Koeppen - Die Welt hinter dem Röntgenschirm", in: Deutsche Volkszeitung, (Düsseldorf), 20.4.57.
212. C. Linder's phrase in "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.25.
213. Ibid. Also Linder's phrase, and the whole statement by the interviewer receives the total and unequivocal agreement from the author.
214. See Koeppen's review of Horst Krüger's novel, Das Zerbrochene Haus, "Hitler, der bleibt uns", in: Literatur im Spiegel, ed. Rolf Becker, Rowohlt, 1969, (pp.158-161), p.161.
215. Ibid.
216. Die Kultur, Nr.148, Feb.1960.
217. "Mein Tag ist mein grosser Roman", loc.cit. (See also: "Der Schriftsteller als moderner Hiob", interview with C.Linder, Rheinische Post, 26.2.72.)
218. Bienek, p.59.
219. Review of Krüger's novel, loc.cit.
220. Ibid.
221. Koeppen, "Wie ich dazu kam", Die Zeit, 4.11.54.
222. Stephen Spender, Penguin New Writing, 14 Sept. 1942, pp.123 ff., quoted in R.H.Thomas, Thomas Mann, The Mediation of Art, O.U.P., 1956, p.169.
223. Review by Erich Franzen, "Römische Visionen" in: Süddeutsche Zeitung, 20/21 Nov. 1954. Georg Lukacs, with a specific reference to Koeppen's work, finds in Musil and Kafka a similar spectral character in their presentation of reality. Musil is quoted as saying: "Die Tatsachen sind immer vertauschbar. Mich interessiert das geistig Typische, ich möchte geradezu sagen: das Gespenstische des Geschehens." Lukacs adds: "Das Wort 'gespenstisch' verdient dabei hervorgehoben zu werden. Denn es bezeichnet eine der wichtigsten Richtungen, die zur mehr oder weniger vollständigen Auflösung der Wirklichkeit in den dichterisch gestalteten Welten führt." He speaks of Kafka's "Angstvision vom Wesen der Welt" which transforms the details of normal 'reality' into "einer gespenstischen

- Unwirklichkeit, einer Welt als Alpdruck." The reference to Koeppen runs: "So verwandelt sich die Wirklichkeit ins Traumhafte, und diese künstlerische Tendenz bleibt bestehen, auch wenn das Zerflattern, das Zerfliessen der Wirklichkeit mit einer sozialkritischen Tendenz verbunden wird, wie im 'Treibhaus' von Koeppen." See G.Lukacs, Wider den missverstandenen Realismus, Claassen Verlag, 1958, pp.23-24.
224. "Ein deutsches Satyrspiel", (anonymous review, r.h.) in Die Gegenwart, Jg. 9, Nr.23, 1954, pp.735-736.
225. E.Franzen, review, loc.cit.
226. Gustave Le Bon, La Psychologie des Foules, Félix Alcan ed., Paris, 1895, pp.91-ff.
227. See T.H., p.271.
228. "Die Erben von Salamis oder die ernstesten Griechen", in Merkur, 1972, p.265.
229. Dr. Faustus, by Thomas Mann, S.Fischer, 1951, p.272.
230. Erich Heller has written: "... the only 'real person' of whom I am reminded by Adrian Leverkühn's genius is the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. There was the same almost paralysing 'absoluteness' in the demands he made upon his work, ... and in his own sphere the same fear that the pursuit of authenticity may have become 'too difficult'." E.Heller, The Ironic German. A Study of Thomas Mann, Secker and Warburg, 1958, p.273.
231. Dr. Faustus, op.cit., p.271.
232. J.Mittenzwei, Das Musikalische in der Literatur, Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1962. Ch. "Die musikalische Kompositionstechnik des 'inneren Monologs' in Wolfgang Koeppens Roman, 'Der Tod in Rom'", (pp. 395-426), p.422.
233. Ibid., p.424. (Even^{the} later Lukacs, in the work cited above, appreciates the social and political grounds for the modernist's intellectual alienation, whilst stressing of course that the latter is not the last word on an irredeemable situation: "Es ist selbstredend vollauf verständlich, dass das Erlebnis der kapitalistischen Gesellschaft der Gegenwart, besonders bei den Intellektuellen, die Affekte der Angst, der Abscheu, der Verlorenheit, des Misstrauens sich selbst und den anderen gegenüber ... der Verzweiflung etc. auslöst. Ja, eine Darstellung der Wirklichkeit, ohne auch solche Emotionen hervorzurufen ... müsste jede Widerspiegelung der Welt von heute unwahr, schonfärberisch werden lassen." Lukacs concludes this point with what for Koeppen, for example, is an irrelevancy: "Es fragt sich bloss: ist dies die ganze Wirklichkeit ... soll dabei stehengeblieben werden?" See G.Lukacs, op.cit., p.85.)
234. G.Steiner, T.S.Eliot Memorial Lectures: In Bluebeard's Castle, Lecture 3, 'A Season in Hell', The Listener, 25 March 1971, p.366.
235. Ibid., p.364.
236. Peter Laemmle, "Annäherung an die Wahrheit der Dinge", loc.cit., p.52.

237. Erich Franzen, "Aufklärungen: Essays," op.cit., p.182.
238. Ibid.
239. Max Frisch has commented eloquently upon this dangerous schizophrenia and its implicit 'absurdity': "Kenner, die sich mit Geist und Inbrunst unterhalten können über Bach, Handel etc. ... ohne weiteres auch als Schlächter auftreten können: beides in gleicher Person ... Es ist eine Geistesart, die das Höchste denken kann ... und die das Niederste nicht verhindert ... Kultur als moralische Schizophrenie ... die landläufige ... Genie als Alibi." (M.Frisch, Ausgewählte Prosa, Suhrkamp, 1968, pp.41-42). Adorno has long been a critic of this asocial and apolitical reverence for art: "Indem jedoch diese (d.h. die Geisteskultur) fixiert, sich zum Selbstzweck wird, hat sie auch die Tendenz, von realer Humanität sich zu entbinden und sich selbst zu genügen ... So verblendet das nützlichkeitsgebundene Lebensgefühl sein mag ... so verblendet ist auch der Glaube an eine Geisteskultur, die vermöge ihres Ideals selbstgenügsamer Reinheit auf die Verwirklichung ihres Gehalts verzichtet und die Realität der Macht und ihrer Blindheit preisgibt." (T.W.Adorno, Stichworte: Kritische Modelle 2, Suhrkamp 1969, (Ch. "Auf die Frage: Was ist deutsch"), p.108.) The schizophrenic character of this cultural dissociation, as well as the alienation implicit in each of the 'Verblendungen' Adorno mentions, taken separately, have become part of the more comprehensive Marxian critique and theory of alienation in our society, involving a fragmentation of our personal and social being which we have seen to be a central aspect of Koeppen's 'Weltbild'.
240. Dr. Faustus, op.cit., p.272.
241. C.Jenkins, Ch. "Flaubert", in: French Literature and its Background: The Late Nineteenth Century, (General Ed. J.Cruickshank), Longmans, p.57.
242. One is reminded of the description by Henry Miller of a Paris concert and its audience where various shades of monied philistinism are trenchantly illustrated. (H.Miller, Tropic of Cancer, J.Calder, 1963 ed., (orig. 1934), pp. 74-77).
243. M.Frisch, Ausgewählte Prosa, op.cit., p.41.
244. Cf. J. G. Herder, Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit; "Das Heer ist eine gedingte, gedanken-, kraft-, willenlose Maschine geworden", (Suhrkamp ed., 1967, p.74).
245. Jugend, Suhrkamp 1976, p.47. (This recent publication is a compilation of the "autobiographical" items discussed mainly in the earlier chapter, "Early Life and Experiences").

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5. Helmut Braem, "Im Spiegel der Empfindsamkeit", Stuttgarter Zeitung, 24.5.58.
6. K.Korn, loc.cit.
7. Krüger-Interview, loc.cit., p.64.
8. Arnold-Interview, loc.cit., p.131.
9. H.Heissenbüttel, "Wolfgang Koeppen-Kommentar", loc.cit. (Merkur Nr.239), p.251.
10. Ibid., p.246
11. H.Heissenbüttel, "Literatur als Aufschub von Literatur", Texte und Kritik, H.34, 1972, (pp.33-37), p.33.
12. Heissenbüttel, "Wolfgang Koeppen-Kommentar", loc.cit., pp.250-251.
13. R.Döhl, "Wolfgang Koeppen", in: Deutsche Literatur seit 1945", op.cit., p.125.
14. "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.17.
15. Arnold-Interview, p.128.
16. "Schreiben als Zustand", p.17.
17. C.Linder, "Im Übergang zum Untergang", loc.cit., p.48.
18. Ibid., p.49.
19. "Schreiben als Zustand", p.23.
20. D.Stephan, "Der Roman des Bewusstseins und seine Spielarten", loc.cit., p.28.
21. Koeppen, "An Ariel und den Tod denken", loc.cit.
22. See Ch.I, "Introduction", Note '2'.
23. "An Ariel und den Tod denken", loc.cit.
24. Ibid.
25. "Schreiben als Zustand", p.31.

26. Ibid.
27. Geno Hartlaub, "Er liebt kein Grün: Gespräch mit W.Koeppen", in: Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 12.3.1967.
28. "An Ariel und den Tod denken", loc.cit.
29. "Schreiben als Zustand", p.23.
30. Krüger-Interview, p.65.
31. Arnold-Interview, p.134.
32. See "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.59.
33. Arnold-Interview, p.134.
34. "An Ariel und den Tod denken", loc.cit.
35. See note '10'.
36. F.Trommler, Roman und Wirklichkeit, op.cit., p.49.
37. In conversation with F.Kermode, in: The Novel Today: Contemporary Writers on Modern Fiction, ed. M.Bradbury, Fontana, 1977.
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40. "Jack London zum 100 Geburtstag. Ein glücklicher Mann", in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 10.1.1976.
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42. Ibid., p.262.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid., p.268.
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46. Ibid., p.264.
47. A.Andersch, op.cit., p.107.
48. Ibid.
49. See A.Andersch, Wanderungen im Norden, Diogenes, 1970, ed.(orig. 1962), pp.153 ff.
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51. See 'Interview mit Alfred Andersch' (interviewer Paul Kersten), in: Über Alfred Andersch, (ed. G.Hoffmanns), Diogenes, 1974, p.110.
52. Ibid.

53. A.Andersch, Hohe Breitengrade, Diogenes, 1969, p.80.
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56. Andersch, Norden, Süden, rechts und links, op.cit., p.59.
57. Ibid., p.45.
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59. "W.Koeppen über Hans Axel Holm: 'Bericht aus einer Stadt in der DDR'; Mecklenburger Protokolle", in: Der Spiegel, 15.6.70., pp.145-146.
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61. A.Andersch, Wanderungen im Norden, op.cit., p.217.
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63. Ibid., p.218.
64. A.Andersch, Norden, Süden, rechts und links, pp.59 ff.
65. "An Ariel und den Tod denken", loc.cit.
66. A.Andersch, ibid., p.38.
67. Ibid., pp.94-95.
68. H.Böll, Irisches Tagebuch, dtv 1961, p.7.
69. Ibid., pp.44-45.
70. A.Andersch, Norden, Süden, rechts und links, p.89.
71. Ibid., p.88.
72. Ibid., p.92.
73. Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man, op.cit., p.69.
74. Andersch, Norden, Süden, rechts und links, p.93.
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76. See ibid., p.37.
77. Andersch, Wanderungen im Norden, op.cit., p.20.
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80. Ibid., pp.139-140.
81. "Erben von Salamis", loc.cit., p.267.

82. Ibid., p.252.
83. Ibid.
84. See "Angst", loc.cit., (Merkur) Nr.309), esp. pp.140-142.
85. "Erben von Salamis", loc.cit., p.265.
86. Ibid., p.254.
87. See the Second Letter of Schiller's Briefe über die Ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen (1795).
88. See Ibid., the Fourth Letter; the most famous part of Schiller's discussion of the theme of fragmentation in modern culture, contrasting with its alleged absence and resolution in Greek culture, is to be found in the Sixth Letter. It is inappropriate here to discuss how Schiller explains and justifies the division and fragmentation of faculties in historical development or the possible shortcomings of his argument in terms of radical solutions.
89. Ibid., Sixth Letter.
90. "Erben von Salamis", loc.cit., p.255.
91. Schiller, op.cit., Sixth Letter.
92. Ibid.
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94. Wilhelm von Humboldt, Ideen zu einem Versuch, die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staates zu bestimmen, 1792. Quoted in R.Pascal, Culture and the Division of Labour, University of Warwick, 1974.
95. See R.Williams, The Country and the City, Paladin 1973, p.355.
96. Max Horkheimer and T.Adorno, Dialektik der Aufklärung, (orig. 1944), Fischer, 1971, p.10.
97. Ibid., p.12.
98. A.Andersch, Hohe Breitengrade, op.cit., p.60.
99. "Angst", loc.cit., p.138.
100. "Erben von Salamis", loc.cit., p.268.
101. Ibid., p.258.
102. See A.Andersch, Hohe Breitengrade, op.cit., p.197 ff.
103. "Erben von Salamis", loc.cit., p.266.
104. Ibid., p.254.
105. G.M.Hyde, "The Poetry of the City", in Modernism, ed. M.Bradbury and J.McFarlane, Penguin Books, 1976, p.341.
106. Raymond Williams, The Country and the City, op.cit., p.358.

107. "Schön gekämmte, frisierte Gedanken", in: Romanisches Café, Erzählende Prosa, op.cit., p.118. Koeppen would no doubt appreciate a more recent and up-to-date assessment of the situation in Paris, L'Assassinat de Paris by Professor Louis Chevalier (Calmann-Levy, 1977), which describes how old romantic symbols of intimate glories of the capital - a capital described by Koeppen thus: "Paris war das Gemälde der Impressionisten, schon ehe die Maler kamen: die Meister brauchten die Stadt nur zu spiegeln" (R.F. 261) - have yielded to the malefactions of the bureaucrats, developers and speculators, who are more concerned with 'circuler' than what used to have priority, 'marcher, vivre, habiter' etc.
108. See "In meiner Stadt war ich allein", in: Romanisches Café, ibid., p.89.
109. See "Die Verlobung im alten Salon", in: Romanisches Café, ibid., pp.20-26.
110. Theodore Roszak, "Where the Wasteland ends", Doubleday, 1972, p.xxix.
111. "Erben von Salamis", loc.cit., p.265.
112. "Angst", loc.cit., p.140.
113. See "New York can take it", in: The Guardian, August 1977.
114. Lewis Mumford, The City in History: its Origins, its Transformations and its Prospects, 1961, p.535, quoted in: The Intellectual versus the City, by M. and L.White, Mentor/Signet, p.206.
115. See Karl Korn, Faust ging nach Amerika, op.cit., esp. pp.18-37. Korn also writes of "Kathedralen jener Religion, die die Welt nach Prometheus' Bilde umschafft ..." (p.20), referring to the towers of Manhattan. He discusses the character this Promethean figure has assumed in the contemporary industrial scene.
116. J.K.Galbraith, "The Big Corporation", in: The Listener, March 10, 1977, (the ninth lecture in the series, "The Age of Uncertainty").
117. Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, 1844.
118. "München oder die bürgerlichen Saturnalien", loc.cit., p.129.
119. Norman Mailer in conversation with A.Alvarez in: Under Pressure, (Conversations with A.A. on 'The Writer in Society'), Penguin, 1965, p.133.
120. See G.M.Hyde, "The Poetry of the City", loc.cit., p.337.
121. "Angst", loc.cit., p.144.
122. See Conversation between A.Alvarez and Saul Bellow, in: Under Pressure, op.cit., p.140.
123. Karl Korn, Aufklärungen, Essays, op.cit., p.72.
124. This is recorded more emphatically in "Anarchie", Merkur 250, loc.cit.
125. See "Proportionen der Melancholie", loc.cit., p.348.

1. In the interview with Angelika Mechtel, "Gespräche mit Schriftstellern", loc.cit., Koeppen remarks: "Der Schriftsteller arbeitet ohne Netz. In einem Versicherungsstaat ist er ungeschützt. Er hat kein Pensionsalter ... so bleibt er jung."
2. In "Proportionen der Melancholie", loc.cit., an ironic survey of German history and its tragic conclusion includes mention of a first German railway from Nürnberg, representing the type of technical achievement which ends with the journey to the moon. The railway did nothing to avert catastrophe. One presumes the striving for other planets will do nothing to solve the problems of our own.
3. See interview with Tennessee Williams, "Named desire", The Guardian, October 27, 1976. The fuller text runs: "... security is a kind of death. And it can come to you in a storm of royalty cheques beside a kidney shaped pool in Beverly Hills or anywhere at all that is removed from the conditions that made you an artist. I learnt that the struggle for me is creation. I cannot live without it. Luxury is the wolf at the door ..."
4. For a lengthier exposition of Koeppen's views on modern woman's preoccupations with more worldly concerns, see "Hat der Mann ausgespielt? Schriftsteller antworten auf eine provokante Frage", in: Magnum, November 1965, H.57, pp.82-84.
5. "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.27. Related to this concept of private freedom is the notion of privacy itself. Apart from the instance of buying four first class tickets for himself on the Moscow train, there is also the highly painful experience of occupying a hospital bed; again privacy is expensive, but sharing a ward with other more vacuous members of the public with their transistors would become sufficiently insupportable that death would be preferred. (See "Schreiben als Zustand", pp.27-28).
6. "Anarchie", Merkur, 1969, (pp.164-169), p.166.
7. "Proportionen der Melancholie", loc.cit., p.334.
8. Ibid.
9. Romanisches Café, op.cit., p.10.
10. See the opening paragraph, characteristically unpunctuated, of "Anarchie", loc.cit.
11. "Proportionen der Melancholie", loc.cit., p.343.
12. "Trümmer oder wohin wandern wir aus", in: Romanisches Café, op.cit., p.14.
13. "Vom Tisch", loc.cit., p.11.
14. See the review by Koeppen, "Die Leute von Winterspelt", in Merkur, 1974, pp.1175-1180.

15. See "Friedo Lampe und Felix Hartlaub", in Merkur, 1957, pp.500-503.
16. Preface to the 1969 edition of Dialectic of Enlightenment by M.Horkheimer and T.Adorno, op.cit., (trans. ed. pub. by Herder and Herder, New York, 1972).
17. Daniel Bell, The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism, Heinemann, 1976, p.49.
18. "Vom Tisch", loc.cit., p.3.
19. Arnold-Interview, p.129.
20. Ibid.
21. "Vom Tisch", loc.cit., p.11.
22. See a commentary on this point by R.H.Thomas and K.Bullivant in: Literature in Upheaval, Manchester Univ. Press, 1974, p.26.
23. Arnold-Interview, loc.cit., p.139.
24. "Schreiben als Zustand", loc.cit., p.24.
25. See "Der kleine und der grosse Aufstand" (reviews of T.E.Lawrence and Henry Miller's study of Rimbaud), in: Texte und Zeichen, 1955, pp.246-250.
26. Ibid., p.250.
27. Ibid., p.247.
28. See reference 116, p.28, Chapter I above.
29. G.Steiner, Extra-Territorial: Papers on Literature and the Language Revolution, Faber and Faber, 1972, p.100. This well-known thematic area - the precarious position of the intellectual artist in modern society, the dominance of the media and the 'market', their effect on the nature and quality of published literature, the dehumanisation of language, the debasement of literature to the level of the commodity, the alienation of the artist from processed culture, the 'retreat from the word' etc. - has been well documented by G.Steiner, Daniel Bell in The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism, Per Gedin in Literature in the Market Place, Dieter Wellershoff in Literatur und Veränderung, among others.
30. T.Mann, "The Artist in Society", in: The Listener, June 5, 1952.
31. "Der kleine und der grosse Aufstand", loc.cit., p.249.
32. See "Schön gekämmte, frisierte Gedanken", in: Romanisches Café, pp.119-120.

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