

## 13 Art or Life, Hermann and Clarissa 1970

**From: "Ivan Mansley" <ivanman dsl.pipex.com>  
Sent: Friday, November 12, 2004 8:13 AM +0100**

AN INTRODUCTION TO:-

DIE ZWEITE HEIMAT, PART 13. ART OR LIFE; HERMANN and CLARISSA, 1970.

I am finding it very difficult to begin writing. I have more notes than on any other episode, I think. My head is swarming with ideas. Why the hesitation? It has to do with the sadness and melancholy of ending, I think. I did not want Die Zweite Heimat to end, as end it must. It has become like life; we do not perceive the end nor do we wish it to arrive in normal circumstances! Well here we have the final episode of this great film and I will try my best to show how Edgar Reitz depicts a sense of finality, a sense of resolution to all his separate strands of story and how he unifies them, in a sense, in the character of Hermann.

Hermann, of course, is at the centre of this episode. I have changed my mind almost totally about his character. At the age of 30 he really comes of age! At times he appears to be on the edge of total breakdown, and yet we see him deal with all the difficulties in his life, and they are many, with an impressive maturity and acceptance of what the future might hold for him. His soliloquies or commentaries carry great weight, and his analyses of the position he finds himself in are often commanding and exact. Let me illustrate.

We see him first amongst all the merriment of the Oktober Beer Fest. He represents the isolated, aloof intellectual, unable to participate in all the communal enjoyment and conviviality around him. We might note, however, that it ends in a brawl! Crushed between Consul Handschuh and his wife Hermann reflects that Schnüsschen would have been in her element there. "But I hated this closeness. It crushed all real feeling with the weight of its banality," he muses. He starts to feel his age. He is still hopeful about life, but feels doubts about his abilities and talents. This thought comes into his head: "Had fate decided that I would never realize my dreams?" Such uncertainty is a new development for him. He remembers his friends, as he takes stock amidst the merriment, but his thoughts are touched by melancholia. He quotes the poet, Hesse. He had once set these words to music. "The world was full of friends\When life was light\Now the mist descends\They're lost from sight", but he cannot find any words for Erika, as she says goodbye to him at the taxi stand. She sees their previous relationship as a "game", though a good one! He cannot articulate an honest response.

Later, in a bar, Herr Zielke makes Hermann a surprising financial offer, but Hermann's thoughts are elsewhere. In fact, his identity seems to be dissolving. He is on the verge of a crack-up. He begins to doubt his own

existence. "The money existed, I didn't." There follows the first of many surreal sequences in this episode. Volker, Jean-Marie, and an unknown woman push past him, and, realising who they were, he follows. He stumbles into a kind of palace piazza where he witnesses the young woman dancing to a piece by Volker. There is a debate about the nature of art and the idea of an audience, but Hermann is bewildered. "It had happened. I was sure I had gone mad." He sees his friends as dazzled by "artistic madness". We do not see Volker and Jean-Marie again in the film.

Hermann receives another extraordinary financial offer almost immediately. Consul Handschuh and his wife are childless. He is a very wealthy man and the film constantly stresses this. Hermann is brought to dinner in a chauffeur driven Rolls-Royce. Electronic gates open to reveal a beautiful house by the Ammersee. There is a private cinema in the house. Consul Handschuh is found in bed after his exertions of the previous day. A whirring of machinery raises one end of the bed so he is in a sitting position. He is a man in search of a son. Hermann is the chosen one. "I wish I had a son like you." He offers to bequeath his entire business to Hermann, if Hermann will dedicate himself to his work with electronic music. However, we know from a soliloquy delivered as he looked out of a window that Hermann has lost interest in the studio and music. "My pride had taken a fall. I'd lost hope. What was music to me?" Hermann is not dazzled by all the trappings of wealth. He is a young man of integrity, isn't he? We know he will eventually refuse but he asks if he has to decide there and then. The Consul replies, "No. But soon." I take it that he knows his death is imminent and that is why his wife falls sobbing into her husband's arms. We do not see them again. [I was a little puzzled by Mrs. Handschuh's reception of Hermann. She asks whether Hermann had realised that the glad-handing and exertions of the previous day had been "play-acting" and when he shrugs an enigmatic smile flickers over her features and there is a long silence. I felt there was something significant here that I had missed.]

Afterwards, in the Königsplatz, where he had first made music with Juan, he analyses what has happened with great precision. His thoughts are worth quoting, as an example of how insightful he has become. "Twice in 24 hours I'd become the dream and hope of an ageing man. Twice I'd been offered fantastic sums to manage. It was my youth and idealism that were worth so much money. I began to be ashamed of them." He knows that both are perishable commodities. "I needed advice." He decides he must see Clarissa for this and finds from her mother that she is on tour and is informed of her itinerary. He goes in search of her in what is one of the great rail journeys in world cinema!! I mean that slightly tongue-in-cheek. It is a voyage through Hermann's past, through his memories, through his head. He is a traveller through time, but Reitz gives us all the naturalistic details as well; timetables, stations, scenery, hotels and so on.

Let us just pause for a moment. At this juncture in the episode Hermann has come into contact with 9 characters from his past if we count Mrs. Handschuh as one [he has only met her once or twice before]. They are Volker, Jean-Marie, Mrs. Lichtblau, Herr Gross and Herr Zielke, Consul Handschuh, Erika and Alex. In the early hours of the morning Alex has turned up at Hermann's apartment [he is living separately from his wife and daughter]

demanding alcohol. He is raddled and dishevelled. Hermann gives him a bottle of whisky [look out for the label!!] and reflects lucidly, as Alex declares that women are the future and that men are redundant fossils, "Strange that Alex was making himself the archetype of male decline." We only see Alex once more as he dies of some kind of alcoholic seizure amongst all his books in a sudden and violent scene that dramatically brings home the total waste of a fine and well-read mind. Such are the sadnesses of our world, Reitz seems to be saying.

Let us now return to Hermann's journey, using his free, first-class rail pass [a nice touch this!]. In the course of it he meets a younger version of himself [vision]; Renate at her most grotesque; Schnüsschen and Lulu who both reject him; Juan in the role of a circus acrobat; Marianne with her twins in Dulmen; Frau Krause [did you remember her? I didn't! Answer: Dr. Bretschneider's assistant]; Granny Aufschrey drinking on the train lavatory, Elisabeth, the photographer; Clarissa; Frau Cerphal and Gerold Gattering in the front row of the audience at Clarissa's "Witches Passion" concert [did you spot them? There are 4 glimpses of them including one where Frau Cerphal beckons to Hermann. She has a new red-headed hair style. I have to confess to missing them totally]. Hermann also sees a wanted poster of Helga, a member of the murdering Baader-Meinhof gang now, and a newspaper picture of a wounded Stefan at the hands of the police in search of terrorists; he talks and sings to Kathrin in Berlin on the phone from a hotel bedroom; and finally, of course, Glasisch in the flesh showing off his operation scars. There are probably two more as well. During the performance of Clarissa's concert Hermann has a sudden vision of the all female cast advancing on him over the seats in the auditorium/the audience has vanished. They turn into all the females the adult Hermann has had relations with. They include, I think, Tommy's mother and the half-naked student from his concert with her back made to look like a cello + Erika, Renate, Helga in corset/underwear, Marianne and Kathrin. He sees them as avenging harpies accusing him of untold crimes against womanhood.

Hermann and Clarissa find each other then and enjoy a night of love in the Hotel Acacia in Amsterdam. On arrival in the city Hermann had said to himself with reference to Clarissa, "I knew what I yearned for. At last I knew what my goal was." But there is to be no happy, Hollywood conclusion. In the morning Clarissa has gone, leaving a note which one of the pretty chambermaids reads: "Wait for me. I've an appointment." Hermann admits to himself that so often he has made women wait for him, starting with his mother. He tries to wait and fill in the day. He returns to the hotel. Clarissa is still not there. He sees his face reflected in the folding mirror around the dressing table, a face full of anxieties, and suddenly takes a glass ash tray and hurls it at the mirror. It shatters it and the fragments all have shattered images of himself. He is not whole and he knows it. He is in pieces. He takes the train for Simmern and home. "I was running away". Yet again!! But would Clarissa have returned? My take on it is that Reitz is suggesting she would not. There is a little sign on a wooden door giving the time of her press conference as 14.00hours [did you spot it?]. She could have invited Hermann there, had she wanted! She prefers her artistic venture and female friends. Lesbian influence??! There is certainly an ambiguity here about Clarissa's motives and behaviour to put it no

higher. Must Hermann take all the blame for this breakdown? I expect you will all have views about this.

As he composes his letter to the Consul in his mind he says, "I'd like to learn to wait." If that relates to life it could mean waiting once again for Clarissa and accepting blame. But perhaps he means "Art". He will wait for new inspiration, for a new creative direction perhaps and rejects the Handschuh option. Here we have the title of the episode which I note does not contain a question mark. Art or Life or both possibly. I would have thought you cannot have one without the other.

Hermann will write, "I have other dreams" but then "I must find out what they are". This is rather curious, is it not? He will wait for revelation. What did you make of the ending? Reitz seems to be saying, "Now make your own judgement. I will not do it for you." There is sadness, a sense of loss, melancholia, but also the possibility of new departures. In other words, the human condition!

Ivan Mansley.

**From: <Bradnsj aol.com>**

**Sent: Friday, November 12, 2004 17:34:54 PM -0600**

Hello all, I've not fully caught up with the list yet, but on reading Ivan's intro to Part 13, particularly the piece below, I'm reminded of two quotations.

Firstly, from Hippocrates as translated into Latin, "Ars longa vita brevis".

Secondly from Oscar Wilde, "Paradoxically, as it may seem, it is none the less true that life imitates art more than art imitates life."

Do these give us any clue, or am I just stating the obvious?

Best wishes  
Neil

**From: "Thomas Hönemann" <th.hoenemann freenet.de>**

**Sent: Sunday, November 14, 2004 12:33 PM +0200**

Dear Ivan,

this was again a really great introduction, thank you very much. Nobody except you would be able to analyse this atmosphere of disenchantment, loneliness, melancholy, remembering, searching and perplexity in such a clear and precise way. After having watched the episode on Friday evening I made many notes referring to this aspect, but after having read your introduction now most of them are redundant, only would be poor repetitions of what you already said in such a convincing and affectionate way.

But there are still some thoughts left, which I would like to add to the

discussion:

First of all I want to pick up your question if Clarissa would have been coming back or not. I think she surely would, in my mind she really has no ambition to evade Herman anymore. In their talking at night it seems to me that she is opening all her mind to him for the very first time. A wall between them seems to be having torn down. Indeed it seems a bit like a Hollywood-staging for that moment. But it is none, the unlucky end already gleams by Hermann's words: "After seven years no atom in one's body is the same like before." In my mind this already shows his disillusion, his disappointment of not "having found what he was looking for" (remembers me of a nice U2-song) - not even in being deeply together with Clarissa. And this already fits in how you, Ivan, describe his character. So Clarissa is just another step on his "long way home" (reminds me of a nice song by Supertramp ...). After having lost or rejected everyone and everything, not economically but psychologically, there is - that is what Reitz seems to want to say to us - only one alternative left: Going back to his roots, going back home to Schabbach and his mother. And Reitz is the best one to tell us this, because he experienced it the same way when he flopped with "Der Schneider von Ulm" and retired on the island Sylt in the snowy winter of 1979, where his idea and first concept for HEIMAT was born.

Did you notice: the road Hermann approximates Schabbach at the end is the same way the camera moved away from Schabbach at the end of the last part of HEIMAT (while the choir is singing in the cavern. - And then good old Glasich meeting him, recognizing him at once, and telling him finally, that he (Hermann) had not changed at all ...

This fits to HEIMAT 3 when Hermann returns to Schabbach, he at once is integrated back into the village community, in people's mind he had not been leaving but just away for a little while (this is how Reitz expresses it).

Another point is how Reitz is handling dialect (again), most obvious in the scene at the train where he has the vision of himself, looking like he left Schabbach to go to Munich 10 years ago. "That's me!" - this will be the subtitle. But did you recognize? He does not say "Das bin ich!", but "Dat sinn eisch!" - in the most intensive Hunsrück dialect we heard of him since Dülmen when he remembers his mother's cookery (see Film 5). I like how Reitz is using the dialect to illustrate Hermann's disposition and feelings (for so many times in the film, this is just another example).

One of the scenes that moved me most is the one at the telephone with Kathrin singing that sentimental song of searching for home and happiness. I found out that it is a song titled "The Wanderer", lyrics by Georg Philipp Schmidt, Music by Franz Schubert (again!), see [http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/get\\_text.html?TextId=14604](http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=14604) (there is also an English translation on this page!). This scene impressed me so deep because I felt Hermann's feeling so well expressed - the last line says it all: "There, where you are not, there is your happiness." And I also was impressed by the deep comprehension Kathrin has for Hermann. They are brothers in mind, I felt.

Finally a thought which treats a more cortical aspect: In the second

sequence, placed at the bar where he went with his assistant Groß and (Hauptmann) Zielke, there are two movie-posters on the wall: "Abschied von gestern" (1965, "Yesterdays Girl", see [http://www.german-cinema.de/archive/film\\_view.php?film\\_id=641](http://www.german-cinema.de/archive/film_view.php?film_id=641)) by Alexander Kluge, where Edgar Reitz worked as the cameraman, and "Mahlzeiten", Reitz' first own feature film ("Lust for Love", 1967, <http://www.filmzentrale.com/rezis/mahlzeiten.htm>, sorry, I found no adequate site in english until now). These two films were very important and formative for the "New German Cinema" in the sixties. [By chance I am just working on the english translation of Reitz's biography where all these things play an important role. I will inform you as soon as the english version is online, the german already is, see <http://home.t-online.de/home/th.hoenemann/heimat/erb.htm>].

Ivan, I really would like to separate the discussion of part 13 from the one about the complete ZWEITE HEIMAT, I think this would be the way we did it with HEIMAT, too.

Best regards to you all, especially to those who are able to join the Amsterdam screening of HEIMAT 3 this weekend, many thanks to Ivan again,

Thomas Hönemann

**From: "Ivan Mansley" <[ivanman\\_dsl.pipex.com](mailto:ivanman_dsl.pipex.com)>**  
**Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2004 11:45 PM +0100**

I just wanted to thank Thomas for his very gracious comments in his post of 14/11/04 and take up one or two of his points.

As regards Hermann's use of dialect I noticed that the English sub-title, when Hermann sees his younger self on the train, reads "Here I be". This phrase would not spring naturally to the lips of any Englishman, so I guessed it was indicating some dialectal use in German.

You mentioned the character of Kathrin and her understanding of Hermann referring to them, I think, as "brothers in mind." However, there are scenes where she comes across as childish and almost contemptible e.g. the setting on fire of the American flag in Schnusschen's travel office, her comments about lavatories and the absence of doors. I remembered that Hermann had visited his mother in Schabbach in the summer of 1969 [see Episode 10 of Heimat: The Proud Years] with 2 girl-friends, Kathrin and Maria. I have consulted my notes for this. Of course, Hermann is played by a different actor, Peter Harting, and Kathrin by a different actress but I assume it was our Kathrin. Remember Hermann being reprimanded by his mother for the growth of a beard. It must have been after he bought the Citroen Cabrio to take Lulu travelling as that is the car he arrives in, I think, with his 2 female friends. Who was the other? Reitz sometimes seems to have forgotten this visit when Hermann talks of not having been home for 10 years, doesn't he? I also remember that when Hermann visits the sickly, declining Paul in the

apartment adjoining Anton's factory [Episode 11 of Heimat: The Feast of the Living and the Dead] he self-pityingly declares that he is alone after having been left by 2 women. I conclude that these are Schnusschen and Kathrin. He has obviously lived with the latter for some time.

Thomas wrote:" One of the scenes that moved me most is the one at the telephone with Kathrin singing that sentimental song of searching for home and happiness. I

found out that it is a song titled "The Wanderer", lyrics by Georg Philipp Schmidt, Music by Franz Schubert (again!), see [http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/get\\_text.html?TextId=14604](http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=14604) (there is also an english tranltion on this page!). This scene impressed me so deep because I felt Hermanns feeling so well expressed - the last line says it all: "There, where you are not, there is your happiness."

Thank you for the link to the translation of the song. It does seem pessimistic, if that is the right word. It seems to suggest that the desired "homeland", where the "roses bloom" and they speak "my language" is a chimera and can never be attained. Therein lies a great tragedy. It responds to a feeling we all have from time to time and is a comment on the titles of the two films.

I would just like to comment on the ending again. Hermann assumes that his mother will be there waiting for him and that motherly love will cause her to take him in. Presumably she does but it was a large expectation, was it not? Glasisch remarks that Hermann is arriving for his mother's 70th birthday but he was not there, was he? I think others might have commented on this. Glasisch has had an artery removed from his leg to use near his heart and Hermann asks why he didn't need it in his leg. Glasisch replies: "Blood finds another path". Do you think, Thomas, this could apply to Hermann and his return to his mother [the blood of family!]?

Ivan.

**From: "Ivan Mansley" <[ivanman\\_dsl.pipex.com](mailto:ivanman_dsl.pipex.com)>**  
**Sent: Thursday, November 25, 2004 11:13 PM+0100**

If anyone has anything they want to say about the last episode [Part 13] please say it now!! There hasn't been much discussion. We have had a slightly cryptic note from Neil, a gracious insightful and informative piece from Thomas, and apologies for absence from Susan!! [We missed you!]

May I now suggest 1 week, November 26th - December 3rd, for submissions/postings on overviews of Die Zweite Heimat as a complete film. You can write anything you like e.g. one word, one sentence, a paragraph, a long or short essay, a book, whatever. Try to see the film as a whole but you can pick out favourite episodes or scenes, discuss characterisation, the playing of different actors and actresses, compare with Heimat, discuss themes and meanings, the film's importance in cinema history, the nature of

Edgar Reitz's achievement and so on and so on. I am not too proud to beg!! Let all the sleeping lurkers and one time contributors return and write something. If you do not, I shall feel I have failed, and I am sure you do not want me to feel that!! I shall take it personally if you don't write!!

The deadline for contributions will be midnight on Friday, December 3rd 2004. [See I'm becoming a dictator<vbg>]. I will then write some sort of conclusion over the weekend December 4th/5th. Our marathon will have reached the finishing tape!

Turning aside from administrative matters I should like to write a little about the scene in Part 13 where Hermann is rejected by both his daughter and his estranged wife, Schnusschen, at the travelling circus by the Rhine where Juan has performed as acrobat with a Javanese partner. Lulu is sulky. She hasn't seen her Daddy for a long time and we shouldn't read too much into it, perhaps. But rejection is in the air. With his ex-wife rejection is made totally explicit, isn't it? She is in conversation with Juan and when Hermann arrives she has nothing to say to him. She rejects him and walks away from him into the big top. She has responded to his question about Lulu's behaviour contemptuously and coldly. [Are you surprised?] I think this is the first time we have seen Hermann totally rejected by a woman in the whole film. It must have given him great food for thought. Did you notice, as he strides through the field past the parked cars and beyond, a riderless horse run towards and past him. A symbol of the freedom he has lost? Before I forget Hermann and Juan had very little to say to each other, once such good friends. How time brings its estrangements, Reitz seems to say.

One other little thing about how Heimat and DZH interlock/enmesh or fail to do so occurred to me. In Episode 10 of Heimat we learn that Paul is not in America but in Baden-Baden where Anton goes to find him. Paul has provided Hermann with an electronic studio and all its equipment, courtesy of sale proceeds from Simon Electric. I remember Paul and Hermann going off to record nightingales in the park, with Anton completely forgotten. There is no mention of this in DZH at all, is there? Hermann's trip to Baden-Baden must be presumed to have occurred after Consul Handschuh's magnanimous offer of a studio in Part 11 of DZH in 1967. ["You'll be free, free as a bird."] So using his freedom Hermann had acquired 2 studios!! I wonder if Reitz ever got confused with his story lines!

Ivan Mansley.

**From: "Susan Biedron" <Susan.jsbiedron.com>  
Sent: Friday, November 26, 2004 7:35 PM -0500**

Ivan wrote:

>One other little thing about how Heimat and DZH interlock/enmesh or fail to  
>do so occurred to me. In Episode 10 of Heimat we learn that Paul is not in  
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>of a studio in Part 11 of DZH in 1967. ["You'll be free, free as a bird."]  
>So using his freedom Hermann had acquired 2 studios!! I wonder if Reitz ever  
>got confused with his story lines!

Ivan, good point. With all the times I have watched Heimat and DZH, I did not notice the contradiction about the two studios. I have had a tendency to watch them as separate entities - but one really should watch DZH with Heimat in mind.

>Before I forget Hermann and Juan had very little to say to each other,  
>once such good friends. How time brings its estrangements, Reitz seems to say.

I still do not really understand the estrangement between Hermann and Juan, unless one can trace it back to early rivalry over Clarissa. Although by this time, it is long clear that Clarissa had no romantic interest in Juan. Can anyone comment on this? Does Juan appear in Heimat 3? He is such an interesting character, he deserves his own "spinoff series." It is true that relationships evolve or decline over the years - people simply loose contact.

The Heimat Trilogy is my favorite "film" because of its power to transport me to the world of my ancestors/heritage. I only know of one person among my acquaintances here in the US who has seen it. Years ago, a man in my German class who was born in Austria bought the video set when it first became available - he talked about it in class and tried to get together a group to view it, but ran into problems finding a viewing location. Like Hermann and Juan, our lives took different paths.

I am also interested in finding a DVD set of Heimat 3 that will play in the US.

Susan

**From: "Maarten Landzaat" <gijs xs4all.nl>**  
**Sent: Sunday, November 28, 2004 11:42 PM +0200**

Better late than never, as we say here. Here's my comment on part 13. I didn't comment too much lately because my 4-year-old-son pressed the record button leaving my 10-11-12 VHS tape almost completely overwritten :-(, and because I was already spending so much time on Heimat3 in Munich and Amsterdam.

My part 13 copy didn't have subtitles so I probably missed some essentials. I will catch up later with the DVDs.

I am writing this first part without having read other people's comments. So

sorry if I make superfluous comments.

As opposed to the other recent parts, I found this one very compelling again. The dreamlike atmosphere, the loneliness and problems of Hermann were conveyed very convincingly, to me anyway.

#### Circles

The story ends at the place of the beginning; Schabbach.

The merry-go-rounds are there again, just as in the final episode of Heimat.

Hermann returns to a tent near the Rhine, wasn't this where he got his first kiss from Snusschen?

Wasn't Glasisch dead by the way??

#### Animals

Bird in Amsterdam

Circus animals

Two horses without riders (is that english?): in Heidelberg and Bacharach

I haven't got a clue about any significance.

#### Women

I thought that women was the central issue of this episode, more so than "Kunst oder Leben".

We see all Hermann's women passing, either real or in fantasy.

It is the century (or year?) of the woman.

There's the Hexenpassion.

Alex dies, which I think also stresses the 'victory' of women.

#### Balloons

I noticed coloured balloons earlier, but now I noticed that the colors of the balloons matched the colors of the women that were subject of the story at those particular times:

1: at the oktoberfest, there was somebody with red and white balloons. Right after that Erika appears with her clothes in the exact same colors.

2: After the Handschuh visit, there were yellow and blue balloons.

Immediately after that, Hermann goes to Renate's U-boot, which is illuminated by these exact two colors.

3: There was a nun with yellow and red balloons. I think this referred to the colors on the Hexenpassion poster, so to Clarissa.

#### Water

Venice and Amsterdam. When you draw a line from Venice to Amsterdam, I would think the Hunsruck is in the middle.

Venice was on a Death in Venice film poster in Stefan's apartment. Later I believe I heard Hermann read from a newspaper that Stefan received some award in Venice.

I believe I saw a Hexenpassion poster in the Lijnbaansgracht under the bridge to the Melkweg.

Death in Venice maybe also refers to the two 'decaying' elderly men: Handschuh and Zielke.

I saw big bars protecting trees from cars near the Amsterdam canals. I'm pretty sure these bars weren't there yet in the seventies!

Now I will read the other emails.

Ivan's introduction: Wow, you have put it to words beautifully again! I did not recognize Elisabeth, Frau Cerphal and Gattinger. I saw them on the title role though...

About Hermann and Clarissa in Amsterdam: I also thought that Clarissa indeed should have returned by the time Hermann was back at the hotel room with his flowers, judging by the time of Clarissa's press conference. Their relationship is still very difficult.

About the ending: I agree it is totally open. All friendships have ended, Hermann's career is on a standstill, he is back at his place of birth. He chose not to jump into the empty baby bed of the Handschuhs, but to return to his own Heimat.

Thomas, like you I also felt for Edgar Reitz, he certainly must have gone through much of Hermann's emotions when he went to Sylt.

DVD

I also finally received the Heimat 1 DVD from Tartan! It is indeed nicely packaged, and there's a nice book with lots of useful information. The picture quality is SO much better than my old VHS tapes. Needless to say, I'm very glad. I'm sorry we didn't have these DVDs available before we started our collective viewing. MANY thanks to Reinder for his lobbying for these DVDs!

Amsterdam premiere

I did not attend the Amsterdam premiere (Munich was a little too recent), but I did go see the discussion afterwards with Edgar Reitz, Salome Kammer, Geert Mak and Pieter Verhoeff. It was quite interesting, although the limited command of German of the two Dutchmen kept the discussion on a fairly superficial level. There was interesting talk about the parallels between music and film, that there needs to be a pulse, a rhythm, which forms a basis on which a story can be told. I'm an amateur musician so I could relate to that. Maybe it partly explains why I like Heimat so much. The most interesting was Reitz's present activity: he told he was cleaning up Heimat film material. He found there was about 5 hours footage from Heimat 3 that was of usable, very high quality. It was only left out for the sake of the 'rhythm' of Heimat3. Then he told about his new idea to make a new Heimat flashback series, also using such material from Heimat 1 and 2. It would start with the Heimat 3 ending: crying Lulu going back inside to see her kids, and then a flash back story would start. I'm looking forward to it! This Edgar Reitz knows no rest.

Good night,  
Maarten

**From: "Ivan Mansley" <[ivanman\\_dsl.pipex.com](mailto:ivanman_dsl.pipex.com)>**

**Sent: Thursday, December 02, 2004 1:33 AM +0100**

Maarten wrote: < Wasn't Glasisch dead by the way??>

You've got your chronology in a bit of a twist here, Maarten. Glasisch dies in the last episode of Heimat, the year being 1982 [Heimat Part 11, The Feast of the Living and the Dead]. Hermann returns to Schabbach and meets Glasisch in 1970 [DZH Part 13, Art or Life]. Glasisch thus has 12 years to go!!!

You also wrote:< Two horses without riders (is that english?): in Heidelberg and Bacharach I haven't got a clue about any significance.> Nothing wrong with the English!! In my post of 25/11/04 I wrote of the riderless horse that gallops past Hermann as he leaves the circus:< Did you notice, as he strides through the field past the parked cars and beyond, a riderless horse run towards and past him. A symbol of the freedom he has lost?> That was only a tentative guess. I noticed the other horse too as it was led across the historic square by a stableman/ostler. I thought of the French horsewoman in Heimat but that didn't seem to lead anywhere. Could it have been a comment by Reitz on the vast changes wrought in transport over a relatively short historic period? The horse was the traditional means of getting from one place to the other over the centuries; now we have Hermann swanning around the country on a free, first class rail pass; old meets new in an ancient city!! Probably totally fanciful!

I hadn't noticed the colour of the balloons and their relation to the different women. In my own mind I feel sure Clarissa was not going to return to Hermann. That is the significance of giving the time of the press conference as 2p.m. on the little notice. She did not need to leave so early before Hermann awoke and he could have accompanied her. I know Thomas differs on this. Hermann cannot wait. When he says he is going home to learn to wait ["I'd like to learn to wait"] perhaps he means to learn the art of patience, which is a mature accomplishment after all, and then the nature of the "other dreams" will be revealed.

Ivan.

**From: "Susan Biedron" <Susan.jsbiedron.com>**

**Sent: Thursday, December 02, 2004 8:57 PM -0500**

While watching Part 13, I noticed something I had never seen before. Right after the title, in the lower right corner is "Für S." Does anyone know what this meant? A dedication?

I like the ending to DZH as Hermann's story comes full circle. It begins with Hermann's comment at Oktoberfest that Schnüsschen would have liked it - she enjoyed being surrounded by her family and lots of people. Does this mean Hermann considers his coworkers his family now? Hermann on the other hand, says he does not like to be surrounded by family, he could not wait to get away. He mentions that he has his friends.

Then things start to happen (the offers from Consul Handschuh and Herr Zielke) that make Hermann realize that success is not that great when you have no one to share it with. He comments suddenly that feelings of homesickness start to come over him. When he needs advice, he thinks about his grandmother. Hermann gets on a train, like in the first episode of DZH, looking for something, hoping to find Clarissa. Throughout part 13, Hermann's friends reappear - many of them have not turned out very well. His attempt to connect with his little daughter fails. Hermann finally finds his great love Clarissa and they get together, but for some reason, she does not come back to him as planned. Hermann is left waiting.

At the end it seems everyone has left Hermann - the only thing left is his family and he returns to his Heimat. He walks down the familiar road to Shabbach.

Even though there are some inconsistencies with the characters in Heimat, Reitz ties DZH to Heimat very well. No matter what happens with friends and lovers, one's family is always there.

By the way, I thought the rail pass was a fantastic gift. Around the time that I first saw Heimat and DZH, I worked for DER Tours that was affiliated with GermanRail. Employees got a discount train pass once a year. Our big boss received a permanent free rail pass when he retired.

I have learned much about Reitz and film in general in this discussion. There are some very knowledgeable and insightful people in this group! Ivan, thanks once again for leading this discussion! Fantastisch!

Susan

## **DZH – The whole Film**

**From: "ANASTASY TYNAN" <evlogite sbcglobal.net>  
Sent: Friday, November 26, 2004 6:18:20 PM -0800**

Ivan:

DZH has meant more to me than any other film. The deaths of Reihard & Ansgar and the alcoholic intellectual (name escapes me) were reminiscent of other deaths in my own university circle. The characters of Evelyn and Schnusschen--so resonant of women in my life. The places of Heimat-- Trier, Munich, Berlin, Oberbayern-- I've lived there, experienced Deutschland in Herbst, lived in a Berliner Wohngemeinschaft, and lived with my Verwandtschaft in a small hamlet off the beaten track.

I have benefited by all your great contributions and insights and will refer back to them as I watch my own personal copy of the Heimat trilogy, which I hope to buy/receive (are you listening St.Nick?) in the next few weeks. (Can anyone suggest a version for American DVD players, with optional English subtitles?)

Again, thanks all  
Happy Thanksgiving

**From: "Ivan Mansley" <ivanman dsl.pipex.com>  
Sent: Friday, December 03, 2004 1:16 AM +0100**

### **DIE ZWEITE HEIMAT: THE WHOLE FILM**

The first and most obvious point about this film considered as a whole is its incredible length. The Imdb web-site says of it: <With a total running time of 25 hrs 32 min, it holds the Guinness World Record for 'Longest Film Commercially Shown In Its Entirety' as it premiered on theater screens in Munich, Germany in September 1992>. Somewhere Edgar Reitz tells us not to underestimate this length of time, and also funnily enough that he nearly needed even more time to tell his stories. There must be someone, somewhere, who saw this film right through in one sitting with a few coffee breaks. The experience must have been very different from watching it the way we have done.

The second point I would make is how incredible for one director to make one masterpiece and then follow it with another!! To my mind Die Zweite Heimat is undoubtedly a masterpiece. One cannot help making comparisons with the

original Heimat. They are very different films but their methods are fundamentally the same. Thomas has written about this. In both films the stories unfold slowly; they are pursued with integrity, and there are no scenes in either film designed to titillate and excite the audience and score cheap effects and thrills. Which film do I prefer? I cannot answer. Perhaps my heart warms more to Heimat but my intellect responds more to DZH. I admit that I like complexity. I like to unravel relationships and fit myself into the predicaments and anxieties of characters.

Let us just consider the stories of some of the characters in DZH and their outcomes in the film:-

- Juan- the talented and perpetual outsider. Attempts suicide in Frau Cerphal's garden and ends as a circus acrobat. He had predicted/wished this on the banks of the river after their little concert in the house of a rich industrialist.
- Reinhard- commits suicide by drowning in Lake Ammersee. The world is not as he wants it to be.
- Alex- the perpetual student. A man of very fine mind but dies in an alcoholic stupor.
- Helga- a very troubled young woman but talented. Becomes an accessory at the very least to murder. Often twisted and bitter.
- Stefan- rather enigmatic, undoubtedly talented, makes Reinhard's film, ends severely wounded after police raid on his apartment.
- Rob- rather fades away. Temporarily blinded thro' his experiments in cinema.
- Volker and Jean-Marie. I see them as a pair! Genuinely talented musicians. Volker unable to satisfy his wife, Clarissa. I would have liked Mr. Reitz to have devoted a complete episode to these men. I found both of them very sympathetic and interesting.
- Evelyne and Ansgar. The latter meets his death in a tragic accident brought about by a certain foolhardiness. I wished Evelyne had not been allowed to fade out of the film as she did. Were there any contractual reasons for this? What a marvellous voice she had!!
- Hermann, Clarissa and Schnüsschen! Hermann and Clarissa's love affair is at the heart of the film. They dance around each other but do not find union. Both their actual marriages are unsuccessful. They are shown as talented and tortured individuals. Schnüsschen does not have the depth of character to satisfy Hermann.

The stories of these characters are interwoven as if by magic almost. And how enthralling they are! And consider the host of others not mentioned above:- Clemens, Consul Handschuh, Kathrin, KohlenJosef, Tommy's mother and father, the Aufschrey family, Erika, Marianne, Dorli, Olga, Herr Brettschneider, the academics at the Conservatoire, Renate, Berndt, Elisabeth, Frau Cerphal, Gerold Gattinger....I could go on and on! And what a range of German society they represent.! We have musicians, writers, academicians, capitalists, film-makers, beer drinkers, brawlers, housewives, photographers, ex-opera singers [Frau Moretti], working men [Josef], bandsmen[Clemens]...One could go on and on.[I see I have just said that, so I will say it again!]. What a rich tapestry!

Have any of the actors and actresses published recollections of working on Reitz's films? I am very interested to know how far they had any licence to

improvise or suggest and how far they had to stick to the script they were provided with. I am sure German list members could help out here. For instance, is the dialogue, as given on the erfilm web-site, what the actors were provided with or what emerged?

I think my favourite episode was probably Ansgar's Death. My favourite scene was probably the seduction scene in the attic in Dulmen. I changed my mind about Henry Arnold's acting of Hermann. He certainly brought depth to the last episode. I would single out Salome Kammer as Clarissa and Armin Fuchs as Volker for my "woman and man of the film".

What does it all add up to? For me, the film depicts the struggle to find maturity amongst a group of student intellectuals but which reflects our own struggles. Life is not simple! We all make mistakes, says Herr Reitz, and we are all bonded together. "No man is an island", as the English poet and cleric, John Donne in the 16th century, wrote, and this film, which speaks movingly and clearly to me, reinforces that idea. Whilst Hermann at the end of the film may feel that there is an opposition between art and life, I do not think that this is Edgar Reitz's view. His film and its stories [Art] have helped to give meaning to my life [Life]. I cannot think of higher praise than that.

Ivan Mansley.

**From: "Chuck Wheat" <fateofgold yahoo.com>**  
**Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2004 10:13:02 AM -0700**

I would like to add a comment about the music in DZH. I absolutely loved it! I've always been interested in the 20th century trend in virtually all art forms away from the beautiful and orderly and into.... something different and more challenging. I'm not saying that this trend was successful. In fact, it created a crisis in most areas of art, including music, painting, dance, and others. The problem seems to be that any artist who wants to adhere to older forms tends to appear stuffy and old-school, yet the new forms fail to satisfy the general public's art consumption needs. DZH is a fabulous dramatization of this struggle. This crisis is not really resolved yet, but it's starting to look like it will ultimately be resolved by letting the "aberrations" of the 20th century be forgotten through the passage of time...

In music I'm drawn to dissonance and chaos to some extent. Classical: Varese and Schoenberg. Jazz: Coltrane, Horace Silver. Rock: Frank Zappa, Robin Trower. So, with these interests and tastes, I was bound to love DZH.

A question about music in Heimat: does anyone have lyrics for "Geheischnis"? Actually I think someone speaks most of the same words early in the first episode... nice foreshadowing and closure. The word Geheischnis isn't in my Wahrig dictionary, but it sounds like it means "what things are called". The choral piece of that name is my favorite



piece of music from all of the Heimat series.

Chuck

**From: "Susan Biedron" <Susan.jsbiedron.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2004 5:26 PM -0500**

Regarding Chuck's comments on the music in DZH - music plays a much larger part than in Heimat. If I think back on Heimat, the only two pieces of music that stand out for me are the powerful theme song (which continues in DZH) and the very sweet tender notes (sometimes piano notes) that play in the background when a scene is particularly sentimental. I can hum it, but do not know how to describe it. I would have to go back and look at Heimat to find the particular scenes.

But back to DZH: when I first viewed the scenes with the sometimes atonal, "alternative" music, I could not wait for that part to be over. But gradually I became somewhat used to it - probably because Hermann's struggle with his composing was part of the plot. This summer I attended an outdoor concert in which an unusual piece was played and I found it rather interesting. So while I would not go out and buy a CD of this music, I have at least found it sometimes acceptable. So DZH has opened my horizons musically, if only a little.

I cannot read music and have never had lessons of any sort. My tastes evolved from strictly rock n roll to classical and folk (ethnic) music. In 1993 my husband and I visited Vienna and bought tickets to an evening concert in St. Stephen's historic cathedral - we were expecting something like Bach played on the magnificent organ. To our great disappointment, the performance consisted of new compositions by a local organist - it was very weird. I did not see DZH until the next year. I think back to that concert and wonder what I would think of it today.

I think Reitz brings out the struggles of all artists and perhaps all people who have new ideas and try to bring about changes. I am continually blown away by the knowledgeable comments about music and film from the participants in this group.

Susan

**From: "Foerderer, Walter (GE Healthcare)" <walter.foerderer@med.ge.com>  
Sent: Monday, December 20, 2004 2:51 PM +0200**

Chuck wrote:

A question about music in Heimat: does anyone have lyrics for "Geheischnis"? Actually I think someone speaks most of the same words early in the first episode... nice foreshadowing and closure. The word

Geheischnis isn't in my Wahrig dictionary, but it sounds like it means "what things are called". The choral piece of that name is my favorite piece of music from all of the Heimat series.

Look here: <http://www.erfilm.de/h1/11/08.html>

CHOR Ue, unne, vore, hinne Drue, drunne, drauße, drinne Loo, doo, hie Frickelscher un Kieh Knäpperscher, Krieschele, Wehle un Schlehe Verziehlscher, Geheischnis. Eisch, meisch, deisch ue, unne, vore, hinne loo, doo, hie Frickelscher un Kieh Knepperscher, Krieschele, Wehle un Schlehe Verziehlscher, Geheischnis. Vatter, Mutter, Kinn Unkel un Gesinn die Goot und der Pat, im Himmel schwätzen sie Hunsrücker Platt.

Chuck, I have similar interest in music and I fully agree with your statement. The DZH music is terrific and I love it as well.

Walter

**From: "Chuck Wheat" <fateofgold yahoo.com>**  
**Sent: Monday, December 20, 2004 4:26 PM**

At 06:51 AM 12/20/2004, Foerderer, Walter \ (GE Healthcare) wrote:

>Look here: <http://www.erfilm.de/h1/11/08.html>

>

>CHOR Ue, unne, vore, hinne Drue, drunne, drauße, drinne Loo, doo, hie  
>Frickelscher un Kieh Knäpperscher, Krieschele, Wehle un Schlehe  
>Verziehlscher, Geheischnis. Eisch, meisch, deisch ue, unne, vore, hinne  
>loo, doo, hie Frickelscher un Kieh Knepperscher, Krieschele, Wehle un  
>Schlehe Verziehlscher, Geheischnis. Vatter, Mutter, Kinn Unkel un Gesinn  
>die Goot und der Pat, im Himmel schwätzen sie Hunsrücker Platt.

>

>Chuck, I have similar interest in music and I fully agree with your  
>statement. The DZH music is terrific and I love it as well.

>

>Walter

Thanks, Walter. btw the music performed by Clarissa in Episode 4 of Heimat 3 was pushing me past my limits! I wonder if it truly represents mid-90's avant garde music in Europe...

Chuck