

I think the powerful theme of Part 10 is that of change and particularly change seen through the eyes of the returning outsider - Reinhart feels that Herman has changed; that Alex has changed; he finds the Fusbar transformed into a pile of rubble; he encounters Elizabeth Cerphal, once wealthy, suddenly broke. In Renate's U-Boat, Renate's boyfriend says to Reinhart - "Yesterday we were closed, today we are open. It changes." Reinhart finds the changes difficult, and for him it is as much a loss of the past as the end of the future - the world he left only months earlier has altered in all sorts of unexpected ways and he finds himself even more on the outside. And of course, there is his death.

In Esther's studio, Reinhart imagines what it would be like to be beheaded. He imagines the rising panic, the moment the blade touches his neck. Just before she goes down to the water and discovers with the others that Reinhart is dead, Clarissa goes into the church and finds the statue of the beheaded saint. I've not thought about it in any depth and so I can't put it into words, but I feel somehow that these two linked references tell us something about Reinhart's death. I think it's unimportant whether he committed suicide or not.

Patricia

From: "Ralf Eigl" <ralfeigl t-online.de>

Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2004 10:54 PM +0200

Thank you very much, Ivan, for a wonderful introduction to part 10. As my tape of episodes 10 and 11 does not work properly and nearly comes to a halt every few seconds, I cannot re-view this episode now and therefore what I am writing is from memory.

I last saw this episode quite a few years ago and what I remember is that Reinhard's death came very much as a surprise to me and was not something you would have expected from the rest of the episode. I had thought that yes, of course Reinhard seemed to be going through a crisis, that he suffered from the loss of the circle of friends, from alienation and disorientation perhaps, but neither to an extent that suggested he might commit suicide. Still it seemed obvious that he killed himself and that his death was not by accident..... The end of the episode - well-filmed as it is - did not seem quite logical. It left me with a big WHY??

I also remember that - although I liked the episode - I felt that it led the viewer a little far off the central storyline, but that may have been my very personal opinion...

Ralf

11 The Time of Silence, Rob 1967/1968

From: "Ivan Mansley" <ivanman dsl.pipex.com>

Sent: Friday, October 15, 2004 8:32 AM +0100

AN INTRODUCTION TO:-

DIE ZWEITE HEIMAT. PART 11. THE TIME OF SILENCE; ROB, 1967/68.

Rob is dramatically blinded, fortunately not permanently, by a violent flash from one of the lamps being used for the first screening of the VariaVision film on modern transport made by Rob and associates, funded by Consul Handschuh and other financial backers, with electronic sound effects engineered by Hermann and some commentary written by Helga. The scene where this happens is fast-moving and full of tension. The main participants are struggling to be ready, as soon as Consul Handschuh has finished speaking to the press. The audience has seen Herr Zielke, a war-time comrade of the Consul's but an ardent traditionalist who is bitterly opposed to the experiments of those he sees as snotty-nosed young upstarts, lurking beside a sparking fuse cabinet. It was unclear to me whether he had deliberately sabotaged the electrics or whether he just maliciously keeps the information about the malfunction to himself. In any case, the scene moves at speed and the tension is ratcheted up.

Through this episode we see Rob grow in stature. He has always felt himself to be under the shadow of Reinhard. In one of his commentaries he says, "He [Reinhard] was always the auteur among us...He told stories", but later he remarks, "I used to leave it to Reinhard, but now I was an auteur." He is finding a voice as a film-maker. The Consul says of him, "He's an eye person. He chases images. Like the devil chases poor souls." It occurs to me that Edgar Reitz is reflecting different aspects of himself as a film-maker in the characters of Reinhard and Rob. The former feels that the most important truths escape and are hidden from the camera, whilst the latter feels that the truth can be conveyed through images. I liked the scenes in the boathouse where Rob demonstrates his work and theories to the Consul and his party. I feel sure that by these means Edgar Reitz is conducting a debate with himself about the nature of film-making and what he feels about it.

Now what are we to make of Rob's sudden blinding? Does it have any symbolic significance? Is this the punishment of the gods? Rob at one point arrogantly remarks to Herr Zielke, "I see truth." Could he be being punished for such boastful claims? I am not sure how to interpret this. In addition, certainly at first, I felt that a more suitable title for the episode might have been "A Time of Blindness" or "A Time of Seeing", but, in fact, the title is "The Time of Silence". I have reflected on this and will outline my thoughts, but I feel there is more to be said on this subject. I hope others will contribute on this matter. Rob tells us that there was not much talking in his family. We see him with his father, a forester and hunter. They do

not talk but watch. A deer is shot. Rob tells us that his father taught him to “look properly” and also that he became a cameraman because he didn’t “think much of talking”. Here we have silence. This is beautifully illustrated at the end of the episode where Rob’s father leads him gently down to the lake. Rob removes his bandages. Despite pain and tears he has recovered his sight. Not a word is spoken! Incredible and very moving!

There are other silences though, aren’t there? These are of a more intangible kind. We have Hermann’s silence to his wife about his adulterous fling with Erika Brandstätter, the Consul’s attractive assistant. He has had his eye on her since first meeting! He shows himself to be a resourceful liar, as he smears grease and petrol from a parked motor scooter on to his face and hands, before going inside and pretending to have been involved in a car breakdown. There is Schnüsschen’s inner hurt and bottled up feelings of neglect. We witness Volker’s inner hurt and feelings of betrayal at Hermann’s hands. We witness Clarissa’s growing hysteria and feelings of inadequacy. Are these “silences” included in the title, do you think?

The episode looks in considerable detail at the parallel marriages of Hermann and Schnüsschen, and Volker and Clarissa, and the interweaving of their lives. We see them altogether for the first time for a dinner party in Volker’s apartment. There is warmth and friendship. It is shot in colour. Schnüsschen is wearing her expensive Pierre Cardin dress, which has left them penniless for the rest of the month. [I didn’t like it at all, but what do I know?!!] Clarissa has bought a fish for supper which is wrapped in newspaper. This is to prove significant! The camera lovingly focuses on the pale colour surrounding its gills [Edgar Reitz is always good on food as observed before], and the purplish colour of its flesh where the body is separated from the head. Hermann does the beheading, as the women, especially his wife, are too squeamish. Even he, however, does not want to eat it if it came from the Ammersee. Reinhard’s body might have fed the fish. There is great attention to detail. We have the thump of the body as the fish is thrown down on to the newspaper and scrunching sounds as the blade of the knife cuts through the fish’s neck. We see the yellow stains on the newspaper where the fish has been wrapped, and through the stains Hermann’s eyes glimpse an article, which reveals that his soundtrack for Rob and Reinhard’s film on the cotton industry has been awarded a prize for best music at the Cannes’ Advertising Film Festival. He has never been informed, which seems a little incredible to both Volker and the viewers. This is to prove the turning point for Hermann financially. Consul Handschuh, the head of Isar Films, has accepted the prize for him and later declares his intention to conquer “new worlds” with Hermann. I thought this scene of the dinner party worked beautifully in cinematic terms and it was the first scene of the episode where my attention was held, 100%.

Volker is left an outsider by Hermann and becomes bitter and jealous. We see the strains of his marriage emerge. Clarissa is highly strung, almost neurotic. The song she sings to her baby is full of gloomy thoughts about sorrow and grief. Is it meant to be her own composition? Or is it a lullaby known to German mothers? Her husband does not want to talk about his feelings. We see the distance, literal and metaphorical, between them as they sit at table. I liked the way Reitz intercuts the scene of Hermann’s

infidelity with Volker's visit to the Simon apartment where he finds Schnüsschen alone. They tremble on the brink of an affair, don't they? Schnüsschen seems to lead him on a little, I thought. She introduces the subject of his love life with Clarissa, and wonders half-seriously whether he calls her "Madam" in the course of their love-making. She obviously sees Clarissa as a superior kind of person. A little later, after Volker starts to relate a little of his life-story, she says, "You're a strange fellow. You could be a really great man, a great artist if...you weren't too scared to show your feelings." This seems a little like an invitation, which she makes with a half-flirtatious smile, and Volker takes it as such, but when he tries to kiss her she rebuffs him and sends him off like a naughty schoolboy with a peck on the cheek. Schnüsschen has talked of her neglect by Hermann. Through the intercutting we are made aware that Hermann is being unfaithful at that very moment and there are some interesting parallel details. Both couples are drinking wine. We have a shot of an empty wine glass on a tray by Erika's bed. Schnüsschen is seen drawing the cork from a bottle and pouring a large glass for Volker. Both couples discuss formality of address. We have mentioned the "Madam" discussion concerning Clarissa, and Erika asks Hermann how formal she should be with him the next day at work. "Right, Fraulein Brandstätter", Hermann replies. You can also find other neat little parallels. For instance, Volker envies Hermann [electronic studio], whilst Schnüsschen envies Clarissa [reasons unspecified].

After Hermann's failure to tell the truth to his wife – truth goes down the plug-hole with the soap as he washes his face-Schnüsschen and Clarissa meet [pre-arranged?] in the park. On first viewing I had marked this scene down as both compelling and revealing. It is a truth-telling session. Clarissa declares that she had never liked Schnüsschen, and the latter replies, "I know why. Because you were the love of Hermann's life." And then it all comes pouring out. She is unhappy, lonely and unfulfilled in her marriage. "Hermann never wrote a song for me. For you, but not for me." So there is jealousy there too. And then I do not know whether this is a mistake by Reitz or an exaggeration on Schnüsschen's part as she declares, "I really longed for it, but do you think I could tell him." She had in Part 8, just before he suggests marriage, if my notes serve me right. "I'd rather have bitten out my tongue than say it to him." She sees herself as a tragic figure. She feels unwanted, undervalued and uneducated. "I feel Hermann left me long ago, in his heart." She is right, of course, although Hermann is a good father. Reitz points up so well the miseries men and women bring upon themselves by unsuitable marriages. And all is not well with Clarissa either. On return home she dumps the crying baby in her husband's lap, more or less ignores her mother who is cleaning her smelly fridge, departs with her cello and returns it to the house of Dr. Kirchmeier in an act of renunciation! Marriage and domesticity have caused her to abandon music. She is anguished and in despair.

I am aware I have not written anything about the Esther story and her search for the truth about her mother. In some ways I feel this is the least interesting part of the episode, although there are silences here too. "Germany is a book with pages torn out." Somehow I feel that this strand is too didactic. Reitz is defending himself against accusations that he has not dealt effectively with Germany's Nazi past and as a result the story-telling

becomes a little formulaic. [What was the mouse-like object in Esther's soup in the inn in Dachau, and why did the camera dwell on it, by the way?] Nor have I written about the scenes involving the left-wing, so-called revolutionaries, Helga, Katrin and Dirk. Reitz satirises them and makes them sufficiently obnoxious; their self-centred behaviour is abominable but they were part of the historical furniture of a time I remember well!

Ivan Mansley.

From: "Susan Biedron" <Susan.jsbiedron.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 20, 2004 6:18 PM -0500

Ivan wrote

>What was the mouse-like object in Esther's soup
>in the inn in Dachau, and why did the camera dwell on it, by the way?

It looked like liver dumpling soup to me. I believe the German name is Leberkäse - ?? It is actually very delicious - tastes more like a meatball than liver.

The only reason I could think of for the long shot of the soup, is that perhaps it is ironic that Esther's father is trying to comfort her with a typical German food after her frustrating visit to Dachau. He also comments earlier that he'll look for a place to eat because she will be hungry - he doesn't put it in so many words, but he means "eat something, you'll feel better."

I agree that her story seems to be tacked on. But she did love Reinhard and after she visits the Ammersee, I think it would seem even odder if we didn't hear anymore about her.

Susan

From: <JoelOYoung aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 21, 2004 8:11 AM +0200

Leberknödelsuppe

From: Thomas Hönemann <th.hoenemann freenet.de>
Date: Thu, 21 Oct 2004 23:23:49 +0200

Dear Ivan and others,

first of all, Ivan, let me thank you for your great introduction to part 11, and all the efforts you did during the last year for us. When I read the introduction the pictures of the film came back into my mind. Luckily I at last found the time to watch the episode

again this evening. The weeks and month before were so busy (even for HEIMAT-reasons) that I just did not find the time to participate in the discussion actively.

I want to pick up your thoughts about the title of this episode - "The time of silence". In fact, there is no silence at all - there is much talking, but, and this is what I felt, there is much empty talking, much talking without saying any constructive word. What is described here is not a loss of words, but a loss of truth and honesty, of meaning. To me this episode seems to be deeply implemented in a sphere of desperation and loneliness. And this all refers to those two couples, Hermann and Schnüsschen, Volker and Clarissa. The scene that pointed me on this most was the one where Clarissa and Schnüsschen were talking on the old graveyard (Munich Nord-Friedhof): not only the loss of colour, the winter and graveyard atmosphere, but Schnüsschen expressing all her desperation, at last crying. She feels not to belong to the world of those who are studying, those who are close to the arts. She regrets that Hermann never wrote a song for her, and this only is symbolising what she makes her doubt about his loyalty. (And finally all this is proved by Hermanns night with the secretary.) The scene in the graveyard for me is the most impressing scene, even because Schnüsschen is obviously not that thumb and birdbrained as we all could believe from how she was introduced to us, with her dialect, her naivety and her unselfconsciousness (Did you recognise: when Hermann is talking to her he often falls back into the dialect. Is he going to show us, that nobody is able to deny his provenience?). To me she appears to be a woman with a very big emotional sensibility, what is called 'emotional intelligence' today, we easily can conclude this from the conversation with Volker. She is analysing all his personal problems very clearly, that clearly, that he is going to try to bring their dialogue to another (absurd) topic because of his embarrassment. She is nobody who is talking in scientific language, but with her own and quite easy words she is able to hit the mark very precisely. - Volker. He is the other tragical character in this "game" of playing with each others emotions. Those two are brothers in mind - or at least brothers in destiny. But even Clarissa is suffering from the situation, she obviously is unsatisfied with her life, not able to lead it to that way she would like to lead it to ... the bringing back of the Cello is a most conspicuous symbol for all her desperation and aimlessness - She is complying to the situation by giving away her last chance (her tool) to flee from the situation. See her coming back from the walk on the graveyard with Schnüsschen, tossing her child (Arnold) in the arms of Volker who is busy in composing, hearing her mothers reproaches, and then spontaneously deciding to leave to bring back the instrument to Dr. K. - no act of liberation at all, but an act of desperation, of getting deeper into the capture of her family and life that she never wanted to live that way.

So, to resume it, this is what "time of silence" means to me, the inability of couples to express the own feeling towards each other anymore, because there is definitely no future in their relationships, no more word to say besides terms of politeness.

A further aspect: Those things that are shown as details of the "Varia Vision" here are indeed some aspects of Reitz' former life as a filmmaker. In 1965 Reitz worked for the "Insel-Film", whose principal was Norbert Handwerk (see the parallel to Konsul HANDschuh). They worked for the architect Paolo Nestler and built a film-event for the International exhibition of Traffic in Munich which started on 25.6.1965, financed by the German "Bundesbahn" (German National Railways). And this event, this installation has a very clear similarity to what we saw at the VariaVision. So in this part of the film Reitz again worked on his own history. As far as I know in 1965 there

was no accident like in DZH, but the concept, as I said, was the same.

That's it for tonight, I hope to be able to continue contributing in the discussion. All the best to you, I am looking forward to your comments,

Thomas

<http://home.t-online.de/home/th.hoenemann/heimat/index.htm>

P. S.: You as experts of DIE ZWEITE HEIMAT are willing to join a little quiz? Have a look at Salome Kammers photo on

<http://home.t-online.de/home/th.hoenemann/heimat/h3actors.htm>.

Are you able to recognize the background? - I did not invent this quiz myself, but this was the question Salome Kammer asked me as well when sending in the photo for my webpage.

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

Date: Fri, 22 Oct 2004 13:39:26 +0200

Dear HEIMAT-Friends,

in addition to last nights contribution I am attaching a file showing the structures of Reitz' installation for Inesfilm in 1965 wich was presented at the International exhibition of Traffic in Munich. It is taken from the book Reinhold Rauh: Edgar Reitz - Film als Heimat, Munich 1993, Page 61.

There is another Detail: Mr. Zielke is a person who even appeared in HEIMAT. He (as Hauptmann Zielke) is the commander of the propaganda-company Anton is working for at the east-front (see HEIMAT, film 7). Later in HEIMAT (see film 10) Anton tells the same story about the filming tactics referring to the movements of the german ranks: In the films they ever had to walk from the left to right, regardless if they were on the advance or withdrawal This is exactly the story that Rob is told by Konsul Handschuh. (As Konsul Handschuh says this is referring to a instruction Josef Goebbels, the Nazi-minister of propaganda, once gave. Moving from the left to the right should suggest going forward, attacking, fighting the opponents down. - I cannot prove or disprove if this detail was real or fictive.). Zielke even is played by the same actor, Thomas Kylau, in both, HEIMAT and DIE ZWEITE HEIMAT.

A very nice weekend to all of you,

Thomas

<http://home.t-online.de/home/th.hoenemann/heimat/index.htm>

From: "Ivan Mansley" <ivanman dsl.pipex.com>

Date: Fri, 22 Oct 2004 23:29:07 +0100

Thomas wrote: <The quotings from and parallels to HEIMAT, that appear in HEIMAT 3, are areally great pleasure for me. Here some examples, I will be thankful for

further references (some of the following aspects, all marked with *, were found by Theresia Sikkens van-der-Meij who indeed is a very competent HEIMAT-lover, thank you very much, Theresia!).>

I loved the way you and Theresia found parallels with Heimat from scenes in Heimat 3! I feel quite shut out in not being able to see H3 yet and probably not for some time, if at all. Anyway it sent my mind back to scenes from Heimat and created a sense of fondness and nostalgia. One senses all the time that there are references forward and back in Mr. Reitz's films.

When you wrote: < So, to resume it, this is what "time of silence" means to me, the inability of couples to express the own feeling towards each other anymore, because there is definitely no future in their relationships, no more word to say besides terms of politeness.>

I think you are agreeing with me that the "silence" is inside the human heart of characters whom Reitz shows us acting just like we may have done in the same circumstances.

You wrote also: <There is another Detail: Mr. Zielke is a person who even appeared in HEIMAT.>

I could kick myself about this!! I thought he, the actor Thomas Kylau looked vaguely familiar but it never crystallised. In addition, the remarks about marching left to right rang a bell but I couldn't think where I had heard them before. The perils of growing old!! But I often wonder how much detail a member of a cinema audience would have retained who sat through Heimats 1 or 2 in a continuous sitting with breaks, of course. The cinematic experience must have been quite different from someone watching it episode by episode on TV. And from someone who goes on to analyse it like we do.

Thank you for posting to we English speaking viewers of Mr. Reitz and going to all the time and trouble to translate your thoughts. I wish I could reciprocate.

Best wishes
Ivan Mansley.

From: "Ivan Mansley" <ivanman dsl.pipex.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2004 8:46 PM +0100

There were more passive readers than active contributors this time. Thank you, Thomas in particular for your active contributions, and thanks to others for your words of encouragement. You know who you are!

Ivan Mansley.

From: "Ralf Eigl" <ralfeigl t-online.de>
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2004 10:26 PM +0200

A few words on a number of aspects in this episode that have not been touched yet:

I love the sequence showing Rob and his father when they are out hunting by the lake. The scenery is beautifully filmed, Rob's inner monologue accompanies everything very quietly, a soothing pattern of words which helps to give the scene the very peaceful atmosphere it radiates - this is very nice to watch and listen to.

I have always liked the inner monologues that Reitz uses in some (all ??) episodes. With their even flow of words they contribute much to the thoughtful and quiet atmosphere that determines Heimat 1 + 2. I often thought that the actors must have spent quite some time practising those monologues to slow their voices down and find the peaceful and quiet rhythm of the words.

Those monologues may well have been as hard to perform as the 'normal' sequences where the actors are heard AND seen, maybe harder...

What I enjoyed most in this episode was the conversation between Schnüsschen and Volker. Not only is this excellently planned script-wise, but also beautifully acted by the two protagonists. This dialogue seems very 'real' to viewers, everything comes very naturally. There is no music in this scene and you can hear each and every little noise and sound very clearly, which adds much to the real-life atmosphere. A beautiful scene!

Ralf

**From: "Maarten Landzaat" <gijs xs4all.nl>
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2004 10:49 PM +0200**

Sorry again for the late contribution, Ivan.

There was a grim atmosphere in this episode. There was certainly much "schweigen".

And graveyards and empty talking. Although the talks on the graveyard were not empty at all.

Stretching it a bit, the silence was:

- in the relation between Hermann and Snusschen
- in the relation between Clarissa and Volker (eg rough about the child)
- in the relation between Volker and Hermann (eg the jealousy about the electronic studio)
- in the head of Hermann (there was no music at all, he said)
- in the cover-up talking of Frau Cerphal, noticed by Esther
- Esther felt everybody was covering up her history: Cerphal, her father, Dachau
- in the emptiness of the VariaVision: everybody only obsessed by the

technology, not content

Helga's texts would have added content, but she is kicked out of the project

- in the relation between Helga's clan and Snusschen
- Rob's father in the treehouse
- Clarissa returning the cello
- the absence of dialogue between Hermann and Erika

The way Frau Cerphal "writes" her thesis (by sleeping on a couch letting others do the work) illustrates that story-telling can be heavily influenced by bad motives.

All relations became colder, as was the weather.

Erika has a sharp nose; in Heimat 3, Hermann's prostitute also has a big nose. Coincidence?

Ivan wrote:

- > Now what are we to make of Rob's sudden blinding? Does it
- > have any symbolic significance?

I remember a TV interview with Reitz in which he elaborated on this scene, which I got from Reinder.

Unfortunately I don't remember what Reitz said.

- > You can also find other neat little
- > parallels. For instance, Volker envies Hermann [electronic
- > studio], whilst Schnusschen envies Clarissa [reasons unspecified].

I didn't notice these parallels; you are right!

- > I am aware I have not written anything about the Esther story
- > and her search
- > for the truth about her mother. In some ways I feel this is the least
- > interesting part of the episode, although there are silences here too.
- > "Germany is a book with pages torn out." Somehow I feel that
- > this strand is
- > too didactic. Reitz is defending himself against accusations
- > that he has not
- > dealt effectively with Germany's Nazi past and as a result
- > the story-telling
- > becomes a little formulaic.

I also have problems identifying to this story, although I'm beginning to like Esther.

- > [What was the mouse-like object
- > in Esther's soup
- > in the inn in Dachau, and why did the camera dwell on it, by
- > the way?]

I found this to be a parallel with the fish scene: both gross!
Leberknodelsuppe, I tried it once during a skiing holiday, but never again!
Now that I think about it: both the Knodel and the fish are under water...
Reinhard again?

Time for bed now,
Maarten

From: "Maarten Landzaat" <gijs xs4all.nl>
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2004 10:54 PM +0200

> I have always liked the inner monologues that Reitz uses in some (all
> ??) episodes. With their even flow of words they contribute
> much to the
> thoughtful and quiet atmosphere that determines Heimat 1 + 2.

I definitely agree.

> What I enjoyed most in this episode was the conversation
> between Schnüsschen and Volker.

You remind me of my puzzlement with the end of this scene:
why did Snusschen suddenly throw Volker out?
It happened just after he confessed that he was jealous, I believe. But
that's no
reason, is it? I thought it was rather rude.

Maarten

From: "Susan Biedron" <Susan jsbiedron.com>
Sent: Friday, October 29, 2004 6:48 PM -0500

Maarten and all,

I wondered about Schnüsschen's action also. But right after she told Volker
to leave, she tells him that she hopes he will visit again. It's as if she
realized she was rude and tries to make up for it. It's rather mystifying.

>You remind me of my puzzlement with the end of this scene:
>why did Snusschen suddenly throw Volker out?
>It happened just after he confessed that he was jealous, I believe. But
>that's no reason, is it? I thought it was rather rude.

Regarding the Leberknodelsuppe:

this is something I really like. Twice a year I get together with my former
German Class friends at the Chicago Brau Haus, a Bavarian restaurant. I
always order this soup as it is really good there. But . . . I never

thought about it in comparison with the fish. Perhaps Reitz does not like this soup and puts it in a class with dead fish. Are these food items intended to remind us of the dead Reinhard and Esther's dead mother? Food is supposed to make everything better? In Hermann's case, the fish does lead to success.

>I found this to be a parallel with the fish scene: both gross!
>Leberknodelsuppe, I tried it once during a skiing holiday, but never again!
>Now that I think about it: both the Knodel and the fish are under water...
>Reinhard again?

As in the scene in the restaurant with the soup, Esther's father is totally clueless when he tells Esther that she will eventually inherit the top two floors of the new condos on the Fuchsbau property. He can't understand why this does not make her happy. But in spite of this, he comes off as having much more character than Frau Cerphal - at least he has tried to be a father to Esther.

Susan

From: "Ivan Mansley" <ivanman.dsl.pipex.com>
Sent: Friday, October 29, 2004 9:44 PM +0100

Maarten thought Schnusschen rude to ask Volker to leave after his uninvited visit and Susan was rather mystified. My take on the scene is quite different and clear. I see an underlying sexual tension being pointed up. I have not referred back to the scene on video but am consulting my notes [also please refer back to my intro!].

Schnusschen rather abruptly starts asking Volker about his love life [Do you call her/Clarissa Madam? etc.] After Volker talks a little about his parents she observes, with rather a coquettish smile flickering on her features, that she admires Volker and that he could be a really great man if he wasn't "too scared to show his/your feelings". This is obviously on one level a sexual invitation. It does not seem realistic to me that she would be talking about "feelings" in his music. She then goes on to talk about her loneliness and how she hardly ever sees her husband. Put yourself in Volker's place. How would any man be likely to interpret that? He is being encouraged to show his feelings to an attractive woman who confesses to being lonely! She tells him that she envies Clarissa. Why? This is not made clear as I said in my intro but it could certainly mean because she is Volker's wife. At this point Volker tries to kiss her. She rebuffs him and sticks some food into his hand or was it his mouth? Remember that Volker's marriage is in great difficulties. Is he being denied sex/marital rights? [This is a surmise but quite possibly, surely?] Schnusschen then asks him to leave. It seems clear to me that she does not want matters to go any further at that moment. She still thinks she can save her own marriage and is not ready to commit adultery. She has led Volker on somewhat but then withdraws. Maybe she has become a little frightened at her own daring? She has had second thoughts but surely such behaviour is quite common. She still admires

Volker and does not wish him to feel hurt so she gives him a little peck of a kiss on the cheek. Volker is hurt, however!

Reitz is making his parallels again between the two couples. Hermann has committed adultery. Will his wife with his rival and friend? Clarissa is swinging away from Volker in other directions and she has never really loved him. Hermann really loves Clarissa and Clarissa really loves Hermann although neither of them fully knows it! Who is Volker to love?!! Schnusschen? Jean-Marie?

Now you will all want to call me an elderly sex maniac! But it all makes sense in terms of Edgar Reitz's film, I believe.

Ivan Mansley.

**From: "Foerderer, Walter (GE Healthcare)" <walter.foerderer@med.ge.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 31, 2004 2:16 PM +0200**

I had the same feeling like Ivan when I watched the scene. Then I got curious and I checked the "Die zweite Heimat" book from Reitz and found the following description of the scene (skipping the dialogs):

"When Volker tries to kiss Schnuesschen she fights with herself. She does not want to belong to the losers as Volker does. It becomes clear to her that she has to act right now. She is fully sensible. She looks into Volker's eyes while she passes the cheese sandwich to him and asks him to eat. Volker begs her pardon."

"Schnuesschen is now very cool. She feels herself that superior that the situation has lost all erotic tension."

Walter

**From: "Susan Biedron" <Susan@jsbiedron.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 31, 2004 6:57 PM -0500**

Ivan & Walter,

Thanks for pointing out about parallels between the two couples. I didn't look at this scene that way before, but now it is clear. Reitz is illustrating (1) the differences between Hermann and Schnusschen - he has already committed adultery, Schnusschen is not yet ready to do this. She still has hope. (2) Clarissa is rebelling against her marriage, Volker is just sad. (3) Hermann and Clarissa are both unhappy in their marital relationships but neither is allowing themselves to realize that what they are missing is each other.

Susan

