

Jan Speckenbach / Birk Weiberg

## Vaudeville

*Long shot parking garage. Music.*

*He comes into the picture (pan or fade) and walks toward the camera.*

*He*

25 years after the death of Ulrike Meinhof. A lot of open questions. Those who felt menaced could still be in a happy mood. A local newspaper reported in the 70s under the title "The Great Feast at the Wörther Lake" about a party, for which "industry tycoons, finance managers and all kinds of playboys" came with private jets. Champagne poured, porno movies were shown. The guests were not alone. For seventeen hours police officers and private security forces guarded them. Previously threats of the so-called Baader-Meinhof-Group were received.

But the circumstances in those days, that were dominated by emergency laws, authority thinking and blindness towards the Nazi-time, were real; just like the action of French journalist Beate Klarsfeld, who had to give Georg Kiesinger, the chancellor of the big coalition, a slap in the face in order to make his NSDAP-membership a topic. She was sentenced to one year in prison. In editorials for the magazine *konkret* Ulrike Meinhof is dealing with the Vietnam War, in radio and TV reports she is dealing with the situation of young outsiders. But more and more she doubts about the effects of her journalist activities. In 1968 she writes: "Protest is, when I say, that I don't like this and that. Resistance is, when I take care, that what I don't want doesn't happen anymore."

On the morning of May 14<sup>th</sup> 1970 three young women and a man enter the Institute of Social Issues in Berlin. As it was fixed, Ulrike Meinhof and Andreas Baader, who is accompanied by two officers, are in the reading hall. The common book project with the Wagenbach publishing house, that Meinhof and Baader are supposed to work on, is just a trick. It serves as a pretext, to liberate Baader out of prison.

Baader jumps out of the window. Meinhof follows him – in opposition to her original intention. Already on the next day warrants of arrest are hanging all over Berlin, that show only Ulrike Meinhof's face: "Attempt of murder in Berlin – 10000 DM Reward." It takes less than 24 hours and the famous journalist is enemy number one of the state. Eight days later the manifesto "To build up the Red Army" is published.

In the first two years of its existence the RAF is busy with organizing every day life in illegality. Then, in May 1972, the RAF appears for the first time in public. After six bomb attacks, especially on facilities of the US-forces in Germany, four people are dead and several injured. Short time later the founding members get arrested.

In May 1975 the trial against the first generation of the RAF starts in Stuttgart-Stammheim. They will not live to see its end. Ulrike Meinhof dies at the age of 41 in her cell in the high security wing. On the morning of May 9<sup>th</sup> 1976 prison officers found her hung in her cell. There is no farewell letter. Neither relatives nor lawyers are allowed to see the dead woman. Even before the hastily carried out autopsy the news agency UPI reports: "Death by Hanging."

Ulrike Meinhof probably was a person with an inner strife until her end. She was wavering between a protestant moral and a rebellious mind. The picture that remains is that of a serious woman.

*Already during the text in the background a car approaches, drives by. Pan with the car. The camera follows the woman in the car, who is driving back and force slightly uncoordinated until she parks. CU off her, from front. The voice-over in the theatre starts.*

#### *Voice-over*

By supreme effort she had grasped herself all her power. The often-practiced self-control did not leave her now either, after she had overcome the first shock of his sudden appearance. But she was pale until her lips and her eyes did not find this sharp coldness, which she would have shown him gladly, to satisfy their pride. She saw that his hair had become gray at the temples. He could not leave his eyes from her. It seamed to him,

as if he had to memorize her trains for all times, and he wondered, how he could have been so blind, to think of her as inwardly empty. Certainly, she had changed a lot since the last time he saw her, and he never saw her so excited like today. Although he could realize that she forced herself to be calm, he however saw in her pale face something like crying. Today the stiff look did not deceive him, today he felt, that behind the apparent coldness, which she showed like a mask, hot life was pulsing.

*She puts a cigarette in her mouth. A hand comes into the picture and gives her fire. Camera changes to medium shot. He is sitting next to her as if they were already sitting there together for hours.*

*He*

Do you already have plans for tonight?

*She*

No, not yet. Why?

*He*

The Babylon shows a movie with Klaus Kinski. Do you want to go?

*She*

Well ... tonight?

*He*

Yes, they only show the movie tonight. And I don't like to go alone in cinema. Come on, let's go.

*She*

OK, I'm coming with you. When does the movie start?

*He*

At half past eight. I will pick you up.

*She*

No, I'm coming to the cinema.

*He*

OK, I'll be there at a quarter past eight.

*She*

Well, then see you tonight...

*He*

Bye.

*She leaves the car. He remains seating.*

*He*

A Roman policeman partially masters a cold-blooded criminal organization that has connections to the police forces, because he utilizes the same brutal methods. Ostensibly critical crime movie, which pleads openly for more sweeping police methods and misuses this for blatant acts of violence, which are soothed neither by the amateurish way of production nor by the tragically garnished story of the policeman. The relentless hand of justice. Italy, 1974.

*Pan to postcards with landscapes. Music: aria (e.g. Wagner).*

*Voice-over*

One often hears, that the possession of hands is the cause of man being of all animals the most intelligent. But it is rational to suppose that the possession of hands is the consequence rather than the cause of his superior intelligence. For the hands are instruments or organs, and the invariable plan of nature in distributing the organs is to give each to such animal as can make use of it; nature acting in this matter as any prudent man would do. For to such an one it would seem much more appropriate to take a flute-player and give him a flute than to take one who possessed a flute and teach him the art of flute playing. For by the former plan something comparatively insignificant would be added to something of much greater importance; while by the latter the more valuable and the more important element would be superadded to the less valuable one. Seeing then that it is a better plan to assign an instrument to a workman than to assign a workman to an instrument, and seeing also that of all available plans nature invariably adopts the best, we must conclude that man does not owe his superior intelligence to

hands, but his hands to his superior intelligence. For the most intelligent of animals is the one which would put the most organ to the best use; and the hand is apparently not a single organ but many in one; for it is an organ that can serve in the place of many. This instrument, then, - the hand - of all instruments the most variously serviceable, has been given by nature to man, the animal of all animals the most capable of acquiring the most varied handicrafts. Much in error then are they, who say that the construction of man is not only faulty, but inferior to that of all other animals; for man numerous modes of defense are open, and these moreover he may change at will; as also he may adopt such weapons as he pleases, and at such times as suit him. For the hand is talon, hoof, horn, spear, and sword, and whatsoever other weapon or instrument you please; for all these can it be from its power of grasping and holding them all.

*The camera pans to him and follows him through the parking garage. He stops at a table where she is sitting.*

*She*

Waiter! The menu, please!

*Voice-over*

The waiter brings her the menu.

*He*

The menu. What would you like to drink?

*She*

I will have a glass of white vine.

*He*

Of course, Madame.

*Voice-over*

5 minutes later the waiter brings the drinks.

*He*

Would you like to eat something?

*She*

I take a goulash soup, a steak with French fries and a green salad.

*Voice-over*

After the dinner.

*She*

Waiter, the bill, please!

*He*

What do you pay?

*She*

I pay the vine, an onion soup and a salad plate.

*He*

4 Mark 50 for the vine, the onion soup is 4,80 and the salad plate 7 Mark, that's all together 16.30 DM.

*Voice-over*

She gives the waiter a twenty Mark note.

*She*

Please, give me 2 Mark. The rest is for you.

*She gets up, walks 10 steps away from the camera, turns suddenly around and shoots at him. He jumps behind a car and shoots back. A wild gunfight arouses during which both actors physically expend themselves.*

*Voice-over*

The projection screen shows an extremely restless picture. It slightly swings, shifts unexpectedly to the side and causes headaches for the viewer. One becomes nervous from watching. What is the reason for this? During the shooting we were holding the camera with unsteady hand. All accidental movements and the shivering of the hand were transferred on the camera and produced the effect of a restless picture during the projection.

Of course there are situations in which we cannot use a tripod – e.g. on a trip in the high mountains or when we are filming animals in the nature or playing

children. There a tripod would only disturb us and so we have to hold the camera so tight in our hand that it is stable enough not to be affected by accidental movements of the body. The most safe and comfortable solution in such cases is to fix a revolver grip under the camera. We are holding the grip with one hand while with the other hand we comprise the camera from above. Thereby we receive the maximum stability during free-hand recordings.

For this reason it is advisable to stop breathing at the moment of recording, in order to avoid any shaking of the camera. Particular caution is recommended, if we have physically exerted ourselves prior to the shooting that means, if we climbed the mountains, ridded a bike, run fast or carried loads for a longer time. After such efforts we should wait with the shooting until we have recovered and are able to master all movements of our body. If we do not bring up this patience, the result will be restless pictures on the projection screen.

*Both actors are standing close to the camera.*

*She*

How reddish the moon is rising. Once up a time there was a child that had neither father nor mother, it all was dead and there was nobody left on earth. All dead and it went and was searching day and night. And as nobody was left on earth, it wanted to go to heaven and the moon was looking at it so friendly; and as it finally arrived at the moon that was a piece of rotten wood. And so it went to the sun and as it arrived there that was a withered sunflower. And as it came to the stars, they were little golden gnats that where pinned like a bird of prey pins them on the sloes. And as it wanted to return to earth, the earth was a plunged harbor. And it was all alone. And then it sat down and cried, and there it is still sitting and is all alone.

*He*

Margreth.

*She (frightened)*

What is it?

*He*

Margreth, we're going. Time is up.

*She*

Where?

*He*

Do I know?

*She*

So out there is the city. It's dark.

*He*

You should stay. Come, sit down.

*She*

But I have to go.

*He*

You will not become footsore.

*She*

But what do you do!

*He*

And do you know, how it's been now, Marie?

*She*

On Whitsuntide two years.

*He*

And do you know how long it will still be?

*She*

I have to go, to prepare the dinner.

*He*

Are you freezing, Margreth? And though you are warm.  
What hot lips you have! Hot, hot whore breath! But I  
still would give heaven – to kiss them once again. – Are  
you freezing? When you are cold, you do not freeze  
anymore. You will not freeze from the morning dew.

*She*

What do you say?

*He*

Nothing.

*Silence.*

*She*

How reddish the moon is rising.

*He*

Like a bloody iron.

*She (into the camera)*

Jan, why you don't put on something from Madonna?

*Jan is hectically looking through his CDs in the theater. Then music Madonna. The actors walk up the stairs (if they haven't already done so during the running). The video transmission breaks down. After a moment of black the end credits appear. The three from outside come into the theater.*