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Defining Nazi Film:

The Film Press and the German Cinematic Project, 1933-1945

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**Defining Nazi Film:
The Film Press and the German Cinematic Project, 1933-1945**

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Defining Nazi Film:
The Film Press and the German Cinematic Project, 1933-1945

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This dissertation analyses the roles and functions of the German film press during the Third Reich and explores the changes and tensions that characterized German cinema and, by extension, German society during that time period. A close reading of three major publications – a trade journal, *Film-Kurier*, a popular magazine, *Filmwelt*, and the regime’s official publication, *Der deutsche Film* – first challenges the traditional view of a monolithic, top down control by the Nazi regime. I show the extent and the limits of the regime’s utilization of culture and media and demonstrate how different parties used the film press to pursue different, but not mutually exclusive goals.

By delineating the film press as a more dynamic public forum than previously assumed, this study secondly informs us about the multifaceted uses and functions of the

film publications, and about the changing relationships between the film industry and the regime, as well as the theater, the music, and the press industries. I combine a media specific approach –demonstrating the central role of film publications in articulating the contradictions within film culture—with an exploration of the media convergence in place at the time.

I thus firmly position the film press at the nexus of politics, business, film professionals, and the audience, and uncover a lively, albeit restricted, discursive system, with theoretical and practical discussions about film, its achievements under the new regime, its weaknesses and the need for improvement. I focus on the three most discussed issues: the relationship between film and theater, between film and music, and, as a correlation of the two previous topics, the need to train a new generation of film professionals, the *Nachwuchs*.

This dissertation thus traces an important moment in German film history characterized by sustained debates about political, technical, aesthetic, and social aspects of film. More importantly, it uses the film press as a mirror to some of the tensions that characterized German society along several divides such as the masses and the elite, the past and the present, as well as the contradictions in its treatment and representation of gender and sexuality.

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INTRODUCTION

A devotee of cinema who went to a newsstand in 1933 to read about film related topics could rely on a long history of sustained press coverage of film and have access to up to 200 magazines and newspapers. Prominent among the specialized film press was the popular weekly *Filmwelt*; it also had the highest circulation.¹ If she/he did not already have a subscription, the reader could enjoy, for a mere 30 pfennig, glossy pictures of German and American actors and actresses and read articles about their lives, the films in the making, and learn about filmmaking itself. Perhaps she/he cut out a picture of Willy Fritsch, Käthe von Nagy, or Clark Gable to save. She/he might have added it to her/his cigarette picture collector's album, together with the supplemental flyer from the last film she/he saw.² For information about films currently playing, she/he might have picked the daily *Film-Kurier* printed on pulp paper and costing 15 pf.³ While providing daily film reviews, this trade paper was foremost addressed to film theater owners and film professionals, informing them about technical, legislative, and economic developments. Both publications originated during Weimar and the limited changes they underwent after

¹ *Filmwelt* had a circulation of 130 156 in 1938, compared to 8704 for the trade newspaper *Film-Kurier*. Other popular magazines were the weekly *Die Filmwoche* and *Die junge Dame*. For a short introduction about the principal film magazines and newspapers see http://www.difarchiv.deutsches-filminstitut.de/zeitschriften/zp_top11.htm.

² Film fans could find pictures of individual actors and actresses in cigarette packets. They could then stick them in an album. See Geoffrey Giles, "Popular Education and New Media: The Cigarette Card in Germany," *Paedagogica Historica* 36, no. 1 (2000): 449–469; Waltraud Sennebogen, *Zwischen Kommerz und Ideologie: Berührungspunkte von Wirtschaftswerbung und Propaganda im Nationalsozialismus* (München: Meidenbauer, 2008). Film companies published individual 2 to 4 page small programs for the films. See for example *Das Programm von Heute mit Künstlerkarte, Illustrierte Film Karte (IFK), Illustrierter Film-Bühne*. See "Die Geschichte der Filmprogramme," <http://www.madmags.de/lesezeichen/die-geschichte-der-filmprogramme>.

³ Werner Sudendorf, "Filmkurier, 1919-1944," *Film und Fernsehen in Forschung und Lehre* 6 (1983); Werner Sudendorf, "Täglich: der Film-Kurier," in *Film...Stadt....Kino....Berlin...*, ed. Uta Berg-Ganschow and Wolfgang Jacobsen (Berlin: Argon, 1987), 127–132.

1933, as well as their longevity (until March 1945 for *Film-Kurier*), raise questions about the roles they played in German society. The creation in 1936 of the regime's own monthly magazine, *Der deutsche Film*, and its 1944 project of a European film magazine both point to the state's interest and investment in the film press.

The film press touched indeed on a broad range of topics and fulfilled important, albeit different functions for filmmakers, film viewers, film companies, and the regime, functions that have so far not been studied. In addition to its economic role of promoting films and stars, the film press took on after 1933 political and ideological roles, whose development and functions I explore and assess here. I unveil the regime's manoeuvre between its censorship efforts and its promotion of an illusion of "business as usual," while I question the motives behind the creation of *Der deutsche Film*. In addition to serving film companies and regime, the film press also provided the audience with entertainment and pleasures, that in turn had different impacts. Film publications contributed to the sense of normality and helped boost morale, but also left room for reading against the grain. In addition to exploring the tensions between political mobilization and consumer-centered entertainment, this dissertation argues that the film provided a forum for ongoing discussions and conflicting opinions about topics ranging from "the film author crisis" and the essence of film, to the tension between realism and illusion and the audience's desires.⁴ I show how, while German cinema achieved unprecedented commercial success in the midst of great geopolitical turmoil, its goals, forms and purposes continued to be debated in the film press.

My focus on German cinema and the film press is thus firmly anchored in recent

⁴ See some of the headlines in *Film-Kurier*: "Cinematic Adaptation of Classics" (September 18, 1934); "The Debate: Does Film Need Poets" (June 09, 1939); "The Discussion: Play and Opera in Film" (April-May 1943). My translation unless otherwise noted.

scholarship, which has moved away from the earlier, “traditional” school of Nazi film historiography and its focus on issues of ideology and the use of films for propaganda, which uncovers the functioning of the cinema industry under a totalitarian regime. Since the late 1990s, scholars such as Eric Rentschler, Sabine Hake, Lutz Koepnick, Antje Ascheid, Mary-Elizabeth O’Brien, and Erica Carter have continuously reevaluated Third Reich cinema.⁵ Pointing to the complexities and contradictions of German cinema, they have redefined not only the subject but also the methods of investigation. They have expanded the corpus of films studied to include popular genres such as melodramas and musicals, improving and differentiating our understanding of, for example, film production and exhibition, stardom and film genres, consumerism and spectatorship during the Third Reich. Moving beyond text-based models, they have also combined institutional and economic, aesthetic and technological, biographical and social histories, and examined Third Reich cinema as a multifaceted practice.⁶ It is this model that my dissertation follows, where I perform close reading of the film press, examine the biographies of a handful of individuals, analyze specific genres and films, and focus not only on the political but also the social and cultural role of cinema, the film press, and culture in German society.

⁵ Eric Rentschler, *The Ministry of Illusion: Nazi Cinema and Its Afterlife* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996); Jo Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Berg, 2000); Sabine Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001); Lutz Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror: German Cinema Between Hitler and Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Antje Ascheid, *Hitler’s Heroines: Stardom and Womanhood in Nazi Cinema* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003); Mary-Elizabeth O’Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment: The Politics of Entertainment in the Third Reich* (Rochester NY: Camden House, 2004); Erica Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts: The Sublime and the Beautiful in Third Reich Film* (London: BFI, 2004); Jana Franscesca Bruns, *Nazi Cinema’s New Women* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Karsten Witte was the undeniable precursor to this new wave of Third Reich cinema. Karsten Witte, “Visual Pleasure Inhibited: Aspects of the German Revue Film,” *New German Critique*, no. 24/25 (1982): 238–263; Karsten Witte, *Lachende Erben, Toller Tag. Filmkomödie im Dritten Reich* (Berlin: Verlag Vorwerk 8, 1995).

⁶ See also the institutional organization of German culture under the Nazis in Alan E. Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, and Economics in Nazi Germany: The Reich Chambers of Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts* (University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

I am indebted in doing so to the recent works of Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross who, taking a long-term approach, show how mass media in Germany have different impacts in different historical situations. While delineating the Third Reich's blurring of entertainment, information and politics, or "politainment" as Ross puts it, both authors also challenge the conception that the media functioned as a "leveling" force in German society, and debunk claims of uniformity and passivity from the audience, emphasizing instead that "entertainment was multifarious and politically ambivalent."⁷ Ross looks at and uses an impressive array of sources and artifacts, from recorded music and radio to film and advertisement.⁸ Considering that "large sections of Germany's press history are still *terra incognita*,"⁹ Karl Christian Führer's work on the press and Christian Adam's study of mass market literature open up new territories.¹⁰ Benefiting from and expanding on the previously mentioned works, this dissertation explores the

⁷ Corey Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany: Mass Communications, Society, and Politics from the Empire to the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 340.

⁸ In addition to his impressive synthesis and coverage of enormous amount of material in his above mentioned monograph, Corey Ross has published specifically on recorded music and audience. See Corey Ross, "Mass Culture and Divided Audiences: Cinema and Social Change in Inter-War Germany," *Past and Present*, no. 193 (2006): 157–195; Corey Ross, "Entertainment, Technology and Tradition: The Rise of Recorded Music from the Empire to the Third Reich," in *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 25–43; Corey Ross, "Writing the Media into History: Recent Works on the History of Mass Communications in Germany," *German History* 26, no. 2 (2008): 299–313. and Karl Christian Führer published on the popular magazines and the press, radio as well as the reception of American movies in Germany

⁹ Christian Haase, "The German Mass Media in the Twentieth Century: Between Democracy and Dictatorship," *European History Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (2010): 487.

¹⁰ In addition to his pathbreaking work on the German press, Führer has published on the radio and film. See Karl Christian Führer, "Auf dem Weg zur 'Massenkultur?' Kino und Rundfunk in der Weimarer Republik," *Historische Zeitschrift* Heft 3, no. 262 (1996): 739–781; Karl Christian Führer, "Die Tageszeitung Als Wichtigstes Massenmedium Der Nationalsozialistischen Gesellschaft," *Zeitschrift Für Geschichtswissenschaft* 44 (2007): 411–434; Karl Christian Führer, "Two-Fold Admiration: American Movies as Popular Entertainment and Artistic Model in Nazi Germany, 1933-39," in *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2007), 97–112; Karl Christian Führer, *Medienmetropole Hamburg: Mediale Öffentlichkeiten 1930-1960* (München: Dölling und Galitz, 2008); Karl Christian Führer, "Pleasure, Practicality and Propaganda: Popular Magazines in Nazi Germany, 1933-1939," in *Pleasure and Power in Nazi Germany*, ed. Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2011), 132–163. See also Christian Adam, *Lesen unter Hitler: Autoren, Bestseller, Leser im Dritten Reich* (Berlin: Galiani, 2010).

functions of film publications during the Third Reich.¹¹

While the film press is regularly cited in scholarly works, it often functions as an anecdotal piece of evidence to support one's arguments. Recent studies have made more active use of film publications. Jana Bruns used it to trace the fashioning of female stars and Mary-Elizabeth O'Brien delineated the use and reception of film genres in the press. Looking at theoretical writings of the time period, Sabine Hake has traced "the efforts by film critics, journalists, scholars, and officials from the Propaganda Ministry to rearticulate the relationships between representation and reality through a modified notion of filmic realism," and Erica Carter has reconstructed "something of the interplay the Third Reich cinema apparently sustained, even after Goebbels' 1936 Decree [which banned film critique], between film theory, film criticism or 'commentary,' the discrete film text, and broader systems of cinematic representations."¹² While their close readings of the film press together with contemporary books that discuss film theories offer far reaching insights, I argue for a different approach to, and use of, the film press and provide the first systematic analysis of film publications, revealing the numerous roles they played. Unlike books or official decrees, the very format of the film press, including its immediacy, leads to more direct connection and interaction with multiple parties. In addition to allowing multidirectional communication, the film press is also at the same time subject and object of media convergence and cultural consumption as well as

¹¹ See also their excellent collection of essays: Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross, *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany*, New Perspectives in German Studies (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

¹² Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, 173; Carter, *Dietrich's Ghosts*, 10. Laura Heins offers a close reading of film and television magazines to trace the early television and media theory in Laura Heins, "The 'Experiential Community': Early German Television and Media Theory," *Screen* 52, no. 1 (2011): 46–62.

political propaganda.¹³ We have thus much to gain from an exploration of not only who was invested in the film press but also how each party utilized it to further what goals.

This dissertation thus sits firmly with the above mentioned works that look at Third Reich cinema from its periphery, here the press, in order to gain insight into the functioning and role of both media in Germany society. Focusing on the film press allows me indeed to explore the changes and tensions that characterized German cinema and, by extension, German society during the Third Reich. A close reading of the film press brings two major insights. My work first challenges the traditional view of a monolithic, top down control by the Nazi regime and shows instead the ongoing negotiations between the different parties involved that utilized the film press. I present the pages of the film press as a controlled public space, one that informs us about competition among Nazi leaders and success (or lack of) of censorship, showing the extent and the limits of their utilization of culture and media.¹⁴ The regime was indeed very careful in its use of the film press as a propagandistic tool, preferring often less intrusive approaches. This was not only rooted in Goebbels' idea that less obvious propaganda works better and the fact that maintaining an "illusion of normality" helped consolidate the power of the state, but also in the difficulties to actually implement total control, and finally in the fact that much of propaganda did not work or even backfired. I demonstrate instead how, in

¹³ On the burgeoning field of media convergence/intermediality see, for example, Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York: New York University Press, 2006); Janet Staiger and Sabine Hake, eds., *Convergence Media History* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Ágnes Petho, *Cinema and Intermediality: The Passion for the In-Between* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011).

¹⁴ For two readings of tabloid newspapers as alternative public sphere see Bernhard Fulda, "Industries of Sensationalism: German Tabloids in Weimar Berlin," in *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2007), 183–203; Sofia Johansson, "'They Just Make Sense': Tabloid Newspapers as an Alternative Public Sphere," in *Media and Public Sphere*, ed. Richard Butsch (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2007), 83–95.

addition to the regime, different parties used the film press to pursue different, but not mutually exclusive goals. While the film industry embraced the regime's use of film for ideological and political purposes and produced numerous militaristic films, hoping for substantial economic profits, it also used the film publications to promote its products and participated in the creation of star cult, already well in place by 1933.¹⁵ The film press was thus as much part of an economic system as it was a propaganda tool. But it also provided room for discussion. Film companies also joined film professionals in their demand for reform, pointing, for example, to the need to train future film professionals, the *Nachwuchs*, which, in turn, led to the creation of the German Film Academy in 1938, a prestige project of the Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels. Using the lens of the film press, *Defining Nazi Film* contributes to a better understanding the functioning of the Nazi regime and of German society, where pragmatism often trumped ideology.

Secondly, by delineating the film press as a more dynamic public space than previously assumed, this study informs us not only about the multifaceted uses and functions of the film publications but also about the changing relationships between the film industry, the regime and the audience, as well as the theater, the music, and the press industries.¹⁶ I thus combine a media specific approach –demonstrating the central role of film publications in articulating the contradictions within film culture–with an exploration of the media convergence in place at the time. I firmly position the film press

¹⁵ See the reactions to Chaplin's trip to Berlin in Wolfgang Gersch, *Chaplin in Berlin: Illustrierte Miniatur nach Berliner Zeitungen von 1931* (Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1988); Sabine Hake, "Chaplin Reception in Weimar Germany," *New German Critique*, no. 51 (1990): 87.

¹⁶ More often than not, histories of the German film press skip over the 1933-1945 period, reducing the press to a propaganda instrument in the hands of Goebbels. See for example how Helmut Dietrich, writing about film critique and film theory, covers "Before World War One," "The Weimar Period" and then jump to "After World War Two." Helmut H. Diederichs, "Filmkritik und Filmtheorie: Analyse, Urteil & utopischer Entwurf," in *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, ed. Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, and Hans Helmut Prinzler (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1993), 451–464.

at the nexus of politics, business, film professionals, and the audience. Indeed, while supervised by the government, which tried to utilize it as its mouthpiece, the film press collaborated closely with the industry, receiving materials to be printed while reporting on current films. It was careful to satisfy audiences, upon whom its livelihood depended. Striking is the limited extent of the politicization of the film press, how little it changed and how it continued to focus on film related issues. The film press served as a forum where film, theater, and music professionals exchanged ideas. A close look at the publications uncovers a lively, albeit restricted, discursive system, with theoretical and practical discussions about film, its achievements under the new regime, its weaknesses and the need for improvement. Among the many topics discussed, I focus on the three major issues which triggered the most discussions and had concrete repercussions: the relationship between film and theater, between film and music, and, as a correlation of the two previous topics, the need to train a new generation of film professionals, the *Nachwuchs*.

It should come to no surprise that, in addition to the issue of *Nachwuchs*, the two most contentious points were film's relationship to theater and to music. I argue that these debates around the two pillars of German identity revealed tensions in German society along several divides such as the masses and the elite, and the past and the present.¹⁷ Arguments against or for the adaptation of classic plays, for example, reveal a battle between theater, as the holder of German prestige and historical identity and culture, and film, associated with uneducated masses. This was coupled with a conflict

¹⁷ Looking at the social uses and meaning of mass media in Germany, Corey Ross comes to the conclusion that despite efforts to use it to create a national community, mass media eventually began to divide it and furnished "new forms of social privilege and conflict." Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 375.

between the past and its values, found in plays, and modernity and the future with its sense of change, as exemplified in film, not only by its technology but also its story lines. These tensions between tradition and modernity also characterized German society as a whole.¹⁸ As Goebbels himself put it after seeing the American film *Swanee River* (Sidney Landfield, 1940)

In the evening we saw the American technicolor film *Swanee River* about which I can make a number of notes for the creation of a new German folk music film. Today the situation is such that the Americans understand how to use modern modes of representation to create something useful for the moment from their relatively modest cultural stores. In contrast to them, we are too weighted down by piety and tradition. We are afraid to envelop our culture in modern garb, and because of that it remains historical or fit for a museum. In the best case it is taken up by groups within the party, the Hitler Youth, or the Labor Service. The cultural heritage of our past can at present, in the broadest scale, only again be made fruitful if we present it or portray it through modern means. The Americans understand that masterfully, probably because they are not as encumbered with historical ballast as we are.¹⁹

In addition to this still existing divide between past and present, the elite and the masses, the discussions and articles found in the film press mirror tensions regarding the treatment and representation of gender and sexuality, as becomes apparent in the biographical sketches of Hans Albers, Gustaf Gründgens, and Marika Rökk.

The changing content and tone of the articles printed in the film press, as the war ravaged Europe and the world, provides us with an untapped source of information about

¹⁸ Jeffrey Herf has coined the term “reactionary modernism” to describe the simultaneous championing of “volkish ideology,” “romantic irrationalist ideas,” and “modern technology.” Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). For many cinema was a “modern technology.” On fascism and modernity see Mark Antliff, “Fascism, Modernism, and Modernity,” *The Art Bulletin* 84, no. 1 (2002): 148–169.

¹⁹ Goebbels’ diaries, May 3, 1942. This comment is not surprising considering that Goebbels himself was torn between modern and conservative art. It is well known that he was more appreciative of modern art than his fellow National Socialists but that he eventually publically embraced the conservative and traditional style that Hitler preferred. See Peter Adam, *Art of the Third Reich* (New York: Abrams, 1995); Jonathan Petropoulos, *Art As Politics in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Jonathan Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain: The Art World in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

German society. The intensity of the discussions found in the press is at times puzzling. Indeed it border on the absurd against the backdrop of events unfolding at the time, from the bloody battles to the East and West to the extermination of European Jewry. While debates about, for example, the relationship between film and theater contributed to the constructed image of the National Socialist regime valuing and protecting German culture, they also justified the very work of the contributors, at the time when more and more men were drafted in the war. Following Eric Rentschler, one can argue that the deliberate disregard for, or even denial of political events, such as the defeat of Stalingrad or the extermination of the Jews, follows a pattern of trying to maintain an “illusion of normality.”²⁰ Many of these discussions stemmed from a genuine desire to improve film making and promote German cinema to higher standards and status. Nonetheless their quasi-obsessive nature in the midst of murder and barbarity points to what Hans Dieter Schäfer has called a “split consciousness,” a dichotomous if not schizophrenic cultural and everyday life, when nationalist and racist ideology coexists with, for example, ongoing Americanism in the form of feature films or jazz music, or, as shown in chapter 9, the continuous efforts to train a new generation of film professionals in the ruins of Berlin.²¹ More than a split consciousness or an illusion of normality, these debates in the film press could be a reflection of a compartmentalization, part of a survival mechanism. Summarizing months of exchanges about the topic “Film and Poet” in the summer of 1943, Felix Henseleit came to the open-ended conclusion that this was probably not the end of the discussion. He welcomed this outcome, arguing that it was “a good thing,

²⁰ Rentschler, *The Ministry of Illusion*. Efforts to sustain this illusion of normality were found in numerous areas of German life, such as tourism. See for example Kristin Semmens, *Seeing Hitler's Germany: Tourism in the Third Reich* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

²¹ Hans Dieter Schäfer, *Das gespaltene Bewusstsein: Über deutsche Kultur und Lebenswirklichkeit, 1933-1945*, 2. Aufl. (München: Hanser, 1982).

because where there are conversations about a topic, there is life and movement.”²² More than participation in a ideological, illusionary project of a new National Socialist art, these discussions could thus be the only thing the authors could hold on to keep some form of sanity in the midst of insanity.

Controlling the Film Industry

While my work questions the extend of the Nazi’s top-down control and shows more complicated decision-making processes than previously assumed, I do not deny the existence of National Socialist power. Domination of the mass media had indeed always been a priority of the Nazi party, which started its reorganization immediately after the seizure of power in January 1933.²³ In March, Joseph Goebbels was appointed Minister of the newly formed Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda. Using legal, institutional, economic, and personal leverage, the NS goal was to achieve control of the media industries. Goebbels justified such an approach in a speech to film professionals, telling them “we are convinced that film is one of the most modern and far reaching tools to influence the masses. Therefore, a government cannot allow the film industry to operate on its own.”²⁴ A first step was the creation in September 1933 of the Reich Culture Chamber, divided into seven sub-chambers: the fine arts, press, radio, literature, theater, and music, with the Film Chamber having already been instituted in

²² Felix Henseleit, “Generalthemen des Filmschaffens. Anmerkungen zum Thema “Film und Dichter” und zur Debate des “Film-Kurier,” *Film-Kurier*, June 24, 1943.

²³ For a great introduction see Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, chapter 9, “Political Control and Commercial Concentration Under the Nazis,” 266–301.

²⁴ Joseph Goebbels to the filmmakers, February 9 1934, printed in Gerd Albrecht, *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik: Eine soziologische Untersuchung über die Spielfilme des Dritten Reichs* (Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1969), 22.

July 1933.²⁵ The ever-expanding set of criteria for membership in the Cultur Chamber, which was required to be able to work, soon excluded talented film professionals and drove them out of the country. In 1934, the Cinematic Act was changed and the tools of censorship modified. All film projects had to be submitted to a Reich Film Dramaturgist, who judged if “the screening of the film could either endanger the vital interests of the state or the public order or security, or endanger National Socialist, religious, moral or artistic sentiment.”²⁶ Completed films were submitted to the Film Review Office, a censorship board appointed by the propaganda ministry, which was authorized to ban any films that violated National Socialist beliefs. Both bodies were licensed not only to reject, promote, or revise treatments and screenplays, but also to demand alterations at any moment during a film’s production.²⁷

Another tool of control was the expansion of the rating system and the creation of new labels, *Prädikate*, to be used to categorize films in the Third Reich, such as “especially politically valuable to the state,” or, from 1941 on, the even more laudatory “Film of the Nation.”²⁸ These ratings brought symbolic and financial rewards, such as tax reductions and exemptions, and served as incentives for film companies to produce work that fit with regime ideology. They soon developed into an effective, widely used way of practicing positive censorship. The prohibition of film criticism, replaced by “film

²⁵ Findbücher zu Beständen des Bundesarchivs, Bd. 31: Reichskulturkammer und ihre Einzelkammern: Bestand R 56 / bearb. von Wolfram Werner (Koblenz, 1987), 7-11. For a good introduction to the system and organization of the chambers of music, theater and visual arts see Gerd Albrecht, *Der Film im Dritten Reich: Eine Dokumentation* (Karlsruhe: DOKU, 1979), 22. For a thorough history of the institutional reorganization of German culture under the Nazis see Alan E. Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, and Economics in Nazi Germany: The Reich Chambers of Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts* (University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

²⁶ Paragraph 7 of the Cinematic Act, February 16, 1934, in Albrecht, *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik*, 512.

²⁷ Ibid. Maiwald details the stories of some forty films that were censored and the often arbitrary reasons for these decisions in Klaus-Jürgen Maiwald, *Filmzensur im NS-Staat* (Dortmund: Nowotny, 1983).

²⁸ Maiwald, *Filmzensur im NS-Staat*.

commentary” in 1936, as well as the use of secret press notes, which recommended, if they did not require, the “appropriate” evaluation of films, rounded out control over production. Financially, the regime first helped companies with economic difficulties via the Film Credit Bank, which subsidized selected film projects. This intervention allowed the regime to promote good relations with the larger operations and align them with its interests, as well as to exercise control over film productions. The Film Credit Bank directly contributed to the decline of medium-sized companies and independent producers. The largest share of the Film Credit Bank’s support went to the four biggest companies, Tobis, Ufa, Terra, and Bavaria Film, which by 1935 constituted 60 percent of national production.²⁹ Following the acquisition of Ufa on March 20, 1937, Reich Commissioner for the Film Industry, Max Winkler, using his trust company Cautio Treuhand as a front, brought 73 percent of national production under state ownership by 1939. The process of nationalizing the film industry was finalized on November 28th, 1942, with the creation of the monolithic institution Ufa-Film G.m.b.H. (Ufi).³⁰

Thus, with the help of these new legal, institutional, and economic infrastructures, the regime intended to functionalize film as it did all the other media. While wide-ranging, such control was far from being homogeneous. In addition to internal competition between leaders of the Nazi party, Third Reich cinema remained “a social, cultural, economic, and political practice that often conflicted with, contradicted, and

²⁹ Klaus Kanzog, *Staatspolitisch Besonders Wertvoll: Ein Handbuch Zu 30 Spielfilmen Der Jahre 1934 Bis 1945* (München: Schaudig & Ledig, 1994). For a good summary of the economic transformations, see Wolfgang Becker, *Film und Herrschaft: Organisationsprinzipien und Organisationsstrukturen der Nationalsozialistischen Filmpropaganda* (Berlin: Volker Spiess, 1973).

³⁰ Pierre Cadars and Francis Courtade, *Geschichte des Films im Dritten Reich* (München: Hanser Verlag, 1979), 29; Jürgen Spiker, *Film Und Kapital: Der Weg Der Deutschen Filmwirtschaft Zum Nationalsozialistischen Einheitskonzern* (Berlin: Völker Spiess, 1975).

compromised the intentions of the Propaganda Ministry.”³¹ These are the same types of tensions that this dissertation explores, focusing on the film press.

Chapter Overview

Characterized by a broad diversity of goals and readership, the film press provides a good vector to explore not only its instrumentalization by different parties, but also the tensions and ongoing discussions and negotiations about film and filmmaking. But at the same time using film publications requires caution considering the politicization of all areas of German society. Indeed, like the film industry, the press was drastically restricted and became the object of much political attention and efforts to control it. Chapter one first delineates the organization and control of the press, specifically the cultural press, under the NS regime. It analyses the directives sent to the editors in chief and examines the main topics covered in the daily Cultural Press Conference and the official publication *Zeitschriften Dienst*, the Magazine Service. While the extent of the control becomes clear, so do the structural competitions and tensions regarding the use of the press. The energy devoted to controlling the press, all the way until 1944, points to the difficulties of such tasks. Focusing on three major publications – a trade journal, *Film-Kurier*, a popular magazine, *Filmwelt*, and the regime’s official publication, *Der deutsche Film* – chapter two then details the organization of the film press and the functions of each functions. It traces what I will argue was the (limited) extent of their politicization.

While delineating what the most contentious points of discussions were and who participated in them, *Defining Nazi Film* delineates the contributors’ goals and

³¹ Cadars and Francis Courtade, *Geschichte des Films im Dritten Reich*, 29; Spiker, *Film Und Kapital*.

motivations and argues that some debates had concrete impact on German filmmaking, such as the opening of the Film Academy. I expand these findings and show that frictions and negotiations were not only found in the film world, but in German society as well, and that cinema and the film press actually provided a place to express some of these tensions. The next three parts of this dissertation explore respectively the relationships between film and the press, the theater, and the music, as well as the issue of the training of future film professionals, the *Nachwuchs*.

Part 2 traces first the continuation of a decade long debate about theater's relationship with film. From Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels' call for a new *Laocoon* for the cinema in 1936 to filmmaker Helmut Käutner's "Thanks to the Theater" in 1945, I outline in chapter 3 the intensification of previous efforts to emancipate film from theater. Goebbels and film professionals alike worked hard to differentiate film from theater and establish the former as a recognized form of art. At the forefront of the debates were critiques of the lack of knowledge about the new medium and some film actors' stagy acting style, particularly the diction of theatrically trained actors and actresses. There were also discussions about cinematic adaptations of plays and the need to train new film professionals. But tensions prevailed as some recommended a clear separation from the institution of the theater while others argued about the benefits of traditional stage training. Reactions and comments about the cinematic work of stage actor-director Gustaf Gründgens illuminate this dilemma. I document in chapter 4 the career of the Mephisto character and head of the Staatstheater Berlin and show how he best embodies the tensions between the classic and the modern, high and low culture, past and present, theater and film. While foremost a man of the theater, the actor director was

also very successful in film, where his choice of material moved between literary adaptations and innovative scripts, covering topics from the 17th century to contemporary 20th century Germany. Examining his personal life further shows the heterogeneity of a homophobic regime, willing to tolerate an extremely successful artist, despite his well known homosexuality

In addition to the theater, music has always played a major role in cinematic creation, especially with the arrival of sound in 1929. Part 3 explores how the relationship between music and film was negotiated at the end of the Weimar republic and how it evolved during the Third Reich, pointing once again to broader issues. In chapter 5, a closer look at the film press demonstrates the ongoing debates about the potential of sound and music in film and their appropriate use. Echoing Weimar's debates, calls for a better inclusion of composers during the film making process persisted throughout the Third Reich. Illustrating yet another example of the divide between high and low culture, discussions regarding the filming of opera and the use of *Schlager*, the hits songs that originated in films, were never settled. The career of Hans Albers is then used to tell the gendered story of the coming of German sound film, where Albers' coronation as the "master of natural speech" is linked to his ostentatious and hyper masculinity. It also gives us insight into a popular element of German films, the singing actors and acting singers. Unlike his male colleagues' performances, though, Albers' songs were designed to showcase Albers, the man and the actor, and further his popularity. Here too the press played an important role in the creation of the star Albers and as a place where the Nazi regime engineered the reevaluation of the *Schlager* as a *Volk* song.

I then show in chapter 6 how the Weimar sound film operetta, a direct byproduct of

the arrival of sound film, disappeared and was replaced during the Third Reich by the less self reflexive and ironic, but nonetheless extremely popular, genre of the revue film.

Looking closely at the 1940 film *Kora Terry* I analyze the popularity of the genre and the success of its biggest star, Marika Röck. Close reading of the film press exposes a mix of enthusiasm and uneasiness about her roles and performances. I argue that both the revue and Röck's career must be seen in the context of a German society subjected to not only conflicting gender and sexual policies but also ambivalent images. Utilizing the genre of the revue film, Röck's success was rooted in her ability to waver between transgression and conformity, and to offer audiences ambiguous cinematic fantasies they could indulge in.

Most of the discussions about film, theater, and music were accompanied by open demands for reforms, first among them the need for *Nachwuchs* training. Part 4 delineates how these at times very vocal demands were answered with the opening of the German Film Academy (DFA, 1938-1940). While this chapter situates the DFA within Goebbels' attempts to control the film industry and to consolidate film's status as a form of art, equal to theater, I also demonstrate in chapter 7 how it was part of a trend toward the creation of film studies, a national and even an international one when seen in context of the opening of the Italian Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia. In addition to the popular lectures offered at the *Lessing Hochschule*, the 1930s saw an increase in film related academic courses which was matched in Germany by the opening of the Reich Film Archive and the *Ufa-Lehrschau*, all contributing to the popularization and the institutionalization of film and film studies. In an effort to re-examine the role the institution played in the larger ambitions of National Socialism, Chapter 8 traces the

opening of the heavily funded German Film Academy, delineates its organization, staff, and curriculum, and details the reasons for its ultimate failure. The outbreak of the war triggered increasing materiel and manpower shortages, leading to the closing of the Academy in the summer of 1940.

The *Nachwuchs* question though remained problematic and intense work was pursued until 1945 in the form of several *Lehrstellen für Filmnachwuchs*, apprenticeship places for the film *Nachwuchs*, where future German stars such as Hildegard Knef, Peter Pewas, and Wolfgang Staudte were trained. Chapter 9 details the measures taken to address the issue of *Nachwuchs* and shows how, in contrast to the centralized DFA, the government-supervised *Lehrstellen* were first run by individual film companies that clearly prioritized their own interests, leading to tensions with Goebbels and his head of the *Nachwuchs* program, Frank Maraun. While the press continued to report on the need for better *Nachwuchs* and the efforts made to address this issue, companies' memos and correspondence with the Ministry reveals the magnitude of the costly enterprise and its lack of success. Soon, material shortages and a desire to have more control led, once again, to the short-lived centralization of the training until the end of the war.

This dissertation thus traces an important moment in German film history characterized by sustained debates about political, technical, aesthetic, and social aspects of film, as they played out on the pages of the film press. The film press also serves as a mirror to some of the tensions that characterized German society during that time period, such as the status of women and the high–low culture divide that ran counter to the project of “the cultural integration of the “national community.”³² An analysis of the film press, its continuities and its politization, demonstrates the extent and limits of Nazi

³² Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 340.

control of culture and media, while it unveils the (relative) plurality of opinions regarding filmmaking that continued to be expressed during the Third Reich. Further research will determine if this semblance of freedom of expression was a smart maneuver on Goebbels' part or if it was rooted in the regime's inability to reform and influence film in the same way it operated with painting, sculpture and architecture.

PART I: FILM AND PRESS

Introduction

In the spring of 1944, as German troops faced fierce resistance all over Europe and the Allies virtually controlled the skies over Germany, Goebbels asked actor/director Wolfgang Liebeneiner, former head of the artistic department of the German Film Academy and current head of Ufa, to create a European film magazine.³³ A mockup issue for *Der neue Film*, The New Film, was designed.³⁴ The destruction of the printing shop and increased paper rationing eventually scuttled the project. That such a project was even started while murder in the concentration camps accelerated and German cities were under nightly bombings raises several questions about the state of mind of the leaders of the Nazi regime in 1944, but also the importance and the role played by the press, especially the film press.³⁵

While radio and film were fighting for the top position of mass media, Germany remained in the 1940s, as Karl Christian Führer put it, “a society of readers,”³⁶ a fact that

³³ BA R109 I/ 1737, February 22, 1944.

³⁴ BA R109 I/ 1737. See letter from Leopold Guterer [state secretary in the Propaganda Ministry, CLF], to Wolfgang Liebeneiner, May 25, 1944 and June 14, 1944. As will be shown in the next chapters, 1944 was characterized by a frenzy of cultural activities and long term projects, from the efforts to find and train *Nachwuchs*, as depicted in chapter 9, to plans for of a new film studio in Bavaria, “whose construction [was] moving along despite the war.” See Goebbels’ diaries, February 11, 1944. In addition to the above-mentioned project for a new film magazine, the propaganda minister also pursued in the spring of 1944 an elaborate project for a new front magazine. See, for example, Goebbels’ diaries, January 29, March 14, and 19, 1944.

³⁵ While we cannot establish if this focus on unrealistic projects, this attention to details away from the reality of the war, are examples of what Schäfer coined “the spilt consciousness,” or parts of calculated efforts to maintain an illusion of normality and provide Germans with much deserved entertainment, while they continued working in ammunition factories, Goebbels was certainly aware of the need for entertainment when commenting on the failure of the new Hitler Youth film *Junge Adler* (Young Eagles, Alfred Weidemann, 1944): “The audience do not want to see political films right now. It goes to the movies not to be educated or indoctrinated, but to be entertained and distracted.” See Goebbels’ diaries, June 10, 1944.

³⁶ Karl Christian Führer, “Pleasure, Practicality and Propaganda: Popular Magazines in Nazi Germany, 1933-1939,” in *Pleasure and Power in Nazi Germany*, ed. Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2011), 137.

calls for more scholarly attention. Indeed, while the National Socialist regime's extensive use of political daily newspapers as a propaganda tool has been well documented,³⁷ journals and magazines, although widely read--even more popular than daily newspapers in 1939--have been largely neglected by academics.³⁸ More often than not, histories of the German film press skip over the 1933-1945 period, reducing the press to a propaganda instrument in the hands of Goebbels.³⁹ While Goebbels undeniably shut down discussions that thrived during Weimar, part 1 argues that the German film press of the 1930s and 1940s served multiple functions and was much more dynamic than previously assumed.⁴⁰

Studies of the German film press have demonstrated the value of close reading and analyses of German film publications and have provided us with rich insights in German society. Werner Suddendorf and Helmut Diederich, for example, have skillfully utilized the film press to unveil the tensions of Wilhelmine and Weimar Germany.⁴¹ But it was Sabine Hake who, looking at an impressive variety of publications types from the Weimar Republic, from treaties and novels, instructional textbooks and practical guides,

³⁷ Karl Christian Führer, "Die Tageszeitung Als Wichtigstes Massenmedium Der Nationalsozialistischen Gesellschaft," *Zeitschrift Für Geschichtswissenschaft* 44 (2007): 411–434. Most of the existing works focus on National Socialist propaganda newspapers, especially the early period. See, for example, Erika Martens, *Zum Beispiel Das Reich: Zur Phänomenologie Der Presse Im Totalitären Regime* (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1972); Russel Lemmons, *Goebbels and Der Angriff* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1994); Detlef Mühlberger, *Hitler's Voice: The Völkischer Beobachter, 1920-1933* (Oxford: P. Lang, 2004).

³⁸ Führer, "Pleasure, Practicality and Propaganda," 140. As an excellent model see the analysis of the nineteenth-century magazine *Die Gartenlaube* in Kirsten Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation. Audience, Representation, and the Production of Identity in Die Gartenlaube, 1853-1900* (Lincoln Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

³⁹ See for example how Helmut Dietrich jumped from Weimar to "After World War Two." Diederichs, "Filmkritik Und Filmtheorie."

⁴⁰ On the rich writing since film's inception see Uta Berg-Ganschow and Wolfgang Jacobsen, eds., *Film...Stadt...Kino...Berlin...* (Berlin: Argon, 1987).

⁴¹ Suddendorf, "Filmkurier, 1919-1944"; Suddendorf, "Täglich: Der Film-Kurier"; Helmut H. Diederichs, "Die Anfänge Der Deutschen Filmpublizistik 1895 Bis 1909. Die Filmberichterstattung Der Schaustellerzeitschrift 'Der Komet' Und Die Gründung Der Filmfachzeitschriften," *Publizistik. Vierteljahreshefte Für Kommunikationsforschung* 1 (1985): 55–71.

trade papers, daily newspapers and magazines, as well as the self promoting publications of the film industry, described in great detail the evolving multiple discourses about film, especially film criticism, as “a mirror of the large society during a crucial period in German history, and as an aspect of the negotiation of mass culture and modernity.”⁴²

This dissertation continues their work and looks at the role and functions of the film press during the Third Reich, an area until now, that has been completely neglected. The film press offered information, entertainment, and pleasure. It was one of the earliest products to be part of, and led to, mass consumption of cultural products.⁴³ Because of its unique position between industry and regime, professionals and audience, the press provides us with previously untapped materials that give a more differentiated picture of German society. Looking at the film press gives us insights into mechanisms of state control and the functioning of a restricted public forum, patterns of cultural consumption, and their political and social functions, as well as a window into intense negotiations regarding the future of German filmmaking, many of them a continuation of Weimar discussions.

By the early 1930s, Berlin had become the “undisputed film journalistic metropolis.”⁴⁴ Cinema had moved out of the ghetto of the purely technical and astute observers such as Siegfried Kracauer recognized how its increasing popularity and commercial success mirrored social and political issues. Following a hard fought

⁴² Sabine Hake, *The Cinema's Third Machine: Writings on Film in Germany, 1907-1933* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993). See the excellent review of the book and discussion of the argument in Paul Malone, “Negotiating Modernity in Weimar Film Theory: On The Cinema's Third Machine by Sabine Hake,” *Film-Philosophy*, no. 37 (1999).

⁴³ On magazines as pleasure providers see Gaylyn Studlar, “The Perils of Pleasure? Fan Magazine Discourse as Women's Commodified Culture in the 1920s,” *Wide Angle* 13, no. 1 (1991): 6–33; Führer, “Pleasure, Practicality and Propaganda.”

⁴⁴ Heinz B. Heller, “Aus-Bilder: Anfänge Der Deutschen Filmpresse,” in *Film...Stadt....Kino....Berlin...*, ed. Uta Berg-Ganschow and Wolfgang Jacobsen (Berlin: Argon, 1987), 117.

struggle, cinematic topics were not only found in traditional newspapers but Weimar also saw the creation and proliferation of “audience magazines” and even newspapers, some of them daily like *Film-Kurier*, solely devoted to the promotion of the seventh art and the education of the audience. In addition, the film and press industries, together with the radio and recording industries, had developed by 1933 a tight collaboration in order to market products (films, stars, and one could argue later the National Socialist regime itself) to generate desires, and to feed and create expectations among customers. This fruitful, albeit not always easy, media convergence or synergy among the different cultural industries was further complicated after 1933 by their relationships to ideological and political institutions. The film press was in a delicate position between genuine endorsement or forced support for the regime and an attitude of “business as usual,” whose foremost goal was to generate profits. But, at the same time, as the following chapters show, it actively participated in efforts to promote German cinema.

In order to contextualize these different positions and functions of the film press, I first delineate the organization and control of the press under the NS-regime, analyzing the directives sent to the editors in chief, the daily Cultural Press Conference, and the official publication *Zeitschriften Dienst* (ZD or the Periodicals Service) to look at the regime’s efforts to control and influence the German press. Chapter 2 then provides the first detailed analysis of three film publications –the people’s magazine *Filmwelt*, the trade journal *Film-Kurier*, and the regime’s official publication *Der deutsche Film*. While assessing the success (or lack of) of the above-mentioned efforts, I show how the film press was used by the film companies (to promote their films), the regime (as “positive propaganda” and to provide readers with entertainment and pleasures), and film

professionals and journalists in an efforts to improve German cinema.⁴⁵ This dissertation uncovers lively, theoretical and practical discussions about film, its achievement under the new regime, but also its weaknesses and the need for improvement. The following chapters demonstrate how the daily, weekly, and monthly publications provided frameworks, albeit limited and constrained ones, where different parties –the regime, the film companies, film professionals and journalists – could discuss and debate cinema related issues, as long as they did not directly infringe on the authority of the regime.

⁴⁵ On magazines as pleasures providers see Führer, “Pleasure, Practicality and Propaganda.”

Chapter 1

Controlling the German Press

The control of mass media and especially the press had always been a priority of the Nazi party. Hitler described in *Mein Kampf* the influence of the press on the masses as “the strongest and deepest one.”⁴⁶ The *Gleichschaltung* (the reorganization and coordination) of art and media took began as early as March 13, 1933, with the creation of the Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (RMVP). It was followed in September 22, 1933 by the creation of the Reich Culture Chamber, divided into seven chambers: the fine arts, press, radio, literature, theater, and music. The Film Chamber already instituted in July 1933.⁴⁷ The *Gleichschaltung* of the press industry was even faster than in the film industry, with Goebbels intending to, “tune the press so delicately that it becomes a piano on which the government can play.”⁴⁸ Operating on institutional, judicial, and economic levels, the Nazi regime was able to eliminate competition and dissidence, to curtail the freedom of the press, and to achieve, once again, an economic quasi monopoly of the German press.⁴⁹ At the judicial level, for example, a series of

⁴⁶ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Bottom of the Hill, 2010), 82ff.

⁴⁷ Findbücher zu Beständen des Bundesarchivs, Bd. 31: Reichskulturkammer und ihre Einzelkammern: Bestand R 56 / bearb. von Wolfram Werner (Koblenz, 1987), 7-11.

⁴⁸ “Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels über die Aufgaben der Press,” in *Zeitungs-Verlag*, March 18, 1933. Reprinted in Joseph Wulf, *Presse Und Funk Im Dritten Reich* (Gütersloh: Sigbert Mohn, 1964), 64–65.

⁴⁹ For the most recent introduction to mass media in Nazi Germany see Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*. The literature about Third Reich press has focused on the control of the regime. See Oron Hale, *The Captive Press in the Third Reich* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964); Karl-Dietrich Abel, *Presselenkung Im NS-Staat. Eine Studie Zur Geschichte Der Publizistik in Der Nationalsozialistischen Zeit* (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1968); Jürgen Hagemann, *Die Presselenkung Im Dritten Reich* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1970); Wulf, *Presse Und Funk Im Dritten Reich*. Others have dealt with the complicate nature of the journalistic work. See Norbert Frei, *Nationalsozialistische Eroberung Der Provinzpresse: Gleichschaltung, Selbstanpassung Und Resistenz in Bayern* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1980). Detailed analyses of primary material and excellent introductions are offered in Doris Kohlmann-Viand, *NS-Presspolitik Im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Die “Vertraulichen Informationen” Als Mittel Der Presselenkung* (München: K. G. Saur, 1991); Gabriele Toepser-Ziegert, *NS-Pressenanweisungen Der*

laws, such as the “Emergency Decree for the Protection of the German People,” eliminated on February 4, 1933 the freedom of the press. The law stated that any type of publication could be confiscated by the police if, “the content is susceptible to endanger public security or order.”⁵⁰ It then became possible to forbid publications in which, for example, “leading civil servants were being insulted or ridiculed.”⁵¹ In addition to crude violence, the Nazis used a series of economic measures such as the “Law about the Confiscation of Communist Properties” to acquire papers and magazines. As a result, a week before the *Reichstag* election on March 5, 1933, all communist and social democratic papers had disappeared. The expropriation of many publishers occurred through seemingly neutral companies, which in fact belonged to the NS party, and resulted in the emergence of the world’s biggest press trust. An additional consequence was the dramatic reduction of published press from 4,700 to about 900 papers by 1936. By the end of the Third Reich, the Nazi party owned about eighty percent of the published German press.⁵²

Institutionally, a Reich Press Chamber was created and the key document at its disposition was the *Schriftleitergesetz*, the Editorial Law, established on October 4, 1933.⁵³ Press and journalists were now under the supervision of the state, a change that first looked like an improvement compared with the chaotic situation during the Weimar Republic, where journalists and especially editors were at the mercy of the publishers. Thus, the professionals welcomed most of the new regulations. Editors were now

Vorkriegszeit. Edition Und Dokumentation, Saur. (München, New York: Saur, 1984). See also Kurt Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse, 1914-1945* (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1972); Konrad Dussel, *Deutsche Tagespresse Im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert*, LIT. (Münster: Lit, 2004).

⁵⁰ Dussel, *Deutsche Tagespresse Im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert*, 160.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Dussel, *Deutsche Tagespresse Im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert*, 176.

⁵³ Reprinted in Wulf, *Presse Und Funk Im Dritten Reich*, 74–76.

required to possess the German citizenship; to have not lost their civic rights (*bürgerliche Ehrenrechte*) and to have the qualification for the tenure of public offices; be twenty-one years old; be capable of handling business; and have been trained in the profession.⁵⁴

Others conditions were unmistakably more political. Editors had to be “of Aryan descent, and not married to a person of non-Aryan descent,” and “have the qualities required to exert intellectual influence upon the public.”⁵⁵ Together with Marxist journalists, the first victims of this re-organization of the press were, of course, Jews. Jewish press boasted sixty-five newspapers and magazines in the 1930s, with a monthly publication of one million. The creation of the *Kulturbund deutscher Juden*, the Cultural Union for German Jews, 1933-1941, allowed Jewish publishers at first to continue their publication under increasing censorship.⁵⁶ With the exception of the *Jüdisches Nachrichtenblatt*, which continued its publication until June 1, 1943, the entire Jewish press was banned on November 10, 1938 in the wake of the *Reichskristallnacht*, while some publications continued underground.

In addition to opening a Reich Press School, to train future members of the press corps, the regime controlled not only the publication of information, including increasing paper rationing, but also its very source.⁵⁷ The compulsory fusion of the two main news agencies: the *Wolffschen Telegraphenbüro (WTB)* and the *Telegraphen Union (TU)* into

⁵⁴ Document 2083-PS, Source: Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression Volume IV. Office of the United States Chief Counsel for Prosecution of Axis Criminality. Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1946. USMARC Cataloging Record. Translated by The Avalon Project at Yale Law School on line.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Barbara Müller-Wesemann, *Theater Als Geistiger Widerstand: Der Jüdische Kulturbund in Hamburg, 1934-1941* (Stuttgart: M & P, 1997); Katrin Diehl, *Die Jüdische Presse Im Dritten Reich. Zwischen Selbstbehauptung Und Fremdbestimmung* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1997); Herbert Freedon, *The Jewish Press in the Third Reich* (Providence: Berg Publishers, 1993).

⁵⁷ On the *Reichspresseschule* see Wolfgang Müsse, *Die Reichspresseschule - Journalisten Für Die Diktatur? Ein Beitrag Zur Geschichte Des Journalismus Im Dritten Reich* (München: Saur, 1995). On paper rationing see Kohlmann-Viand, *NS-Presspolitik Im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, 56–65.

the *Deutschen Nachrichten Büro GmbH (DND)* as of January 1, 1934, facilitated the “supervision” of the information.

Notwithstanding the rapid *Gleichschaltung* of the film and press industries, scholars have argued that Nazis did not exercise monolithic control. In the case of the press, the inherent paradoxes of the Nazi regime were aggravated by the complicated task-division between the agencies controlling it. The Propaganda Minister Goebbels, in charge of content of the press, had numerous disagreements with Max Amann, who was responsible for its organizational and economical aspects. President of the Reich Press Chamber since 1933, Amann was also the *Reichsleiter für die Press der NSDAP* (Reich Leader for the Party Press), and the chief executive of the Eher Verlag, which, among other things, published the SS magazine *Das schwarze Korps*. The other major player was Otto Dietrich, appointed by Hitler in 1931 *Reichspressechef der NSDAP* (Reich Press Chief of the Party). The ambitious Dietrich achieved the rank of *Obergruppenführer* in 1941, the second highest rank behind *Reichsführer SS*, Heinrich Himmler. In 1933, Dietrich became *Vorsitzender des Reichsverbandes des deutschen Press* (Chair of the National Association of the German Press), as well as Vice-President of the Chamber of the Press. In addition, Dietrich was chief press officer of the government and state secretary in the Ministry of Propaganda. In 1934, Hitler ordered that Dietrich be, as the Press Chief of the Reich Government, “the supreme authority for all press publications of the Party and all its offices.”⁵⁸ From 1940 on, Dietrich instituted his own “*Tagesparole*,” the slogan of the day, which had to be integrated in publications.

⁵⁸ Ernest Bramsted, *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda, 1925-1945*, (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1965), 107; Dussel, *Deutsche Tagespresse Im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert*, 164.

With each man pursuing his own agenda while responsible for certain areas of the press, the collaboration between the different agencies was extremely difficult, especially due to personal rivalries among Goebbels, Amann, and Dietrich. The situation was complicated by the addition of two other press agencies: the *Wehrmacht*, the German army, had its own press department with an opaque system of transmission of information and the *Auslandsminister*, the foreign ministry, headed by new Foreign Minister Joachim Von Ribbentrop, which held its own press conferences for foreign correspondents.

Despite these overlapping agencies, often resulting in confusion and chaos, the press was clearly “a tremendously important and significant instrument to influence the masses,” to propagate official ideas and policies.⁵⁹ Unlike the press in Western democracies, the German press during the Third Reich was not regulated by relatively free competition, but by “a system of official “do’s and don’ts,” by constant criticism, frequent threats and occasional praise from the authoritarian rulers.”⁶⁰ The main tool to achieve control was the daily press conference and the *Anweisungen*, the bidding directives, journalists received.⁶¹ Unlike the Weimar government, Goebbels did not invite journalists for a session of questions and answers. Instead, every day at noon the propaganda minister summoned a group of chosen journalists and laid down what had to be reported and what was not allowed to be reported. The information issued by the press department came under three categories:

⁵⁹ Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels über die Aufgaben der Press,” in *Zeitungs-Verlag*, March 18, 1933. Reprinted in Wulf, *Presse Und Funk Im Dritten Reich*, 64–65.

⁶⁰ Bramsted, *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda*, 88.

⁶¹ As often with the Nazis, the rhetorical choice is misleading. Whereas the term “*Anweisungen*” originally implies freedom of choice, it meant mandatory under the Nazi. See Ibid., 90. All the pre-1939 directives have been published with a thorough introduction by Toepser-Ziegert, *NS-Presseanweisungen Der Vorkriegszeit*.

- News for immediate publication to be released in full by the press
- Information and material to be used indirectly without indicating the source
- Strictly confidential directives, which were only available to the journalists admitted to the press conference ⁶²

The sheer number of these briefings coming from the propaganda minister denotes the extensive and forceful efforts to control the press, despite Hans Fritzsche's assurance to journalists that, "[y]ou will not be hindered but furthered in doing your own work. You will be protected from committing blunders that would be painful to both sides."⁶³ Part of the wide system destined to control information, these directives were sent to all the editorial offices across the country and had to be destroyed once read. A handful of editors in chief disregarded these directives and, risking their lives, hid and kept the directives. Out of the collections published so far, the so-called Fritz Sänger's collection is the most impressive. Its publication by Gabriel Toepser-Ziegert resulted in sixteen volumes and three indexes. While four hundred pages were sufficient to publish the 1933 press instructions, and seven hundred for 1934, 1935 required one thousand pages. Four volumes and a total of 1,900 pages were necessary for 1936, while 1937, 1938 and 1939 necessitated about 1000 pages each.⁶⁴ Numerically we go from an average of 80 directives per month in 1934 to about 385 for the first half of 1939.⁶⁵ While the Sänger collection only covers the pre-war years, scholars are lucky to have at their disposition the press directives collected during the war, despite explicit prohibition, by

⁶² Dussel, *Deutsche Tagespresse Im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert*, 166.

⁶³ Toepser-Ziegert, *NS-Pressenanweisungen der Vorkriegszeit*. For a fascinating biography of Fritzsche, see Max Bonacker, *Goebbels' Mann Beim Radio. Der NS-Propagandist Hans Fritzsche (1900-1953)* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2007).

⁶⁴ Toepser-Ziegert, *NS-Pressenanweisungen Der Vorkriegszeit*.

⁶⁵ Hans Bohrmann, Karen Peter, and Gabriele Toepser-Ziegert, *NS-Pressenanweisungen der Vorkriegszeit: Edition und Dokumentation*, vol. 7, 1939,1 (München: Saur, 2001), 13.

Theo Oberheitmann, the editor of the provincial newspaper *Das Weinburger Tagesblatt*.⁶⁶ Thus, we have a fairly complete view of Goebbels' "incentives" to the Reich's journalists.

The directives covered a broad range of issues, mostly political ones. When talking about cultural topics, they fulfilled several functions. The regime first informed them about major changes in regulations such as, in January 1939, the soon-be-implemented ban on the import of American films.⁶⁷ The regime was careful though to "slowly prepare the public," by first not reporting about upcoming American films and by "pushing them to small film theaters."⁶⁸ Secondly, the directives concerned themselves with wording, advising on how, if at all, to report about specific events. From March 1939, screenings of American films should only be briefly mentioned in "a dismissive and negative tone and pointing to the general lack of taste of American film."⁶⁹ Pictures of upcoming or running American films were only allowed as paid advertisement. Talking about radio, the press was asked for example not to use the "naked word *radio* or *funk*, but instead *Rundfunk* or *Rundfunkwirtschaft*,"⁷⁰ or "Bablesberg instead of Neubabelsberg," for the German Hollywood.⁷¹ Reports about the film *Urlaub auf Ehrenwort* (Furlough on Word of Honor, Karl Ritter, 1938) should not describe it as a war film, as "this would be incorrect characterization and could hurt the film."⁷²

The commented publications of the directives by Gabriel Toepser-Ziegert also demonstrate how the directives reacted to already published information, correcting for

⁶⁶ Kohlmann-Viand, *NS-Propaganda im Zweiten Weltkrieg*.

⁶⁷ ZSg. 101/12/10/Nr.30, January 9, 1939. The ban actually took effect in June 1940.

⁶⁸ ZSg. 102/14/27/(1), January 9, 1939.

⁶⁹ ZSg. 101/12/91/Nr. 238, March 23, 1939.

⁷⁰ ZSg. 101/10/53/Nr. 953, July 24, 1937 and ZSg. 102/7/408/34 (4), December 14, 1937.

⁷¹ ZSg. 102/8/147/(4), February 23, 1938.

⁷² ZSg. 102/8/39/42 (4), January 1938.

example the (false) news that the actor of the Hitler Youth film *Hitlerjungen Quex*, Jürgen Ohlsen, was Jewish or fraternized with Jews.⁷³ Lastly, directives about cultural topics sometimes took the form of prohibitions and, more commonly, requests for support for specific films, especially the ones in line with national socialist ideology such as Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia* films, whose premiere should be "acknowledged as the unusual social event it is."⁷⁴ In a December 18, 1936 directive, for example, "special attention [was] called to the fact that the Ufa Film *Annemarie* [had] received the rating 'artistically valuable.'" Newspapers are asked to add laudatory critiques, if this has not already been done.⁷⁵ The rhetoric used is remarkable, especially the passive voice and the word choice, "are asked." In the same vein, the successes of German films at the 1938 Venice Film Festival were to be emphasized in the press as a result of the long intensive work of the government.⁷⁶ The National Socialist regime's involvement was also to be developed in the coverage of the opening of the Film Academy, while the opening of an international film archive in Paris in 1938 or the creation of the Cannes Film Festival in 1939, both seen as direct competition to fascist programs, were not to be covered.⁷⁷

Prohibitions thus could pertain to undesirable films, filmmakers, or members, and products of certain countries, as seen with American films, but always with an eye on the geopolitical situation, the German film industry's interests, and its effort to maintain the country's image abroad. Following a review of the spy film *Lockspitzel Asew* (Agent

⁷³ ZSg. 101/6/71 from August 26, 1935. On the use of language during National Socialism, see Albrecht Greule and Waltraud Sennebogen, *Tarnung - Leistung - Werbung: Untersuchungen Zur Sprache Im Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2004).

⁷⁴ ZSg. 101/11/299/Nr. 506, April 19, 1938.

⁷⁵ ZSg. 101/8/429/Nr. 1400, December 18, 1936.

⁷⁶ ZSg. 102/12/147/14 and ZSg. 102/12/148/29/(4), both September 1, 1938.

⁷⁷ For the German Film Academy see ZSg. 101/11/185/Nr. 320, March 4, 1938, ZSg. 102/9/15/36 (9), ZSg. 109/9/89/31 (8), March 25, 1938, and part four in this dissertation. On the Parisian film archive, ZSg. 102/10/194/64, June 17, 1938, and ZSg. 101/13/114/Nr. 889, August 21, 1939 for the Cannes Film Festival.

Provocateur Asew, Phil Jutzi, 1935), film critics were specifically asked on May 25, 1935, not to address the issue of spies and concern themselves solely with the artistic aspect of the film: “it is undesirable to publicly draw attention to questions of spying and espionage,” as it could damage the interest of the country.⁷⁸ In the wake of Jesse Owens’ triumph at the Berlin Olympics, the regime had to ask the press to refrain from attacking the athlete, as “such critiques appear unfavorable, because it looks like Germany was considerate of its guests during the Games, but was now showing its true intentions. In addition, Jesse Owens has behaved with loyalty towards Germany and has, for example, refused a Jewish offer to work against Germany.”⁷⁹ Following the purge of the film industry of its undesirable elements, most of them Jewish, the regime had to specify in 1937 that screenings of films made before 1933 with the collaboration of Jews, “must not be attacked in the press, as these screenings are vital for the small film theaters.”⁸⁰ Acting professionals working abroad, for example, “are not be attacked, as they possibly could come back to play in Germany again. This concerns especially Marlene Dietrich.”⁸¹ After unsuccessful efforts on Goebbels’ part to bring her back to Germany, nothing could be written about the actress after November 1937, and negative comments about her and her films were forbidden.⁸² In 1938, the wedding of Greta Garbo was to be only briefly mentioned, as she married a Jew. This fact was, of course, not to be mentioned at all, “as [the regime] is very much interested in acquiring her films in the future.”⁸³ By 1939 though, as the anti-Jewish propaganda increased in Germany, Garbo’s new film was not

⁷⁸ ZSg. 101/5/170/Nr. 1340, May 25, 1935.

⁷⁹ ZSg. 101/9/47/Nr. 91, January 18, 1937.

⁸⁰ ZSg. 102/4/44/65 (4), January 18, 1937.

⁸¹ ZSg. 101/8/439/Nr. 1423, December 23, 1936.

⁸² ZSg. 101/10/339/Nr. 1428, November 9, 1937 and ZSg. 102/7/354/(2), November 19, 1937.

⁸³ ZSg. 101/11/199/Nr. 350, March 10, 1938.

distributed in Germany, as “the director Ernst Lubitsch was Jewish, and consequently the German press should not even mention it.”⁸⁴ By October 1940 nothing about Garbo could be published.⁸⁵

Directives were more often designed to give the impression of a smoothly running film industry, without tensions, mistakes, or difficulties of any kind. Any reports of mishaps or failure were absolutely forbidden, such as in the case of a German-Polish film project,⁸⁶ the negative critique German films received abroad,⁸⁷ as well as “the alleged difficulties of the Bavaria film company,” or the processes leading to the privatization of the Ufa in 1937.⁸⁸ In October 1935, the press was asked not to mention the previous censorship of Mathias Wieman’s film *Die ewige Maske* (The Eternal Mask),⁸⁹ while discussions of the film *Weisse Sklaven* (White Slaves, Karl Anton, 1937) “should not refer to the fact that the *Führer* and *Reichskanzler* had originally banned it.”⁹⁰ The German film industry was to appear strong and successful, especially abroad. The regime reacted sharply to German critiques of its domestic cinematic productions, especially after these were taken by “Germanophobic foreign newspapers,” and had thus “damaged German film exports.”⁹¹

Despite such an elaborate system of control, Goebbels faced two major problems. First, its effectiveness was far from absolute, as seen in the sustained amount

⁸⁴ ZSg. 101/13/95/Nr. 806, August 2, 1939.

⁸⁵ *Zeitschriften Dienst*, Directive 3371, October 18, 1940.

⁸⁶ ZSg. 101/10/387/Nr. 1522, November 29, 1937.

⁸⁷ ZSg. 102/6/153/55 (3) September 3, 1937.

⁸⁸ ZSg. 102/5238/105, April 16, 1937, ZSg. 101/9/285/Nr. 520, April 17, 1937, ZSg. 101/9/319/Nr. 582, May 3, 1937: “the case Bavaria must disappear from the German press,” followed by ZSg. 102/5/272 (2) May 4, 1937, “nothing about the Bavaria can be published, not even in the trade section.”

⁸⁹ ZSg. 102/1/33 (8), October 15, 1935.

⁹⁰ ZSg. 101/8/437/Nr. 1416, December 22, 1936.

⁹¹ ZSg. 101/10/367/Nr. 1474, November 19, 1937.

of “reprimands” and “disciplinary actions” taken against journalists.⁹² The regime issued over two thousand complaints regarding topics ranging from foreign and domestic politics to economic and cultural issues. As late as August 1938, directives sharply reprimanded a journalist for his derogatory review of German films presented at the Venice Film festival, more than two years after film critiques were banned.⁹³ Such reprimands point to the lack of understanding and deficient communication between the regime and journalists, but can also be interpreted as a refusal by the journalists to conform and obey the directives. Another major impact of such control was to make journalist uncertain as to what the appropriate behavior ought to be. Censorship and outright bans could strike left- as well as right-leaning papers. In October 1936, Goebbels closed the art magazine *Der Querschnitt* for its irreverent portrait of Frederick the Great and at the same time scolded the NS-weekly *Deutsches Wollen* for its condemnation of the Rühman’s comedy *Wenn alle Engel wären* (If We Were All Angels, Carl Froelich, 1936). While the journal was indignant at the story of (small) infidelity, Goebbels on the other hand fumed at the “priggish” journalists.⁹⁴

Reports about cultural events had drastically changed after the prohibition of the *Nachttheaterkritik*, the nightly theatrical review, on May 12, 1936. This prohibition quickly extended to any type of art critique replacing it with “descriptive report” (*Betrachtung*).⁹⁵ Out of fear of reprisals, most journalists were careful to remain so neutral that journals and magazines soon became synonymous with uniformity and boredom, much to the dismay of the regime, and especially of Goebbels, who regularly

⁹² See the concrete numbers in Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse, 1914-1945*, 374–377.

⁹³ ZSg. 102/11/116/37 (7), August 19, 1938.

⁹⁴ ZSg. 101/8/243-247, October 17, 1936.

⁹⁵ See ZSg. 101/7/299/Nr.421, May 12, 1936, ZSg. 101/7/301/Nr. 428, May 13, 1936, ZSg. 101/8/243-247, November 28, 1936, and Zsg. 101/8/349-351, November 28, 1938.

complained about the dullness of the press.⁹⁶ To answer such qualitative weaknesses and present to the international community a semblance of journalistic freedom, Goebbels launched *Das Reich* in 1940, hiring non-National Socialist journalists and granting them a sliver of freedom.⁹⁷ Needless to say the coverage of political topics was still carefully monitored, with Goebbels writing the Opinion Piece of *Das Reich* himself.

The Cultural Press Conference and the *Zeitschriften-Dienst*

The regime also ‘guided’ reports on cultural issues via the Cultural Conferences and the publication of the *Zeitschriften-Dienst*. The daily press conference, while covering all sorts of topics, only occasionally dealt with cultural themes. Social and cultural topics were developed more fully in die *Zeitschriften*, the magazines, whose editors were also supervised and had to attend the *Kulturpolitischen Pressekonferenz* (the Cultural Political Press Conference) which took place every Thursday at 1 pm starting July 24, 1936 following an array of other conferences.⁹⁸ Elke Fröhlich has demonstrated how this new conference was “symptomatic for the development of national socialist cultural policies in the year 1936,” which had been marked by the revisions of originally high expectations for genuine National Socialist art, following the failure of ambitious projects such as the Thing-Spiel.⁹⁹ She argues that the regime tried to compensate for “cultural sterility with ingenious propaganda, and cultural failure with organization.”¹⁰⁰ Looking more like a catalogue of current cultural events, the cultural conference gave the

⁹⁶ Hans Bohrmann and Gabriele Toepser-Ziegert, eds., *NS-Pressenanweisungen Der Vorkriegszeit: Edition Und Dokumentation*, vol. 2, 1934 (München: Saur, 1985). See Elke Fröhlich, “Kulturpolitik Und Presse Im Dritten Reich,” *Vierteljahrshelte Für Zeitgeschichte* 22, no. 4 (1974): 363–367.

⁹⁷ Martens, *Zum Beispiel Das Reich*.

⁹⁸ The only existing work on the conference is Fröhlich, “Kulturpolitik Und Presse Im Dritten Reich.”

⁹⁹ Ibid.; Gerwin Strobl, *The Swastika and the Stage: German Theater and Society, 1933-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

illusion of a blooming cultural activity. Accordingly, it avoided long-term regulation, ruled on an ad hoc basis, and privileged positive influence over prohibition. The most concrete positive encouragement regarded the *Nachwuchs* (the new talents), an issue that concerned all aspects of German cultural life. Journalists were, for example, urged to mention young artists and not just focus on the stars and well-known personalities. Despite broad efforts by the government to encourage and nurture cultural production, none of the programs put in place could compensate for the dearth of talent, and eventually, according to Fröhlich, the war was used to explain the low level of German culture.

While the Cultural Press Conference continued until the end the war, the increased geopolitical tensions required more detailed and extensive sets of directives. The weekly *Zeitschriften-Dienst* (*ZD*, later *Zeitschriften and Wochendienst*) was created in the spring of 1939, with Hans-Georg Trunit as editor-in-chief; Walter Hopf responsible for economic and social political topics, and Kurt Lothar Tank and Heniz Vöpel for cultural and entertainment.¹⁰¹ The *Zeitschriften-Dienst* was published until April 14, 1945.

While it delivered the same kind of prohibitions as the daily directives, the *Zeitschriften-Dienst's* focused even more on recommendations and provided the magazines with a breath of material. In the absence of any independent news sources, the *ZD* was often the only material journalists had at their disposal, especially in the province. The *Zeitschriften Dienst* utilized this situation and presented itself disingenuously as a tool to help the magazines:

¹⁰¹ Koszyk, *Deutsche Presse, 1914-1945*, 414.

It would not make sense to expect from the magazines that they mentioned all the topics that are dealt with in the *Zeitschriften Dienst*. It is not the purpose of our suggestions. Rather we offer an abundance of material and thoughts, so that every editor has the possibility to choose the themes that are appropriate for his readership.¹⁰²

Needless to say, the content presented was in the line of pure National Socialist ideology, with topics such as the perfidy of England and the duplicity or the evil Jews brought to German society. Kurt Koszyk gives several examples of how the *ZD* “advised” magazines editors to comment, for example, on the opulence of bread in Germany (November 24, 1939) or, during the invasion of the Soviet Union to allow “the Germans let their feelings free (...) their instincts concerning the threat of Bolshevism and the devastating activities of the Jews,” and by “reminding the readers that numerous *Volksdeutsch* (ethnic Germans) are living in the Soviet Union.” The *Zeitschriften-Dienst* reminded the readers that “Germans came not to destroy socialism but to create justice for the oppressed people living under Bolshevism,” and that “the German soldiers do not come as enemies but as a friends of the people who are oppressed by Bolshevism, and they come as their savior from Jewish-Bolshevik yoke.”¹⁰³

The regime also reacted to the “rumors” of atrocities. With the question “what happens to the mentally ill in Germany?” the *ZD* from January 2, 1942 points to the “erroneous assumptions,” circulated by the enemy propaganda. Therefore the magazines have the important role of providing the readers, especially soldiers and their families, with effective explanations. These explanations should be as inconspicuous as possible and free of any spectacular characters. One should avoid a direct polemic against the “opposing allegations.” The best thing to do is to rely on the “exemplary research and

¹⁰² Quoted in *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ See *Ibid.*, 417–418.

Zeitschriften-Dienst

Sonderbeilage zur Ausgabe 18

1. September 1939

Nummer 718—723

Für alle Zeitschriften!

Zusätzliche Anweisung

des Reichsministeriums für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda:

1. Das Wort bzw. der Begriff Krieg ist in keinem Zusammenhang in der gesamten Zeitschriftenpresse zu verwenden, da wir lediglich polnische Angriffe zurückschlagen. **718**

2. Die Rede des Führers vor dem Reichstag (1. 9. 39) ist zur Grundlage aller Betrachtungen über die aktuelle Lage zu machen. **719**

Ferner wird es vor allem für die ins Ausland gehenden deutschen Zeitschriften zweckmäßig sein, sich ausführlich mit dem deutschen Angebot an Polen zu beschäftigen, wobei Behauptungen des Auslandes, England habe von dem Vorschlag des Führers nicht gewußt, sich an Hand der vielen Auslandstimmen zurückweisen lassen. Insbesondere hat sich am 31. 8. der Warschauer Sender mit diesem Angebot befaßt.

3. In keinem Fall dürfen irgendwelche Zukunftspläne und Voraussagen hinsichtlich Polens usw. erörtert werden. **720**

In dieser Hinsicht haben sich die Zeitschriften strengstens an die DNB-Veröffentlichungen zu halten.

4. Meldungen des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht (OKW.) dürfen nur unverändert und ohne Zusätze veröffentlicht werden. Sie sollen auch nicht mit Meldungen aus privaten Quellen zusammengebracht werden. **721**

5. Es sind keinerlei private Schätzungen über die Zahl der Volksdeutschen in Polen zu bringen. Die Zeitschriftenpresse verwendet einheitlich die Zahl von 1,2 Millionen Volksdeutschen in Polen. **722**

6. Sonderausgaben dürfen nur nach vorheriger Absprache und nach Genehmigung durch das Hauptreferat Zeitschriften im Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, Berlin W 8, Jägerstraße 5 (11 00 14, Hausapparat 2507), herausgebracht werden. **723**

Figure 1.1: *Zeitschriften-Dienst*, Directives 718-723, September 1, 1939.

medical practices” in Germany. The *Deutsche Wochendienst*, for example, mentioned the treatment of schizophrenia and the surgical removal of brain tumors. No discussion of the killing of genetically sick and mentally impaired took place, so that the problem of euthanasia was glossed over.¹⁰⁴

Despite the rhetoric, the mandatory character of this “advice” was clear to all and became unmistakable on September 1, 1939 with the invasion of Poland. We see, for example a long list of directives on how to report the “skirmishes,” such as the *Anweisungen* 718-721(Figure 1.1):¹⁰⁵

718. The word, and/or the concept of war are in no way to be used in the entire magazines press, because we are only fighting back Polish attacks.

719. The *Führer*’s speech from September 1,1939 is the source of all comments about the present situation (...)

721. No private estimations about the number of ethnic Germans living in Poland. The magazines are using consistently the number of 1.2 million ethnic Germans in Poland.

In addition, the first page of the September 1, 1939, *ZD* opens with an appeal to “Fellow workers!” reminding them that “Your magazine is an important and useful help for the accomplishment of the political duties our time.” But of course this help took the form of absolute obedience to the party’s “directives,” the *Anweisungen*.

The mandatory character of such advice was unmistakable on the same page: “We point again to the fact that the recommendations, wishes and directives of the *ZD* are to be considered mandatory and to be followed absolutely. In cases of violations or lack of cooperation the most severe consequences must expected in the present.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ See Ibid., 419.

¹⁰⁵ *Zeitschrift-Dienst*, Directive Nr. 718, September 1, 1939.

¹⁰⁶ *Zeitschriften-Dienst*, 1. September 1939, N. 718-723. Sonderbeilage zur Ausgabe 18.

The *Zeitschriften-Dienst* instituted “*Die parole der Woche*,” the slogan of the week, similar to Dietrich’s slogan of the day. From July 23, 1943 on, this was supplemented by the report “*Zur Lage*,” about the situation; a one-page editorial about the main current themes. The last *Zeitschriften-Dienst*, and *Wochen-Dienst* available to scholars has the number 305 from March 9, 1945 and the front page read, “Resist! Attack!”

In the absence of any independent news sources, magazine editors had to rely on the *Zeitschriften Dienst*. In addition, for small magazines, especially outside of Berlin, the *ZD* provided a welcome source of already prepared materials for editorials, as the papers were increasingly understaffed. The directives covered all imaginable topics, not only political and social ones, such as the participation of German women in the *völkisch* National Socialist society, but also cultural topics, especially films and the *Wochenschau*, the newsreels.¹⁰⁷

The “advice” offered in *ZD* followed the same patterns than the ones given at the press conference: a mix of information, issues of wording (“no effusive coverage”),¹⁰⁸ prohibitions and suggestions. New regulations were announced such as, in April 1940, the explicit ban on any publication about film projects. Only films already in production

¹⁰⁷ Next to cultural topics, the *ZD* devoted numerous directives about the role and position of women, increasingly so as the war wore on. See for example “Der Einsatz der deutschen Frau” September 16, 1939 and again on November 3, 1939 “Einsatz der deutschen Frau,” “Frauen helfen Siegen,” March 21, 1941, “Frauenumschulung für die Kriegswirtschaft,” May 9, 1941, “Ehrt die Frauen und Mutter” July 18, 1941, “Aufgaben der Frauen- und Familienzeitschriften im dritten Kriegswinter,” October 10, 1941, “Die soziale Betreuung der werktätigen Frau,” April 10, 1942, “Das BDM-Werk ‘Glaube und Schönheit,’” December 18, 1942, “Der Frauendienst für Wohlfahrts- und Krankenpflege,” April 9, 1943, “Eine neuer Frauenberuf,” June 4, 1943, “Aus der Praxis des Frauenarbeitseinsatzes,” June 18, 1943, “Berufstätige Hausfrauen,” November 5, 1943, “Die Kulturarbeit der deutschen Frauenorganisation,” April 28, 1944, “Leistungsmöglichkeit des Frauenarbeit,” August 25, 1944, “Hilfe für die werktätige Hausfrau,” September 22, 1944, “Erfahrungen mit meldepflichtigen Frauen,” October 6, 1944, “Frauenbewährung in Kriegen vergangener Zeit,” October 6, 1944, “Frauenarbeit im totalen Kriegseinsatz,” October 26, 1944, “Frauen im Wehrdienst,” December 8, 1944, “Die Frau – Ergänzung des Mannes,” March 31, 1945.

¹⁰⁸ *ZD*, directive 789 regarding the film *Schneider Wibbel*, September 16, 1939.

could be mentioned in an effort not to heighten expectations about upcoming films, which did not materialize in the end.¹⁰⁹ Prohibitions were not to be disregarded. On January 26, 1940, for example, one reads, “We ask you not to mention under any circumstances the fact that 120 Jews have been brought to Germany from the former Polish ghettos in order to be used as extras in Veit Harlan’s film *Jud Süß*.”¹¹⁰ The *ZD* also intended to educate journalist with the rubrics “what we liked,” analyzing and praising a published article, while “Please, not like that” commented negatively about published articles, as an example of what *not* to do.¹¹¹

The impact of the regime was certainly most effective through the material it provided to journalists. In addition to book reviews and short columns, the *ZD* offered one or two extensive press-packages every week. On July 15, 1939, the directive 426 consisted of a two-page script entitled *Film art in Competition*, dealing with the Venice Film Festival (Figure 1.2). Such elaborate directives were divided into different categories such as “Why is this relevant?” and “Goal,” juxtaposing “Film as a tool for cultural rapprochement and the reciprocal comprehension of people” with “The ideological film must assert itself.”¹¹²

The category “Format” included “What to emphasize” and “What to avoid.” While the quality and the success of the German film productions in previous years needed to be emphasized, journalists were asked to debunk any assumption that Germany was favored due to its collaboration with Italy.

¹⁰⁹ *ZD*, Directive 2255, April 19, 1940.

¹¹⁰ *ZD*, Directive 1705, January 26, 1940.

¹¹¹ See for examples Directives 785 and 786, September 16, 1939.

¹¹² *ZD*, Directive 426, July 15, 1939.

Filmkunst im Wettbewerb 426

Warum aktuell?

VII. Internationale Filmkunst-Ausstellung, Venedig, 1939 (8.–31. August). Deutschland beteiligt sich wiederum mit einigen Spitzenfilmen.

Ziel:

Die Bedeutung des alljährlich stattfindenden venezianischen Filmwettbewerbs für die Entwicklung der Filmkunst und der kulturpolitischen Zielsetzung in den verschiedenen Herstellungsländern. — Der Film kann Mittel der kulturellen Verständigung und des Verstehens der Völker untereinander sein. — Der weltanschaulich betonte Film muß sich durchsetzen. — „Je klarer die Konturen eines Kunstwerkes sind und je schärfer man seine Linien umreißt, um so klarer und schärfer sieht die Welt dieses Kunstwerk, und je unerschütterlicher wir unsere eigene Art stehen und je fanatischer wir sie pflegen, um so mehr werden wir der Welt imponieren können.“ (Dr. Goebbels am 19. Mai 1933 vor den Filmschaffenden.)

Ausrichtung:

Betonen:

Der deutsche Film hat in allen internationalen Filmkunst-Wettbewerben von Venedig stets seine Qualität und künstlerische Bedeutung beweisen können. Zweimal hat das deutsche Filmschaffen die „Coppa Mussolini“ als höchste internationale Auszeichnung erhalten, 1936 für „Der Kaiser von Kalifornien“ (Luis Trenker), 1938 für Leni Riefenstahl „Olympia“-Film. In allen Jahren fielen weitere wertvolle Pokale, Medaillen und Ehrenschilde an Deutschland. — Die Zusammenarbeit Deutschland-Italien auch auf kulturellem Gebiet könnte zu der Vermutung führen, daß bei der Wertung deutsche Filme bevorzugt behandelt werden. Diese Mutmaßung ist falsch. Im Preisgericht befinden sich offizielle Vertreter aller beteiligten Nationen. Daraus ergibt sich, daß die Wertung stets nach künstlerischen Gesichtspunkten erfolgte und die deutschen Erfolge in jeder Weise begründet sind. Jeder deutsche Spitzenfilm, wie auch jeder ausländische Film, der hier zur Aufführung gelangt, wird beachtet und erregt das Interesse der Weltöffentlichkeit.

Vermeiden:

Mutmaßungen über Erfolge einzelner Filme, über Preisvergebung.

Nur zur Information:

Die politischen Erfolge Italiens als Achsenmacht und die sichtbare künstlerische Aufwärtsentwicklung der deutschen und italienischen Filme veranlaßten England und Frankreich, eine Konkurrenz-Filmkunstschau in Cannes anzukündigen. Trotzdem ist die Beteiligung in Venedig aus fast allen Filmländern der Erde wiederum stark. Ein Zeichen der anerkannten Bedeutung der venezianischen Schau. Ob und in welchem Maße die Vereinigten Staaten, England und Frankreich die Filmkunst-Ausstellung von Venedig besichtigen, bleibt abzuwarten. Die Entscheidung, welche Filme deutscherseits auf der Filmkunst-Ausstellung von Venedig gezeigt werden, trifft der Reichsminister für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda. Eine kritische Wertung der getroffenen Auswahl wollen wir unterlassen. Bisher fest zugelassen: „Es war eine rauschende Ballnacht“.

Themen und Anregungen:

Politisch:

Die venezianische Weltfilmschau im Dienste der Völkerannäherung. — Filmkunst ver-

mittelt nicht nur Eindrücke vom Wesen und Leben anderer Völker, sondern schafft Verständnis für deren Lebensnotwendigkeiten. — Der Film als friedlicher Sendbote unter den Völkern. — Weltanschaulicher Film oder Hetzfilm? (Während in Deutschland Filme entstehen, die nationale und völkische Themen behandeln, ohne andere Völker und Staatsformen anzugreifen, stellen andere Länder (z. B. USA.) Filme her, in denen das nationalsozialistische Deutschland verächtlich gemacht wird.) — Pflege der internationalen Beziehungen auf allen Gebieten des Films zwischen den beteiligten Nationen. — Filme, die nationalen Aufbau, Vaterlandsliebe, Volkstum oder überhaupt aufrechte heldische Haltung verherrlichen, haben größte Aussicht auf Erfolg. — Zusammenarbeit auf allen Gebieten.

Geschichtlich:

Erste Filmkunstschau in Venedig 1932. — Ab 1934 jährliche Wiederholung des Weltfilmfestens, nicht mehr im Rahmen der „Internationalen zweiwöchigen Kunstausstellung“ (Biennale). — Bis 1936 Freilicht-Filmvorführungen im Garten des Gr. Hotel Excelsior-Lido. 1937 entstand der „Palazzo del Cinema“ als offizielle Austragungstätte des Wettbewerbs. — Der Lido bekam durch die Weltfilmschau ein architektonisch neues Gesicht.

Wirtschaftlich:

Venedig-Filmkunstschau fördert Vertiefung der filmwirtschaftlichen Beziehungen. — Nicht nur Filmkünstler, auch Filmwirtschaftler treffen sich in Venedig. — Durch eigene Anschauung der künstlerischen Leistungen anderer Länder Anregung zur Steigerung des gegenseitigen Filmaustausches. Möglichkeit zu Besprechungen wichtiger Probleme der Filmwirtschaft und des Filmexportes. — Festigung der Wirtschaftsbeziehungen Deutschland-Italien auf filmischem Gebiet. — S. E. Botschafter Paulucci di Calabò-Barone sucht 20 deutsche Filme für italienischen Markt aus. In Deutschland werden mehr italienische Filme gezeigt. — Abkommen Istituto Nazionale LUCE-Ufa über Austausch von Wochenschaumaterial und Kulturfilmen. — Deutsch-italienische Gemeinschaftsproduktion (1939 Cine-Citta: „Die Premiere der Butterfly“ und „Gang in die Nacht“).

Kulturell:

Venedig als Kunststadt. — Deutschland auf allen Kunst-Ausstellungen von Venedig (so Kunstbiennale Venedig 1938) führend vertreten. — Deutsch-italienischer Kulturaustausch. — Italien, eines der ältesten Filmländer Europas. — Spitzenfilme aus der Zeit vor dem Weltkriege. — Förderung des Filmwesens durch das faschistische Regime. Auch in Italien betont weltanschauliche Stoffe erfolgreich (Schwarzhemden; Mario, der Held;

Luciano Serra, der Flieger; Karthagos Fall). — Film als kulturelle Brücke zwischen den Völkern. — Die „Intern. Filmkunst-Ausstellung“ Venedig verschafft dem Film in künstlerischer Hinsicht Weltgeltung. Sie gibt Anregungen für den künstlerischen und technischen Fortschritt durch Vergleichsmöglichkeit, welche Entwicklung die Filmkunst in den verschiedenen Ländern nimmt. — Neue, filmkünstlerische Wege. — Deutschlands Filmschaffen nicht nur organisatorisch, sondern auch künstlerisch in der Spitzengruppe. — Welche Spitzenleistungen zeigte Film-Deutschland in Venedig bisher der Filmöffentlichkeit? — Der Anteil Prof. Carl Froelichs (1932: „Mädchen in Uniform“, 1934: „Reifende Jugend“, 1935: „Ich für Dich — Du für mich“, 1936: „Traumulus“, 1938: „Heimat“). — Das deutsche Kulturschaffen eindeutig führend. — Internationale Anerkennungen für den wissenschaftlichen deutschen Film. — Was verlangt Deutschland vom künstlerischen Film? — Venedig-Wettbewerb strebt Hebung des künstlerischen, ethischen und kulturellen Films an.

Nach Bekanntgabe der Filme, die Deutschland zeigt: Deutsche Filmgestalter stellen sich dem Urteil der Welt. — Wo steht heute der deutsche Film? — Das deutsche Filmschaffen nimmt den Wettkampf auf. — Der Präsident der Reichsfilmkammer, Prof. Carl Froelich, als Filmgestalter. Sein neuestes Werk. — Welche Filme stellte Prof. Carl Ritter in den letzten Jahren zum Wettbewerb? — Das bisherige Schaffen der deutschen Filmkünstler, die mit ihren Leistungen Deutschland vertreten.

Unterhalten:

In rund 200 000 Filmmetern spiegelt sich die Welt. — Das Weltbad Lido im Zeichen der Filmkunst. — Venedig als Hintergrund von Filmhandlungen. — Deutsche Filmschaffende in Venedig.

Bilder:

Rund um Venedigs Filmkunst-Ausstellung (Lido, Palazzo del Cinema, evtl. deutscher Pavillon, Hotel Excelsior als Treffpunkt der offiziellen Vertreter der Filmnationen, Excelsior-Garten, die Freilicht-Vorführungsstätte). — Venedig, die Stadt der Kunst und des Films. — Bilder aus Filmen, die zur Aufklärung gelangen (Nachrichtenstellen der Filmgesellschaften).

Beispiel für Fachzeitschriften:

Handwerklich:

Häufige Prämierung deutscher Kulturfilme, die Meisterleistungen des deutschen Handwerks darstellen. — Wahre Filmtechnik: Keine Industrie, sondern ein Handwerk (Arbeit am einzelnen Stück).

Quellen:

Filmabteilung des Reichsministeriums für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda (RR. Dr. Bacmeister), Berlin W 8, Wilhelmplatz 8 (11 00 14). — Reichsfilmkammer (Frl. Stark), Berlin W 35, Bendlerstraße 33 (22 89 91). — Reichpropagandaleitung der NSDAP, Amtleitung Film (Reichshauptstellenleiter Belling), Berlin SW 61, Belle-Alliance-Straße 38 (66 06 03). — Deutsche Filmgesellschaften (soweit Filme ihrer Produktion zur Teilnahme gemeldet werden). — „VII. Internationale Filmkunstausstellung, Venedig, 1939“ Ufficio Stampa, Lido di Venezia (zum Vertreter Deutschlands hat Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels Ministerialrat Leichtenstern bestimmt).

Frauen helfen mit 427

Gebiet:

Freiwillige Erntehilfe der deutschen

Frauen

(Vgl. Nr. 229/230.)

Warum aktuell?

Die Reichsfrauenführerin, Frau Scholtz-Klink, hat alle deutschen Frauen und Mädchen zur Erntehilfe aufgerufen. Der Einsatz läuft ab sofort bis zur Beendigung der Hackfruchtperiode.

Ziel:

Unbedingte Notwendigkeit des Einsatzes aller verfügbaren Kräfte.

Ausrichtung:

Die Werbung soll sich besonders an berufsun- und kinderlose Frauen richten, die viel freie Zeit zur Verfügung haben. Einsatz möglichst 2–6 Wochen, oder auch nur über Wochenende oder halbtägig (letzteres besonders in Landstädten). Auch Bearbeitung von Wasch- und Flickkörben der Bäuerin durch die Stadtfrau. Vermieden: Bel der Städterin romantische Vorstellungen vom Landleben zu wecken. Ueberheblichkeit der Stadtfrau zu züchten. (Bäuerin soll in ihr die Kameradin sehen.) Keine zu starke Ueberlastung der Stadtfrau. (Bäuerin soll aber auch keine Hemmungen haben, der Städterin Arbeiten in ihrem Haushalt verantwortlich zu überweisen.)

Betonen: Jede Frau, die freie Zeit hat, muß mitteilen, um die Ernährung sicherzustellen.

Themen und Anregungen:

Politisch:

Die deutsche Frau kämpft nicht um frauenrechtlerische Theorien, sie setzt sich mit der Tat ein. — Die deutsche Frau darf nicht absits stehen (alle helfen mit: Männerorganisationen, Studenten, H.J.). — Durch eigenes Erleben Achtung vor der bäuerlichen Arbeit. Erkenntnis, daß der Bauer die Grundlage des Staates bildet.

Hauswirtschaftlich:

Die Bedeutung der bäuerlichen Vorratswirtschaft. Durch Arbeitsüberbürdung fehlt die Zeit zur Verwertung der anfallenden Erzeug-

Figure 1.2: “Film Art in Competition,” *Zeitschriften-Dienst*, Directive 426, July 15, 1939.

Another category, “For information only; not to be published,” asked to mention briefly the newly created Cannes festival, seen as a competition, while the participation of country from all around the world attested to the importance of the Venetian show. The selection of the German films for the Italian film festival, met by Goebbels, should not be commented upon. The “Topics and Suggestions,” divided among “Political,” “Historical,” “Economic,” “Cultural” and “Entertainment” are fascinating. As a political topic, the *ZD* suggested “the Venetian world film festival in the service of rapprochement between the nations” and also “the differentiation between ideological films (*weltanschaulich*) and hate films (*Hetzefilm*),” pointing the fact that while in “Germany films are made, which deal with national and *völkisch* themes, without attacking other nations and states, other countries (such as the United States) are producing films in which National Socialist Germany is treated disdainfully.” The other historical, economical, cultural and entertainment topics all have either Germany at their core, or Italy, the close ally of Germany.

The *ZD* also recommended a set of images for general press usage and had specific examples for magazines. Technical magazines could, for example, point to the numerous prizes awarded to German Cultural films, which represents the masterly performance of the German craft: “Real film technique, not an industry but a craft.”

The next press package devoted to cinema was published in October 1939.¹¹³ As evidenced by its title, “German film production as helper in the fight,” the tone was more political. The stated goal was to “illustrate the important functions German film production has for the political and psychological care of the German people.” Films have an important function in times of “extreme tensions at the home front and the front.”

¹¹³ *ZD*, Directive 924, October 14, 1939.

New themes and suggestions were added: “Foreign Politics,” with an emphasis on how Germany produces film for the reconciliation of the people while its opponents make film for the agitation of the people against Germany; “State Politics,” pointing to the new duty of the film industry and filmmakers united in the fight and against the tissue of lies of the English propaganda in the neutral countries; “Party Politics,” highlighting the work of the party, which organize “film theaters on wheels” to bring to the countryside the latest newsreels and feature films. The “Historical Topics” mentioned Germany’s contribution to quality cinema, exemplified by the creation of the new rating system, while the economic rubric pointed to the healthy German film industry and its sustained production. As will be shown in chapter 2, the film press followed, by large, the same line of news and information.

While the tone of this press package was aggressive with a defensive undertone the next one, published in January 1940, traced German military successes and was much more celebratory, detailing “the great achievements of German film, thanks to the support of the state.”¹¹⁴ In addition to political, economic, and even musical aspects, the focus was on the content of films with new rubrics such as “Military,” (*DIII* 88, *The New German Air Force Attacks*, Herbert Maisch, 1939); “Social,” while *Mutterliebe* (*A Mother’s Love*, Gustav Ucicky, 1939) is an hymn to German mothers,¹¹⁵ *Fräulein* (*Mademoiselle*, Erich Waschnecks, 1939) illustrates the “hollowness of middle-class families with the wrong social mindset;” “Regional” with films highlighting specific regions of Germany; “Population Politics” where *Mutterliebe* once again was praised for

¹¹⁴ ZD, Directive 1673, January 19, 1940.

¹¹⁵ See an analysis of the film in Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, 47–50.

its great representation of German national character/culture and German strength (*Volkstum* and *Volkskraft*).¹¹⁶

The *Zeitschriften-Dienst* thus lined up with National Socialist ideology and *Weltanschauung*. It recognized the propagandistic value of film but repeated Goebbels' dictum that propaganda should be inconspicuous. It suggested, that the review of the 1939 film *Der Fuchs von Glenarvon* (The Fox of Glenarvon, Max W. Kimmich) focus on the individual fate of the characters instead of pointing to anti-British propaganda.¹¹⁷ In the same vein, "films, where Jewish characters play a role should not be described as anti-Jewish. We want to make clear that these films are not biased [...] but represent the historical facts [...] The word "anti-Semitic" should not be used in connection with these films."¹¹⁸ Films were often judged by the way they dealt with issues dear to the National Socialist regime, such as pronatalism or efforts to stop and reverse the rural exodus.¹¹⁹ The film *Ehe in Dosen* (Canned Marriage, Johannes Meyer, 1939), for example, looked very promising with its story of the "rescue of a couple, endangered because of trivialities" but:

When they decide in the end to try to get a baby, one could expect here pronatalist work. Unfortunately there is not much of it. The marriage is a grotesque [...], the child is just a requisite, the end sudden, the plot unbelievable and the execution unimaginative. It would be a mistake to underline this entertaining film because of its thematic: failed propaganda is worse than no propaganda at all. Hence: caution!¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ ZD, Directive 1673, January 19, 1940.

¹¹⁷ ZD, Directive 2296, April 26, 1940.

¹¹⁸ ZD, Directive 2390, May 17, 1940.

¹¹⁹ See ZD, Directive 1305, December 1, 1939, for the praise of the film *Mutterliebe* (A Mother's Love), and Directive 1368, December 8, 1939.

¹²⁰ ZD, Directive 924, October 7, 1939.

In addition, the *ZD* provided essayistic comments on topics such “Trends in Comedies,” or “Crime Films.”¹²¹ These served to congratulate the industry and the regime regarding the positive changes since 1933— away, for example, from the celebration of criminality to the educational function of crime film – but also to scold certain films and praise others.¹²² Reviewers for the *ZD* were especially sensitive to films dealing with marriage, couples, and infidelity as seen in the essay “Marriage/matrimony in Film.”¹²³ Subsequent reviews of film with ominous titles such as *Seitensprünge* (Infidelities, Alfred Stöger, 1939) or *Weltrekord im Seitensprung* (World Record in Infidelity, Georg Zoch, 1939) were satisfied with the moral of the films: “idleness leads to stupid acts and infidelities,” and thus regular work turns people into useful member of the society.¹²⁴ The fate of the young woman Djunga, who ends up as a mistress in *Der Postmeister* (The Stationmaster, Gustav Ucicky, 1939) could serve as a warning for mothers and daughters alike.¹²⁵ But while the anonymous author praised how filmmakers were now taking on topics such as the German peasantry or work ethic, he did not hesitate to criticize them for their “psychological and dramaturgical weaknesses” and their “relatively primitive and not very new plots.”¹²⁶

¹²¹ *ZD*, “Tendenz im Lustspiel,” Directive 1765, February 2, 1940, “Die Ehe im Film,” Directive 1632, January 12, 1940 and “Kriminal-Filme,” Directive 1674, January 19, 1940.

¹²² The *ZD*’s reviewer was still unhappy when gangsters are brought down not by good police work or because crime does not pay, but because of their own stupidity. See Directive 1894, February 23, 1940. On the other hand, the film *Falschmünzer* (Forgers, Hermann Pfeiffer, 1940) was praised for “showing the different motives that lead one to become a forger: the one who gets a kick out of his fear for authority and the imprudent woman who gets trapped in this milieu and cannot get out.” Directive 3571, November 22, 1940.

¹²³ *ZD*, “Die Ehe im Film,” Directive 1632, January 12, 1940.

¹²⁴ *ZD*, Directive 1967, March 8, 1940.

¹²⁵ *ZD*, Directive 2287, April 26, 1940.

¹²⁶ *ZD*, “Die Welt des Bauerns,” Directive 1804, February 9, 1940. Directive 2304 reviewed *Mädchen im Vorzimmer*, (Young Women, Gerhard Lamprecht, 1940) on May 10, 1940.

In a German cultural landscape deprived of genuine public art critique since 1936, the *Zeitschriften Dienst*, the official organ of the propaganda minister, paradoxically offered--next to few critical film reviews in the film press--the only thing close to film critique, albeit always in line with National Socialist ideology. Propaganda films or films which had “so many points of interest” such as *Robert Koch* (Hans Steinhoff, 1939) should be especially emphasized.¹²⁷ But German and foreign feature films were not spared from sharp criticism. Directive 1218, from November 24, 1939, advised as follows regarding the film *Das Lied der Wüste* (The Desert Song, Paul Martin, 1939): “Due to its attacks against international profiteering, the film *Das Lied der Wüste* could be evaluated positively, if it was better artistically. But now it is necessary not to mention it at all and of course not to publish any pictures [of the film].”¹²⁸ This example is interesting as *Das Lied der Wüste* starred Zarah Leander, who after a series of box office hits such as *Zu neuen Ufern* (To New Shores), *La Habanera* (both Detlef Sierck, 1937), and *Heimat* (Carl Froelich, 1938) was undeniably the biggest film star of the time.¹²⁹ The film press, as will be shown in chapter 2, reacted differently to the “advice” of the *ZD*.

The *ZD* seemed undaunted by the star status of actors and actresses. Coverage of the new Leander’s film *Das Herz der Königin* (The Queen's Heart, Carl Froelich, 1940) for example, was to emphasize the realistic depiction of sixteenth-century England and

¹²⁷ *ZD*, Directive 876, September 30, 1939.

¹²⁸ *ZD*, Directive 1218, November 24, 1939.

¹²⁹ The literature about Leander is voluminous. For good overviews see Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*; Lutz Koepnick, “Engendering Mass Culture: Zarah Leander and the Economy of Desire,” in *The Dark Mirror: German Cinema Between Hitler and Hollywood* (University of California Press, 2002), 72–98; Ascheid, *Hitler’s Heroines*; Bruns, *Nazi Cinema’s New Women*. For reading of specific films see Marc Silberman, “Probing the Limits. Detlef Sierck’s To New Shores,” in *German Cinema. Texts in Context* (Wayne State University Press, 1995), 51–65; O’Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment*, 179–193; Thomas R. Nadar, “The Director and the Diva: The Film Musicals of Detlef Sierck and Zarah Leander: Zu Neuen Ufern and La Habanera,” in *Cultural History Through a National Socialist Lens: Essays on the Cinema of the Third Reich*, ed. Robert C. Reimer (Rochester: Camden House, 2000), 65–83.

the male actor Willy Birgel, who embodied “real manliness and depicted a character who knew nothing but freedom and power,” while Leander herself was not even mentioned.¹³⁰

While it is not always clear why some films deserved specific treatments, justifications were often quite obvious. A reviewer complained about the film *Hurra! – Ich bin Papa!* (Hurra! I am a Papa, Kurt Hoffmann, 1939):

The good idea – the improvement of a male “good-for-nothing” through the sudden arrival of his illegitimate son – is unhappily implemented. This very topic could have allowed for excellent and deep educational work. But the film does what bad parents do: it finds brattiness cute and funny [...] The film completely forgets that real humor has always a very serious root. It would thus be completely misguided to give this Rühmann film any prominence.¹³¹

The *ZD* seemed genuinely interested in the quality of German film, advising for example that the film *Rettende Engel* (Saving Angel, Ferdinand Dörfler, 1940) “should not be covered in magazines, because it is below the level of German film,”¹³² and reluctantly acknowledging that there must be an audience for “vulgar comedies which take place in villages without taking notice of the situation of the farmers.”¹³³ The publication was also concerned about the uniformity of film reviews, which simply reprinted articles provided by the film companies, without engaging with the material.¹³⁴ Complaining that magazines often treated film solely as an entertainment product and regularly break the “power of illusion,”¹³⁵ the *ZD* urged them to tackle theoretical film questions, illuminate technical aspects, and “deal with stylistic and dramaturgical elements.”¹³⁶ It was eager to educate the reader by introducing film related professions

¹³⁰ *ZD*, Directive 3491, November 8, 1940.

¹³¹ *ZD*, Directive 1218, November 24, 1939.

¹³² *ZD*, Directive 2439, May 24, 1940.

¹³³ *ZD*, Directive 4191, March 14, 1941.

¹³⁴ *ZD*, Directive 4017, February 14, 1941.

¹³⁵ *ZD*, Directive 4718, June 13, 1941.

¹³⁶ *ZD*, Directive 4519, May 9, 1941.

such as the production manager¹³⁷ or explaining “the cultural political meaning of the film ratings,” reminding the press that “a film which had received a rating from the state cannot, of course, be described in derogatory terms.”¹³⁸

Coverage of foreign films was also carefully regulated, especially as the geopolitical situation was changing rapidly. In the wake of the German invasion of France, the French adaptation of a Balzac novel, while “laudable for its treatments of the value of money,” should only sparsely be talked about.¹³⁹ Tensions between the United States and Germany were reflected in comments about distribution and coverage in the press of American films.

Foreign Films: As a general rule, caution is recommended. [...] Preference should be given to Italian films [...] We should cut down on American films. Be careful with the publication of their pictures!. [...] The name of American actors and actresses who never come to us should disappear: Mae West (first rate scandal star), Sylvia Sydney, Douglas Fairbanks (not Aryan) etc., but also Greta Garbo, who always chose as her director the Jew Lubitsch.¹⁴⁰

But the quality of American films however was also often recognized as superior, such as the film *Die goldene Peitsche* (Kentucky, David Butler, 1938). The *ZD* recommended that, “[n]ewspapers and magazines can demonstrate for their readers with this good example of a successful script how to handle film material. They would do the German audience and also the German film a service.”¹⁴¹ Following the outbreak of the war, English, French, and Polish films stopped being distributed in Germany. Film from other countries, the United States among them, could be shown, as long as content and

¹³⁷ ZD, Directive 4017, February 14, 1941 and Directive 3976, February 7, 1941.

¹³⁸ ZD, Directive 4651, May 30, 1941.

¹³⁹ ZD, Directive 2437, May 24, 1940.

¹⁴⁰ ZD, Directive 651, August 26, 1939.

¹⁴¹ ZD, Directive 877, September 30, 1939.

form allowed it.¹⁴² Tensions increased though and in June 1940 Fox films and newsreels were banned from Germany, as a response to the anti-German films the company produced.¹⁴³ This was followed on August 16, 1940 by a ban of Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer's productions, "which plan a series of hate films such as *Mortal Storm*, *Journey's End*, *Thunder Afloat*, and *Hell Below*."¹⁴⁴ Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* could be mentioned in connection with the film's lack of success in the United States.¹⁴⁵ It was recommended not to address his part as Hitler. The film was to be characterized as an, "anti-German hate film from the famous film Jew."¹⁴⁶ In 1941, private anecdotes or communications of any kind about American film were forbidden "in order to avoid indirect publicizing of American cinema,"¹⁴⁷ even the reproduction of articles printed in countries such as Switzerland could not be mentioned.¹⁴⁸

On the other hand the regime was eager to strengthen its ties with its allies Japan and especially Italy.¹⁴⁹ In August 1939, for example, a directive encouraged journalists to expand the coverage of Italian film beyond the mere basics and to help make Germans familiar with Italian actors and actresses, considered "essential for the success of Italian

¹⁴² ZD, Directive 1070, October 28, 1939.

¹⁴³ ZD, Directive 2710, June 28, 1940.

¹⁴⁴ ZD, Directive 3024, August 16, 1940.

¹⁴⁵ ZD, Directive 3491, November 8, 1940.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ ZD, Directive 3858, January 17, 1941.

¹⁴⁸ ZD, Directive 4108, February 21, 1941.

¹⁴⁹ Few Japanese films were distributed in Germany. See the efforts to promote the Sino-German-coproduction *Die Tochter des Samurai* in ZSg. 101/9/22/223/Nr. 402 from March, 22, 1937. On the German-Japanese film relations see Janine Hansen, "Celluloid Competition: German-Japanese Film Relations, 1929-1945," in *Cinema and the Swastika. The International Expansion of Third Reich Cinema* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 187–197. Fascist Italian cinema has been the subject of numerous works. See for example Jacqueline Reich and Piero Garofalo, *Re-viewing Fascism: Italian Cinema, 1922-1943* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); Steven Ricci, *Cinema and Fascism: Italian Film and Society, 1922-1943*, 1st ed. (University of California Press, 2008).

films in Germany, which is much desired.”¹⁵⁰ The German production, *Alles für Gloria* (Everything for Gloria, Carl Boese, 1941), should interest the German audience because of its main Italian actress Laura Solari and her “female charm.”¹⁵¹ The German press sometimes had difficulties to bring out Italian Films, especially when the quality was not very good, and the *ZD* suggested ways to talk about them. The Italian-German co-production *Premiere der Butterfly* (The Dream of Butterfly, Carmine Gallone, 1939) was called “un-cinematic and often excruciatingly pathetic,” but the *ZD* “advise[d], however, to emphasize the excellent music.”¹⁵² With the film *Rivalin der Zarin* (Betrayal, Fyodor Otsep, 1939) “one could underline the technically perfect photography, the beauty of the original shots and the beauty of the main actress.”¹⁵³ Following the invasion of Western Europe and the need to consolidate Germany’s ties to its Italian allies, the *ZD* encouraged the press to highlight even more Italian productions and especially Italian-German cinematic collaboration.¹⁵⁴ Italy’s entry into war in June 1940 led to a renewed call for stronger consideration of Italian films, especially the ones with “heroic characters” such as *Alcazar* (Augusto Genina, 1940).¹⁵⁵

Germany’s relationship to French cinema was more complicated. The two countries had a rich history of exchange and collaboration and, as shown in chapter 2, German newspapers and magazines regularly featured stories about French films,

¹⁵⁰ *ZD*, Directive 612, August 19, 1939.

¹⁵¹ *ZD*, Directive 5574, October 24, 1941.

¹⁵² *ZD*, Directive 1218, November 24, 1939.

¹⁵³ *ZD*, Directive 787, September 16, 1939.

¹⁵⁴ *ZD*, Directive 1217, November 24, 1939, 1305, December 01, 1939.

¹⁵⁵ *ZD*, Directive 2588, June 14, 1940 and Directive 2658, June 21, 1940. On *Alcazar* see Directive 4190, March 14, 1941.

actresses and actors.¹⁵⁶ The outbreak of the war led to a momentary censorship of any France related topic. The *ZD* informed, as late as September 20, 1940, that reports about French films were not appropriate at that time.¹⁵⁷ Two month later, the press was allowed to talk about film work in occupied France, but only after consultation with the propaganda ministry, while news about a resumption of film production in free France were not to be mentioned.¹⁵⁸ When in May 1942, the French film *Ihr erstes Rendez-vous* (Her First Affair, Henri Decoin, 1941) was distributed in Germany, the *ZD* asked to mention it in friendly ways, but not cover it, and especially not to mention that it was produced by Continental, the German owned film company that operated in France.¹⁵⁹ Interest in French cinematic works remained sustained throughout the war and the *ZD* responded to this by offering as late as January 1944 (!) a press package about current French cinema.¹⁶⁰

With the expansion of the conflict, the role of cinema became even more important. The *ZD* offered a detailed press package entitled *War and Art. The Deployment of Film*, whose goal was to illustrate “the unbroken artistic creation of German cinematographic art,” but also the “psychological effect of film as a tool of enlightenment and influence.”¹⁶¹ In addition to the economic success and the high quality of German cinema, the emphasis should be on the German newsreels and the enemies’ web of lies and their hate films. A follow up essay entitled *Film as a Topic* admonished

¹⁵⁶ Sibylle M. Sturm and Arthur Wohlgemuth, *Hallo? Berlin? Ici Paris! Deutsch-französische Filmbeziehungen 1918-1939* (Hamburg: edition film + kritik, 1996); Katja Uhlenbrock, “Verdoppelte Stars. Pendants in Deutschen Und Französischen Versionen,” in *Hallo? Berlin? Ici Paris! Deutsch-französische Filmbeziehungen 1918-1939*, ed. Sibylle M. Sturm and Arthur Wohlgemuth (Hamburg: edition text + kritik, 1996), 155–168.

¹⁵⁷ *ZD*, Directive 3219, September 20, 1940.

¹⁵⁸ *ZD*, Directive 3573, November 22, 1940.

¹⁵⁹ *ZD*, Directive 6702, may 1, 1942.

¹⁶⁰ *ZD*, Directive 9843, January 28, 1944.

¹⁶¹ *ZD*, Directive 2637, June 21, 1940.

magazines to follow the *ZD*'s advice and to cover the cinematic production not only from the point of view of the stars, as it was too often the case, but more importantly to educate audience and reader about the role of cinema in National Socialist society with themes such as "Film as an historical document," "Racial ideas in film," or "The artistic film poster."¹⁶² Needless to say, a *ZD* promoted military documentary, such as *Sieg im Westen* (Victory in the West, Fritz Brunsch, 1941),¹⁶³ and war films, including *Kampfgeschwader Lützow* (Battle Squadron Lützow, Hans Bertram, 1941)¹⁶⁴ and *Stukas* (Karl Ritter, 1941),¹⁶⁵ even offered a press package about the topic *The Army in Film*.¹⁶⁶ Certain films were specifically recommended such as the espionage film *Achtung Feind hört mit!* (Beware! The Enemy Is Listening!, Arthur Maria Rabenalt, 1940) with its plot of a British spy preying on careless Germans who chatters about vital issues.¹⁶⁷

Propaganda films such as the anti-British South Africa story of *Ohm Krüger* (Hans Steinhoff, 1941) were connected to topics such as "[t]he untenable colonial methods of England and France," or "English colonial plutocrats," while presented as a work of art.¹⁶⁸ Liebeneiner's hymn to Bismarck in the eponymous film was to be helped in the magazines with articles about this time period as to orient the readers and future viewers.¹⁶⁹ *Mein Leben für Irland* (My Life for Ireland, Max W. Kimmich, 1941) was considered "an educational film about the British oppression of other nations,"¹⁷⁰ while the colonial film *Carl Peters* (Herbert Selpin, 1941) whose plot lies in the past, should of

¹⁶² *ZD*, Directive 3110, August 30, 1940.

¹⁶³ *ZD*, Directives 3827, January 10, 1941 and 3857, January 17, 1941.

¹⁶⁴ *ZD*, Directive 4067, February 21, 1941.

¹⁶⁵ *ZD*, Directive 4822, June 27, 1941.

¹⁶⁶ *ZD*, Directive 3962, February 7, 1942.

¹⁶⁷ *ZD*, Directive 3136, September 6, 1940.

¹⁶⁸ *ZD*, Directives 3334, October 11, 1940 and 4317, April 4, 1941.

¹⁶⁹ *ZD*, Directive 3570, November 22, 1940.

¹⁷⁰ *ZD*, Directive 4066, February 21, 1941.

course resonate with contemporary Germans and the country's "pursuit of international standing and influence on the African continent."¹⁷¹

In the summer of 1941, the *ZD* matched military victories with the "supremacy of German film in Europe," which dominated the screens of fifteen countries,¹⁷² and was expected to fare strongly at the upcoming Venice film festival.¹⁷³ The self-congratulatory pieces were followed by a long piece justifying a now total ban on American films, accused of producing anti-German hate films, a ban that extended to current as well as past films, photographs of stars, or films.¹⁷⁴ Confident, the *ZD* claimed that German film production "offers now an abundance of diverse feature films," as well as strong cultural documentaries, and should be able to satisfy the audience's needs, as seen in the strong presence of German films at the Venice film festival.¹⁷⁵ The confidence extended to the development of color film where the German Agfacolor was presented as, in the long term, a better and stronger alternative to the widely used, even in Germany, American Technicolor.¹⁷⁶

By 1942, critiques of German films, which at time had been harsh, were now rare, either because filmmakers exercised a kind of self-censorship, as can be seen in the small number of films actually censored during the Third Reich,¹⁷⁷ or out of a desire by the reviewer to brush by side things like "a trivial plot" or the "few implausibilities" and

¹⁷¹ *ZD*, Directive 4278, March 28, 1941.

¹⁷² *ZD*, Directive 5092, August 15, 1941. Mentioned were, in that order, Italy, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Holland, Belgian, France, and Switzerland.

¹⁷³ *ZD*, Directive 5144, August 22, 1941.

¹⁷⁴ *ZD*, Directive 5145, August 22, 1941.

¹⁷⁵ *ZD*, Directive 5255, "Die deutsche Filmproduktion im Kriege," September 5, 1941.

¹⁷⁶ *ZD*, Directive 5612, October 31, 1941.

¹⁷⁷ Kraft Wetzel and Peter A. Hagemann, *Zensur. Verbotene Deutsche Film, 1933-1945* (Berlin: Verlag Volker Spiess, 1982).

focus instead on the positive aspects such as “the superior work with actors.”¹⁷⁸ As the year wore on, fewer directives dealt with film. When they did the emphasis was on the importance of cinema as a weapon and/or the success of German filmmaking. The domination of European film by Germany was illustrated in its pivotal role within the International Film Chamber, which had been reduced, by 1942, to an instrument in the hand of Germany and its allies.¹⁷⁹ The creation of a new film company was celebrated as a proof of German cinema’s vitality and strength in the middle of the war, and even reruns of German films, caused by insufficient production, were presented as rare occasion to “catch up on a missed filmic event.”¹⁸⁰

In 1943, in the wake of the defeat of Stalingrad and Goebbels’ call for a Total War, numerous newspapers and magazines were shut down. The entire film press, with the exception of the trade paper *Film-Kurier*, folded.¹⁸¹ The *Deutscher Wochendienst* reminded the few existing magazines that film remained “an important element of cultural politics.”¹⁸² While the press was responsible for informing the audience about current feature films, cultural documentaries and film related books,¹⁸³ “the role of film as an educational tool for soldiers” was to be the object of special articles.¹⁸⁴ The last substantial directive regarding film dealt with the cost cutting measures regarding

¹⁷⁸ ZD, Directive 6878, May 29, 1941 commenting on the film *Kleine Residenz*, and 7375 from August 11, 1942 regarding the film *GPU*. A new section called *Deutsches Wochendienst* (DW) was added to *The Zeitschriften Dienst* in December 1941.

¹⁷⁹ DW, Directive 7863, November 13, 1942.

¹⁸⁰ DW, Directive 7940, November 27, 1942 on the creation of the Deutsche Film-Vertrieb-GmbH. and 7608, September 25, 1942, regarding the film *Der zerbrochene Krug* (The Broken Jug, Gustav Ucicky, 1937).

¹⁸¹ DW, Directive 8470, March 5, 1943.

¹⁸² DW, Directive 8858, May 21, 1943.

¹⁸³ For reports about film related books see DW, Directive 8817, May 14, 1943 and 9659, November 26, 1943.

¹⁸⁴ DW, Directive A99 March 31, 1944.

“manpower, materials and time.”¹⁸⁵ As always, the tone was confident and complimentary of the governmental changes implemented, pointing to the fact that despite a “forty percent cut in manpower, less construction material and less time at its disposition, the biggest German film company, the Ufa, has produced this year two more films than last year.”¹⁸⁶

In the last month of their publications, the *ZD* and *DW* concerned themselves mostly with reruns of films with “soldierly and nationalistic contents,”¹⁸⁷ and with making sure that only “serious films” were reviewed in the few remaining papers and magazines.¹⁸⁸

Combined, the directives, the cultural conferences, and the advice from the *Zeitschriften-Dienst* mirror the extensive efforts of the regime to control the press, to address specifically the coverage of film, but also to present itself, in cultural matters, as a guiding rather than a controlling force. Interestingly, while the regime’s control was often unmistakable, it had to be reinforced regularly and one senses a certain frustration about how some of the advice were not followed and had to be reiterated, a sign that journalist and editors were not always following them to the letter.¹⁸⁹ More than three years after the ban on film critique and constant exhortation to celebrate German cinema,

¹⁸⁵ DW, Directive A697, September 22, 1944.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ DW, Directive A833, November 3, 1944. The following films were listed: *Annelie* (Josef von Báky, 1941), *Die Degenhardts* (Werner Klingler, 1944), *Die Entlassung* (The Dismissal, Wolfgang Liebeneiner, 1942), *Der Choral von Leuthen* (Carl Froelich, 1933), *Diesel* (Gerhard Lamprecht, 1942), *Die Affäre Rödern* (Erich Waschneck, 1944), *Bismarck* (Wolfgang Liebeneiner, 1940), *Friedrich Schiller* (Herbert Maisch, 1940), *Der Fuchs von Glenarvon* (Max W. Kimmich, 1940), *Der grosse König* (The Great King, Veit Harlan, 1942), *Junge Adler* (Alfred Weidenmann, 1944), *Kameraden* (Hans Schweikart, 1941), *Mein Leben für Irland* (Max W. Kimmich, 1941), *Ohm Krüger* (Uncle Kruger, Hans Steinhoff, 1941), ... *reitet für Deutschland* (Arthur Maria Rabenalt, 1941), *Der Katzensteg* (Cat Walk, Fritz Peter Buch, 1938).

¹⁸⁸ DW, Directives A554, August 4, 1944, A770, October 13, 1944, and B107, February 9, 1945.

¹⁸⁹ See for example how the *ZD* pushed for greater coverage of the film *Befreite Hände* (Hans Schweikart, 1939), Directive 1426, December 15, 1939 and 1593, January 5, 1940. Recommendations to extensively cover the film *Mädchen in Vorzimmer* (Gerhard Lamprecht, 1940), for example, had to be repeated several times. *ZD*, Directive 2340, May 10, 1940, and again on June 7, 1940, Directive 2551.

the *ZD* responded to a magazine which had complained about the cinematic treatment of bastard children and lambasted the whole German film culture by reminding its readers in July 1939 that:

the German film, as well as the press and the radio are under state governance. We are well aware that much needs to be done in the area of film and that a few isolated cases have been less than stellar. But in the same way that the unrestrained “slamming” of individual films is not acceptable, it is even less acceptable to attack the German film completely.¹⁹⁰

Thus, while political, ideological, and geopolitical issues had the strongest impact on the nature of the directives and advice given to the editors in chief, the cultural conferences and especially the *Zeitschriften-Dienst* were also interested in improving how the press reported about cinema and they exercised the closest thing to criticism in an effort to improve German cinema itself. While the directives were addressed to general publications and specialized press, such as the film press, had a little more leeway, we find the same kind of tensions and dynamics in the pages of film publications.

¹⁹⁰ *ZD*, Directive 368, July 1, 1939.

Chapter 2

All About Film? The German Film Press during the Third Reich

As described in the previous chapter, the extensive efforts of the government to influence if not outright control publications leave no doubt about the important role played by the press in German society. The detailed directives regarding film related issues and the 1944 project to create a new film magazine confirm the significant functions of film and the film press. After a short history of the German film press, this chapter endeavors to answer two main categories of questions. The first one deals with politicization and state influence. Do we see a politicization of the film press? If so, which form did it take and how effective was the state's control of the press? Do we, for example, see a focus on positive propaganda and an absence of negative propaganda, as Karl Christian Führer has shown for general magazines? Secondly, this chapter explores the major components of each publications, which major topics were discussed and what was the targeted audience. In short, chapter 2 asks what were the roles and functions of the film press during the Third Reich.

A short history of the film press reveals a dynamic market that started early in 1896 with *Der Komet* and followed the evolution of film itself.¹⁹¹ It began with trade papers created for exhibitors and projectionists that focused on the economic and technical aspects of film, its connection to photography and its chemical components for example, and fought against the anti-film position of the daily press.¹⁹² Cinema's

¹⁹¹ Heller, "Aus-Bilder: Anfänge Der Deutschen Filmpresse."

¹⁹² Hake, *The Cinema's Third Machine*, especially Chapter 1: Early Beginnings in the Trade Press; Diederichs, "Die Anfänge Der Deutschen Filmpublicistik 1895 Bis 1909." For a contemporary view see

developing cultural ambitions and its attempts to move away from being solely an attraction for the poor masses were paralleled by the emergence of the first critical reviews in the press and by the birth of the first journal devoted entirely to film, *Der Kinematograph* (1907-1935). Most significant though was the impact of *Lichtbild-Bühne* (1908-1939) and *Film-Kurier* (1919-1944), two trade papers that greatly contributed to the professionalization of film making and helped consolidate film's position as a respected form of entertainment, between art and industry. With the works of Béla Balács, Siegfried Kraucauer, Rudolf Arnheim, and Herbert Ihering, Weimar's writing on film in periodicals like *Berliner Börsen Courier*, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and especially *Die Weltbühne* produced some of the most thoughtful and, to this day, unrivalled, analyses of film and its role in society, as well as the role and responsibility of film critique.

The film press was diversified and pursued different goals. If the trade press was eager to fight off accusations of being too close to the industry and prove that it could educate its readers and advocate for better German films, the illustrated press and fan magazines capitalized on the growth of the star system and provided dreams and entertainment. They both benefited from technological improvements of the press, such as increase printing capability and use of photographs, many now in color, and the rapidly developing consumer society to reach a broader audience and contributed to the "dissemination of cinematic consciousness."¹⁹³

Werner Henske, "Überblick Über Die Entwicklung Der Filmzeitschriften," *Zeitungswissenschaft* 5 (1936): 233–238; Hans Traub, "Filmzeitschriften," in *Handbuch Der Zeitungswissenschaft*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: K.W. Hiersemann, 1940), 1020–1038.

¹⁹³ Hake, *The Cinema's Third Machine*, 113. On mass media and consumer society see Kaspar Maase, "Massmedien and Konsumgesellschaft," in *Die Konsumgesellschaft in Deutschland 1890-1990* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2009), 62–78; Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*. For Third Reich Germany as a (failed?) consumer society see Hartmut Berghoff, "Konsumgüterindustrie Im Nationalsozialismus: Marketing Im Spannungsfeld Von Profit- Und Regimeinteressen," *Archiv Für Sozialgeschichte* 36 (1996): 293–322; Wolfgang König, *Volkswagen, Volksempfänger, Volksgemeinschaft:*

With 160 periodicals, including temporarily three daily newspapers, the film press was an important part of the German media landscape in the 1930s and already the object of scholarly work. Werner Henske, for example, offered in a 1936 issue of *Zeitungswissenschaft* (Science of Journalism), a short overview of the development of the film press, emphasizing the close relationship between film and film press, but also pointing to the “problematic dependency between journalism and advertisement.”¹⁹⁴ Often credited with the establishment of German film and media studies, Hans Traub wrote a typology of film press in 1940 and an extensive bibliography of film related books and journals published between 1896 and 1939.¹⁹⁵ In the former, he differentiated between two major groups: the film press for film professionals and the one for and from the audience. Following this categorization, the chapter presents a trade newspaper, *Film-Kurier*, a popular magazine, *Filmwelt*, and a hybrid of the two, the regime sponsored *Der deutsche Film*.

The Trade Newspaper *Film-Kurier*

Most prominent among the trade papers was *Film-Kurier*.¹⁹⁶ The daily paper had the highest distribution, ten thousand issues in the early 1930s, making it the largest in

“Volksprodukte” *Im Dritten Reich, Vom Scheitern Einer Nationalsozialistischen Konsumgesellschaft* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2004); Hartmut Berghoff, “Träume Und Alpträume. Konsumpolitik Im Nationalsozialistischen Deutschland,” in *Die Konsumgesellschaft in Deutschland 1890-1990*, ed. Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Claudius Torp (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2009), 268–288; S. Jonathan Wiesen, *Creating the Nazi Marketplace. Commerce and Consumption in the Third Reich* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹⁹⁴ Henske, “Überblick Über Die Entwicklung Der Filmzeitschriften.”

¹⁹⁵ Traub, “Filmzeitschriften”; Hans Traub and Herbert Birett, *Das Deutsche Filmschrifttum. Bibliographie Der Bücher Und Zeitschriften Über Das Filmwesen 1896-1939* (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1940). For Traub himself see Frank Biermann, “Hans Traub (1901-1943),” in *Zeitungswissenschaftler Im Dritten Reich. Sieben Biographische Studien* (Köln: Hayit, 1984), 45–80.

¹⁹⁶ See the detailed description of *Film-Kurier* in Sudendorf, “Filmkurier, 1919-1944”; *ibid.*; Sudendorf, “Täglich: Der Film-Kurier.”

Europe at the time and the equivalent of *Variety*.¹⁹⁷ It also boasted the longest distribution, lasting until the end of the Third Reich. Compared to its competitors, the journalistic quality of the paper, rooted in the skills of its contributors, including E.M. Dupont, Willy Hass, Lotte H. Eisner, and Hans Feld, was a novelty in the 1920s. While negotiating economic imperatives (the paper was, like all film publication, dependent on advertisement, especially from Ufa) *Film-Kurier* expanded the limits of what was covered in a film trade paper and provided comprehensive and party independent information to the industry, the audience, and most importantly the theater owners. Hoping for more security in a volatile market, *Film-Kurier* became in 1928 the official mouthpiece of the *Reichsverband Deutscher Lichtspieltheaterbesitzer* (the Organization of the Film Theater Owners) a decision that proved fateful when the latter embraced the new political order in March 1933, although the journal had been veering towards the conservative right since the late 1920s.¹⁹⁸ Scholar Sudendorf described the “long death” of the paper in a few sentences: *Film-Kurier* is discounted to a dummy company, contributors are fleeing abroad, and the paper’s cosmopolitan worldview makes room for regime plebiscism while the distribution decreases to 8121 in 1935.¹⁹⁹ In 1940 it was combined with the *Lichtbild-Bühne* and in May 1943 with the paper *Der Film*, before being published from October 1944 on under the title *Film-Nachrichten* (Film News, The

¹⁹⁷ Sudendorf, “Täglich: Der Film-Kurier,” 129.

¹⁹⁸ See the biography and a selection of the critiques of Ernst Jäger, editor in chief of *Film-Kurier* from 1924 on in Ernst Jäger and Heinrich Lewinski, *Ernst Jäger Filmkritiker* (München: Ed. Text und Kritik, 2006).

¹⁹⁹ The collaborators of *Film-Kurier* have been described by Hans Feld, the journal’s leading critic succeeding Willy Hass, as “a tightly knit group of committed journalists set upon furthering experiments, the young avant-garde, and following a film-political line of widening cultural horizon.” Hans Feld, “Jews in the Development of the German Film Industry: Notes from the Recollections of a Berlin Film Critic,” in *Leo Baeck Institute. Year Book XXVII* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1982). Cited in Hake, *The Cinema’s Third Machine*, 115.

communication paper of film professionals). After twenty-five years of existence, the paper ceased publication.

Such casual dismissal of the 1933-1945 period in the history of the German press, and especially the film press, is common.²⁰⁰ As described in chapter 1, the rapid instrumentalization of German cultural life starting with the creation of the Reich Culture Chamber and its mandatory membership led to the forced emigration of many writers and greatly restricted the freedom of the press, leading many scholars to treat this period as a dark-age of journalism. While *Film-Kurier* during the Third Reich openly supported the regime and never achieved the level of sophistication of its Weimar predecessor, it nevertheless remained an active and public site of negotiation between the different parties, with many issues continuing Weimar discussions.

Looking at *Film-Kurier* after January 1933, one notices very few changes in terms of layout on the surface. The paper consisted of four to six pages with occasional supplemental pages. Following a four-column divide, we see at the center of the first page one or two main pieces of news, with one or two secondary stories at the bottom, and on the left side a few boxes of advertisement or short news items. The film critique was found on the second page, taking usually only a column or two, next to reports about theater, radio, news records, and cabaret shows, as well as new pieces of legislation. Page two and three follows the same layout with, for example, interviews with filmmakers, visits to the sets, film-related statistics about audience and film production. As the official newspaper of the film theater owners, *Film-Kurier* regularly featured one or two supplemental pages of technical information called the *Kinotechnische Rundschau*. Other

²⁰⁰ In his short history of German film critique and film theory, Helmut Diederichs completely skipped the 1933-1945 period. See Diederichs, "Filmkritik Und Filmtheorie."

technological topics included new development in the “small film” area, the Super 8 and 16 mm, used by amateur film makers, something that was (and still is) very popular in Germany, as well as the color film.²⁰¹

The use of advertisement (something the film press had been harshly criticized for, as it was said to compromised the paper’s independence and objectivity) consisted of ads for film products, such as film stock or cameras, and of course ads for upcoming or running films. These were either in small boxes, a whole column, half a page or a whole page, something reserved for big star like Hans Albers,²⁰² and big budget productions, including American companies such as Metro Goldwyn Mayer. The last page featured small film related ads for everything from film theater jobs, such as projectionist or cashier, to heating components for film theaters. *Film-Kurier* also regularly advertised for its own products: film related books and well as its popular illustrated film program, the *Illustrierte Film-Kurier* (Figure 2.1 and 2.2).

In the early 1930s, *Film-Kurier* printed very few pictures with the exception of a supplemental page or two consisting solely of pictures and fittingly called *Bilderbogen des Film-Kurier*, a pictorial broadsheet of *Film-Kurier*, which focused on one or two films or new comers. From the late 1930s on, the front page was adorned with a photograph of a scene from a film, of actors, actresses, or of political actors such as Goebbels and Fritz Hippler. As a daily paper, *Film-Kurier* was characterized by its brevity. With the exception of the main articles on the front page, which often continued

²⁰¹ In addition to a regular supplemental section, *Film-Kurier* extensively covered the “International Schmal film conference.” See, for example, on May 25, 1934 and June 15, 1935.

²⁰² All his new films were extensively advertised. See for example March 17, 1933 and August 19, 1933. See also chapter 5.

24. Jahrgang — Nummer 271
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 Ausgabe T

Film-Kurier

Theater · Kunst · Varieté · Funk
 Illustrierter Film-Kurier · Kinotechnische Rundschau · Bühnenblatt
T A G S Z E I T U N G
 Mit 8772 Auflage und Weltverbreitung das führende deutsche Fachblatt!

Berlin, Mittwoch, 26. Juli 1939



„Durch Leistung zum Erfolg“
Ufa-Angebot für 1939/40:
34 Spielfilme
 Programm zur Hälfte fertig oder in Arbeit
 Stars und Regisseure von Welttruf

Heute gibt die Ufa die mit Spannung erwarteten Ufa-Filme für 1939/40 bekannt. Das Ufa-Angebot für 1939/40 besteht aus 34 Spielfilmen, die in zwei Gruppen eingeteilt sind. Die erste Gruppe besteht aus 17 Filmen, die zur Hälfte fertig oder in Arbeit sind. Die zweite Gruppe besteht aus 17 Filmen, die noch in der Planung sind.

„Ich verweigere die Ansfage“
 ... spannend und von starker politischem Wert! Im Ganzen ein Werk, dem man eine voller Übergang zustimmen kann.

Wichtige Personen-Schilder
 Ein Querschnitt
40 Jahre Film
 ... 40 Jahre Film ...

Beitragwechsel
 ...



Zarah Leander in dem Ufa-Film „Es war eine herrliche Nacht“

„Jubel über PARADIES DER JUNGSELLEN“
 ...

„Weiter to Zerna“
 ...

FACHLITERATUR

Die Filmvorführung in der Praxis
 Von J. Rosenberg und H. Seidel
 ...

Die Deutschen Filmschaffenden 1935
 ...

Hilfsbuch für die Prüfung des Kinovorführers
 ...

Reichs-Kino-Adreßbuch 1935
 ...

Der Tonfilm
 ...

Die Gesetze und Verordnungen für das Deutsche Filmwesen II
 ...

Filmtheater-Führung
 ...

Deutschland und der Deutsche Film
 ...

Film-Kurier
 Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.H.
 Berlin W 55 • Stöckerstraße 2

Figure 2.1: Advertisement in *Film-Kurier*: Three small ads for upcoming films and a picture of actress Zarah Leander, July 26, 1939. (Left)
 Figure 2.2: The paper also advertised its own products, June 19, 1936. (Right)

to the second page, and one or two columns, such as *In Film Music*, the news was usually only a few paragraphs long, often less than that.

Keeping our two original questions in mind, we see that, with a few exceptions, everything *Film-Kurier* wanted to do with film, film making, film distribution, film audience, film and music, film, and theater, etc. But while the paper covered topics connected to film, it also underwent a clear politicization.

A closer look at the paper after 1933 reveals a politicization that mirrored patterns analyzed by Ian Kershaw in his study of the German population's support for Hitler.²⁰³ Following an original quick endorsement of the regime and, for many a genuine

²⁰³ Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

enthusiasm, the popularity of Hitler and expressions of support fluctuated, depending on his domestic and, after 1938, his international successes. While governmental actions are praised and military successes are celebrated, there is also a striking continuity with the pre-1933 period in the topics covered in *Film-Kurier*.

The spring of 1933 saw enthusiastic endorsements of the new regime and the promises of changes and renewal. Headlines talked about “reconstruction” (April 8, 1933), urged the German film community “Let’s do it!” (April 22, 1933), and proclaimed “We want to build a new Germany,” (April 29, 1933), with “New Spirit against the Old Guard” (December 20, 1933). The restructuring launched by the regime, including the creation of the Propaganda Ministry, the Film Credit Bank (June 1, 1933), the opening of the Reich Culture Chamber in November 1933, and the creation of the Reich Film Dramaturgy in February 1934 were closely followed. The new state’s interest in cinema was couched in terms that were welcomed by the trade paper: “The Film as a Moral Institution” (April 15, 1933), “Art from the Volk to the Volk” (August 7, 1933), “Against Film as a Commodity” (September 9, 1933), “Film and Radio as Bearers of Culture” (October 30, 1933). The allegiance of the paper to the new regime was unmistakable. It welcomed the fact that “Film Serves the State” (September 7, 1933) and supported the November 1933 election with a special edition of *Bilderbogen* featuring pictures of Hitler and Goebbels with swastika flags. The first issue of 1934 proudly featured a “Sieg Heil 1934!”

The tone was about collaboration, how film and the regime together will help make German film better for the *Volk*. The first measures implemented by the regime bode well as they addressed issues the film community, and *Film-Kurier* in particular,

had been fighting for such issues as movie block booking (July 11, 1935) and a ban on “Kitsch Film Advertisement,” (August 25, 1934). Film professionals welcomed the abolition of the entertainment taxes (February 12, 1934), the creation of the Reich Film Archive (February 14, 1934), the jumpstart of filmmaking in Munich (September 20, 1934), and the creation of the organization *Kraft durch Freude* (Strength through Joy), which presented itself as “the pioneer for the advancement of film” (March 7, 1934). *Film-Kurier* closely followed the “Fight about the Copy Patent,” and the patent for sound (May 1934). It welcomed the effort to curtail the stars incomes, which had gotten out of hand (July 5, 1934), and thanked Goebbels for ending the “Fight about Royalties,” (May 8, 1934). The paper celebrated the creation of the *Film-Volkstag*, the People’s Film Day, (April 1935) and the “Film Hour of the Hitler Youth” (September 1936), all designed to promote film viewing. In the second year of the National Socialist regime, *Film-Kurier* was optimistic about the future of German filmmaking, rejoicing, for example, about the positive statistics and the new wave of film professionals, the *Nachwuchs*.

Throughout the Third Reich, *Film-Kurier* acted as a mouthpiece of the government regarding film related issues, and the paper constantly extolled the success of the German film industry, focusing on increasing numbers of films made and record setting tickets sales. It introduced and praised further changes, always positing Germany as the leading country, the path-breaker for issues such as the creation of a national film bank (created in England), a national film prize (seen in Austria), and even the Film Chamber, implemented in Sweden (May 1936). Germany prided itself on the work of the International Film Chamber, in 1936 under the German leadership of Professor Lehnich,

and pushed for the use of *Sicherheitsfilm* (safety film), which, unlike celluloid film, was not flammable (June 1938).²⁰⁴

Thus, like the general magazines that Führer studied, *Film-Kurier* focused mostly on positive propaganda, emphasizing the accomplished, although this often took the form of comparing the improved situation to the one during the Weimar period when Jews controlled cinema. In April 1938, announcing the upcoming speech of the *Führer* to celebrate the *Anschluß* of Austria, *Film-Kurier* featured an article on its front page narrating “How it was yesterday and how it is today” emphasizing how film is thankful for the work of the *Führer* (April 6, 1938). As will be shown later, the only negative propaganda was about anti-German propaganda, especially from the United States, Britain, and later the Soviet Union.

The number of enthusiastic articles about governmental actions eventually subsided and while important political news was featured, such as the election of August 1934 and the plebiscite of March 1936, the return of the Saarland (January 1935), Austria (March 1938), and the Sudeten-Germans (September 1938) in the *Reich*, as well as the yearly congratulations to the *Führer*'s and later Goebbels' birthdays, these events were talked about in connection with film. Following the *Anschluß* of Austria for example, *Film-Kurier* explained how

We heard the complaints of the Austrian film theater owners, who suffered from the Germanophobic censorship and could not show films and newsreels, which bear witness to the cultural and economic rise of Germany.[...] We know from trustworthy Austrian film professionals that there are still behind the curtain disguised non Aryans, who stretch their influence to the trade press (March 12, 1938).

²⁰⁴ Yong Choy, “Inszenierungen Der Völkischen Filmkultur Im Nationalsozialismus: ‘Der Internationale Filmkongress Berlin 1935’” (Technische Universität Berlin, 2006).

The following articles featured pictures of Austrian film professionals and statistics on theaters, using the official language of *Großdeutschland*, Greater Germany, as the word Austria completely disappeared: “An additional 1171 film theaters for a total of 6617 in *Großdeutschland*,” (November 1938). In the most absurd way, anti-Semitism came to the forefront only in relation to film. While the anti-Jewish “organized riots” during the *Reichskristallnacht* (the Night of Broken Glass), on November 11, 1938, for example, were not mentioned at all in *Film-Kurier*, three days later the paper announced the exclusion of Jews from German cultural life, especially film, as a response to the attempted murder of a National Socialist in Paris (November 14, 1938).²⁰⁵

Over the course of one year, *Film-Kurier* followed a certain routine that did not change much even after the outbreak of the war. Until the mid-1930s film theaters saw a dramatic reduction in audience during the hot summer months and many theater owners simply closed.²⁰⁶ During that time *Film-Kurier* was thus devoted to the upcoming films of the new season. There was originally a sense of competition between the companies about who would produce the most films and which stars they had hired. After 1939, the presentation of the new program was couched in terms of German and not company specific achievement. As the war went on and lesser films were produced, *Film-Kurier* emphasized the continued high qualitative level of productions, compared to France or England where productions quasi stopped.

Other annual events included the Convention of the Reich Film Chamber in March, the Film amateur congress in June, the Leipzig Technological Fair in

²⁰⁵ See Corey Ross about how the “Night of the Broken Glass was conspicuously muted in *BIZ* [the leading general illustrated weeklies, CLF], as in the bulk of general interest magazines” in Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 324–325.

²⁰⁶ *Film-Kurier* even talked about the “Angst Psychose vor dem Sommer,” the psychotic fear before the summer, June 9, 1936.

February/March, where new products were introduced and German inventions were given prominence. As seen in chapter 1, the Venice Film Festival allowed German productions to shine and be internationally recognized. Every winter *Film-Kurier* advertised for the *Winterhilfswerk* (the Winter Relief), publicizing how much film professionals had collected donation and printed pictures of film stars with their collecting cans.

Reviews of films were usually relegated to the second page, but *Großfilme*, the state sponsored big budget production, or films that fitted especially well in the National Socialist propaganda made it to the front page. Among these, we find Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (March 1935) and the *Olympia* films (January 1936), and historical films with a National Socialist re-writing of history such as *Friedrich Schiller- Triumph of a Genius* (Herbert Maisch) and *Bismarck*, (Wolfgang Liebeneiner) both 1940, *Carl Peters* (Herbert Selpin, 1941) about German colonialism, or *Ohm Krüger*, the anti-British film about the South African Boers war (Hans Steinhoff, 1941). Of course some militaristic films found their way to the front page, *Feinde* (Enemies, Viktor Tourjansky, 1940), *U-Boote Westwärts!* (U-Boat, Course West!, Günther Rittau, 1940), and so did the two anti-Semitic films made during the Third Reich *Jud Süß* (Veit Harlan, 1940) and *Der ewige Jude* (The Eternal Jew, Fritz Hippler, 1940).

Thematically, the articles dealt first and foremost with domestic issues, but international film related issues also figured prominently. As the official paper of the Organization of the Film Theater Owners, the trade paper provided its targeted audience with technical and judicial news, such as the improvement of acoustic (June 1938) or the standardization of the lightning of the screen (October 1938), and gave tips on how to run

a successful business while contributing to the new cultural project sponsored by the National Socialist state. The daily paper opened up its pages to the film theater owners, printing their letters and comments, such as their wish lists and expectations from film in June 1937. *Film-Kurier* featured articles about how “the personality of the theater owner influences the appreciation of the film” (May 25, 1938), and repeatedly talked about customer services (until March 1944). We get a sense of the inner workings of privately owned film theaters, where bad weather reduced revenues, owners struggled with costs of films and rent, and films had to be carefully handled, packed, and sent to second tier theaters after their premieres. With the implementation of the Four-Year Plan in 1936 and the following material restrictions, theaters were urged, for example, to “Carefully Handle the Copies, Save Light, Be Gentle with the Props!” (May 25, 1937). *Film-Kurier* also reported about professional changes and opportunities such as the now mandatory training courses for projectionists and theater owners which was reduced from three months to two after the outbreak of the war (December 1940), or the fact that more and more women took over the business after their husbands went to war (January 1940).

One of the issues regularly covered by *Film-Kurier* and, as we will see later, by *Der deutsche Film* was the topic of advertising. The paper encouraged film theater owners to improve the quality of ads, away from garish posters and exaggerated slogans. It even concluded in November 1937 that, “[n]o advertisement is better than bad advertisement,” and urged in October 1939 for a “Cleaning up of the Film Propaganda. Enough with Platitudes and Superlatives.” Corey Ross has shown how this new attention to advertisement was part of “the most rapid and far-reaching Americanization of the

German advertising scene to date.”²⁰⁷ That *Film-Kurier* repeatedly returned to this issue until March 1943 shows how the implementation of new standard of advertisement was not entirely followed.

In addition to this focus on film theater issues, *Film-Kurier* regularly talked about foreign film industries and especially foreign film markets. Interestingly France was the object of the most articles, with its own columns such as “In France” or “Parisian short news,” a fact that was rooted in the long history of collaboration between the two countries and the intensive economic exchanges. One notices the enthusiastic welcome of Jacques Feyder in Berlin in June 29, 1935, and the extensive coverage of the widespread reorganization of the French film industry in July 1935. The work of René Clair, for example, enjoyed a broad popularity and respect throughout the Third Reich.

Hollywood, of course, featured prominently with a mix of admiration (“MGM sets in Hollywood, The largest in the World,” November 12, 1935), worries about the market share of U.S. film in Europe (July 2, 1936), and fear that, for example, Metro or 20th Century Fox were planning to build new film studio in Vienna (July 1936). There was also a certain *schadenfreude* when talking about the difficulties of foreign film industries, especially England. The paper gleefully reported how “England lost 21% of its audience in the last two years,” (March 16, 1934), but also praised the creation of the British Film Institute (October 17, 1934).

Boasting the largest film industry in Europe, the German film trade press dealt with issues of distribution and quotas, following closely the development of film industries in Europe. *Film-Kurier* featured specific articles about Belgium, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Austria, Spain, Switzerland, the Baltic States,

²⁰⁷ Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 326.

Denmark, Sweden, Norway, even Japan, Argentina, and China. While most articles welcomed the development of indigenous film markets that could lead to more German exports, *Film-Kurier* also had a regular column entitled “The German Film Abroad” that talked about success – “German record in Paris (April 3, 1935), “German film abroad: success in Vienna and Stockholm (September 24, 1935) – but also the negative reception of German films, such as the boycott in Scandinavia (January 15, 1935).

While development in Italy had always been followed (“Italian Hollywood in Rome,” December 1935), we see from 1938 on a shift with more articles devoted to politically friendly countries, such as Hungary, a trend that increased after the outbreak of the war. It is hard to pin down if the increased coverage about Italian cinema was a result of the *ZD*’s directives, or simply a consequence of the fact that very few other foreign films were distributed in Germany.

The war triggered a sudden, but short lived, increase in political propaganda. While, like most of the German press, *Film-Kurier* participated in the official propaganda, the paper rarely made any direct announcement about political events, but commented instead on what was shown in the film theaters through the newsreels. In a rare participation in the coordinated propaganda campaign to justify Germany’s attack on their neighbors, *Film-Kurier* featured on August 25, 1939 an emotional article about the situation of Germans in Poland: “An indelible experience. The newsreels report about the refugee camps. Germans tell about the harassment from the Polish authorities.”²⁰⁸ As German troops invaded the country, the paper, using the prescribed wording, celebrated

²⁰⁸ “Ein unauslöschliches Erlebnis. Wochenschau-Bericht aus den Flüchtlingslagern. Deutsche erzählen von den furchtbaren Drangsaleirung durch den polnischen Machthaber,” *Film-Kurier*, August 25, 1939. For Nazi propaganda see Aristotle A Kallis, *Nazi Propaganda and the Second World War* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

September 1 as the “Return of Danzig to Germany,” as a personal victory of Hitler (Figure 2.3).²⁰⁹ In accordance with the directives of the *ZD*, the press never used the word war.

The next few months featured articles about the newsreels and film related issues, such as the blackout of cities and its consequences on film business, or the Polish film industry, “the poorest in Europe.” *Film-Kurier* quickly emphasized how the German cultural production continued and, as shown below, it resumed ongoing discussions about topics ranging from the need for film poet to the first year of the Film Academy. As shown by Kershaw, the “phony war,” characterized by a lack of military operations, was full of tension as many Germans were anxious about the outcome of the war. The next announcements of the “preventive attack” on the neutral countries of Denmark and Norway (April 9, 1940) as well as Belgium and Holland were more subdued, with only a short paragraph (Figure 2.4).

²⁰⁹ See the analysis of how domestic and international events were presented as personal victories of Hitler in Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth*.

Film-Kurier

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Das führende deutsche Fachblatt

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Berlin, Freitag, 14. Juni 1940

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Über 100 000 Besucher
Capitol, Leipzig
Der Postmeister
Genaue Angaben im Programm

Stärker in die Liebe
mit Karin Hardt-Kay Morawisch - Paul Wegener - Paul Richter - Insa Freylich

Diese Wochenshow hatte einen derartig großen Erfolg, daß wir das Programm bis einschließlich Donnerstag auf dem Spielfeld behalten.
Verleiher: Lichtspiele, Bismarck
Märkische - Panorama - Schneider - Südost

Kurzmeldungen
Neuer Ufa-Film mit Willy Birgel
Der Ufa hat den Staatsangehörigen Willy Birgel für zwei weiteren Jahre fest verpflichtet.

Heute Premiere: Hilde Wulfer
Der neue Film hat besten Bekanntheitsgrad des Berliner Schauspielers Hilde Wulfer hat sich heute mit dem neuen Film "Hilde Wulfer" in den Kinos bewährt.

Zensiert
Der Film hat den Film "Die Notwendigkeit von Sanierung" zensiert, er ist für den Kinobetrieb freigegeben.
Der Film "Die drei Craxen" hat den Kinobetrieb freigegeben, er ist für den Kinobetrieb freigegeben.

... marschieren wir marschieren wir nach Frankreich hinein

Die neue Wochenshow Der Führer bei den Soldaten

Die neue Wochenshow "Der Führer bei den Soldaten" ist ein Film, der die Soldaten in Frankreich zeigt. Der Film zeigt die Soldaten in Frankreich, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen. Der Film zeigt die Soldaten in Frankreich, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen.

Zwei Diapositive für das Rote Kreuz

Die beiden Diapositive zeigen die Soldaten in Frankreich. Die beiden Diapositive zeigen die Soldaten in Frankreich, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen. Die beiden Diapositive zeigen die Soldaten in Frankreich, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen.

Deutsche Truppen in Paris

Die deutschen Truppen in Paris sind in den Straßen zu sehen. Die deutschen Truppen in Paris sind in den Straßen zu sehen, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen. Die deutschen Truppen in Paris sind in den Straßen zu sehen, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen.

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Lebensnah Schauspiel und Einzelfilm zeigen in jedem Film in fesselnder Dramatik

Die neuen Filme zeigen die Soldaten in Frankreich. Die neuen Filme zeigen die Soldaten in Frankreich, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen. Die neuen Filme zeigen die Soldaten in Frankreich, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen.

Johannisfesten der Erfolgsfilm der Terra jetzt in vielen Neuaufführungen.

Die neuen Filme zeigen die Soldaten in Frankreich. Die neuen Filme zeigen die Soldaten in Frankreich, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen. Die neuen Filme zeigen die Soldaten in Frankreich, die den Führer bei den Soldaten sehen.

Film-Kurier

Theater • Kunst • Varieté • Funk
Illustrierter Film-Kurier • Kinotechnische Rundschau • Bildbeilage
T A G E S Z E I T U N G
Das führende deutsche Fachblatt

Berlin, Sonnabend, 15. Juni 1940

SCHWALBE
Die Zeitschrift von bleibendem Wert!
Sonderausgabe!
Deutschland schlägt zu!
Der gewaltige Vorstoß im Westen
Lesebuch heraus
Ermans in Belgien - Lippmann wieder deutsch - Lüttich in deutscher Hand
Feldmarschall Guderian
Auf französischem Boden - Sedan gefallt
Weiter geht der Kampf
Produktion
Staatspolitik wertvoll
widersägend
Länge 284 Meter, stunde Pausung
1500 Meter, stunde Pausung
Herstellung: Ufa-Filmverleih G. m. b. H.
Berlin SW 68, Konstanzerstr. 81/29
Vertrieb: Ufa-Filmverleih G. m. b. H.
Berlin SW 68, Konstanzerstr. 81/29

Nach der Besetzung von Paris Frankreichs Filmproduktion im Lebensnerv getroffen Italiens Kriegseintritt beeinflusst die Filmversorgung Südosteuropas

AUS DEM INHALT
Bereitschaft der Filmindustrie vorwärts
Lesebuch heraus
Ermans in Belgien - Lippmann wieder deutsch - Lüttich in deutscher Hand
Feldmarschall Guderian
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Er spielt den Schiller
Hans Casper als Träger der Titelfarbe in dem Schillerfilm der Tobis, den Herbert Haschmann inszen

On the other hand, the speed with which the German army progressed and the lack of casualties reinforced Germans' faith in Hitler and *Film-Kurier's* headlines mirrored the quasi exuberance of the spring of 1940. Here again, a day after the invasion of France, the film paper focused right away on film issues by announcing that "the country's film production vital nerve has been hit" (Figure 2.5 and 2.6). The following months saw a few more propagandistic headlines such as Hitler's reassurance that "his intention was never to wage war but to build a social state of highest culture (July 20, 1940) and, in November 1940, as the Battle of Britain was now clearly unsuccessful, an announcement about the "Uncompromising Fight up to the Clear Victory," (November 9, 1940).

While many articles dealt with the film industries in occupied countries, the closest the paper got to talk about the war was through reports about troop entertainment (see for example the *Bilderbogen* of March 1, 1942). The newsreels, on the other hand, featured stories of victorious German armies. The invasion of Russia, depicted once again as an answer to the "British- Bolshevik plot" (June 23, 1941) led to a new wave of enthusiasm ("Triumphal March," July 11, 1941) that muted quickly as the Germans encountered fierce resistance. While the upcoming Battle of Stalingrad reinforced the bond between the "Indomitable Front and Home-front," (October 8, 1942), turning them into a "Sworn Community" (*verschworene Gemeinschaft*) by February 3, 1943, the defeat led to rallying cry of "Unconditional Effort for the Victory!" (*Bedingungslose Einsatz für den Sieg!*) echoing Goebbels' Sportpalast speech in which he called for a total war. As the population got warier of the official propaganda and Goebbels was now focusing on entertaining the Germans, reports about the newsreels moved from the first to the second page, until a final surge in the Spring of 1944. On June 20, 1944, the

newsreels came back to the front page as “documents about the fight against the invasion.” But the next edition featured a story about how German soldiers were relaxing in a makeshift film theater. Apart from rare outbursts of propaganda such as “With the invasion of the Bolshevik Mongolian in our country, the enormous fight for our existence has entered its decisive phase,” *Filmnachrichten*, the successor of *Film-Kurier*, took from late 1944 on, a tone of pragmatism, almost resignation, continuing to focus on what it never stopped talking about: film and film making.²¹⁰

Indeed, while *Film-Kurier* underwent a politicization that fluctuated during the Third Reich, the paper remained a place of (limited) dialogue among film professionals, journalists, the regime, and the audience. In addition to praising the regime and addressing specific issues of the film theater owners, the trade paper tackled topics that concerned the film industry as a whole, supporting the regime’s agenda but also opening the floor for discussions, addressing weaknesses and pushing for improvements. Among the many striking aspects are the variety of topics discussed, the differences in opinions, and how these could be seemingly freely exchanged and continued amidst world conflicts and genocide.

We see how, in addition to boast about audience and productions statistics, the regime utilized the press to communicate with the film community. It advertised regulations or organizational changes such as the creation of the Reich Film Dramaturge, the creation of retirement funds for artists, and the new copyrights laws. Some measures, such as the ban on art critique, replaced with merely appreciative film reviewing in November 1936, were carefully explained, even justified to the film professionals as something positive.

²¹⁰ *Filmnachrichten*, February 2, 1945.

Starting in 1942, *Film-Kurier* promoted and complimented the rationalization of and the rationing that were imposed in filmmaking as resources got scarcer. It also actively participated in the re-evaluation and promotion of cultural and educational films.

Scholars have shown that this interest and support were not altruistic, as both cultural films, now part of the standard screening set composed of newsreels, cultural film and feature film, and educational films were great vehicles for National Socialist propaganda.²¹¹

In addition to the straightforward celebration of any type of achievements, *Film-Kurier*, starting in 1935, regularly encouraged, if not urged further changes, pointing to tensions within the film industry. These encouragements came from all parties, regime and film professionals, as well as journalists and sometimes the audience. In addition to Goebbels, whose film related speeches were reprinted or summarized in *Film-Kurier*, other members of the regime used the paper to express their views. Film dramaturge Willy Krause asked if there was something like a filmic laws (April 1935), while Curt Belling, head of the press communication for the film department, expressed his frustration in October 4, 1935: “The development of the artistic film stagnates.” The most active was certainly Fritz Hippler, Goebbels’ lieutenant, who used the daily paper to lay out his ideas about film making, contributing to more than thirty articles.²¹²

²¹¹ See for example on November 22, 1938 an article about how educational films are used in the air force as “Education and entertainment for the troops as well as ways to enhance the interest of the people for aviation.” Ursula Keitz, “Wie „Deutsche Kamerun-Bananen“ ins Klassenzimmer komme: Pädagogik und Politik des Unterrichtsfilms,” in *Mediale Mobilmachung I. Das Dritte Reich und der Film*, ed. Harro Segeberg (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2004), 71–102.

²¹² About Hippler was one of the most influential men in Third Reich cinema see Roel Vande Winkel, “Nazi Germany’s Fritz Hippler, 1909-2002,” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 23, no. 2 (2003): 91–99. Head of the German Newsreel Center since 1939, Hippler had also directed several propaganda films, including the infamous *Der Ewige Jude* in 1940. In June 1939 Goebbels appointed him head of the film department, and in February 1940 *Reichfilmintendant*. Following this last appointment Hippler started expressing his view about filmmaking in print on a regular basis. *Film-Kurier* published a

If the regime used the paper to promote its agenda, journalists and filmmakers also used *Film-Kurier* to start discussions and at times to express their dissatisfaction with the system. While three of the most contentious issues – the relationships between film and theater, and film and music, and the need for more film studies and a systematic training of the *Nachwuchs* – will be developed in further chapters, the paper addressed a variety of topics, ranging from the technological improvements in television, color films, German animation features, and even 3D films (December 1937), as well as broad issues such as the very essence of film and the elusive “cinematic laws.”

The journalists of *Film-Kurier* often took the initiative in starting discussions of topics like humor or the realistic depiction of people in film. They also printed the responses and reactions the articles triggered.²¹³ In January 1939, for example, an article questioned how in a recent film the police had caught four murders at once and appealed to the authors, arguing that, “one must be fair to the police without falling into empty showing-off.” This was answered, a week later, by an article with suggestions for criminal film. Following a March 9, 1942 article that demanded more films, pointing to the fact that the reduced total number of films was caused by the high numbers of *Großfilme*, *Film-Kurier* featured an interview with Reich Film Intendant Fritz Hippler announcing that “in the future twenty percent of the film will be *Großfilme* and eighty percent entertainment films.” The paper presented itself as the vital link that connected people active or interested in the film world.

series of eight articles in May 1941. In total, the trade paper printed nine of his articles in 1940, eleven in 1941, thirteen in 1942. Many of these articles were also reprinted in *Der deutsche Film*.

²¹³ Sabine Hake, “The Power of Thought: Redefining Popular Cinema Between Realism and Illusion,” in *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 171–188.

Film-Kurier proudly reported when its suggestions had born fruit. On February 15, 1937, for example, we read:

A few days ago we published an article from Gonny Rothex, [the head of the Association of Film Writers, CLF] in which he suggested that the dramaturgic department of the film companies should restrict their consideration of film manuscripts to the members of the film chamber. We cannot agree with this suggestion, because this restriction does not leave enough room for the “play of the free forces” (*Spiel der freien Kräfte*). In the meantime, Gonny Rothex sent us a second article, which suggests the creation of a special editorial office that examines any materials sent by non-members of the Reich Chamber of Literature.

The article concludes by saying that “it would be good if this would lead to a debate about this important topic, a debate to which the dramaturgy departments will hopefully actively participate.”²¹⁴ Up to the very end, the paper would open up its pages for discussions, some spanning over several months.

Film-Kurier also welcomed and encouraged exchanges and discussion with other publications. On March 12, 1941, for example, it published an article by Heinrich Koch in which he compared film and poetry that came from the Hamburg magazine *Kogge*. *Film-Kurier* hoped, once again, that “this would lead to further discussions.” Under the title “The Art to Invent Film Materials” *Filmnachrichten* published in February 1944 excerpts from Paul Ickes’ book *Film Guide for the German Press* and concluded that, “a Lessing of cinema does not yet exist.”²¹⁵ It hoped that the article would “be met with agreement and dissent and thus would prompt further thoughts, commentaries, and active journalistic contributions.”²¹⁶

Film-Kurier thus problematized the very role of the press as a vital collaborator not only to the film theater owners but also to the film industry. Its role was to “educate the

²¹⁴ “Die Prüfung der Manuskript,” *Film-Kurier*, February 15, 1937.

²¹⁵ “Über die Kunst, Filmstoffe zu erfinden,” *Film-Kurier*, February 29, 1944.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

audience” (June 1937). After film critique was banned, the role of the “film commentator” was often discussed: What should his qualifications be? (August 1938), Should the journalist watch the film with or without the audience in a preview? (April 1941). In a May 1942 article, *Film-Kurier* reported, in connection with higher ticket sales, how “the audience is more knowledgeable nowadays,” and ascribed this trend to the daily press, which helped not only the audience, but also film theater owners and film companies. In earlier times, *Film-Kurier* frowned upon connections to the film companies for undermining the paper’s objectivity; now its emphasized the close connection between film companies, film theaters, and the press (January 1941). The film industry was very well aware of the vital role played by the press and it invested a great deal of money in it.²¹⁷

The connection to the audience was also nurtured. Although targeting a professional readership, *Film-Kurier* clearly established a link between the audience and film industry as well as the regime. The recurrent celebration of successes and achievement were part of the regime’s propaganda and the explanation of many structural reforms indicates how careful the government was to present changes as something positive. In addition to advertisements for upcoming films, *Film-Kurier* enabled film companies to entertain their connections with the audience in the form of prize competitions. Tobis, for example, asked the readers to submit suggestions for a film about journalism in April 1936, and had another contest in April 1940 for a poster for the film *Geierwally*.

In addition to educating the audience to appreciate and value good German films, *Film-Kurier* helped introduce structural changes in exhibition practices, such as

²¹⁷ BA R 109 I/ 2139 b, Workshop of the heads of the film companies, January 17, 1941.

numbered seats and instructions about the newsreels.²¹⁸ It also played an important part in changing film viewing habits, encouraging audiences to visit more afternoon shows (July 1942) and to go to their local theater versus the crowded downtown theaters (March 1943). These efforts to redirect audience because were vital in order to help handling the increased traffic as transportation infrastructure diminished. Again and again *Film-Kurier* featured articles about punctuality of the audience, a topic that became pressing after Goebbels ordered the doors of the theater be closed after the beginning of the program to prevent people from skipping the newsreels (November 1942).

Film-Kurier was also a place where the “almost obsessive preoccupation with audience,” as Sabine Hake put it, played out.²¹⁹ From the phenomena of word-of-mouth (February 1937) and numerous poll about favorite movies (June 1937, June 1939), to psychological studies about the “ones who still do not go to the film theater” (January 1939) to the topic of applauding during the film (April 1941), the paper was eager to draw conclusions about “popular taste” (*Publikumsgeschmack*) from the box office numbers (August 1942 or March 1943). While the female audience was the object of much writing, the topic of young people in film theaters as well as film for young people came increasingly to the forefront. Couched in terms of protection, articles about youth in film theaters exhibit an anxiety about how to control and win over this specific group. Articles alternated between regulation such as how young people were banned from the late shows, to incentives about how to make films specifically for the young.²²⁰ In fact,

²¹⁸ On the motives behind the changes in exhibition practices see Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, chapter 4; Carter, *Dietrich's Ghosts*, chapter 3.

²¹⁹ Sabine Hake, “At the Movies: Film Audiences and the Problem of Spectatorship,” in *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, 68–86.

²²⁰ On the use of feature films for the youth as propaganda tools see Bianca Dustdar, *Film Als Propagandainstrument in Der Jugendpolitik Des Dritten Reichs* (Alfeld: Coppi-Verlag, 1996); Barbara

the last known issue of *Filmm Nachrichten*, on March 31, 1945, laid out recommendation for the making of film for young people.

The last year of the paper was characterized by a focus on film related issues, an effort to attend to “business as usual” in the midst of destruction. As will be developed in Part 4, 1944 started with a renewed interest in the *Nachwuchs* looking towards a future not mired in destruction and war, where “young people dedicate themselves to film and film acting” and where the most important duty of *Nachwuchs* is to be honest and sincere and “to have courage to be oneself” (January 7, 1944). Was it wishful thinking for a society where such traits of characters had disappeared? The articles in 1944 give the impression of a frenzied, frenetic activity with numerous debates, many focusing on details, as if excessive attention to details could shed people from the war and makes things “normal.” In addition to listing the new film studies programs across the Reich, *Filmm Nachrichten* featured in the spring of 1944, for example, articles about film professions such cameraman and cutter, dramaturge and make-up artist, and the challenges posed by color film for set designer. In the face of a looming defeat, artistic activities were the only positive news and were presented as signs of the strength of the Reich. Following irked reports about how enemies had launched aerial warfare targeting specifically cultural buildings, film and theater alike, the film press praised film theater owners and the essential work they were doing.²²¹

Stelzner-Lange, “*Der Jugend Zur Freude*”? *Untersuchungen Zum propagandistischen Jugendspielfilm Im Dritten Reich* (Weimar: VDG, 1996).

²²¹ Max Winkler, Reich trustee, had complained about the fact that the press, specifically *Völkischer Beobachter* and *Film-Kurier*, gave extensive reports about the shooting of films. He argued that this was detrimental because, first readers might get the impression that the film sets are not affected by the aerial war, and second, “the enemy forces could find out where the films are shot, if they decide to stop it, because it is politically and propagandistically important.” In BA R 109 I/ 1737, on May 18, 1944. Winkler asked *Film-Kurier* on March 30, 1944 to only report about films when the shooting were completed.

Film-Kurier thus performed multiple functions as it stood at the nexus of film companies and film professionals, the regime and the audience, as well as the journalists. While its politicization was clear and the paper remained in line with official politics, it also opened up its pages for discussions and debates that often challenged the current situation of German cinema. *Film-Kurier* not only provided a restricted public forum where topics such as the role of composers could be debated, its criticism of the weaknesses of German filmmaking led to concrete changes such as, for example, the workshop for film authors as shown in chapter 3. While it also addressed film viewers as a whole, *Film-Kurier*, as a trade newspaper, targeted mostly film professionals, which allowed it to tackle more specific film related issues and to go more in depth than the weekly magazine *Filmwelt*.

The Popular Magazine *Filmwelt*

The most popular film magazine of the time, the weekly *Filmwelt* provided its readers with the pleasures Führer has identified for the general magazines of the Third Reich. Unlike what happened in *Film-Kurier*, political propaganda did not fully started in *Filmwelt* until the outbreak of World War Two in September 1939, and the magazine did not experience any drastic changes in layout or tone. *Filmwelt* thus exemplifies the continuity with Weimar and the efforts to maintain an illusion of normality by bringing film stars closer to readers and audience.

A powerful advertising tool for its publisher, Ufa, *Filmwelt* had the widest readership in Germany, printing over 130,000 weekly copies in 1939. Similar in format to *Filmwoche* and *Die Junge Dame*, it unmistakably addressed a female audience as can be

seen in the ads printed.²²² Called ‘the film and photo magazine’ *Filmwelt* featured, throughout the Third Reich, ads not only for cameras, but for perfume, epilation cream, stockings, and band-aids (Figures 2.7 and 2.8). The magazine also had a column entitled *Jung und schön bleiben* (Stay Young and Beautiful), consisting of interviews with film stars, mostly women but on some occasions men, sharing their beauty tips as well as advice on well-being such as the importance of exercise and a good diet.²²³

The overall format of the magazine until 1939 was the following: on the front page a full page picture of an actress or actor; the second page made up of one column with ads for Ufa films or products and another column entitled “In production” listing the films in the making; the third page always had a second full page picture of actors or actresses; the next few pages presented upcoming films, behind the stage stories, interviews with film professionals, presentations of news comers and the different film professions, history of filmmaking, short notices about theatrical performances, short paragraphs about running films; one page was dedicated to photographs sent by the readers and a second one was the “photography technical page;” several pages of a serial novel; between three and five pages answered readers’ questions; the final page was adorned with advertisements for Ufa products, upcoming films, photography materials, and a film calendar.

²²² See the detailed analysis of *Die Junge Dame* in Lott, *Die Frauenzeitschriften von Hans Huffzky und John Jahr*.

²²³ Another piece of evidence that *Filmwelt* targeted a female readership was the fact that articles about the Winter Relief in October 1942 emphasized how a large amount of the collected money was dedicated to the Mother and Child Organization, 701,000,000 RM, mothers convalescent homes of the *Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt* (NSV), to the National Socialist People's Welfare organization, with 18 million RM, and to the NSV Kindergarten with 148,000,000 RM.

Dralle

Tula besitzt die Eigenart eines Parfüms, das in der Komposition vollkommen gelungen ist. Eindringlich, aber mit dem Kolorit einer beschwingten Eleganz tritt es uns entgegen. Tula ist das Parfüm der Dame, wenn wir darunter eine Frau verstehen, die mit sicherem Gefühl zu wählen weiß.

TULA




Parfüm: -.90 bis 7.-, Eau de Cologne: -.35 bis 15.-, Kopfwasser: -.50 und 2.-
Seife: 2 Stück im Karton 1.80, Puder: 1.25, Geschenkpackungen: 2.50 bis 6.50

Das edle Parfüm



TULA

EAU DE COLOGNE

PUDER SEIFE

Dralle

Figure 2.7: Full page ad for the cosmetic company Tulla Dralle, in December 1938 (Left) and December 1939 (Right).

film professionals, presentations of news comers and the different film professions, history of filmmaking, short notices about theatrical performances, short paragraphs about running films; one page was dedicated to photographs sent by the readers and a second one was the “photography technical page;” several pages of a serial novel; between three and five pages answered readers’ questions; the final page was adorned with advertisements for Ufa products, upcoming films, photography materials, and a film calendar. From October 1938 to February 1941, the magazine published a four-page supplement, *Im Scheinwerfer* (In the Spotlight) devoted to individual film professionals or occasionally a specific film. While the magazine reported prominently about Ufa products and films, it also had advertisements for films from other companies. As will be shown in the next chapters, *Filmwelt* echoed in its own way some of the debates that were taking place much more vividly in the trade press, including the efforts of a systematic *Nachwuchs* training and the role of the composer.

The predominant place reserved for photographs, increasingly in color, with a minimum text tracing a career path of acting professionals was striking. Part of the appeal of *Filmwelt* and what made it an important part of consumer society, being at the same time an object but also a creator of desire, was indeed its use of glossy photographs of stars, which in turn allowed the magazine to play a constitutive role in the creation of stardom. In addition to full-page photos, the magazine also had regularly double page portraits in the middle of magazine, easily detachable.²²⁴

A “people’s magazine,” *Filmwelt* specialized in blurring the lines between screen and reality, presenting articles about upcoming films but also revealing the private lives of the actors and actresses, thus contributing to the very creation of, if not stardom, at least

²²⁴ In that respect *Filmwelt* was very similar to its American counterpart *Photoplay*.

popularity.²²⁵ Articles lifted the curtain and guided the readers into the stars' private homes in articles called "At home with Heinz Rühmann," (November 1933), "Weekend with Ida Wüst" (July 1933), "15 Minutes with Brigitte Horney (July 1934), "Afternoon with XY." Star couples got special attention: "The Wives of Our Artists" such as Ms. Dr. Christa A. Liedtke-Tordy in August 1935, and "Visit with the artists Franz Grothe und Kirsten Heiberg" (September 1938). *Filmwelt* also featured special reports for every season: what film stars were doing for New Year's Eve, how they celebrated carnival, decorated their Christmas trees and their fondest memories, how they spent their winter, spring, summer, and fall vacations, their favorite recipes (January 1940), what they wanted to do when they were in school (December 1938), favorite hobbies, etc. All this contributing to what Richard Dyer calls "a rhetoric of sincerity or authenticity, two qualities greatly prized in stars because the guarantee, respectively, that the star really means what he or she says, and that the star really is what she or he appears to be."²²⁶

Filmwelt entertained the relation with the readership and by extension the film audience in numerous ways. The magazine organized, for example, regular prize competition and had columns entitled "Wish Page" with the requested photographs of several actors and actresses, German and foreign. In addition to the "Beautiful Picture" page where the photographs readers took were printed, the most direct connection was the column "Questions we were asked" which ran between three and five pages (!).

Readers could submit as many as four questions and the magazine printed only the answers not the questions. Among the most common questions/answers were the age of

²²⁵ On the star phenomena, specifically for films, see Richard Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*, vol. 2nd (London: Routledge, 1986); Christine Gledhill, *Stardom: Industry of Desire* (London, New York: Routledge, 1991); Richard Dyer, *Stars* (British Film Institute, 1998); Jackie Stacey, *Star Gazing: Hollywood Cinema and Female Spectatorship* (London: Routledge, 1994).

²²⁶ Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*, 2nd: 11.

the film professionals, the address they could be written at in order to get an autograph, the exact cast of a specific film, etc. As the magazine was faced with paper rationing, this section disappeared after October 1939.

One noticeable change is the disappearance of the two to four page photomontages entitled *Women around XY* (Hans Albers in July 1933) or, as often, *Men around XY* (Charlotte Susa in March 1936) after 1936.²²⁷ It is unclear if this change was caused by ideological objections or if the magazine was running out of stars who had played in enough films to fill two to four pages. Around the same time, *Filmwelt* started featuring lengthy articles about the career of actors and actresses, tracing their beginning since childhood and, as shown in chapter 7, emphasizing their hard work. For a few actors and actresses this series of articles ran for several installments, with the exceptional eight part series for Greta Garbo in June-July 1938.²²⁸ For many Germans, the Swedish actress, who had her debut in 1925 in *Die freudlose Gasse* (The Joyless Street or The Street of Sorrow) directed by G. W. Pabst and co-starring Asta Nielsen), was considered German and they took pride in her success in Hollywood.

²²⁷ Between 1933 and 1936, the men featured were in 1933: Willy Forst, Georg Alexander, Gustaf Gründgens, Conrad Veidt, Peter Voss, Hermann Thimig, Hans Stüwe, Karl Ludwig Diehl, Gustav Diessl, Hans Albers, Gutav Fröhlich (2 parts), Werner Fuetterer. In 1934: Viktor de Kowa, Karl Ludwig Diehl. 1935: Paul Hartmann (2 parts). For the women: 1933: Brigitte Helm, Renate Müller, Lucie Englisch, Doroteha Wieck, Käthe von Nagy, Greta Garbo, Lil Dagover. In 1934: Anny Ondra, Marta Eggerth. 1936: Charlotte Susa, Sybille Schmidt. 1937: Marianne Hoppe.

²²⁸ Other three parts series included Adele Sandrock, May 1936, Harry Piel, May-August 1935, Karl Ludwig Diehl, October 1937, Karl Ritter, May 1938, Nelson Eddy, September 1938, Zarah Leander, November 1938, Brigitte Horney, January 1939, the film *Herz der Königin*, in December 1939-February 1940. Two parts articles about Ivan Petrovich in July 1935, Magada Schneider, April 1936, Rudolf Foster, June 1936, Willy Eichberger, July 1936, Ida Wüst, January 1937, Luise Ullrich, November 1937, Paul Klinger, March 1938, Frits van Dongen, March 1938, Fita Benkoff, April 1938. Only three acting professionals were honored with a four parts series: Renate Müller, January 1936, Gustav Fröhlich, April-May 1936, Olga Tschechowa June 1937, and Zarah Leander in December 1938.

In addition to an ongoing fascination with Garbo and Dietrich, *Filmwelt* featured numerous articles and pictures of American film stars.²²⁹ Between 1933 and 1937, for example, American stars were on the cover of the magazine twelve times, with eleven full-page pictures on page three. News about Hollywood was very prominent until 1933, and made up one third (if not more) of the magazine, including a column on page two entitled *Filmfunken aus Hollywood* (The Latest Film News From Hollywood). In addition to the glamorous pictures and extensive stories,²³⁰ the popular magazine featured more and more articles critical of the Hollywood system. It complained about how Hollywood was all about making money and how it did not recognize talent such as the French director Rene Clair (June 1934), and told cautionary tales of film stars who lost everything and were now forgotten and living in misery (July 1937). But these remained rare and *Filmwelt* offered more often pictures of American stars with their boats as a sign of success (September 1938). The journal featured extensive advertisement for American films, including Fox, Paramount, Metro Goldwyn Mayer each advertising, for example, about ten films in September 1938.

Second to U.S. productions, French, and increasingly Italian films were commented upon. The only other foreigners to make it to the front page were the Italians Benjamin Gigli, who had enjoyed a long career in Germany, as well as Maria Cebotari (October 1939) and Allida Vali (April and October 1942) when they played in German films; the French Sacha Guitry (January 1938) and Danielle Darrieux (March 1939). In addition to Danielle Darrieux, described as charming, Simone Simon, who came back from

²²⁹ For the complicated relationship between Nazi Germany and Marlene Dietrich see Carter, *Dietrich's Ghosts*.

²³⁰ In 1936 for example, Claudette Colbert, Joan Crawford, Harold Lloyd, Gary Cooper, and Douglas Fairbanks Jr. all got three page articles, something quite unusual even for German artists.

Hollywood, Michelle Morgan, and Viviane Romance, admired for her sensuality were mentioned. In the early 1930s, Maurice Chevalier was a favorite while Jean Gabin, Charles Boyer, Charles Vanel, Louis Jouvet, and Tino Rossi were occasionally mentioned but they had not developed a following. French directors were mentioned more often. In addition to Sacha Guitry, the direction work of Jean Duvivier, Jacques Feyder, Maurice Tourner, Marcel L'Herbier, and especially Rene Clair and Marcel Carné were regularly praised.

Filmwelt was thus not about the film industry *per se*, but all about servicing its readership and audience in their curiosity and interest in films and film stars. The magazine did not escaped politicization though, but it took different forms than with *Film-Kurier*. The most noticeable change was the disappearance of articles about American films, only mentioned after 1939 in the short columns about new releases and the “film commentary,” before completely disappearing after July 1940.²³¹ Instead we see an increase in articles about Germany’s political allies, Italy and its main film company Difu, as well as a handful of articles about Japanese cinema. In the first year of the regime, *Filmwelt* did not change its format and content, and news about the 1934 Reich National Party Convention or Goebbels’ speech to the film professionals in August 1935, for example, were relegated at the back of the magazine, between ads for bras. *Filmwelt* dutifully reported about structural changes such the creation of the Reich Film Archive (February 1935), the International Film Congress (August 1935), and the creation of a National Film Prize (May 1936).

²³¹ Karl Christian Führer, “Two-Fold Admiration: American Movies as Popular Entertainment and Artistic Model in Nazi Germany, 1933-39,” in *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2007), 97–112.

It was not until December 1936 that film related political news, such as the celebration of the third year of the Reich Chamber of Culture and Goebbels' speech, or the anniversary of the fourth year of the Nazi regime in January 1937, moved to the front of the magazine. Such articles were very sporadic though and only amounted to four for the year 1937, before finding their regular place on pages four and five, after the full page photographs of the front page and page three.²³² This move to the beginning of the magazine, but not all the way to the front page, is interesting. One of the particularities of the press and magazines in particular is that the reader is free to browse through the magazine as he/she pleases without any specific order. Unlike film screenings where Goebbels positioned the newsreels before the film and ordered to have the doors closed in an efforts to make sure moviegoers would watch the highly propagandistic newsreels, nobody can dictate how a magazine is read. One can, as in the case of *Film-Kurier*, placard the front page with propaganda headlines and "force" one's message to the readers, but this did not happen with *Filmwelt*. Following Goebbels' principle that propaganda is more effective when it is not obvious, propaganda in *Filmwelt* remained steadily on page four and five from September 1939 on, with a short interruption from January to April 1940. The rare exception was the celebration on pages two and three (but still not on the front page) of the victory over France and the return of Alsace and Lorraine, something the majority of Germans rejoiced about (June 28 and July 12, 1940).

Propaganda was originally positive, praising, for example, the work of the German Red Cross (October 1939), the creation of film programs for young people (November

²³² On very few occasions, political news was found on page three instead of the second full page picture, For example: October 1938: "Thanks to the *Führer* for his peace work in Munich on September 22, 1938;" March 1939: "Under German Care" and "The *Führer* in Memel. Memelland thanks the liberator after decades of subjugation" celebrated the "liberation" of East Prussia near Danzig.

1939), and the opening of the Film Academy (December 1939), but also celebrating Goebbels' speeches (December 1939) and congratulating Hitler on his birthday (April 1940). Pages four and five contributed to the discourse of the union of front and home front, something the regime was very eager to sustain in order to avoid similar events in 1917 when dissatisfaction on the domestic front undermined the war efforts. We see articles about the celebration of National Day of the German Volk (April 1940), the work in an ammunition factory (May 1940, Figure 2.9), and especially troop entertainment and support of the war efforts (see for example June 1940). Such articles presented not only the images of a united *Volk*, it also put film professionals and the regime in a good light for taking care of the soldiers.²³³

This connection between front and home front was made even clearer when in May 1940, *Filmwelt* asked its readers to send the magazine to the front once they had read it. Indeed, from spring 1940 on, *Filmwelt* featured a few double pages photographs with young upcoming actresses going to the swimming pool and exercising in order to stay fit. The images of the scantily dressed women, also found in *Der deutsche Film*, were certain to please the soldiers.²³⁴


While the spring 1940 campaigns were presented as examples of German courage and military superiority, with a sure victory in sight, page four and five gave room for strident

²³³ The connection between the front and the film industry took an absurd turn when in January 1942, clothes from films were given to soldiers.


²³⁴ See also among others the special issue "Schöne Mädchen – kluge Frauen," *Filmwelt*, no. 3 (Januar 1940) and the two pages photomontage entitled "Sonne, Wind und Wasser," *Filmwelt*, no. 25/26 (July 1942): 200-201.

Front und Heimat

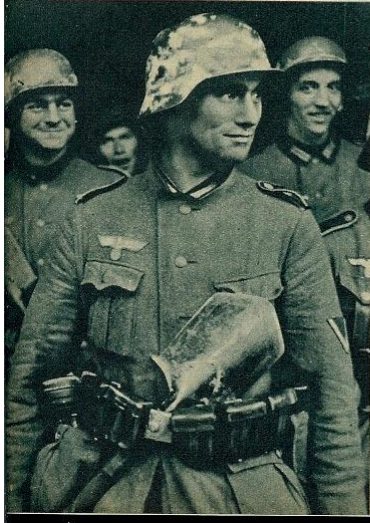
von Rolf Brandt



Fallschirmjäger werden eingesetzt
Aufnahme Weltbild



Rechts: Eine Panzerkolonne auf dem Vormarsch
Aufnahme PK. Boecker-Scherl



Unten: Stoßtruppmänner nach der Rückkehr von erfolgreichem Unternehmen
Aufnahme PK-Fincornelly-Scherl

Der Soldat erlebt und sieht den Sieg in der Schlacht mit einer Stärke des Gefühls, das den ganzen Menschen durchströmt und ihm die Kraft verdoppelt. Wenn unter dem furchtlosen Einsatz jedes einzelnen, unter dem Eisenhagel der Geschütze und dem Hammers der Maschinengewehre, unter dem Vorwärtssprung der Schützen, unter der Drahtschere der Pioniere, unter dem Donner der schweren Fliegerbomben die Schlacht vorwärtsgeht, ist es so, als ob vom Himmel ein anderes und größeres Licht strahlte. Der Kämpfer ist außer sich, er ist herausgetreten fast aus seiner menschlichen Hülle. Neben ihm stirbt der Tod, er weiß es, aber in ihm lebt nur der Gedanke an das Ziel. Der Sieg auf dem Schlachtfeld ist das größte Wunder, das die männliche Seele erleben kann...

Im polnischen Feldzug der achtzehn Tage habe ich auf manchen Gesichtern der Gefallenen diesen erschütternden Zug gesehen, der fast wie ein Lächeln anmutet. Diese Gesichter ruhen in der Hand der Ewigkeit, wer sie je gesehen hat, kann sie in seinem Leben nicht mehr vergessen.

Dieser Krieg des gewaltigsten Einsatzes, dieser Sieg, der die Geschichte der Welt auf Generationen und Generationen verändert und festlegt, wird gegen einen Feind erfochten, in dessen Fahnen auch der Lorbeer rauscht und der immer und immer tapfere Soldaten auf die Schlachtfelder Europas geschickt hat. Von der Schwere des Einsatzes kann sich niemand in der Heimat die letzte Vorstellung machen. Die Worte heldisch und tapfer, zu oft gebraucht, stehen auf in einem neuen furchtbaren Glanz. So wie dieser Sieg, den das Föhlerregime des Führers an die deutsche Heere erantreibt, über die Zukunft der Welt und über die Zukunft allen deutschen Wesens auf Generationen hinaus entscheidet, so fechten Generationen im Einsatz jedes einzelnen Soldaten mit. Wie die alten Siegesmärsche aus den Schlachten Friedrichs des Großen, wie

Front und Heimat



die jubelnden Rhythmen aus den großen Einigungskriegen Deutschlands, wie der Marschritt aus den Freiheitskriegen aufwärts und über das eigene Erleben die großen Fahnen aller deutschen Siege flattern, so erlebt die Heimat, herausgerissen aus der eigenen Zeit, das große Leuchten der deutschen Siege.

Wir sind alle dabei. Wir sind dabei, während wir unser Tagewerk tun und die kleinen Dinge des Lebens erledigen. Wir sind dabei im Morgengrauen, wenn sich die Augen zum erstenmal öffnen, und wir sind dabei, wenn wir nach des Tages Arbeit die Ruhe suchen. Noch durch unsere Träume geht der Marsch unserer Soldaten, wie er durch unser ganzes Leben geht.

Die Heimat hat nicht Siegesfeste gefeiert und Hurra geschrien, sie ist mit geschlossenen Lippen und festen Herzen bei den Soldaten,



In der Rüstungsindustrie hat die Frau dort, wo es möglich war, den Arbeitsplatz des Mannes übernommen
Scherl Bilderdienst

bei dem Einsatz an der Front. Land und Stadt haben das ihre getan, in diesem Winter, sie haben das ihre getan, bevor der Krieg noch begann im selblosen Opfer für die Armee, die nun siegt. Es ist ja, wenn man vergleicht, ein Vergleich, der im Grunde unzulässig ist, so, daß aller Einsatz der Heimat, aller Pflichtbewußtsein und die selbstverständliche Zurücksetzung der persönlichen Wünsche wenig an Opfer bedeutet gegenüber dem Opfer des ganzen Menschen, gegenüber dem Soldatentum.

Aber die Willensbildung eines ganzen Volkes schlägt die Schlachten mit. Dieser Siegeswillen von achtzig Millionen Deutschen, diese Opferbereitschaft ist das Schild, das jeder einzelne Soldat mit hinausbekommt auf die Schlachtfelder.

Front und Heimat sind eine Einheit. Front und Heimat leben miteinander in unblühlicher Verbundenheit. Im Licht der Siege schlagen die Herzen heller, Front und Heimat wissen um das große Wiedersehen und um die ehrene Größe der deutschen Zeit.

Die Ereignisse des Tages im Straßenbild der Reichshauptstadt. — Überall strauen sich vor den Lautsprechern die Berliner, um die neuesten Nachrichten zu hören
Aufnahme Presse-Illustrationen Hoffmann



Werk in die Montage eines Flugzeuges
Werkstoffaufnahme ZfM

Figure 2.9: "Front and Home Front," *Filmwelt*, no. 22 (May 1940).

Anti-British sentiment, most often penned by Dr. Günther Sawatzki and Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck, that focused on the “lies of British atrocity propaganda,” (*Greuelpropaganda*) (May to September 1940).²³⁵ Like *Film-Kurier*, *Filmwelt* published scores of articles about how the media should represent the war and especially newsreels’ function as “historical documents” (July 1940) with the camera as “the weapon of truth” (August 1940). Unlike *Film-Kurier*, though, *Filmwelt* had a format that allowed for longer articles and abundant photographs. Thinking back to the celebration of the victory of France, we see that while *Film-Kurier* had a headline with a popular song “We are marching in France,” *Filmwelt* could feature an extensive one two-page article with a photograph of soldiers actually marching and an additional article with a picture of German troops on the Place de la Concorde.

1940-1941 also saw an increase in the production of militaristic films such as *Feuertaufe* and *Kampfgeschwader Lützow* (both Hans Bertram, April 1940 and March 1941 respectively), *Stukas* (Karl Ritter, December 1940), and *Sieg im Westen* (Svend Noldan), as well as nationalistic films such as *Bismark* (Liebeneiner) that were extensively covered in *Filmwelt*. That propaganda films such as the anti British *Ohm Krüger* (Hans Steinhoff, 1941), the colonial film *Carl Peters* (Herbert Selpin, 1941), and the anti-Semitic film *Jud Süß* (Veit Harlan, 1940) made it to the front page was rooted in the popularity of their main stars, respectively Emil Jannings, Hans Albers, and Ferdinand Marian. On the other hand, the fact that they were talked about on pages four and five points to their propagandistic function.

This heightened propaganda came to a halt in early 1942 and pages four and five were once again dedicated for the most part to current or upcoming films. A few half-

²³⁵ Other authors of pages four-five included Rolf Brandt, Hilde R. Lest, Rolf Marben, Friedrich Hussong.

page vindictive articles against England or Hollywood propaganda were found on page two, but photographs of victorious soldiers disappeared and messages encouraging Germans to behave a certain way, such as giving priority to soldiers priority during commutes, were relegated to the back of the magazine, the same place notes about Goebbels were found in 1933 (Figure 2.10).

In a last spasm, the February 3, 1943 issue was designed as a celebration of the ten-year anniversary of the seizure of power, with a full-page portrait of Hitler, and of the last ten years of National Socialist film politics. But in the context of the recent defeat in Stalingrad, the front page picture of a Hitler Youth young man carrying the flag entitled “*Führer*, command, we follow!” looks more like a eulogy (Figure 2.11). The rest of the magazine and the following two issues before the complete suspension were all “back to normal.”

Despite this long overview of the propagandistic elements of *Filmwelt*, the most striking aspect of the magazine is how little it changed during the Third Reich. It remained true to its mission of advertising not only Ufa but also all German film companies, and of providing an oasis of entertainment, pleasure and relaxation, that remained intact with the exception of these two pages of propaganda, as well as the exclusion of news about American film industry and, of course, all the German exiles. But the layout of these political digressions though was so at odds with the look of the rest of the magazine that it was a clear sign of the external provenance of the reports.



Figure 2.9: “First traveling, then winning. Think about it: Wheels must roll for the victory,” *Filmwelt*, no. 35/36 (September 1942). (Left)
 Figure 2.10: The only outright propaganda on the front-page of *Filmwelt*, no. 5/6 (February 1943). (Right)

If outright propaganda was clearly recognizable, the regime used less direct, and not as easily recognizable, forms of control. If we think back to the directives from the *Zeitschriften Dienst* and its ban on talk about certain movies, we find in December of 1939 a full page ad in *Film-Kurier* for *Hurra ich bin Papa* with enthusiastic “comments” from various newspapers.²³⁶ The new Zarah Leander film, *Das Lied der Wüste*, was highly anticipated and had been covered in *Film-Kurier* and *Filmwelt*, before ZD advised against talking about it because of its low artistic quality.²³⁷ Following the ZD notice in November 1939, *Filmwelt* refrained from mentioning the film at all, not even in its short column *Films We Saw*.²³⁸ *Film-Kurier* on the other hand could not refuse a full-page ad of the film on December 12, 1939, as well as several front page advertisements.²³⁹ The only mention in the text of the film shows up in the column *Success of German Film Abroad*.²⁴⁰ The absence of coverage is especially obvious in *Filmwelt*, which had, in the past extensively reported about Zarah Leander’s films, which were produced by Ufa,

²³⁶ Back cover of *Film-Kurier*, December 6, 1939. ZD, Directive 1218, November 24, 1939.

²³⁷ For *Film-Kurier* see “Filme im Werden. Ein Lied spielt Schicksal,” June 15, 1939; “Gustav Knuth, der Partner von Zarah Leander in dem neuen Ufa Film das Lied der Wüste,” June 23, 1939, and “Zarah Leander “Kluge Frauen sagen nur vielleicht” in ihrem neuen Ufa Film “Das Lied der Wüste,” June 29, 1939. For *Filmwelt* “Das Lied der Wüste,” Erste Bider aus dem neuen Film mit Zarah Leander,” *Filmwelt* no. 25 (June 1939): 4-5; “Lied des Schicksals. Zu dem Film ‘Das Lied der Wüste,’” *Filmwelt* no. 28 (July 1939): 8-9; “Märchenwelt Film. Kleine Betrachtung zu ‘Das Lied der Wüste,’” *Filmwelt* no. 36 (September 1939): 13. The film was also advertised on the back cover of the magazine twice, issue no. 46 and 47 (November 1939). ZD, Directive 1218, November 24, 1939.

²³⁸ Another example was the film *Maria Ilona* (Géza von Bolváry, 1939) with Paula Wessely, who was very popular. Because members of the Habsburg house were painted in a friendly light, ZD asked that the film should not be underscored in the film press, and not mentioned in any other press. ZD, Directive 1495, December 22, 1939.

²³⁹ See the advertisements in *Film-Kurier* on November 28, 1939: “Das Lied der Wüste. Erste 10 Tage im Ufa Palast am Zoo Berlin. 38713 zahlender Besucher. Ein Spitzenergebnis;” on December 8, 1939: “Der neueste Zarah Leander Film Das Lied der Wüste. 4. Woche Ufa Palast am Zoo Berlin;” and on March 23, 1940, “Das Lied der Wüste, Bestes Wochenergebnis seit Bestehen des Theaters. Grafschafter Lichtspiel Moers.”

²⁴⁰ *Film-Kurier*, “Das Lied der Wüste in Zürich. Das Theater was zweimal ausverkauft. [...] Starke Anziehungskraft [...], January 06, 1940, and “Das Lied der Wüste in Finnland. [...] Bisher unerreichte Rekordbesuche eines ausländischen Films,” October 3, 1940.

which in turn owned *Filmwelt*. The magazine seems to have found a way around the ban by advertising instead Leander's film, *Das Herz der Königin*.

What do we learn from these examples? An effective system of “influencing the press” (*Pressebeeinflussung*) was obviously in place; but its effectiveness was challenged by the very system itself, with its multilayered levels of control, and the position of the press at the nexus of politics and business. Dependent on advertising for revenues, the film press often reported about and advertised for films based on their potential success and the economic profits they would bring rather than for their propagandistic potential. A total control of the content and especially how and what people read was impossible. Despite the ban on the film critique in the fall of 1939, the “films comments” remained a place where writers, especially Herman Wanderscheck in *Film-Kurier* and Hans-Erasmus Fischer in *Filmwelt*, could point to the weaknesses of films produced. The very format of the medium, where people can browse through and skip pages, and the fact that *Film-Kurier* and *Filmwelt* had a longstanding relationship with their audience which might reject any drastic changes, made the utilization of the existing film press for propagandistic purposes difficult. This might explain why, in 1936, Goebbels launched a new film magazine entitled *Der deutsche Film, Zeitschrift für Filmkunst und Filmtwirtschaft. In Verbindung mit der Reichsfilmkammer (DdF)* (The German Film, Magazine for Film Art and Film Business, in Collaboration with the Reich Film Chamber).

Der deutsche Film

Der deutsche Film is an intriguing publication, with its mix of artistic, self-reflective approach to film, its treatment of film as art, and its political bias. The subtitle

points to one of the main tensions in Goebbels' approach to film, that between art and business. While publically presenting himself as rescuing the German film industry from the Jewish, capitalist, money making system of the Weimar area and restoring film to its deserved status as a form of art, equal for example to theater, in reality, economic imperatives guided many of Goebbels' decisions during the Third Reich.

A hybrid between trade and entertainment press, the magazine was launched in July 1936 – tellingly a few months before film critique was abolished. The ambitious first publication of 20,000 issues was followed by a more modest 11,500; the last numbers provided are 9,000 in March 1938. With a A4 format, or 210x297cm, the monthly magazine was a little smaller than *Filmwelt* and used full page glossy photographs, many previously unpublished as the magazine boasted.

Dr. Leohnard Fürst was editor-in-chief. He had written several film reviews and film related articles in the late 1920s early 1930s.²⁴¹ A friend of the experimental filmmaker Oskar Fischinger,²⁴² he was especially interested in the use of sound and music in film. He spoke about this and other topics at the III and IV Congress about Color-Sound-Studies, respectively in Florence (1931) and Hamburg (1936), to Tobis filmmakers (1934), in the *Lessing Hochschule* (1935 and 1937), and at the Kroll-Oper,

²⁴¹ Fürst wrote for example for *Nürnberg-Fürther-Morgenpresse* (1929), *Echo der Jungen Demokratie*, *Nürnger* (1930), *Melos*, *Deutsche Filmzeitung München* (1932). From 1932, he wrote regularly for *UFA-Feuilleton*. Powlouschek, Personal Collection, Hamburg.

²⁴² "Oskar Fischinger. An Interview with Elfriede Fischinger", n.d., Fischinger Archive, <http://www.oskarfischinger.org/EFZoetrope.htm>. According to Fischinger's widow other people in this circle of friends included "Paul Hindemith, Prof. Trautwein, Karl Mengelberg jr., or journalists and writers like Dr. Bernhard Diebold, Dr. Fritz Boehme, Hans Schuhmacher, from the Film Tradepaper "Filmkurier" and also at times Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Joris Ivens, Robert Wiene (Caligary f.) and Guide Seeber (Ki-Pho Film." See also William Moritz, "Resistance and Subversion in Animated Films of the Nazi Era: The Case of Hans Fischerkoesen," *Animation Journal* 1, no. 1 (1992): 4–33.

Berlin (1937).²⁴³ He also directed short documentaries such as, *Arbeiter*, (Workers, 1935), a film about the *Kraft durch Freude* travel of three thousand German workers to Lisbon and Madeira,²⁴⁴ and *Klar Schiff zum Gefecht. Ein Film von der deutschen Flotte*, (Clear for Action! A Film about the German Navy, 1936) and wrote the script for the 1936 propaganda film *Verräter* (The Traitor, Karl Ritter), works that must have given him enough political credentials for the job.

While *Der deutsche Film* was made in collaboration with the Reich Film Chamber, and thus clearly helped publicize official policies, it also pursued broader goals. President of the RFC, Oswald Lehnich, introduced the publication as “a magazine, which combines everything needed to bring a national socialist *Weltanschauung*, world view, to the film industry.”²⁴⁵ But he also emphasized right away how German film was “in the middle of the fight about its form, its artistic and dramaturgic laws” and presented the new publication as

a much needed platform for debate and intellectual clarification, which would point to paths of new artistic and economic insights, would promote the continued education of *Nachwuchs*, and activate and decisively influence all creative forces [...] [*Der deutsche Film*] wants to stimulate filmmakers and film economists; it wants to collaborate on the great artistic, cultural, economic, and political questions of the film.²⁴⁶

Vice President Hans Weidemann specified the need for and the role of the magazine: “Because the specialized film press must focus all too much on the current daily film questions and film news, a monthly magazine, to which the best and the brightest of

²⁴³ Fürst also spoke at the Kurbel, Berlin (1939) about “Film as the art of the twentieth century,” at the Haus der Press, Berlin (1940), about “General Questions about Film Dramaturgy,” and at the professional workshop for film reporters (1942), about “Dramaturgic Thinking.”

²⁴⁴ See the script in Powlouschek Personal Collection, Hamburg.

²⁴⁵ Oswald Lehnich, "Dem deutschen Film" *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (June 1936): 1.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

German film art and film business could contribute, is absolutely essential.”²⁴⁷Appealing to professional filmmakers and film commentators alike, Weidemann too set broad goals for the magazine

It is our duty, through constant study and through the practical application in the realm of film of the insights we gained, to make improvement possible and to gather the few people who are willing and capable to collaborate on the completion of film art form. We reach a higher goal not by fighting the poor quality but by promoting talent.²⁴⁸

Like Lehnich, who wanted the magazine to “be so true-to-life that it reaches outside the professional circle and wins the broad audience as its friend and fellow combatant,”²⁴⁹ Weidemann pointed to the importance of the audience and how the magazine must, “in easily understandable and inspiring ways, convey the right attitude towards film art,” and not attract film viewers to the theaters with “sensations and stars’ inanities.”²⁵⁰

Laying out the main goals and targeted readership of the magazine, these two contributions in the first issue of *Der deutsche Film* also point to the magazine’s position as a champion of good (better) German film. This translated into a lot of positive propaganda, especially in the column *Most Important Film of the Month*, which featured a broad range of films and not just state sponsored propaganda films. *Der deutsche Film* also praised the craftsmanship of film professionals, including Weimar’s avant-gardists like Walter Ruttmann or Weimar’s icon F.W. Murnau and informed the readers about the different film professions, from gaffer (September 1936) to cameraman (October

²⁴⁷ Hans Weidemann, "Kleine Lection," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (June 1936): 2-3.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Ostwald Lehnich, "Dem deutschen Film" *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (June 1936): 1.

²⁵⁰ Hans Weidemann, "Kleine Lection," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (June 1936): 2-3.

1942).²⁵¹ The magazine presented not only the professions but also the professionals themselves and ran series of portraits of about composers (see chapter 5), cameramen, directors, and even producers.²⁵² It followed closely new developments such as the advent of television, 3-D film (June 1937), safety film (December 1938), and color film, and celebrated the creation of new film studios such as the Carl Froelich Studio (November 1936). In addition to a special issue devoted to this topic in January 1939, the magazine focused regularly on German film exports, not only the success of films such as Leni Reifenstahl's *Olympia*, but also German film technologies with products from AG, Agfa, IG Farbe, Askania-Werke AG, and Zeiß (July 1941 and February 1943).

Der deutsche Film definitely held true to its goals of bringing members of the film community together to discuss film related issues. Due to the format of the monthly publication and the fact that they had more space than in *Film-Kurier*, the authors, many of them film professionals, had more time to reflect and articles often took the form of opinion pieces.²⁵³ Topics were for the most part similar to the ones found in *Film-Kurier*:

²⁵¹ See Frank Avril, "Avantgardisten des deutschen Films. I. Walter Ruttmann," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1936): 135-136, and "Avantgardisten des deutschen Films. II. Wilfried Basse," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 8 (February 1937): 233-234; as well as Wendelin, "Die Glosse. Theorie und Praxis des Avantgardismus," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 8 (February 1938): 230 and Victor Schamoni, "Die Anfänge des absoluten Films in Deutschlands," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 9 (March 1938): 242-246. Frank Maraun, "'Unverführt vom Geld' Zum 50. Geburtstag F.W. Murnau," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1939): 191-195.

²⁵² See the series about German Film Directors: "I. Herbert Maisch," (January 1937); "II. Werner Hochbaum," (April 1937); "III. Karl Hatrl," (July 1937); "IV. Hans Steinhoff," (October 1937); "V. Karl Ritter," (March 1938); "VI. Carl Froelich," (June 1938), Erich Engel (April 1939); Hemult Käutner (February 1943). The following cameramen were portrayed: Carl Hoffmann (June 1937); Franz Wehmayr (April 1938), Edward Daub (September 1938), Robert Baberske (September 1938), Alexander v. Lagorio (April 1939), Günther Anders (June 1939), Seep Allgeier (March 1940), Georg Krause (October 1932). For producers see Hans Schweikart, Bavaria (November 1940), Ewald von Demandowsky, Tobis (January 1941).

²⁵³ *Der deutsche Film* was characterized by the fact that a great majority of the articles were written by invited contributors, from regime officials, film directors, composers, cameraman, actors, and actresses. In house regular writers included, in addition to Leonhard Fürst and his deputy editor-in-chief Ilse Wehner, Dr. Hermann Gressieker, Frank Maraun, Robert Volz, and Dr. Hans Spielhofer. In June 1937, Leonhard Fürst left his position to "devote himself to practical duties in film productions," Ilse Wehner replaced him.

the relationship between film and theater, between film and literature, questions of audience, its expectations and sense of taste (or lack of), technical questions, and the understanding of film as an art (*Kunst*). Prominent among the issues discussed were topics related to filmmaking as a profession, with numerous articles dealing with the training of and presenting new *Nachwuchs*. As shown in chapter 7, editor-in-chief Leonhard Fürst laid out an extremely detailed plan for a film school in November 1937 that could not but have influenced the plans of the German Film Academy.

Der deutsche Film was eager to educate its audience about film questions such as editing and the function of light (January 1937), the use of trailers (March and June 1937), the technique of the dissolve (September 1937), or the skills of costume (December 1938 and March 1939) and film set construction (February 1939). Hans Spielhofer for example guided its reader through the working steps of filmmaking from script material to advertisement (February and April 1938). The articles were detailed enough for professionals (“Image and Sound in Film Theater” March 1939) but written in an accessible tone with numerous illustrations to inform and educate broader audiences as in the case of the extensive interview with film set designer Walter Haag (February 1941).

But the magazine also tackled big questions in its special issues devoted to one specific topics such as film advertisement (March 1939) or the tension between dream and illusion and reality in film (May 1939). While it certainly praised many film productions as well as the work done by the film theaters in promoting good films, *Der deutsche Film* was at the same time the most vocal publication about the weaknesses of

See *Der deutsche Film*, no. 12 (July 1938). He worked with the German Film Academy in the late 1930s and published again in November and December 1942.

the German film industry. It was more outright in debating the “Problematic of Filmmaking” (November 1937), gave advice about film posters (July 1938), and argued the pros and cons of literary adaptations. It asked question such as “Is Filmmaking Team Work?” (December 1939) and “What is the Filmic Film” (March 1940). The state sponsored magazine even ventured in October 1940 a series entitled “Typical mistakes in Films,” using popular and successful German films to illustrate mistakes such as logical holes in the scripts or unmotivated singing, while taking German films such as *Urlaub auf Ehrenwort* (Furlough on Word of Honor, Karl Ritter 1937) and American films such as *San Francisco* (Woody Van Dyke, 1936) as positive examples.²⁵⁴

While its stated goal was to improve German film, *Der deutsche Film* did not hesitate to compliment and take foreign productions as examples. Once again, French productions received much attention,²⁵⁵ but the magazine also talked about Eisenstein’s *Potemkin*.²⁵⁶ Similar to reports about Italy, which featured more prominently after 1938, short articles about Japanese, Indian, Hungarian, Spanish, and Croatian film industries must be seen as a reaction to changing geopolitical situation.²⁵⁷ Unlike *Film-Kurier* which focused on

²⁵⁴ Frank Maraun, “Die Typischen Fehler im Film: V. Am Überfluß erstickt!,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (February 1941): 149-150.

²⁵⁵ See for example the extensive five-page articles from Frank Maraun, “Menschlichkeit und Natürlichkeit. Schauspielkunst im französischen Film,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 6 (December 1937): 155-159. See also Walter Möhl, “Der Weh der französischen Filmwirtschaft,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 3 (September 1937): 84-85, Leonard Fürst, “Das ‘wohltempierte Klavier’ des Films ‘Sous les Toits de Paris’,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 8 (February 1938): 224 ff; Hermann Gressieker, “Große Gefahren eines großen Erfolges. Der Fall Sascha Guitry,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 11 (May 1938): 296-303; “Was geht im Ausland vor? Der französische Film im Jahr 1938,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April 1939): 298.

²⁵⁶ See Carl Junghans, “Sowjetrussische Suite. I. Potemkin, 86-89,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 3 (September 1936): 86-87, and “Sowjetrussische Suite, II. Die Russen und die Montage,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 4 (October 1939): 116.

²⁵⁷ Karl Srinivasan, “Von der indischen Filmproduktion,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1938): 206; Walter Blachetta, “Japan und Deutschland. Ihre kulturelle Annäherung durch den Film,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 6 (December 1937): 171-172, Sven Schacht, “Ungarn als Filmiland,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 11 (May 1938): 309-310, Walter Möhl, “Spaniens Film vor großen Aufgaben,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 4 (October 1940): 71-74, Frank Maraun, “Japanische Filmkunst von heute,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1941), Walter Möhl, “Das Filmiland Kroatien,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1941): 21-22.

specific numbers of film theaters and export possibilities, *Der deutsche Film* attempted to give a broader picture of the countries cinematic history and main themes, introducing its readers to the film industries of the Nordic (March 1938) and South American countries (June 1939), while of course keeping the economic issues in mind as illustrated in a September 1938 article about the Polish film industry and its exchanges with German. In July 1939 Ilse Wehner penned an article about decentralized German film work that was taking place in Prague, Vienna, Munich, and Rome.

While it printed lavish ads for forthcoming American films until January 1939, the magazine was more reluctant to cover US films than *Filmwelt*. Unlike the popular magazine, it never featured photographs of US stars; only the French received attention. The relationship with US cinema was fraught with tensions. In January 1938 *Der deutsche Film* featured a two parts article about U.S. “Principles of Efficiency.” Using a scene from the film *The Thin Man* (W.S. Van Dyke, 1934) with stills and excerpts from the script, the article praised the “dramaturgical precise work” and pointed to the precision of the dialog, but warned that it was “a model but not an idol.” After complimenting the new films of the season in September 1938, the monthly magazine reported about U.S. film stars working for the communists.

Unlike *Film-Kurier* and *Filmwelt*, *Der deutsche Film* was created during the Third Reich by the regime, so that we cannot talk of a *process* of politicization, as the magazine was political per se. That it ceased any mention of U.S. production after the fall of 1939, together with the *Schadenfreude* about “the retraction of British film industry” (July 1938) and the financial difficulties of French film industry in February 1939, is a marker

of the magazine's political views. Interestingly enough though the monthly publication comes across as less political and propagandistic than both *Film-Kurier* and *Filmwelt*.

Out of seventy-seven issues, *Der deutsche Film* had only a handful of political covers: a swastika flag in October 1936 to celebrate the Party Convention in Nürnberg, Hitler Youth in April 1940, and a cameraman in a bomber over London in November 1940. The magazine of course covered important events of German cultural and specifically film life such as the first annual convention of the convention Reich Film Chamber (April 1937), the creation of the artistic committees (June 1937), and the creation of the German Film Academy to which it devoted a special issue in November 1938 (see chapter 8). It also featured numerous articles praising the work of the regime such as the Winter Relief, the film work of the German Labor Front (November 1936), and the Youth Film Programs (April 1937).

Unlike its two counterparts though, *Der deutsche Film* did not engage much in current events. Noticeable is the celebration of the *Anschluß* of Austria. In April 1938 the magazine featured a very short paragraph about “this world event” and how it was presented in the newsreels with eight pictures as illustrations. An impressive photomontage of the five years of reconstruction led by the *Führer* who engineered improvement in all areas of society (most importantly the reduction of unemployment from seven million in 1932, to none in 1937) can also be found a few pages later in the same issue. By association, the *Anschluß* is thus presented as yet another achievement of the *Führer* for the benefit of the German *Volk*.

Tensions with Czechoslovakia on the other hand were not mentioned at all. We find only an article about the situation of the film industry in Sudetenland (and not in

Czechoslovakia), and, in April 1939 after German troops invaded the rest of the rest of the country, an article about film industry in “the former Czechoslovakia.”

Der deutsche Film's relative lack of reaction to the outbreak of World War II is quite interesting. The September 1939 issue featured a young loving couple from the film *Anton der Letzte* (Anthony the Last, E.W. Emo) on the cover and the editorial reads “The Rallying Cry of the German Film.”²⁵⁸ Against the background of the British declaration of war, the article explained how work continued in the studios and laid out the mobilization of German film. In a much more realistic manner than the other two publications, the article is illustrated with numerous pictures of military fights taken from the Ufa newsreels. The author, Hermann Gressieker, head of the dramaturgy department at the German Film Academy, explained how Germany and the German film were prepared. He added that the Film Academy was taking care of the *Nachwuchs* and made sure that the film industry was not running short of human material. We find in the same issue of *Der deutsche Film* a presentation of the *Nachwuchs* from the last production with ten photographs and the title “Weighted But Not Found Wanting,” a play on the biblical expression “weighted and found wanting.” Here again, as the war started, the magazine decided to juxtapose to images of destruction and death young and pretty *Nachwuchs*, the very term that points to future and growth.

The next month featured an article about the documentary *Westwall*, described as “propaganda of truth and objectivity,” next to an article about how film has historically been used by Britain as a tool of hate propaganda (October 1939). The war is then talked about indirectly through its representation in films such as *Feldzug in Polen* (Campaign

²⁵⁸ Hermann Gressieker, "Die Parole des deutschen Films," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 3 (September 1939): 63-67.

in Poland, Fritz Hippler) and of course the newsreels (January and March 1940). Unlike *Film-Kurier* and *Filmwelt*, the magazine remained silent as German troops invaded Western Europe, featuring instead articles on the cinematic representation of German socialism and the German army (May and June 1940).

An entire year passed without any outright political article before *Der deutsche Film* turned into a full propaganda instrument with its issue entitled “Film as the Spiritual Weapon in War” in May/June 1941, the same month Germany invaded Russia, with a photograph of a soldier operating a canon on the cover. The entire issue was devoted to the use, the effect, and the importance of art, and more specifically film, in war, and the impact of war on film. It also dealt with the representation of German soldiers in films, how educational film had been used by the army, and how cultural films about the army can connect army and Volk. The next two issues focused solely on film, with a “photograph of a laughing Anneliese von Eschtruth,” a *Nachwuchs* actress, on the cover of the July 1941 issue, and the August/September 1941 featured a photograph of actress Hilde Krahl in a swimsuit. Here again we see a juxtaposition of military propagandistic discourse with images of *Nachwuchs*, especially young women. With the exception of the December/January 1942 special issue about the German Air Force in Film, published on behalf of the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* (Supreme Command of the Armed Forces), it was, once again, back to business.

These examples illustrate how the regime could and did use the magazine in much more directly than *Film-Kurier* and *Filmwelt*. But the great majority of the articles steered away from political topics and dealt with film specific issues, often in ways that were not found in other film publications; something quite unexpected for a regime

sponsored magazine. The very existence and the format of *Der deutsche Film* are a bit puzzling. In obvious efforts to inform, inspire, and educate film professionals and film audiences alike, the magazine boasted a wide range of topics and styles of presentation, making the publication feel a bit scattered at times. While the glossy pictures of stars on the covers seem designed to attract moviegoers, the technical and essayist quality of the articles, as well as the fact that the majority of the ads, unlike *Filmwelt*, were for filmmaking products point to film professionals as the targeted audience. Was the monthly magazine a conscious effort on Goebbels' part to create a magazine "somewhat free," as he had in 1940 with *Das Reich*, a publication which, with the exception of Goebbels' editorial, did not share the usual tone of other Nazi publications?²⁵⁹ By allowing non-political, and at times critical, voices the regime could sustain the image of a country that guaranteed freedom of expression.²⁶⁰ Goebbels could also use *Der deutsche Film* to win over film professionals, whom he considered to be for the most part apolitical, and make them more active participants in the National Socialist project. Another explanation could be that the propaganda minister had expressed numerous times his dissatisfaction with the cultural press. The ban on film and theater reviews in November 1936 made the German press uniform and dull. In his efforts to elevate the quality of German film, Goebbels might have granted a little more leeway to the film press.

²⁵⁹ Martens, *Zum Beispiel Das Reich*.

²⁶⁰ This could have led to strange effects--for example when the authors called for "more courage" reflected the almost schizophrenic frustration, shared by Goebbels, towards low quality German films, films which are in fact products of the system created by the regime itself. See Hans Rein, "Mehr Mut zum Experiment," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1939): 4-6, "Mut zum Einsatz" no. 11 (May 1940) and "Mehr Mut zum Verantwortung," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 3 (September 1940).

While we cannot ascertain the exact motivations behind the creation of *Der deutsche Film*, the sustained interest of the regime in the film press, as seen in the different ways it politicized *Film-Kurier* and *Filmwelt*, point to the important role these publications were playing. In the spring of 1943, in the wake of the total war, the great majority of newspapers and magazine were discontinued.²⁶¹ Max Winkler, the Reich Trustee and Reich Commissioner for German Cinema, wrote to Goebbels to argue about the need for paper and specifically for the film press in order to promote the films.²⁶² He emphasized that films could not be distributed without any form of advertisement and laid out a specific plan that would allow the production of small postcards (7,000), film posters (7,000, including 250 for Berlin and 1,500 in foreign countries), and seasonal advertisements (3,580) as well as personal invitations.²⁶³ Perhaps more than a political impact, the film press played an important economic role that the regime and the film companies were well aware of.²⁶⁴ Blaming the decision on the fact that the Fines were not delivering any more paper, Goebbels ordered in August 1944 that up to ninety percent of the newspapers and magazine be shut down.²⁶⁵

While the film press played an undeniable political and economic role, its functions as a public forum where film related questions could be debated remain unexplored. It is

²⁶¹ BA R109 I/ 1737, April 10, 1943. Like *Filmwelt*, *Der deutsche Film* announced the end of publication in its March 1943 issue, ironically the same issue that celebrated the twenty-five year anniversary of Ufa, the German company that had helped define cinematic art.

²⁶² BA R 109 I/1737, Winkler to Goebbels, November 9, 1943.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Film companies and filmmakers were well aware of the advertisement work done by press and did not hesitate to go directly to the regime when they were unhappy with a film comments. Head of production of Bavaria Film, Hans Schweikart, for example, complained directly to Hippler about a critique of the Bavaria film *Carl Paters* from Herbert Seplin with Hans Albers. See BA R 109 I/ 2139 a, Schweikart to Hippler, December 20, 1940 and February 8, 1941.

²⁶⁵ Goebbels' diaries, August 24 and 26, 1944. Hitler was much chagrined about the decision and especially bemoaned the disappearance of *Kunst im Volke*, Art in the Volk, and *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich*, The Art in the Third Reich.

this very role that the next chapters analyze, focusing on three of the most debated issues: the relationship between film and theater and film and music, and the issue of *Nachwuchs* training.

PART II: FILM AND THEATER

Introduction

“The primacy of the stage must be broken. [...] Only when film has freed itself from theater can it continue its development towards artistic perfection.”²⁶⁶

Joseph Goebbels, July 1935

“The elasticity of his play, the panache of his movement, the artistry of his parry with words, which are part of Gründgens’ charisma on stage, are now seen in film.”²⁶⁷

Review of *Tanz auf dem Vulkan*,
Film-Kurier, December 17, 1938

“Film and Theater are two different things”
Headlines of *Film-Kurier*, September 8, 1942

Often couched in terms of sibling rivalry, the relationship between film and theater remained one of the most debated issues in the film press. While film’s position as the most important medium of the new century—a symbol of mass culture and modernity—was being consolidated by the end of the Weimar Republic, its relationship to the other arts, especially theater, was still being negotiated, and the film press played an important role in the debates.²⁶⁸ Film had indeed numerous and complicated ties to theater. As Charles Musser points out, “the relationship between stage and screen encompasses many levels: that of personnel, subject matter and treatment, production

²⁶⁶ “Grundsätzlichkeiten des Films,” *Film-Kurier*, July 22, 1935. Goebbels had expressed similar ideas in his speech at the closing of the International Film Congress in Berlin. Reprinted in *Filmwelt*, no. 19 (May 1935). In 1937, Goebbels used the same analogy in his closing speech at the Annual Meeting of the Reich Film Chamber. See *Filmwelt*, no. 11 (March 1937).

²⁶⁷ Günther Schwark, “Tanz auf dem Vulkan,” *Film-Kurier*, December 17, 1938.

²⁶⁸ On the impact of mass culture see Corey Ross, “Mass Culture and Divided Audiences: Cinema and Social Change in Inter-War Germany,” *Past and Present*, no. 193 (2006): 157–195.

methods, distribution of productions, advertising and promotion, as well as spectatorship.”²⁶⁹ It comes as no surprise then, that the theater remained the major point of reference when attempting to establish film as a form of art.²⁷⁰ But the negotiations regarding film’s emerging status was everything but simple, illustrating an elitism that, despite the regime’s effort to promote the cultural integration of the “national community,” was very much alive.²⁷¹ Called the “theater of the little people,”²⁷² film was looked down upon by many, who saw it as a threat to the purity and the authority of the theater, but it was also hailed by its admirers as the seventh art, the one having the potential to become the ultimate work of art, the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Opinions varied from the proponents of a “separate but equal” compromise, to some who, like Georg Lukàcs, hoped that with the arrival of film, theater was now free from having to entertain the masses and could go back “to fulfill its true mission: to serve the great tragedy and the great comedy.”²⁷³

The arrival of sound in 1929 intensified the “stage-screen debates,” the hotly debated discussions about relationship between film and theater. The need to stay close to the microphones for better sound recording reduced the range of motion of actors and cameras, and many films now burdened themselves with heavy dialogue and lost sight of the pictorial aspect of filmmaking. In addition, the hard-fought emancipation of film from

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Gregory Waller traces similar, albeit specifically American debates in Gregory A. Waller, *The Stage/Screen Debate: A Study in Popular Aesthetics* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1983).

²⁷¹ Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 340.

²⁷² Alfred Döblin, “The Theater of the Little People,” in *German Essays on Film*, ed. Richard W. McCormick and Alison Guenther-Pal, trans. Lance W. Garner (New York: Continuum, 2004), 1–3.

²⁷³ Georg Lukàcs, “Thoughts on an Aesthetic for the Cinema,” *Framework*, no. 14 ([1913] 1981), 2–6. Quoted in Hake, *The Cinema’s Third Machine*.

theater seemed to experience a setback as operetta and vaudeville adaptations of plays and musicals flooded the German film market in the early 1930s.

Against this background, part 2 of my dissertation investigates how the “stage-screen debates,” far from being settled, evolved throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and the forms they took in the film press. In addition to institutional competitions between film and theater, the debates reveal a class divide in German society, and they also illustrate an important moment in German film history, with the latter struggling to emancipate itself from theatrical tradition.

From the early 1700s, individuals such as Caroline Neuber, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Goethe, and Friedrich Schiller worked toward the realization of a truly “national” German theater culture, championing the theater’s role as a beneficial force in German society.²⁷⁴ They helped establish permanent residencies for theater either at aristocratic courts or in major urban centers and secured financial backing from the middle class and aristocracy. While Goethe was a major force in German theater's rise to significance as it “joined the ranks of European cultural consciousness alongside and equal to the French and English,”²⁷⁵ Schiller, influenced by Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, believed that only theater could cultivate the inherent moral sense of humankind and guide men by giving them a sense of moral sensibility. For many Germans, going to the theater became a pleasurable civic duty and a source of national pride and the theater was increasingly used to foster national identity and promote politics ideas. Despite the drastic commercialization of theaters in the late nineteenth

²⁷⁴ For a concise history of German theater see the concise introduction in William Grange, *Historical Dictionary of German Theater* (Scarecrow Press, 2006).

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, xlvii.

century—when they were visited more for entertainment than for education, artistic, or political edification—the theater became the most consistently controversial branch of the arts in the Weimar Republic. Gerwin Strobl has shown how the radicalization of leftist, republican, and avant-garde theater, as seen in Loepold Jeßner’s production of *Wilhelm Tell* or *Hamlet*, antagonized many archetypical *Bildungsbürger* (members of the educated classes) who would later welcome National Socialist promises of restoring German culture.²⁷⁶ Aware of its role as a pillar of German national identity, the Nazis were quick to take control of the theater. They rescued it from the financial constraints of the Great Depression and spent an ostentatious amount of money on it; for the first time in its history, German theater became a completely subsidized organ of the state.²⁷⁷ The arbitrary nature of Nazi theater regulation and policies, with its combination of patronage and intimidation, was enhanced by competition at the highest levels between the Reich Theater Chamber (under Goebbels), the Rosenberg Office, Robert Ley’s Labor Front, and Hermann Göring who had control of the theaters in his own Prussian fiefdom, but also among regional mandarins and even local functionaries. At the end of what was supposed to be a thousand year Reich, very few theaters had escaped destruction in the big cities.

This short overview of the position of theater in German society and its utilization by the Nazi regime highlights at least three points that resonated with the "stage screen debates." First, the hostile reaction of the *Bildungsbürger* to Weimar theater shared many characteristics with their early attitude towards cinema. Cinema and Weimar theater

²⁷⁶ Strobl, *The Swastika and the Stage*.

²⁷⁷ On the control and support of theater during the Third Reich see Bogusław Drewniak, *Das Theater Im NS-Staat: Szenarium Deutscher Zeitgeschichte, 1933-1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1983); Alan E. Steinweis, "The Professional, Social, and Economic Dimensions of Nazi Cultural Policy: The Case of the Reich Theater Chamber," *German Studies Review* 13, no. 3 (1990): 441-459; Strobl, *The Swastika and the Stage*. Strobl shows how "the regime conjured an age of plenty [for the German theater]: the Hitler years were probably the most opulent period in the history of the German stage," 197.

challenged the authoritative position the educated middle-class had inhabited since the eighteenth century, as bearers and guarantors of German culture.²⁷⁸ In addition, the derogatory comments about film as a technology and not an art form mirrored a widespread uneasiness, if not anti-modernism, about the industrial modes of productions of cinema as contrasted with the traditional artisanal productions of the theater. The yearlong training of theater professionals, for example, those who starred in small parts in the province stages to gain experience before moving to bigger roles and bigger cities, echoed the long tradition of the German craftsman and its apprenticeship. The idea of the artist as a craftsman clashed with film and its collective modes of productions leading to a mechanized, mercantile product without soul. As will be shown later, many discussions revolved around the position and the function of the director, which for some was the actual creator of the film, while others, following the tradition of the theater, argued for a reevaluation of the author, be it of the script, the play, or the novel the film was based on, calling him a *Filmdichter*, a film poet. Finally, whereas theater enjoyed a long history of financial support from individual courts or cities, film was a commercial enterprise from the beginning. This commercial aspect of film was seen as compromising the artistic value of film. As a result of these three factors, theater was, and still is to this day, considered high culture, while film is still fighting for its place as the seventh form of art.

While the Nazi regime extended its lavish support of German theater, presenting itself as the patron of German culture, it was also invested in the success and the re-evaluation of cinema, which it recognized as the most powerful medium of the twentieth century. The film press was often the only place where film and opinion-makers, as well as the regime and the audience, engaged with the new artistic, technological, and

²⁷⁸ Hake, *The Cinema's Third Machine*.

ideological possibilities of film. From Goebbels' call for a new *Laocoon* for the cinema in 1936²⁷⁹ to filmmaker Helmut Käutner's "Gratitude Towards the Theater" in 1945, film's relation to the theater continued to play a prominent part in conceptualizing, experimenting with, and evaluating new cinematic trends.²⁸⁰

Chapter 3 explores how the discursive practices surrounding the "stage-screen debate" played out on the pages of the film press. The latter provided a space where film proponents could celebrate achievements and respond to disparaging comments from the theatrical camp. They often discussed ways to improve the quality of German cinema. While emancipating filmmaking from its theatrical connections was seen as the surest way to finally establish it as a recognized form of art, these efforts were impeded by structural constraints such as the lack of film specific writers, or film poets. As developed in part 4, the opening of the German Film Academy was in part designed to provide future film professionals, the *Nachwuchs*, a film specific training, a departure from the traditional theatrical training. While the debates touched on a broad range of topics, from practical to purely aesthetic and sometimes even esoteric, they also mirrored tensions within German society, pointing out, for example, the still existing divides along high and low culture and class lines despite the promise of a united *Volk*.

²⁷⁹ "I am firmly convinced that, somewhere, sometime in Germany, the man will rise up, who will give film its firm and unalterable principles [in the way Lessing did it for the theater], and that these principles will set forth a century long trend in the whole world," in "Dr. Goebbels fordert das Primat der Kunst: Schaffengrundsätze für das kommende Jahr," *Film-Kurier*, March 6, 1936. Gotthold Lessing's essay on literature and aesthetics, *Laokoon oder Über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie* (1766), translated in 1836 as *Laocoon: or, The Limits of Poetry and Painting*, was one of the early texts of art criticism. Together with the *Hamburg Dramaturgy* (*Hamburgische Dramaturgie*), they set the standards for the discussion of aesthetic and literary theoretical principles. Both were often taken as an example during the Third Reich to achieve not a "poetics of the drama," but one of the film. See Hans-Jürgen Brandt, *NS-Filmtheorie Und Dokumentarische Praxis: Hippler, Noldan, Junghans* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1987). On the complicated relationship between national socialists and Lessing see Ann Schmiesing, "Lessing and the Third Reich," in *A Companion to the Works of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing* (Rochester: Camden House, 2005), 264–275.

²⁸⁰ Helmut Käutner, "Dank an das Theater," *Der deutsche Film 1945. Kleines Film-Handbuch Für Die Deutsche Presse*, (1945), 45. Also translated in English in Richard W. McCormick and Alison Guenther-Pal, eds., *German Essays on Film* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 167–168.

While chapter 3 focuses on discussions in the press and their repercussions, chapter 4 takes a biographical approach and examines the life and career of actor and director Gustaf Gründgens, one of the most prominent key players on the stage and in film during the Third Reich. The chapter explores, on one hand, how Gründgens himself negotiated the transition between film and theater, and, on the other hand, how the press responded to his efforts. Reactions to Gründgens' cinematic performances show that, far from contributing to the separation of film from theater that was aimed for, his film work and his success were rooted in, and indebted to, his theatrical experience. A study of his life and career also illustrates how cultural products and their producers were deeply intertwined and mirrored the society in which they belonged. Gründgens informs us about the place and roles of artists during the Third Reich, pointing to tensions in matters of sexuality, as well as competitions among National Socialist leaders, and shows the regime and artists' willingness to compromise.

Chapter 3

The Stage-Screen Debates and the Emancipation of Film

A continuation of Weimar's discussion, the stage-screen debate was cast, after 1933, as a "war between two worlds," in which one of the fundamental points was whether film was a legitimate form of art, especially in comparison to the theater.²⁸¹ Pointing to a century's rich tradition and an unparalleled status, supporters of theater had no doubts about the superiority of their art. In order to steal audiences away from film theaters, they advertised lower prices and promises of higher quality as enticement. Illustrating the common belief that theater was high culture while film low culture, one theater defender pronounced: "for [the] same price as in film theater you can enjoy an artistically valuable performance."²⁸² Film advocates, on the other hand, had many reasons to believe that "the fight against film [had to] fail," as film had clearly, for them, the upper hand.²⁸³ In addition to boasting a larger audience, film gave actors the possibility "to accomplish, in the very moment of the shooting, in the moment of highest tension, something exceptional and unique," while theatrical shows, lasting several weeks, inevitably led to weaker performances.²⁸⁴ Technical advantages of the film, such as the close-up, helped "unveil the true talents and exposed the bunglers," while the new medium was undeniably the best "educational tool for the youth."²⁸⁵ Optimism about the

²⁸¹ For a detailed analysis of the Weimar debates see Hake, *The Cinema's Third Machine*. H-h., "Ein Kampf zweier Welten: Film und Theater," *Film-Kurier*, May 18, 1933.

²⁸² "Bühne und Film im Ziele gleich," *Film-Kurier*, October 7, 1933, -g. "Nebeneinander von Kino und Theater. Konkurrenz, wie sie sein und wie sie nicht sein soll," *Film-Kurier*, September 22, 1934.

²⁸³ H-h., "Ein Kampf zweier Welten: Film und Theater," *Film-Kurier*, May 18, 1933.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ "Theater oder Film: Erziehungsmittel der Schuljugend?" *Film-Kurier*, March 23, 1934.

victory of film over theater was boosted by the creation of the Reich Film Chamber in July 1933, months before the other six Chambers, including the Reich Theater Chamber. It was seen as proof of “the high standard to which the government was holding film.”²⁸⁶

The self-titled “patron of German film,” Goebbels indeed valued the medium as a powerful cultural and propagandistic tool, domestically and internationally, and, from 1940 on, a substantial source of revenue. To sustain and increase film’s influence, the propaganda minister actively participated in the debate, eager to elevate film to higher standards, while at the same time continuing to heavily sponsor the theater.²⁸⁷ Goebbels, and many others with him, believed that cinema, in order to achieve these high standards, had to be emancipated from theater and create its own laws. In 1935, Goebbels proclaimed, as one of the first “fundamental principles” (*Grundsätzlichkeiten*) of film, that “the primacy of the stage must be broken.”²⁸⁸ The propaganda minister delineated a violent fight, where film struggled for its emancipation and attempted to shed the guardianship of the theater: “only when film has freed itself from theater can it continue its development towards artistic perfection.” Acknowledging the “undeniable fairly close kinship between film and theater,” Goebbels warned in 1937, in a speech given during the annual week of theater festivities, the Reich Theater Week, that a “too close fusion of theater with film did not only hamper theater in its development, but also frequently hindered the triumphal march of film.”²⁸⁹ Lacking the centuries long tradition of the

²⁸⁶ “Bühne und Film im Ziele gleich,” *Film-Kurier*, October 7, 1933.

²⁸⁷ His increasing control of the film industry was accompanied by genuine efforts to improve the quality of films. On the gradual control of the entire film industry see the introduction. The majority of film related entries in his diaries are disparaging comments about film. Films he deemed successful received the highest praise.

²⁸⁸ During the annual meeting of the Reich Film Chamber Goebbels has publicized his seven theses about film. See the reprint as “Grundsätzlichkeiten des Films,” *Film-Kurier*, July 22, 1935.

²⁸⁹ Goebbels’ speech during the *Reichstheaterwoche* in Düsseldorf. Reprinted in *Filmwelt*, no. 26 (June 1937).

theater, film must focus on its own laws, laws, which are not from, and not connected to the stage. As laid out in the film press, film suffered from its connection to theater in two major areas: acting techniques, including diction, and script materials, which were too often adaptations of plays and novels.²⁹⁰

Diction, Training, and Fundamental Differences

While a constant source of praise for Gründgens, the “theatrical diction” which characterized many film actors coming from the theater was seen as un-cinematic. In an angry article published in August 1935, Hans Nicklisch describes how “barely five years old, sound film starts to go with fine people, to deny its roots, to walk on stilts which are not made for it.”²⁹¹ The author thus proudly assumed the popular root of cinema, which he contrasted with the high culture, but un-natural, world of theater. He specifically scolded the language and the diction used in film, when the new medium was, above all, supposed to differentiate itself through its simple and natural way of speaking.²⁹²

Nicklisch blamed the training that the film *Nachwuchs* (the upcoming film professionals) received. Trained on the stage, the *Nachwuchs* learned a theatrical, not cinematic way of speaking, which sounded false once employed in the new medium. For Nicklisch, the only way to film for an aspiring actor was to stay away from the theater. Musician and conductor Jan Koetsier-Muller agreed that, “film and theater were still not separated enough.”²⁹³ While the very material condition of theatrical representations force the actors to “exaggerate” voice and acting, in order to fill the room, the technical aspects of

²⁹⁰ The dependency on theatrical material was bemoaned in Germany as well as in the United States. See “Hollywood sucht Stoffe: Man will von Theaterstoffen und Romanen wieder loskommen,” *Film-Kurier*, January 13, 1933.

²⁹¹ Hans Nicklisch, “Zur Debatte: Weg vom Theater – Der Weg zum Film,” *Film-Kurier*, August 20, 1935.

²⁹² Hans Albers’ success, for example, was rooted in his “natural way of speaking.” See chapter 5.

²⁹³ Carl Froelich, “In der Lessing-Hochschule. Sprache der Bühne – Sprache des Films,” *Film-Kurier*, February 20, 1936.

film rendered such methods obsolete. The author concluded that, unlike American actors, “the German actor is burdened by the theater.”²⁹⁴

Despite persistent efforts to institute “boundaries between film and theater,”²⁹⁵ things were not as clear-cut, as can be seen with Gründgens’ career. Commentators and aspiring film professionals were in a bit of a conundrum as to the benefits and/or pitfalls of theatrical training. For many, it was the lack of theatrical training of famous film director Carl Froelich which explained his success: “like all the film directors who are unburdened by the completely different school of theater, he understands the film as what it actually is, the art of images and movement.”²⁹⁶ The virtuosity of the dialog and the wonderful acting in the film *Versprich Mir Nichts* (Promise me Nothing), on the other hand, were credited to first time film director Wolfgang Liebeneiner’s theatrical background and his insistence on extensive rehearsals.²⁹⁷

A theatrical background, decried by many film advocates, was still considered a necessary training for acting professionals. Famous actors and actresses were always introduced in the film press as having honed their skills on the stage. Answering recurring questions about “How to get into film?” the popular *Filmwelt* incessantly reminded its readers that acting was like many other professions: one needed talent and training, and this training was done on the stage.²⁹⁸ In addition, every article about an actor or actress, established star or beginner, spent a fair amount of time detailing the difficult beginnings and the arduous theatrical work that led to film success.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ See, for example, the lecture given at the *Morgenveranstaltung der Hamburger Arbeitsgemeinschaft*, “Grenzen zwischen Theater und Film,” *Film-Kurier*, December 20, 1937.

²⁹⁶ “Zum zweiten Mal Filmpreisträger. Carl Froelich und sein Werk,” *Filmwelt*, no. 19 (May 1939): 6.

²⁹⁷ *Promise me Nothing* was Liebeneiner's first film as a director. See Georg Herzberg’s review in *Film-Kurier*, August 31, 1937.

²⁹⁸ Many articles were entitled X or Y: His/her path from theater to film.

Thus, when not polemical, the film press often emphasized commonalities and welcomed film newcomers from the theater, such as the Austrian theater actress Paula Wessely. She made her film debut in Willy Forst's *Maskerade* (1934) and would become one of Germany's biggest film stars. Ridiculing the warnings against the "border crossing" between film and theater, the article called Wessely the best example of an experienced actress, "not a film beauty," who had matured through her work on the stage and was "bring[ing] charm, complete commitment, and precious atmosphere to the film."²⁹⁹ Such comments were symptomatic of the relationship between film and theater, where the latter provided the necessary training and maturity, but lacked the technological experience and the film aura. In an interesting twist, the film press presented film work as something more challenging and needing more experience and training than theatrical work. Goebbels himself reminded acting professionals in 1937 that "it would be wrong to believe that every theater actor was also able to act in film. It would be much more appropriate, on the other hand, if every film actor/actress would play in the theater now and then."³⁰⁰

The biggest point of contention was thus the issue of training. Many, like the actor Gustaf Gründgens, agreed that, "as long as we do not have a film school, the only way to get *Nachwuchs* is from the theater."³⁰¹ The future right hand of Goebbels, Fritz Hippler wrote in December 1936, "film is not the foundation upon which one can build an acting career. If the skills are ample and the will is earnest, then one goes to the theater, the only

²⁹⁹ "Von der Bühne zum Film," *Film-Kurier*, August 4, 1934. See also Dr. Hermann Gressieker's article in *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1937): 204.

³⁰⁰ Goebbels' speech during the Reichstheaterwoche in Düsseldorf. Reprinted in *Filmwelt*, no. 26 (June 1937).

³⁰¹ See interview of Gründgens in *Filmwelt*, no. 23 (June 1937).

place/institution able to offer at least a modest security in the long term.”³⁰² But even after the opening of the German Film Academy in 1938, famous actor Emil Jannings explained in February 1939:

The Film Academy will bring organization to the educational training for the different film-specific jobs. Because film constantly needs Nachwuchs, it needs new input, new forces, news faces. Germany is exceptionally rich in actors; I think about the rich source of the city theaters, which have not been utilized for the film. I plan, during the next break from film, to quietly travel through Germany and to attend theater performances – I am convinced that I will be able to bring back with me a set of talented people.³⁰³

The two sides appeared irreconcilable. Hans Rein, for example, emphasized the fundamental difference between stage and film actors to explain why the former do not perform as well in films,³⁰⁴ and script-writer Ottoheinz Jahn adamantly rejected the use of theater actors and actresses for the film, arguing that, while they are “intense” and “interesting,” they learned to play, to “act and simulate,” and thus are lacking what is making a real film actor, the natural way of being.³⁰⁵ But the head of casting of the film company Terra, Dr. Max Krüger, explained on the other hand the vital role of theater as a source and training ground for acting talent.³⁰⁶ Whereas a young actor had seven- to eight thousand possibilities to act in a given year, the numbers were close to twenty- to twenty-five for films. More importantly, theater provided a long lasting community for acting

³⁰² Dr. Fritz Hippler, “Beruf oder Berufung: Angebot und Nachfrage im deutschen Filmschaffen,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 6 (December 1936): 165.

³⁰³ “Emil Jannings erzählt sein Leben,” *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (February 1939): 15. A theatrical background was deemed necessary not only for actor but also for director. Hans Rein in *Der deutsche Film* argued in July 1939 that “the ideal director should be the theater director who does not direct right away grandiloquently but who, in addition to his theatrical experience, gathers extensive technical and filmic foundation before he ventures to direct by himself,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1939): 6.

³⁰⁴ Hans Rein, “Natur und Kunst: Bühnenschauspieler auf der Leinwand,” *Der Deutsche Film*, no. 9 (March 1941): 170-172.

³⁰⁵ Ottoheinz Jahn, “Über den Schauspielernachwuchs,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1942): 4-5.

³⁰⁶ Max Krüger, “Ensemblebildung im Film: Eine Frage der künstlerischen Schulung des Nachwuchses und eine soziale Frage,” *Film-Kurier*, October 25, 1941.

professionals where they could grow and improve, whereas in the film industry such community existed only for the duration of the filmmaking. As will be shown in chapter 9, Frank Maraun, the head of the *Lehrstelle für Filmnachwuchs* (the Apprenticeship for Film *Nachwuchs*) had no other choice in 1944 than to go back to using the theater to find new talent.³⁰⁷ Thus, despite consistent efforts throughout the Third Reich, the stage predominantly remained the primary avenue for acting training, much to the chagrin of many film proponents.

The Plights of Adaptations

While the issue of crossover between stage and screen seemed to have been accepted de facto as a positive necessity, the second most contentious issue in the stage-screen debate, the use of plays for cinematic adaptation, was never solved. Experiments in France to film theatrical performances were met with skepticism and derision,³⁰⁸ and many agreed with Goebbels that such “photographed theater was the worst defamation” one could do to cinema.³⁰⁹ If “photographed theater” was universally frowned upon, the adaptation of plays, especially adaptations of German classics, triggered different reactions, especially when renowned directors attempted them. Gustaf Gründgens was offered to participate in the creation of a film company affiliated with the Staatstheater Berlin that specialized in cinematic adaptations of German classic such as *Minna von*

³⁰⁷ BA R109II / 16&17. Maraun, May 8, 1944.

³⁰⁸ “Verfilmte Klassiker. Ein Kulturfilm-Experiment – die ‘Comedie française.’ Nun wirklich “verfilmtes Theater,” *Film-Kurier*, September 18, 1934; “Fotographierte Bühne. Ein mißgelungener Versuch,” *Film-Kurier*, February 25, 1936. See also W. Hoepfner-Flatow, “Machen wir eigentlich Filme? Fotografiertes Theater und die Eigensetzlichkeit des Films,” *Film-Kurier*, April 2, 1937.

³⁰⁹ Goebbels, “Grundsätzlichkeiten des Films,” *Film-Kurier*, July 22, 1935. Gründgens would venture such a film in 1960, with his renowned *Faust*. Despite the excellent acting, it was indeed a failure as a film.

Barhelm, Das Konzert, Figaros Hochzeit, Meistersinger von Nürnberg.³¹⁰ In 1937, *Der deutsche Film* announced an upcoming adaptation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, but the film was never made.³¹¹ Froelich considered adaptation of plays such as Goethe's *Götz*, Kleist's *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg*, and Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe*.³¹² Despite both men's extensive experience and credentials, these plans prompted warnings in the press against the inherent dangers of such projects. Adaptations were faced with three major difficulties: the use of language, space, and time.

Unlike silent films, which had adapted numerous plays quite successfully, sound films were confronted with the challenge of language, considered to be the heart of every play. Bypassing the language through an emphasis on the visual, as had been done in *Wilhelm Tell* (Heinz Paul, 1934), strained the original, but adaptations into more modern language did not work either. Instead of an awe of the text, which inhibits creativity, filmmakers were urged to try not to reproduce the word exactly, but instead to render its spirit, or even better to create their own film material.³¹³

For many, fundamental differences between film and theater simply inhibited adaptations. Play- and scriptwriter Rolf Lauckner argued that film, by creating a concrete, real, historical space, lacks the symbolic space of the theater.³¹⁴ Due to its technological

³¹⁰ Letter from Christoph Müllenheisen to Gründgens on June 7, 1936. Printed in Dagmar Walach, *Aber Ich Habe Nicht Mein Gesicht: Gustaf Gründgens: Eine Deutsche Karriere* (Berlin: Henschel, 1999), 55. With the exception of his last film as a director, *Zwei Welten*, 1939, all his films were adaptation of novels or plays.

³¹¹ *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2 (August 1937): 48.

³¹² "Klassiker verfilmt," *Film-Kurier*, March 7, 1936.

³¹³ Arthur Kutscher, "Literatur und Film. Eine stilkundliche Untersuchung," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 8 (February 1937): 225-226.

³¹⁴ Dr. Rolf Lauckner, "Über die Grenzen zwischen Bühne und Film. Probleme von Bild und Raum und Ort und Zeit," *Film-Kurier*, March 4, 1938. Lauckner wrote, among others, the script for the Steinhoof's film *Der alte und der junge König*, 1934. For a psychoanalytical analysis of the film see Linda Schultze-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich: Illusions of Wholeness in Nazi Cinema* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 126-147.

possibilities, film can use the word more frugally. Film radiates reality while theater radiates poetry. For Lauckner the main difference between film and theater was that the film space, “caught in reality, imposes a limitation on the use of the word for composition of matters, which are discernable through the senses and enhance the experience. The concentrated theatrical space, on the other hand, allows the intellectual act of poetry.”³¹⁵

Answering to Lauckner, Dr. Max Krüger, head of the casting office at Terra, agreed that different spaces, a theatrical and a cinematic one, were at the root of differences and led to different acting styles.³¹⁶ While a transfer of theatrical style to film seldom worked because the space of the theater required more accent and affect, Krüger, unlike Lauckner, considered film style more natural. He also valued the theatrical style: “if a film director who comes from the theater is aware of both acting styles, then his experience with actors’ directions and treatment of the dialogue will be noticeable in his film.” Advocating for more collaboration, Krüger pleaded for less “prejudice and mistrust” between the two “sisterly arts.”³¹⁷

In addition to space and language, the third major difference between film and theater that complicated adaptations was the treatment of time. For Krüger, a shorter time in film leads to “pressured rhythms, simpler conflicts, easy plots rushing to climax, and the prohibition of any intellectual lingering.”³¹⁸ While Lauckner tried to remain neutral on

³¹⁵ Like many before him, Lauckner was against filmed theater, because such products were never films and remained plays, mechanical ones. Interestingly, he was however complimentary of the adaptation of *Pygmalion*, featuring the head of the Staatstheater and Göring’s protégé, Gustaf Gründgens, because the film was “anchored in reality.” On the other hand, Lauckner called Max Reinhardt’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* a failure. Such comments are partly rooted in the fact that Reinhardt was an exiled Jew, working successfully in the United States. The film, his only one, is considered one of the best adaptations of a theatrical play, especially of Shakespeare’s work.

³¹⁶ Max Krüger, “Theater und Film: Die Unterschiede und Ähnlichkeiten der beiden schwersterliche Künste,” *Film-Kurier*, May 17, 1939.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

the subject of which of the two forms of art is better, his preference for the theater became apparent through the essay. In the end, he argued that both mediums are so different that any adaptation encounters major difficulties, and only talented artists should venture in such projects.

Thus, for film advocates the issue was not use of theater material per se, as talented filmmakers could successfully adapt plays. They urged instead to write film-specific materials, which would fully utilize the possibilities of the new medium: “what film needs is less classic adaptation than its inherent creative film poetry (*Filmdichtung*).”³¹⁹ But producers, eager to attract a large audience, were more willing to invest in the adaptation of a well-known literary work. The numbers speak for themselves. From 1937 to 1938 more than half of the German films stemmed from literary works: twenty-five novels, twenty-four plays, one opera, six operettas and three novellas make a total of fifty-nine adaptations for 119 films.³²⁰ By August 1938, the numbers were forty-nine adaptations for 125 films, a total of forty percent, and in February it was fifty percent of adaptations for 125 films.³²¹ In May 1940, the popular *Filmwelt* asked why so many, between one third and one half of the previous years films, had their roots in literary materials.³²²

³¹⁹ The lamentation about the lack of film specific topics was a recurrent subject in the film press, symptomatic of a crisis of the film industry.

³²⁰ Gerd Eckert, “Verfilmte Literatur nimmt zu. Die Hälfte aller deutschsprachigen Filme der kommenden Spielzeit wird nach Literatur gedreht,” *Film-Kurier*, July 30, 1937. Gerd Eckert, “Zunehmende Literaturverfilmung,” *Film-Kurier*, January 6, 1938.

³²¹ “Mehr Originalstoffe als im Vorjahr,” *Film-Kurier*, August 8, 1938, “Von 125 Filme fast 50% nach Literatur. Demandowsky: Ein Originalstoff vermag mehr herzugeben als ein Literaturvorlage,” *Film-Kurier*, February 11, 1939.

³²² Dr. Günther Sawatzik, “Von Dichtungen und Drehbüchern,” *Filmwelt*, no. 19 (May 1940): 10-11.

Adaptation: Emil Jannings' *Der zerbrochene Krug*

The two opposite camps of the screen-stage debate crystallized over the “adaptation” of Kleist’s *Der zerbrochene Krug* (Gustav Ucicky, 1937), a project dear to actor Emil Jannings. The famous actor talked personally to Goebbels and pushed for the making of the film. The Propaganda Minister noted in his diaries: “Jannings wants to film *Zerbrochene Krug*. With the words of Kleist. A very bold experiment. But Jannings will be careful. I refuse to lend two hundred thousand RM upfront. Kimmich wrote a script. It is not that bad. On the contrary, it is very good.”³²³ Yet despite Goebbels’ relative enthusiasm and Jannings’ talent, this bold experiment was overwhelmingly considered a failure. Goebbels, who previewed most of the film, wrote on October 11, 1937:

“*Zerbrochene Krug* with Jannings. Good character study. But, as anticipated, the interminable verses are very annoying. Not a skilled achievement. More theater than film.” The premiere took place on October 19 in the Ufa-Palast am Zoo in Berlin.

Goebbels attended it

for the sake of Jannings, who otherwise will get very depressed. And also because of Funk and Winkler, who are thinking about the business. A great premiere! But the film, despite great willingness of the audience at the beginning, is a flop. It is photographed theater, not a work of film art. Jannings did not want to listen to my advice. And now he is paying for it dearly.³²⁴

The press shared Goebbels’ opinion of the film. Amidst the broad advertising campaign,³²⁵ editor in chief of *Film-Kurier* Günther Schwark, for example, could not

³²³ Goebbels’ diaries, July 15, 1937.

³²⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, October 20, 1937. There is something of a *Schadenfreude* in Goebbels’ comments. See also on November 5, 1937: “Jannings very depressed about *zerbrochene Krug* [sic]. These artists are like children. But maybe this was a blow for Jannings. He is becoming too big and arrogant.” The rumor that Goebbels disliked the film because of a scene where the main character limped, not unlike Goebbels himself, was never confirmed. See picture of Goebbels at the premiere in *Filmwelt*, no. 44 (October 1937).

³²⁵ See for example the front-page article of *Film-Kurier*, “Künstler über einen Film,” *Film-Kurier*, October 15, 1937, and the cover of *Filmwelt*, no. 41 (October 1937). In the same edition we find a lengthy three page article about the film, which traces the history of the play’s staging, from its disastrous premiere under Goethe’s direction—a clash between the “real and natural characters and humor and the affected acting style—to the deserved appreciation of the play in the nineteenth century. Earlier articles about the

help but calling the verbatim reproduction of the play “good filmed theater.”³²⁶ In a lengthy essay, he actually used the film as an example of how plays cannot simply be transplanted to film and concluded that adaptations were too often inhibited by the filmmakers’ exaggerated reverence towards the text. His colleagues from *Filmwoche* echoed his critique and called the film, “the best example of a photographed theatrical play.”³²⁷ Even the popular *Filmwelt*, always shy of any criticism, used the film in an article about literary adaptations as an example of a failed effort.³²⁸ Writing for the official magazine of the Reich Film Chamber, *Der deutsche Film*, Hans Spielhofer concluded that

The film industry, which has so often expressed its longing for the great film poet, has surprisingly found satisfaction by bringing a classic poet to the screen, word for word. We have the first one hundred percent theater film in front of us. The film is a feast for the actors, who can celebrate an orgy of expression in the close-ups of cameraman Frizarno Wagner [...]³²⁹

But despite a much-praised opening scene, Spielhofer judged the film “wearisome.” He finished on a positive, albeit a bit sarcastic, note: “in the small and middle sized cities with mediocre theaters, the film will be welcomed as an example of a Kleist performance with excellent cast. In the big cities, the curiosity of the educated

upcoming film and Kleist’s play in *Filmwelt*, no. 31 (August 1937) and no. 35 (August 1937) about the film set.

³²⁶ Günther Schwark, “Der zerbrochene Krug,” *Film-Kurier*, October 10, 1937. According to W. Hoepfner-Flatow, the problem of “filmed theater” was still very much accurate in 1937. See W. Hoepfner-Flatow, “Machen wir eigentlich Filme? Fotografiertes Theater und die Eigensetzlichkeit des Films,” *Film-Kurier*, April 2, 1937.

³²⁷ *Filmwoche*, no. 4 (1937). Reprinted in *Geliebter Kintopp, Sämtliche Deutsche Spielfilme Von 1929-1945 Mit Zahlreichen Künstlerbiographien - Jahrgang 1937 Und 1938* (Berlin: Verlag Medium Film, 1987), 92.

³²⁸ Dr. Günther Sawatzki, “Von Dichtungen und Drehbüchern,” *Filmwelt*, no. 19 (May 1940): 10-11. While *Der zerbrochene Krug* “did not prove popular,” Gründgens’ adaptation of Theodor Fontane’s novel *Effi Briest* was made with “such a precision and literary purity,” that even the critiques of any adaptation were silenced.

³²⁹ Hans Spielhofer, *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1937): 144.

classes will bring masses of viewers to the film theaters.”³³⁰ Jannings put forth the same kind of argument about the educational value of classic play adaptations. Looking back at his work, he admitted two years later that the film was

an experiment, whose bold character I never underestimated. But I have to say, when one wants to do something new. An idyllic material, well known few characters [...] But where should the German film find such a big, attractive task? *Der zerbrochene Krug* had to emerge again in front of our eyes, but this time, be made visible with the new, broad possibilities of the film, possibilities that go well beyond the theater [...] With the cut, shot, switch between scenes and so on, film has tools that extend the forms of expression of the theater almost up to infinity. [Film] makes every background of the characters visible, in a way that is unthinkable in theater, [film] makes obvious what is between the lines. This was understood by the audience, and I know that the film brought a brand new audience to the theater.³³¹

If nothing else, commentators agreed that “theater and film have different forms and paths but one goal,” to educate people.³³² Such comments point to two recurrent elements in film’s efforts to establish itself as a recognized form of art. We first see how film proponents equate film with theater using the argument of education, of intellectual ennoblement, as a way of distancing film from its purely commercial and entertainment origins. We also see how, despite efforts from Goebbels and film proponents alike, the relationship between film and theater was still articulated among class lines, where theater is equated to high culture and film to low culture and the masses. Film proponents were torn between utilizing their appeal to masses as an advantage against the theater (being able to give people access to classic plays), and the desire to free film from its ties to the theater and become an independent form of art.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ “Emil Janning erzählt sein Leben,” *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (February 1939): 14.

³³² Felix Henseleit, “Bühnenwerk und Filmschöpfung. Theater und Film. Verschiedene Formen und Wege – ein Ziel,” *Film-Kurier*, July 3, 1940.

Some adaptations, such as Hans Schweikart's adaptation of Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm*, for example, were considered somewhat more successful than Jannings' effort.³³³ Reports about the upcoming film in the press come across as extremely careful to reassure readers, potential viewers, and critics alike, that "the film-makers were aware (in clear knowledge) of the difference between the two arts."³³⁴ The major changes concerned "the unity of the play and the transfer of the emphasis from the word to the image."³³⁵ For example, in order to avoid the typical long dialogue recounting previous actions, the film actually shows, in a few scenes, what happened. Some reviewers were delighted. Wilhelm Hackbarth wrote in *Filmwelt*:

So much human warmth, so much intimacy and joviality in this film! Yes, of course, Lessing created immortal figures that we all know [...] And yet, they have found here a new, a different life. The film modified the play – neither did [the film] simply adopt [the play] blindly and systematically, nor did it distort [the play's] beautiful, deep and loud meaning. We have to say that Ernst Hasselbach and Peter Francke, the two authors, have shown tact and a sense of taste for the original play.³³⁶

While he too justified the adaptation as a way to enable more people to see the material when they have no possibility to see it on stage, Schwark was a bit more reserved, noting that, "this beautiful goal may justify the venture."³³⁷ But, he added that

³³³ P.J., "Mina von Barnhelm in der Literaturgeschichte," *Film-Kurier*, July 2, 1940. See Franz A. Birgel, "Hans Schweikart's Das Fräulein Von Barnhelm: Lessing Gets Drafted into the Service of the Third Reich," in *The Many Faces of Germany. Transformations in the Study of German Culture and History*, ed. Johan A. McCarthy, Walter Grünzweig, and Thomas Koebner (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 86–98. See Goebbels' reaction on August 6, 1940: "Das Fraulein von Barnhelm from Schweikart. Ended up being pretty good. Käthe Gold not so pretty, but very dear." See articles about the upcoming film in *Filmwelt*, no. 18 (May 1940) and no. 26 (June 1940): 8-9.

³³⁴ "Klassische Dichtung mit den Mitteln des Films gestaltet," *Film-Kurier*, July 6, 1940. See also E. Schopen, "Bühnendichtung und Film. Zur Verfilmung von Lessings 'Minna von Barnhlem,'" *Der deutsche Film* 12 (June 1940): 235-237.

³³⁵ "Klassische Dichtung mit den Mitteln des Films gestaltet," *Film-Kurier*, July 6, 1940.

³³⁶ Wilhelm Hackbarth, "Das Fräulein von Barnhelm," *Filmwelt*, no. 44 (November 1940). *Filmwelt* devoted several full pages to the film (see no. 30 in July 1940, and no. 42 in October 1940) and even a cover page in no. 45 (November 1939).

³³⁷ Günther Schwark, "Das Fräulein von Barhelm," *Film-Kurier*, October 23, 1940.

the speed of the dialogue and the tension between characters were somewhat lost in the cinematic adaptation, due to the optical expansion that characterizes cinema. As always *Der deutsche Film* was a bit more critical. While praising how the authors remained faithful to the original text, *without* taking the dialog verbatim, Ilse Wehner noted that the text did not become more filmic and that the film had a stagy feeling.³³⁸ Seeing this as yet another example of how a great theater play does not make a great film, Wehner urged filmmakers to “leave to the theater what belongs to the theater and to give the film original material.”³³⁹

Thus, tensions between film and theater did not abate. That the relationship was not always harmonious can be heard from the lengthy speech Goebbels delivered during the 1939 Reich Theater Week in Vienna. Despite the propagandistic encomium of German achievements in the theatrical world, Goebbels reassured his audience that “the incursion of film in the theatrical sphere will not cause damage in the long run.”³⁴⁰ That the propaganda minister felt the need to address this topic points to a tangible sense of threat in the theater world. While he did not give specific examples, a possible point of contention could have been the fact that actors and actresses were leaving theater for film. The leading theater paper *Die Bühne*, for example, reported under the headline “Film – a Danger?” about the many acting professionals who, lured by the hope of quick success in the film industry, quit their contracts with the stage and eventually lost their

³³⁸ Ilse Wehner, Review of *Das Fräulein von Barnhelm*,” *Der deutsche Film* 4 (November 1940): 90-91. Wehner reviews in the same edition another adaptation *Kleider machen Leute*, which she equally judged failed.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ The speech was reprinted in *Film-Kurier*, May 17, 1939. See also excerpts in *Filmwelt*, no. 4 (June 1939): 24. Alluding to a usual differentiation between film and theater, Goebbels added, “film worked in width and theater in depth.”

jobs.³⁴¹ The language used here is striking. Published in November 1940, this issue of *Die Bühne* demonstrates the increasing militarization, if not politicization of the language found in the press and in German society as a whole, as shown in chapter 2. Which danger was actually meant in November 1940 when German tanks were rolling over Europe is unclear: the theater, as an expression of middle- and upper-class German culture being overrun by the working class film, or the land of poet and thinkers being led by racist and jingoistic leaders.

The film press thus performed a difficult balancing act between pushing for film's recognition, which implicated a distancing from theater but without cutting all ties to the theater, from which it was, for some, too dependent. *Filmwelt* for example, in addition to always mentioning the theatrical background of film professionals, featured every so often a page about “*Berlin Stages*,” with pictures of ongoing productions. While it focused mostly on film-related topics, *Film-Kurier*, whose subtitle was “Theater – Art – Varieté – Radio,” regularly featured reviews of theater premieres.³⁴² It published the numbers of German theaters throughout the Reich under the headline “Impressive numbers of German theaters. Positive influence on the film and the expectation of the audience.”³⁴³ But the film press also featured articles such “Away from the theater!” in *Der deutsche Film*,³⁴⁴ while *Film-Kurier* talked about “Why I prefer film. A 17-year-old

³⁴¹ F.H., “Bühnendarsteller und Film Laufbahn: Falsche und richtige Wege zum Film: Für voreilige aufgegebenen Theaterverträge ist der Film nicht verantwortlich zu machen,” *Film-Kurier*, December 11, 1940. The article contained a copy of the article of *Die Bühne*, no. 22 (November 22, 1940). *Film-Kurier* answered the above accusations that film was not responsible for a “prematurely ended contract.”

³⁴² Among the reviewers Hans Schumacher, Günther Schwark, Felix Henseleit, Georg Herzberg.

³⁴³ “Imponierende Zahlen über Deutschlands Spektakelbühnen: Positive Auswirkungen auf den Film und die Ansprüche des Publikums,” *Film-Kurier*, July 9, 1940.

³⁴⁴ Carl Mandelartz, “Los vom Theater!” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 3 (September 1936): 74-75.

explains,”³⁴⁵ “Disadvantages of working for film and theater at the same time,”³⁴⁶ and protested against the comparison between film and theater.³⁴⁷

Addressed foremost to film professionals, *Film-Kurier* was indeed the most engaged in the discussion about the relationship between film and theater. After 1939, Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck became the dominant voice of *Film-Kurier* in theatrical matters, having given numerous proofs of his ideological credibility with works such *World War and Propaganda* (1936), *France’s Propaganda against Germany* and *English Propagandist Lies* (both 1940). He had contributed to literary and theater journals such as *Die Bühne* and *Deutsche Theater-Zeitung*, worked as the editor-in-chief of *Der Autor*,³⁴⁸ and published the book *German Contemporary Dramatics* in 1938.³⁴⁹ After drastically improving the music section of *Film-Kurier*, Wanderscheck’s contributions changed the intensity, style, and format of the theater column. The reviews of, and comments about the stage premieres increased and so did the topical columns, which became an essential part of *Film-Kurier*, moving often from the regular second page to the front-page.³⁵⁰ Although his articles concerned themselves with theater-specific questions, he too tackled the topic of the relationship between film and theater, the “much-discussed question.”³⁵¹ In 1942, *Film-Kurier* published his two-part article entitled “Film creation and theatrical

³⁴⁵ “Warum ich den Film dem Theater vorziehen,” *Film-Kurier*, April 14, 1939.

³⁴⁶ “Auf dem Wege zur Qualitätssteigerung. Nachteile gleichzeitiger Bühnen- und Filmarbeit,” *Film-Kurier*, May 9, 1938.

³⁴⁷ Dr. Franz Wallner-Basté, “Kinderschuhe oder Siebenmeilenstiefel? Man darf das Entwicklungstempo des Film nicht mit dem des Theaters vergleichen,” *Film-Kurier*, February 18, 1939.

³⁴⁸ Josef Wulf, *Theater Und Film Im Dritten Reich. Eine Dokumentation* (Gütersloh: Rowholt, 1966), 149. Wanderscheck also used the pseudonym Hermann W. Anders.

³⁴⁹ Hans Schumacher, “Neue Bücher: Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck: Deutsche Dramatik der Gegenwart,” *Film-Kurier*, April 13, 1939.

³⁵⁰ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Vom idealen Zuschauer. Der Bühnendichter und sein Publikum,” *Film-Kurier*, July 13, 1942.

³⁵¹ Herman Wanderscheck, “Ein vieldiskutiertes Thema. Filmschöpfung und Bühnenwerk. Untersuchung über die Unterschiede ihre Formen und Wege und ihre gemeinsames Ziele,” *Film-Kurier*, August 11, 1942.

oeuvre: A study about the differences in their form and their common goals.”³⁵² In it, Wanderscheck summarized decades of debates and catalogued the differences and commonalities of film and theater. He concluded by finally, indisputably, establishing the “equal worth” of film as a form of art, something that still needed to be done in 1942. Pointing to the fact that between 1910 and 1934, film had produced 736 adaptations of plays, 109 of which were German classics, he noted that film was still “material hungry.”³⁵³ Echoing years of similar discussion, he argued that the way to finally make film independent from the theater was to get more and better *Filmdichter* (script writers or, quite literally, film poets).

The Search for the Film Poet

Indeed, next to the need to train film actors, discussions about film writers, or *Filmdichter* were ongoing during the 1930s and 1940s. They not only shaped the debate about the film *Nachwuchs* as will be shown in chapter 7, but went hand in hand with the film-theater discussions. Following up on a July 10, 1934 article, which had detailed the difficulties authors more accustomed to writing theater plays or novels experienced when dealing with screenplays, ³⁵⁴ *Film-Kurier* announced the opening of an eight week long seminar on screenplay writing organized by the *Reichsfachschaft der Filmschriftsteller* (Department of Film Writers).³⁵⁵ But the dearth of film writers was still so acute that 1936 saw Tobis’ prize competition of up to five thousand *Reichsmarks* for a script, which was echoed in July 1936 by an “emergency call for new writers.”³⁵⁶ Gonny Rothex, the

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Heinz Grothe, “Studenten zum Film. Junge Autor und Drehbuchfrage” in *Film-Kurier*, July 10, 1934.

³⁵⁵ S.L., “Schneider-Edenkoben- Dr. Döll. Der Lehrgang für Drehbuchautoren. Erziehung zum bewußten Fachmann” in *Film-Kurier*, July 25, 1934.

³⁵⁶ “Filmdichter gesucht,” *Filmwelt*, no. 17 (April 1936).

head of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Filmschriftsteller* (Association of Film Writers), insisted that the best, the only way for screenwriters to learn was, in addition to a theoretical knowledge, participation in filmmaking for a minimal wage.³⁵⁷ Rothex's plea for a systematic training of film writers was answered, in December 1936, with a new arrangement between the Association of Film Writers and the Tobis film company, whose work comradeship, *Arbeitskameradschaft*, and its courage to "experiment" with the *Nachwuchs* were highly praised by Rothex himself.³⁵⁸ *Filmwelt* contributed in its own way to the discussion by featuring articles such as "I would like to write a film script!," introducing film authors Eva Leidmann and Thea von Harbou, and printing pieces of scripts.³⁵⁹ The magazine also tackled the topic of "dialog in film," and agreed with Gerhard Menzel that, "the A and O of film is the script."³⁶⁰

The "author debate" reopened and culminated in the spring of 1937.³⁶¹ *Film-Kurier* functioned, once again, as a forum where critiques, suggestions, and demands such as the

³⁵⁷ Gonny Rothex, "Notruf des Autoren-Nachwuchs," *Film-Kurier*, July 30, 1936.

³⁵⁸ Schu., "Chancen für Autoren-Nachwuchs," December 16, 1936, Rothex, "Kameradschaft, wie sie sein soll: Tobis fördert Autoren nachwuchs," *Film-Kurier*, December 18, 1936. Three young writers were to be given a contract to work on a screenplay

³⁵⁹ "Ich möchte ein Filmmanuskript schreiben!" *Filmwelt*, no. 29 (July 1936); "Besuch bei einer Filmautorin (Eva Leidmann)," *Filmwelt*, no. 39 (September 1936); Hansjürgen Wille, "Was gehört zum Filmautor?" Gespräch mit Thea von Harbou, *Filmwelt*, no. 10 (March 1937); "Szenen aus dem Drehbuch zu 'Annemarie,'" *Filmwelt*, no. 49 (December 1936).

³⁶⁰ Dr. Johannes Eckardt, "Der Dialog im Film," *Filmwelt*, no. 48 (November 1936); Gerhard Menzel, "Das A und O des Films," *Filmwelt*, no. 1 (January 1937).

³⁶¹ Charles Klein, "Die Autoren-Debatte ist eröffnet: Film nach Maß. Ein Vorschlag zur Behebung der Stoff-Kalamität," *Film-Kurier*, February 16, 1937; W. Hoepfner-Flatow, "Filmautoren...? – Filmdichter...! Ein Beitrag zur Autoren-Diskussion des Film-Kuriers," *Film-Kurier*, February 22, 1937; Hermann Doerr, "Zur Autorendebatte. Die Besten Filme schreibt das Leben," *Film-Kurier*, February 23, 1937; "Autoren gesucht. Neue Begabungen," *Film-Kurier*, March 4, 1937; Gonny Rothex, "Außenseiter oder Filmdichter? Zur Autoren-Debatte," *Film-Kurier*, April 1, 1937; Margrete Lindau-Schulz, "Seid – nett zu Ihnen! Erwiderung auf den Artikel 'Außenseiter oder Filmdichter?'" *Film-Kurier*, April 3, 1937; Host Feldt, "Fördern? – Fördern!", *Film-Kurier*, April 5, 1937; Charlotte Parahuz, "Zur Autoren-Diskussion: Um was geht es eigentlich?" *Film-Kurier*, April 7, 1937; Ul. Schlüter, "Zur Autoren-Diskussion," *Film-Kurier*, April 9, 1937; Max Wallner, "Zur Autoren-Debatte: Der zweigeteilte Autor," *Film-Kurier*, April 12, 1937; Gonny Rothex, "Zur Autoren-Debatte Und – ob ich nett zu ihnen bin," *Film-Kurier*, April 13, 1937; Dorothea Werner, "Die Diskussion. Originalstoff oder Bearbeitung?" *Film-Kurier*, May 5, 1937; Kurt Wesse, "Die Diskussion: Was mich bewegt, kann ich gestalten," *Film-Kurier*, May 26, 1937; Otto Aug. Ehlers, "Der Dichter der Film: Ein Beitrag zur Autoren-Debatte," *Film-Kurier*, July 8, 1937.

promotion of *Nachwuchs* film writers could be exchanged.³⁶² Reports about the progress of the newly created “authors’ internship” at the Tobis unveiled the students’ lack of comprehensive knowledge of filmmaking.³⁶³ Though talented writers, the interns had to be schooled in questions of financing, censorship, and numerous technical questions. By the spring of 1937, Rothex explained in the pages of *Filmwelt* that once a certain talent for film writing had been established, the aspiring writer would be accepted in a *Nachwuchs* course, organized by the state.³⁶⁴

While discussion disappeared from the press after the creation of the Film Academy in 1938, the need for film specific authors remained acute.³⁶⁵ The discussions flared up again in 1941. Continuing a long-standing discussion, a “script debate” spanned thirteen issues in *Film-Kurier* starting in January.³⁶⁶ The former head of the Film Academy’s artistic department, Liebeneiner, published an essay about scripts and the role of the director, triggering a month long debate.³⁶⁷ Wanderscheck himself contributed to the

³⁶² See especially Host Feldt, “Fördern? – Fördern!,” and Dorothea Werner, “Die Diskussion: Originalstoff oder Bearbeitung?” *Film-Kurier*, May 5, 1937.

³⁶³ “Autorenpraktikum bei der Tobis: Pläne, die unter Willy Forsts Leitung am Sommer-Ausgang verwirklicht werden sollte,” *Film-Kurier*, April 10, 1937.

³⁶⁴ Gonny Rothex, “Filmautoren-Nachwuchs,” *Filmwelt*, no. 22 (May 1937).

³⁶⁵ “Ein Autor hat das Wort. Georg C. Klaren an der Lessinghochschule,” *Film-Kurier*, February 10, 1938. See in *Der deutsche Film*, Victor Schamoni, “Der schwierige Autor oder Die andere Seite eines wichtigen Problems,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1940): 7-9, and no. 2 (August 1940): 29-31; Fritz Hippler, “Einige grundsätzliche Bemerkungen zur Film-Dramaturgie,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2 (August 1940): 23-25, and “Die Stofffrage im Film,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 4 (October 1940): 59-61; Frank Maraun, “Aller Anfang ist schwer. Ein vernachlässigtes Kapitel der Filmdramaturgie,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 4 (October 1940): 67-69; H.R., “Mehr Mut zum Hinterhaus,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1940): 80-82; Werner Kortwich, “Das Drehbuch,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1940): 89-90.

³⁶⁶ See for example in *Der deutsche Film* Jürgen Schüddenkopf, “Die Typischen Fehler im Film: IV. Der Dialog,” no. 7 (January 1941): 136-137; Frank Maraun, “Die Typischen Fehler im Film: V. Am Überfluß erstickt!” no. 8 (February 1941): 149-150. In *Autor* see Dr. Hans Zugschwert, “Filmautor und Regisseur: notwendige Rivalen?” no. 9/10 (1941), and Dr. Erich Ebermayer, “Der Weg zum Filmdichtung,” no. 11 (1941).

³⁶⁷ Wolfgang Liebeneiner, “Drehbücher sind in Wahrheit Regiebücher,” *Film-Kurier*, January 11, 1941. See the responses in “Zwei Zuschriften zur Drehbuch-Debatte die von der Stellungnahme Wolfgang Liebeneiners im “Film-Kurier” angeregt wurde,” *Film-Kurier*, January 14, 1941; “Die Diskussion. Drehbücher sind mehr als Regiebücher! Paul van der Hurk entgegnet Liebeneiner zur Drehbuchfrage,” *Film-Kurier*, January 15, 1941; “Der Könnner teile, das Genie herrsche. Kameramann Jaworsky zur

issue of film authors, writing series such as *Living German Playwrights*, which spanned several weeks in *Film-Kurier*,³⁶⁸ and he introduced film writers to the broad audience of *Filmwelt*.³⁶⁹

Thus, complaints about the many adaptations went hand in hand with the need to promote new film writers and to woo literature authors to work for film. Reviewer S-k., for example, bemoaned the exaggerated reverence film makers use when adapting a play.³⁷⁰ The results were hybrid products, unsatisfying from either point of view. Using the *Laocoon* analogy, he reminded readers that film and drama are two different arts

Drehbuch-Debatte,” *Film-Kurier*, January 16, 1941; “H.F. Köllner zur Drehbuch-Debatte. Seit wann resigniert man, weil etwas jahrelang gelernt sein will. Jedes Handwerk braucht drei Lehrjahre – jede Kunst ein Leben!” *Film-Kurier*, January 17, 1941; “I. Paul-Czech. Verantwortungsbewußte Zusammenarbeit von Autor und Regisseur,” *Film-Kurier*, January 18, 1941; “Zur Drehbuch-debatte. Einer, der nicht “vom Bau” ist, hat das Wort,” *Film-Kurier*, January 20, 1941; “Fortsetzung der Drehbuch-Debatte,” *Film-Kurier*, January 21, 194; Richard Angts,” Noch ein Kameramann zur Drehbuch-Debatte. Gemeinschaftsarbeit!” *Film-Kurier*, January 22, 1941; “Zur Drehbuch-Debatte. Mit dem Drehbuch beginnt die schöpferische Domäne des Regisseurs,” *Film-Kurier*, January 24, 1941; “Noch einmal P. van der Hurk zur Drehbuchdebatte. Ein Vorschlag zur Güte,” *Film-Kurier*, January 25, 1941; “Zur Drehbuch-Debatte,” *Film-Kurier*, January 27, 1941; “Morgen Schluß der Drehbuch-Debatte,” *Film-Kurier*, January 28, 1941; “Liebeneiner Schlußwort zur Drehbuch-Debatte,” *Film-Kurier*, January 29, 1941. Liebeneiner also published pieces about dramaturgy (“Wolfgang Liebeneiner über hemmende Theorie,” *Film-Kurier*, July 12, 1941) and the relationship between artist and state (“Künstler und Staat. Wolfgang Liebeneiner sprach in München,” *Film-Kurier*, September 19, 1941).

³⁶⁸ It started on July 12, 1940 with Curt Langebeck, followed the same year by Hans Schwarz (July 16), Sigmund Graff (July 23), Hanns Gobsch (July 31), Alois Johannes Lippi (October 19), Werner Deubel (December, 11), all in *Film-Kurier*.

³⁶⁹ See in *Filmwelt* “Die Stunde der deutschen Dichter,” no. 46 (November 1940), “Felix Lützendorf. Dichter and Drehbuchautor,” no. 48 (November 1940), “Paul Joseph Cremers. Vom Dramatiker zum Filmdichter,” no. 2 (January 1941), “Richard Billinger. Der Weg eines Dramatikers,” no. 3 (January 1941), “Dichtung und Drehbuch. Gespräch mit dem Filmautor Rolf Lauckner,” no. 23/24 (June 1941), “Dramen unserer Väter – heuet verfilmt. “Naturalismus im Film?” Vom Sinn der ewig menschlichen Konflikte,” no. 33/34 (August 1941). He also wrote reviews of political or militaristic film such as *Anschlag auf Baku* no. 21 (May 1941) and “Der Film erobert die Gegenwart. Zeitnahe deutsche Spielfilme in Front,” no. 22 (May 1941). Wanderscheck wrote also several political propagandistic articles such as See “Schlacht den Lords!” no. 43 (October 1940); “Deutschlands Außenpolitik der Tat,” no. 48 (November 1940), “1940- Ein Jahr des Sieges,” no. 52 (December 1940), “Der Herz im Panzer. Zum Tag der nationalen Erhebung” no. 5 (January 1941), “Lieder der kämpfenden, singende Front,” no. 8 (February 1941), “Die Frau im Kreigseinsatz,” no. 14 (April 1941), “Von Narvik bis zum Olymp. Die Wochenschau – Dokument der Weltgeschichte,” no. 18 (May 1941), “Deutschlands Kampf für Jahrhunderte,” no. 1 (January 1942).

³⁷⁰ S-k., “Was ist mit der Pietät im Film. Zur Verfilmung literarischer und dramatischer Werke früherer Epochen,” *Film-Kurier*, November 31, 1940.

forms, in the same way that poetry and sculpture are.³⁷¹ For scriptwriter Philipp Lothar, it boiled down to the need for *Filmdichter*, who were the ones, more than the actors or the director, who made adaptations work.³⁷² Hans Rein was especially upset about Dr. Gottfried Müller's book, *Dramaturgie des Theaters und des Films*, and criticized the preface by Liebeneiner, who in 1941 still claimed that "the dramaturgic rules of the film are the same as those of the theater."³⁷³ He considered such statements to be "at least misleading, if not outright dangerous."³⁷⁴

The rerelease of *Der Zerbrochene Krug* in the fall of 1942 triggered a new wave of discussions.³⁷⁵ Recognizing the differences between film and theater, Jannings himself tried to shift the debate to the "common goal" – educating people – and argued that a "filmed theater play" would bring the play to millions who have no opportunity to go to the theater. Dr K. Kurth, head of the institute for journalism in Vienna, took up this idea and pleaded in the spring of 1943 for more "verbatim filming" of not only classic plays but even operas, raising the question of what was "filmic."³⁷⁶

Needless to say, what followed was a series of heated exchanges, lasting until July 1944, with many of the "usual" arguments repeated. Stage directors underlined the differences between film and theater, whilst emphasizing how theater allowed, among

³⁷¹ Lessing objected to efforts to try to write poetry using the same devices as one would in painting. Instead, poetry (a.k.a. literature) and painting each has its character (the former is extended in time; the latter is extended in space). Goebbels for example often talked about how film worked in width and theater in depth.

³⁷² Ge., "Vom Theaterstück zum Film," *Film-Kurier*, February 26, 1942.

³⁷³ Hans Rein, "Natur und Kunst. Bühnenschauspieler auf der Leinwand," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 9 (March 1941): 170-172.

³⁷⁴ Hans Rein, "Film als Dissertationsthema," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 4/5 (October/November 1941): 29-30.

³⁷⁵ See *Filmwelt*, no. 35/36 (September 1942). In a lecture about "The Film – A pictorial Art," Frank Maraun praised *Der zerbrochene Krug* and *Das Fräulein von Barnhelm* for their cast and performance but used them as an example of how "the impact of film lies in the image [not the word]," in *Film-Kurier*, May 30, 1942.

³⁷⁶ "Zur Diskussion gestellt: Schauspiel und Oper im Film," *Film-Kurier*, April 15, 1943.

other things, more audience participation, recalling the 1938 contribution of playwright Lauckner.³⁷⁷ Film professionals, reading Kurth's proposal as yet another denigration of film art and its potentials,³⁷⁸ pointed to the limitations of theatrical representations. It seems that the only things both sides could agree on, was a "strict demarcation between film and theater,"³⁷⁹ despite the fact that the reality was, of course, quite different.

Some writers, though, tried to push the discussions further. Although disagreeing with Kurth, Paul Ickes called for a revision of what was considered "cinematic laws" (*Eigengesetzlichkeiten des Films*) and argued that such a revision would allow "the poetic word to have free access to film."³⁸⁰ Dr. Ludwig Gesek rejected filmed plays and even more so filmed opera. For him, *Der zerbrochene Krug* constituted a "lucky exception."³⁸¹ Adapting opera to film was for Gesek even more problematic as "their fundamental laws are opposite: film is movement, the song lingers; the rhythm of image is found in film, the rhythm of the score dominates the opera."³⁸² In addition, the audience's experience in theater cannot be translated in a film and there is a danger of creating "canned art." Gesek favored the adaptation of plays, and maybe of operas, in which the material is taken, changed and turned into something different, a film.³⁸³

Hermann Meyer devised an eight-step separation between play and film, from "kinematographiertes Theater" and "filmed Theater" up to the "real film, based on

³⁷⁷ Dr. Rolf Lauckner, "Ueber die Grenzen zwischen Bühne und Film. Probleme von Bild und Raum und Ort und Zeit," *Film-Kurier*, March 4, 1938.

³⁷⁸ Eric Meyer, "Meinung des Autors," *Film-Kurier*, May 20, 1943.

³⁷⁹ Alexander Golling, "Für klare Abgrenzung!" *Film-Kurier*, May 20, 1943.

³⁸⁰ Paul Ickes, "Bühnendramen als Film," *Film-Kurier*, April 22, 1943.

³⁸¹ Dr. Ludwig Gesek, "Schauspiel und Oper im Film?" *Film-Kurier*, April 27, 1943. Ludwig Gesek had been the editor of the magazine "Der gute Film," and then the director of the Direktor des Instituts für Filmkultur, 1934-38. He also led from 1935-1938 a radio show called "Wir sprechen über Film."

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Veit Harlan's *Die Goldene Stadt* is for him a successful example.

original film material.³⁸⁴ Adamantly defending film, he accused Kurth, and other critics, coming from outside the film, of wanting to simply go back to “filmed theater” and to deny any artistic quality to film.³⁸⁵ While for stage manager Paul Rose, adaptation of plays could only work if they were translated into “lingua filmiana,”³⁸⁶ theater manager Alexander Golling too demanded “a strict demarcation between film and theater,” especially the classics.³⁸⁷ Eric Ebermeyer, a writer himself, agreed with the difficulties, if not impossibilities, of adapting plays and especially operas, and followed Rose’s plea for a reevaluation of the film author, or even better the “film poet.”³⁸⁸

On July 26, 1943, *Film-Kurier*, gave the (presumably) final word to Dr. K. Kurth, who defended with verve his idea of “filmed plays and operas,” answering each and every response to his first essay. *Der zerbrochene Krug* was not an exception, but the first example of new and different way of filming plays. He especially built on Froelich’s comments about upcoming technology, and argued that color film, and even color television, would allow an artistic experience, close to the living one.³⁸⁹

In the meantime, *Film-Kurier* published additional articles about the debate “Film and Poet” in the summer of 1943, but despite Felix Henseleit’s efforts to summarize all positions and come to an open-ended conclusion, this was probably not the end of the discussion. But for Henseleit this was “a good thing, because where there is

³⁸⁴ Hermann Meyer, “Schauspiel und Oper im Film? Kinematographiertes Theater,” *Film-Kurier*, May 13, 1943.

³⁸⁵ Meyer talked about a twenty years ongoing effort to undermine film. See for example Konrad Lange, “Bewegungsphotographie und Kunst,” *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* 15 (1921): 88-104.

³⁸⁶ Paul Rose, “Der Film und das Theater: Versuch einer Abgrenzung,” *Film-Kurier*, July 4, 1944.

³⁸⁷ Alexander Golling, “Für klare Abgrenzung!” *Film-Kurier*, May 20, 1943.

³⁸⁸ Eric Meyer, “Meinung des Autors,” *Film-Kurier*, May 20, 1943.

³⁸⁹ Carl Froelich, “Was heute unmöglich erscheint, kann sehr bald möglich werden!” *Film-Kurier*, May 24, 1943.

conversations about a topic, there is life and movement,” the discussions continued.³⁹⁰

While scriptwriter Ludwig Metzger explained the concept of “film idea,”³⁹¹

Wanderscheck tried to clarify the “mystery of what is filmic,”³⁹² and *Film-Kurier*

explored the adaptations of novels.³⁹³ Dr. Herbert Mühlbauer posed once again as ideal

the director who would also write the script, or the other way around, an author who

would have acquire the necessary knowledge to be able to direct.³⁹⁴

Two months after these exchanges, Dr. Kurt Wortig urged film and theater directors to extend the possibilities of *mise-en-scene* and not rely too much on existing and usual dramaturgy.³⁹⁵ For filmmakers adapting a play, the temptation to follow the stage directions were strong but Wortig exhorted them to fully utilize the cinematic tools and become independent from the traditional dramaturgic tools. The perfect work, be it a play or a film, reaches a compromise between “stylized reality and commenting symbolic, which ennobles the simple action into psychologically enriching event.”³⁹⁶

³⁹⁰ H.W. “Über die Kunst, Filme zu schreiben,” *Film-Kurier*, June 10, 1943; Dr. Max Krüger, “Um Stoff und Form: Zum Thema ‘Film und Dichter,’” *Film-Kurier*, June 21, 1943, Felix Henseleit, “Generalthemen des Filmschaffens. Anmerkungen zum Thema ‘Film und Dichter’ und zur Debatte des ‘Film-Kurier,’” *Film-Kurier*, June 24, 1943.

³⁹¹ Ludwig Metzger, “Um den Begriff ‘Filmidee’: Ein Vorschlag zur Klärung mancher Zweifelsfragen,” *Film-Kurier*, July 12, 1943.

³⁹² Wanderscheck, “Um das Rätsel des ‘Filmischen’: Abermals: Versuch einer Deutung und Klärung der Begriffe,” *Film-Kurier*, July 15, 1943.

³⁹³ “Roman-Novelle-Film: Die Verwandlung eines Kunstwerks: Die Verfilmung von Romanen und Novellen als künstlerisches Problem,” *Film-Kurier*, August 23, 1943. See the answer of scriptwriter Herbert Maisch who wrote the adaptation of Kurt Kluge’s novel *Die Zauberhexe* in “Roman und Film,” *Film-Kurier*, July 15, 1943.

³⁹⁴ Herbert Mühlbauer, “Von den Schöpfer des Films: Über die Stellung von Autor und Regisseur und die künstlerischen Beziehungen ihrer Arbeit,” *Film-Kurier*, August 26, 1943. See also Helmut Müller, “Vom grundlegenden Regie-Einfall: Etwas über den Schaffensbereich des Regisseurs,” *Film-Kurier*, December 24, 1943.

³⁹⁵ Kurt Wortig, “Dramaturgischer Fundus: Streifzug zwischen Bühne- und Filmregie,” *Film-Kurier*, October 28, 1943. See also Wilfried Bade, “Der Dichter und der Film,” *Film-Kurier*, January 28, 1944, and Ernst von Decken, “Problem um den Film-Dichter,” *Film-Kurier*, February 15, 1944.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Discussions continued all through 1944. *Film-Kurier* talked about “The Poet and Film,” (January) and “Problems about the Film Poet (February). Paul Ickes concluded that “a Lessing of cinema is not yet there,”³⁹⁷ while Dr. Adolf Nagel argued for the “Independence of Film Poetry,”³⁹⁸ and Wanderscheck elaborated on “script, author and film direction.”³⁹⁹ In the summer the need to redefine the division between film and theater came from theater managers. The neutral and detached summary that Henseleit gave of theater manager Gustav Rudolf Sellner’s speech hints at his unspoken disagreement with the latter.⁴⁰⁰ While Henseleit had emphasized in *Film-Kurier* the commonalities of the two art forms and their common goal, Sellner promoted a strict observation of the boundaries between film and theater. Theater manager Rose’s conciliatory comment that adaptation of plays could only work if they were translated into “lingua filmiana,”⁴⁰¹ cannot hide the underlying critique of film, for which “the word, which is the essence of theater, is only a tool.” For Rose, film relies too much on the visual and renounces from the beginning the participation of the audience; it does not suggest anything, but shows everything, too much according to Rose, and by doing so leaves nothing for the audience to imagine.

What is remarkable about these exchanges is their sheer number and, after 1942, the openness of the divergence and the entrenchment of the opinions, pointing to a more dynamic role of the press than previously assumed. Declarations of the achievement of

³⁹⁷ “Über die Kunst, Filmstoffe zu erfinden,” *Film-Kurier*, February 29, 1944.

³⁹⁸ Dr. Adolf Nagel, “Dichter und Filmdichter. Über die Selbständigkeit der Filmidchtung. Ein Beitrag zur Abgrenzung von Literatur und Filmkunst,” *Film-Kurier*, March 31, 1944.

³⁹⁹ Dr. Wanderscheck, “Entscheidende Faktoren der Filmgestaltung. Einiges über Drehbuch, Autor und Regie,” *Film-Kurier*, May 9, 1944.

⁴⁰⁰ Felix Henseleit, “Der Film und das Theater: Ihre Grenzen, Ihre Ziele: Ein Vortrag von Generalintendant Gustav Rudolf Sellner in Hannover,” *Film-Kurier*, June 16, 1944.

⁴⁰¹ Paul Rose, “Der Film und das Theater: Versuch einer Abgrenzung,” *Film-Kurier*, July 4, 1944.

the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, boosted by technological advances such as sound and color film, clashed with derogatory comments by theater professionals about the value of film. The discussions presented in this chapter, with their detailed arguments in the midst of a world conflict, are not only a good illustration of the “split consciousness” and the “illusion of normality” that characterized most of German society during the Third Reich. They also point to an interesting moment in the history of German culture, with deep-seated tensions between the world of the theater and the film, where the former could see how its prestige, and the power connected to it, were increasingly shifting in favor of film. While the theater remained the prestige art form of the Third Reich, cinema was the Reich’s most powerful tool and received lavish attention from the audience and the government, which was also the driving force behind efforts for an increased institutionalization of film art. It is true that film professionals appeared more serene about their future, less in need of differentiating themselves from the theater. In 1942, Jürgen Schüddekopf even pointed to the increasing influence of film on theater.⁴⁰² The transformation of closed theaters into film theaters in fall 1944 must have been a bittersweet victory for film professionals.⁴⁰³

In March 1945, amidst destruction and chaos, filmmaker Helmut Käutner, bypassed animosities and bruised egos. In a mournful essay after the closing of the German theaters, he acknowledged, “the centuries old fight of the theater, which leveled the way for the film.” Käutner remained confident that with the help of “film poets and creative personalities” like Neuber and Lessing, film was destined to become “a cognate

⁴⁰² Jürgen Schüddekopf, “Am Rande bemerkt,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April 1942): 16-17.

⁴⁰³ See Goebbels’ diaries, October 5, 1944.

Gesamtkunstwerk.⁴⁰⁴ But in the end, the search for new cinematic laws, for a new *Laocoon*, and the promises of a new *Gesamtkunstwerk* did not materialize, the artistic freedoms too curtailed, the political pressures too heavy, and the material conditions too depleted.

⁴⁰⁴ Helmut Käutner, "Der Film and das Theater," *Film-Kurier*, March 17, 1945. The essay was reprinted as "Dank an das Theater," in *Der deutsche Film 1945. Kleines Film-Handbuch Für Die Deutsche Presse*, (1945), 45. Also translated in English in McCormick and Guenther-Pal, *German Essays on Film*, 167–168.

Chapter 4

Gustaf Gründgens: Tightrope Walk Between Theater and Film

As shown previously, the stage-screen debates involved a broad variety of people, from producers, scriptwriters, actors, directors, journalists, and the propaganda minister himself. Often a reaction to film productions of the time, the discussions were at times quite intense, with hard to reconcile positions. These discussions point to many tensions and contradictions among the participants: while film proponents were adamant about film needing to “distance” itself from the theater, the blurry boundaries between film and theater and practical conditions made such a goal hard to realize. In addition, talented theater artists who regularly crossed this artificial divide and were successful in films were praised for acting skills that were rooted in their theatrical experience. In an effort to look at the film-theater relationship from different points of view and to illustrate more clearly the concrete roots and impacts of the above discussions, the second half of part 2 follows Gustaf Gründgens’ life--especially his career from Weimar to the end of the Third Reich. Biographical approaches not only provide meaningful access to other people’s lives in different times and place, they are also inextricably linked to historical analysis and offer an important tool for analyzing historical questions. Texts, be they films or film newspapers, are indeed situated in specific historical and biographical contexts from which they are generated.⁴⁰⁵ Organized in a chronological fashion, this biography illustrates the tensions mentioned above by focusing on the public reactions to

⁴⁰⁵ Lloyd E. Ambrosius, ed., *Writing Biography: Historians & Their Craft* (University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

Gründgens' career and placing the film review as a site of negotiation for institutional, cultural, and ideological struggles.

A reading of Gründgens' life also expands our knowledge of German society during the Third Reich. It demonstrates not only contradictions regarding the role and use of artists during the Third Reich but also tensions surrounding issues of gender and sexuality.

Any discussion about the theater during the Third Reich must include the actor and director Gustaf Gründgens, whose career spanned four decades and witnessed four political systems (Weimar Republic, Third Reich, occupation, and the Federal Republic). Hailed as one of the most influential actors and stage directors of the century, Gründgens also embodied the opportunism attributed to many Germans during the Third Reich period.⁴⁰⁶ His persona and career have inspired numerous books,⁴⁰⁷ several theater plays,⁴⁰⁸ regular exhibitions,⁴⁰⁹ and television documentaries.⁴¹⁰ Two novels were loosely

⁴⁰⁶ Reviewing the Berlin exposition in 1999, Stefan Steinberg talks about “the compliance and spinelessness demonstrated by broad layers of the German intelligentsia,” in Stefan Steinberg, “The Rehabilitation of Gustav Gründgens”, 1999, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/1999/dec1999/gust-d29.shtml>.

⁴⁰⁷ See the bibliography. To my knowledge, no book in English about Gustaf Gründgens exists.

⁴⁰⁸ Volker Kühn, “G wie Gustav, mit F – Ein Leben als Spiel,” Berlin, Germany, 1999; Michael-Georg Müller, “Alles theater,” Berlin, Germany, 1999.

⁴⁰⁹ See *Gustav-Gründgens-Ausstellung zu seinem achtzigsten Geburtstag*, December 22, 1979, in Düsseldorf. The exhibition traveled to Hamburg, München, Berlin, and Darmstadt. For his one-hundredth birthday, an imposing exposition was organized by the *Staatsbibliothek Berlin; Aber ich habe nicht mein Gesicht: Gustaf Gründgens - eine deutsche Karriere*, vom December 9, 1999 – February 12, 2000. It travelled to Bonn, February 27 – May 7, 2000, and to Hamburg, May 31 - July 15, 2000. See also *Gustaf Gründgens - Ansichten eines Schauspielers: Eine Legende in Bildern*, vom October 26, 1999 – March 26, 2000, in Düsseldorf, as well as *Tanz auf dem Vulkan. Hommage an Gustaf Gründgens*, November 9, 1999 – March 12, 2000, in the *Schwules Museum*, Berlin. Further expositions include *Gustaf Gründgens. Ansichten eines Schauspielers, Sonderausstellung*, December 10, 2002 - March 16, 2003, *Theatermuseum Hannover*, and the latest one, *Gustaf Gründgens - Ansichten eines Schauspielers: Bilder einer Legende* from July 4 – August 10, 2007, in the *Staatlichen Puschkin-Museum* in Moskow.

⁴¹⁰ “Gustaf Gründgens,” first broadcast July 10, 1963 by ZDF, director unknown; “So spiel ich viel Personen ganz allein...” *Der Theatermann Gustaf Gründgens*, directed by Jürgen Moeller (Germany, 1980); “Joachim Kaiser “... ich erinnere mich.” 2. Gustaf Gründgens,” first broadcast September 10, 1989 by ARD, director unknown; “Der Prinzipal – Die Legende Gustaf Gründgens first broadcast July 08, 1989 by Nord 3, directed by Rainer K. G. Ott; “Ich trete aus meinem Traum heraus – Gustaf Gründgens,” directed by Petra Haffter, 2000.

based on his life;⁴¹¹ one of them was made into a feature film that won the Academy Award for best foreign film in 1981.⁴¹² The square of the Düsseldorf Theater, which Gründgens headed from 1947 to 1955, was named after him in 1976.⁴¹³

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, Gründgens remains an ambiguous figure, who embodies many of the tensions and ambivalences of the tumultuous times in which he lived. Part of the fascination he evokes stems from his artistic skills: although his influence dwindled after his death in 1963, his acting and directing styles remain for many an important point of reference. To this day, any new staging of Goethe's *Faust* must acknowledge Gründgens' groundbreaking performance as Mephistopheles in 1932, a performance he developed further throughout his career and was captured on film in 1960.⁴¹⁴ Contemporary witnesses remember his charisma on stage, his ability to bring his characters to life, and his perception that theater and acting were (literally) everything for him.⁴¹⁵

While his artistic abilities remain undisputed, his behavior during the Third Reich persists as the subject of heated debates. Many, following Klaus Mann's acerbic novel *Mephisto*, accuse Gründgens of careerism and collaboration with the Nazi regime, while

⁴¹¹ Klaus Mann, *Mephisto: Roman Einer Karriere* (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1957); Werner Fritsch, *Chroma: Farbenlehre Für Chamäleons* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002).

⁴¹² *Mephisto*, DVD, directed by István Szabó (1981; Paris: Concorde Video, 2006).

⁴¹³ More recently U2's singer Bono invented an alter ego called Mr. MacPhisto, whose resemblance to the Mephistopheles immortalized by Gründgens has been remarked upon.

⁴¹⁴ See for example how Evelyn Finger's "Vorwärts zu Goethe!" in *Die Zeit*, no. 13 (March 20, 2008), is illustrated with a still from the film "Faust," directed by Peter Gorski, 1981, featuring prominently Gründgens as Mephisto.

⁴¹⁵ See how Marcel Reich-Ranicki remembers having seen, at the age of sixteen, Gründgens in *Hamlet* in 1936. Erika Fischer-Lichte and Dagmar Walach, eds., *"Als Schauspieler fühle ich mich": Gustaf Gründgens (1899-1963)* (Berlin: Bostelmann & Siebenhaar, 2000), 164-66. See also Erika Fischer-Lichte's essay on "the fascination" for the actor Gründgens in Erika Fischer-Lichte, "Faszination als Wirkung: Der Schauspieler Gustaf Gründgens," in *"Als Schauspieler fühle ich mich" Gustaf Gründgens (1899-1963)*, ed. Erika Fischer-Lichte and Dagmar Walach (Berlin: Bostelmann & Siebenhaar, 2000). Gründgens famously declared, "I feel myself when I am acting" adding that "acting is the profession that is in my passport," Rolf Badenhausen and Peter Gründgens-Gorski, *Gustaf Gründgens: Briefe, Aufsätze, Reden* (München: DTV, 1970), 318.

others present him as a defender of German culture amidst Nazi barbarism, an artist who kept his integrity and helped persecuted people whenever he could.⁴¹⁶ Carl Zuckmayer, writing his “secret reports” for the American Office of Strategic Services in 1943, put Gründgens in the “Category 3: special cases, part positive, part negative – not readily classifiable.”⁴¹⁷ The answer is indeed not simple, making Gründgens an intriguing and fascinating character, a perfect case study to explore the intricacies of the first half of the century.

Born into a middle class family in Düsseldorf in 1899, Gründgens was trained at the well-known Düsseldorf Theater Academy.⁴¹⁸ He achieved initial recognition in Kiel in his first part as Mephistopheles in Goethe’s *Faust*.⁴¹⁹ After a failed attempt to establish himself in Berlin, his next stop was Hamburg, where between 1923 and 1928 he played over seventy roles, mostly under the direction of Erich Ziegel, and directed thirty-two plays, earning positive reviews.⁴²⁰ His friendship with Klaus and Erika Mann led to a part in Klaus’s play *Anja und Esther* in 1925 and to his short-lived marriage to Erika.⁴²¹ An

⁴¹⁶ Klaus Mann declared that he was attempting to depict the capitulation of a whole part of the German society: "This book was not aimed at a particular person, rather: it was aimed at the careerist, against the German intellectual who sold and betrayed the German mind and spirit. Hoefgen - Hoefgen as a type, Hoefgen as a symbol - places a great talent at the disposal of a ruthless and blood-bespattered power," in *The Turning Point*. On Klaus Mann’s novel see Eberhard Spangenberg, *Karriere eines Romans: Mephisto, Klaus Mann und Gustaf Gründgens: Ein Dokumentarischer Bericht aus Deutschland und dem Exil 1925-1981* (München: Edition Spangenberg im Ellermann Verlag, 1982).

⁴¹⁷ Carl Zuckmayer, *Geheimreport* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2002), 16.

⁴¹⁸ See Gründgens’ letter addressed to the head of the Düsseldorf Playhouse, in Walach, *Aber Ich Habe Nicht Mein Gesicht*, 22–23. The *Hochschule für Bühnenkunst* was lead by the famous Louise Dumont (1862-1932) and Gustav Lindemann (1872-1960).

⁴¹⁹ See positive reviews in *Ibid.*, 29–31.

⁴²⁰ Review of his performance as Hamlet, May 14, 1928, unknown, in *Ibid.*, 48. “the most original acting personality [of the Hamburg Theater] [...] Gründgens’ field cannot be described in terms of characters. This skeptic hits right on spot everything spleeny, blasé, satirical, ironical. [...] One almost forgot about the articulated speech of the nervous, jumpy temperament of this brain and nerves man, about the mastery of reasoning, which lies outside any external declamation. [...] The rhythm of his speech found in the rhythm of the body [...] a powerful addition.”

⁴²¹ Klaus Mann, *Der Wendepunkt: Ein Lebensbericht*, Erw. Neuausg. (Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006), 163f.

adventure more than anything else, this “cocktail union”⁴²² served Erika and Gründgens to reassure their entourage about their sexual orientation, as both were more attracted to same sex partners.⁴²³ While his marriage did not last, Gründgens’ career took a more positive turn, when Germany’s most prominent director, Max Reinhardt, invited him to work for his company at the Deutsches Theater in 1928.⁴²⁴ His first performance in Berlin as the sadist homosexual Ottfried Berlsen in Heinz Hiplert’s production of Ferdinand Bruckner’s *Verbrecher* in 1928 was “sensational.” Unfortunately, Gründgens was subsequently often cast as a villain—a role he became quite famous for but did not match his ambitions.⁴²⁵

The image Gründgens had of himself was that of a man of classical theater, a man who longed to play Hamlet, Mephisto, and the like. What attracted him and what he excelled at was the spoken word in the form of dialogue, monologues, songs. As he later explained, he would have been a terrible actor of the silent era, and his first cinematic successes were with the sound film:

For me the relationship with film started with the sound film. Its predecessors, the silent film, remained and still remain to this day closed for me. I would not have been able to sustain the pressure to turn all expression into mimicry. [...] I would have been the worst actor of silent film. Only the arrival of words turned film into an artistic exercise, which attracted me.⁴²⁶

⁴²² Anja Maria Dohrmann, “Erika Mann: Einblick in Ihr Leben” (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität zu Freiburg, 2003), 58.

⁴²³ Dohrmann, “Erika Mann: Einblick in Ihr Leben.”

⁴²⁴ On Max Reinhardt see Simon Williams, “The Director of the German Theater: Harmony, Spectacle and Ensemble,” *New German Critique* No. 29, *The Origins of Mass Culture: The Case of Imperial Germany (1871-1918)* (1983): 107–131.

⁴²⁵ Gründgens would later describe how “in the first years, I played the wrong parts [...] I always played the easily readable parts, easily readable from my face, and never the ones from my heart, never. I mean, in the beginning! And film is maybe responsible for the fact that I, well, you know, that I used to be the typical film crook. And such a thing stays with you. Even my first Berlin part in Bruckner’s ‘*Verbrecher*’ was a part I hated a lot, but which I had to play, just to be able to survive. But, [this part] gave me a certain image, and I am sometimes flabbergasted, how little the image people had of me fitted with the image I had of myself.” 1949 Interview with Werner Höfer for Gustaf Gründgens’ fiftieth birthday, in Badenhausen and Gründgens-Gorski, *Gustaf Gründgens*, 318.

⁴²⁶ “Der Schauspieler Gustaf Gründgens zum Thema Tonfilm,” *Die Woche*, September 1935.

This comment helps one understand his choice of film materials, often adaptations of plays or novels where the words and dialogue played an essential part. Gründgens' acting and directing style was also influenced by his work in diverse Berlin theaters and opera houses. He enjoyed working with music, singing and writing songs, and staging operas, such as Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Così fan Tutte*:

I have learned a lot by directing operas, because the singer must express, that which he wants to express, exactly within the beat given to him, whilst, let's say, to play a Gretchen in prayer one [actress] needs six minutes, another one might need four minutes [...] The order required by the music has fascinated me and has also influenced my later staging, the style of my staging.⁴²⁷

Many reviewers would later comment on the quality and the musicality of the dialogues in his films. Of all these experiences, Gründgens especially enjoyed directing, a task where he felt most comfortable.⁴²⁸ In 1930 he explained, in a highly ironic tone that points to his sense of self, that, as an actor "I, for example, have always worked very well with [the director Gründgens] although I am certainly not his ideal actor."⁴²⁹ Gründgens' preference for the role of director was rooted not only in his ambition, his controlling drive, and his search for perfection, which was often thwarted by directors he considered unskilled, but also in his experience working with Reinhardt. Described by Simon

⁴²⁷ Badenhausen and Gründgens-Gorski, *Gustaf Gründgens*, 318.

⁴²⁸ Gustaf Gründgens, *Wirklichkeit Des Theaters* (Frankfurt am Main: Edition Suhrkamp, 1963). In a 1930 poll asking theater actors and actresses to talk about their work with directors, the actor Gründgens wittily elaborated on his experience working with the director Gründgens, drawing a self-reflexive portrait of himself: "Problems are not debated, opinions not discussed and he [the director] knows how to skillfully avoid dissent. During the rehearsals, we agree quickly and easily with each other about German grammar. He likes to stay down to earth, even during intense work. A fanatic about precision, he is a sworn enemy of everything accidental, unclear, uncontrollable. The audience must understand what the actor is saying. The actor must understand what the poet is saying [...] Although he prefers the straightforward actors who speak directly to the heart and the mind, because he can talk to them openly, he also finds the right tone with the intricate and complicated ones: I, for example, have always worked very well with him, although I am certainly not his ideal actor."

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*

Williams as “adulated by some as the first truly modern stage director in that he established the director as the primary interpreter of the drama, Reinhardt was vilified by others as one whose ambitions to dominate all aspects of theatrical production bordered upon the megalomaniacal.”⁴³⁰ Gründgens followed a similar path in his journey from actor to director, and later as head of the Staatstheater Berlin, striving for more control and more autonomy.

He became a ubiquitous figure not only in Berlin but also nationally because of the numerous films he made.⁴³¹ Following a similar pattern to his theater career, Gründgens was relegated to playing the arrogant beaux, the *bon vivants*, and shady characters, epitomized in his role as the gentlemen crook in Fritz Lang’s *M* in 1931. His first roles were mostly supporting acts, but his performances were often commented upon, even abroad. In a New York Times article about director Carl Froelich, C. Hooper Trask described Gründgens in *Brand in der Oper* (Fire in the Opera House, Froelich, 1930) as “dapper, bold, with monocle in eye and a hard line around his mouth, he is a younger von Stroheim with considerably more variety. His very inability to be sympathetic makes us feel for him doubly.”⁴³²

His film parts grew in importance, as did his income, and he gained increasing leverage, which he used to set the terms of publicity and his wages. He could now ask to have his name printed in the same size font used for the main actors, and negotiated his

⁴³⁰ Williams, “The Director of the German Theater: Harmony, Spectacle and Ensemble,” 122.

⁴³¹ Herbert Ihering, *Pariser Platz 13*, in Herbert Ihering, *Von Reinhard Bis Brecht: Vier Jahrzehnte Theater Und Film* (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1961), 113. Between 1930 and 1933, Gründgens appeared in eleven feature films, alternating between low and high quality films with directors such as Gustav Ucicky, Eric Waschneck, Geza von Bolvary, Carl Froelich, Fritz Lang, and Max Ophüls. See filmography. His busy film work was partly motivated by financial needs. Gründgens was living a high standard of life, “cultivating an image of a worldly man with light decadent touch,” in Walach, *Aber ich habe nicht mein Gesicht*, 50. Gründgens was one of the “hundred thousands who can secure their means of existence with the extra income provided by film.” See “Lehren der Bühnen-Krise,” *Film-Kurier*, January 27, 1933.

⁴³² C. Hooper Trask, “Audible films inspire German producers,” *New York Times*, November 23, 1930.

honoraria, which were raised from 150 *Reichsmarks* per day for his first films to the ten thousand *Reichsmarks* he received for his main part of Friedrich Wilhelm III in *Luise, Königin von Preussen* (Luise, Queen of Prussia, Froelich, 1931) next to Weimar star Henny Porten.⁴³³ Gründgens was thus highly successful, with an income, from film and theater combined, reaching one hundred thousand *Reichsmarks* in 1932.⁴³⁴

But Gründgens was unhappy with the parts he played, especially in the theater. In his four years with Reinhardt, the man who was longing for Hamlet played only two classical parts: Orestes in Beer-Hofmann's staging of *Iphigenie* and Kalb in *Kabale und Liebe*. His theater and film performances were well received but he felt he had no possibility to advance his career. He expressed his frustration and anger in a lengthy open letter he wrote in 1932.⁴³⁵ Summarizing his early career, Gründgens narrates how he went "from playing Hamlet and Mephisto to faded *bon vivants* in stupid plays."⁴³⁶ Now was the time to move on, but he realized that he did not have the opportunity to develop because he was relegated to always playing the same type of characters and even the public was starting to identify him with this type.⁴³⁷ Consequently, Gründgens terminated his contract with the Deutsches Theater, broadly accusing its leadership of lacking any concrete plans and being responsible for the rapid deterioration and crisis the theater was

⁴³³ Gustaf Gründgens, Nachlass 316, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

⁴³⁴ BA RK C 59, 766f.

⁴³⁵ "Zur Situation des Schauspielers," 1932, in Gründgens, *Wirklichkeit Des Theaters*, 14–17. First published in Walter Firner, *Wir Und Das Theater* (München: Verlag F. Bruckmann AG, 1932).

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁷ Gustaf Gründgens, "Zur Situation des Schauspielers," in Gründgens, *Wirklichkeit Des Theaters*. "The theater was satisfied with the state of my development, and that it [the theater] had nothing else to offer to me. [...] I was again and again assigned the same tasks. I receive a face, which is enough. But I don't have my own face. All my passionate attempts to change this have failed. [...] In the meantime, my position is such that one starts in public to identify me with the characters I am staging. This goes too far. I stand up against this. Against the theater."

experiencing.⁴³⁸ In addition to unveiling Gründgens' own ambition, such analysis accurately depicted the situation of Weimar theater, described as "a director's theatre even more than an author's theatre."⁴³⁹ Gründgens thus was part of a set of actors who, having gained experience directing, were seeking more control over the artistic process. In May 1930, he was considered as a replacement for Dr. Robert Klein as the head of the Berliner Theater. When Joachim von Ostau was appointed instead, numerous actors and actresses, including Hans Albers, Heinz Rühmann, Marlene Dietrich, and Hans Brausewetter left the Berliner Theater, demonstrating their frustration with the theater system.⁴⁴⁰ In June 7, 1932, critic Herbert Ihering, who never minced his words about Gründgens' performances, now praised him for his "intellectual skills [...] his nerves, taste, and musical talent."⁴⁴¹ He concluded that Gründgens was necessary for the reconstruction of Berlin's theaters, and wrote, "he will decide if he wants to go for stardom or team work. I think Gründgens is smart enough to choose the team work."⁴⁴²

While his frustration and ambition were undeniable, it is unclear if the actor/director's public expression of discontent was a bluff considering that his film work had just taken an important turn. In April 1932, Gründgens was offered a contract from Elite Film Production to direct a film based on Gogol's play *Revisor*, a.k.a. *The Inspector*

⁴³⁸ Herbert Ihering talks about a "theater crisis" in his introduction to Walter Firner's collection of commentaries from renowned theater actors and actresses. See Firner, *Wir Und Das Theater*. Gründgens himself concluded, "it is no coincidence that more and more directors, and especially the actor-directors, take over the leadership of theaters." Here again Max Reinhardt example loomed large. The director had raised money and taken ownership of the Deutsches Theater in 1905.

⁴³⁹ Christopher Innes, "The Rise of the Director, 1850-1939," in *A History of German Theater*, ed. Mark Hamburger and Simon Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 171-197; Williams, "The Director of the German Theater: Harmony, Spectacle and Ensemble"; John Willet, *The Theatre of the Weimar Republic* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1988).

⁴⁴⁰ Heinrich Riemenschneider, "Gustaf-Gründgens-Ausstellung Anlässlich Seines Achtzigsten Geburtstages Am 22. Dezember 1979", 1980, 58.

⁴⁴¹ "Neue Schauspieler. Gustaf Gründgens. 7 Juni 1932," in Herbert Ihering, *Der Kampf Um Das Theater Und Andere Streitschriften, 1918 Bis 1933* (Berlin: Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft, 1974).

⁴⁴² Ibid.

General.⁴⁴³ Unsurprisingly, the actor/director, who was familiar and confident with the material, willingly accepted. This tale of corruption and satire of the *Spießbürgertum*, the conservative middle class, intrigued him immediately. Author Curt Alexander helped adapt the story from Gogol's Russia to a contemporary German province, transforming the text into interlaced stories with shortened dialogue, achieving a "*Tour de Farce* [sic]."⁴⁴⁴ Gründgens implacably unveiled the greed, stupidity, arrogance, and meanness of the German bourgeoisie in the film now entitled *Ein Stadt steht Kopf* (A Town Stands on Its Head). Conceived as a musical, the film was very much a product of his experiences directing operas and operettas, mirroring his musical sensibility and his sense of travesty.⁴⁴⁵ The director even wrote the text of the songs under the pseudonym Atila.⁴⁴⁶ Gründgens had thus successfully expanded his repertoire from theater and opera to film, with the very cross-disciplinary mastery of talents—with the exception of script authorship that would be called for during the Third Reich. One of the seventy-four directors responsible for 120 German films produced in Germany in 1932, Gründgens was thus part of a substantial group of first time sound film directors.⁴⁴⁷ While a few had worked as film technicians and writers, several came from the theater. Gründgens had the

⁴⁴³ Gustaf Gründgens, Nachlass 316, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

⁴⁴⁴ Herbert Holba, Günter Knorr, and Peter Spiegel, *Gustaf Gründgens: Filme* (Wien: Action, 1978), 6.

⁴⁴⁵ Describing Gründgens' work as a director, Herbert Holba wrote, "A set of scenes introduces the topic, decomposes it verbally but not optically. The characters entangle themselves in actions, which vary and grow to a kind of grotesque, a farce, which allows no escalation. A song, recited or sung, interrupts the *furioso* and brings the characters back to their original position. The musical *intermezzi* are simultaneously confession and monologue. In the same way that Lubitsch made the double standards visible by playing the same situation twice, Gründgens moralizes through the double explanation and achieves the same effects."

⁴⁴⁶ The film brought together some of Germany's top stars, such as Jenny Jugo, Theo Linggen, Heinrich Schroth, Paul Henckels, Fritz Kampers, Hermann Thimig, and Szöke Szakall. Many continued working with Gründgens at the Berliner Theater.

⁴⁴⁷ "Jahresschau der Filmarbeit in Zahlen. 5. Gestalter des Werks: 74 Schauspielleiter schufen 120 Filme," *Film-Kurier*, January 01, 1933. Among the new directors: Alfred Abel, Willi Forst, Hans Deppe, Fritz Kampers and Peter Erkelenz. Fellow actor Heinrich George had also his premiere as a film director with his first and only film *Schleppzug M 17*, starring his wife Berta Drews.

additional advantage of having worked as a stage director. We see here how film was dependent on the theater to find not only actors and actresses but also directors.

The film press took a renewed interest in him. In June 1932, *Filmwelt* featured a two-page article about Gründgens, calling him “a man of the times,”⁴⁴⁸ and praised the actor profusely for his role in *Teilnehmer antwortet nicht* (No Answer, Rudolph Cartier, 1932).⁴⁴⁹ He was pictured in his house, surrounded by his dogs,⁴⁵⁰ and also in shots from his films surrounded by his female co-stars.⁴⁵¹ Gründgens’ versatility as an actor and as a first time director was well publicized. The female star, Jenny Jugo, was on the cover of *Filmwelt* in January 1933, and in a presentation of the film, Gründgens was described as a “lively, modern man, with a crystal clear mind and the burning artistic temperament.”⁴⁵² Well-known film critic Lotte H. Eisner attended the premiere of *Ein Stadt steht Kopf* on January 21, 1933 and commented “it is insightful to observe the first film work of a man, who went from acting to directing plays and operas.”⁴⁵³ She praised his versatility, his smart competence, noticing that he consciously made a film “for the many” and not for a small circle of intellectuals.⁴⁵⁴ Eisner was especially impressed with Gründgens’ confident sense of space and his direction of actors, and she approved of his musicality.

⁴⁴⁸ “Gustav Gründgens. Ein Typ unserer Zeit,” *Filmwelt*, no. 26 (June 1932). Comparing Gründgens to his fellow actor Hans Albers (see chapter 5), the article argues that silent film did not know what to do with the talented actor and that only the arrival of sound film opened new opportunities. See the interesting description of his character: “Gründgens is in all the roles he plays a modern man of nerves, a child of our time, which does not let himself be stunned, a risk-taker/gambler, who plays with events and never loses his ironic superiority.” Carl Zuckmayer offered the same conclusion in 1943 in Zuckmayer, *Geheimreport*.

⁴⁴⁹ “Gründgens is nowadays the iciest and most calculating actor of the German cinema. With him, the words of the dialogue freeze between his teeth. That’s why he is magnificently convincing in the role of the cynical safecracker, although there is no doubt that such an intellectual thief can only be found in crime fiction. Yet Gründgens overcomes all opposition in his acting.” *Filmwelt*, no. 35 (August 1932).

⁴⁵⁰ *Filmwelt*, no. 11 (March 1933). For “domestic pictures,” see also *Filmwelt*, no. 21 (May 1933).

⁴⁵¹ *Filmwelt*, no. 4 (January 1933).

⁴⁵² *Filmwelt*, no. 3 (January 1933).

⁴⁵³ See *Film-Kurier*, January 21, 1933. Eisner’s comment is interesting, pointing to Gründgens reputation as “an intellectual,” something Goebbels will consistently complain about. One also senses the dichotomy between theater, as the art of the few, the elite, and film, made for the many, the masses.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

She described his playful work with sound and songs, and the ways in which he interspersed them with dialogues. Another compliment, which certainly pleased Gründgens, was that “he does not work with type (the very thing he complained about, CLF), but gets the best out of his actors.”⁴⁵⁵ Eisner finished by praising his depiction of the milieu, his sense for dialogue and his “quiet and delicate inclination for details.”⁴⁵⁶ The film was even reviewed in the *New York Times*, although much less enthusiastically.⁴⁵⁷

This success led to more offers. The company Cinema offered him a contract running from April 1933 to February 1934 for three feature films, guaranteeing him the right to decide the main character, the topic, the author of the script, the composer, and the technical staff, all unusual concessions at the time.⁴⁵⁸ Germany’s biggest film company, Ufa also made him an offer to direct three films in German with complementary French versions for twenty-five thousand *Reichsmark* per film.⁴⁵⁹ While none of these offers materialized, Gründgens’ parts improved a little. He had signed up with Elite Tonfilm for his role as Baron Eckersdorf in Max Ophüls’ *Liebelei*. For his small but unforgettable part in an all-star cast featuring Magda Schneider, Luise Ullrich, Wolfgang Liebeneiner, and Olga Tschechowa, Gründgens negotiated to have his name directly below the main actors’ names in the same size font.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ C. Hooper Trask, “Screen Notes from Germany,” in *New York Times*, March 19, 1933: “An equal disappointment was the first film of that very smooth-surfaced actor and stage director Gustaf Gründgens. His adaptation of Gogol's *The Inspector General* he renamed “A Town Stands on Its Head,” but it wasn't even a fraction as exciting as that.”

⁴⁵⁸ See Gustaf Gründgens, Nachlass 316, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

⁴⁵⁹ Correspondence with Ufa on December 27, 1932 and follow up on February 27, 1933 in Gustaf Gründgens, Nachlass 316, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

⁴⁶⁰ Correspondence with Elite Tonfilm on December 16, 1932 and follow up on January 2, 1933 in Gustaf Gründgens, Nachlass 316, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

In addition, at the time of the premiere of *Ein Stadt steht Kopf*, the actor was celebrating, his theatrical success at the Staatliches Schauspielhaus. Definitively breaking with Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater, Gründgens began on December 2, 1932, under the direction of Lothar Müthel, what would be his personal role of a lifetime: Mephisto in Goethe's *Faust*. Ihering attended the premiere:

One thing cannot be denied: An actor like Gustaf Gründgens generates excitement, wherever he appears. It is not easy to break through the reserved attitude of the Staatstheater Berlin audience. [...] Gründgens whirls. He asserts himself. He tantalizes. But he forces people to listen, to say yes or no.⁴⁶¹

Head of the Prussian Theater

When Hitler came to power in January 30, 1933, Gründgens was triumphing in *Faust II* at night, and filming *Liebelei* during the day. He had established a name for himself in Germany, both in theater and film, but this position was jeopardized by the National Socialist seizure of power. In view of the brutality of the brown shirts who had terrorized people in the streets of Berlin, lashing out against everyone who did not fit their image of what the German nation should be, Gründgens' life was in potential danger. He spent the following months in Tenerife on vacation and then in Spain for the exterior shots of Johannes Meyer's *Die schönen Tagen von Aranjuez* (The Pretty Days of Aranjuez). Only after friends reassured him of his safety did he come back to Berlin. He got news of the Nazi Boycott of Jewish shops on April 1, 1933 while on another trip abroad but decided to return, as he was, as he put it, responsible at that time for several people, including a Jewish friend.⁴⁶² Back in Berlin, Gründgens met Hermann Göring

⁴⁶¹ Herbert Ihering, "Faust in Staatstheater Berlin," *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, December 3, 1932.

⁴⁶² "I came to Paris, where my Jewish friend Carlheinz Jarosy called me: I had to come back. [...] Why did I have to come back? Because at that point I was responsible for the safety and the well being of five persons; my parents, and then a friend of mine who had exposed himself as communist, my Jewish friend

who reassured him that his contract with the Staatstheater Berlin would be honored. Early on, the head of Prussia was eager to establish the Prussian theater at the head of German theatrical culture. A year later Göring had grown increasingly dissatisfied with the work of the two stage managers, Hanns Johst and Franz Ulbrich, and offered the post to Gründgens. Having secured extensive freedom “to enforce good things and prevent bad things on an artistic and especially human level” during four weeks of negotiations, Gründgens finally accepted.⁴⁶³ The actor remained head of the Staatstheater Berlin and the Kleines Haus Theater until the end of the war. With the exception of a few special requests from the regime, Gründgens managed to keep the theater mostly free from Nazi propaganda.⁴⁶⁴ He established it as a place of classic theater, where not only the *crème de la crème* of German actors and actresses were eager to participate, but also some of the best stage directors, such as the genial but impulsive and irascible Jürgen Fehling.⁴⁶⁵ The productions were often sold out within a few hours.⁴⁶⁶

Ida Liebmann, and a fifth a friend of mine, whom I helped to flee to Switzerland in 1944 and who now lives in the USA. These five persons lived in my house on Hagenstraße. They belonged to my household.” Gründgens in a letter to Karl Marx, the editor of the *Allgemeinen Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland*,” December 13, 1950, reproduced in Badenhausen and Gründgens-Gorski, *Gustaf Gründgens*, 77–78.

⁴⁶³ Erich Ziegel in his statement under oath during Gründgens’ denazification process. In *Ibid.*, 318. The temporary position became a permanent one in October 1934. See Announcement in *Film-Kurier* on October 4, 1934.

⁴⁶⁴ For a history of the theater during the Third Reich see Drewniak, *Das Theater Im NS-Staat*; Henning Rischbieter, *Theater Im “Dritten Reich”: Theaterpolitik, Spielplanstruktur, Ns-Dramatik* (Seelze-Velber: Kallmeyer, 2000). There are surprisingly few English works about the topics: Glen W. Gadberry, *Theater in the Third Reich, the Prewar Years* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995); John London, *Theater Under the Nazis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Strobl, *The Swastika and the Stage*.

⁴⁶⁵ In addition to Jürgen Fehling and Gründgens himself, we see Lothar Müthel, Franz Ulrich, Erich Ziegel, Karl Heinz Stroux, the actors Hans Leibelt, Viktor de Kowa, Theo Lingen and Wolfgang Liebeneiner who would also direct film, as did Helmut Käutner. See the complete list in Peter Jammerthal, “Ein zuchtvolles Theater. Bühnenästhetik des ‘Dritten Reiches’” (Freie Universität Berlin, Philosophie und Geisteswissenschaften, 2005), 338-42.

⁴⁶⁶ For a good, critical summary of the plays staged under Gründgens see Heinrich Goertz, *Gustaf Gründgens* (Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, 1982); Peter Jammerthal, “Ein Zuchtvolles Theater: Bühnenästhetik Des ‘Dritten Reiches’” (Freie Universität Berlin, Philosophie und Geisteswissenschaften, 2005).

If Göring's decision to hire Gründgens had been mostly practical, the latter's acceptance was a surprise and a shock for his friends, many of them forced into exile. While Mann's novel has (unfairly) had the longest lasting impact on the public perception of the actor, Gründgens presented his decision as a conscious effort to keep the Nazi barbarity out of the theater.⁴⁶⁷ Such plans reflect not only Gründgens' famous self-confidence which bordered on arrogance but they also point to his belief in his own power, one that was rooted in his status as a man of the theater, perhaps the most revered art form in German culture. As he put it, Gründgens only felt like himself when he was acting and the world was a play in which he was the star and in command. To his credit, Gründgens tried to create a safe space, where he could (and indeed did) protect many endangered persons.⁴⁶⁸ Gründgens later confessed that the climax of his prolific career was between 1934 to 1945 when he was the unchallenged star of the German theater.⁴⁶⁹ Göring's motivation for hiring him was rooted in his bitter competition with Goebbels, and his attempt to establish the Staatstheater Berlin, which was under his jurisdiction, as the epitome of German theater. To achieve this, Goring was more than ready to overlook Gründgens' lack of ideological involvement as well as his notorious homosexuality. Such pragmatic attitudes were not uncommon during the Third Reich and illustrate some of the

⁴⁶⁷ Badenhausen and Gründgens-Gorski, *Gustaf Gründgens*, 77–82.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid. His biographers have willingly perpetuated this hagiographic version. In addition to Rolf Badenhausen's work, Alfred Mühr published four biographies of Gründgens: Mühr Alfred, *Gustaf Gründgens* (Hamburg: Toth, 1943); Mühr Alfred, *Großes Theater: Begegnungen Mit Gustaf Gründgens* (Berlin: O. Arnold, 1952); Mühr Alfred, *Rund Um Den Gendarmenmarkt: Von Iffland Bis Grundgens* (Berlin: Oldenburg, 1965); Mühr Alfred, *Mephisto Ohne Maske: Gustaf Gründgens, Legende Und Wahrheit* (Berlin: Langen Müller, 1981). See also Curt Riess, *Gustaf Gründgens: Eine Biographie, Unter Verwendung Bisher Unveröffentlichter Dokumente Aus Dem Nachlass*. (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1965). For collections of primary documents see Badenhausen and Gründgens-Gorski, *Gustaf Gründgens*; Walach, *Aber Ich Habe Nicht Mein Gesicht*. More recent works such as Heinrich Goertz's biography and the excellent collections of essays published in *Als Schauspieler fühle ich mich* have provided a more nuanced and complicated picture. Erika Fischer-Lichte and Dagmar Walach, "*Als Schauspieler Fühle Ich Mich*" *Gustaf Gründgens (1899-1963)* (Berlin: Bostelmann & Siebenhaar, 2000); Goertz, *Gustaf Gründgens*.

⁴⁶⁹ Jammerthal, "Ein Zuchtvolles Theater."

fundamental dilemmas of the Nazi regime, which was torn between the need to promote political correctness and the necessity to appeal to consumers. Göring was aware of the fact that Gründgens was central, if not essential, to the high quality of “his” theater—especially after the exile of many talented artists. In the face of Gründgens’ success, Goebbels reacted by nominating other actors as head of the theater under “his” supervision such as Eugen Klöpfer to the Volksbühne in 1936 and Heinrich George to the Schillertheater in 1938.⁴⁷⁰ But although both men were excellent actors, neither of them had Gründgens’ organizational talent and lacked his skills and experience as a director.

There is no doubt though that the actor-director’s personal career was a priority. In the midst of geopolitical upheavals, Gründgens never neglected business issues such as negotiating honoraria and fighting with UFA’s Hugo Corell about the size of his name on posters.⁴⁷¹ He also directed his second film for the Tofa Tonfilm Fabrikation, *Die Finanzen des Großherzogs*, (Finances of the Grand Duke) which premiered on January 10, 1934.⁴⁷² This time the film was loosely based on a novel by Swedish author Martin Gunnar, under the pseudonym Frank Heller. In 1924, Wilhelm Murnau had adapted the story of Ramon, Grand Duke of the imaginary and highly in debt country Sillorca. While travelling to Paris in hope of raising money, Ramon meets and falls in love with Olga, Grand Duchess of Russia, but both doubt each other’s identity. In the meantime a revolution breaks out in Sillorca and Ramon must go back. After a series of frantic chases, plots and counter-plots, the two become a couple and enjoy a happy ending. In

⁴⁷⁰ Viktor de Kowa was made head of *Theater am Kurfürstendamm* in 1944. See Goebbels’ diaries, April 25, 1944 and June 1, 1944.

⁴⁷¹ See Contract with Vador Film GmbH, on May 27, 1933 and Letter Gründgens to Hugo Corell August 8, 1933. Gustaf Gründgens, Nachlass 316, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Gründgens was on the cover of *Filmwelt* for the upcoming film *Die schönen Tagen von Aranjuez* no. 39 (September 1933). See also no. 40 (October 1933).

⁴⁷² Gründgens got a director’s fee of sixteen thousand *Reichsmarks*. See correspondence with Tofa Tonfilm Fabrikation GMBH, August 31, 1933. Ibid.

this satire of social status Gründgens used masterly details, often small objects, and revealed their power over human beings, who are dependent on, and are defined by, these very objects. He laughed at the “impoverished aristocracy, the culture of the “new-rich” and the kitsch of the bourgeoisie.”⁴⁷³ According to Herbert Holba, the first internal previews convinced the producers that the film would flop: the audience was not used to the sleek construction of the plot and the distanced direction.⁴⁷⁴ Only after foreign distributors praised the film, did they change their mind and launch the film with an impressive advertising campaign. However, Gründgens took offense to the critiques, calling the producers “cultural philistines,” and disregarded any advice on how to improve the film. He even refused to participate in any of the marketing, arguing that the film would find its audience, much to the anger of the distributors’ union, who blamed the film's original lukewarm success on his absence. Displaying a renowned self-confidence that many considered to be arrogance, Gründgens argued that bad marketing caused the film's poor reception.⁴⁷⁵

The film was actually well received by the audience and the critics in Germany and abroad. Critical of the script, especially its flat-ending, *Film-Kurier* praised the performances of the cast, Viktor de Kowa, Hilde Weißner, and Heinz Rühmann and described Gründgens’ work as “sophisticated. Sometimes a little too fine, sometimes a little too much in love with the details,” and added “one notices everywhere the subtle assiduity and the exact stylistic work.”⁴⁷⁶ *Filmwelt* commented “interesting and compelling how Gründgens directs the film; he constructs the scenes in ingenious

⁴⁷³ Holba, Knorr, and Spiegel, *Gustaf Gründgens: Filme*, 10.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ See correspondence with Neues deutsches Lichtspiel Syndikat Verleih GMBH, February 1934, in Gustaf Gründgens, Nachlass 316, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

⁴⁷⁶ Loh. “Filmkritik. Die Finanzen des Großherzogs,” in *Film-Kurier*, January 11, 1934.

ways.”⁴⁷⁷ Another article explained how “nothing in Gründgens’ ingenious directing is stenciled [...] Here we have charming lightness, peppiness, in every scene real cinematic composition. Parody, for which Gründgens is famous, is skillfully applied.”⁴⁷⁸ Indeed, advertisements for the film emphasized Gründgens’ direction (Figure 4.1).⁴⁷⁹ Goebbels personally chose the film to represent Germany at the 1934 Venice Film Festival.⁴⁸⁰

The dispute with the distributors obviously piqued Gründgens, who would not direct again until 1937. His focus was on the theater and his new responsibilities as the head of the Staatstheater Berlin and the Kleines Haus, as well as in 1941 the Lustspielhaus. The film press continued, however, to regularly praise Gründgens’ theatrical successes. He not only managed the institution but also staged and played world famous parts (Hamlet, Mephisto, Don Juan, Richard II, Fiesco and Julius Caesar), which contributed to his popularity.⁴⁸¹ While his priority was now undoubtedly the

⁴⁷⁷ *Filmwelt*, no. 2 (January 1934).

⁴⁷⁸ *Filmwelt*, no. 3 (January 1934).

⁴⁷⁹ See add on January 16, 1934. See attachment 1. Reviewing it for the *New York Times* on April 6, 1935, H.T.S. called the film “a comedy romance, flavored with some gay dances and peppy music,” which he described as having “a considerably good photography [and being] well-directed.” H.T.S. “At the 79th Street Theater,” in *The New York Times*, April 6, 1935.

⁴⁸⁰ *Filmwelt*, no. 27 (July 8, 1934).

⁴⁸¹ See how the reviewer of “Friedrich II” crowned Gründgens as the embodiment of “the aesthetic actor [...] who can dare anything because of his mastery of the technique,” in *Film-Kurier*, April 24, 1934.

Die Finanzen des Großherzogs

REGIE:
GUSTAF GRÜNDGENS

Drehbuch: Hans Rameau / Musik: Theo Mackeben

Mit

Victor de Kowa, Hilde Weissner, Heinz Rühmann
Paul Henckels, Theo Linggen
Der graziöseste Film der Saison

Der große Uraufführungs-Erfolg im Capitol
im Spiegel
der Fach- und Tagespresse:

Film-Kurier

Eine amüsante und herrliche Geschichte... Victor de Kowa hat hier seine großen Momente... ein Gewinn für den Film ist Hilde Weissner... Heinz Rühmann schießt den Vogel ab... kultivierte Regie... Gründgens hat einen großen und schönen Erfolg zu buchen... ein Sorgenbrecher...

Kinematograph

Ein amüsanter Film und ein bezaubernder Film... so wie ein Film sein soll... lustig ohne trivial zu sein. Bewundernswert wie Gründgens die Darsteller in der Hand hat... ein ganz famoser Film... Beifallsökän.

Licht Bild Bühne

...wirklich reizend und charmant, was da geboten wurde... eine entzückende Komödie... Gründgens hatte gute und greifartige Darsteller, er holte... alles aus ihnen heraus... Ein ausgezeichnetes Ensemble, von einem guten Schauspieler und Regisseur geführt... Es war der wohlverdiente Erfolg eines heiteren, sorglos machenden Films.

B.Z. Mittag

Ein stilistisches Meisterwerk... wundervoll stillich... wie selten fotografiert... einfach bezaubernd... ein Fest für das Auge, wie man es sich vollendeter kaum vorstellen kann... ein Triumph der Photographie.

Wochenspiegel

Gründgens hat diesen Film so leicht hingetupft, so viele kleine Pointen hineingezaubert, die Schauspieler in seinen suggestiven Bann gezogen, daß der ganze Film zu einer übermütigen sprühenden Eskapade im Reich der heitersten und anspruchlosesten aller Musen wurde... Das Ganze ein lauter, herzlicher Erfolg.

Berliner B. Tageblatt

Die Finger einer Hand reichen aus, um die Filme des heiteren Genres aufzuzählen, die sich mit diesem Film messen können... Gründgens... rückt mit diesem Film in die erste Reihe der Filmregisseure... überall Leben, Bewegung... Tempo, überall Schwung, Betrieb, Schwingen. Die Filmindustrie sollte sich diesen Film zum Vorbild nehmen.

Der Angriff

Ein romantischer Lustspiel, eine reizende flimmernde Nüchternheit, der das Uraufführungspublikum herzlichen Beifall spendete.

Berliner Börsen Zeitung

Gustaf Gründgens... erzielt eine wunderbare Stilleheit... beneidenswerte komödiantische Leichtigkeit... Der Premierenapplaus nahm am Schluß ein Übermaß an, wie man es im Capitol lange nicht erlebt hat.

MORGENPOST

Ein entzückendes Lustspiel voll tänzerischer Beschwingtheit und graziöser Laune... ein Märchenroman, aus dem man erst erwacht, wenn donnernder Beifall losbricht.

Der große Publikumsschlagler
Terminieren Sie rechtzeitig!
heim

Neuen Deutschen Lichtspiel-
Syndikat Verleih G. m. b. H.

Hersteller:
TOFA-TONFILM
FABRIKATIONS G.M.B.H.



Weltvertrieb:
CINEMA A.-G., BERLIN W 8

Figure 4.1 Ad for the film *Die Finanzen des Großherzogs*, *Film-Kurier*, January 16, 1934.

theater,⁴⁸² Gründgens continued to appear in films, albeit still confined to the same type of supporting roles, in which he, as usual, excelled: blackmailer in *Das Erbe in Pretoria* (Inheritance in Pretoria, Johannes Meyer, 1936),⁴⁸³ the opportunist Fouché in *Hundert Tage* (the German version of the Italian film *Campo di Maggio*)⁴⁸⁴ or the double agent Dr. Frost, “the Frankenstein of diplomacy, who betrays everything,”⁴⁸⁵ in *Schwarzer Jäger Johanna*, (Black Fighter Johanna, Johannes Meyer, 1934) next to his future wife, Marianne Hoppe. For many, his performance as the French King Karl in *Das Mädchen Johanna* (Joan the Maid, Gustav Ucicky, 1935) as a cold, distanced power politician and as a skeptic who is waiting for his chance, was a reflection of his own character. While this was the same old image Gründgens endeavored to shed, his film and theater work, including his nomination as the head of the Staatstheater Berlin, was well publicized and contributed to his growing media presence.⁴⁸⁶

By the time he received his next offer to direct a film, Gründgens had been nominated head of the Staatstheater Berlin and made a name for himself in classic

⁴⁸² While shooting his part as Metternich in *So endet eine Liebe* (The End of an Affair, Karl Hartl) in the summer of 1934, the actor had to leave the studio at 6 pm in order to be on stage; a schedule some members of the film team resented. See correspondence with Cine Allianz Tonfilm on July 27, August 17, and 20, 1934 in Gustaf Gründgens, Nachlass 316, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz. S-k . also complained in May 1938 about the double occupation of actor, who outspend themselves on stage at night and lack the energy while shooting during the day. S-k., “Auf dem Weg zur Qualitätssteigerung. Nachteile gleichzeitige Bühnen- und Filmarbeit. Ausschließlichkeit des Schaffens begünstigt die darstellerischen Leistungen,” *Film-Kurier*, May 9, 1938.

⁴⁸³ His performances are also praised abroad. See the review in *The New York Times*, “Das Erbe von Pretoria (1934) [...] Schliebach is played by Gustaf Gründgens, one of the leading lights of the German theater, whose film appearances were infrequent but always welcome.”

⁴⁸⁴ See the positive review of Gründgens’ performance in *Film-Kurier*, March 23, 1935, and *Filmwelt*, no. 9 (March 1934), and no. 50 (December 1934).

⁴⁸⁵ -r, “Review of *Schwarzer Jäger Johanna*,” *Film-Kurier*, September 20, 1934. Gründgens earned a “special success in *Schwarzer Jäger Johanna*, [where he] “played the great artistic solo.”

⁴⁸⁶ See the cover of *Filmwelt*, no. 13 (March 1935). A new *Filmbücher* dedicated to Gründgens was advertised in *Filmwelt* in June 10, 1934 and July 8, 1934.

parts.⁴⁸⁷ He seemed to have been offered, and could accept, different parts. In the spring of 1935, the Klagemann-Film company offered him the part of Professor Higgins in an adaptation of Shaw's *Pygmalion* under the direction of Heinz Hilpert. After Gründgens secured extensive changes in the script,⁴⁸⁸ the first adaptation of Shaw's play was finally made under the direction of Erich Engel.⁴⁸⁹ This film provides a good example of how filmmakers were aware and outspoken about the difficulties of adapting plays into films, something the director explained in an interview with *Filmwelt*.⁴⁹⁰ The director and his cameraman, Mondy, tried to eliminate the stiffness of the décor and to dissolve and loosen the dialogue through countless shots, so that they do not look too "stagey." The press reacted very positively to the film, even arguing that it was "breaking the spell of the obsessive idea of the shortcomings of dialogue-film, which was thought to be constrained by the cinematographic scope of design."⁴⁹¹

While the adaptation of a theatrical play was challenging, Gründgens' theatrical background, on the other hand, was seen as beneficial to the film. "Gründgens was predestined for the role of the experimenting Professor," commented the press. The actor,

⁴⁸⁷ *Filmwelt*, no. 43 (October 1934).

⁴⁸⁸ See correspondence between producer Georg Witt and Gründgens during the summer of 1935, in Gustaf Gründgens, Nachlass 316, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Gründgens had to fend off implications of star attitude: "by the way, it is not a film star, but a man, who thought he had, through continuous and serious work for the last fifteen years in all artistic fields, earned a certain respect, and who is now more than surprised about the way one negotiates artistic collaboration with him." This was not the first, not the last time. The *Reich Theater Dramaturg* Rainer Schlösser, responding to an inquiry about a dispute between Gründgens and Hinkel in 1942, explains how when he had to deal with Gründgens "it always started with Gründgens letting me know how the whole world [...] had hurt him beyond all measure. [...] I take this "Theater" always with the highest placidity, because it is rooted in a vibrant lack of self-confidence from the part of Herr Staatsrat. Such feeling could turned into anger and complicate all negotiations, if one did not sacrifice the necessary time." Rainer Schlösser, April 16, 1942, cited in Jutta Wardetzky, *Theaterpolitik Im Faschistischen Deutschland. Studien Und Dokumente*. (Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1983), 330.

⁴⁸⁹ Shaw wrote, together with W.P. Lipscomb and Cecil Lewis, the adaptation for the 1938 British film starring Leslie Howard as Professor Higgins. *Pygmalion* was also turned into a musical, *My Fair Lady* (1956), itself adapted to the screen in 1964.

⁴⁹⁰ *Filmwelt*, no. 28 (July 1935).

⁴⁹¹ S-k, "Mut zum Dialog-Film! Pygmalion-Erfolg als Ansporn," *Film-Kurier*, September 17, 1935.

famous for the quality of his diction, excelled in the role of Professor Higgins because of his meticulous attention to language. In an interview for the weekly magazine *Die Woche* Gründgens explained that “one must take [the spoken word in film] seriously, and one will only reach the goal [of making good films] when a way of speaking, that is at the same time free from trivial banalities and from bombastic excess, will have been worked out.”⁴⁹² He illustrated this in the film. For the press, the actor “self evidently” delivered the punch lines with panache and the film was considered a big success, much of it credited to Gründgens.⁴⁹³ Wolfgang Theis rightfully described his part as the beginning of a new era for Gründgens as an actor. He now played the (potential) romantic lover, without his usual monocle, replaced instead with fashionable glasses, which softened his look.⁴⁹⁴

While his theatrical roots were the very things that people wanted to see, and the reasons directors were hiring him, his work on the stage jeopardized Gründgens’ position. In May 1936, vicious attacks from the NSDAP’s paper *Völkischer Beobachter* lambasted Gründgens’ performance as Hamlet, accusing him of being “consciously antifascist,” not masculine enough, and of being “an actor [...] who delights, with decadent morbid vanity, in the footsteps of Oscar Wilde and his gentleman criminal Dorian Gray.”⁴⁹⁵ The

⁴⁹² “Der Schauspieler Gustaf Gründgens zum Thema Tonfilm,” *Die Woche*, September 1935.

⁴⁹³ S-k., “Review of Pygmalion,” *Film-Kurier*, September 3, 1935. The reviewer also remarked that Gründgens lacked vivacity playing the matters of the heart and appeared “contrived.” Leslie Howard, in the 1938 British film, left the same impression of coldness. See the full page of Gründgens and Jugo in *Filmwelt*, no. 32 (August 1935) and a center double page of Gründgens in *Filmwelt*, no. 44 (November 1935).

⁴⁹⁴ Wolfgang Theis, “Capriolen – Der Filmschauspieler Gustaf Gründgens,” in *Als Schauspieler Fühle Ich Mich* Gustaf Gründgens (1899-1963), ed. Erika Fischer-Lichte and Dagmar Walach (Berlin: Bostelmann & Siebenhaar, 2000).

⁴⁹⁵ Walterman Hartman, “Hamlets politisches Heldentum. Gedanken zum “Hamlet,” als der Tragödie nordischen Verantwortungsgefühls,” *Völkischer Beobachter*, May 3, 1936. On the different versions of the incidents see the original documents in Walach, *Aber Ich Habe Nicht Mein Gesicht*, 95–101. See also Drewniak, *Das Theater Im NS-Staat*, 247–248. The National Socialists had an interesting relation to

actor fled to Switzerland, afraid of reprisals. Göring, aware of Gründgens' homosexuality,⁴⁹⁶ appointed him as Prussian *Staatsrat*, a title which was not connected to any political function but which put him under Göring's personal protection and control.⁴⁹⁷ The film press celebrated Gründgens' new title, reprinting for example congratulation telegrams from the president and the vice president of the Reich Film Chamber, Dr. Lehnich and Hans Weidemann on the front page of *Film-Kurier*. Meanwhile *Filmwelt* had a full-page picture of Gründgens as Hamlet on its cover (Figures 4.2 and 4.3) and the Reich Film Chamber publication *Der deutsche Film* used also a picture of Gründgens as Hamlet in an article about acting professionals in its November 1936 issue.

Shortly after this episode, Gründgens married his colleague Marianne Hoppe.⁴⁹⁸ The union, which lasted until 1946, was soon the source of numerous satirical songs in Berlin.⁴⁹⁹ Gründgens' sexual preferences were indeed notorious in Berlin – much to the

Shakespeare and his work. See Werner Habicht, *Shakespeare and the German Imagination* (Hertford: International Shakespeare Association, 1994); Wilhelm Hortmann and Michael Hamburger, *Shakespeare on the German Stage: The Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Gerwin Strobl, "The Bard of Eugenics: Shakespeare and Racial Activism in the Third Reich," *Journal of Contemporary History* 34, no. 3 (1999): 323–336, <http://jch.sagepub.com/content/34/3/323.short>; Rodney Symington, *The Nazi Appropriation of Shakespeare: Cultural Politics in the Third Reich* (Lewiston N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005).

⁴⁹⁶ Gründgens had officially informed Göring in the wake of the Night of the Long Knives, where the murders of SA men was justified due to their homosexuality. See the more detailed narrative of what happened in Strobl, *The Swastika and the Stage*, 170–171. On homosexuality in Germany during the Third Reich see Burkhard Jellonnek, *Homosexuelle Unter Dem Hakenkreuz: Die Verfolgung Von Homosexuellen Im Dritten Reich* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1990). See also Günter Grau, *Hidden Holocaust? Gay and Lesbian Persecution in Germany, 1933-45* (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1995).

⁴⁹⁷ "Staatsrat Gustaf Gründgens," *Film-Kurier*, May 7, 1936 and, May 8, 1936. See *Filmwelt*, no. 5 (February 1936).

⁴⁹⁸ Carola Stern, *Auf Den Wassern Des Lebens: Gustaf Gründgens Und Marianne Hoppe* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2005).

⁴⁹⁹ Carl Zuckmayer reports the numerous jokes and rumors about the couple, which circulated in Berlin, in Zuckmayer, *Geheimreport*, 183. According to Marianne Hoppe, the marriage was "a real affair and a real marriage." In Zuckmayer, *Geheimreport*, 156–158. See also Peter Michalzik, *Gustaf Gründgens: Der Schauspieler Und Die Macht* (Berlin: Quadriga, 1999), 143.



Figure 4.2: Full page picture of Gründgens in *Hamlet*, *Filmwelt*, no. 5 (February 1936) (Left)



Figure 4.3: Congratulatory telegrams about his appointment as Staatsrat, *Film-Kurier*, May 8, 1936 (Right)

anger of Goebbels, who often complained about him and what he called the “Paragraph 175 ones,” referring to the legislation criminalizing homosexuality.⁵⁰⁰ Herbert Holba quotes a letter addressed to the head of the Nazi Cultural Office (*Reichskulturamtsleiter*) Franz Moraller, in which National Socialist cultural politicians reject an attempt to woo Gründgens to the Nazi cause:

As much as Gründgens is an industrious actor, film artist, and theater specialist, I think it is not appropriate [to appoint him to the] Presidential Council, because the

⁵⁰⁰ Goebbels regularly complained about Gründgens in his diaries, often in connection with homophobic comments. See for example below the entries on July 7, July 14, July 27, and July 28, 1937, regarding Gründgens’ film *Capriolen*.

odium of §175 cannot be separated from his person in the National Socialist public opinion, and his positive stance toward National Socialism is very recent.⁵⁰¹

That Gründgens, once again, decided to stay in Nazi Germany after the Hamlet incident is surprising. Despite Göring's patronage, his homosexuality remained highly problematic, and even life endangering, in the new National Socialist state. In addition to ambition, his contemporary Carl Zuckmayer offered a convincing analysis, worth quoting at length:

Brilliance and an enormous, unprecedented confidence in his appeal characterize his personality as an actor, as well as a stage director. [...] Theater is in each of his nerves; it is inseparable from his personal existence; play and life are for him congruent, and *play* as much in the sense of risky *ante*, in roulette or bluffing at poker, as in the sense of his mastery of the art. One can understand his career with the Nazis through this artistic, sublimated player nature, through this lust for the risky, for the juggling and the brilliant feats of balancing, for the jumping from vertiginous heights, [...], for representation, ostentation and fabulously controlled masks, – [through the lust] for power and danger. His relationship to power is extremely cynical and therefore always self-endangering. He savors it without ever abusing it, and he is ready to jeopardize it for a whim, for an elegant trick, sometimes even for a decent action. As much as he made his position with the big theater politics and personal relationships – as Göring's luxury champion against the narrow cultural politics of the party – as much as [...] he was up to all their tricks – he held up his artistic quality, his style and his personal way of living.⁵⁰²

That Goebbels tolerated the presence of Gründgens at the head of the *Staatstheater Berlin* was certainly rooted in Göring's protection. It is also possible that Gründgens was already too popular and too important to the Reich for him to be persecuted. A few months after the Hamlet incident, Goebbels sent a telegram to

⁵⁰¹ Holba, Knorr, and Spiegel, *Gustaf Gründgens: Filme*. Unfortunately without any archival references.

⁵⁰² Zuckmayer, *Geheimreport*, 131. Gründgens strongly refuted such explanation, arguing that there was “too much danger for him to enjoy [performing the balancing act on a tightrope]” many imputed to him. The expression “dancing on a tightrope” was first used by Carl Zuckmayer's report. It was then used by Peter Suhrkamp in his introduction to *Wirklichkeit des Theaters*. See Zuckmayer, *Geheimreport*, 153. Gründgens vehemently disputed such notion in a television interview in 1963. See Riemenschneider, “Gustaf-Gründgens-Ausstellung Anlässlich Seines Achtzigsten Geburtstages Am 22. Dezember 1979,” 189.

Gründgens on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Staatliche Schauspielhaus in Berlin, praising the stage manager for his “judicious artistic management.”⁵⁰³ Regardless of his reasons for staying and compromising with the Nazi regime, the Hamlet episode seems to have influenced the actor’s choice of future film roles. He definitely departed from the heavily powdered Dr. Frost in *Schwarze Jäger Johanna* a morally dubious character, whose effeminate manners were all too obvious. Following on the success of *Pygmalion*, Gründgens took the part of the unusual father George Illingworth in Hans Steinhoff’s adaptation of Oscar Wilde’s play, *A Woman of No Importance*. Here again the actor could rely on a literary basis. While the film also featured his wife Marianne Hoppe and one of Germany’s most renowned actresses, Käthe Dorsch, it was Gründgens’ face that was chosen to announce the making of the film.⁵⁰⁴ Media coverage of the film prominently featured the newly wed couple, Gründgens and Hoppe, surely an interesting constellation considering that in the film Gründgens plays the father of Hoppe’s fiancé.⁵⁰⁵ The film was well received despite some weaknesses in Thea von Harbou’s adaptation. The performances of Dorsch and especially Gründgens were celebrated in the press.⁵⁰⁶ The latter “shines” with all “the subtleties of his cultivated way of speaking. Even empty sentences have color with him and the audience is crazy about him.”⁵⁰⁷ Here again, it was his diction that earned him praise and his theatrical background was emphasized, as the *Berliner Nachtausgabe* put it “a gentleman the likes of whom had not been seen on stage

⁵⁰³ The telegram was reprinted in *Filmwelt*, no. 51 (December 1936).

⁵⁰⁴ See *Film-Kurier*, July 16, 1936. See also the drawings in *Filmwelt* on August 1936, no. 35, and the photographs from and articles about the film on September (nos. 37, 38, and 39), as well as October (nos. 42 and 43). Gründgens was on the cover of the popular magazine on November 1936, no. 44.

⁵⁰⁵ “Bilderbogen,” *Film-Kurier*, October 3, 1936 and another report of the film on October 24.

⁵⁰⁶ Goebbels found the film “good and partly captivating,” but disliked Dorsch’s performance, calling her “unfit for film.” Goebbels’ diaries, October 23, 1936.

⁵⁰⁷ “Review of *Eine Frau ohne Bedeutung*,” *Film-Kurier*, October 27, 1936.

or screen since Harry Walden. No one has the refined effortlessness and the liveliness that he has. Who can imitate that swirling temperament, that self-assured eloquence?”⁵⁰⁸

Capriolen: A War of the Sexes and Goebbels' Reaction

Hoppe and Gründgens appeared together in front of the camera a year later for his third film as a director, *Capriolen*, a cinematic adaptation of Jochen Huth's play *Himmel auf Erden*, (Heaven on Earth) which had been staged in Berlin in 1935 with Gründgens in the main role. This time the actor worked with fellow actor and director Willi Forst, who acted as writer and producer.⁵⁰⁹ The men also became members of the Artistic committee of the Tobis; together with Emil Jannings, they were hailed as the “Triumvirate of artists.”⁵¹⁰ Goebbels himself considered their nomination “a first success” in his reorganization of the film industry.⁵¹¹ It is unclear why Gründgens took such a step: had he been convinced by his fellow actor Willi Forst, or attracted by the possibilities of the powerful position? At that time, Gründgens was a recognized force in German theater, and was asked, for example, to lecture at the *Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft* about his work

⁵⁰⁸ Review published in the *Berliner Nachtausgabe* and used in the ad for the film reprinted in *Der deutsche film*, no. 5, November 1936. Like Gründgens, Harry Walden (1875-1921) worked under Max Reinhardt in the classic plays of Shakespeare, Goethe and Schiller. He created his own film company in 1912 and worked also as a director.

⁵⁰⁹ Willi Forst, born in Vienna Austria, had a fascinating career, which in many ways mirrored Gründgens'. From singing and acting in theaters and cabarets, Forst moved to film, directing and creating his own film production in 1936. He became a board member of Tobis in 1937 and led, from 1938-1945, Wien Film GmbH. See Robert Dachs, *Willi Forst: Eine Biographie* (Wien: Kremayr & Scheriau, 1986); G. S Daviau, “Willi Forst: Bel Ami in the Third Reich,” *Modern Austrian Literature* 32 (1999): 146–156; Armin Loacker, *Willi Forst: Ein Filmstil Aus Wien* (Wien: Filmarchiv Austria, 2003).

⁵¹⁰ See the front-page article in *Film-Kurier*, January 21, 1937. The board unanimously voted for their nomination on February 2, 1937. See *Film-Kurier*, February 2, 1937.

⁵¹¹ Goebbels' diaries, January 22, 1937.

as the head of the Staatstheater Berlin,⁵¹² and his work as a stage director was regularly praised.⁵¹³ His decision to accept the nomination certainly mirrored his growing interest in film; as such a position would have given him more freedom for his own film projects. But it also put him dangerously close to, and under the constant attention of Joseph Goebbels, “the patron of the film.” As will be shown in the next chapter, in the spring of 1937 Goebbels maneuvered to get increasing control of the film industry and the artistic committees were part of his plan: “The Ufa too must have an artistic committee, with which I can work. I will take the Tobis strongly under my wing.”⁵¹⁴ Goebbels’ ambition became more concrete in the following weeks. “From now on,” he added on February 15, “I will intervene more strongly in the [film] production.”⁵¹⁵ Two weeks later, he called a meeting with the heads of Tobis and the newly appointed members of the artistic committee to lay out *his* plan for the company.⁵¹⁶ Gründgens left the artistic committee a mere two months later, allegedly because of “work overload.”⁵¹⁷ The news of his departure was not made public and Gründgens still had an exclusivity contract as an actor and director with Tobis.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹² “Gründgens über Regie,” *Film-Kurier*, January 28, 1937. On the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft during the Third Reich see its own sponsored research “History of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society in the National Socialist Era,” at http://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/KWG/guests_e.htm See also Robert Dachs, Willi Forst. Eine Biographie (Wien: Kremayr & Scheriau, 1986); G. S Daviau, “Willi Forst: Bel Ami in the Third Reich,” *Modern Austrian Literature* 32 (1999): 146-156; Armin Loacker, Willi Forst : ein Filmstil aus Wien (Wien: Filmarchiv Austria, 2003).

⁵¹³ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Schöpferische Dramaturgie der preußischen Staatstheater Berlin,” *Film-Kurier*, February 12, 1937, Georg Herzberg on *Was Ihr wollt (Twelfth Night)*, *Film-Kurier*, June 14, 1937.

⁵¹⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, February 6, 1937.

⁵¹⁵ Goebbels’ diaries, February 15, 1937.

⁵¹⁶ Goebbels’ diaries, February 24, 1937.

⁵¹⁷ Goebbels’ diaries, April 29, 1937. In its June 1937 issue, *Der deutsche Film* celebrated the creation of the artistic committees, without mentioning Gründgens.

⁵¹⁸ Presenting its program for the 1937/1938 season, Tobis advertised a “program of big names,” with Gründgens figuring prominently, in *Film-Kurier* July 27, 1937.

Capriolen was a Deutsche Forst-Film production for Tobis. Following similar preparation for the stage, actors and director rehearsed for weeks to achieve the fast paced dialogue, modeled after the American screwball comedies.⁵¹⁹ Gründgens also fully utilized the numerous cinematographic tools at his disposal to “bring to the screen the rhythm of the technical age.”⁵²⁰ The plot took place in America, where the playful game with gender roles was possible. The happy resolution of the war between the sexes, where both the female pilot and the male journalist keep their personalities and their jobs, could have been problematic in National Socialist Germany. Heide Schlüpmann, for example, has argued that images of creative, independent women in National Socialist films were just propagandistic preparation for the incorporation of women in the armament industry.⁵²¹ Using the example of *Capriolen*, Ute Bechdorf, on the other hand, shows how “traditional gender stereotypes are held up and questioned,” and thus, “represents potential counter-images to the propaganda.”⁵²² In *Capriolen*, Marianne Hoppe’s character Marbel is depicted going from “womanly-strong” to “manly-weak” and eludes the usual objectification of female characters found in cinema. Gründgens’ Jack, on the other hand, is shot in soft focus and with close ups, surrounded by flowers and frills. Such display of the male character, considered threatening in traditional Hollywood cinema, is defused throughout the film by irony and parody (Figure 4.4).⁵²³

⁵¹⁹ Fita Benkhoff’s monologues are a case in point.

⁵²⁰ Holba, Knorr, and Spiegel, *Gustaf Gründgens: Filme*, 12.

⁵²¹ Heide Schlüpmann, “Trugbilder weiblicher Autonomie im nationalsozialistischen Film,” in *Frauen und Faschismus in Europa: Der faschistische Körper*, ed. Leonore Siegele-Wenschkewitz and Gerda Stuchlik (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1990), 211–227.

⁵²² Ute Bechdorf, “Erwünschte Weiblichkeit? Filmmische Konstruktionen Von Frauenbildern Im Nationalsozialistischen Unterhaltungsfilm,” in *Augen-Blick. Capriolen Und Vexierbilder. Neue Studien Zum NS-Unterhaltungsfilm* (Marburg: Schüren, 1993), 55.

⁵²³ Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975): 6–18.



Figure 4.4: Two scenes from *Capriolen* where Jack Warren/Gründgens is feminized and turned into the object of female desire.

Not surprisingly, Goebbels hated the film. The propaganda minister first mentioned it in his diaries on July 7, 1937: “The Führer also finds *Capriolen* awful. I will keep an eye on [Gründgens].”⁵²⁴ He got more specific a week later on July 14: “*Capriolen* is a typical Gründgens film with Hoppe, Bard, Benkhoff etc. Typical Gründgens, cold, intellectual, trenchant, and with metallic irony. In some cases even embarrassing.”⁵²⁵ Interestingly, on the same day, Goebbels ranted about homosexuals. He had talked about them with Hitler, who was “adamant: there is no pardon. Rightfully so. We have to clean the theater of them. And thoroughly.”⁵²⁶ Although Gründgens is not mentioned by name in this entry, the reference to the theater makes the connection clear. On July 27, Goebbels talked to his State Secretary Karl Hanke, “who was very dismayed at the cesspool of the Staatstheater Berlin. Gründgens must leave the country.”⁵²⁷ Goebbels juxtaposed information about the tenor Jansen being involved in §175 with the

⁵²⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, July 7, 1937.

⁵²⁵ Goebbels’ diaries, July 14, 1937.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

⁵²⁷ Goebbels’ diaries, July 17, 1937.

note “as expected Göring takes *Capriolen* defense. Gründgens had one of his hysterical fits. But I cannot cave in. The Führer must see the film himself”.⁵²⁸ The association between Gründgens and homosexuals was final on the next day: “All these §175 are hysterical like females.”⁵²⁹ In the face of Goebbels’ growing animosity towards Gründgens, Göring, who intended on keeping the head of “his” theater, appeared to have maneuvered in the background. Despite the fact that Hitler agreed that Gründgens “had to go away,” and “found *Capriolen* very bad,” Goebbels concluded that “nothing should be done for right now.”⁵³⁰ Gründgens had, once again, escaped a dramatic fate thanks to Göring’s intervention, but his homosexuality remained a potential source of danger throughout the Third Reich. Goebbels regularly mentioned it in his diaries, albeit often in connection with other people’s comments. In August 1941, for example, he had a conversation with Hitler about the Staatstheater Berlin, during which the latter expressed his dislike of Gründgens, which was followed by a rant about the danger of homosexuality.⁵³¹ Goebbels’ own opinion of Gründgens fluctuated over time, a mix of praise and criticism, seemingly contingent on the broader political context and on his relationship with Göring. It ranged from “Gründgens appointed *Generalintendant*,” on December 25, 1934, “Next thing you know he will be emperor!” to a note from

⁵²⁸ Goebbels’ diaries, July 28, 1937. The Nazis have been known to use the pretext of §175, sometimes even fabricating a scandal, to further their political agenda, as in the “Blomberg-Fritsch affair.” See Karl-Heinz Janßen and Fritz Tobias, *Der Sturz Der Generäle: Hitler Und Die Blomberg-Fritsch-Krise 1938* (München: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1994); Kirstin A. Schäfer, *Werner Von Blomberg: Hitlers Erster Feldmarschall* (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006).

⁵²⁹ Goebbels’ diaries, July 29, 1937.

⁵³⁰ Ibid.

⁵³¹ Goebbels’ diaries, August 19, 1941. “The Führer does not like Gründgens. He is too “unmanly”. In his opinion, one should not tolerate homosexuality in public life at all. Especially the Army and the Party should be free of it [...] A real man would always fight against it [homosexuality] because he sees in it an attempt to destroy his own development potential.” Hitler ordered in February 1942 that seventy-five men be sentenced to death. Goebbels welcomed the measure as “a benedictory measure, which will protect the elite organizations of the party against this cancer damage.” (February 25, 1942).

November 15, 1938 after a meeting with the actor, “we talked about his new film. He is a funny man.”⁵³² In addition to his social skills, “Gründgens is very funny [...] He can so delightfully tell stories. We are enjoying ourselves royally,” Goebbels could not but be impressed by Gründgens’ success.⁵³³ After attending a production of *Hamlet* directed by Müthel on June 14, 1938, he wrote “A magnificent theater evening, wonderfully tuned play,” and concluded that “Gründgens [was] only every now and then somehow decadent,” but “the audience is delighted.”⁵³⁴ While he noted in 1939, “He is a smart and sympathetic guy after all. And most importantly, he can do a lot,” by 1941 his opinion of Gründgens had changed for the worse.⁵³⁵ Goebbels complained about his staging of *The Magic Flute*, “I am very unhappy with this development of the theater. Thank God, it is only an exception and after the war the Führer will deal with this problem too.”⁵³⁶

Notwithstanding Goebbels and Hitler’s reservations about the film, *Capriolen*, which premiered on August 11, 1937, was a success.⁵³⁷ The story of a man and woman fighting and loving each other certainly benefited from the “real” union between the two main actors, who married just a year ago.⁵³⁸ It was also a signal role for Gründgens who appeared relaxed and confident, displaying his famous mastery of language, as an actor and a director.⁵³⁹ The press also emphasized that Gründgens was one of the few individuals able to excel equally in both jobs.

⁵³² Goebbels’ diaries, December 25, 1934.

⁵³³ Goebbels’ diaries, September 5, 1936.

⁵³⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, June 14, 1938.

⁵³⁵ Goebbels’ diaries, June 06, 1939.

⁵³⁶ Goebbels’ diaries, May 12, 1941.

⁵³⁷ See reports about the film in *Filmwelt*, no. 17 (April 1937) and no. 21 (May 1937). Interestingly, the regime’s magazine, *Der deutsche Film*, gave only a quick summary of the film, with an illustrating photograph, but no review or comments. See *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1937): 30-31.

⁵³⁸ *Filmwelt* featured an article about the couple in their home. See no. 45 (November 1937).

⁵³⁹ Georg Herzberg, “Capriolen,” *Film-Kurier*, August 11, 1937. See also *Filmwelt*, no. 17 (April 1937), “Every time the infallible ear of Gründgens notices a sound that differs by a hairbreath from the speech

Debureau: An Actor Playing an Actor Playing...

Gründgens' next film was announced in the summer of 1937.⁵⁴⁰ The story, based on the historical character of "Debureau," a "brilliant man, whose overflowing vitality threatens to destroy him," seemed to be a perfect match for Gründgens.⁵⁴¹ A favorite of the French theater audience, Debureau was the secret head of the political *Fronde* against Karl X. How could Gründgens resist the story of this man, who "every evening sings on the stage, attacking the King with sharp chansons. The censorship does not intervene – "too subtle, too hidden are his punch lines.""⁵⁴² Director Hans Steinhoff explained why Gründgens was the only possible choice: "[he has] the greatness of the tragedy together with the effervescent light art of the language, in order to be able to master a mocking chanson."⁵⁴³ The audience had to wait a whole year before the premiere of the film, with the provisional title "Genius and Passion," but regular reports in the film press kept expectations alive.⁵⁴⁴ Berliners, though, could enjoy Gründgens in several prestigious theatrical productions, including *The Marriage of Figaro*, which illustrated Gründgens'

melody that has been assigned to every actors, the director brings that immediately back in order." See also *Filmwelt*, no. 23 (June 1937): "[Gründgens] is a lover of language."

⁵⁴⁰ "40 Spielfilme der Tobis. Das Programm des großen Namen," *Film-Kurier*, July 27, 1937.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*

⁵⁴³ *Filmwelt*, no. 25 (June 1938).

⁵⁴⁴ *Film-Kurier* distributed excerpts from the script, ("Debureau: Karls Thron ist Morsch! Ich werden ihm den ersten Stoß geben!" May 28, 1938); a picture of Gründgens/Debureau in prison decorated the front page on June 04, 1938, and a full-page article with a picture of the main actress Sybille Schmitz appeared two weeks later. See –ck. "Ein künstlerischer Dreiklang; Gustaf Gründgens, Sybille Schmitz, Hans Steinhoff," *Film-Kurier*, June 18, 1938. The shooting was slowed down as Gründgens injured his foot, preventing him from playing in *Emilia Galotti* in the evening and forcing him to postpone his trip to Denmark for a guest performance of Hamlet. See "Gustaf Gründgens im Atelier verunglückt," *Film-Kurier*, June 20, 1938. The trip was eventually a success. See "Lorbeerkränze für Gründgens," in *Film-Kurier*, August 2, 1938.

“directing genius,”⁵⁴⁵ *Emillia Galotti* by Lessing, and his performance as Frederic the Great in *The Seven Year Wars* from the Nazis’ favorite Hans Rehberg.⁵⁴⁶

During that time, Gründgens, like other fellow directors, signed an agreement with the company Terra and established his own production unit, the *Gustaf Gründgens-Produktion*. Such a move allowed him “to realize his cinematic plans, as a director, as an actor, and as the artistic director.”⁵⁴⁷ This type of arrangement was also very profitable for the Terra, who utilized the new contract with Gründgens, and its affiliation with the Staatstheater Berlin, to profile itself. The actor-director figured prominently in the company’s advertising campaign presenting its upcoming films.⁵⁴⁸ The first two projects were to be an adaptation of Theodor Fontane world renowned novel *Effi Briest*, followed by *Gösta Berling*, an adaptation of Selma Lagerlöf’s novel.⁵⁴⁹

Gründgens cinematic media-exposure reached an unusually high point in the summer of 1938 with the publication in *Film-Kurier* of a lengthy contribution by Gründgens himself. During the shooting of the *Debureau* film, Gründgens entertained a series of questions from journalists who visited the set. According to the journalist S-k., Gründgens “opposed a filmic principle of creation, which relies on theory or on an overrating of the technology.”⁵⁵⁰ Film is too young for people, often some who have no experience with the practical making of films, to argue about and try to construct a theory

⁵⁴⁵ Hans Schumacher, “Im Staatstheater Berlin (Kleines Haus) “Der tolle Tag,” *Film-Kurier*, February 11, 1937.

⁵⁴⁶ See the review of Hermann Wanderschek in *Film-Kurier*, April 9, 1938. On Hans Rehberg see Zuckmayer, *Geheimreport*, 64–65. For a detailed reading of the two later plays see Jammerthal, “Ein Zuchtvolles Theater,” 261–317.

⁵⁴⁷ “Gustaf Gründgens-Produktion der Terra-Filmkunst. Erster Film: “Effi Briest,” *Film-Kurier*, July 1, 1938.

⁵⁴⁸ “Ein Programm das sich sehen lassen kann. 25 neue Filme der Terra Filmkunst,” *Film-Kurier*, July 20, 1938.

⁵⁴⁹ The later project was never realized.

⁵⁵⁰ S-k., “Grau, Freund, ist alle Film-Theorie,” *Film-Kurier*, August 19, 1938.

of film directing. For Gründgens, while many readily refer to Lessing and his theory of the theater, one forgets that theater had gone through a century long evolution before *Laocoon* was written in 1766.⁵⁵¹ Addressing the fear that many filmmakers experience facing technology, Gründgens responds that techniques such as montage, editing, crane shots or dissolves must be put to the service of the artist. But while he himself made use of such technology, the centerpiece of his film had always been the dialogue.

Gründgens' philosophy of filmmaking – summarized under the headlines “In particular cases, the artistic internal/personal instinct, must guide the filmmaker” – was thus pretty much in sync with the discourse of artistic creation of the genius, who must *feel* things.⁵⁵² As will be shown in chapter 7, this idea of the artistic genius was debated throughout the Third Reich. The Film Academy must be seen as part of the efforts to resolve the tension between the idea of inherent artistic genius and the necessity of training and hard work.

While the promotion of the film was in full swing,⁵⁵³ *Tanz auf dem Vulkan* had to go through censorship and get Goebbels' approval. On November 19, the propaganda minister wrote “Reviewed *Tanz auf dem Vulkan* with Gustaf Gründgens. A typical Gründgens' work. A little too cerebral. Still needs to be edited.”⁵⁵⁴ Although Hitler did not like Gründgens' acting and Steinhoff's directing, the film nevertheless received the

⁵⁵¹ Such analogies angered film proponents, who fought against them. See Dr. Franz Wallner-Basté, “Kinderschuhe oder Siebenmeilenstiefel? Man darf das Entwicklungstempo des Films nicht dem das Theaters vergleichen,” *Film-Kurier*, February 18, 1939.

⁵⁵² S-k., “Grau, Freund, ist alle Film-Theorie,” *Film-Kurier*, August 19, 1938.

⁵⁵³ See a long article recalling Gründgens' theatrical beginning while in the army, a set of pictures and drawings, even a poem illustrated with caricatures of the main actors and actresses. Eric Weinscheck, “Als der gefreiete Gründgens Theater spielte,” *Film-Kurier*, September 03, 1938, *Film-Kurier*, September 09, November 15, and December 16, 1938. See also the articles in *Filmwelt*, no. 25 (June 1938); no. 27 (July 1938); no. 35 (August 1938), and no. 40 (September 1938). The popular magazine devoted a special edition of *der Scheinwerfer*. Gründgens and director Hans Steinhoff were also on the cover of *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2 (August 1938).

⁵⁵⁴ Goebbels' diaries, November 19, 1938.

rating “artistically valuable,” and opened on November 30, 1938 in Stuttgart.⁵⁵⁵ Despite the revolutionary story, it is doubtful that the director Hans Steinhoff (who also directed *Hitler Junge Quex*), who wrote the script together with the Nazi sympathizers Hans Rehberg and Peter Hagen, also responsible for the libretto, “intended to make a film criticizing a totalitarian state.”⁵⁵⁶ It is indeed more likely that they were careful not to give such an impression. While Felix Henseleit praised the historical details,⁵⁵⁷ Günther Schwark’s criticism that “the street scenes, especially during the outbreak of the revolution are missing the thrilling, poignant atmosphere of turmoil,”⁵⁵⁸ echoed Ilse Wehner’s disappointment regarding the depreciatory depiction of all the political actors.⁵⁵⁹ She was especially irked at the “operetta like ending of an serious film,” obviously missing the fact that the filmmakers intended to create “a colorful spectacle with politics, love, theater.”⁵⁶⁰

At the center of the film was of course, Gründgens. The *Berliner Volkszeitung* wrote “an acting success for Gustaf Gründgens,” while the *Breslauer Neueste Nachrichten* commented “It is the impressive acting performance of Gustaf Gründgens, which we admire.” The National Socialist publication *Der Angriff* offered this opinion

⁵⁵⁵ BA / NS10. Report from November 11, 1938.

⁵⁵⁶ Bogusław Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945: Ein Gesamtüberblick* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1987), 201. Mary-Elizabeth O’Brien traces the production history of the film and corrects the myth that the film, and later the main song, *Die Nacht ist nicht allain zum Schlafen da*, were banned in O’Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment*, 19.

⁵⁵⁷ Felix Henseleit, “Szene zwischen den Zeotaltern: nachtaufnahmen in Johannistahl für den Gründgens-Film *Tanz auf dem Vulkan*,” *Licht-Bild-Bühne*, no. 186 (August 10, 1938). Cited in O’Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment*, 21–22.

⁵⁵⁸ Günther Schwark, “Tanz auf dem Vulkan,” *Film-Kurier*, December 17, 1938. He bemoaned especially the use of caricature and montage instead of “realistic tools.”

⁵⁵⁹ Ilse Wehner, “Filme des Monats,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1939): 195.

⁵⁶⁰ Gründgens in Eric Weinscheck, “Als der Gefreiete Gründgens Theater spielte,” *Film-Kurier*, September 3, 1938.

“The film belongs to Gründgens... his character, his voice, his eyes.”⁵⁶¹ The *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (DAZ)* newspaper summarized it by explaining how “Gründgens as Debureau masterfully uses every opportunity to show his humor, his malleability and elegance, his ironic pleasure for comedic demeanor.”⁵⁶² Indeed, the reviewers and the audience recognized that it was foremost a Gründgens’ film; the very same thing Goebbels had bemoaned.⁵⁶³ Brian Curry remarks how “the extent to which the film makes use of Gründgens’ unique theatricality begs an interpretation of this film within his star text.”⁵⁶⁴ The film worked the best when Gründgens/Debureau was in his element, the theater. It allowed thousands of viewers to experience how Gründgens was on stage: “the elasticity of his play, the panache of his movement, the artistry of his parry with words, which are part of Gründgens’ charisma on stage, are now seen in film.”⁵⁶⁵ In the special edition to *Filmwelt, Im Scheinwerfer*, Hans Hufszky argues that both Debureau and Gründgens are one and same, or close relatives, separated by only hundred years,⁵⁶⁶ and the magazine highlighted their physical resemblance and shared passionate temperament.⁵⁶⁷ The readers/viewers are thus led to think that not only Gründgens stands for Debureau, but also Debureau gives us insights into Gründgens. In one scene Debureau/Gründgens declares his love of the theater, and its audience:

⁵⁶¹ These “film comments” were used in an advertisement for the film published in *Film-Kurier* on December 23, 1938, under the headline: “The audience was fascinated: A success, a tremendous success? But of course.”

⁵⁶² “Tanz auf dem Vulkan. Murr nicht den Dubereau!” *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 17, 1938. Printed in Walach, *Aber Ich Habe Nicht Mein Gesicht*, 56–58.

⁵⁶³ This was a project dear to the director Steinhoff, who reportedly waited fifteen years to make the film, because he wanted Gründgens to play the main role. O’Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment*, 53, footnote 18.

⁵⁶⁴ Brian Currid, *A National Acoustics: Music and Mass Publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 115–116.

⁵⁶⁵ Günther Schwark, “Tanz auf dem Vulkan,” *Film-Kurier*, December 17, 1938.

⁵⁶⁶ Hans Hufszky, “Gustaf Gründgens als Debureau,” *Scheinwerfer*, no. 50 (December 1938).

⁵⁶⁷ Ej, “Debureau spielt Louis Philippe: Nachtaufnahmen zu *Tanz auf dem Vulkan*,” *Filmwelt*, no. 35 (August 1938).

Because it is the greatest thing in the world for me to stand there as the curtain goes up and to know that all the people down there are waiting for you and what you have to say to them. You know their desires and dreams, and you can fulfill them. You know their happiness and misery, you can make them laugh and cry. Night after night you fight with them to conquer their hearts! To enchant them enchants me. They let themselves be led by me and I lead them to where they will be happy: in the eternal realm of art.⁵⁶⁸

This “commitment to the profession and vocation of acting” was the only scene Ilse Wehner deemed “real and moving.”⁵⁶⁹ She also conflated Gründgens and Debureau in a description reminiscent of Carl Zuckmayer’s analysis, calling him “cold, superior, sarcastic, putting everything on one card, at the same time full of burning love for the art, this is Gründgens Debureau.”⁵⁷⁰

In addition to the acting and directing, the music was also remarked upon. Dr. Hermann Wandercheck, in his regular column about film music (see chapter 5), praised Theo Mackeben’s work, as an example of a composer, who uses music not only to “underline” the film, but as a constitutive part of the film.⁵⁷¹ Following its premiere in Stuttgart, the film conquered Berlin.⁵⁷² But Gründgens was already working on his next film project, this time as a director.

Another Adaptation: *Effi Briest*

Gründgens had given a copy of Fontane’s *Effi Briest* to his wife Marianne Hoppe as a wedding present in 1936. Two years later, now with his own production unit with

⁵⁶⁸ *Tanz auf dem Vulkan*, 54:15. This scene has intriguing sexual components. Gründgens/Debureau makes this declaration of love and promises of fulfillment and pleasures while he is in bed, dressed in his nightgown.

⁵⁶⁹ Ilse Wehner, “Filme des Monats,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1939): 195.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷¹ Dr. Hermann Wandercheck, “Die Woche nach Noten. Variationen um ein ernstes Thema,” *Film-Kurier*, December 17, 1938.

⁵⁷² See O’Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment*, 53, footnote 16.

Terra,⁵⁷³ he directed the first of five film adaptations of the novel.⁵⁷⁴ The upcoming celebration of the fortieth anniversary of Fontane's death in September 1898 made the project especially well timed.⁵⁷⁵ It immediately drew a lot of attention. The leading German press, including *Berliner Börsen Zeitung*, *Berliner Zeitung am Mittag*, *DAZ*, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, *Hamburger Tagesblatt*, *Kölnische Zeitung*, *Rheinische Westfälische Zeitung*, as well as *Völkischer Beobachter* reported meticulously about the preparation and the shooting of the film.⁵⁷⁶ The cast included the big names of Gründgens' ensemble, such as Marianne Hoppe, Paul Hartmann, Karl Ludwig, Käthe Haack, and Elisabeth Flickenschildt. In addition to the actors and actresses of his theater, Gründgens also brought technicians and other artists with him: Mark Lothar wrote the music; Trautgott Müller conceived the costumes and decor. Part of the script, an especially dramatic scene, was reprinted in *Film-Kurier* on November 26, 1938. Riding on the success of *Tanz auf dem Vulkan*, the advertisement for *Der Schritt vom Wege* started as early as October 28, 1938, emphasizing the name Gründgens.⁵⁷⁷

In this 1894 novel, the seventeen year old, carefree, Effi is married off to a thirty-eight-year-old aristocrat, von Insstetten. Neglected by her husband, alienated in the conservative small town where they have moved, Effi enters into an extra-marital affair with Major Campras. Years later, after the couple has moved to Berlin where Effi

⁵⁷³ Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 73 and 114. *Film-Kurier*, July 1, 1938.

⁵⁷⁴ See also *Rosen im Herbst* (Rudolf Jugert, 1955, FRG), *Effi Briest* (Wolfgang Luderer, 1968, GDR). *Fontana Effi Briest* (Rainer Werner Fassbinder, 1974, FRG), *Effi Briest* (Hermine Huntgeburth, 2009).

⁵⁷⁵ On the numerous cinematic adaptations of Fontane's novels during the Third Reich see Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 495–497.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 495. See also Schu., in *Film-Kurier*, October 22, 1938. In his book on the cinema in the German press, Kurt Wortig uses the film, which he considers one of the best films ever made, as a case study, and reprints more than ten complete reviews of the film. See Kurt Wortig, *Der Film in Der Deutschen Tageszeitung* (Frankfurt am Mainz: Moritz Diesterweg, 1940), 81–92.

⁵⁷⁷ See reports about the shooting in *Filmwelt*, no. 44 (October 1938), and the ads in *Film-Kurier*, December 17, 1938, and *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (February 1939).

achieves some happiness, her letter exchanges with Camprás are discovered. Her husband, following the strict honor code of his time, challenges the Major and kills him in a duel. Having obtained the sole custody of their daughter, Annie, in the divorce, he inculcates in Annie a latent feeling of disdain for her mother. Heart-broken, shunned by society, Effi is finally taken in by her parents where she tries to recover from her nervous disorder. She dies serenely, having expressed her regrets and her willingness to forgive the pain with which she has been bedeviled over the course of her declining years.

Contemporary reviewers had different interpretations of the film. Robert Volz in *Der deutsche Film* felt the need to warn against such behavior and reassure his readers that “it is not necessary to justify how in Adolf Hitler’s *Reich* the family represents the sacrosanct force of the internal and external structure of the *Volk*.”⁵⁷⁸ For the editor in chief of *Film-Kurier*, on the other hand, Effi’s “natural free spirit connects her to contemporary youth.”⁵⁷⁹ In his sympathetic reading of the film, Günther Schwark rejoiced about “the positive societal change from yesterday to today,” and the fact that Effi would not experience the same fate in 1939. Similarly, Hans Erasmus Fischer in the popular *Filmwelt* emphasizes how the novel and the story were a good mirror of nineteenth-century society and he describes Effi’s situation sympathetically.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁸ Robert Volz, *Der deutsche Film*, March 1939, 270-272.

⁵⁷⁹ Günther Schwark, “Der Schritt vom Wege,” *Film-Kurier*, February 10, 1939.

⁵⁸⁰ Hans Erasmus Fischer, “Review of *Der Schritt vom Wege*,” *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (February 1939): 28. Two years later, Wilhelm Hackbarth wrote in *Filmwelt* about “the woman throughout the ages,” and uses Effi Briest as an example of how things had changed for women, “When Theodor Fontane wrote the novel half a century ago [...] his young heroine was sure to receive the deserved concern and even real compassion, because one could assume [...] that it was based on a real story. Two years ago, when the story put in scene so empathetically by GG, [...] played in the theaters, we were impressed by the strong artistic composition of the work, but we felt at the same moment a certain detachment because we are living in a different time,” in *Filmwelt*, no. 17 (April 1941).

Thus, despite some reservations, the reception was overwhelmingly positive and the film received the rating “artistically valuable.”⁵⁸¹ In the city of Essen, the *National-Zeitung* celebrated the film as “the best cinematic adaptation of all time.”⁵⁸² Werner Fiedler in the *DAZ* lauded Gründgens’ diligent efforts to match Fontane’s realism.⁵⁸³ Gründgens had forgone cheap effects and exaggerated pathos: no duel scene, no death on camera. “Effi Briest’s husband was not the caricature of the pedantic civil servant, nor was Campras the unscrupulous seducer,” commented Günther Schwark.⁵⁸⁴ *Filmwelt* praised his directing skills, “Gründgens’ direction is exceptional. How talented he is to create such an atmosphere!”⁵⁸⁵

In terms of style and technique, Gründgens combined techniques from the film and the theater world. With his cameraman Ewald Daubre, he created an extremely visual film, where shots, especially of landscape in a combination with Mark Lothar’s music, are used to express the feelings of the characters. On the other hand, many scenes situated inside the house were shot frontally, reminiscent of a theater stage, so that “the furtive, the anticipating, the eerie, the symbolic usually found in film are missing.”⁵⁸⁶ For the dialogue, Gründgens used “certain stage-like expressions, which are surprisingly useful for the characterization of yesterday’s milieu.”⁵⁸⁷ It is interesting here that theater, or theatrical style is seen as something from the past, something antiquated. While some

⁵⁸¹ A. Rosenberg bemoaned the choice of a 19th century material instead of more contemporary topics. See *Nationalistische Monatshefte* (NSMH), no. 4 (June 1939). Quoted in Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 496.

⁵⁸² *National-Zeitung*, February 16, 1939, cited in Ibid.

⁵⁸³ Werner Fiedler, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 10, 1939. Quoted in Paul Coates, “National Socialism and Literary Adaptation: Gustaf Gründgens’s *Der Schritt Vom Wege* and Helmut Käutner’s *Kleider Machen Leute*,” *German Life and Letters* 53, no. 2 (2000): 234.

⁵⁸⁴ Günther Schwark, “*Der Schritt vom Wege*,” *Film-Kurier*, February 10, 1939.

⁵⁸⁵ Hans Erasmus Fischer, “Review of *Der Schritt vom Wege*,” *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (February 1939): 28.

⁵⁸⁶ Eberhard Schulz, “Ein Schritt vom Wege. Fontanes “Effi Briest” im Film,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, February 11, 1938. Reprinted in Walach, *Aber Ich Habe Nicht Mein Gesicht*, 59–60.

⁵⁸⁷ Werner Fiedler, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 10, 1939.

credited the success of Effi's long monologue taken directly from the novel to Gründgens' "incredible sensitivity to the language,"⁵⁸⁸ others bemoaned the "theatrical spirit" that hung over the film.⁵⁸⁹ As for Goebbels, he approved of the film, commenting that it was "full of atmosphere, properly made, full of melancholy and reserve (*Verhaltenheit*). I was very happy about it."⁵⁹⁰ The film's success triggered a fervent demand for the novel, which was serialized in the *Frankfurter Illustrierte* and the *Preußische Zeitung* in Königsberg.⁵⁹¹ Once again, the success of Gründgens' work was explained by his theatrical "sensitivity."

A month later, Gründgens was preparing his next film: an adaptation of *Gösta Berling*, the 1891 the novel from Swedish writer Hjalmar, with again Marianne Hoppe and Hermine Körner. The advertisement for the film emphasized once again Gründgens' theatrical successes: "Hamlet, Mephisto, Friedrich ... unforgettable splendid parts."⁵⁹² As winter shots were needed, the production was postponed to the winter of 1939. The outbreak of the war in September 1939 forced the crew to suspend the film. Despite expenditures reaching 103,479,049 *Reichsmarks*, the project was eventually abandoned.⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid. For Hans Erasmus Fischer "the monologue near the end of the film belongs to the unforgettable acting performances of the sound film," in Review of *Der Schritt vom Wege*, *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (February 1939), 28.

⁵⁸⁹ Eberhard Schulz, "Ein Schritt vom Wege. Fontanes "Effi Briest" im Film," *Frankfurter Zeitung*, February 11, 1938.

⁵⁹⁰ Goebbels' diaries, February 3, 1939.

⁵⁹¹ Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 496.

⁵⁹² Advertisement brochure of Terra-Filmkunst GmbH. Reprinted in Walach, *Aber Ich Habe Nicht Mein Gesicht*, 58.

⁵⁹³ BA R55 / 1319, 33. Letter of Winkler to Goebbels on March 15, 1938. Cited in Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 566, footnote 96.

1939 was an extremely successful year for Gründgens. *Tanz auf dem Vulkan* and *Der Schritt vom Wege* were great successes.⁵⁹⁴ He had directed Hermine Körner as “Queen Isabel,” in Hans Rehberg’s play,⁵⁹⁵ and had enjoyed success as Richard II under the direction of Jürgen Fehling.⁵⁹⁶ As for his cinematic work, Gründgens was one of the highest paid actor-directors in Nazi Germany. Before the outbreak of the war, only Zarah Leander, Benjamino Gigli, Emil Jannings, Paula Wessely, and Hans Albers earned more. Gründgens, Jenny Jugo and Heinz Rühmann each got a flat rate of eighty thousand *Reichsmarks* per film.⁵⁹⁷ He was also one of the most popular actors. According to a poll from *Der deutsche Film*, he was among the half dozen of most popular actors, behind Willy Birgel, Heinrich George, and Emil Jannings, but equal to Heinz Rühmann and Hans Albers.⁵⁹⁸

With the exception of the filming of *Gösta Berling*, the outbreak of war brought no dramatic changes for Gründgens who was finishing the exterior shots for his new film, *Zwei Welten* (Two Worlds), his second project as a director with his film production company.⁵⁹⁹ The film was to be a “cheerful, light-hearted work, a play between young people and the older generation.”⁶⁰⁰ One of Gründgens’ explicit goals with this film was

⁵⁹⁴ See as part of the advertisement campaign for the film, the “testimonies” of theater owners on several front pages of *Film-Kurier* throughout February 1939.

⁵⁹⁵ Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck, “Hans Rehberg, “Die Königin Isabell,” Staatliches Schauspielhaus,” *Film-Kurier*, April 15, 1939.

⁵⁹⁶ Günther Schwark, “Shakespeares “Richard II.” *Film-Kurier*, May 9, 1939.

⁵⁹⁷ BA R55 / 949, 56, from October 13, 1939. Cited in Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 153. The above-mentioned actors and actresses earned between 150,000 and 120,000 *Reichsmarks* per film. Gründgens held this position until 1944. See BA R 109 III, 12, from August 3, 1944. Cited in Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 162.

⁵⁹⁸ Frank Maraun, “Das Ergebnis: Wirklichkeit bevorzugt! Eine Untersuchung über den “Publikumsgeschmack,”” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 11 (May 1939): 310.

⁵⁹⁹ See reports about the making about the film in *Filmwelt*, no. 30 (July 1939), and no 39 (September 1939), with the young actress Antje Weisberger on the cover.

⁶⁰⁰ Schu., “Wir spachen mit Gründgens. “Zwei Welten” – heiter kontrastiert in seinem neuen Terra Film,” *Film-Kurier*, September 19, 1939.

to promote the *Nachwuchs*.⁶⁰¹ He hired the four main characters from his own theatrical ensemble and pledged to follow up on them.⁶⁰² He also intended to prove that there was plenty of film material out there, material, which “through constructive criticism” and the work of Dr. Felix Lützendorff could be turned into creative material. Gründgens wanted to have a “contemporary topic,” in the middle of *now*. *Zwei Welten* tells the story of two young men, who on their way to “harvest duty,” exchange identities. The Baron Werner von Rednitz turns into the worker’s son Hans Schulz, and vice versa. They upset the estate and later the working class household, fighting against outdated conceptions of class. In the film, the myth of the *Volksgemeinschaft* is realized: pseudo-aristocratic aspirations are ridiculed, the working class values are seen as reasonable and the collective good is celebrated.

This film is an odd one in Gründgens’ *oeuvre*. His association with Felix Lützendorff for example is surprising. A NSDAP and SS member, Lützendorff had been working as a scriptwriter for nationalist films such as *Patrioten* (Patriots, 1937), *Urlaub auf Ehrenwort* (Furlough on Word of Honor, 1938), and *Legion Condor* (1939), but also for “lighter” films such as *Capriccio* (1938) or *Bal Paré* (1940), all in collaboration with

⁶⁰¹ Gründgens had always been active in the promotion of the *Nachwuchs*. See how in October 1934 he opened a *Studio*, as a place for “unknown director, unknown actor,” and for “the actor, who, constrained by the regular work, can here have other and bigger tasks, through which he can prove his artistic diversity and versatility,” in Dr. Gressiker, “Über “Studio,” in *Film-Kurier*, October 1, 1934. About the reactions to the *Studio* see also Schu., “Der Vortrupp des Staatstheater Berlins. Alfred Mühr über die Haltungen des Staatstheater Berlins-Studio,” *Film-Kurier*, November 21, 1934. *Filmwelt* reported about the actor headed the *Staatliche Schauspielschule Berlin* until 1935, when Lothar Müthel replaced him. *Filmwelt*, no. 24 (June 1935).

⁶⁰² Marianne Simson could be seen in a play from Felix Lützendorff at the *Kleines Haus*. See Günther Schwark, “Felix Lützendorff. “Liebesbriefe,” *Film-Kurier*, January 4, 1940, and Hans Bornemann, “Filmschauspieler auf Berliner Bühne,” *Filmwelt*, no. 8 (February 1940). She was also in a production of *Wie es euch gefällt* in September 1940. See *Film-Kurier*, September 7, 1940. Antje Weisberger, the other female character, also worked with Gründgens at the *Staatstheater Berlin*. She would continue their collaboration in 1946 in Berlin and, from 1951 on, in Düsseldorf.

film director Karl Ritter.⁶⁰³ While the film was based on an idea from Gründgens, some of the “ideological” dialogue was typical Lützendorf. For film reviewer Georg Herzberg, “much came up in the film, that needed to be said.”⁶⁰⁴ While praising the performance of the actors and actresses, especially the *Nachwuchs*, and the dialogue’s direction, Herzberg remarks that the audience “took the film the way it was meant to be: a cheerful contribution to contemporary questions.”⁶⁰⁵ His review concluded that, “the film-goers will not resent the fact that they need not worry as much as the rather unsuitable title suggests,” and that the audience does not have to take the film “too seriously.”⁶⁰⁶ It is interesting that the majority of the press downplayed the potential generational conflict. *Filmwelt*, for example, explains that it is not really about “the rebellion of the youth against the older generation. No, rebellion is too strong a word; it is about the contrast between the new and the old. It is never taken tragically, only light-heartedly/cheerfully, and so we laugh and understand that these two worlds are actually one.”⁶⁰⁷ For Hans Spielhofer in *Der deutsche Film* the film “attempts to depict the fight against old and young, yesterday and today in the form of a cheerful entertainment film.”⁶⁰⁸ While he compliments the film for its courage to tackle this topic, Spielhofer remains unconvinced about the execution. The reviewer at the *National-Zeitung* on the other hand praises the film as “a great political subject;” a cheerful one, much more efficient than the direct

⁶⁰³ See Herman Wanderscheck’s introduction of the writer in “Felix Lützendorf. Dichter and Drehbuchautor,” *Filmwelt*, no. 48 (November 1940). Lützendorf also wrote the play *Opfergang*, which Veit Harlan turned into a film.

⁶⁰⁴ Georg Herzberg, “Zwei Welten,” *Film-Kurier*, January 6, 1940.

⁶⁰⁵ Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 406. This quote is actually from the review of Georg Herzberg, “Zwei Welten,” in *Film-Kurier*, January 6, 1940.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁷ *Filmwelt*, no. 39 (September 1939).

⁶⁰⁸ Hans Spielhofer, “Zwei Welten,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 8 (February 1940).

propaganda that has been produced so far.⁶⁰⁹ In light of such positive comments, it is unclear why Goebbels did not like the film. He described it as being “a film about the harvest duty program, or at least this is what it is supposed to be. But it failed. Too intellectual and almost only brainwork. Gründgens cannot get out of his skin.”⁶¹⁰ He added later, “Gründgens’ film can barely be saved.”⁶¹¹ But Gründgens did not give up and defended his film: “Gründgens wants to talk to me about his bad film. Awkward thing!”⁶¹² Despite Goebbels’ reservations, Gründgens’ insistence and Göring’s backing got the film a rating: artistically valuable.⁶¹³ The press was friendly but downplayed the conflict between the generations (“not at all big problems”) insisting that the film was a “harmless summer film.”⁶¹⁴

After this contemporary film, Gründgens was back to his material of choice, the literary adaptation. In the spring of 1939, he had started working on an adaptation of Mozart’s *Don Juan*, with Herbert von Karajan as musical director and exterior shots in Sevilla. But the propaganda minister decided to go with another project about Mozart, *Die kleine Nachtmusik* from Leopold Hainisch.⁶¹⁵ While *Don Juan* never got very far, Gründgens’ adaptation of Gioacchino Forzano’s *Julius Caesar* received a lot of press. The film was supposed to be a German-Italian coproduction and the actor/director traveled to Italy to meet with his counterparts. Gründgens was understandably attracted to the “powerful” story of Caesar’s march on Rome, his fight with the opposition, his

⁶⁰⁹ Hans Krabe, “Sensation: ‘Zwei Welten’! Gustav Gründgens heiterer Nachwuchsfilm,” *National-Zeitung*, January 6, 1940. Reprinted in Walach, *Aber Ich Habe Nicht Mein Gesicht*, 59–60.

⁶¹⁰ Goebbels’ diaries, December 27, 1939.

⁶¹¹ Goebbels’ diaries, December 30, 1939.

⁶¹² Goebbels’ diaries, January 3, 1940.

⁶¹³ Goebbels’ diaries, January 4, 1940. “Long with Gründgens negotiated. He is convinced that his film is good, and Göring supports it. I don’t understand that.” On January 11, “Gründgens gets his film rating.”

⁶¹⁴ Quotes from *Berliner Illustrierte Nachtausgabe* and *Berliner Morgenpost*. See the full page add on January 13, 1940.

⁶¹⁵ Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 455.

conquest of Alexandria and love of Cleopatra, and his assassination back in Rome. He also had worked in the past with the Tirrenia studios: in 1935 he had made *Hundert Tage* with Werner Krause under the direction of Franz Wenzler. The artistic project turned into a political one, with numerous articles following its development amidst diplomatic intervention.⁶¹⁶ Goebbels was, of course, involved, and careful of the Italians, who he suspects “were trying once again to cheat on us.”⁶¹⁷ (August 3, 1940). But while the film was officially announced as part of Terra program, it never saw the light of the day.⁶¹⁸

Friedemann Bach

Gründgens’ next project, *Friedemann Bach*, tells the tragic story of Johann Sebastian Bach’s son. Albert Emil Brachvogel wrote a novel about it in 1858, and the National Socialist Paul Graener turned it into an opera in 1931. Ludwig Metzger wrote a film novella in 1939, which Helmut Brandis and Eckart von Naso adapted into a film script.⁶¹⁹ The story of the rebellious son in the shadow of his famous father differs significantly from the historical facts, where Friedemann Bach led a successful life and only in the end did he die impoverished.⁶²⁰ Like his previous film, Gründgens hired almost all his cast from the Staatstheater Berlin: Eugen Klöpfer, Leny Marenbach, Wolfgang Liebeneiner, Camilla Horn, and Johannes Riemann were joined by “house composer” Mark Lothar, who used only original music from the Bachs. While Trautgott

⁶¹⁶ C.C. Schulte, “Gründgens in Italien. Verhandlungen mit Forzano,” *Film-Kurier*, July 26, 1940. The Italian minister of popular culture, Alessandro Pavolini, Goebbels and the German Consul Wüster were all involved.

⁶¹⁷ Goebbels’ diaries, August 3, 1940.

⁶¹⁸ “Aus dem neuen Terra-Programm: Zwei Gründgens-Filme,” *Filmkurier* September 1, 1940. See also Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 413. Gründgens became Terra’s figurehead, as can be see in the front page picture of Gründgens in *Filmkurier*’s article about the new productions on September 2, 1940.

⁶¹⁹ S-k., “Das tragische Künstlerschicksal Friedemann Bachs im Film. Gustaf Gründgens über seine neuen Arbeit,” *Film-Kurier*, October 26, 1940.

⁶²⁰ *Filmwelt* featured a short story about the historical person in no. 49 (December 1940).

Müller was officially the director, Gründgens was art director (*künstlerische Oberleiter*) and it was clearly a “Gründgens’ film.”⁶²¹ The advertisement campaign started in the fall of 1940.⁶²² As with the role of Debureau, the press emphasized how the tragedy of Friedemann Bach, described as a misunderstood genius,⁶²³ was a perfect role for Gründgens, who excelled in the romantic character of the outsider, with “fanatical temperament of a willful artistic nature.”⁶²⁴ Photographs from the sets revealed the precise reconstruction of the historical period, and presented Gründgens/Friedemann lost in thoughts, searching for inspiration by candlelight.⁶²⁵ Gründgens was indeed at the center of Terra’s advertising campaign and he made, once gain, the cover of *Filmwelt* on April 11, 1941, and of *Der deutsche Film*, in March 1941 (Figure 4.5). Next to the mention of Dr. von Naso’s script⁶²⁶ and the praise of Eugene Klöpfer as the father Johannes Sebastian Bach,⁶²⁷ Felix Henseleit’s description of Gründgens’ career and talent

⁶²¹ The press also used the other cast members to promote the film. See Leny Marenbach on the cover of *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (January 1941). *Filmwelt* also issued a *Scheinwerfer* on the work of the composer Mark Lothar, “Music for Friedemann Bach,” no. 10.

⁶²² Front-page picture of Gustaf Gründgens and Leny Maranbach in *Film-Kurier*, November 26, 1940.

⁶²³ “Bilderbogen des Film-Kurier: das künstlerische Genie und seine Welt,” *Film-Kurier*, December 31, 1940.

⁶²⁴ Werner Dopp, “Friedemann Bach. Schicksal im Film,” *Film-Kurier*, November 28, 1940.

⁶²⁵ “Bilderbogen des Film-Kurier: Friedemann Bach,” *Film-Kurier*, December 13, 1940 and “Neues von der Terra: Friedemann Bach,” *Film-Kurier*, January 02, 1941. See also “Gestalten aus dem neuen Terra-Film, “Friedemann Bach,” *Film-Kurier*, January 11, 1941. Gründgens was several times on the cover of *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (February 1941) and no. 15 (April 1941). See also no. 27/28 (July 1941).

⁶²⁶ “Neues von der Terra: Friedemann Bach,” *Film-Kurier*, January 02, 1941.

⁶²⁷ HOF, “Neues von der Terra: Eugen Klöpfer als Joh. Sebastian Bach in dem Terrafilm “Friedemann Bach,” *Film-Kurier*, April 3, 1941.



Figure 4.5 : Gründgens as Friedemann Bach on the cover of *Filmwelt*, April 1941 (left) and *Der deutsche Film*, March 1941 (right).

is nothing short of an encomium.⁶²⁸ While praising Gründgens’ diversity in expressing the different stages of Friedemann’s life, Georg Herzberg, on the other hand, is more critical of Müller’s direction. The latter’s choice of a bare and simple imagery matches the music, as can be seen in the opening scene during the Cembalo play or the scene in the church. For other scenes, like the one at the Dresden court, “the optic rigidity could have been maybe a little loosened.”⁶²⁹ Müller’s theatrical experience did translate well into film.

⁶²⁸ Felix Henseleit, “Neues von der Terra: Gustaf Gründgens spielt die Titelrolle des Terrafilms “Friedemann Bach,” *Film-Kurier*, February 27, 1941.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*

Fittingly, the premiere took place in Dresden on June 26, 1941. in collaboration with the Dresdener Choir and an exhibition of original artifacts from Friedemann Bach borrowed from the state archive. The Dresden press was “moved by the violence of the tragedy,” and the performance of a “brilliant actor.”⁶³⁰

During a press conference that afternoon, Gründgens, “witty and charming [...] chatted about the topic “Image and Music in Bach’s film.”⁶³¹ As will be shown in chapter 5, the premiere was followed by a resurgence of the topic “Music and Film.”⁶³² The film then opened successfully in the Reich and in Zürich, where the press commented on how the camera slowly circled the powerful columns in the church, while Friedemann played the organ: “the regularity of the *Dom*’s architecture came together in a sisterly way with regularity of the music.”⁶³³ Goebbels found the film “cultural historically good, musically excellent, acting wise, like all Gründgens’ films, a little stiff,”⁶³⁴ and gave it the rating “artistically and culturally valuable.”⁶³⁵

This was to be Gründgens’ last film as a director during the Third Reich. While *Friedemann Bach* was in post-production, Goebbels forced Gründgens to play the role of Chamberlain in the anti-British film *Ohm Krüger*, which depicts the British as the inventor of concentration camps.⁶³⁶ Gründgens tried to refuse, but even Göring could not help him out. The actor then used, for the first and only time, his position as *Staatsrat*. As such he had the right to a car and driver and to two adjutants to accompany him wherever

⁶³⁰ Ad for Friedemann Bach in *Film-Kurier*, June 30, 1941

⁶³¹ “Erfolgreiche Uraufführung von “Friedemann Bach,” *Film-Kurier*, June 26, 1941.

⁶³² Günther Schwark, “Appell an die Komponisten zur Mitarbeit am Film,” *Film-Kurier*, July 8, 1941. The “discussion” or “debate,” as it was called, lasted until September 1941.

⁶³³ “Weitere Pressstimme zu ‘Friedemann Bach,’” *Film-Kurier*, October 7, 1941.

⁶³⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, May 12, 1941.

⁶³⁵ Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 423–439.

⁶³⁶ Gründgens’ reluctance to play a part in the film has been well documented. See for example his icy answer to Emil Jannings’ telegram rejoicing about his participation in December 1940. Reprinted in Walach, *Aber Ich Habe Nicht Mein Gesicht*, 61.

he wanted. He turned down the eighty-thousand RM wage, and came to work ostensibly as *Staatsrat*, requiring that everybody call him “*Herr Staatsrat*” and communicate with him through his adjutant, as in a war situation. His Chamberlain was “icy-cold, sleek.”⁶³⁷ Gründgens had experienced firsthand the power of Goebbels. He retreated to the theater, the “island.” While he still met with Goebbels regarding theatrical matters, Gründgens did not appear in any other films.⁶³⁸

In the summer of 1943, the tensions between the world of illusion maintained in the Staatstheater Berlin and the radicalization of German politics became increasingly unsustainable, especially after Goebbels infamous call for the “total war” in February 1943. Gründgens volunteered for the army, was assigned to an anti-aircraft unit and became a sergeant in Holland.⁶³⁹ He arranged to come to Berlin as often as possible and Göring ordered him to pursue his work in Berlin. Gründgens’ last staging before the definitive closing of the Staatliches Schauspielhaus in June 1944 was Schiller’s *The Robbers*, a play which raised many disturbing issues, questioning the dividing lines between personal liberty and the law and probing the psychology of power, the nature of masculinity, and the essential differences between good and evil.⁶⁴⁰ After the theaters

⁶³⁷ Günther Schwark, “Meisterwerk “Ohm Krüger” festlich uraufgeführt,” *Film-Kurier*, April 5, 1941.

⁶³⁸ On June 11, 1942, the propaganda minister invited artists in honor of author Gerhart Hauptmann and wrote in his diaries “the director of the Staatsschauspiel, Gustaf Gründgens, is also a guest today, and an exceptionally animated discussion developed about the question of German literature and German theater.” Together with Hartman and Liebeneiner, Gründgens was invited to discuss the need for a qualifying exam for theater *Nachwuchs* later that year. See Goebbels’ diaries, December 3, 1942. On December 19, 1942, Gründgens proposed a new program for the Metropol Theater, Goebbels’ diaries, December 19, 1942.

⁶³⁹ On the different interpretations for such a move see Heinrich Goertz, *Gustaf Gründgens* (Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, 1982), 97-102.

⁶⁴⁰ The press reacted very positively, much to Goebbels’ anger who commented on June 28, 1944 “The Berlin press’ reaction to Gründgens’ staging of *The Robbers* in the Staatstheater Berlin made me mad. These critiques are so full of exuberant praise that one must ask the question: does the sun circle around Gründgens or does Gründgens circle around the sun. It is about time that I intervene. The intellectualistic Berlin theater review feels of course more attracted to the type of stage intellectualism like Gründgens, than to the mellow nature like George or Klöpfer. But I won’t tolerate these aberration from the Berlin critique anymore.” Goebbels’ diaries, June 28, 1944. See also Stephanie Barbé Hammer, “Schiller, Time and

closed in August 1944 and most of the personnel sent to the army or to work in the armament factories, Gründgens remained active.⁶⁴¹ He organized literary evenings, which allowed his staff to stay out of danger and provided the bombed citizens some hours of respite.

While he continued a long and successful career on the German stages after the war, Gründgens would not appear in another feature film until 1960.⁶⁴² Helmut Käutner convinced him to accept the leading part of Lord Bolingbroke in his adaptation of *Das Glas Wasser*, based on Eugène Scribe's play; a role Gründgens had played in 1934 on the Berlin stage. While for some the ironic and elegant period piece allowed Gründgens to show one more time his acting and singing skills, others found the "constructed language/affected speech (*Kunstsprache*) and mimic art [...] so artificial."⁶⁴³

Gründgens' last foray into the cinematic world, a mere three years before his death, and the reactions to this last film, are symptomatic of his film career. As shown previously, the actor's success was rooted in his love and mastery of the language, of the word, skills that were rooted and grounded in his theatrical work. While his skills in acting, and especially his diction, made him a star of the German theater, the transfer to film was more problematic. For twenty-first-century viewers, many of his performances

Again," *The German Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (1994): 153–172. She called Schiller "an important critic of history as a violent and violently gendered masculine construction."

⁶⁴¹ For the closing of the theater and the reactions of the stage professionals see Goebbels' diaries, August 24, 27, and 29, 1944. Gründgens made a plea "with elegiac emotion," for the Staatstheater Berlin to remain open but Goebbels refused: "But there is not point. The Staatstheater Berlin are not allowed to get special treatment." See Goebbels' diaries, August 31, and September 28, 1944.

⁶⁴² Arrested in 1945, Gründgens was liberated from Russians camps thanks to the work of a rescue committee. He had his first post war part at the Deutsches Theater under the direction of Gustav von Wangenheim on April 4, 1946, and went on to become the head of the Düsseldorf theater from 1947 to 1955 and then of the Deutsches Schauspielhaus Hamburg from 1955 until he quitted in 1963. Gründgens died under unexplained circumstances during a trip in Manila, Philippines in September 1963. The "filmed theatrical version" of *Faust*, also in 1960 does not qualify as feature film.

⁶⁴³ DFH., "Das Glas Wasser (Deutschland)," *Der Spiegel*, July 20, 1960.

come across as a bit “affected,” too “stagey,” and the handful of films he directed were also influenced by theatrical tradition: they were mostly adaptations of literary works with emphasis on dialogue, the very thing film proponents were complaining about. How then does one explain his sustained film success and the praise he regularly received in the film press?

One notices that, when presenting new film professionals, the popular magazine *Filmwelt* repeatedly emphasized their theatrical background. The reason, I argue, is that in the mid-1930s and early 1940s, a theatrical training was still considered by many, especially the audience the magazine was addressing, a necessary part of any acting profession. For the Weimar viewers, actors and actresses were first and foremost theater professionals, and the only acting style they were familiar with was what today would be considered as “stagey” acting. Only slowly, and still very rarely, do we see film professionals without any theatrical background. When they did not have a theatrical background and had been, for example, “discovered” by the film industry, the magazine was quick to note that these artists went back to training and learned the trade from the beginning. In addition to being seen as an essential part of any acting job, in the 1930s theater still gave film a certain *caché*, something cinema was struggling to acquire. With his experience in theater, opera, as an actor, director and from 1934 on, as the head of the most prestigious German theater, Gründgens brought all of that and much more to film.⁶⁴⁴ This also explains, for example, the wide coverage of Gründgens’ theatrical performances in *Filmwelt*, more than any other actors with theatrical ties, such as Werner

⁶⁴⁴ A telling example was in *Filmwelt*, no. 45 (November 1937). While the article was about presenting the couple Gründgens-Hoppe in their home, as relaxing from their busy professional life in Berlin, the entire first paragraph is spent listing Gründgens’ functions and work.

Kraus or Heinrich George.⁶⁴⁵ Indeed, Gründgens achieved national and international renown; much was made, for example, of the fact that he was invited to Denmark for a performance of *Hamlet*.⁶⁴⁶ Such status possibly led to Göring's protection and to Goebbels' "patience." While his star power was rooted in both his film and theater work, with the film press contributing greatly to that, Gründgens was and remained foremost a man of the theater. As actors and actresses were experimenting with film-specific acting techniques, such as method acting, the acting style of the great actor who once declared he saw "his task only in the really unusual, in the monumental and 'allgemein-wesentlich' materials" seemed a bit "artificial."⁶⁴⁷

While the popular magazine *Filmwelt* insisted on a connection between film and theater, the professional newspaper *Film-Kurier* on the other hand was talking about tensions within the film world. Contributors to *Film-Kurier*, many of them film professionals themselves, praised the acting performances of theater stars such as Gründgens, but they were more vocal about German filmmaking weaknesses. Continuing the "stage-screen debate," they worked to emancipate film from theater and establish the former as a recognized form of art. Their efforts crystallized in a push for the systematic

⁶⁴⁵ See "Film und Bühne. Gründgens in Mina von Barnhelm," *Filmwelt* no. 40 (October 1934). On February 2, 1936, no. 5, a full-page picture of Gründgens as Hamlet; on December 20, 1936, no. 26, we see him as Don Juan. Ihre regie of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* is presented on June 27, 1937, no. 26. On April 22, 1938, no. 17, we see him as Friedrich der Große; in November 1938 in Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma* and a year later in Shakespeare's *Richard II* (May 1939, no. 2). In May 1940, issue no. 18, he is in Schiller's *Verschwörung des Fiesco zu Genua*; on May 25, 1940, he directed Musolinni-Forzano's play, *Cavour*. In 1941, *Filmwelt* reported about his performances as Alexander (June, no. 25/26) and as Faust (October, no. 43/44).

⁶⁴⁶ "Lorbeerkränze für Gründgens," *Filmkurier*, August 2, 1938. He was also invited to Copenhagen by the Friends of German Literatur. See *Filmwelt*, no. 17/18 (May 1942).

⁶⁴⁷ *Filmwelt*, no. 43 (October 1934). He added, "This does not prevent [me] from making [myself] with all warmth the advocate for the good comedy." To this day, theater still has the power to give credibility to German actors and actresses. See for example how the film work of the young actress Julia Jentsch is always juxtaposed with her theatrical performances.

cinematic training of film professionals, away from the theater. The creation of the German Film Academy to which I will turn to in part 3 partly answered these calls.

Zeller, in the daily film trade paper *Film-Kurier*.⁶⁴⁸ On the right, the 1941 back cover of the popular film magazine *Filmwelt* shows an advertisement for Ufaton-Verlag, the film music distribution department of Ufa which also owned *Filmwelt*.⁶⁴⁹ It features posters and shots from Ufa's popular films, including some of its biggest stars, such as Zarah Leander and Marika Röck. By offering film viewers the chance to buy the sheet music "for singing and piano playing," the film company, through the film press, combined film with music and played on one of Germany's favorite and traditional pastimes, *musizieren* (music-making) "the most German art."⁶⁵⁰

Called the "people of music," Germans have long considered music to be an important part of their identity.⁶⁵¹ Music has played a constitutive role in the fashioning of German identity and has been used increasingly since the nineteenth century to further German nationalism.⁶⁵² Although its role under the Nazi regime was far from diminished, music has received scant scholarly attention, especially compared to the attention paid to cinematic productions of the same time period.⁶⁵³ The works of Pamela Potter, Michael Kater, and Axel Jockwer have more recently challenged "the dystopia in which all musical activity was strictly controlled by a core of ruthless dictators and a few willing

⁶⁴⁸ *Film-Kurier*, August 5, 1940.

⁶⁴⁹ *Filmwelt*, no. 8 (February 1941).

⁶⁵⁰ See Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter, eds., *Music and German National Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 2.

⁶⁵¹ See Applegate and Potter, *Music and German National Identity*.

⁶⁵² Sabine Hake talks about the "symbolic function of music in defining [German] national identity," in Sabine Hake, *German National Cinema*, 2nd ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2008), 88. See also Sabine Schutte, *Ich Will Aber Gerade Vom Leben Singen... Über Populäre Musik Vom Ausgehenden 19. Jahrhundert Bis Zum Ende Der Weimarer Republik* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987); Nora M. Alter and Lutz Koepnick, *Sound Matters: Essays on the Acoustics of Modern German Culture* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004).

⁶⁵³ For a fascinating historiography see Pamela M. Potter, "Dismantling the Dystopia: On the Historiography of Music in the Third Reich," *Central European History* 40, no. 4 (2007): 623–651.

collaborators, and in which all music produced was artistically impoverished.”⁶⁵⁴ They shift the question from *how* the dictatorship controlled musical life to *whether*, asking instead how musical life carried on and perhaps even thrived under the Nazi system. One of such newer approaches considers the relation between music and other media. Using Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno’s idea of the culture industry critically, scholars such as Lutz Koepnick and Brian Currid have studied the musical mass culture of Weimar and the Third Reich, laying out a dynamic relationship between its three pillars—film, radio, and magazines.⁶⁵⁵ Part 3 looks at the evolving relationships between film and music and the function of the musical film.

While cinema was already one of the most popular forms of entertainment of the early twentieth century, the arrival of sound film had wide-ranging effects on Weimar culture and society and drastically changed cinema.⁶⁵⁶ Indeed, despite technological weaknesses at the beginning, the German audience, hungry for new technologies and in dire need of distraction in time of social, economic and political crisis, overwhelmingly embraced the talkies in the late 1920s.⁶⁵⁷ The sound film became the norm in a matter of

⁶⁵⁴ Pamela M. Potter, “What Is ‘Nazi Music’?,” *Musical Quarterly* 88, no. 3 (2005): 428–455. See also Michael H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse: Musicians and Their Music in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Pamela Potter, *Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society from the Weimar Republic to the End of Hitler’s Reich* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Michael H. Kater, *Different Drummers: Jazz in the Culture of Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Michael H. Kater and Albrecht Riethmüller, eds., *Music and Nazism: Art Under Tyranny, 1933-1945* (Laaber: Laaber, 2003). For a critical overview of the existing literature, see the thorough dissertation of Axel Jockwer, “Unterhaltungsmusik Im Dritten Reich” (University of Konstanz, 2005).

⁶⁵⁵ Horkheimer and Adorno coined the term culture industry and argued that popular culture produces standardized cultural goods to manipulate masses into passivity. See Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Continuum, 1991); Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror*; Currid, *A National Acoustics*; Jockwer, “Unterhaltungsmusik Im Dritten Reich.”

⁶⁵⁶ Hake, *The Cinema’s Third Machine*; Malte Hagener and Jan Hans, *Als Die Filme Singen Lernten: Innovation Und Tradition Im Musikfilm 1928-1938* (München: edition text + kritik, 1999).

⁶⁵⁷ Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror*, 29. Although he called it “Jewish Kitsch from Hollywood,” Joseph Goebbels himself was impressed after viewing *The Singing Fool* in 1928 and recorded in his diaries “... the first sound film. American. ‘Singing Fool.’ I was surprised how advanced the technology of sound film is.

a few years, a surprisingly fast pace, especially compared with the U.S.'s silent film production, which lasted until 1935. This “monkey-like speed,”—to quote the influential critic and opponent of sound film, Rudolf Arnheim—was rooted not only in the audience’s reaction, but also in the politics of the film companies, such as the Universum Film AG, the Ufa.⁶⁵⁸ Declaring as early as 1930 that “silent film is dead,”⁶⁵⁹ producer Erich Pommer, for example, went on to produce lavish musical films.⁶⁶⁰

The advent of film sound meant a redefinition of the cinematic art itself, triggering an outpouring of theoretical reflection and debates on the nature of film.⁶⁶¹ Aesthetic opposition to the talkies has been summarized by Sabine Hake as forming around the following points: “the much-praised internalization of the silent cinema; the pictorial, metaphoric, and rhetorical functions of the image in the silent film; and the affinities between silent cinema, visual pleasure, and the cult of diversion.”⁶⁶² Although seen by many as “poisoning artistic integrity and formal rigor,”⁶⁶³ sound film also found its enthusiastic proponents, who celebrated the arrival of sound as opening new artistic

Here is the future, and we are wrong to dismiss all that as simply American stuff.” December 3, 1928 and September 2, 1929.

⁶⁵⁸ Among the opponents were Herbert Ihering, Siegfried Kraucauer and Rudolph Arnheim. Arnheim quoted in Corinna Müller, *Vom Stummfilm Zum Tonfilm* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2003), 12. See Hake for a detailed presentation and analysis of Arnheim’s thoughts about film in Hake, *The Cinema’s Third Machine*. For a “defense” of Arnheim’s position on silent film see Ian Verstegen, “A Formalist Reborn,” *Film-Philosophy* 3, no. 46 (1999).

⁶⁵⁹ Erich Pommer, *Die Filmwoche*, no. 11 (December 1930): 325-327.

⁶⁶⁰ Wolfgang Jacobsen, *Erich Pommer: Ein Produzent Macht Filmgeschichte* (Berlin: Argon, 1989).

⁶⁶¹ For Germany see, for example, Helga de la Motte-Haber and Hans Emons, *Filmmusik: Eine Systematische Beschreibung* (München: Carl Hanser, 1980). For an overview of international reactions see Mervyn Cooke, *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Elisabeth Weis and John Belton, *Film Sound: Theory and Practice* (Columbia University Press, 1985). On Benjamin purposefully ignoring the advance of sound film see Lutz Koepnick, “Benjamin’s Silence,” in *Sounds Matters*, ed. Nora M. Alter and Koepnick Lutz (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 117–130.

⁶⁶² Sabine Hake, “Provocations of the Disembodied Voice: Song and the Transition to Sound in Berger’s Day and Night,” in *Peripheral Visions. The Hidden Stages of Weimar Cinema*, ed. Kenneth S. Calhoon (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001), 67.

⁶⁶³ Koepnick, “Benjamin’s Silence,” 27.

possibilities.⁶⁶⁴ Notwithstanding the heated debates, the audience flocked to the theaters, and producers were eager to satisfy their demands for entertaining sound films.

Films had, of course, never been completely “silent.”⁶⁶⁵ Musical scores that were expressly composed for films were not only performed for live audiences by the musicians, the corresponding sheet music and records were also sold in the thousands.⁶⁶⁶ Later, the arrival of the radio accelerated the success of the *Schlager*, the popular hit tunes that often originated in films.⁶⁶⁷ More importantly, contemporary musical culture, from operas, operetta, variétés, and revues had a strong impact on cinematic production. Thomas Elsaesser has shown that these genres not only provided the basis for film plots and production methods, but they were also a fertile place for talented film craftspeople. They helped create an audience that was accustomed to and very fond of such genres.⁶⁶⁸ When adapted to the screen, musical revues, theater farces and operettas attracted huge crowds.⁶⁶⁹ This process started during the silent era and intensified with the arrival of the sound film, leading to more media convergence. For example, while radio shows introduced sound film composers, popular film actors participated in radio play, many of

⁶⁶⁴ Emil Jannings, “Deutschland und der internationale Tonfilm,” *Der Film*, June 3, 1929.

⁶⁶⁵ For the recording music industry see Corey Ross, “Entertainment, Technology and Tradition: The Rise of Recorded Music from the Empire to the Third Reich,” in *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 25–43. On film music see Motte-Haber and Emons, *Filmmusik: Eine Systematische Beschreibung*.

⁶⁶⁶ Ross, “Entertainment, Technology and Tradition.”

⁶⁶⁷ On *Schlager* see Dietrich Kayser, *Schlager: Das Lied als Ware* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1975); Schutte, *Ich will aber gerade vom Leben singen... Über populäre Musik vom ausgehenden 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Ende der Weimarer Republik*.

⁶⁶⁸ Thomas Elsaesser, “Filmgeschichte – Firmengeschichte – Familiengeschichte,” in *Joe May. Regisseur Und Produzent*, ed. Hans-Michael Bock and Claudia Lenssen (München: Edition Text + Kritik, 1991), 11–30.

⁶⁶⁹ Michael Wedel, *Der Deutsche Musikfilm. Archäologie Eines Genres 1914-1945* (München: edition text + kritik, 2007). See especially the chapter entitled “Schizophrene Technik, sinnliches Glück. Filmoper, Filmoperetten, Filmsingspiel,” 69-191. Between 1914 and 1929 Germany saw the production of “Filmopern, Filmoperetten, Filmsingspiele, Singfilme oder Gesangfilme.”

them adapted from theatrical plays.⁶⁷⁰ Merchandizing articles referenced back and forth among film, records, music sheets and radio.⁶⁷¹ By 1933, “ninety percent of all the songs people [were] listening to and the dance bands that [were] playing [came] from sound film.”⁶⁷²

Part 3 follows the development of the film-music relationship during the Third Reich and the questions it raised in the film press. Existing studies on the soundscape of Third Reich films have focused on the use of music, often classical, for propaganda purposes, especially in documentaries and newsreels.⁶⁷³ Recent works have opened up the field, offering close analyses of the musical scores of specific films and exploring the relationship between popular music and film, underscoring the pervasiveness of musical influence in cultural productions.⁶⁷⁴ The following chapters expand their investigation of the sonic dimension of German cinema, exploring three distinct sites where the

⁶⁷⁰ “Rundfunk und filmmusik,” *Film-Kurier*, November 19, 1934; “1490 Hörspiele wurden 1932 gesandt,” *Film-Kurier*, March 21, 1933.

⁶⁷¹ Currid, *A National Acoustics*. We see for example how film companies verticalized their operations and acquired or created music sheets publishing companies, such as the Bavariaton Verlag, the Terra Echo Musik Verlag, or the Beboton Verlag of Tobis. UFA owned the Wiener Bohème-Verlag GmbH and created UFAtion-Verlag. The paper *Film-Kurier* also had its own publishing department, whose products were advertised on the page of the newspaper. See Klaus Kreimeier, *Die Ufa-Story: Geschichte eines Filmkonzerns*. (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2002), 230; Fred Ritzel, “... Vom Paradies Ein Gold’ner Schein? - Schlager Präsentationen Im Tonfilm Der Weimarer Republik,” in “*Es Liegt in Der Luft Was Idiotisches...*” *Populäre Musik Zur Zeit Der Weimarer Republik*, ed. H. Rösing (Baden-Baden, 1995), 157–180.

⁶⁷² Walter Jerven, “Sags mit Liedern,” *Film-Kurier*, January 7, 1933.

⁶⁷³ Volker Reimar, “Herbert Windt’s Film Music to Triumph of the Will: Ersatz-Wagner or Incidental Music to the Ultimate Nazi-Gesamtkunstwerk,” in *Composing for the Screen in Germany and the USSR: Cultural Politics and Propaganda*, ed. Robynn J. Stilwell and Phil Powrie (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, n.d.), 39–53; Ben Morgan, “Music in Nazi Film: How Different Is Triumph of the Will?,” *Studies in European Cinema* 3, no. 1 (April 2006): 37–53; Celia Applegate, “To Be or Not to Be Wagnerian: Music in Riefenstahl’s Nazi-Era Films,” *Riefenstahl Screened: An Anthology of New Criticism* (2008): 179–201; Ulrike Bartels, *Die Wochenschau Im Dritten Reich. Entwicklung Und Funktion Eines Massenmediums Unter Besonderer Berücksichtigung Völkisch-nationaler Inhalte*. (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2004).

⁶⁷⁴ Currid, *A National Acoustics*; Jockwer, “Unterhaltungsmusik im Dritten Reich”; Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror*. See for example Sabine Hake’s analysis of Dietlief Sierk’s use of music in his 1936 film *Schlußakkord* (Last Accord) in Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, 107–127.

relationship between music and film was negotiated from the late 1920s on and how it evolved during the Third Reich.

Chapter 5 presents the ongoing debates in the film press about the potential of sound and music in film and their appropriate use. Starting in the late 1920s and persisting throughout the Third Reich calls for a more integral inclusion of composers during the filmmaking process illustrate an important moment in the history of cinema. It was characterized by tense negotiations regarding the use of sound and music by a medium that was struggling to establish its own laws (film as a foremost optical, image-driven medium) and position itself as an independent form of art. Similar to the debates about adaptations of classic plays, discussions regarding the filming of opera and the use of *Schlager* unfolded along the lines of high versus low culture, with the use of classical music and filming of opera, for example, being, on one hand, rejected, and, on the other hand, justified as helping to educate the masses.⁶⁷⁵ The second part of chapter 5 focuses on the highly debated but widely popular element of German films, the singing actors and acting singers and their use of *Schlager*. The latter were harshly criticized by National Socialists, who were especially irate at the commercial (e.g. Jewish) abuse of songs in films. In their efforts to elevate the standards of film, they also objected to the use of *Schlager*, but these were so popular that the regime, in a typical hypocritical move, engineered their reevaluation as *Volk-Schlager*, songs of the people, and used them to entertain the Germans, a function that became increasingly important as the war went on. *Schlager* thus fulfilled many functions. An important part of popular culture, the songs also linked the Third Reich to Weimar and helped launch and consolidate individual

⁶⁷⁵ Michael Beiche, "Musik Und Film Im Deutschen Musikjournalismus Der 1920er Jahre," *Archiv Für Musikwissenschaft* 63, no. 2 (2006): 117.

careers. Looking at the career of Hans Albers, I tell the gendered story of the advent of German sound film, where Albers' coronation as the "master of natural speech" was linked to his ostentatious masculinity. Unlike his male colleagues' performances, though, Albers' use of songs was designed to showcase Albers, the man and the actor, and created a connection that was cherished by the audience and helped further his popularity.

In addition to the singer film, the arrival of sound film led to the creation of other new genres such as the sound film operetta. Criticized for their exaggerated use of *Schlager*, the sound film operettas disappeared and were replaced during the Third Reich by the less self-reflexive and ironic, but nonetheless extremely popular genre of the revue film. Chapter 6 delineates the functions of a genre that, because of its typical setting in artistic milieus, was able to showcase exotic and extravagant costumes, songs and even plots, some of them offering an alternative to the highly politicized German public sphere. I show how the success of the genre's biggest star, Marika Röck, was rooted in her ability to waver between transgression and conformity, and to provide audiences with ambiguous cinematic fantasies they could indulge in.

Chapter 5

The Use of Music and Songs in Film

Film and Music in the Film Press

This chapter delineates how the film press was actively involved in efforts to articulate the newly expanded relationship between music and film.⁶⁷⁶ It analyzes the main topics covered, such as the position of film in the media landscape of Nazi Germany and its relationship to radio, and shows how the film press fulfilled important functions, from informing and educating its readers about sound film, to providing once again a forum for discussions, albeit limited ones, where the role of music and composers, the exploration of a new genre such as the opera film, and the use of popular hit songs, the *Schlager*, were negotiated.

The film press devoted a substantial amount of space to the issue of music: the daily *Film-Kurier*, for example, featured an average of thirty articles per month, second only to questions of film dramaturgy.⁶⁷⁷ Starting in March 1934, the trade newspaper featured a bi-weekly column called *Im Filmmusik*, which was replaced in May 1938 by a new column, *Woche nach Noten*. From December 1939, it alternated with another column entitled *Musikrückblick*, written by the knowledgeable, ironic, and often very critical Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck, who would regularly complain about the stagnant situation, occasionally praising good arrangements and constantly exhorting filmmakers

⁶⁷⁶ Konrad Vogelsang, *Filmmusik Im Dritten Reich. Die Dokumentation* (Hamburg: Facta, 1990). As late as 1937, *Film-Kurier* felt it necessary to explain and emphasized the role played by music in film.

⁶⁷⁷ The number for *Film-Kurier* are following: 1933: 15; 1934: 40; 1935: 22; 1936: 25; 1937: 16; 1938: 33; 1939: 52; 1940: 67; 1941: 71; 1942: 48; 1943: 28; 1944: 11. For *Filmwelt* 1933: 7; 1934: 6; 1935: 7; 1936: 10; 1937: 8; 1938: 8; 1939: 10; 1940: 4; 1941: 11; 1942: 1.

to utilize music and composers in more constructive ways.⁶⁷⁸ With a column closer to an opinion piece, Wanderscheck was instrumental in pushing the discussions about film and music further, triggering passionate exchanges about the possibilities, or impossibilities, of new genre such as the film opera, and about how music could turn film into the complete artwork, the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The more critical *Woche nach Noten* was supplemented in the summer of 1940 by an another column, penned by Hans Martin Cremer, which consisted of interviews with composers, and illustrated with photographs and excerpts from the film music sheet (see Figure 5.3). In *Der deutsche Film*, editor in chief Leonhard Fürst also introduced a series of composers to the readers.⁶⁷⁹ Bemoaning the lack of attention paid to film music by the field of musicology, by the press, and even by the film industry,⁶⁸⁰ he fought tirelessly for a reevaluation of the use of music in film and for an aesthetic of film music.⁶⁸¹

While it was not engaging in the same debates as *Film-Kurier* and *Der deutsche Film*, the popular magazine *Filmwelt* was also doing its part in educating and informing

⁶⁷⁸ The first few articles were penned by Hans Rutz, “Lang, lang ist’s her – Filmische Musikdramatik so oder so,” *Filmkurier*, May 7, 1938; “Funk im Dienste der Filmmusik. Von den Ziele und Aufgaben der deutschen Filmmusik,” *Filmkurier*, May 17, 1938; “Filmmusik verlangt Klarheit des Gefühls,” *Filmkurier*, May 21, 1938; “Herbert Windts Musik-Olympia,” *Filmkurier*, June 4, 1938.

⁶⁷⁹ In *Der deutsche Film*: Walter Gronostay (no. 3, September 1936); Alois Melichar (no. 8, February 1937); Herbert Windt (no. 11, May 1937); Wolfgang Zeller (no. 7, January 1938). See also “Musikdramaturgie des Films. Aus einem Gespräch mit Michael Jary,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1942), 9ff.

⁶⁸⁰ “It is a pity that film professionals have no understanding of music. They really have no clue, otherwise they would have long ago opened the barricaded path to film music,” in “Deutsche Filmmusiker. IV Wolfgang Zeller,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1938), 195.

⁶⁸¹ Leonhard Fürst, “Filmmusik,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 4 (October 1936), 97-99, no. 5 (November 1936), 141-145. See also Carlheinz Becker, “Aufgaben der Tongestaltung im Film,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 12 (June 1938), 331-332.

Wir sprachen Fritz Wennais

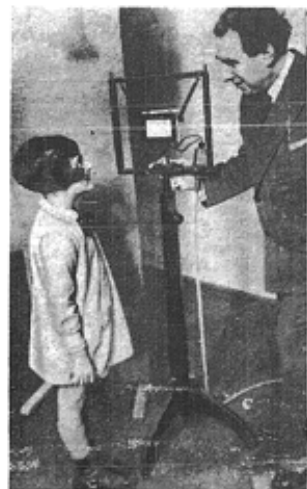
Vom Schulmeister zum Musik-Illustrator im Filmtheater

Er schreibt jetzt die Musik zu „Die letzte Runde“

Zu den Pionieren der Filmmusik gehört Fritz Wennais, der gleichzeitig einer der dienstältesten Filmmusiker überhaupt ist. Im Besaun in der Lütowstraße in Berlin steht er vor dem großen Orchester und nimmt gerade die Musik zu dem Film „Die letzte Runde“ auf. Eine kurze Orchesterpause gibt Gelegenheit, sich von Wennais selbst die Geschichte seines Lebens und Werdens erzählen zu lassen:

Zuerst Lehrer

Er ist 1899 in Mannheim geboren, absolvierte das Lehrseminar in Karlsruhe und war zunächst noch als Lehrer in Villingen (Schwarzwald) tätig. Von frühester Jugend hatte er sich bereits musikalisch betätigt und



Fritz Wennais bei der Arbeit an einem der ersten Tonfilme, bei denen noch das alte Reismikrofon Verwendung fand.

schrrieb als Lehrer seine erste Komposition „Das deutsche Recht“ auf Bestellung nach einer Dichtung von Handel-Maxetti. Wegen seines musikalischen Talents erhielt er einen dreijährigen Urlaub vom Schuldienst, um die Akademie der Tonkunst in München zu besuchen. Es folgten Gesangsstudien in Frankfurt a. M.

Darauf schied er aus dem Schuldienst aus, um eine Kapellmeisterstelle am

und Eleganz ihrer Arbeit, die doch in immerwährendem harten Training, im fortisierenden Ueberlegen erkämpft worden war“, sagt uns der Mann, dem Berlin das Auftreten der Codonas zu danken hatte. „Dem dreifachen Salto“, setzt er hinzu, „hat es ja schon vor Alfredo und Lalo Codona gegeben: — Anfang der neunziger Jahre traten in amerikanischen Varietés die „Drei Jordan“ auf, die den „Dreifachen“ brachten. Zu einer ausgereiften artistischen Leistung, die die Augen der Welt auf sich zog, zu einer Leistung von bewunderswerter Diszipliniertheit und Präzision machten ihn erst die Codonas, deren Lebensroman nun vor uns im Film abrollen wird.“

Stadtheater in Bochum anzunehmen. Eine Konzertreise durch das In- und Ausland schloß sich an, die durch den Ausbruch des Weltkrieges unterbrochen wurde. Als Waldhornbläser wurde er der Regimentskapelle des Kaiser-Alexander-Gardegrenadier-Regiments zugeteilt und machte den Krieg auf fast allen Schauplätzen des Ostens und Westens mit.

Nach dem Weltkriege war er Kapellmeister in Brandenburg und Halle und übersiedelte dann nach Berlin. „Ich bin dort sehr früh mit dem Film in Verbindung gekommen. Auf der Suche nach einer Celesta lernte ich bei Schiedmayer das Meisterharmonium kennen. Ich ließ es mir vorspielen und war restlos begeistert, da ich die praktische Bedeutung dieses Instrumentes für eine wirklich passende Illustrationsmusik zum Stummfilm erkannte.“

Als Musik-Illustrator im Kino

Die Direktion des „Deutschen Lichtspieltheaters“ in Berlin schaffte auf meinen Vorschlag einen Schiedmayer-Dominaator an. Dies Instrument stellte ich im Orchester des Theaters auf, zusammen mit einem Bechstein-Fügel im spitzen Winkel, beide Spielstische einander zugekehrt. Ich saß auf einem Drehschemel dazwischen, um abwechselnd das eine oder andere Instrument spielen zu können, wie es der Film gerade erforderte und — hatte so etwas ganz Neues erfunden. Alle Prominenten des Films kamen damals zu mir in die Spichernstraße, um sich die endlich erreichte Einheit zwischen Film und Musik anzuhören. Die Direktion des Konservatoriums am Bayrischen Platz und des Konservatoriums des Westens machten sich meine Methode zu eigen, und ich unterrichtete dort selbst. Auch der Rundfunk wurde aufmerksam, und ich gab dort das erste Konzert auf dem Meisterharmonium.

Bei der Eröffnung des Gloria-Palastes an der Gedächtniskirche spielte ich die dort eingeblaste Steinmeyer-



Ich habe die dankbare Aufgabe, für diesen Film eine Musik zu komponieren, deren Klänge den Gegensatz zwischen Deutschland und den Vereinigten Staaten illustrieren. So besteht meine Arbeit aus der Komposition von Gegensätzen, wobei ich die amerikanische Musik oft fast parodistisch bringe.“

Wir verfolgen die weitere Synchronisationsarbeit. Da zanken sich Ludwig Schmitz und Hörbiger in einer Taxe, sind verschiedener Meinung über den Boxkampf. Fein geht die Musik mit, die „Instrumente zanken sich“. Ein amerikanischer Marsch klingt auf, wir sind in der Arena, in der der Boxkampf stattfindet. In der Garderobe der



Orgel. Von dort holte mich die Direktion der Kasi-Lichtspiele in ihr Theater in der Kasi-Strasse, und hier gründete ich das erste Dominator-Orchester.“

Lehrer für Filmmusik an der Musik-Hochschule

1926 wurde Wennais Lehrer für Kunstharmoniumspiel an der Hochschule für Musik, unterrichtete dort auch speziell in der Kunst der Filmmusikillustration, bis er 1929 wieder in den Verband der Ufa zurückging, um das Orchester im Ufa-Pavillon Nollendorplatz zu übernehmen. Er schuf dort ein kleines Kammermusikzentrum für den Film. Dabei betrachtete er das Kunstharmonium keineswegs als Orchestersatz oder als Orchesterimitation, vielmehr behandelte er dieses Instrument als Klangkörper für sich, der nur an den Stellen eingesetzt werden durfte, an denen es der Film vertritt.

Als der Tonfilm kam, gehörte auch Wennais wieder zu den Komponisten, die sich der neuen Kunst verschrieben und eifrig für eine artgerechte Filmmusik kämpften. Viele Musiken zu Tonfilmen stammen von ihm, zu Spiel- und Kulturfilmen, wobei er sehr oft nur das Kunstharmonium benutzte oder es wenigstens als Instrument mit einsetzte.

Wer die Musik zu dem Film „Das Lied vom Stahl“ gehört hat, die Wennais schuf, der wird erkennen, was der Tonschöpfer mit seinen Forderungen meint. Ein sicheres und geschmackvoller Illustrator, kennt er die Gesetze der Filmmusik, die Aufnahme- und Wiedergabeteknik so genau, daß seine Musiken immer sauber und ohne Verwischungen, die aus falscher Instrumentation entstehen können, klingen. Auch das, was es leider bei Kulturfilmen noch oft der Fall ist, Wennais gezwungen ist, mit bescheidenen Mitteln zu arbeiten, erkennt man doch immer den Fachmann und Filmkennner, der durch jahrzehntelange Praxis ein Handwerk gelernt hat, das, zusammen mit wirklichem Schöpferum, unerlässlich für eine gute Filmmusik ist.

„Die letzte Runde“

Wir trafen, wie gesagt, Wennais im Besaun, wo er eben die Musik zu dem Tobis-Film „Die letzte Runde“ aufnimmt. Ein vorzügliches Orchester spielt schmissige Weisen, die etwas amerikanisch anzunehmen. Der Dirigent und Komponist gibt hierfür in einer Pause die Erklärung:

„Der Film beginnt in Amerika, zu Beginn eines großen Boxkampfes, deshalb der amerikanische Rhythmus.“

Boxer geht der Dialog weiter, begleitet von fernzer Musik.

Fein abgetönet hat Wennais hier die Klänge eingestreut, sie rütteln auf, scheinen dem Boxer zuzurufen: Los, mach dich zum Kampf fertig! ... Bis der Boxer Eddie Steele plötzlich verschwunden ist. Die Handlung geht weiter in Deutschland. Paul Liskes Thema aus der „Berliner Luft“ wird als Signal eingesetzt: wir marschieren mit deutscher Marschmusik durch das Brandenburger Tor.

Gut hat Wennais die deutsche Seele in seiner Musik ausgedrückt.

Hans Martin Cremer.

Figure 5.3: Felix Wennais in *Film-Kurier*, August 7, 1940.

the readers about film music with, for example, its regular presentation of film composers.⁶⁸² Keeping with the overall tone of the magazine, the articles presented the composers from a personal point of view, with a short biography recounting their beginnings and emphasizing their training, and photographs of them at home or on sets working with film stars.⁶⁸³ (see Figure 5.4). It also provided its readers with numerous reprints of music sheets, some of which were partly hidden by a picture of the main actor/actress, so that the readers had to buy the sheets from Ufa Tonverlag (see Figure 5.5). From November 1940 on, Wanderscheck contributed also to *Filmwelt*, making the presentation of film composers a more regular feature of the magazine, and always emphasizing the vital role that music plays in film.⁶⁸⁴ The presentations of composers

⁶⁸² See for example “Vom Oper zum Tonfilmschlager. Der Komponist Robert Stolz,” *Filmwelt*, no. 13 (April 1934); “Der Tonfilmkomponist Friedrich W. Luft,” no. 24 (June 1934); “Der Tonfilmkomponist Werner Bochmann,” no. 32 (August 1934); “Der Tonkomponist Franz Doelle,” no. 4 (January 1935); “Hans Otto Borgmann, ‘Vom Schlager zum Volkslied,’” *Filmwelt*, no. 19 (May 1934); “Alle kennen seine Melodien. Harald Böhmelt,” *Filmwelt*, no. 13 (March 1936); “Musik: Franz Doeller. Kompositionen zu ‘Und du, mein Schatz, fährst mit!’” *Filmwelt*, no. 3 (January 1937); “Die Musik zu ‘La Habanera.’ Ein Besuch bei dem Komponisten Lothar Brühne,” *Filmwelt*, no. 51 (December 1937).

⁶⁸³ Starting in 1939, Wilhelm Schnauck penned a new series, “Visit to the composer xxx.” See “Filmmusik muß jeden ansprechen. Die ‘Filmwelt’ besucht den Komponisten Werner Bochmann,” *Filmwelt*, no. 16 (April 1939), 12-13; “Besuch bei Theo Mackeben,” *Filmwelt*, no. 26 (June 1939), 6-7; “Der Komponist Wolfgang Zeller,” *Filmwelt*, no. 34 (August 1939), 20; “Der Komponist Werner Eisbrenner,” *Filmwelt*, no. 38 (September 1939), 10. See also “‘So Kann das rühig weitergehen.’ Von Hans Carste und seiner Filmmusik,” *Filmwelt*, no. 24 (June 1939), 13. See also Hans E. Dits, “Ein Pioneer der Filmmusik. Der Komponist Willy Schmidt-Gentner,” *Filmwelt*, no. 28 (July 1940), 10-11, and r.m., “Gespräch mit dr. Giuseppe Becce,” *Filmwelt*, no. 34 (August 1940), 15-16.

⁶⁸⁴ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Der Komponist Norbert Schultze,” *Filmwelt*, no. 44 (November 1940), 4-5; “Filmmusik als Lebenswerk. Der Komponist Wolfgang Zeller,” *Filmwelt*, no. 1 (January 1941), 16-17; “Willy Richard komponiert... Eine Stunde mit dem Film- und Rundfunkkomponisten,” *Filmwelt*, no. 4 (January 1941), 90; “Alois Melichar und seine Filmkompositionen,” *Filmwelt*, no. 13 (March 1941), 332-333; “Heroische Filmmusik. Der Komponist Herbert Windt,” *Filmwelt*, no. 15 (April 1941), 382-383; “Filmmusik—ernst und heiter. Aus der Arbeit des Komponisten Edmund Nick,” *Filmwelt*, no. 19 (May 1941), 493; “Die Macht der Musik im Film,” *Filmwelt*, no. 43/44 (October 1941), 880-882; “Sein schönstes Lied. Der Filmkomponist Werner Bochmann,” no. 47/48 (November 1941). See also “So singt man in Berlin, Walter Kollo's Melodien un einem neuen Film,” *Filmwelt*, no. 21 (May 1941), 550-551.



Die Tänzerin Araga Makarova beginnt ihren Maskentanz "Erkenne dich selbst"

I. Sie tanzt das Gebahren einer Frau, die anders sein möchte, als sie ist.

Sie prüft sich im Spiegel, - dann, mit einer Drehung des Spiegels, zeigt sie die erste Maske, die auf der Rückseite des Spiegels das Gesicht eines Unschuldensängels darstellt.

I. Sie tanzt ein paar Takte mit dieser Maske vor dem Gesicht, um sofort eine neue Verwandlung vorzunehmen, und so Maske auf Maske von der Rückseite des Spiegels abziehend - spielt sie sich tänzerisch durch mehrere überraschende Verwandlungen über die Waive, die KÖKETTE,

die Seelenvolle und den Vamp wieder zu ihrer eigenen Physiognomie zurück, die sie endlich, den Spiegel herabklagend, energisch bejaht.

Hanna sieht gespannt zu.

Mathias beobachtet sie unausgesetzt. Er sieht kaum zur Bühne. Er ist von jeder Regung gefesselt, die über Hannas Gesicht fliegt.

Der Tanz ist zu Ende.

Die Makarova verbugt sich.

Handwritten notes and musical sketches:

- 1. *Das* (Musical notation)
- 2. *KöKette* (Musical notation)
- 3. *Die Seelenvolle (Faschante?)* (Musical notation)
- 4. *hart angesprochen No 4:* (Musical notation)
- 5. *Meine einseln aufzulegen. 185.* (Musical notation)
- 6. *die Seelenvolle und den Vamp wieder zu ihrer eigenen Physiognomie zurück, die sie endlich, den Spiegel herabklagend, energisch bejaht.* (Musical notation)
- 7. *festhalten des Spiegels. 178p. 180a. 181a. 181b. 181c.* (Musical notation)
- 8. *Makarova kommt auf den Hauptparkett. Verändertes Tempo. Das ist der Ende.* (Musical notation)
- 9. *Die Musik schliesst/* (Musical notation)
- 10. *klüßte der Tanz. Kostüm. Begehren. Die Langsamkeit wird durch individualisiert ganz vom Hillland kommt.* (Musical notation)

Figure 5.4: “Film music must address everybody. Filmwelt pays a visit to the composer Werner Bochmann,” *Filmwelt*, no. 16 (April 1939), 12-13.



Figure 5. 5: Music sheet in *Filmwelt*, as advertisement for upcoming films: February 12, no. 7, and May 27, no. 21, both 1933.

contributed to ongoing efforts to educate the readers about the importance of music in film, from technical as well as aesthetic points of view.⁶⁸⁵

Articles written in the Third Reich continued many of the same discussions that had taken place during the Weimar Republic, such as the divide between proponents of original foreign language versions or dubbed films.⁶⁸⁶ Discussions crystalized around technological developments, the relationship between sound film and other media, the role of the composers in the filmmaking process, new genres such as the opera film, and the use of *Schlager*.⁶⁸⁷

Sound film was still a relatively new technology in the early 1930s and several articles assessed the positive and negative aspects of this constantly evolving technological innovation.⁶⁸⁸ Informational seminars were also organized to inform theater owners about sound film recording and playing in the theaters.⁶⁸⁹ *Film-Kurier* published several articles about the role and function of the sound editor, presenting and interviewing professionals.⁶⁹⁰ Numerous articles detailed the specific work made on set in a pedagogical effort to educate audiences about the role of music in film and how it was

⁶⁸⁵ Walter Gronostay, "Gibt es Musikfilme?" in *Film-Kurier*, November 20, 1936.

⁶⁸⁶ Michael Beiche has traced the discussions about film music in the Weimar music press. Beiche, "Musik Und Film Im Deutschen Musikjournalismus Der 1920er Jahre." On the debate dubbing versus original version see W.H. "Synchronisierung oder Original? Ein Beitrag zur grundsätzlichen Klärung," *Film-Kurier*, February 9, 1933. See the lengthy article about the dubbing of Emil Jannings's film *Der alte und der junge König* in French in *Film-Kurier*, January 4, 1936. On the problems with dubbings see Hermann Wanderscheck, "Anonyme Synchronisation und kleine Untermalungen," *Film-Kurier*, September 17, 1938. The popular *Filmwelt* asked "why a film in two languages," in no. 22 (May 1933).

⁶⁸⁷ On filming of opera see for example Chaparral, "Soll man Opernstoffe verfilmen? Sidneys "Madame Butterfly," *Film-Kurier*, January 31, 1933.

⁶⁸⁸ The educational role of *Film-Kurier* continued with for example an article describing how film music is recorded, as the journal had the feeling that "there are enough readers who do not know how this is done," in "Die Musik kommt zum Film," *Film-Kurier*, August 25, 1939, or a more technical article on how to appropriately handle the film reel in order to achieve good synchronization between sound and images in "Bild und Ton müssen zusammen passen. Falsche Filmschleifenlänge führt zur nichtsynchronen Vorführung," *Film-Kurier*, May 18, 1940.

⁶⁸⁹ "Dr. von Lölhöfel über "Der Ton in Film,"" *Film-Kurier*, February 8, 1935.

⁶⁹⁰ "Die Männer mit dem guten Ton. Tommeister bei der Arbeit," *Film-Kurier*, August 8, 9, and 12, 1935.

used.⁶⁹¹ As late as June 18, 1937, a two-page article explained how sound and image were recorded and used in the final montage.⁶⁹²

Born in 1928, sound film was still in its infancy and was constantly developing technically. Sound technicians called for “more sound critique,” hoping that paying more attention to, and being more critical of, the sound would lead to an increase in the quality of the latter.⁶⁹³ *Film-Kurier* journalists were often very critical of the executed work.⁶⁹⁴ Indeed, despite better microphones, and, from 1936 on, new and better ways to record sound film,⁶⁹⁵ the quality of sound film left much to be desired, something film theater owners and projectionists complained about until 1937.⁶⁹⁶ Film professionals and viewers alike complained about the lamentable mixes of sounds, voices, and dialogue, with one superseding the other two.⁶⁹⁷ By June 1942, complaints about unintelligible dialogue still

⁶⁹¹ “Opernszene Königswalzer,” *Film-Kurier*, July 4, 1935; Walter Bertin, “Musik durch Film, Funk und Schallplatte. Zur Soziologie mechanischer Musikvermittlung,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1937), 200-207; Carlheinz Becker, “Die Instrumentalisation im Tonfilm,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 8 (February 1937), 228ff.

⁶⁹² “Die Darstellungsmittel des Films. Bild und Ton getrennt,” *Film-Kurier*, June 18, 1937; “Die Darstellungsmittel des Films. Die Rolle der Musik im Film,” *Film-Kurier*, July 20, 1937.

⁶⁹³ “Mehr Ton Kritik,” *Film-Kurier*, January 16, 1935.

⁶⁹⁴ Cis-Des, “Tonleiter der Woche,” *Film-Kurier*, July 11, 18, 25, August 1, and August 8, 1935. Only Reinhold Schünzel’s *Amphitryon* was praised on July 25, 1935.

⁶⁹⁵ “Neue Wege der Tonaufnahme. Die Eurocord-Apparatur der Klangfilm,” *Film-Kurier*, December 1, 1936.

⁶⁹⁶ “Immer wieder der Ton,” and the answer of a theater owner in “Der Ton macht die Musik,” *Film-Kurier*, January 6 and 14, 1937. See also “Hier spricht ein Theaterleiter. Der Ton im Filmtheater. Ein offenes Wort zu vielen Fehlerquellen,” *Film-Kurier*, June 12, 1937.

⁶⁹⁷ G.H., “Musik wird störend oft empfunden, wenn sie den Dialog in dem Film übertönt,” *Film-Kurier*, October 13, 1939. See also the viewer’s letter from Ilse Deyk, “Stimme des Publikums. Wenn die Musik stört,” *Film-Kurier*, January 18, 1941. *Film-Kurier* published another letter from Deyk tackling the issue of the “speech in film,” “Die Sprache im Film,” *Film-Kurier*, July 25, 1941. She points to the low level of speech in film and also to the grammatical errors in films. The balance between music and dialogue was difficult to achieve. See “Tonsalat,” *Film-Kurier*, July 2, 1940. Such complain was reminiscent of earlier comments. See for example Hermann Hacker, “Gespräch mit Peter Kruger. Braucht man Film Musik um jeden Preis,” *Film-Kurier*, November 24, 1936. German films were especially criticized for being dialogue-heavy, as opposed to their American counterparts. A situation rooted in the strong ties between film and theater, where the latter provides materials and acting professionals. Johannes Eckardt, “Dr. Eckardt in der Lessing Hochschule. Wort und Dialog im Film,” *Film-Kurier*, November 12, 1936. The film *Pygmalion* was seeing as finally “breaking the spell of the obsessive idea of the shortcomings of dialogue-film, which was thought to be constrained by the cinematographic scope of design.” S-k, “Mut zum Dialog-Film! Pygmalion-Erfolg als Ansporn,” *Film-Kurier*, September 17, 1935.

made the front page.⁶⁹⁸ Interestingly enough, foreign filmmakers were often taken as examples of advanced sound film technologies that should be followed.⁶⁹⁹ In addition to the French film pioneer Rene Clair and his film *Sous les Toits de Paris*, (Under the Roof of Paris),⁷⁰⁰ the U.S. films' use of music were praised for their "precision [...] ahead of us."⁷⁰¹ Disney films were remarked upon for their musicality and even called "film operas."⁷⁰²

Along with technical issues, the new position of sound film in relation to other media was explored. The strong media network developed during Weimar was solidified with the arrival of sound film. As one article put it "[s]ound film and records, two important factors of German industry, have long had common interests and impacts," and film, radio, music industry, and the press promoted common products and stars.⁷⁰³ *Film-Kurier*, for example, regularly commented on developments in the music industry business,⁷⁰⁴ such as the ban of "nigger jazz" on German radios,⁷⁰⁵ the optimal use of records in film theaters,⁷⁰⁶ and the creation of a new "National Music Prize."⁷⁰⁷

⁶⁹⁸ Georg Herzberg, "Das Wort im Tonfilm muß zu verstehen sein," *Film-Kurier*, June 20, 1942. See also Werner Bochmann takes on the subject in G.H., "Gespräch mit einem Komponisten," *Film-Kurier*, August 20, 1942.

⁶⁹⁹ The British studios had their microphones hanging from the wall, leading to more flexibility in the movement. Kurt Schröder, "Atelier Spaziergänge eines Musikers," *Film-Kurier*, October 18, 1934.

⁷⁰⁰ E.J. "Wieder Musik – Sous les toits de Paris," *Film-Kurier*, May 31, 1934.

⁷⁰¹ Frz Jos. Kleinkorst, "Zwei Entwicklungslinien fimischer Musik," *Film-Kurier*, October 4, 1934.

⁷⁰² Kurt Schröder, "Die umstrittene 'Filmoper,'" *Film-Kurier*, October 25, 1934.

⁷⁰³ Waldemar Lydor, "Film im Funk," in *Film-Kurier*, October 12, 1933; Schu. "Tonfilm und Schalplatte," *Film-Kurier*, May 24, 1934.

⁷⁰⁴ "Geschmack an Schallplatten," June 13, and "Besuch bei den Tonfilmmusik-Verleger," *Film-Kurier*, June 17, 1935.

⁷⁰⁵ "Was ist Nigger-Jazz," *Film-Kurier*, November 25, 1935.

⁷⁰⁶ "Die Schallplatten im Filmtheater," *Film-Kurier*, December 7, 1935.

⁷⁰⁷ "Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels sprach in Düsseldorf," *Film-Kurier*, May 22, 1939.

As part of this consolidating set of multimedia, film's collaboration with radio was a recurrent topic in the film press.⁷⁰⁸ *Filmwelt* noted, for example, the increase in radio shows devoted to film. In a 1934 *Deutschlandsender* show actress Marianne Hoppe talked about "What women want from film." Illustrating efforts to make producing film and film music respectable occupations, three film composers (Hans-Otto Borgmann, Theo Mackeben, and Alois Melichar) talked about their works, "showing the audience that the serious film composers were striving to be aspiring creators and no manufacturers of *Schlager*."⁷⁰⁹ *Film-Kurier* reported on an "innovative collaboration between radio and film, when, in January 1939, all the stations of the *Großdeutschen Rundfunk* produced a series of shows about the upcoming Veit Harlan's film *Das unsterbliche Herz* (The Undying Heart). The radio organized a competition, whose winners received a round trip to Nuremberg with room and board, tickets to the "world premiere" of the film, and a meet and greet with the actors.⁷¹⁰ The trade paper noted in 1943 how "radio always pays a lot of attention to the new film production, while film knows how to appreciate the incomparable advertising power of radio and put his

⁷⁰⁸ For a history of radio during the Third Reich see Inge Marssolek et al., *Zuhören und Gehörtwerden: Radio in Nationalsozialismus. Zwischen Lenkung und Ablenkung* (Edition Diskord, 1998); Bonacker, *Goebbels' Mann Beim Radio*; Anna-Gesa Pollex, *Rundfunk im Dritten Reich: Der Volksempfänger als Sprachrohr der nationalsozialistischen Propaganda* (GRIN Verlag, 2010). For radio as part of a society of consumption see König, *Volkswagen, Volksempfänger, Volksgemeinschaft*. For radio as a "tense, contradictory social field," see Currid, *A National Acoustics*, especially chapter 1, "Radio, Mass Publicity, and National Fantasy," 19–64. Contemporary journalists regularly commended on the power of the radio to connect the different arts. Max Bing, for example, argued that film, radio and theater had too much in common to be easily separated and that radio had the power to introduce broad audience to the theater. See Max Bing, "Rund um Film und Funk. Erkenntnisse – Begegnungen – Erinnerungen," *Filmwelt*, no. 43 (October 1936), and "Mikrophone im Rampenlicht; streiflichter von einer fröhlichen Fahrt kreuz und quer durch Berlin," *Filmwelt*, no. 15 (April 1937).

⁷⁰⁹ "Film und Funk," *Filmwelt*, no. 50 (December 1934).

⁷¹⁰ "Wer will mit dem Fubk nach Nürnberg? Großaktion des Rundfunks für den Veit-Harlan-Film "Das unsterbliche Herz," *Film-Kurier*, January 18, 1939.

novelties at its disposal willingly.”⁷¹¹ Using, the career of the composer Werner Bochmann it illustrated how “closely film and radio go together, to bring to the audience joy and relaxation.”⁷¹²

The film press also regularly reported on the progress of television and “the people’s radio” technology, covering the annual radio exhibition (Figure 5.6).⁷¹³ *Filmwelt* especially focused its articles on the consumer, keeping the technological jargon to a minimum and emphasizing how much easier the use of radio had become since its inception, especially for women (see Figures 5.7). Radio, with its “7.5 Millions listeners,” was regarded as a powerful medium for film advertisement.

Film-Kurier described radio as “the helper of film,”⁷¹⁴ and had a separate column called *Film und Funk*.⁷¹⁵ Journalist Gerd Eckert suggested ways to increase the presence of film-related materials in the form of interviews with film professionals. He recommended that reports from the sets, for example, should be increased, because the audience was more interested in the creative aspects of filmmaking than in its critique.⁷¹⁶

⁷¹¹ “Film und Rundfunk Hand in Hand. Ein Beispiel: Werner Bochmann,” *Film-Kurier*, July 29, 1943. See also the reportage about the short film *Rundfunk im Krieg* (Radio in War) in Werner Plücker, “Rundfunkmann filmt Rundfunk,” *Film-Kurier*, January 28, 1944.

⁷¹² Ibid.

⁷¹³ Otto Kappelmayer, “XII. Deutsche Funkausstellung (16.-25. August 1935) Fernseher – Volkssender – Volksempfänger,” *Filmwelt* no. 33 (August 1935); “Tonfilm und Rundfunk. Ein Kapitel über den Klangsinne des Menschen,” *Filmwelt*, no. 41 (October 1935); “Die neuen Rundfunk-Empfänger – eine Freude für Auge und Ohr. Zur 15. Großen Deutschen Rundfunkausstellung,” *Filmwelt*, no. 33 (August 1938); “Die deutschen Gemeinschaftsempfänger,” *Filmwelt*, no. 34 (August 1938); “Fernsehen und Tonfilm. Zwei Wunderwerker begegnen sich,” *Filmwelt*, no. 35 (August 1938); “Die neue Empfänger auf der XVI. Großen Deutschen Rundfunk- und Fernseh Rundfunk- Ausstellung 1939,” *Filmwelt*, no. 30 (July 1939), 22-23; “Der Deutsche Einheitsfernseher E1,” *Filmwelt*, no. 31 (August 1939). For television, see Gerda Torenburg, “Zwischen Film und Fernsehen,” *Filmwelt*, no. 23 (June 1940), 12, and a.m.k., “Frohe Stunden beim Fernsehsender,” *Filmwelt*, no. 1 (January 1942), 10.

⁷¹⁴ “Funk als Filmhelfer. 20 Minuten Film im Münchener Funkprogramm,” *Film-Kurier*, April 13, 1935.

⁷¹⁵ “Berlin und der Rundfunk,” *Film-Kurier*, June 04, 1942; “Europa immer rundfunkfreudiger,” *Film-Kurier*, June 24, 1942; Paul Ickes, “Bunte Filmmusik im Rundfunk,” *Film-Kurier*, May 3, 1943.

⁷¹⁶ Gerd Eckert, “Filmwerbung des Rundfunks,” *Film-Kurier*, March 23, 1936.

Die neuen Empfänger auf der XVI. Großen Deutschen Rundfunk- und Fernseh Rundfunk- Ausstellung 1939

Der Ton von Kultur — Kurzwellen ganz groß — Vollsuper unter 200 Mark
Stromsparschaltung — Tastenabstimmung



Der Vollsuperempfänger mit Kurzwellen unter 200 Mark ist einer der markantesten Fortschritte der neuen Apparate. Telefonen „Condor“



Die Klanggüte der neuen Empfänger ist so groß, daß viele Firmen die Geräte gleich mit Musikschalen kombinieren lassen, um wirklich den letzten Feinschliff herbeizuführen. Klaring Modell, Strom 40 mit dem Großsuper „Amator“ 40 und zwei Lautsprechern

Der Ton von Kultur

Können Sie das Unmögliche zwischen Hören und Erleben? Den Ton einer Flöte kann man nur hören, aber den Ton eines Geiges erleben. Das Hören geschieht in der Außenwelt, das Erleben innen. Der Sinn der Handwerke in Metieren, also mühen die Empfänger so gut sein, daß man die Musik wirklich erleben kann. Dazu gehört aber sehr viel, denn alle physikalischen Bestandteile der Klänge müssen erst einmal wirkungsvoll in Lautsprecher wiedergegeben werden, außerdem aber auch jene unersichtlichen inneren Spannungen, die aus den Klängen das musikalische Kunstwerk machen.

Das ist jetzt soweit.

Die Empfänger haben neue Lautsprecher bekommen mit größeren

Membranen, weicherer Aufhängung, stärkerem Magnetfeld und langbelegten „Spinnen“. (Spinner heißt man die äußere Halbleiterschaltung der Lautsprechermembranen.) In aller der Lautsprecher schließlich die Musik sucht, so kann man schon erkennen, wie diese Verbesserungen für den Klang bedeuten. Aber auch im Inneren der Geräte hat man alles „Staub herausgewischt“, der sich so leicht auf den Klang legt und seiner feineren Leinwand Farben verleiht. „Geräusche“ ist natürlich nur heillos gestört. Aber es muß im Erfolge der Richter. Die kleine Welle, die von der Antenne in die Abstimmrinne, die Hochfrequenz und schließlich den Niederfrequenz-Verstärker fließt, wird allmählich ein bisschen verändert.

Und das hört das Ohr als Verflüchtung des Klanges, als Beirührung und als Versuch der Farben. Es ist so ähnlich, wie wenn man beim Fotografieren die Entfernung falsch einstellt oder zu wenig belichtet. Der Handhabungsbedarf der „Filme“ will lassen nicht erlauben, es überall herauszufinden, was ist, was nicht wirklich menschlichen Ton zu erreichen, der zum Erleben der Musik führt. Aber wenn man mit gewissen Ohren einige der neuen Apparate anhört, sagt man sich: „Ja, das ist Musik!“ — und wandert sich, daß man sich überhaupt mit dem, was früher war, zufrieden sein konnte.

Kurzwellen ganz groß!

Ein so gut klingender Empfänger muß natürlich auch genügend viel Programme bieten, damit man sich wirklich auch die wahren Kunstwerke hören kann. Aber wir wissen, daß auf Mittel- und Langwellen gegenüber auch dem allgeringsten Super kann ein halbes Dutzend Sender so gut kommen, daß man die Darbietungen nicht hören kann. Gerade wegen des Tagesempfangs hat man nun die Kurzwellen stark verbessert. Das Weltband wurde erweitert und reicht jetzt von 13,5 bis 22 m, die Empfängerlichkeit wurde durch dessen Durchbildung der Röhren und die neuen Schaltkreise erhöht — und schließlich hat man auch die Kondensatorstufen mit neuen so dünnen Folien versehen, daß auch die Grobmoder-Kurzwellen empfangen kann. Man beachte sich bei der Station auszuwählen, um zu merken, was alle auf die Kurzwellen hin an. Da stehen jetzt schon 30 oder gar mehr Sender oben für „aus“ damit. Sie sind nicht darauf gebaut, wenn man sie nicht hören könnte. Bei den größeren Super Sets ist der Kurzwellen sogar in zwei oder drei Abteilungen zerlegt worden, wodurch die Ein-

stufung. Außerdem unterscheiden sich viele der neuen Geräte schon durch die Druckknöpfe von ihren Vorgängern. Durch die Druckknöpfe kann jetzt auch die Frequenz der Fernempfänger leicht einstellen. Man hat 216 DE.

stellung auch viel leichter und die Skala noch übersichtlicher wird. Man heißt die „Bandstreifen“, weil die Kurzwellen auseinandergepresst werden ist. Der große Kurzwellen so ist wohl also im Zukunft immer Super mit Bandstreifen haben. Das natürlich der Schwere entsprechend verstärkt werden mußte und daß man bei den größeren Geräten die Kurzwellen eine tauchbare Vorrück eingehen hat, wodurch die Gesamtverstärkung auf 50 bis 30 Millionen gesteigert ist, ... das gehört selbstverständlich dazu, denn ohne diese elektronischen Verstärkungen müßten auch die Bedienungselemente nicht viel. Was mit so einem neuen Super zu irgendeiner Tages, sehr Abweicht einmal Kurzwellen gehört hat, weil eine richtige, was das für eine große Sache ist.

Vollsuper unter 200 Mark

Der Super wird immer billiger. Jetzt gibt es schon Super für 199 Mark — und solche mit dem Weltband, die weniger als 200 Mark kosten. Dieser Erfolg beruht darauf, daß man mit den neuen Schaltkreisen und leistungsfähigeren Geräten mit wenig Röhren auskommen kann als früher. Außerdem gibt es in der Stadtliche sogenannte Vier-Röhren-Super, die man unter einer Haube steckt. Ein Vier-Röhren-Super der neuen Art ist also von vornherein stärker als einer mit sechs Röhren von früher. Die Bedienung ist Superben und heute so groß, daß man diesen Apparatetät derartig vollkommen in der Montageherstellung beherrscht wie keine andere. Und wenn der Super billiger ist, kann man große Stückzahlen herstellen, wodurch wieder ein niedrigerer Preis erreicht wird. So besteht man aber von einem Vollsuper für 179 Mark mit zwei Weltbändern genau so wenig Angst haben, wie vor einem billigen Kurzwellensuper. Man bekommt für diesen niedrigen Preis einen Apparat mit automationsfähiger Verstärkung, mit einer Frequenzabstimmung von 1 : 1000, Bandbreitenregelung, Vollschwingungsbereich, Gegenüberstellung und einem Klang, der überhaupt mit den Hören genussvoll macht.

Wenn man zwischen 200 und 250 Mark zahlt, gibt es dann auch noch das magische Auge, und zwar die neue mit Doppelröhrenbestattung, eine separate Filter- und Höhenabstimmung und bei manchen Geräten sogar zwei Kurzwellenbereiche. Wieder einen Fünfzigmarktschein höher liegt der Großsuper mit sechs oder sieben Röhren, was bei den Kurzwellenbereichen und allen modernen Bedienungselementen.

Tastenabstimmung

Der zuletzt erwähnte Fortschritt dieses Jahres sind Druckknöpfe an den Empfängern. Man kann seinen Lieblingswelle nach

stetiglicher Einwirkung immer wieder einfach durch Druck auf die Taste herbeiführen, ohne daß man sich irgend etwas anders anzuordnen braucht. Gedrückt einem die Programme des ausgewählten Senders nicht mehr, denn kann man die Taste erreichen auf eine neue Station. Der Tastensuper ist der richtige Begleiter für die Frau und die Kinder. Papa hat einen Abend auf die radio nicht acht Tante die beiden Sender gelacht und kassiert abgibt ist, hauptsächlich natürlich nicht; die auch tagüber zu hören und — und man kann in Mutter nicht mehr weiter zu tun als zuzuhören und die Taste drücken. Der Hauptvorteil der Tasten ist der, daß endlich ein auf die Sender wirklich scharf eingestellt werden; denn wenn man diese Arbeit nur einmal in den Händen, gibt man sich große Mühe. Aber wenn sie sich jeden Tag wiederholt, ist es kein Wunder, wenn sie mit wenig Sorgfalt ausgeführt wird. Dann aber ist es mit der Klanggüte nicht weit her; denn Schaltungsänderung ist eine unzufällige und reine Verzerrung.

Man hat zweierlei Methoden der Tasten gefunden. Die eine, bei der sich durch den Tastendruck die Drehkontakten von zu einem entsprechenden Anschlag verschoben — und die andere, bei der für jede Taste eigene Schwingungskreise vorgesehen sind, die man durch Verschieben der Spulen auf die gewünschte Welle abstimmt. Beide Methoden arbeiten unbedingt zuverlässig. Der einmal gewählte Sender nicht übertragung mit großer Genauigkeit stehen, da die weiter Temperaturänderung auch mechanische Beanspruchungen etwas anhaben können. Es gibt schon einen Tastensuper für etwa 179 Mark, der allerdings nur Tasten, aber keine andere Einstellung hat — zwischen 200 und 300 Mark hat man heute eine große Auswahl an Geräten mit Drucktaste —, und über 300 Mark sind sie natürlich selbstverständlich.

Die neuen deutschen Empfänger sind billiger geworden, aber trotzdem hauptsächlich in klassischer Hinsicht bestanden lassen. Das Konstruktionswerk wurde besonders geübt. Das Volkswort, was man dem Hörer in Bedienungselementen bieten kann, die Tastenabstimmung, hat sich durchgesetzt. Damit ist der Fernempfänger für die Frauen geschaffen worden.

Auch für Hörer ohne Lichtempfindlichkeit wurde Sorge: Es gibt jetzt eine ganze Reihe vorzüglicher Batteriesuper, die wenig Strom brauchen. Das permanent-dynamische Lautsprecher hat sich weiter eingeführt, und es eine selbstregulierende Lautsprecher hat und können Strom verbraucht. Überhaupt ist der Sparsende bei fast allen Geräten dadurch gefördert worden, daß man eine Sparschaltung einbaut, bei deren Benutzung je Monatsausgabe ungefähr 1 Pfennig ersparter Stromkosten in eine unerschöpfliche Sparschale überführt. Das Konstruktionswerk

Gehören Sie zu den Sonntagsjägern?

Sonntagsjäger — das müssen nicht nur Jäger im großen Buck sein. Nein, auch unter den Photo-Amateuren ist dieser Beruf so blühend. Es sind diejenigen, die ihre Camera regelmäßig nur sonntags hervorholen. Wieviel reizvolle und interessante Motive liegengen vor aber gerade im Alltag! Was sollte leichter sein eine Camera, die wie auf Schritt und Tritt bei uns tragen können, eine Camera, die bei möglichst niedrigem Gewicht und kleinem Abmessungen die besten Prinzipien moderner Photoapparate aufweisen. Jetzt wissen wir, daß die Tandem-TENAX 24-24 mm von Zeiss Ikon diese Bedingungen erfüllt. Sie wiegt nur 250 Gramm und läßt sich bequem in Rock- oder Hosentasche unterbringen. Ihr



Tandem-Tenax (Tandem 24-24 mm mit Novar 1:3,5 in Compur RM 18. Tandem 24-24 mm mit Zeiss Ikon 1:3,5 in Compur-Bajonet RM 19. Tandem 24-24 mm mit Zeiss Ikon 1:2 in Compur-Bajonet RM 20.

Meisteraufnahmen durch diese drei: Zeiss Ikon Camera, Zeiss Objektive, Zeiss Ikon Film!

Novar-Objektiv 1:3,5 ist so kernbrennweitig, daß die Schärfentiefe schon bei Blende 7 (!) von Unendlich bis 3 m reicht. Die Compur-Vorblende wird durch einen Schnelllauf gespannt, der mit dem Filmtanktransport gekuppelt ist. Doppelbelichtungen sowie Linsenverstellungen sind daher ausgeschlossen. Noch rührender Vorzüge ist die Schwenker der Taschen-TENAX die TENAX II. Sie ist mit auswechselbaren Zeiss Objektiven bis zur Lichtstärke 1:2 ausgestattet. Ferner besitzt die TENAX II einen Maßstab (Entfernungsmessung im Sucher) sowie einen eingebauten Selbststator. Ausführliche Prospekt über die TENAX erhalten Sie gratis von der Zeiss Ikon AG, Dresden 147

Figure 5.7: Otto Kappelmayer, “The new radio receivers presented at the XVI. Great German Radio and TV Exposition 1939,” *Filmwelt*, no. 30 (July 1939), 22-23.

From the mid 1930s on, radio augmented its coverage of cinematic topics, not only by playing specific songs of running or upcoming films, but also by having several regional stations institute regular shows devoted to film.⁷¹⁷ While the two were radically different media, film being visual and radio aural,⁷¹⁸ exchanges were numerous.⁷¹⁹ The link was often musical. During the 1935 International Film Congress, German radio organized a concert, where composers from around the world directed their own film music.⁷²⁰ Ufa collaborated with the Saarbrücken radio station for another concert on June 20, 1939, a concert, which was heard also in Munich, Vienna, and Danzig.⁷²¹ Hans Martin Cremer, head of the radio department of Ufa created one-hour radio shows where actors talked about film music.⁷²² This was followed on May 18, 1940, by a radio show called *Love at First Sound*, featuring audio clips from popular films, featuring Zarah Leander, Johannes Heesters, and Marika Röck.⁷²³ But the exchanges also took other forms. Breslau radio, for example, produced in 1940 the kind of “reports from the sets” that Gerd Eckert had suggested. Breslau radio chief director Kurt Paqué moved to the Tobis Filmkunst Company where he worked as a scriptwriter and film director.⁷²⁴ Radio was indeed a place where future film talent could be found.⁷²⁵ In a celebratory January

⁷¹⁷ “Funk als Filmhelfer,” *Film-Kurier*, April 13, 1935.

⁷¹⁸ Gerd Eckert, “Film als Hörspiel,” *Film-Kurier*, June 20, 1939.

⁷¹⁹ *Film-Kurier* celebrated the twentieth anniversary of radio with a front page article. “Die Stimme im Äther. 20 Jahre deutscher Rundfunk,” *Film-Kurier*, October 28, 1943.

⁷²⁰ Schu., “International Filmmusik im Rundfunk,” *Film-Kurier*, April 25, 1935. For the 1935 International Film Congress see Choy, “Inszenierungen Der Völkischen Filmkultur Im Nationalsozialismus: ‘Der Internationale Filmkongress Berlin 1935’.”

⁷²¹ “Filmmusik im Konzertsaal,” *Film-Kurier*, March 19, 1937.

⁷²² Schu., “Film und Funk. H. M. Cremer inszeniert eine ‘UFA-Musik-Sendung,’” *Film-Kurier*, November 11, 1939; “Filmmusik als Hörspiel,” *Filmwelt*, no. 48 (December 1939), 17.

⁷²³ “Film und Funk,” *Film-Kurier*, May 14, 1940.

⁷²⁴ H.R. Fritsche, “Film und Funk. *Der Fuchs von Glenarvon* im Reichssender Breslau,” *Film-Kurier*, April 23, 1940.

⁷²⁵ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Musik and dem Äther und Musik im Film,” *Film-Kurier*, June 3, 1939. The issue of *Nachwuchs* was also regularly mentioned with reports about a research institute for film music. See

1940 article, Rolf Marben listed all the collaborations between film and radio,⁷²⁶ and in May 1941 *Filmwelt* reported about the participation of film and theater actors and actresses in a radio show organized by the *Großdeutsche Rundfunk*, the Reich centralized radio.⁷²⁷

Another point of contact between film and radio were the highly popular radio plays, the *Hörspiele*.⁷²⁸ *Filmwelt* provided interviews with radio playwright Ernst Johannsen, and Gerd Eckert in *Der deutsche Film* laid out the differences and the commonalities between film and radio plays.⁷²⁹ While turning films into radio plays was first deemed impossible, radio plays on the other hand were sometimes turned into films, as with *Urlaub auf Ehrenwort* (Furlough on Word of Honor, Karl Ritter, 1937),⁷³⁰ *Robert Koch* (Hans Steinhoff, 1939), and *Parkstraße 13* (Park Lane 13, Jürgen von Alten, 1939).⁷³¹ Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia* films were taken as examples of a successful collaboration between radio and film, with the radio commentator turned into a major actor in the film.⁷³² The symbiosis between film and radio was realized with the film

Hans Schumacher, "Eine Film-Versuchsanstalt," *Film-Kurier*, June 14, 1934, about the workshop for Nachwuchs; -r, "Der schöpferische Musiker. Ein Freiatelier für junge Talente," *Film-Kurier*, August 8, 1934; Georg Herzberg, "Aus der Filmarbeit der Hochschule für Musik," *Film-Kurier*, April 24, 1940, about the film work of the *Hochschule für Musik*. Film music was also a recurrent topic of the Lessing Hochschule lectures. See for example Fürst, "Das Problem der Musik im Tonfilm," *Film-Kurier*, March 20, 1936.

⁷²⁶ Rolf Marben, "Film und Funk," *Filmwelt*, no. 5 (January 1940), 4-5.

⁷²⁷ "Film und Funk," *Filmwelt*, no. 18 (May 1941), 471.

⁷²⁸ For radio plays during the Third Reich see Glenn R. Cuomo, *Career at the Cost of Compromise: Günter Eich's Life and Work in the Years 1933-1945* (Rodopi, 1989), chapter IV, The Radio Play under National Socialism, 47-65.

⁷²⁹ Ernst Johannsen, "Wie wird ein Hörspiel gesendet?" *Filmwelt*, no. 16 (April 1937); Gerd Eckert, "Film und Hörspiel," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 8 (February 1938), 213ff. In 1941, Eckert published a book about radio as a governing/controlling tool. See Gerhard Eckert, *Der Rundfunk als Führungsmittel* (K. Vowinckel, 1941).

⁷³⁰ G.E., "Hörspiele wurden Filme," *Film-Kurier*, August 8, 1938; Herbert Urban, "Filmstoffe aus Hörspielen," *Filmwelt*, no. 17 (April 1938).

⁷³¹ Rolf Marben, "Film und Funk."

⁷³² -ert, "Film und Rundfunk," *Film-Kurier*, March 24, 1939.

Wunschkonzert (Request Concert, Eduard von Borsody, 1940).⁷³³ A romantic story loosely woven around the famous eponymous radio show, the film included extensive excerpts from the show, featuring film stars such as Leander, Röck, Paul Hörbiger, Weiß Ferdl, and the famous trio, Sieber-Rühmann-Brausewetter.⁷³⁴ The media convergence between film, radio, the music that would be sold in the thousands, the film press that extensively reported about it, and the illustrated book that would be made about the show was perfect (Figure 5.8).⁷³⁵

In addition to technological advancement and film's relation to radio, the press gave voice to more essential concerns about the role of music in film and the role of the composers. The latter expressed in the film press their dissatisfaction with the filmmaking process. The main grievances were the lack of involvement of the composer in the film making process, the same grievance Weimar composers had expressed.⁷³⁶ Composers usually had hardly any time, often just a few days, to compose a score for a film they had never seen.⁷³⁷ Successful composers, such as Werner Bochmann and Walter Gronostay, were not immune to such conditions.⁷³⁸ In May 1935, Gronostay listed on his "three

⁷³³ David Bathrick, "Making a National Family with the Radio: The Nazi *Wunschkonzert*," *Modernism/modernity* 4.1 (1997): 115–127; Hans-Jörg Koch, *Wunschkonzert: Unterhaltungsmusik Und Propaganda Im Rundfunk Des Dritten Reichs* (Graz: Ares verlag, 2006). See also the insightful reading of the film in O'Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment*, 121–134.

⁷³⁴ See review of the film in Hermann Wanderscheck, "Musik zu *Wunschkonzert Blutbrüderschaft*," *Film-Kurier*, January 6, 1941.

⁷³⁵ Heinz Goedecke, *Wir Beginnen Das Wunschkonzert Für Die Wehrmacht* (Berlin: Nibelungen-Verlag, 1941).

⁷³⁶ Beiche, "Musik Und Film Im Deutschen Musikjournalismus Der 1920er Jahre."

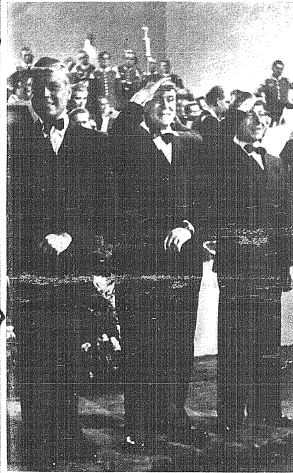
⁷³⁷ "Talent, Könner und Plagiatoren," *Film-Kurier*, April 5, 1934; Schu. "Vom Paukenschlag der lyrischen Stelle..." *Film-Kurier*, June 28, 1934.

⁷³⁸ See "Filmische Kontrapunkt. Filmkomponist Werner Bochmann," no. 36 (September 1935), and "Das musikalische Element im Tonfilm," no. 39 (September 1935), both in *Filmwelt*.

Bilderbogen des Film-Kurier

Film im Zeichen des Wunschkonzerts

Wunschkonzert im Film „Wunschkonzert“: Nachdem wir aus dem Ufa-Film „Wunschkonzert“ bereits einige Szenenfotos an dieser Stelle veröffentlicht haben, gibt unsere heutige Seite einen Blick auf die Szenen, die ausschließlich Aufnahmen vom Wunschkonzert-Veranstaltungen im Rahmen dieses Spielfilms aus dem heutigen Zeiterleben zusammenfassen.



Oben u. links u. rechts: Hans Bransenetter, Josef Sieber und Heinz Rühmann singen den durch sie überlängte gemessenen Schläger „Das Kanu doch einen Seemann nicht erschüttern“.

Bilder rechts oben:
Die Soldaten beim Wunschkonzert (oberes Bild) und Soldaten als glückliche Zuhörer.
(Zweites Bild oben rechts)

Nebenstehende Bilder:
Paul Hörbiger (links) singt ... doch das Schöne auf der Welt, Apollonert, bist Du.“
Marika Rokk (rechts) singt „Ein Nahl im Mai“.

Abb. (1): Ufa



Figure 5.5: *Film-Kurier* report about the film *Wunschkonzert*, November 2, 1940.

wishes list for the New Year: I would like once to have more than a week to compose a score for a film.”⁷³⁹ Again and again, composers asked to be involved early on, not only after the film was finished.⁷⁴⁰

Composers felt they had to fight for the role of music in film, as *Metropolis* score composer Gottfried Huppertz explained: “The mission of sound film music is to underscore the plot dramatically, where dialogue scenes are not necessary. Songs have to develop organically and to originate from the plot, otherwise, they are superfluous. The complete music of a sound film [...] should be able to work without images, in order to convey a specific impression to the listener.”⁷⁴¹ For Winfrid Zillig, “music should be the carrier of the spiritual/emotional tensions. Music should be an autonomous (*selbstständig*), equally valued and equally important element.”⁷⁴² As Walter Gronostay summarized it “a film without artistic music is not an artistic film.”⁷⁴³ But in practice the situation was different and composers felt that their work was reduced to two options: “Right now it is either *Schlager*, or just illustration.”⁷⁴⁴ The word “illustration” was especially offensive for composers, who called for a more balanced share of sound and word elements.⁷⁴⁵ Indeed for the composer, “music in film should not just illustrate scene but be a constitutive part of the scene. The music will help see the film.”⁷⁴⁶ Echoing the composers’ grievances, Wanderscheck argued that music should have dramaturgical

⁷³⁹ Walter Gronostay, “Wünsche eines Komponisten,” *Film-Kurier*, May 21, 1935.

⁷⁴⁰ Clemens Schmaltisch, “Zukunftshoffnungen für die Film-Musik,” in *Film-Kurier*, March 15, 1934. “Die rationelle Seite. Erfahrungen vor Mikrophon und Kamera,” *Film-Kurier*, April 19, 1934; Franz Grothe, “Die Musik im Unterhaltungsfilm,” *Film-Kurier*, April 19, 1934; “Unterredung mit Giuseppe Becce,” *Film-Kurier*, April 26, 1934.

⁷⁴¹ “Gottfried Huppertz: Die Mission der Tonfimmusik,” in *Film-Kurier*, December 20, 1933.

⁷⁴² Winfrid Zillig, “Meine Musik zum “Schimmelreiter,” in *Film-Kurier*, January 15, 1934.

⁷⁴³ Walter Gronostay, “Filmmusik, die geht. Filmmusik, die kommt” in *Film-Kurier*, December 31, 1935.

⁷⁴⁴ Walter Gronostay, “Gibt es Musikfilme?” in *Film-Kurier*, November 20, 1936.

⁷⁴⁵ Kurt Schröder, “Musikalische “Illustration,” *Film-Kurier*, September 27, 1934, and “Musikalität des Stoffes,” *Film-Kurier*, August 15, 1935.

⁷⁴⁶ Walter Gronostay, “Gibt es Musikfilme?” in *Film-Kurier*, November 20, 1936.

functions, not just illustrate or underline emotions. But he also differentiated between composers of scores, who, in his eyes, were close to composers of classical music, and composers of *Schlager*. Illustrating again the divide between what was considered high and low culture, Wanderscheck expressed that, for him, *Schlager* had only one function of illustration and could never achieve a higher, dramatic level, and *Schlager* composers were unable to master the difficulty of writing music for psychological films.⁷⁴⁷

As a response to the discussions about the future of film music, a “composer’s sound file,” similar to the screen tests of acting professionals, was created as part of the wide ranging measures announced at the Annual Convention of the Reich Film Chamber in the March 1938.⁷⁴⁸ In order to give the unknown composers exposure, the latter would write the score for a cultural film or a scene from a feature film.⁷⁴⁹ But while he welcomed these measures, composer Fritz Wenneis argued that what needed to be changed and improved was “the status of music in the film dramaturgy.”⁷⁵⁰

From 1938 to July 1944, Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck became the tireless advocate of the composers, arguing that they should be “the equal of the director,”⁷⁵¹ and that composers were “the soul of the film.”⁷⁵² In addition to his anti-British tirades, Wanderscheck’s enthusiastic reviews of *Jud Süß* (Jew Süß, Veit Harlan, 1940) and *Der ewige Jude* (The Eternal Jew, Fritz Hippler, 1940), and of the work of Herbert Windt, composer of several militaristic films such as *Sieg im Westen* (Victory in the West, Svend

⁷⁴⁷ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Das aktuelle Problem: Dramatische Filmmusik,” *Film-Kurier*, November 5, 1938, and “Psychologische Filme mit musikalische Aufwand,” *Film-Kurier*, November 26, 1938.

⁷⁴⁸ “Hans Otto Borgmann über Filmmusik und ihre Probleme,” November 29, 1938.

⁷⁴⁹ “Bilanz der geleisteten Arbeit. Der Präsident der Reichsfilmkammer eröffnete die Jahrestagung,” *Film-Kurier*, March 4, 1937.

⁷⁵⁰ Fritz Wenneis, “Gibts es in der Film-Musik noch neue Wege?” *Film-Kurier*, July 26, 1937.

⁷⁵¹ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Theorie und Praxis der Filmmusik,” *Film-Kurier*, April 1, 1939.

⁷⁵² Hermann Wanderscheck, “Deutsche Filmmusik im abgelaufenen Jahr,” *Film-Kurier*, January 1, 1942.

Noldan, 1941) as well as Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia* films,⁷⁵³ leave no doubt as to his political and ideological allegiance.⁷⁵⁴ His comments about the use of music in films, though, remained for the most part objective, based on an uncompromising quest for better film music.⁷⁵⁵ He urged composers to move away from illustration and to create film-specific compositions,⁷⁵⁶ and echoed their call for a deeper, earlier inclusion in the film making process.⁷⁵⁷ His goal was, "week after week, to establish the basics, the main features of a filmic musical dramaturgy."⁷⁵⁸ Echoing common National Socialistic critiques, Wanderscheck stated that films necessitated music compositions that focused on the filmic aspect and not potential record sales.

Wanderscheck was generally critical and quite unforgiving, and very few productions met his approval. He wrote, for example, that "our expectations are not always quite met" with the film *Rote Rosen- blaue Adria* (Red Roses– Blue Adria, Jan Sviták, 1939)⁷⁵⁹ and accused Hanns Elinn's music for the film *Liebe ist Zollfrei* (Love is Custom-Free, E.W. Emo, 1941) of "sounding intrusively loud," and going from "lyrical

⁷⁵³ "Die Musik zum Olympia-Film," *Filmwelt*, no. 12 (March 1938).

⁷⁵⁴ Hermann Wanderscheck, *Weltkrieg Und Propaganda* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, 1936); Hermann Wanderscheck, *Die Englische Lügenpropaganda Im Weltkrieg Und Heute* (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1940); Hermann Wanderscheck, *Höllmaschinen Aus England. Hinter Der Kulissen Der Londoner Lügenhetze* (Berlin: Mittler, 1940); Hermann Wanderscheck, *Dunkelmänner Um Churchill* (Berlin: Mittler, 1941).

⁷⁵⁵ Hermann Wanderscheck, "Jud Süß und Falstaff als musikalische Themen," *Film-Kurier*, September 30, 1940; "Vom ewigen Juden zu Kora Terry," *Film-Kurier*, December 2, 1940; "Herbert Windt Musik zum Sieg im Westen," *Film-Kurier*, February 3, 1941; "Musik zu Ohm Krüger," *Film-Kurier*, April 8, 1941. See also his review of the air force film *Stukas*, on June 30, 1941. Hermann Wanderscheck, "Die Forderung der Stunden: Filmmusikalischer Stil," *Film-Kurier*, November 19, 1938.

⁷⁵⁶ Hermann Wanderscheck, "Auf der Suche nach erschöpfenden Illustrationen," *Film-Kurier*, February 4, 1939.

⁷⁵⁷ See for example his review of den Film *Alles Schwindel* in *Film-Kurier*, August 5, 1940, or interview with Wolfgang Zeller about his work on the film *Jud Süß* in *Film-Kurier*, August 5, 1940.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁹ Hermann Wanderscheck, "Die Woche nach Noten," *Film-Kurier*, December 10, 1938. See his review of the film *Rote Rosen- blaue Adria* "selbstgefällig und anspruchslos wie der film plätschert auch die Musik," in "Vom musikalischen Lachen und tönenden Seelenzuständen" in *Film-Kurier*, July 14, 1938.

into half pathetic, half massive hammering.”⁷⁶⁰ He scolded Singer Films, whose commercial goals and lack of appropriate use of the form of film led to poor and unrealistic scripts. Wanderscheck explained, “[Singer] film is not born out of creative necessity, but it is just an excuse to use a phenomenal voice.”⁷⁶¹ While he did not hesitate to compliment foreign films,⁷⁶² he remained especially critical of American films, which suffered from “a flood, a saturation of syrupy accompanying music, which is unbearable.”⁷⁶³ He attacked their “arbitrary use of music”⁷⁶⁴ where the latter “naively expresses mood, boosts the scene, makes every concession possible and does not spare the crudest effects.”⁷⁶⁵ Wanderscheck was especially irate at the American spoiling of German classical music with “nigger music.” He denounced the abuse of Schumann’s *Ave Maria* in a Jeanette Macdonald’s film. The actress sings the German classic to a pack of thieves, who in a previous scene have just woken up to the sound of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy’s *Liebesträum*. Such comments illustrate a long tradition of German anti-Americanism, located among the intellectual elites as well as in far right and far left groups, that was partly rooted in racial ideology.⁷⁶⁶ Echoing official propaganda, Wanderscheck opposed the German terms *Kultur*, reserved for expounding intellectual,

⁷⁶⁰ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Nur ein bißchen Musik,” *Film-Kurier*, April 28, 1941.

⁷⁶¹ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Kunstgesang im Musikfilm. Musik um kunstseidene Fäden,” *Film-Kurier*, October 08, 1938. See also “Auf dem Wege zur filmeigenen Musik. Was 1940 erreicht wurde - und was für 1941 zu wünschen ist,” *Film-Kurier*, January 2, 1941.

⁷⁶² Hermann Wanderscheck, “Seelenvolle Filmmusik und amerikanische Seitensprünge,” in *Film-Kurier* July 23, 1938. Critique of the French film *Vertrauensbruch*, and the American film *Tarantella* on July 23, 1938 in “Seelenvolle Filmmusik und amerikanische Seitensprünge.”

⁷⁶³ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Musik um Kanonen und Hochstapler,” *Film-Kurier*, March 4, 1939.

⁷⁶⁴ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Seelenvolle Musik der Kamera und lustige Musik aus Amerika,” *Film-Kurier*, October 1, 1938.

⁷⁶⁵ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Ave Maria in der Prärie und Bänklesang von Jary,” *Film-Kurier*, April 22, 1939. The author hoped that new copyright laws would help solve such problem.

⁷⁶⁶ Philipp Gassert, *Amerika Im Dritten Reich: Ideologie, Propaganda Und Volksmeinung, 1933-1945*, vol. 7, *Transatlantische Historische Studien* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1997); Hermann Danuser and Hermann Gottschewski, eds., *Amerikanismus, Americanism, Weill. Die Suche Nach Kultureller Identität in Der Moderne* (Schliengen: Edition Argus, 2003).

artistic, and religious facts or values, here exemplified by German classical music, against *Zivilisation*, a “second rank” term that only deals with superficialities, usually associated with France and sometimes the United States.⁷⁶⁷

As mentioned in previous chapters, the year 1941 saw an increase in debates and discussions in *Film-Kurier*. We find a series of exchanges about scripts (April), the audience (May), the need to train *Nachwuchs* (October), and in May, a series of nine articles laying out Fritz Hippler’s grand plan for the film industry. The use of music in film was reevaluated in the same year. Taking stock of the previous year, Wanderscheck recapitulated in January 1941 the main objectives for film music, which included film-specific music, clear understanding of the dramaturgic requirements, collaboration between director and composer, increase of the dramatic, cinematic element through the music, reduction of the dance songs to characterization, and inclusion of young, unused talents. While concluding that things were now much better, he remained critical of many aspects of the use of film music and made it clear that there was still a need for improvement, especially in the promotion of *Nachwuchs* or the collaboration between composers and directors.⁷⁶⁸

This was followed by heated exchanges between film journalists, composers, and producers. Entitled *Die Diskussion: Zur Frage des Musikfilms*, (The Discussion, The Issue of the Music Film), it spanned over three months in *Film-Kurier* and revealed not only the dissatisfaction among the participants, but also the new possibilities for

⁷⁶⁷ Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*, ed. Eric Dunning, Johan Goudsblom, and Stephen Mennell (Oxford, UK; Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).

⁷⁶⁸ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Auf dem Wege zur filmeigenen Musik. Was 1940 erreicht wurde - und was für 1941 zu wünschen ist,” *Film-Kurier*, January 2, 1941.

cinema.⁷⁶⁹ *Film-Kurier*'s editor in chief Günther Schwark noted with surprise the dearth of music film among German film productions, Willy Forst's *Operette* being the only notable exception.⁷⁷⁰ Schwark remarked that while Germany was an internationally renowned land of music, one could barely get a sense of the "extraordinary musical gift of the [German] people" in the film productions.⁷⁷¹ As usual, blame was put on the composers and on the producers.⁷⁷² The calls for a new kind of "author-director," who would have a better command of the film material, were echoed by the calls for a new type of director who would have a musical sensitivity. Erica Carter has shown that such calls for an "all-knowing" director illustrate how "both ideology and industry practice cohered around the concept of the artistic 'personality' as both a leader figure in the political-ideological sense, and as the embodiment of a racialized version of the genius

⁷⁶⁹ A first start was made with three articles on February 5, 1941: "Es geht um die Musik im Tonfilm," Gerhard Pilz, "Es kommt auf den Künstlerischen Einsatz der Musik an," and Traute Scholz, "Musik im Film – sehr schön, aber nur solange sie nicht stört." The discussion took off on July 8, 1941 with the "appeal to the composers," in Günther Schwark, "Appell an die Komponisten zur Mitarbeit am Film." Following articles were "Die Diskussion. Zur Frage des Musikfilms. Zwei Antworten auf unsern Appell an die Komponisten. Franz Grothe: Der Komponist wird zu spät mit dem Stoff vertraut gemacht. Franz R. Friedl: Arbeitsgemeinschaften von Komponisten und Autoren müßten vermittelt werden," July 11, 1941; Ewald von Demandowsky, "Film und Musik. Erklärungen über den Musikfilms," July 15, 1941; Kurt Schröder, "Zur Diskussion um Musikfilm," July 22, 1941; Marc Roland, "Die Diskussion um den Musikfilm. Erste Forderung: Die stoffliche Behandlung des Musikfilms hat auf der vorwiegend seelischen Ebene zu stehen," July 23, 1941; "Die Diskussion um den Musikfilm. Filmvariation über das Thema Bach," July 24, 1941; Maz Krüger, "Kommt der Opernfilm? Ein Beitrag zu dem Thema Musikfilms," July 29, 1941; "Zur Frage des Musikfilms," August 1, 1941; "Noch einmal. Marc Roland zur Musikfilm-Diskussion," August 2, 1941; Fred M. Franke, "Angler am Musikfilmgestade," August 2, 1941; Fritz Stege, "Diskussion um den Musick Film," August 2, 1941; Ekkehard Scheven, "Nochmals: Zum Thema Musikfilm. Gebt der Oper, was der Oper ist und dem Film, was des Films ist!," September 2, 1941; Edmund Nick, "Zur Debatte um den Musikfilm," September 11, 1941.

⁷⁷⁰ Forst's film was applauded as the best (and for some the only) successful music film. See Georg Herzberg, "Opernball," *Film-Kurier*, February 2, 1940, Günther Schwark, "Operette," *Film-Kurier*, January 17, 1941, "Richtige Dramaturgies eines Musikfilms," *Film-Kurier*, January 20, 1941.

⁷⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷² For the producers see Ewald von Demandowsky, "Film und Musik. Erklärungen über den Musikfilms," in *Film-Kurier*, July 15, 1941. See the answers of the composers in "Die Diskussion. Zur Frage des Musikfilms. Zwei Antworten auf unsern Appell an die Komponisten. Franz Grothe: Der Komponist wird zu spät mit dem Stoff vertraut gemacht. Franz R. Friedl: Arbeitsgemeinschaften von Komponisten und Autoren müßten vermittelt werden," in *Film-Kurier*, July 11, 1941. Demandowsky argued that composers should come up with plots, not only music. See responses to this proposal in Edmund Nick, "Zur Debatte um den Musikfilm," *Film-Kurier*, September 11, 1941. See a portrait of the composer in "Romantiker der Filmmusik. Zu Edmund Nicks 50. Geburtstag," *Film-Kurier*, September 20, 1941.

figure.”⁷⁷³ While a new breed of “author-composer-director” was called for,⁷⁷⁴ composers were also asked to “think filmicly.”⁷⁷⁵ Despite the extensive efforts pursued by the German Film Academy, where such potential new composers/directors could be found, how they should be trained remained unanswered by the end of the Third Reich.

Genre ranked second on the list of most discussed issues. The abundance of music in films and the ever important role it played led to debates about what a music film was or should be and which forms it should take.⁷⁷⁶ Producer von Demandowsky divided music films into three categories “1. Films in which a composer, Mozart or Schubert, plays the main role; 2. Films, like the operetta, where the music, well known and liked, constitutes most of the film; 3. Films in which film music takes the form of illustration or as *Schlager*.”⁷⁷⁷ Like many others, he advocated for a new kind of music film, whose format was not known at the time, but a music film that would follow the cinematographic laws and could thus not be a film opera. While opinions were still undecided about the future of the film operetta,⁷⁷⁸ recurrent efforts to create film operas, or opera films, were the most contentious ones.⁷⁷⁹ The idea of a film opera was usually

⁷⁷³ Carter, *Dietrich's Ghosts*, 13–14.

⁷⁷⁴ Hans Schumacher, “Absolute Film-Musik? Teil des Gesamt-Kunstwerks aus schöpferischer Gemeinschaft,” *Film-Kurier*, June 7, 1934.

⁷⁷⁵ Eduard Künneke in an interview in *Film-Kurier*, May 21, 1937.

⁷⁷⁶ Even the *ZeitschriftDienst* was struggling with the concept of music film, film music and so on. Regarding the film *Falstaff in Wien* (Leopold Hainisch, 1940), we read on October 4, 1940 “it is inappropriate to simply write about film music, as official language is still expected.” *ZD*, Directive 3289, October 4, 1940. The *ZD* corrected itself a week later, specifying that film music per se could be addressed. Merely the topic “music in the newsreels” was banned. See *ZD*, Directive 3335, October 11, 1940.

⁷⁷⁷ Ewald von Demandowsky, “Film und Musik. Erklärungen über den Musikfilms, in *Film-Kurier*, July 15, 1941; Kurt Schröder, “Zur Diskussion um Musikfilm,” *Film-Kurier*, July 22, 1941; Marc Roland, “Die Diskussion um den Musikfilm. Erste Forderung: Die stoffliche Behandlung des Musikfilms hat auf der vorwiegend seelischen Ebene zu stehen,” in *Film-Kurier*, July 23, 1941.

⁷⁷⁸ Wanderscheck, “Even in this film [*Maske im Blau*] the question of Revue or Operetta remains inconclusive, and requires a dramaturgical examination,” in “Variationen um die Operette,” *Fimkurier*, June 7, 1943.

⁷⁷⁹ Some critics talked about “operette obsession.” Hans Dorasil, “Der musikbetonte Film,” *Film-Kurier*, June 1, 1936. This topic triggered a 5 partsexchange on April 15, April 22, April 27, May 13, May 20 1941.

rejected –“neither can an opera be filmed, nor can a film be turned into an opera (*veropern*),”⁷⁸⁰ – mostly due to the radically different “laws of movement.”⁷⁸¹ The most successful effort appeared to be films like the Verdi biography *Drei Frauen um Verdi*, (Three Women and Verdi, Carmine Gallone, 1938), which used the composer’s life and career to present fragmented pieces of operas.⁷⁸² As Wanderscheck put it

The cinematic adaptation of opera remains a dramaturgic problem without a solution. One cannot transform a naturally developed piece of art into a different technical piece of art. Film is not against such experiment. But one must understand that the unity of an artistic work must be completely destroyed in order for the transformation to succeed. Especially when we are talking about a *Gesamtkunstwerk* like opera.⁷⁸³

But, as shown in chapter 3, head of casting at the Terra, Max Krüger, was asking in the summer of 1941 if the opera film was indeed possible.⁷⁸⁴ Despite being theoretically equal, one form of art actually dominates the others in any *Gesamtkunstwerk*; music, for example, has the upper hand in opera. Krüger argued that if film would put itself at the service of another art, for example music, it could achieve new heights and enable new genres such as film opera. The answer in the film press was quick and ferocious. “Give the opera, what the opera is, and the film, what the film is!” exclaimed Ekkehard Scheven, who countered that the future of music film was not the opera film, but “a film, created out of the spirit of the music.”⁷⁸⁵

See also Ekkehard Scheven, “Nochmals: Zum Thema Musikfilm. Gebt der Oper, was der Oper ist und dem Film, was des Films ist!” in *Film-Kurier*, September 2, 1941. Wanderscheck was still addressing the issue in 1943, “Von der Oper zum Film.” See September 27, 1943.

⁷⁸⁰ Professor Clemens Schmalstich, “Opernfilm oder Filmoper?” *Film-Kurier*, November 14, 1935.

⁷⁸¹ Carl Froelich, “Operettenfilm oder Filmoperette...” *Film-Kurier*, March 31, 1934.

⁷⁸² Hermann Wanderscheck, “Musikerfüllte Biographie und reizende Chanson,” *Film-Kurier*, July 8, 1939.

⁷⁸³ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Andalusische Tänze und bayerische Walzer,” *Film-Kurier*, October 22, 1940.

⁷⁸⁴ Maz Krüger, “Kommt der Opernfilm? Ein Beitrag zu dem Thema Musikfilms,” *Film-Kurier*, July 29, 1941.

⁷⁸⁵ Ekkehard Scheven, “Nochmals: Zum Thema Musikfilm. Gebt der Oper, was der Oper ist und dem Film, was des Films ist!” *Film-Kurier*, September 2, 1941.

The issue was brought to the forefront anew in 1943, with another round of “discussions,” which connected the issue of film opera to the debates about adaptation of plays.⁷⁸⁶ As seen in chapter 3, Dr. K. Kurth, head of the institute for journalism science in Vienna, pleaded for more “literal adaptation” of not only classic plays, but also of operas, raising the question of what was “filmic.”⁷⁸⁷ But for many, such as Dr. Ludwig Gesek, film and opera still had two “widely opposite dramaturgical laws. Film is movement; the song lingers. Film is rhythm of the image, the rhythm of the score dominates the opera. Film aspires to reality [...] the opera stylizes.”⁷⁸⁸ Not unlike the discussions about film and theater, rejections of film opera were often rooted in a disparaging opinion of film, whose “social function [was] relaxation and entertainment.”⁷⁸⁹ Mentions of “canned art” abounded. While the majority of film proponents rejected the idea of an opera film, some hoped that expanding the realm of film would help solidify its status as a “recognized form of art.”⁷⁹⁰ They recognized the impossibility of “literal adaptation,” and emphasized the role of the film author, whose task was to focus on the “core plot” and to turn plays and operas into cinematographic materials.⁷⁹¹

Color film added an unexpected element to the discussion. The new technology was challenging but at the same time full of exhilarating potential.⁷⁹² Color films required a “warmer music,”⁷⁹³ “higher color in harmony and instrumentation” and “higher demand

⁷⁸⁶ See the exchanges on April 15, April 27, May 13, and May 20, 1943.

⁷⁸⁷ K. Kurth, “Zur Diskussion gestellt: Schauspiel und Oper im Film,” *Film-Kurier*, April 15, 1943.

⁷⁸⁸ Ludwig Gesek, “Schauspiel und Oper im Film,” April 27, 1943.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁰ Bavarian theater director Alexander Golling called for a “clear separation,” in “Für klare Angrenzung,” *Film-Kurier*, May 20, 1943 and author Erich Ebermayer recognized that the implication was “film is no art” in “Meinung des Autors,” *Film-Kurier*, May 20, 1943.

⁷⁹¹ Erich Ebermayer, “Meinung des Autors,” *Film-Kurier*, May 20, 1943.

⁷⁹² Georg Anschütz, “Musik und Farbe im Tonfilm,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 4 (October 1937), 103-104.

⁷⁹³ Hermann Wanderscheck in *Film-Kurier*, March 12, 1943.

on the sense of color of the composer.”⁷⁹⁴ Indeed, because color film “dramatically increased the intensity of the image and the power of the experience,” the composer had to step up his work.⁷⁹⁵ The arrival of color film also renewed hope for the realization of the opera film. In the same way that color and music played a constitutive part in the opera ensemble, they were also supposed to help create the opera film.⁷⁹⁶ All contributors to the discussion agreed though, that, if possible, such film would require a “skillful hand and smart head,” raising the issue, once again, of professional training.⁷⁹⁷

Wanderscheck, for his part, remained critical of many of the same issues he had raised since 1938.⁷⁹⁸ This was a sign of the author’s tireless effort, but also of the lack of change and improvement in a stagnant film industry.⁷⁹⁹ In 1943 he was still asking why every kissing scene had to be hammered with heavy classical music.⁸⁰⁰ Why always use Puccini’s *La Boheme* for sentimentalized death scenes?⁸⁰¹ He was also still tackling in 1944 more systematic questions such as “Does the film music follows the film direction?”⁸⁰² *Film-Kurier* featured articles such as “Music Film- Yes or No?” and traced the “Transformations of Music Films.”⁸⁰³ But while he rejoiced about the fact that “the music film was gaining form and style,” Wanderscheck frustratingly concluded in one of

⁷⁹⁴ Fritz Stege, “Musik der Farben,” *Film-Kurier*, July 29, 1942.

⁷⁹⁵ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Der Weg der Filmmusik,” *Film-Kurier*, August 27, 1942.

⁷⁹⁶ K. Kurth, “Theaterfilm im Filmtheater,” *Film-Kurier*, June 26, 1943.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁸ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Die Jagd nach Leitmotiven” *Film-Kurier*, May 14, 1942, “Harte musikalische Schnitte” *Film-Kurier*, May 15, 1942, “Das Komponieren nach Maß” *Film-Kurier*, May 18, 1942, “Dialog-Geräusch-Musik,” *Film-Kurier*, May 22, 1942, “Musikalische Probleme in neuen Filmen,” ” *Film-Kurier*, January 18, 1944.

⁷⁹⁹ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Über die Rolle des Filmkomponisten,” August 09, 1943, “Folgt die Filmmusik die Regie?” February 08, 1944, “Von den Grundsätze der musikalischen Dramaturgie,” February 29, 1944, “Filmmusikalische Wendepunkte,” June 27, 1944.

⁸⁰⁰ Reviews of *Liebesgeschichte* and *Späte Liebe* in *Film-Kurier*, June 03 and 07, 1943.

⁸⁰¹ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Filmmusikalisches Gleichgewicht,” *Film-Kurier*, October 25, 1943.

⁸⁰² Hermann Wanderscheck, “Folgt die Filmmusik der Regie?” *Film-Kurier*, February 8, 1944.

⁸⁰³ Walter Grauer, “Musikfilm – ja oder nein?” *Film-Kurier*, April 25, 1944 and ej. “Wandlungen des Musikfilms,” *Film-Kurier*, May 2, 1944.

his last articles that “the problem of the music film and the musical film are some of the hardest and unsolved questions.”⁸⁰⁴

Are Schlager (Un)necessary? ⁸⁰⁵

Not surprisingly many of these issues echoed discussions that took place during the Weimar Republic. A good example is the controversy around the use of *Schlager* in film. Despite increasing media convergence and the mutually beneficial collaboration between film, radio, and music industry, the main element that bound all three, *Schlager*, remained a sour topic. As mentioned previously, the sound film operetta of the late 1920s-early 1930s, which were characterized by their extensive, and for some excessive, use of *Schlager*, were harshly criticized under the new regime. While *Schlager* always had defenders such as composer Franz Grothe, who pointed to their constitutive role in entertainment films,⁸⁰⁶ and were often used as advertisements to promote films in Germany as well as in foreign markets,⁸⁰⁷ many criticized the excessive, “unmotivated singing” in film, considered “outdated” by 1934.⁸⁰⁸ Composers such as Will Wiesel later recounted how extreme it was, “One had to have at least one *Schlager* in everything, regardless of the type of film.”⁸⁰⁹ The main point of criticism was the for-profit aspect: “If the star has a nice voice, let’s give her a chance.”⁸¹⁰ A *Schlager* was then used

⁸⁰⁴ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Der musikalische Film gewinnt Form und Stil,” May 12, 1944 and 16, 1944. He traced the successful and unsuccessful use of music as turning point in a handful of new releases in “Filmmusikalische Wendepunkt. Vergleichende Betrachtungen zu neuen Filmen,” June 27, 1944.

⁸⁰⁵ *Filmwelt*, no. 50 (December 1933).

⁸⁰⁶ Franz Grothe, “Die Musik im Unterhaltungsfilm,” *Film-Kurier*, April 19, 1934.

⁸⁰⁷ -r, “Musik und Propaganda,” *Film-Kurier*, July 12, 1934.

⁸⁰⁸ Horst Hanns Sieber, “Der Filmchlager hat sich überlebt,” *Film-Kurier*, October 25, 1934, “Der ‘Schlager’” *Film-Kurier*, March 11, 1936.

⁸⁰⁹ R.M., “Zur Psychologie des *Schlagers*,” *Film-Kurier*, April 10, 1941.

⁸¹⁰ “Der ‘eine Schlager,’” *Film-Kurier*, July 23, 1937.

repeatedly “during the opening credit [...], the happy end [...], as leitmotiv [...] etc...”⁸¹¹
It was its use and abuse as a marketing tool that provoked irate comments.⁸¹²

While these debates concerned specifically the use of *Schlager* in film, Alex Jockwer’s work has demonstrated how they were part of a much broader set of discussions about the form and the role of entertainment music during the Third Reich.⁸¹³ Relevant for us is his unveiling of the numerous efforts to “elevate the level” of the songs, efforts that were, once again, rooted in the assumption that commercial (a.k.a. Jewish) and popular (a.k.a. for the masses) music were not of high standards. However, Jockwer shows how, because its function “as an alternative to Anglo-American dance music, as the new *Volk* song, as a valuable commodity, and as a potential optimism weapon and tool of distraction in time of war” were recognized, *Schlager* did not lose its strong position on the German music market.⁸¹⁴ Not without difficulties, the Nazi regime engineered the revaluation of the *Schlager* as a “modern German *Volk* song,” demonstrating, once again, its opportunism.⁸¹⁵

We see how this played out on the pages of the film press. The popular *Filmwelt*, for example, participated in the debate, asking “Are *Schlager* unnecessary?,” pointing to the value of film as entertainment: “[W]hile it was not high art,” *Schlager* were a vital part of the film industry, “when the film is forgotten and the celluloid is torn, the tunes of the *Schlager* will still be remembered.”⁸¹⁶ *Filmwelt* also published articles about

⁸¹¹ Ibid.

⁸¹² Wanderscheck often mentioned *Schlager* which have been played to death on the radio. See for example, the song *Das kann doch einen Seemann nicht erschüttern*, whose popularity was increased by the recurrent demand for it to be played on the radio show *Wunschkonzert*.

⁸¹³ Jockwer, “Unterhaltungsmusik Im Dritten Reich.”

⁸¹⁴ Ibid., 193.

⁸¹⁵ Ibid., 211–223.

⁸¹⁶ *Filmwelt*, no. 50 (December 1933).

composers such as Hans Otto Borgmann who described the transition “From *Schlager* to *Volk Song*,” or “*Volk Song Schlager*” as he put it.⁸¹⁷ In *Film-Kurier*, Wanderscheck asked “Are *Schlager* necessary in film?” The author was not against *Schlager per se*, but against its excessive use, pointing to many cases when “after the premiere of the film, the song is mechanized though millions of records and through numerous radio shows.”⁸¹⁸ But he also granted that a good *Schlager* could sometimes determine the success of a film, even retroactively as in the case of the American film *Tarantella* with Jeannette MacDonald.⁸¹⁹

For Wanderscheck, well-written *Schlager* had the power to characterize scenes, emotions, and even protagonists in specific scenes.⁸²⁰ While *Schlager* could “sweeten the filmic illusion,” it had to have some logical anchoring in the film plot, a rational justification.⁸²¹ He complimented, for example, the work done in Zarah Leander’s *Blaufuchs* (Blue Fuchs, Victor Tourjansky, 1938) or Willy Forst’s *Bel Ami* (1939) and described Peter Kreuder’s *Schlager* for Marika Röck in *Hallo Janine* (Carl Boese, 1939) as “combined with the plot.”⁸²² But Wanderscheck’s reserve towards the use of classical music, especially when mixed with *Schlager*, reveals a common unease regarding the

⁸¹⁷ “Hans Otto Borgmann, “Vom Schlager zum Volkslied,” *Filmwelt*, no. 19 (May 1934).

⁸¹⁸ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Ist das Schlagerlied für den Film notwendig,” *Film-Kurier*, June 18, 1938.

⁸¹⁹ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Der Erfolg eines Schlagers,” *Film-Kurier*, January 20, 1939.

⁸²⁰ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Characterisierende Schlager und dramatische Höhepunkt,” *Film-Kurier*, January 7, 1939.

⁸²¹ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Illusionen mit Musik,” *Film-Kurier*, April 15, 1939. See also “Musik für Bengt Berg. Lieder für Zarah Leander,” *Film-Kurier*, November 05, 1938, “Ein Schlager schlägt ein, in “Bel-Ami,”” *Film-Kurier*, February 25, 1939, “Musik für Marika Röck und zwei Vagabunden,” *Film-Kurier*, July 15, 1939.

⁸²² About the use of Bach in Veit Harlan’s *Das unsterbliche Herz*, see Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck, “Ein ganzer Film mit Bach Musik,” *Film-Kurier*, December 21, 1938 and “Sebastian Bach als Filmmusik,” February 1939. The film triggered heated discussion and composer Alois Melichar had to defend himself. “Alois Melichar antwortet,” *Film-Kurier*, July 4, 1939. About the use of Peter Tschaikowsky in Carl Froelich’s *Es war ein rauschender Ballnacht*, see Dr. E.K., “Musik formt einen Film,” *Film-Kurier*, February 24, 1939.

combination of classical music, the symbol of German middle-upper class identity, and *Schlager* and film, still associated with a popular culture many found threatening. By the late 1930s, commentators rejoiced about the disappearance of the exaggerated use of music as a sign of a healthy German cultural taste, a result, as they put it, of the new National Socialist cultural programs. Hans Hinkel, for example, exulted on October 27, 1938 that, “The instinct of the *Volk*, always healthier, had weeded out the worst excesses of *Schlager* production by itself.”⁸²³

Despite such criticism, film songs and *Schlager* remained an important element of the German cultural landscape, especially during the war. The film press made sure to present *Schlager* in a positive light and to emphasize their connection to the success of films. In an interview with composer Dr. Michael Jary, *Filmwelt* guided its readers through the making of the popular song “Das kann doch einen Seemann nicht erschüttern,” (“That Would Not Shake a Sailor”) from the film *Paradies der Junggesellen* (Bachelor’s Paradise, Kurt Hoffmann, 1939).⁸²⁴ Rena Tusch speculated in November 1939, “which songs of the upcoming films would become the biggest *Schlager*?”⁸²⁵ That songs and film were tightly intertwined became evident in the February 1941 special edition of *Filmwelt* dedicated to *Lieder die den Film uns brach* (Songs that Film Brought Us), with a mix of military songs and popular *Schlager*.⁸²⁶ Dr. Wanderscheck started with military marches and songs from the films *Sieg im Westen* (Victory in the West, Svend Nolan), *Stukas* (Karl Ritter), and *Unterseeboote westwärts!* (U-Boot, Course West!, Günther Rittau, all 1941), but the magazine also featured an

⁸²³ “Hans Hinkel über musikpolitische Tagesfragen,” *Film-Kurier*, October 27, 1938.

⁸²⁴ Ek. “Ein Schlager, und wie er entstand,” *Filmwelt*, no. 28 (July 1939), 11.

⁸²⁵ Rena Tusch “Welches Lied wird wohl der große Schlager?” *Filmwelt*, no. 45 (November 1939), 6-7.

⁸²⁶ *Filmwelt*, no. 8 (February 1941).

interview with composer Theo Mackeben and the songs he composed for Zarah Leander, a reportage about the music film *Die schwedische Nachtigall* (Jenny Lind, Peter Paul Brauer, 1941), and upcoming Italian films with substantial opera scenes. In order to be able to celebrate the work of composers in a time of war, Hans Martin Cremer used a similar juxtaposition, listing the military songs and the popular *Schlager* they had written.⁸²⁷ In January 1942, Wanderscheck looked at film songs which “sneaked in the hearts of our soldiers,” such as Norbert Schulze’s “Auf der Straße des Sieges,” (“On the Streets of Victory”) from the film *Sieg im Westen*, and Harald Böhmelt’s “Irgendwo in weiter Ferne” (“Somewhere Far Away”) from *Unterseeboote westwärts!*.⁸²⁸ Later that year, Wanderscheck wrote an amusing hymn to the *Schlager*, noting that “*Schlager* remain in our hearts and minds,” long after the film has disappeared, echoing the same arguments from 1933.⁸²⁹

It thus appears that the *Schlager*, which had been denounced as a symbol of the excesses of Weimar film, persisted during the Third Reich, to the joy of the audience and to the benefit of the film and music industry, as well as the regime, which utilized it to entertain the Reich’s citizens. It was left to critics and commentators in publications such as the Year Book of the Reich Film Chamber and on the pages of the film press to revalorize such trends by, for example, emphasizing the harmonic relationship between songs and plot.⁸³⁰ Such justifications were echoing Richard Heymann’s description of the

⁸²⁷ Hans Martin Cremer, “Der Ton macht die Musik. Deutsche Filmkomponisten bei der Arbeit,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2/3 (August/September 1942), 17-18.

⁸²⁸ Hermann Wanderscheck, “Deutsche Filmmusik im abgelaufenen Jahr,” *Film-Kurier*, January 1, 1942.

⁸²⁹ Hermann Wanderscheck, ““Berühmte” Schlager im Film. Musik, die jeder kennt,” *Film-Kurier*, December 31, 1942.

⁸³⁰ See for example Herbert Windt, “Warum Musik im Film,” in *Jahrbuch der deutschen Musik 1943*, ed. Hellmut von Hase (Leipzig; Berlin: Breitkopf und Härfel, 1942): 182-183; Leonhard Fürst, “Die Musik im Film,” *Jahrbuch der deutschen Musik 1944*, ed. Hellmut von Hase (Leipzig; Berlin: Breitkopf und Härfel, 1944): 148-158.

the sound film operetta (*Tonfilmoperette*), as a genre which “actively integrated music as a primordial element in the plot,”⁸³¹ something Wanderscheck tirelessly asked for during the Third Reich.

Schlager thus fulfilled several functions. The last part of this chapter looks at the particular case of an actor, who became as famous for his career as a daredevil, as for the tunes he sang. Something of a German John Wayne, Hans Albers’ musical career was possible, unlike his American counterpart, because of the cinematographic-musical tradition described above, but also because of the combination of his particular screen persona and the specific role his songs performed.

Hans Albers and the Birth of German Sound Film

As mentioned above, the arrival of sound in 1927 had immediate consequences for individuals. In addition to putting thousands of musicians out of work, many actors and actresses of the silent era failed to make the transition to the talkies. The infatuation of the German audience with (almost) anything that was sung forced film producers to look for and train a new kind of actor who could master the requirements of the sound film.⁸³² One example of a successful transition from silent to sound is Willy Fritsch.⁸³³ Given speech and singing lessons from Ufa, Fritsch was able to continue an even more

⁸³¹ Michael Wedel, "Die Tonfilmoperette. Zugpferd Des Tonfilms," in *Wenn Ich Sonntags in Mein Kino Geh'. Ton-Film-Musik 1929-1933*, ed. Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz (Berlin: Deutsche Kinemathek. Museum für Film und Fernsehen, 2008), 39. On Werner Heymann see Hubert Ortkemper, ed., *Liebling, Mein Herz Lässt Dich Grüßen. Der Erfolgreichste Filmkomponist Der Großen UFA-Zeit Erinnert Sich*. (Berlin: Henschel Verlag, 2001), Helga Gutsche, ed., "Ein Freund, Ein Guter Freund." *Der Komponist Werner Richard Heymann (1896-1961)* (Berlin: Fürst & Iven 2000).

⁸³² Many argued that actors were better suited to sing in film, as professional opera or operette singers had an “exaggerated way of singing” making them unfit for the screen. See Ria von Hassert, “Wie soll man im Tonfilm singen? Der Schauspieler hat größeren Chancen,” in *Film-Kurier*, January 9, 1933.

⁸³³ Willy Fritsch, *das kommt nicht wieder: Erinnerungen eines Filmschauspielers* (Stuttgart: Werner Classen Verlag, 1963); Ursula Vossen, “Vom Happy-End zum Leiden an der Liebe. Die deutsche Liebespaare Lilian Harvey - Willy Fritsch und Maria Shell - O.W.Fischer,” in *Idole des deutschen Films. Eine Galerie von Schlüsselfiguren*, ed. Thomas Koebner (München: edition text + Kritik, 1997), 165–187.

successful career with several *Schlager*, many of which, such as the tune “Ein Freund, ein guter Freund” (A Friend, a Good Friend) from the movie *Die Drei von der Tankstelle*, (Three From the Gas Station, Wilhelm Thiehle, 1930), became classics.

In the winter of 1929, Fritsch starred in one of the first German talkies, the Ufa production *Melodie des Herzens* (Melody of the Heart, Hans Schwarz) with Willy Fritsch and Dita Parlo, with Richard Heymann’s music. A few weeks later, Carl Froelich’s film *Die Nacht gehört uns* (The Night Belongs to Us) featured Hans Albers and Charlotte Ander. The much-publicized premieres triggered much commentary in the press, especially about Albers’ performance.

A busy actor who painfully climbed the ladder of success, Albers was well known by the late 1920s in Berlin’s artistic milieu.⁸³⁴ He was famous for his physical performances in cabarets and *varietés* and later on for his critically acclaimed theater performances. Albers played in over one hundred silent films before his breakthrough in *Die Nacht gehört uns*, which established him overnight as a star and typecast him as “Lover, Bon-vivant, Singer.”⁸³⁵ Why such instant stardom? Oskar Kalbus wrote that “in *Die Nacht gehört uns* Albers takes over the screen in this film, because he doesn’t mince his words, and doesn’t put on any exaggerated acting show.”⁸³⁶ His colleague Willy Fritsch confirmed in his memoirs, “Albers dared to do in this film what we did not. He

⁸³⁴ While a handful of biographies remain mostly hagiographic, Michaela Krützen had written an excellent scholarly work on Albers’ life and career. See Michaela Krützen, *Hans Albers: Eine deutsche Karriere* (Berlin: Quadriga Verlag, 1995); Christoph Funke, *Hans Albers* (Berlin: Henschel, 1965); Joachim Cadenbach, *Hans Albers* (Berlin: Universitas Verlag, 1975); Otto Tötter, *Hans Albers Hoppla, jetzt komm’ ich!* (Hamburg: Rasch und Röhring, 1986); Hans-Christoph Blumenberg, *In Meinem Herzen, Schatz. Die Lebensreise Des Schauspielers Und Sängers Hans Albers* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch, 1991); Bärbel Dalichow and Filmmuseum Potsdam, *Hans Albers. Ein Leben in Bildern* (Berlin: Henschel, 1997).

⁸³⁵ Cited in a 1933 artist almanac. See Krützen, *Hans Albers*, 31.

⁸³⁶ Oskar Kalbus, *Vom Werden Deutscher Filmkunst. 2. Teil: Der Tonfilm* (Altona-Bahrenfeld: Cigaretten-Bilderdienst, 1935), 110.

did not speak the intertitles, he just talked as he pleased. When we were still stiff, he was already easy, brash, cynical, human. Overnight, Albers became *the* German film star.”⁸³⁷

Apparently the success of *Die Nacht gehört uns* resided not in the new technology but in the actor himself, who appeared to dominate the screen and the technology: “the film and its technique did not make Albers ‘Albers,’ rather it was Albers who conquered the technique with his natural vitality and subordinated it to his own personal laws.”⁸³⁸

Albers was now more comfortable than in his previous films and for critics who had criticized his affectation in silent films, he now became the model for natural acting: “Albers’ way of acting and his language are state of the art for sound film stars – Albers acts and talks so unaffectedly, so naturally, so ‘without showing off.’”⁸³⁹ Thus, Albers was able to utilize the new technology of sound film to his advantage. Even sound film opponent Rudolf Arnheim marvels at Albers, the “debonair, sassy guy,” who “invented the language of sound film:”

He sat bent over a swooning girl and spoke gently to her. But he didn’t speak pure text, he murmured soothing sounds, he tossed unintelligible stuff between the lines, all kind of acoustical rubbish, half-words, little sighs, contented murmuring. For he sensed that one of the goals of sound film was to make speech fit into the rest of the world of sounds.⁸⁴⁰

This equation of Albers’ performance with natural style requires further exploration. Using Siegfried Kracauer’s argument that realism is the most important function of cinema, Michaela Krützen analyses the reaction to Albers’ acting as part of a valorization of his natural style, his much praised *Natürlichkeit*, which has nothing to do

⁸³⁷ Fritsch, *Das Kommt Nicht Wieder: Erinnerungen Eines Filmschauspielers*, 104.

⁸³⁸ E.U. in B.Z. am Mittag, 22.9.1928, quoted in *Ibid.*, 81.

⁸³⁹ Knopf, Julius. – undatierte Kritik ohne Quellenangabe.– *Kritikensammlung TWS* cited in Krützen, *Hans Albers*, 86.

⁸⁴⁰ *Film Essays and Criticism*, *Wisconsin Studies in Film* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 221.

with a realistic acting style.⁸⁴¹ Reviewers regularly remarked on his ability to “speak as if he improvises freely,” comparing him to American actors, such as “Wallace Berry, Gary Cooper, Clark Gable.”⁸⁴² While his half-finished sentences, his mutterings and sighs, and his seemingly improvised speeches differentiated him from fellow actors, we need to look for further explanations for these enthusiastic reactions.⁸⁴³ After all, Willy Fritsch, Gustav Fröhlich, and Heinrich George had also successfully transitioned from silent to sound, without sounding too theatrical.

A major difference in Albers’ case was that the perception of his way of speaking as “natural” was also rooted in the conflation of his on- and off-screen persona, both at the same time accessible and idealized. Many of Albers’ characters had something “broken.” They not only burst with strength, they also had vulnerable and melancholic aspects, making Albers more approachable, more “human.”⁸⁴⁴ The letters he received “welcomed the fact that he plays real-life characters, made of flesh and blood.”⁸⁴⁵ Albers achieved a successful mix of macho and melancholic, not unlike Valentino or the French actor Jean Gabin.⁸⁴⁶ A reviewer of his film *Unter heißem Himmel* (Contraband, Gustav Ucicky, 1936) called him “the lovable bear.”⁸⁴⁷ In addition, as Siegfried Kracauer explains, his popularity transcended class and gender: “From 1930 to 1933, [he] played the heroes of films in which typically bourgeois daydreams found outright fulfillment; his

⁸⁴¹ Krützen, *Hans Albers*. Especially chapter 3: Durchbruch: das Erfolgsargument “Natürlichkeit,” 67-118.

⁸⁴² See review of “*Savoy-Hotel 17*,” in *Film-Kurier*, April 14, 1936.

⁸⁴³ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁴ See for example his pilot Ellissen in Karl Hart’s 1931 film, *F.P.I. antwortet nicht*.

⁸⁴⁵ Aros, *Hans Albers. Wie Er Ist Und Wie Er Wurde*, Illustrierte Filmbücher 4 (Berlin: Scherl, 1931), n/a.

⁸⁴⁶ Best examples for his performance characters with “softer” side are in Robert Siodmak 1932 *Quick*, Karl Hartl 1932 *F.P.I antwortet nicht*, Herbert Selpin 1939 *Wasser für Catinoga*, and Helmut Käutner 1944 *Große Freiheit No. 7*. See Norbert Grob, “Ein deutscher Mann der Tat: Hans Albers und seine Filme zwischen 1929 und 1944,” in *Idole des deutschen Films. Eine Galerie von Schlüsselfiguren*, ed. Thomas Koebner (München: edition text + kritik, 1997), 199–204.

⁸⁴⁷ Advertisement for *Unter heißem Himmel*, in *Film-Kurier*, January 20, 1937.

exploits gladdened the hearts of worker audiences, and in *Mädchen in Uniform* (Girls in Uniform, Leontine Sagan, 1931) we see his photograph worshiped by the daughters of aristocratic families.”⁸⁴⁸ All of these characteristics allowed identification by the audience with the actor, an important step in the constitution of star status, as Richard Dyer has shown.⁸⁴⁹ A constitutive part of his appeal and stardom, Albers’ multifaceted performances and image would lead to opposite interpretations of his career during the Third Reich.⁸⁵⁰

Looking back at 1929, we see that *Die Nacht gehört uns* was not only Albers’ debut, it was also the German sound film’s debut. For those who supported it, sound film mirrored hopes to overturn Hollywood’s control over the European film market. It also opened up possibilities for the construction of a German national identity along linguistic and musical vernaculars.⁸⁵¹ It is striking that the man who was associated with the birth of German sound film—and furthermore with the birth of new German national identity—was not the smiling and charming Willy Fritsch, but a self-confident, “natural,” actor (See Figure 5.9). These very qualities were emphasized by the press: “[Albers] is in this film no “pretty boy,” with no hair-do and no make up.”⁸⁵² Indeed, Albers was a very physical actor, who would, from this first sound film on, specialize in the role of adventurers. Albers’ nickname became *der Draufgänger* (the daredevil). Thus, what the

⁸⁴⁸ Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), 8–9. It must be added that Albers’ treatment of women was often less than sensible. Reviewers were amused when he threw women in the water and disliked when he came back to the home at the end of films, considering this end not a successful one. See reviews of *Ein gewisser Herr Gran* in *Film-Kurier*, August 16, 1933, and of *Gold*, in *Film-Kurier*, March 31, 1934: “not an Albers-ending, an overly sweet wife (Lien Dyers) pulls him in resigned happy end.”

⁸⁴⁹ Dyer, *Stars*.

⁸⁵⁰ Krützen, *Hans Albers*, 183–193.

⁸⁵¹ Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror*, 25.

⁸⁵² Review of *Ein gewisser Herr Gran*, *Film-Kurier*, August 8, 1933.

critics were celebrating was an actor who could pass as “one of us,” and at the same time an actor whom one who one could look up to.

Not incidentally, this actor was a markedly strong and healthy, sturdy looking man, an ideal image for a Germany painfully healing many wounds. His second film consolidated this image. In Josef von Sternberg’s 1930 *Der Blaue Engel* (The Blue Angel), Albers played Mazeppa, “the strongman,” who, with few words and a lot of body language, seduced Marlene Dietrich away from Emil Jannings. Two films with Richard Eichberg allowed him to establish his screen persona of “the blond Hans,” the intrepid policeman: *Der Greifer*, (The Snatcher, 1930) and *Der Draufgänger* in 1931.

Several of his screen characters were named Hans, completing the assimilation of his on- and off-screen persona.⁸⁵³ The actor was synonymous with strength, strong will and success. His films promised “tempo and excitement.”⁸⁵⁴ By 1935, Oskar Kalbus could write that Albers was “the messenger and the carrier of the German ideal of the man par excellence.”⁸⁵⁵

⁸⁵³ Hans Röder, in *Der Draufgänger* (The Daredevil, Richard Eichberg, 1931), Hans Kühnert in *Der Sieger* (The Winner, Hans Hinrich, 1931).

⁸⁵⁴ Advertisement for *Unter heißem Himmel*, *Film-Kurier*, January 20, 1937.

⁸⁵⁵ Kalbus, *Vom Werden Deutscher Filmkunst. 2. Teil: Der Tonfilm*, 110.

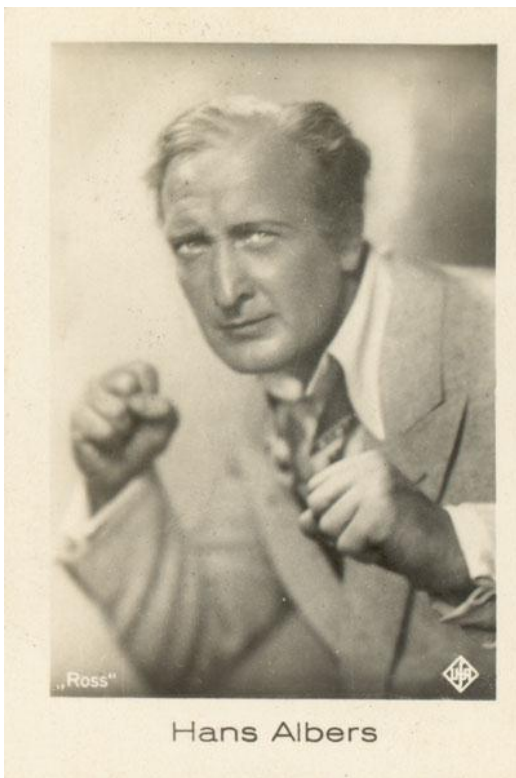


Figure 5.9: Willy Fritsch vs. Hans Albers

As a man of the *Volk*, a “natural” talent whose physicality matched official racial ideology and whose characters were strong-willed men who got what they wanted, Albers had many qualities and talents to make him a perfect candidate for the propagation of National Socialist ideology. But Albers’ participation in two outright nationalistic films – Ucicky’s *Flüchtlinge* (The Refugees, 1933) and Herbert Selpin’s *Carl Peters* in 1941 – was rooted more in his own predilection for strong characters and adventurers than any political allegiance.⁸⁵⁶ The actor’s dislike of the Nazi regime was well-known and numerous tensions arose between the two.⁸⁵⁷ For example, after the ban of Ferenc Molnár’s celebrated play *Liliom*, which Albers had performed close to two thousand times, the actor, disgusted by this censorship, did not appear on a stage until 1946, in a performance of *Liliom* no less. On a personal level, Albers had to send his girlfriend Hansi Burg, daughter of Albers’ Jewish mentor Eugen Burg, to England in 1939, where she stayed until they were reunited in 1946.⁸⁵⁸ While he continued his prosperous career during the Third Reich, Albers kept a distanced relationship from the regime, seldom taking part in official celebrations and gatherings and refusing to be photographed with party members. Highly irritated by his increased demands, especially financial ones, the National Socialist regime, and particularly Goebbels, nevertheless accommodated him in

⁸⁵⁶ Siegfried Kracauer adds to the list the 1931 *Bomben auf Monte Carlo*, Hanns Schwarz, where Albers plays “the craze captain of an operette cruiser,” in Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler*, 214. For a thoughtful analysis of Albers’ characters and the conflicting, opposite interpretations see Krützen, *Hans Albers*, especially Chapter 5, “Der Draufgänger,” 178–238. Krützen lists as an additional nationalistic film the 1935 film *Henker, Frauen und Soldaten*. See the contemporary enthusiastic reviews of the *Flüchtlinge* in *Film-Kurier*, December 9 and 14, 1933 and the numerous reports about *Carl Peters* on November 31, 1940, December 7 1940, February 15, March 22, April 8 and 16, 1941.

⁸⁵⁷ Grob, “Ein Deutscher Mann Der Tat.” See also Michaela Krützen’s Chapter 4 “Machtkämpfe” in Krützen, *Hans Albers*, 119–177.

⁸⁵⁸ BA J1/ 2200, October 15, 1935. Letter from Albers to Goebbels informing that he had separated from Hansi Burg.

view of his undiminished and even growing popularity.⁸⁵⁹ Despite official critiques about “stars,” the German film industry needed film stars and worked towards the creation of a Hollywood-like star system.⁸⁶⁰ Albers was one of the few stars who had been successful during Weimar and stayed in Germany after 1933.⁸⁶¹ The regime recognized his popularity and his influence on the audience.⁸⁶² When analyzing the effect of film on the audience, Reich Film Dramaturge Fritz Hippler described, in his 1943 book, *Betrachtungen zum Filmschaffen* (Considerations on Film Making), Hans Albers as the actor people would identify with:

Besides the personal connection between the audience and the main character during the course of the movie, film also generates the ambition to be like a star. How he clears his throat and how he spits, how he is dressed, how he behaves, if and what he drinks, what and how he smokes, whether he is a stuffed shirt or a man-about-town, that all has an effect not only in the film but also in the life of the audience. A powerful and victorious film releases a different public than a tragic or comic film. After an Albers film, an assistant barber is an Albers; nobody had better dare to get mixed up with him.⁸⁶³

Albers indeed remained one of Germany’s biggest, if not the only, star.⁸⁶⁴ The popular *Filmwelt* featured him twenty times on its front cover in addition to numerous

⁸⁵⁹ Albers had been fighting for higher wages since 1930. He became the highest paid actor of the Third Reich. Examples of some of the often tense exchanges between Albers and the Propaganda Minister regarding wages see BA J1/ 2156, 2158. For the 1944 film *Die Grosse Freiheit* (Helmut Käutner) Albers received RM 416.000. See BA J01 / 2160 Letter from Hinkel to Goebbels, January 23, 1945. See especially Michaela Krützen’s chapter “Machtkämpfe” in Krützen, *Hans Albers*, 119–177.

⁸⁶⁰ The idea of an individual, americanized “star” was frowned upon, and a sense of community and “ensemble” was being fostered instead.

⁸⁶¹ Andrea Winkler-Mayerhöfer, *Starkult Als Propagandamittel? Studien Zum Unterhaltungsfilm Im Dritten Reich* (München: Ölschläger, 1992). For female stars see Ascheid, *Hitler’s Heroines*; Bruns, *Nazi Cinema’s New Women*. See also Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*. Once again Michaela Krützen offers the only study of a male actor during the Third Reich.

⁸⁶² Reviewers of his films often point to his popularity. See reviews in *Film-Kurier* for *Peer Gynt*, December 08, 1934, “the most striking and popular [actor].” Reviewing the film *Die gelbe Flage*, the author assures “the large group of [Albers’] fans” that they will get plenty of “the star.” *Film-Kurier*, November 27, 1937.

⁸⁶³ Fritz Hippler, *Betrachtungen Zum Filmschaffen* (Berlin, 1942), 95.

⁸⁶⁴ Karsten Witte calls him “the only big star of German Cinema from silent film to the post war time.” Karsten Witte, “Hans Albers. Athlet in Halbseide,” in *Die Unsterblichen Des Kinos. Glanz Und Mythos*

full page and double pages portraits.⁸⁶⁵ Needless to say, this was unmatched by any actor or actress during that time period. His fans rejoiced over his films, and complained when the characters he embodied lost, or even worse, as in the film *Fahrendes Volk* (People Who Travel, Jacques Feyder, 1938), dared to die.⁸⁶⁶ In addition to his natural quality, his mix of strong and weak characters, Albers also managed to keep the image of a man of the people throughout his career, something the National Socialist regime and the audience valued: “This aura of the man of the *Volk*, which most of the actors lack for this type of role, Albers has it.”⁸⁶⁷ In March 1943, *Der deutsche Film* described Albers as “one of us. This is the secret of his success: He is a child of the people.”⁸⁶⁸ Interestingly, this last issue of the magazine devoted its cover to the new Albers’ film *Münchhausen*. The film was released to celebrate the twenty-five year anniversary of Ufa, a fact that the magazine acknowledged at length in a commemorative article. In the same issue, we find, juxtaposed to the Ufa article, a four-page celebration of the twenty-five year career of

Der Stars Der 40er Und 50er Jahre, ed. Adolf Heinzlmeier, Berndt Schulz, and Karsten Witte (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1980), 33.

⁸⁶⁵ For issues of *Filmwelt* with Albers on the front cover and the films featured see: no. 10 (March 1932) in *Der Sieger*; no. 40 (October 1932) in *Rauschgift*; no. 50 (December 1932) in *F.P.1 antwortet nicht*; no. 28 (July 1933) in *Ein gewisser Herr Gran*; no. 42 (October 1933) in *Flüchtlinge*; no. 29 (July 1934) with “Albers bei der Bavaria”; no. 30 (July 1935) “Zwei Ufa Filme”; no. 35 (September 1935) with Annabella und Albers in der Bavaria Film *Variété*; no. 50 (December 1935) in *Henker, Frauen, Soldaten*; no. 7 (February 1936), Brigitte Horney und Hans Albers in *Hotel Savoy 217*; no. 31 (August 1936) “Albers in zwei Ufa Großfilme”; no. 50 (December 1936) in *Unter heißem Himmel*; no. 42 (October 1937) in *Die gelbe Flagge*; no. 28 (July 1938) in *Fahrendes Volk*; no. 58 (December 1938) in *Sergeant Berry*; no. 11 (March 1939) in *Wasser für Catinoga*; no. 51 (December 1939) with Hilde Sessak in *Mann auf Abwegen*; no. 35 (August 1940) in *Trenck der Pandur*; no. 16 (April 1941) with Karl Dannemann in *Carl Peters*; no. 9/12 (March 1943) in *Münchhausen*.

⁸⁶⁶ “Hans Albers in *Ein Mann auf Abwegen*, Regie: Herbert Selpin,” *Filmwelt*, no. 45 (November 1939). According to the article, fans wrote letters with “the rudest reproaches. What was he thinking? Albers and dying? Loosing instead of winning? No way.” Albers confirmed that he received letters asking him not to die. See “Hans Albers über kommenden Filme,” *Film-Kurier*, December 15, 1938. Albers “died” again in *Wasser für Catinoga*, Herbert Selpin, 1939.

⁸⁶⁷ Review of *Savoy-Hotel 17*, *Film-Kurier*, April 14, 1936.

⁸⁶⁸ *Der deutsche Film*, no. 9 (March 1943).

Hans Albers. By 1943, it seems that Albers had come to embody the largest film company, Ufa, if not the whole German film industry.

In addition to the above-mentioned factors, Albers' success was also significantly rooted in his musical performances. From his early theatrical successes in revues, where broader artistic freedom allowed for improvisation, Albers asked to integrate songs whenever possible. The waltz *Komm auf die Schaukel, Luise* (Music: Theo Mackeben, Lyrics: Alfred Polgar), for example, was especially written for him in the play *Liliom*. Between 1931 and 1933, Albers recorded sixteen titles; all but three were from his films. Albers sang in eight of the eighteen films he made during the Third Reich. As will be shown below, the popularity of the actor was undoubtedly enhanced by the marketing of the songs he performed, a widespread phenomenon since the arrival of sound in 1929, which often turned actors into singers, and singers into actors.⁸⁶⁹

As shown previously, sound film, in addition to the many individual changes it produced, also brought numerous genre-aesthetic novelties. As seen with Albers' career, integrating songs in films was a very common practice, rooted in early film and music culture, as well as the highly developed media cross-fertilization, or media convergence, mentioned earlier. New cinematographic genres appeared in the late 1920s, all attempting to capitalize on the media network in place and the audience's infatuation with this mix of film and songs.⁸⁷⁰ Audiences could rejoice in "composer biographies, film opera,

⁸⁶⁹ For the career of Marga Eggerth and Jan Kiepura see for example Michael Wedel, "Die Entfesselte Stimme. Marga Eggerth, Der Sängereilm Und Die Operentradition," in *Der Deutsche Musikfilm. Archäologie Eines Genres 1914-1945* (München: Edition Text + Kritik, 2007), 359–391; Günter Krenn and Armin Loacker, *Zauber Der Boheme: Marta Eggerth, Jan Kiepura Und Der Deutschsprachige Musikfilm* (Filmarchiv Austria, 2002).

⁸⁷⁰ Klaus Kanzog, "'Wir Machen Musik, Da Geht Euch Der Hut Hoch!' Zur Definition, Zum Spektrum Und Zur Geschichte Des Deutschen Musikfilms," in *Positionen Deutscher Filmgeschichte: 100 Jahre Kinematographie. Strukturen, Diskurse, Kontexte*, ed. Michael Schaudig (München: diskurs film, 1996), 197–240.

operetta film and film operetta, revue film and melodrama, singer film and musical comedies.”⁸⁷¹

The “most important film genre of the end of the Weimar Republic” was the sound film operetta.⁸⁷² Unlike the first sound films such as *Ich Küsse Ihre Hand, Madame* (I Kiss Your Hand, Madam, Robert Land, 1929), which was shot as a silent film and later enhanced with a singing sequence, sound film operettas were characterized by the organic cohesion between, and by the systematic integration of, image and sound, music and plot.⁸⁷³ Starting with Wilhelm Thiel’s *Liebeswalzer* (Love Waltz, music by Werner R. Heymann and starring the dream couple Lilian Harvey and Willy Fritsch) and Geza Bolvary’s *Zwei Herzen im ¾ Takt* (Two Hearts in Waltz Time) based on the operetta written by Robert Stolz) the genre flourished until 1933 with classics such as *Die drei von der Tankstelle* (Three Good Friends, Wilhelm Thiele, music Werner Richard Heymann), considered by many as the “prototype of the genre,”⁸⁷⁴ and *Der Kongress tanzt* (The Congress Dances, Erik Charell, 1931). The last major film in this genre was *Viktor und Viktoria* made in 1933 by Reinhold Schünzels, although arguably Schünzels’s *Amphitryon* from 1935 and Paul Martin’s *Glückskinder* (Happy Kids) made in 1936 can

⁸⁷¹ Wedel, *Der Deutsche Musikfilm*, 10.

⁸⁷² Thomas Koebner, “Wenn ‘Fortuna Winke, Winke Macht.’ Die Tonfilm-Operette: Das Bedeutendste Kino-Genre in Der Endzeit Der Weimar Republik,” in *Diesseits Der “Dämonischen Leinwand.” Neue Perspektiven Auf Das Späte Weimarer Kino*, ed. Thomas Koebner (München: edition text + kritik, 2003), 341–372; Michael Wedel, “Medienkonvergenz Und Genreästhetik. Die Ufa-Tonfilm-Operette,” in *Der Deutsche Musikfilm. Archäologie Eines Genres 1914-1945*, ed. Michael Wedel (München: edition text + kritik, 2007), 241–302.

⁸⁷³ Michael Wedel, “Die Tonfilmoperette. Zugpferd Des Tonfilms,” in *Wenn Ich Sonntags in Mein Kino Geh’. Ton-Film-Musik 1929-1933*, ed. Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz (Berlin: Deutsche Kinemathek. Museum für Film und Fernsehen, 2008), 35.

⁸⁷⁴ See the detailed analysis in Wedel, “Medienkonvergenz Und Genreästhetik. Die Ufa-Tonfilm-Operette.”

also be considered sound film operetta.⁸⁷⁵

Despite their popular success, sound film operettas were sharply criticized for their escapism and, as shown above, their excessive use of *Schlager*.⁸⁷⁶ Recent detailed analyses, though, have shown that these films actually reflected the spirit of the time.⁸⁷⁷ Under a layer of light, musical entertainment, they problematized topics such as unemployment, poverty, and housing shortages. They played with gender identity and cross dressing, and ironically mixed reality and illusion. Unsurprisingly, the National Socialists loathed the wit, as well as the Jewish makers of such films. Sound film operettas were able to “infuse elements of self distancing and critical reflection,”⁸⁷⁸ qualities which were not welcomed under the Nazis. The *Gleichschaltung*, the forced coordination of the film industry led to the exodus of many talented filmmakers, such as producer Erich Pommer, director Erik Charell, and composer Richard Heymann, and gave the deathblow to the genre of the sound film operetta.

Other short-lived novelties of the era were multilingual versions.⁸⁷⁹ As a response to the puzzlement among the audience with the first synchronized films, and in an effort to amortize the increased cost of film making, producers decided to make several versions of the same film with the same plot, same set designs, same technicians and

⁸⁷⁵ For a close reading of *Amphitryon* see Jan Hans, “Musik- Und Revuefilm,” in *Mediale Mobilmachung I. Das Dritte Reich Und Der Film*, ed. Segeberg Harro (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2004), 181–202.

⁸⁷⁶ See among others the critique of Siegfried Kraucauer and Theodor W. Adorno.

⁸⁷⁷ Corinna Müller, “Tonfilm: Neuer Realismus? Zum Beispiel Ich Bei Tag Und Du Bei Nacht,” in *Diesseits Der “Dämonischen Leinwand”*: *Neue Perspektiven Auf Das Späte Weimarer Kino*, ed. Thomas Koebner (München: edition text + kritik, 2003), 393–410; Hake, “Provocations of the Disembodied Voice”; Koebner, “Wenn ‘Fortuna Winke, Winke Macht’.”

⁸⁷⁸ Hake, “Provocations of the Disembodied Voice,” 61.

⁸⁷⁹ Joseph Garnarcz, “Die Bedrohte Internationalität Des Films: Fremdsprachige Versionen Deutscher Tonfilme,” in *Hallo? Berlin? Ici Paris! Deutsch-französische Filmbeziehungen 1918-1939*, ed. Sibylle M. Sturm and Arthur Wohlgemuth (Hamburg: edition text + kritik, 1996), 127–141; Michaela Krützen, “Esperanto Für Den Tonfilm: Die Produktion Von Sprachversionen Für Den Frühen Tonfilm-Markt,” in *Positionen Deutscher Filmgeschichte: 100 Jahre Kinematographie, Strukturen, Diskurse, Kontexte* (München: diskurs film, 1995), 119–154.

often the same director and sometimes, even the same actors. One version was directed in the German language, with a German star; a second one in French, with a French star. Less often, a third version was made in English.⁸⁸⁰ A famous example is the 1931 above mentioned *Der Kongreß tanzt*, directed by Erik Charelle, which became *Le Congrès s'amuse* in French and *The Congress Dances* in English.⁸⁸¹

Between 1929 and 1935, 165 multilingual versions were made employing well-known actors such as Willy Fritsch with fifteen versions, Hans Albers with twelve, and Gustav Gründgens with five, as well as renowned film makers such as Wilhelm Pabst and Robert Siodmak, each of whom produced three versions.⁸⁸² By 1935 numerous factors such as the audience's familiarity with dubbing and the propagation of remakes made the multi-lingual versions obsolete.

The disappearance of the sound film operetta notwithstanding, comedies and musical films prevailed during the Third Reich, comprising about half of the cinematic production. The exaggerated, sometimes forceful inclusion of songs in film and the many "spontaneous outbursts of song" were now replaced by a more careful deployment in order for the films to remain closer to reality.⁸⁸³ Popular songs nevertheless remained an important component of filmmaking. As shown previously, the National Socialists tried to harness the popular appeal of the *Schlager* and utilize it as a "weapon of optimism,"

⁸⁸⁰ Uhlenbrock, "Verdoppelte Stars. Pendants in Deutschen Und Französischen Versionen."

⁸⁸¹ Horst Claus and Anne Jäckel, "Ufa, Frankreich Und Versionen: Das Beispiel 'Der Kongreß Tanzt'," in *Hallo? Berlin? Ici Paris! Deutsch-französische Filmbeziehungen 1918-1939*, ed. Sibylle M. Sturm and Arthur Wohlgemuth (Hamburg: edition film + kritik, 1996), 141–154.

⁸⁸² Francis Courtade, "Die deutsch-französischen Koproduktionen," in *Kameradschaft – Querelle. Kino zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich.*, ed. Heike Hurst and Heiner Gassen (München: Institut Français de Munich/ Cicim, 1991), 159–172; Sturm and Wohlgemuth, *Hallo? Berlin? Ici Paris!*.

⁸⁸³ On the "Spontaneous Outburst of Song" see Kevin Bozelka, "The Musical Mode. Rock and Hollywood Cinema" (University of Texas, Austin, 2008). On "the repeated efforts by film critics, journalists, and officials from the Propaganda Ministry to rearticulate the relationship between representation and reality through a modified notion of filmic realism" see Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, 172–188.

despite their ambivalence toward this remnant of Weimar culture, especially its capitalist, Jewish character.⁸⁸⁴ While the propagandistic use of popular songs was only partially successful, film companies and film stars continued to benefit from their enduring popularity.⁸⁸⁵ Songs composed specifically for films were played on the radio weeks before the premieres, and advertisements in magazines included music sheets. While singing was no longer a must for many actors and actresses, it certainly enhanced and sometimes even launched a few careers during the Third Reich. The arguably biggest female film star of the time, the Swedish singer Zarah Leander, is the best example of a film career based, among other things, on her baritone voice.⁸⁸⁶ Leander was first and foremost a singer, and her filmography consists mostly of melodramas, built around climactic scenes in which Leander could perform her songs; many of them are still popular in Germany today. But while *Schlager*, and especially Leander's songs, have been the object of scholarly studies, unveiling either their propagandistic effects or, following Currid, their contradictory, destabilizing moments, the musical performances of male actors/singers have been largely neglected.⁸⁸⁷ The male singers' songs, of course, did not play such a vital role as Leander's songs, which were a constitutive part of her melodramas. In this genre, music and songs function as a form of expression for the male characters, which are often unable to express themselves directly.⁸⁸⁸

⁸⁸⁴ Jockwer, "Unterhaltungsmusik Im Dritten Reich."

⁸⁸⁵ On the unsuccessful attempts with the songs for the film *Die Große Liebe*, Rolf Hansen, 1942, see *Ibid.*, 264–272.

⁸⁸⁶ Jan-Oliver Decker, "Die Leidenschaft, Die Leiden Schafft, Oder Wie Inszeniert Man Eine Stimme? Anmerkungen Zum Starimage Von Zarah Leander," in *Geschichte(n) NS-Film – NS-Spuren Heute*, ed. Hans Karh (Kiel: Ludwig, 1999), 97–122; Nadar, "The Director and the Diva." Erica Carter analyses Leander's "voice sublime" in Carter, *Dietrich's Ghosts*, 173–202.

⁸⁸⁷ Ulrike Sanders, *Zarah Leander- Kann Denn Schlager Sünde Sein?* (Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1988); Currid, *A National Acoustics*, 65–118.

⁸⁸⁸ Not surprisingly Leander's first German films were made with the director who came to epitomize the melodrama genre, Douglas Dirk, under his German name Dietlef Sierk: *Zu neuen Ufern* (To New Shores)

Albers' songs fulfill a different function than those made for his female and male counterparts. The Dutch singer Johannes Heesters for example was at home in operetta, on stage as well as in films at the side of Marika Röck and Brigitte Horney, while Heinz Rühmann specialized in comic roles of "ordinary men," with songs as humorous shtick.⁸⁸⁹ As mentioned earlier, while Albers was a man of the *Volk*, he also embodied an idealized version of masculinity. His songs were not designed to amuse and he was not the romantic type who would express his heartache or seduce a woman with songs. They also did not further the plot by adding new information. As noted by Aros in 1930, one of the first *Schlager* Albers performed in a film, *Hoppla, jetzt komm' ich*, (Watch Out! Now I am coming) "could serve as a leitmotiv found in every biography of Albers."⁸⁹⁰ Indeed, while his songs served to characterize the protagonist of his films, the conflation of Albers' on- and off-screen persona made it so that each song appeared to be a reflection of his personality. Not only do the songs characterize him and his roles, Albers himself marks the song with his own twist.

A good example is his rendering of the song *Good Bye Johnny* in his 1939 film *Wasser für Catinoga* (Herbert Selpin, 1939), which led to different interpretation. Lutz Koepnik argues that the songs allows Albers' character "to establish himself as a roughneck whose aim it is to evacuate women and uncontrolled passion from the Far

and *La Habanera*, 1936 and 1937. See the detailed analysis of the use of music and songs in Andreas Pietsch, *Tönende Verführung: NS-Propaganda Durch Filmmusik* (Berlin: Mensch und Buch Verlag, 2009). For cinematographic melodramas and their use of music see Thomas Elsaesser, "Tales of Sound and Fury," in *Imitations of Life. Explorations of Melodrama*, ed. M. Landis (Ohio: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 44–79; Christine Gledhill, ed., *Home Is Where the Heart Is: Studies in Melodrama and the Woman's Film* (London: BFI, 1987).

⁸⁸⁹ Stephen Lowry, "Der Kleine Mann Als Star: Zum Image Von Heinz Rühmann," in *Idole Des Deutschen Films. Eine Galerie Von Schlüsselfiguren*, ed. Thomas Koebner (München: edition text + kritik, 1997), 265–278; Peter Zimmermann, "Kleiner Mann, Was Nun? Der Komiker Heinz Rühmann Im Obrigkeitsstaat," in *Idole Des Deutschen Films. Eine Galerie Von Schlüsselfiguren*, ed. Thomas Koebner (München: edition text + kritik, 1997), 279–292; Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, 87–106.

⁸⁹⁰ Aros, *Hans Albers*, 36.

West.”⁸⁹¹ Karsten Witte, on the other hand, analyzes the lines, “*I have to move on, always move on / To follow my luck / It breaks my heart in two / In a hundred years, Lilly / Everything will be over,*” as “not really getting ready for the war, but more like a veiled appeal for escapism, a wish to hibernate through the Third Reich in a world of dreams.”⁸⁹² For the contemporary reviewer of *Filmwelt*, this song epitomizes Albers, allowing him to showcase his wild and cheerful side.

Hans Albers has once again a terrific part. He is not only a hardboiled guy, who does not mince his words, not only a daredevil who storms through life with temperament and energy. Albers also sings a song: Peter Kreuder composed, Hans Fritz Beckamnn provided the text. It is a great, wild song, and Albers sings it like a ballad.⁸⁹³

Albers twisting of the original song – an homage to a fallen soldier – into a tale of a loose woman, killed by Johnny after he found her “naked in a friend’s closet,” resonates with Albers’ familiar contempt for women. He seduces women but who would never sacrifice his freedom for them.⁸⁹⁴ The addressee of the song is a character in the film, Lilly Westbrook, the flamboyant owner of the local saloon in this pseudo-western set on the Canadian border. The exchange they have is full of sexual innuendos, with Albers hinting at his preferred forceful treatment of a woman, a roughness that does not put Lilly off but instead seems to attract her. Having (re-)affirmed his masculinity, Albers comes to the help of his long-time friend, who is being ridiculed as he attempts to perform a sad song in the saloon. Asking the rowdy crowd what they want to hear, Albers first sings “the song of Johnny’s lady” and then the original *Good Bye Johnny*.

⁸⁹¹ Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror*, 129.

⁸⁹² Witte, “Hans Albers. Athlet in Halbseide,” 37–38.

⁸⁹³ Hans Erasmus Fischer, Review of *Wasser für Canitoga*,” *Filmwelt*, no. 12 (March 24, 1939), 21.

⁸⁹⁴ See especially the films *Bomben auf Monte Carlo* (Hanns Schwarz, 1931) and *F.P.1 antwortet nicht* (F.P.1 Doesn’t Answer, Karl Hartl, 1932).

Text of *Das Lied von Johnny's Braut*

My friend Johnny loved a woman
She was bad, as all women are
Fraulein Lilly was her name
And my poor Johnny was blind for love
One night he found her
Completely naked in a friend's closet
he said no, it can't be
what are we doing now?
And then he took the gun out
And then the gun made a boom
Then the woman fell over

Cheerio - cheerio - cheerio
Goodbye Lilly, goodbye Lilly
It was nice with us
But unfortunately, unfortunately
Its cannot continue like that
Goodbye Lilly, goodbye Lilly
Don't make it so hard for me
I have to move on, always move on
To follow my luck
It breaks my heart in two,
In hundred years, Lilly
Everything will be over

Goodbye Lilly, goodbye Lilly
You were my full luck
One day, one day
Be it in heaven
Be it in hell
Maybe, I will come back to you.

From the beginning, it is obvious that not only the character Oliver Montstuart, but also the actor, Albers, is enjoying himself tremendously. He is at the center of attention, with women and men alike staring appreciatively at him. The surrounding is reminiscent of the cabarets and revues that Albers was so successful in. He smiles at the saloon owner when mentioning the name Lilly and his rendering of the song is very physical. Albers comically mimes the text, exaggerating his movements and facial

expressions. During the line, *I have to move on, always move on/ To follow my luck*, he grabs a woman's purse, flings it over his shoulder, and pretends to walk laboriously. At the end of the last verse, he surrounds himself with a handful of laughing women who gladly swing their bodies in rhythm. They obviously enjoy the performance and song and do not seem to resent the narrative of a loose woman killed by a lover. At the end of the song, Albers spontaneously applauds the audience, and himself, with an expression of pure joy (see Figure 5.10). In this moment, the real Albers transcends his screen character: we see him self-confident and with a contagious *joie de vivre*.⁸⁹⁵ His charisma in the saloon, and on-screen, is irresistible, even more so because he plays a "real guy," something Albers favored.⁸⁹⁶ Through the characters, we see the real Albers, with all his healthy mischief, irony, and irreverence.⁸⁹⁷

⁸⁹⁵ See Krützen's analysis of Albers as the German swashbuckler in Krützen, *Hans Albers*, 210–232.

⁸⁹⁶ "Hans Albers in dreierlei Gestalt," *Film-Kurier*, July 3, 1940. Albers had repeatedly expressed his desire to play "regular" guy, "who have to live and fight like any other guy. Full blood guys with all their worries and joy [...], no puppets, concocted by any script writer. And men, [...] who imperturbably go their way, even when they have to absorb rabbit punches. I want to give in my films the real, the natural, the original/primordial, the way it is, without taking something off or adding anything."

⁸⁹⁷ In addition to individuals who were often struggling with authority, bordering with anarchistic impulses, willing to go against, often above, the law to achieve their goals, Albers' character also were full of self irony. See for example the last scene of *Sergeant Berry*.



Figure 5.10. Hans Albers being himself in *Wasser für Canitoga* (Herbert Selpin, 1939)

The audience is aware of the conflation of the on- and off- screen persona; it expects it. This is part of the attraction of a Hans Albers' film, as Felix Henseleit argues. He writes, "[n]o matter which role he plays, without or without a mask, as *Trenck, der Pandur* or *Münchhausen*, as *Der Mann auf Abwegen*, or as Hannes, the singer from Hamburg in *Großen Freiheit*, he is always recognizable."⁸⁹⁸

His last film made during the Third Reich, *Große Freiheit No. 7* (Great Freedom No.7, Helmut Käutner, 1945) especially offered the audience the expected pleasure. In this poignant tale of Hamburg's Saint Pauli district, Albers, himself a kid from Hamburg, plays a former seaman, Hannes, now a singer in a sailor's nightclub where he expresses his longing for the sea in melancholic songs. Having taken care, first reluctantly, of his dead brother's girlfriend Gisa, he became very fond of the young woman. Hannes/Albers

⁸⁹⁸ Felix Henseleit, "Hans Albers. Ein Schauspielerbildnis," *Film-Kurier*, July 1, 1943.

first opposes Gisa's love for a dockworker, but in the end, he recognizes that they are better fitted for each other and takes off to the sea. Reviewing the film, the press emphasized the connections to Albers' real life:

Hans Albers is Hannes, and he, himself North German from Hamburg, has here found a role, in which he can pour more heart and soul, as in other roles, where he only plays adventurers and daredevils. Indeed, he plays his role with something like a personal piece of longing. Albers really once wanted to be a sailor, comes from the coast, and always has a love for the sea in his blood.⁸⁹⁹

More than just a plot device or a requisite of a specific genre, songs in Albers' films served primarily to showcase Albers, the actor and the private man, utilizing the media convergence to enhance his popularity. Although Albers' *Schlager* were seldom actively integrated as a primordial element in the plot, as was noted countless times in the film press, they were obviously tolerated and even celebrated, demonstrating the popularity of not only Albers as a star but also the *Schlager*. This exemplified the tensions between the attempts to reform the use of *Schlager* and *Schlager* as part of efforts to elevate the level of entertainment music and, by focusing on the songs used in films, the level of the films themselves, and the sustained popularity of *Schlager* during the Third Reich.

A study of Albers' rise to fame and his use of *Schlager* illustrate of many of the points made in this chapter, from the extended media convergence of film, music, radio, and the press, to the tensions between high and low culture, as they manifested themselves in the discussions about the use of "serious" music in film and the filming of opera, and the popularity of the "low" genre of commercial *Schlager*. While they greatly enhanced his popularity, Albers' songs also contributed to the complexity of his screen

⁸⁹⁹ "Hannes singt von der weissen Taube," *Film-Kurier*, June 10, 1943.

characters, allowing for multiple readings and identifications. As will be shown in chapter 6, the revue star Marika Rökk fulfilled similar functions less with the songs than with the roles her characters performed.

Chapter 6

Kora Terry (Georg Jacoby, 1940) and the German Revue Film

A nightclub somewhere in North Africa. A dozen men, dressed in oriental attire, slowly beating their drums.⁹⁰⁰ Moving to the sound of this hypnotic music, the dancer Kora Terry emerges from a smoking altar wrapped in a white veil, which she quickly drops, unveiling an exotic outfit made of an elaborately jeweled gold bikini, barely covering her body.⁹⁰¹ She wears numerous pieces of jewelry, including a headdress reminiscent of the Indian Goddess of destruction, Kali. Kora lasciviously belly dances to the edge of the stage, where she entices the Arabic customers. She then picks up a live python and dances with it, wrapping it around her neck and putting its head dangerously close to hers, as if she going were to kiss or swallow it. Her bare-chested musicians lift her up and parade her around the stage, while she assumes the Shiva position. Back on her feet, she mixes belly dancing with embellished acrobatics before being placed back on the altar, into which she finally disappears, while the dancers prostrate themselves in front of the altar.

⁹⁰⁰ This scene is very similar to the famous night club scene in Yoshiware from Fritz Lang's film *Metropolis*, 1925/26, where the robotic Maria, wrapped in a white cloth is also emerging from an exotic object supported by skimpily dressed African men. One can find a still from this scene in Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, and Hans Helmut Prinzler, eds., *Geschichte Des Deutschen Films* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1993), 418.

⁹⁰¹ Dora Traudisch points to the white veil as symbol of innocent and virginity, which fittingly Kora Terry dropped quickly. See Dora Traudisch, *Mutterschaft Mit Zuckerguß? Frauenfeindliche Propaganda Im NS-Spielfilm* (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus, 1993), 138.

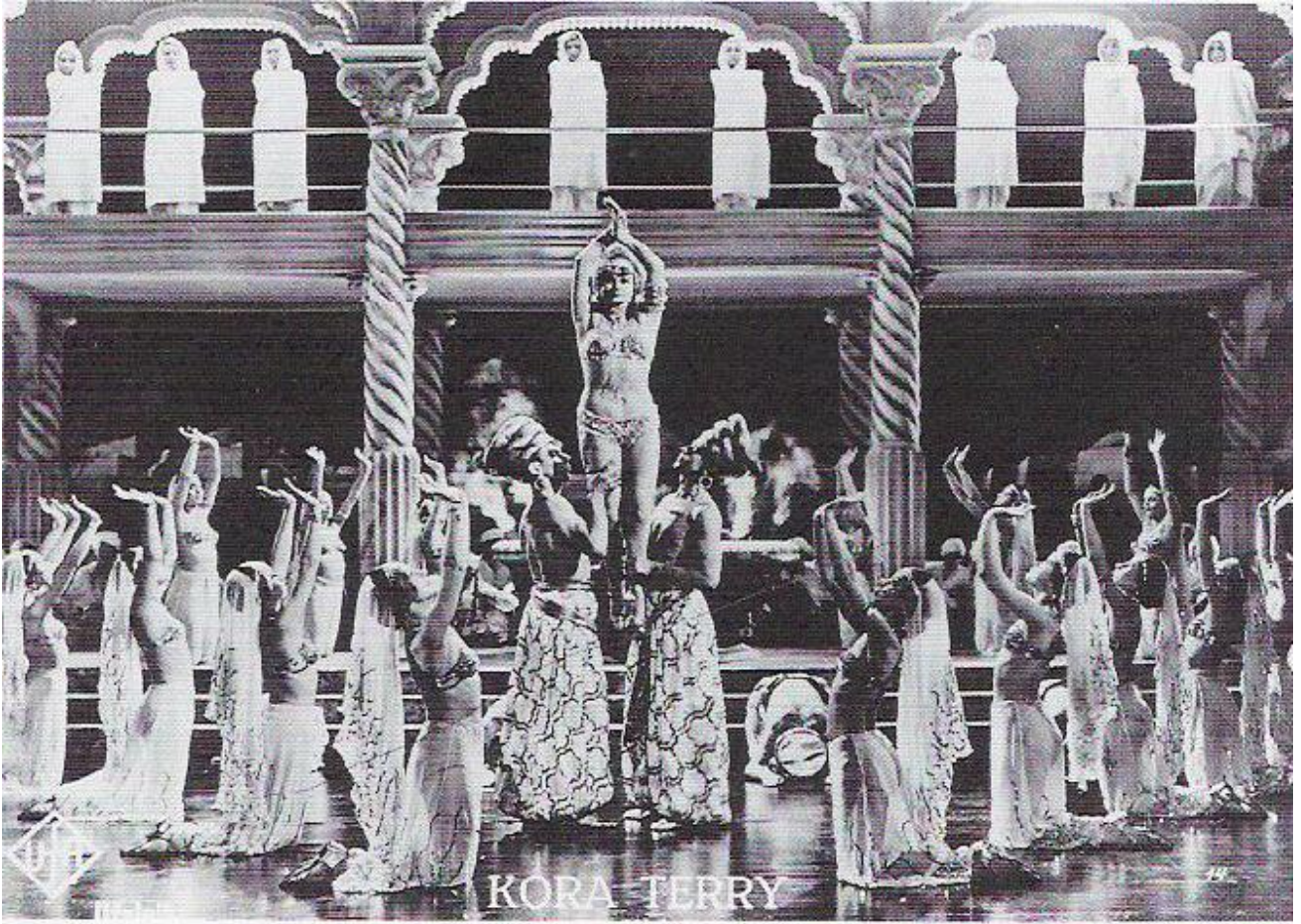


Figure 6.1: Marika Röck in the climatic scene of the film *Kora Terry* (Georg Jacoby, 1940). Horst von Harbou - Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek

While the racist overtones and exploitation of different cultural traditions are to be expected from a 1940 German production, the blatant eroticism of this climatic scene of the melodrama *Kora Terry*, is quite unusual for the film industry of the time.⁹⁰²

⁹⁰² A number of Third Reich films were set in “exotic” countries where the superiority of the white, German main characters and the decadence of the indigenous population were emphasized. For a good survey of foreign adventure films see Mary-Elizabeth O’Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment. The Politics of Entertainment in the Third Reich* (Rochester NY: Camden House, 2004), 65–117. Interesting parallels could be made between the film *Kora Terry* and the 1932 American production *Blonde Venus* with the famous scene where Marlene Dietrich wears a realistic gorilla costume with a back up chorus of black dancers in “native African” costume. She pulls off the gorilla head to reveal a blond afro wig with rhinestone studded arrows poking out and sings a song entitled “Hot Voodoo.” See Lea Jacobs, “The Censorship of ‘Blonde Venus.’ Textual Analysis and Historical Method,” *Cinema Journal* 27, no. 3 (Spring 1988): 21–31; Florence Jacobowitz, “What Does a Man Know About Mother Love? Blonde Venus,” *CineAction!*, no. 21–22 (1990): 35–45.

While often seducing the audience with a mix of patriotism, entertainment, and stars, most of whom were female, Third Reich cinema usually confined the female body to dramas and melodramas, which emphasized female suffering and sacrificial death.⁹⁰³ Erotic displays of female bodies were associated with Weimar's corrupt culture and thus proscribed. And yet, in 1940, Germany's biggest film company, Ufa, produced this lavish film designed to have the audience "experience the arousing atmosphere that simmers behind the scenes of the variety show, amidst animal cages, trapezes, and people from all parts of the world."⁹⁰⁴ How to explain the apparent contradiction between a state-sponsored gender ideology that promoted the image of women as wives and mothers, and the state-sponsored production of such "a frantic revue film," whose main character resembles the *femme fatale* of the decried Hollywood?⁹⁰⁵ I argue that the answer is to be found in the popular genre of the revue film and the star persona of Marika Röck.

As shown in the previous chapter, while the sound film operetta disappeared, the number of films with musical elements did not lessen. Together with the Wiener Operetta, the main musical genre during the Third Reich was the revue film. Although inspired by American musicals, revue films were a specific German-speaking genre, characterized by light entertainment, with recurring singing and dancing scenes and a plot that often took place in artistic milieus and mixed melodrama and comedy. Revue films

⁹⁰³ On female film stars and the cinematic representation of women during the Third Reich see Ascheid, *Hitler's Heroines*; Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Women*; Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*. For a detailed analysis of melodramas see O'Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment*, especially her chapters on home front films and melodramas, 118–206. Nancy P. Nenno had previously offered an excellent, and still valid, summary of the state of scholarship about NS film and the cinematic treatment of women see Nancy P. Nenno, "Women, Fascism and Film," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 2, no. 2 (2001): 73–90. It should be read together with Patrice Perro, "Nazi Cinema at the Intersection of the Classical and the Popular," *New German Critique* 74, Special Issue on Nazi Cinema, no. 74 (1998): 41–55.

⁹⁰⁴ Ufa advertising brochure (*Werberatschlag*) for *Kora Terry* (Ufa-Pressstelle: Scherl Druck, 1940). Cited in Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Women*, 94.

⁹⁰⁵ Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck, "Vom ewigen Juden zu Kora Terry," *Film-Kurier*, December 2, 1940.

featured contemporary *Schlager* and continued a long tradition of German cinematic products that emphasized the musical element.⁹⁰⁶ While the exaggerated use of *Schlager* was regularly decried in the film press, the popularity of revue films, at home and abroad, prevented any drastic changes from the part of the regime.⁹⁰⁷ Contemporary reviewers were aware of the limitations of the genre. As *Film-Kurier* editor in chief Günther Schwark explained in his review of *Broadway Melody of 1938*:

By definition, revue films consist of various, sensational scenes and cabaret episodes passing by our ears and eyes, for the comfort, the boosting and the amusement of the minds. Their particular attraction stems from the decorativeness, the rhythmic-dancing, the buoyant-music, from *Chansons* and *Schlager*, from female beauty. The dynamic of the revue film thus does not come from psychological depth or internal drama, but, on the contrary, from the superficial. It aims at a fascinating fleeting effect. The main plot of the film is only used to string the individual acts together with some logical consistency.⁹⁰⁸

More recently, the uniformity, rigidity, monotony, and lack of talent of the German productions of the time period, especially compared to their American models, have been discussed.⁹⁰⁹ The sustained popularity of the genre, however, begs for further study. I argue that Marika Röck's lavish revue films fulfilled important functions, not unlike melodramas, during the Third Reich, especially regarding issues of gender and

⁹⁰⁶ Wedel, *Der Deutsche Musikfilm*, 10.

⁹⁰⁷ For condemnations of the excessive use of *Schlager* see chapter 5 with numerous examples such as Frank Maraun, "Die typischen Fehler im Film: III. Stillbrüche am laufenden Band!" *Der deutsche Film*, December 1940, 99-100 and Ilse Deyk, "Kunst oder Konzession? Ein Notschrei aus dem Publikum," *Der deutsche Film*, April 1941, 196-197. See also R 109 I, 1745, Tagesordnung der Ufa, January 14, 1944. The most successful films for foreign markets were, among others, "große Musikfilme aller Art," as well as "die (Wiener) Operettenfilme."

⁹⁰⁸ "Review of *Broadway Melody of 1938*," *Film-Kurier*, April 12, 1938. Benno Brohl agreed but defended the revue film against accusation of futility by underlining its potential as persiflage in "Hat der Revuefilm einen Sinn?" *Film-Kurier*, August 25, 1938.

⁹⁰⁹ Helga Belach, *Wir Tanzen Um Die Welt: Deutsche Revuefilme 1933-1945* (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1979); Witte, "Visual Pleasure Inhibited."

sexuality.⁹¹⁰ A reading of her 1940 feature film *Kora Terry*, the melodramatic story of two opposite twin sisters Kora and Mara Terry, offers a good illustration of the fundamental dilemmas of National Socialism's engagement with sexuality and its cinematic representation, with the comments of the film press mirroring the tensions at play.

This chapter thus follows Elizabeth Heineman's call to write the history of sexuality in the Third Reich; it explores the National Socialist regime's well-known ambivalence about the "woman question" and sexuality through an examination of its cinematic treatments.⁹¹¹ After a quick survey of the regime's sexual ideologies and policies and a short introduction of the state of the film industry, through a close reading of the 1940 feature film *Kora Terry* – the melodramatic story of two opposite twin sisters Kora and Mara Terry – I investigate the fundamental dilemmas of National Socialism's engagement with sexuality and its representation. I argue that the production of such a film was made possible by the specificities of the German star system and the popularity of certain film genres, in this case the musical. This chapter highlights the complexities of cinematic productions and lays out the contradictions of Nazi culture in matters of sexuality. The film *Kora Terry* provides an example of how and why the Nazi regime sometimes seemingly disregarded its own official agenda, as well as illustrates the regime's unwillingness to enforce specific gender ideology. To explain how such a film could even be made, the second part of this paper focuses on the gendered audience and advocates for a more ambivalent reading of the film.

⁹¹⁰ For an analysis of melodramas during the Third Reich see O'Brien, *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment*, 160–205. See the seminal text of Mary Ann Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

⁹¹¹ Elizabeth D. Heineman, "Sexuality and Nazism: The Doubly Unspeakable?," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11, no. 1/2 (2002): 22–66.

National Socialist Gender Ideologies and Policies

As with many other areas of German life, recent scholarly works have demonstrated numerous paradoxes in Hitler's and the National Socialist party's relation to women.⁹¹² The party was based on the notion of a *Männerbund*, a male organization, whose low opinion of women, especially the Weimar New Woman, was always clear.⁹¹³ Hitler had early on denounced "women's emancipation" as "the product of Jewish intellect"; according to his statements, the movement was "stamped with that same spirit."⁹¹⁴ The roles and functions of men and women within the National Socialist state were clear and unquestionable; as Hitler stated, "The amount of valor a man deploys on the battlefield is matched by woman's eternal patient devotion, her eternal patient suffering [...]. Every child she brings into the world is a battle that she undergoes for the being or nonbeing of her people."⁹¹⁵ While men embodied power and assumed the leading position in society, women were expected to focus on the domestic sphere. A loudly publicized re-evaluation of their roles compensated many women for the loss of some of the political and social advances they had made during the Weimar Republic. After the turmoil of the post-war period and the failures of the new democratic system,

⁹¹² For a review of and "a reflection on significant and innovative current trends in the historiography on women and gender in the National Socialist era" see Adelheid von Saldern, "Innovative Trends in Women's and Gender Studies of the National Socialist Era.," *German History* 27, no. 1 (January 2009): 84–112.

⁹¹³ For a fascinating study of the *Freikorps*, who would later make up the majority of the SA, and their particular vision of women see Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

⁹¹⁴ Adolf Hitler, Speech to the NS-Frauenschaft, on 8. September 1934, reprinted in *Völkischer Beobachter*, September 9, 1934.

⁹¹⁵ Adolf Hitler at the Nuremberg Reichsparteitag 1934, quoted in Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 251.

the National Socialist party's promises to re-establish economic and social stability won many women's hearts and votes, turning them into faithful followers of the regime.⁹¹⁶

Part of the appeal was that women were granted certain levels of responsibility.⁹¹⁷ The Nazi party did not fail to notice the support it received from conservative bourgeois and mainstream German women groups. Largely anti-egalitarian and anti-liberal themselves, these women shared the party's traditional visions of gender, rooted in domestic ideology and heterosexism, as well as its platform of nationalism, colonialism and *völkisch* ideas, and to a certain extent its anti-Semitism. While not regarding them as "equal," the Nazi regime, in a typical pragmatic move, considered women to be "of the same value for the *Volksgemeinschaft*." It allowed a small elite of women to inhabit powerful positions in groups and organizations that dealt with women. Indeed, the state was very active and institutionalized its control of the female population. Membership in the League of German Girls (*Bund Deutscher Mädel* or the *BDM*) was made mandatory in 1936.⁹¹⁸ Girls were members of the *BDM* until the age of eighteen; adult women were incorporated in the *NS-Frauenschaft* (the National Socialist Women's League). When

⁹¹⁶ Julia Sneeringer, *Winning Women's Votes: Propaganda and Politics in Weimar Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

⁹¹⁷ Reviewing the *Historikerinnenstreit*, the German women's historians' debate of the early 1990s, Leck suggests thinking of a "matrix of empowerment" when attempting to explain the "hydra-headed appeal of Nazism" and women's support for the Nazi party and their roles during the Third Reich. Ralf M. Leck, "Conservative Empowerment and the Gender of Nazism: Paradigms of Power and Complicity in German Women's History," *Journal of Women's History*, 12, no. 2 (2000): 147–169. The heated *Historikerinnenstreit* was rooted in diametrically opposed claims about the role of women in Nazi society, alternatively seen as "victims of," or as "perpetrators within" the National Socialist regime. Gisela Bock's characterization of women in Nazi Germany as victims of a patriarchal ideology clashed with Claudia Koonz's approach, which illustrated their agency and complicity in Nazism. See the original texts Gisela Bock, "Antinatalism, Maternity and Paternity in National Socialist Racism," in *Maternity and Gender Policies. Women and the Rise of the European Welfare States, 1880s-1950*, ed. Gisela Bock and Pat Thane (London: Routledge, 1991); Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family, and Nazi Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987).

⁹¹⁸ The *BDM* had always been less successful than its male counter-part, the Hitler Youth, which had over two million members at the end of 1933. See Michael Kater, *Hitler Youth* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2004); Arno Klönne, *Jugend Im Dritten Reich: Die Hitlerjugend Und Ihre Gegner* (Köln: Papyrossa Verlagsgesellschaft, 2008).

they were not simply dismantled, all other political or union-like women's organizations or groups were grouped under the *Deutsches Frauenwerk* (the German Women's Organization), under the direction of the *NS-Frauenschaft*. Many women chose to dissolve the organizations they belonged to themselves and willingly accepted the *Gleichschaltung*, the process of coordination under the Nazi regime. Before 1939, the German Women's Organization and *NS-Frauenschaft* together counted 3.3 million members, a number that doubled by 1941. Every fifth "pure German" woman was therefore included in National Socialist women's organizations. Under the leadership of women, these state controlled organizations directly and indirectly helped stabilize the NS system, exposing their members to constant propaganda about their roles and duties in the new state.⁹¹⁹

One of the main goals of these organizations was to increase women's willingness to marry and reproduce; professional activities were strongly discouraged or even made impossible.⁹²⁰ In the early 1930s, access to university education was made increasingly difficult for women, school education was gender-separated again (a move away from the increased number of co-educational classrooms that had characterized the Weimar period), and girls were offered only those educational programs that prepared them for

⁹¹⁹ Norbert Westenrieder, "*Deutsche Frauen Und Mädchen!*" *Vom Alltagsleben 1933-1945* (Düsseldorf: Droster Verlag, 1984), 13.

⁹²⁰ Elizabeth D. Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make? Women and Marital Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

their future roles as mothers and (house-)wives.⁹²¹ For Hitler, a woman's "world was her husband, her family, her house."⁹²²

The NS agenda for women was limited to family and population measures.⁹²³ Laws were passed, for example, to lower the age of marriage or to facilitate divorce and simplify remarriage, all for the benefit of the *Volk*. In order to encourage women to stop working and get pregnant, young couples were granted marriage loans of one thousand *Reichsmarks*, with the loan forgiven by one third for each child born. However misogynist, many measures, such as the Cult of Motherhood, which culminated in the widely publicized Mother's Day, made a positive impression on women.⁹²⁴ Official and public recognition and acknowledgement of their usually underrated roles strengthened the confidence of many women, and many took pride in their "Cross of Honor of the German Mother," a pseudo-military decoration that rewarded mothers of many children. The enthusiasm for such awards evaporated gradually, however, and they ended up being called *Kaninchenorden* (the rabbit awards).⁹²⁵ The Janus face of this reassessment of women's roles can be seen in the regime's numerous repressive measures, such as the "Law for the Prevention of Hereditary Diseased Offspring" of July 14, 1933, and the

⁹²¹ Dagmar Reese, *Growing Up Female in Nazi Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006); Dagmar Reese, *Die BDM-Generation: Weibliche Jugendliche in Deutschland und Österreich im Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 2007); Jacques Pauwels, *Women, Nazis, and Universities: Female University Students in the Third Reich, 1933-1945* (Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984).

⁹²² Adolph Hitler, Speech to the NS-Frauenschaft on September 8, 1934, reprinted in *Völkischer Beobachter*, September 9, 1934.

⁹²³ Lisa Pine, *Nazi Family Policy, 1933-45* (New York: Berg, 1997); Wolfgang Voegeli, "Nazi Family Policy. Securing Mass Loyalty," *Journal of Family History* 28 (2003): 123-148.

⁹²⁴ An American "invention," Mother's day was celebrated in Germany since the 1920s. On Mother's Day in 1939, the Nazi regime "awarded some three million women the Cross of Honor of the German Mother." See Ute Frevert, *Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation* (New York: Berg, 1989).

⁹²⁵ A bronze cross for four children, silver for six and gold for eight children. About the relevance and importance of the status of married women in Germany see Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make?*.

“Nuremberg Laws” of 1935, which literally turned private matters into political ones and made a tremendous impact on the intimate sphere of women.⁹²⁶ For example, the Social Darwinist race theories of the National Socialist regime forbade marriage between "Aryans" and "Jews" as defined in the law, and instituted the forced sterilization of any citizen who suffered from alleged genetic disorders.⁹²⁷

Of course, reality in National Socialist Germany presented a stark contrast to the prevailing ideology (as can be seen in many other cases relating to the extent of realization of NS ideologies). By 1937, the number of employed women had risen to 6 million, from 4.2 million in 1933. The expansion of the German economy in the 1930s drew heavily on an uneducated, underpaid female workforce. The National Socialist regime tacitly accepted the fact that even the rate of employment outside the home among "cherished" married women rose from thirty-five to forty-one percent between 1933 and 1939.⁹²⁸ New opportunities opened up for women. Elizabeth Harvey has shown how thousands of women were more or less willingly active in the newly “gained” territories in the East.⁹²⁹ Women’s work moved quickly beyond traditional female occupations like nursing. From mid-1940 on, the German Army employed them in uniformed services, for example as telephone operators and air traffic controllers.⁹³⁰ From September 1942, the *Pflichtjahrmädel* (girls on their compulsory domestic service year) and the *Arbeitsmädchen* (girls on work duty) often not much older than sixteen-years-old, were used for

⁹²⁶ Margret Lück, *Die Frau Im Männer-Staat: Die Gesellschaftliche Stellung Der Frau Im Nationalsozialismus, Eine Analyse Aus Pädagogischer Sicht* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1979); Westenrieder, “*Deutsche Frauen Und Mädchen!*”.

⁹²⁷ Traudisch, *Mutterschaft Mit Zuckerguß?*.

⁹²⁸ Westenrieder, “*Deutsche Frauen Und Mädchen!*,” 71.

⁹²⁹ Elizabeth Harvey, *Women and the Nazi East: Agents and Witnesses of Germanization* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

⁹³⁰ Gerda Szepansky, “*Blitzmädel,*” “*Heldenumter,*” “*Kriegerwitwe*”: *Frauenleben Im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Fischer, 1995); Gordon Williamson, *World War II German Women’s Auxiliary Services* (Osprey Publishing, 2003).

potentially dangerous activities. They worked in teams to assist the anti-aircraft artillery (flak), directing light streams that were designed to pull enemy planes off course or lighting up the sky so that flak operators could shoot down enemy airplanes. Importantly, the women were not the ones shooting.

Sexuality and its Representations

If the attitude of the National Socialist state towards women seems rife with contradictions and ambiguities, the same, if not even more, can be said about questions of sensuality, sexuality, and eroticism. The excellent contributions to the 2002 special issue of *The Journal of the History of Sexuality* demonstrate how appeal to and repression of sexuality played conflicting, and so far mostly under-examined roles, in Third Reich Germany. Dagmar Herzog has shown how many scholars have taken the Nazis at their word as they “sanctimoniously claimed to be restoring law and order and returning marriage and family life to their proper dignity.”⁹³¹ She calls for a revision of the image of Nazism as a regime profoundly repressive and intensely preoccupied with sexual propriety rather than liberation.⁹³² Elizabeth Heineman has demonstrated how Nazis used sexuality to consolidate their ideological appeal, arguing persuasively that Nazi Germany was characterized by sexual opportunities as well as sexual repression.⁹³³ The other contributors of the issue each demonstrated the contradictions and, in many cases, the hypocrisy of the regime regarding, for example, prostitution (Julia Roos and Annette F.

⁹³¹ Sophinette Becker, “Zur Funktion Der Sexualität Im Nationalsozialismus,” *Zeitschrift Für Sexulforschung* 2 (2001): 130–146. See her comments about Stephan Maiwald and Gerd Mischler, *Sexualität Unter Dem Hakenkreuz: Manipulation Und Vernichtung Der Intimsphäre Im NS-Staat* (Wiesbaden: Europa Verlag, 1999); Georg Lachmann Mosse, *Nationalismus Und Sexualität: Bürgerliche Moral Und Sexuelle Normen* (München: Hansweert, 1985).

⁹³² Such a thesis, first advanced by George Mosse, continues to influence more recent works, which, once again, reinforce standard assumptions about the NS period as a world in which “eroticism as a sensibility was suppressed.” See for example Udo Pini, *Leibeskult Und Liebeskitsch Erotik Im Dritten Reich* (Munich: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1992).

⁹³³ Heineman, “Sexuality and Nazism: The Doubly Unspeakable?”.

Timm), homosexuality (Stefan Micheler and Geoffrey J. Giles), the relationship between Germans and foreigners (Birthe Kundrus), and sexual iconography (Terri J. Gordon).⁹³⁴

The National Socialist party was intervening in unprecedented ways in the private space of the body, which became a social site for the mapping of political ideals. But far from being consistent, the regime conducted contradictory sexual and family policies.⁹³⁵ Sophinette Becker has listed a number of such contradictions: idealization versus the destruction of family and marriage; intensified criminalization of prostitution versus state sponsorship of prostitution for the army, in concentration camps and for forced laborers; systematic exclusion of women from the workforce (and their reduction to their roles as housewives and mothers) versus exploitation of the workforce of women as *Arbeitskameradinnen* (working female colleagues), in the armament industry and later in all “male” jobs; persecution versus toleration of homosexuality depending on the circumstances; and propagation of moral purity and cleanliness versus the publication of pornography and insistent anti-prudery.⁹³⁶

These apparent inconsistencies were revealed not only in laws and regulations but even more prominently in cultural products.⁹³⁷ In his analysis of the contradictory messages in Nazi-era cultural productions, Torsten Reters concludes that the latter were neither incoherent nor hypocritical, but offered a vocabulary of options that were, more

⁹³⁴ The articles were reprinted in Dagmar Herzog, ed., *Sexuality and German Fascism* (New York: Berghahn, 2005).

⁹³⁵ Some of the contradictory policies were also subsumed under racial policies. For example, through the combined use of the incentives and repressive laws mentioned above, a pro-natalist campaign encouraged “healthy” Aryan women to bear and raise children, whereas an anti-natalist policy aimed at preventing the reproduction of the “undesirable.” See the seminal work of Bock, “Antinatalism, Maternity and Paternity in National Socialist Racism.” See also the excellent summary of the existing scholarship in Terri J. Gordon, “Fascism and the Female Form: Performance Art in the Third Reich,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11, no. 1 (2002): 164–200.

⁹³⁶ Becker, “Zur Funktion Der Sexualität Im Nationalsozialismus.”

⁹³⁷ See Terry Gordon’s analysis of dance in Gordon, “Fascism and the Female Form.”

often than not, guided by the regime.⁹³⁸ Examining the intersections of erotic desire, political responsibility, and use of media can thus help us understand the appeal of Nazism, creating an understanding with applications outside of the Nazi context. One of the most powerful mass media tools in the hands of the Nazis, the feature film, is a telling site to analyze the Nazi state's "maneuvering between repression, incitement and enticement."⁹³⁹

As shown in the introduction, the National Socialist regime gave itself legal, institutional, and economic infrastructures, in order to functionalize film as it did all the other media. Goebbels considered film one of the most effective propaganda tools, albeit one to be used carefully. He urged directors to avoid displaying National Socialist symbols and to rely instead on more subtle means of indoctrination, explaining, "as soon as propaganda becomes obvious, it is ineffective."⁹⁴⁰ Of course, Goebbels also actively promoted creation of crass propaganda films, especially anti-British and anti-Jewish ones.⁹⁴¹ But he was also aware that film fulfilled different functions. Stabilizing the home front was a priority and it was the regime's responsibility, during hard times, to provide the *Volk* with "relaxation and entertainment."⁹⁴² As Goebbels explained "[w]ar cannot be won without optimism; it is as important as cannons and weapons. [...] The darker our streets, the brighter our theaters and film theaters must be."⁹⁴³ Thus, in direct parallel to

⁹³⁸ Torsten Reters, *Liebe, Ehe Und Partnerwahl Zur Zeit Des Nationalsozialismus: Eine Soziologische Semantikanalyse* (Dortmund: Projekt, 1997).

⁹³⁹ Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Women*, 4.

⁹⁴⁰ Printed in Albrecht, *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik*, 49.

⁹⁴¹ David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema, 1933-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983); Gerhard Schoenberger, "Ideologie Und Propaganda Im NS-Film: Von Der Eroberung Der Studio Zur Manipulation Ihrer Produkte," in *Der Deutsche Film: Aspekte Seiner Geschichte Von Der Anfängen Bis Zur Gegenwart*, ed. Uli Jung (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 1993), 91–110.

⁹⁴² Josef Goebbels, *Kultur Leben im Krieg*, speech given on November 27, 1939. Printed in Albrecht, *Der Film Im Dritten Reich*, 67.

⁹⁴³ *Ibid.*

the worsening of the domestic German situation, Goebbels increased production of entertainment movies. He gave the German population enough entertainment to "hang on" (*durchhalten*). Historian Eric Rentschler has demonstrated the soothing effect of the entertainment industry on the German citizens and pointed to the importance of the time they spent in the movie theaters.⁹⁴⁴ In an interview for the 2003 documentary, *Der Feuersturm: Der Bombenkrieg gegen Nazi-Deutschland* (The Firestorm, Michael Kloft), Elizabeth Voigt remembers the devastation of the Allied bombings of 1944-1945. She also recalls what made her persevere: "[t]here were days when things were completely quiet. Then we could go to the movies. We then watched "*durchhalte*" movies. Marika Röck, *Die Frau meiner Träume* (The Woman of My Dreams, Jacoby, 1944), and other revue films that we could see at that time."⁹⁴⁵

With its wide-ranging control of the means of production and distribution, the National Socialist had indeed a powerful tool of propaganda. A series of "state projects" projected images of manipulative Jews and conniving British, suffering ethnic Germans saved by heroic German soldiers and happily singing and dancing with members of the new German Reich, as well as a gallery of German geniuses, from Schiller to Mozart. But when it came to representation of women and sexuality, the regime found itself struggling. It was caught between its need to promote definitions of political and sexual correctness, the party's design of appealing to sexual desire as a means of pursuing political purposes (something it did quite skillfully), and the requirement of satisfying audience expectations which was necessary if films were to continue to attract customers. While not inherently mutually exclusive – a number of films managed to satisfy all of

⁹⁴⁴ Rentschler, *The Ministry of Illusion*.

⁹⁴⁵ Elizabeth Voigt, in Michael Kloft, *Feuersturm - Der Bombenkrieg Gegen Nazi-Deutschland*, 2003.

them – these different goals were rooted in, and led to, many tensions. As seen above, the Nazis experienced many difficulties in their attempts to reconcile dilemmas created by the dissemination of propaganda messages that were antagonistic to women’s real life situation. In addition, themes of purity and sexuality channeled into the path of reproduction and motherhood, as propagated for example in the women’s magazine *NS-Frauenwarte*, coexisted with topics and images reminiscent of the much decried Weimar Period.⁹⁴⁶ Despite attempts to distance itself from and even eliminate references to Weimar cinematic productions, the regime was often willing or forced to compromise and to respond to the popularity of for example film stars and specific cinematic genres, such as the sound film operetta. Indeed, Third Reich Germany was caught between conflicted and ambiguous cinematographic messages about womanhood and sexuality, leaving perhaps more freedom for identification and visual pleasure than has been previously assumed.⁹⁴⁷

Consuming the Femme Fatale in Kora Terry

Kora Terry is a fitting illustration of the ambiguities, but also of the possibilities previously mentioned. A mix of lavish revue film and melodrama, the film features female star Marika Röck in one of her most famous roles.⁹⁴⁸ It tells the story of the dancers and twin sisters, Kora and Mara Terry, both played by Röck. The blonde, Mara, represents the “good woman”: always honest and loving, self-sacrificing, and assuming,

⁹⁴⁶ A telling example can be found in the March 1938 edition of *NS-Frauenwarte* with an article juxtaposing images of female revue dancers, cabaret and glasses of champagne with sportive, healthy, Aryan looking women. The caption read for the first set of images “You think: Charming and fun? We think: dirty and convulsive,” and for the second set “You think boring? We think: healthy and beautiful.” See a reprint and translation of the article in Ascheid, *Hitler’s Heroines*, 1–2.

⁹⁴⁷ For an excellent discussion of term identification with film stars and a revision of the idea of visual pleasure see Stacey, *Star Gazing*.

⁹⁴⁸ Belach, *Wir Tanzen Um Die Welt*. For a definition of the term “revue film,” most akin to American musical film, and its fundamental differences with the latter, see Witte, “Visual Pleasure Inhibited.”

for example, the role of surrogate mother to her sister's daughter, Illona, who was conceived and born out of wedlock and abandoned in a boarding school. The dark-haired Kora, on the other hand, is represented as the "evil twin," echoing Weimar trope of nefarious "doubles."⁹⁴⁹ We see the sisters first performing an acrobatic dance routine at the Odeon Music Hall.⁹⁵⁰ As a result of Kora's carelessness, Mara falls and breaks her ankle. She is confined to bed for a few weeks, and, in her absence, Kora seduces Michael Varany, the sweetheart of her injured sister. She manipulates him and his talent as a songwriter to achieve great success as a solo artist, before leaving him, out of boredom. Varany turns to alcohol but after a conversation with Mara, finds renewed motivation to pursue his artistic ambition. Out of financial need, Mara follows her sister to North Africa, where the latter pursues a lucrative career. After having gambled away all of her money in addition to that of her sister, Kora engages in espionage and is ready to sell to the spy Vopescu important strategic papers she had once stolen from a former lover. Mara discovers her sister's intention and accidentally kills her. Tobias, a family friend who accompanies them and witnesses the accident, persuades Mara to masquerade and perform as Kora in order to be able to continue to take care of Illona. Tobias takes the blame for Kora's death, which the charade disguises officially as Mara's. Mara travels to the United States, where she finds great success as a talented and, in contrast to her sister, serious performer. After learning of "Kora's/Mara" tour, Vopescu blackmails Mara when she returns to Germany. She is arrested and the case eventually ends up in court, where

⁹⁴⁹ As seen, for example, in films such as *Student from Prague*, *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, and for a female double, *Metropolis*. On the construction of female as criminal and double see Barbara Hales, "Projecting Trauma: The Femme Fatale in Weimar and Hollywood Film Noir," *Women in German Yearbook: Feminist Studies in German Literature & Culture* 23 (2007): 224–243; Thomas Elsaesser, *Weimar Cinema and After: Germany's Historical Imaginary* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

⁹⁵⁰ For a concise summary of the film see Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, 125.

X-rays showing her previously broken ankle reveal Mara's true identity.⁹⁵¹ Her identity restored, Mara explains everything to Varany and they finally become a couple.

The few existing analyses of the movie delineate the obvious, often heavy-handed dichotomy of characterization of the sisters through their behavior or clothing.⁹⁵² Mara is tolerant and reasonable, an unassuming, loving, and vulnerable woman. She is sensitive, polite, faithful to the homeland, and self-sacrificing. Kora, on the other hand, is the epitome of the "bad" woman. Choosing her career over her child, she gambles, smokes, and indulges in alcohol.⁹⁵³

Her most distinctive characteristic is her ostentatious sexuality. She flirts, has affairs with several men over the course of the film, and uses her sexuality to get what she wants. In the scene where we first see them, the sisters are rehearsing and practicing. Their characters are established from the outset. Kora tells her sister, "higher, raise the leg higher, that's the way to sell a show." She prides herself on the fact that men buy the most expensive seats to be able to see *her*. We see her smoking and drinking and wearing revealing clothes in comparison to her sister, who is modestly dressed. After Mara's accident, for which Kora shows no sympathy, Kora seduces Mara's love interest, Varany, in a scene that best illustrates Kora's flirtatious manner. Notable is the way in which Kora challenges Varany's masculinity, leading the rehearsal (as she is now performing the number alone), dominating the discussion, and forcing him to kiss her. This and later success present her as being very self-confident, but she also comes across as a greedy

⁹⁵¹ The use of X-Ray to solve the plot is one of numerous cases where German technological inventions are drawn to the forefront of attention in the film.

⁹⁵² Traudisch, *Mutterschaft Mit Zuckerguß?*, 131–150; Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, 124–132; Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Women*, 91–96.

⁹⁵³ A staple of the 1920s iconography, images of smoking women disappeared in the Third Reich, as a reaction to Weimar and probably Hitler's anti-tobacco efforts.

and self-obsessed opportunist. Editing techniques emphasize the contrast with her sister Mara, who is lying next door with her broken ankle and can hear the rehearsal. This scene also introduces a theme song Varany has composed, which plays a role later as Kora appropriates it and turns it into her own, making it more dynamic, sexy, and ultimately successful.

Kora is thus blatantly sexual and sensual, and as one female character puts “a bit dangerous, isn't that so?” She is depicted as seductive and destructive. Throughout the film, she uses men as she pleases and corrupts them in all possible ways, from bringing the German athletes she encounters in North Africa to smoke cigarettes to causing a former lover’s suicide. She hires Varany as her personal composer, inciting him to quit his job and abandon his other commitments. Eventually, of course, she gets bored and leaves him. In despair, Varany turns to alcohol, until, with Mara’s advice and support, he recovers, works hard, and becomes an internationally renowned classical violinist.

Her corrupting character is made even more obvious when the trio arrives in North Africa.⁹⁵⁴ The contrasting routines of the sisters in this segment of the film further enhance our perception of their divergent characters. Mara, in addition to her job as a paid dancer for passengers, also has an act in which she sings sentimental songs. She is obviously uncomfortable in this setting, and a group of Arab spectators laughs her off the stage. A group of German athletes encourages her and later rescues her from the unwanted attentions of a drunken guest. In contrast, Kora feels at ease in this decadent environment. She spends a great deal of time at the gambling table, losing, always

⁹⁵⁴ Note how the second third of the movie is located in “uncivilized Africa” with its reputation of sexual licentiousness.

dressed voluptuously and provocatively. In one scene, she wears large pieces of jewelry decorated with snakes, one of them wrapped around her arm (Figure 6.2).



Figure 6.2: Kora Terry at the gambling table, smoking, dressed in alluring attire.
Horst von Harbou - Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek

Earlier in the film, Kora had been associated with the snake and its symbolically sinful nature. In the very first dancing scene, both sisters perform a song, each singing a different verse. Here the sisters are characterized verbally, with Kora's lines indicated in italics:

"I Give Everything for a Night Full of Bliss
Music: Peter Kreuder, Text: Günther Schwenn

But I give my heart only
When I am in the mood!
I love to listen to

Every word full of tenderness
I quickly start to kiss
When I am in the mood!
I wish I would be happy too
Until the next morning, 8 am
Some like the sunshine
And I like the night

When God created the world and paradise
The woman had a good reputation,
Her name was Eve
But then the snake found its way into the Holy Land
She caused the Fall and became interesting

I give everything for a night full of bliss...

This song is a less than subtle reference to the story of the Garden of Eden, with Eve being beguiled by the snake, while Kora is willingly letting herself be seduced, or even doing the seducing. A live snake plays an important role in the longest scene of the movie, described earlier, which can be regarded as its climax. Kora performs a lavish and extravagant show in which she emphasizes her sexuality by dancing with the snake. Part of the dance is conducted in extreme proximity to the male audience, enticing its members. Obviously, this scene has nothing to do with the de-sexualization of women proclaimed by National Socialist ideologues. *Kora Terry*, then, with its numerous juxtapositions of binary depictions of women in the characters of Mara and Kora, exemplifies the ambiguities mentioned earlier.

Of course, Kora's behavior, like Eve's, has to be punished. In a typical cinematic move, the "bad woman" dies and the "good one" gets the male lead, a reward at the end not only for her virtue but also for her endurance of such calumny at the hands of her sister, to whom she remains loyal for an improbably long time. The matter that finally makes Mara react, abandon her previous loyalty, and shoot at her sister, is Kora's

betrayal of the Fatherland. She had been gambling and is now heavily indebted and is willing to sell the important papers she stole to unidentified Middle Eastern agents.⁹⁵⁵ We see here how nationalist feelings justify attempted murder. Of course, Mara does not kill her sister directly. Advertisements were pressed to emphasize that Mara hits her sister's leg and Kora falls down a staircase and subsequently dies from the fall.⁹⁵⁶ Turning the “good” character into a cold-blooded murderer would have compromised her portrayal as the heroine.

But the conventional reading of the movie with “bad woman dies, good woman wins at the end” needs to be pushed a little further, if one wants to explain the feasibility and the success of the film. Looking at *Kora Terry*, I emphasize the importance of not only Röck as an established film star of the Third Reich cinema who could carry such film, but also of the specific genre of the revue film, where such exotic and extravagant plot was possible. I then look at issues of reception and audience to explore potential readings of the film. With the female audience in mind, I read *Kora Terry* as a *femme fatale*, but a peculiar one, slightly different than the one typically found in American film noir, and argue for the “possibility of oppositional readings.”⁹⁵⁷

The making of this and Röck's other films, which often crossed the lines of the official doctrine, is partly rooted in the successful on- and off-screen persona and popularity of the actress.⁹⁵⁸ Stephen Lowry, Andrea Winkler-Mayerhöfer, and more

⁹⁵⁵ The fact that the spies and agents are not identified is part the National Socialist trope of the enemies, many of them not clearly identified, who prey on Germany.

⁹⁵⁶ “Not the bullet, but the fall is what killed her and prevented her from causing even bigger calamity [...]” IFK 3136, *Kora Terry*, cited in Traudisch, *Mutterschaft Mit Zuckerguß?*, 146.

⁹⁵⁷ Stephen Lowry, “Ideology and Excess in Nazi Melodrama: The Golden City,” *New German Critique*, no. 74 (Spring-Summer 1998): 132.

⁹⁵⁸ Robert Müller, “Temperament Und Tempo: Marika Röck Und Der Deutsche Revuefilm,” in *Idole Des Deutschen Films: Eine Galerie Von Schlüsselfiguren*, ed. Thomas Koebner (München: edition text + kritik, 1997), 293–303.

recently Jana Bruns have aptly demonstrated the functioning and the use by the National Socialist regime of an elaborate star system already in place in 1933, a system that worked together with the press and music industry to market its stars.⁹⁵⁹ Jana Bruns has traced in detail Röck's "bumpy rise to prominence," from her mediocre debut to her uncontested status as the queen of the revue film.⁹⁶⁰ While her rapid rise in the German film industry had much to do with the dearth of film artists after the National Socialist purges, Röck worked tirelessly to compensate for her weaknesses and establish herself as a favorite of the movie audience.⁹⁶¹ The press regularly commented upon this, as it fit well with the German and National Socialist ethos of hard work and helped differentiate Röck from the typical image of the superficial star. An article about the shooting of *Kora Terry* in *Film-Kurier*, June 10, 1940, spoke of her "often vaunted work discipline," and Dr. Wanderschek, reviewing her next film, *Women are Better Diplomats*, described how she had "worked with energy on her talent," and how "her voice, which lacks none of the vitality of her legs, has a radiance and a cultivated buoyancy." Especially emphasized was her energy and quality as an "all-arounder" performer; as Ufa points out "Once again, she pulls out of the stops of her large and versatile set of skills."⁹⁶² Reviewing the 1938 *Eine Nacht im Mai*, (One Night in May, Georg Jacoby, 1938) *Filmwelt* exclaimed

⁹⁵⁹ Winkler-Mayerhöfer, *Starkult Als Propagandamittel?*; Stephen Lowry, "Das Star-System Im Kino Des 'Dritten Reiches': Überlegungen Zur Modernität Des NS-Kinos Am Beispiel Von Heinrich George Und Heinz Rühmann," in *Reflexe Und Reflexionen Von Modernität, 1933-1945*, ed. Erhard Schütz and Gregor Streim (Bern: Peter Lang, 2002), 193–208; Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Women*. For a study of American star system see Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*, 2nd.; Dyer, *Stars*; Gledhill, *Stardom*.

⁹⁶⁰ In addition, Jana Bruns provides a detailed account of the advertisement and publicity efforts around Zarah Leander and Kristina Söderbaum. Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Women*. Here, 66.

⁹⁶¹ Historians have been much more critical of Röck, a circus artist turned actress, bemoaning her lack of talent. See especially Karsten Witte: "Granted, Marika Röck can ride, shoot, swim, do gymnastics and sing; but mere addition of athletic disciplines scarcely amounts to mastery of the medium *métier*, which requires nuancing or, to put it more bluntly: discrimination in the employment of means." Witte, "Visual Pleasure Inhibited," 246.

⁹⁶² Werbematerial für den Film *Und du mein Schatz fährt mit* (Georg Jacoby, 1935).

“Golly! She can really do all kinds of things! She tap-dances, she sings, she dances, she plays!”⁹⁶³ In the popular film magazine, *Filmwelt*, Dr. Günther Sawatzski describes her as able to

unleash a smile in the dance... the bobbing, shaking, pattering, stomping rhythm and swinging is immediately infectious. Marika can do everything. Whether she is under the big top, or performing somersaults on horseback; boisterous and fearless, she romps around. [...] When she dances, no one can forget her; the pouty, supple, tender and playful [girl] who always arouses our sympathy with the little glimmer of sadness in her eyes.⁹⁶⁴

In addition to her energy and hard work, Röck was best suited for the double roles of Kora and Mara, as her own on and off screen persona was constructed as a an exotic “zesty, passionate Hungarian girl,” combined with the image of a “regular” woman, sharing, for example, her favorite goulash recipe.⁹⁶⁵

By 1939, Ufa’s years of efforts and investments in Marika Röck, featuring her, for example, already five times on the cover of the popular magazine *Filmwelt*, in addition to twenty other articles since 1934, seemed to finally bare results.⁹⁶⁶ After a recent series of box office successes, Röck had been chosen for the high-profile project *Frauen are bessere Diplomaten* (Women Are Better Diplomats, Georg Jacoby, 1941) the first German color film. This highly publicized film put her at the top of the German star

⁹⁶³ Hans Erasmus Fischer, “Filme, die wir sahen: “Eine Nacht im Mai,” *Filmwelt*, no. 43 (October 1938).

⁹⁶⁴ Dr. Günther Sawatzski, “Grazie, Rythmus Paprika! Tänzerinnen der Leinwand,” *Filmwelt*, no. 3 (January 1940). See also Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, 124.

⁹⁶⁵ Ufa advertising brochure (*Werberatschlag*) for *Hot Blood* (Ufa-Werbedienst/Scherl Druck, 1936) and “Unsere wöchentliches Interview,” *Filmwoche*, no. 49 (December 1939). Both cited in Bruns, *Nazi Cinema’s New Women*, 59, footnote 17, and 69, footnote 58.

⁹⁶⁶ Her popularity translated into ever increasing wages. While in 1939, she was earning thirty thousand RM per film, her salary had doubled by 1944 with ninety-six thousand RM per film, or eight thousand per month, putting her in the same “group one” as Kristina Söderbaum and Paula Wessely. See BA R56 VI / 5, RFI Hinkel to Goebbels. New Fees Listing 1944, November 10, 1944. The biggest female actress, Zarah Leander, who earned up to 150,000 RM in 1939, had left Germany to return to her native Sweden in November 1942. See also *Ibid.*, 90, footnote 125.

system and illustrated her “star power.” While the film was in postproduction, Ufa started her next project, *Kora Terry*.

In addition to the popularity of its main star, *Kora Terry* could also be made because it was part of the very genre Röck became associated with, the very popular revue film. Indeed, *Kora Terry*’s exotic and extravagant plot, which mixes melodrama with singing and dancing numbers, could only take place within the specific genre of the revue film. Revue films were not only part of a German cinematic tradition, they increasingly fulfilled a vital role during the Third Reich: entertainment. As seen earlier, feature films played an important role in stabilizing the regime. Film companies and the regime alike were willing and eager to fashion products that would please the audience, even if they sometimes led to tensions with official ideology. The need to satisfy the audience’s desire for this particular genre was pressing after Goebbels ordered the withdrawal of American productions in 1940, many of which had been musicals.⁹⁶⁷ Eager to use film as an effective propaganda tool, Goebbels was torn between his demand for “more manly and heroic films,” and the fact that there was in 1940 a “high in demand for cheerful materials.”⁹⁶⁸ By 1941, this demand had turned into “a very strong need for pure entertainment,”⁹⁶⁹ and, in 1942, Goebbels notes in his diaries that, “good mood is an

⁹⁶⁷ Goebbels used the pretext of *Confession of a Nazi Spy* (Anatole Litvak, 1939) to ban the import of American productions, leading to an unchallenged domination of German films, something Goebbels rejoiced about many times in his diaries. See also Ernst Offermanns, *Internationalität Und Europäischer Hegemonialanspruch Des Spielfilms Der NS-Zeit* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovac, 2001); Roel Vande Winkel and David Welch, eds., *Cinema and the Swastika. The International Expansion of Third Reich Cinema*, First ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

⁹⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁹ Goebbels’ diaries, April 23, 1940, February 17, 1940, and December 30, 1941. While he was a proponent of “Großfilmen,” Goebbels defended comedies such as Rühmann’s *Der Gasmann*, against for example Heß: “Heß calls. He has a few objections against *Gasmann*. Complete lack of humor. Best thing is to put ourselves in a straitjacket and lock ourselves in jail/mental institution.” (February, 18, 1941). On the other hand, Goebbels was reluctant to distribute the “excellent” film *Annelie*, because of its few “scenes that are too pessimistic. We cannot use such films for the coming fall and winter.” (July 21, 1941). See also his comments about the film *Leichte Muse* on September 7, 1941: “[the film] is especially welcome as

article of war. In some circumstances, is it not only strategic but also decisive for the war (*kriegsentscheidend*).”⁹⁷⁰

Carried by the popular Rökk, *Kora Terry* offered period audiences a great mix of melodrama and musical theatre. While its exotic settings, dances, and costumes provided the much-desired entertainment, its blatant eroticism is still unusual. While he, for example, scolded the “priggish” comments about the film *Wenn wir alle Engel wären*, (If We All Were Angels, Carl Froelich, 1937) Goebbels is known to have ordered cut for scenes judged “too obscene /salacious.”⁹⁷¹ Film directors themselves were aware of the, often unspoken, limits in matters of representation of sexuality. Asked if he was interested in a film project about a brothel, director Victor Tourjansky answered that it was a great story, one that could become a good French film, but that it “would not get approval here in Germany.”⁹⁷² Goebbels and the censorship apparatus he put in place were well aware of *Kora Terry*’s “possibilities for healthy stimulating effect,”⁹⁷³ and that they utilized its “unabashed decadence, outlandishness, and eroticism” to satisfy and pacify the audience.⁹⁷⁴ In a speech given on November 27, 1939, Goebbels had declared “the first and most important duty of the German artist is to bring entertainment and recreation to our soldiers.”⁹⁷⁵ *Kora Terry* was certainly promoted to appeal to its male audience, as can be seen in the advertisement used: “In the Hotel Ambassador in Algiers,

entertainment for the next winter. We have to strive for this and the next winter to do everything possible to keep the *Volk* in good spirit. No pessimistic, gray or desperate mood is allowed this winter. For that, film and radio are our best tools.”

⁹⁷⁰ Goebbels’ diaries, February 27, 1942.

⁹⁷¹ ZSg. 101/8/243-247, October 17, 1936. See also “Frau nach Maß. Eine netter Unterhaltung aber etwas zu obszön. Ich lasse die anrächtigen Stellen herauschneiden,” in Goebbels’ diaries, February 11, 1940.

⁹⁷² BA, R 109 I/1076, Protokoll der dramaturgischen Besprechung. Protokoll über eine Bepreschung mit Herrn Viktor von Tourjansky, January 6, 1942.

⁹⁷³ Günther Schwark, “Kora Terry,” *Film-Kurier*, November 30, 1940.

⁹⁷⁴ Bruns, *Nazi Cinema’s New Women*, 93.

⁹⁷⁵ Printed in Albrecht, *Der Film Im Dritten Reich*, 67.

between palms, mosques, Turks and questionable figures from all over the world, Kora stands in the center of a colorful, hedonistic life. Her oriental dance fascinates the men's world [...]"⁹⁷⁶ Indeed, the cobra dance scene in particular triggered numerous reactions from commentators, all of them male. H.O.F. noted in *Filmwelt* that, "Kora Terry does a wild and thrilling dance with a cobra wrapped around her bare neck; for a few moments the spectators' hearts beat faster. But at the end of the dance she herself has a luminous, slightly entrancing smile on her face."⁹⁷⁷ What made hearts beat faster was not only the fear associated with the cobra, but Röck's negligee, ubiquitous in advertisements. Posters and ads for the film depicted her in her "exotic" outfit, lifting up her leg in just the way she had instructed her sister to do; that was the way to sell a number (Figure 6. 3).⁹⁷⁸ The recipe seemed to have worked as the film was a domestic and an international success, from Paris, Athens, Zurich, Sophia, Brussels, Copenhagen, Budapest, and even Tokyo.⁹⁷⁹

⁹⁷⁶ IFK 3156. Cited in Traudisch, *Mutterschaft Mit Zuckerguß?*, 138.

⁹⁷⁷ H.O.F., "Rhythmus und Rausch des Tanzes," *Filmwelt*, no. 49 (December 1940): 12-13.

⁹⁷⁸ Advertisement for *Kora Terry*, *Film-Kurier*, December 21, 1940.

⁹⁷⁹ See the numerous reports in *Film-Kurier* on June 10, 1941, May 21, 1941, March 6, 1941. For exports in Tokyo and Greece see Ufa boards meeting protocols, January 2 and November 27, 1941, in BA, R 109 I/1034a (Ufa), No. 1140/8, 78, and 1034b, No. 1447/6, 30. All cited in Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Women*, 96, footnote 144. Scholars like Lutz Koepnick have pointed to the fact that the Nazi film industry "manufactured genre films whose plots and styles were often meant to speak to audiences abroad as much as to domestic viewers." See Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror*, 74. On the effort to control foreign market see op. cited, footnote 74.

MARIKA RÖKK



2.

KORA TERRY

Ein Ufa-Film mit
**Josef Sieber, Will Quadflieg, Will Dohm, Florkina von Platen
 Herbert Hübner, Hans Leibelt, Ursula Herking, Franz Schafheitlin
 Friedel Haerlin, Maria Koppert-Höller, Lotte Spira, Paul Blüth, Rudolf Carl, A. Engelmann
 Erich Fiedler, Karl John, Ingolf Kuntze, Theodor Loos, H. v. Meyendorff
 Leo Paukert, Hans Slesbner, Heinrich Schrath u. a.**

Drehbuch: Walter Wassermann und C. H. Dittler, nach dem gleichnamigen Roman von H. C. von Zebalitz
 Lieder: Peter Kreuder / Illustrationen: Frank Fox / Kostüme: G. Schwann / Bild: E. Irwin / Ober-
 Bau: Erik Schmidt / Ton: Walter Kühn / Anzeiger: Herbert Pöbinger und Max / Nachdru-
 cken: Sabine Hoff / Regie-Assistenz und Schnitt: Erik Kabler / Aufnahmestelle: Wiener Eisenbahn
HERSTELLUNGSGRUPPE: MAX PFEIFFER
SPIELLEITUNG: GEORG JACOBY
Kriegfilm-Gesellschaft / Alita-Verlag

... ein Film mit Tempo, Spannung und sprühenden Farben! ... Marika Röck ... sie ist unbestritten die beste Tanzakrobatin im deutschen Film ... Ein Rausch der Farben und Töne — ein pulsierend bunter, spannender Film.
Berliner Nachtausgabe

... so hat Marika Röck groß gesiegt, nachdem sie wieder virtuos all das zeigen konnte, was ihr an universellem Artistenkünstlertum erstaunlich zur Verfügung steht.
BZ am Mittag

Marika Röck ... eine Freude, sie zu sehen! Ihr galt in erster Linie der stürmische Beifall am Schluß ... Lob für alle! „Kora Terry“ aber wird zweifellos die Kinobesucher betören!
Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger

Es gab rauschenden Beifall am Schluß, und viele Vorhänge für die dankenden Künstler.
Film-Kurier

Der Beifall war sehr groß und steigerte sich beim Erscheinen der Hauptdarsteller zu herzlichen Ovationen.
Berliner Morgenpost

Fast zwei Stunden wird das Publikum durch ein an abenteuerlichen Spannungen reiches Geschehen in Atem gehalten.
Spandauer Zeitung

Revue- und Tanzszenen von überraschender Phantasie, wohl die gelungensten, die je ein deutscher Film zu bieten hatte.
Dresdner Nachrichten

Figure 6.3: Advertisement for the film *Kora Terry*, in *Film-Kurier*, December 21, 1940.

Thus *Kora Terry* is a good example of how sexual iconography was used in the Third Reich for economic and especially for political purposes. In addition to entertaining the audience, seemingly “apolitical” films such as comedies, melodramas or revue films were still conveying specific ideologies, such as extolling patriotism and hard work or reaffirming certain gender roles and expectations.

Looking at cabaret revues, expressionist dances, revue and propaganda films such as Riefenstahl’s *Olympia*, Terri Gordon has skillfully demonstrated how “the redeployment of sexuality in Nazi Germany often had domestic and political resonance, reinforcing the role of woman as natural wife and mother and rechanneling female sexuality into the service of the state.”⁹⁸⁰ The ultimate death of the “bad” woman and the marital reunion of her “good” sister seem to fit into the trope of punishment and domesticization of women.⁹⁸¹ Mary-Elizabeth O’Brien has rightfully analyzed the death of the female character in National Socialist film productions, such as Söderbaum’s in *Opfergang* (The Great Sacrifice, Veit Harlan, 1941) as engaging in “a discourse about masculinity centered on territorial domination and about femininity which rewards sacrifices, self-effacement, and service while punishing mobility, self-interest, and passion with death.”⁹⁸² While such conclusions are certainly valid, other scholars have offered competing readings of German films, pointing to the polysemy of the film text, especially in connection with specific stars and genre.⁹⁸³ *Kora Terry*, with its ambiguous

⁹⁸⁰ Gordon, “Fascism and the Female Form,” 166.

⁹⁸¹ Lutz Koepnick makes a similar argument, criticizing revisionist scholars and their narratives of resistance, subversion and irony in Zarah Leander’s films. Koepnick, “Engendering Mass Culture: Zarah Leander and the Economy of Desire.”

⁹⁸² See Mary-Elizabeth O’Brien, “Male Conquest of the Female Continent in Veit Harlan’s ‘Opfergang’ (1944),” *Monatshefte* 87, no. 4 (1995): 431–445.

⁹⁸³ Lowry, “Ideology and Excess in Nazi Melodrama,” 147; John E. Davidson, “Cleavage: Sex in the Total Cinema of the Third Reich,” *New German Critique*, no. 98 (2006): 101–133.

depiction of women, offers “the possibility of oppositional readings”⁹⁸⁴ for the viewers, which as Jo Fox has shown, film companies and the regime considered to be predominantly female.⁹⁸⁵

While female audience most certainly enjoyed the exotic settings, dazzling dances and even the eroticism of the film, the character of Kora as a *femme fatale* presents the female audience with potential alternative readings.⁹⁸⁶ Indeed, the figure of Kora Terry shares many similarities with the “typical” character of the *femme fatale* found in film noir.⁹⁸⁷ In the scenes mentioned earlier, she is sexy and manipulative. Günther Schwark even calls her “an über vamp, next to whom Marlene Dietrich would look pale.”⁹⁸⁸ She is a powerful woman, in control, making decisions, a philosophy summarized in one of her songs, “Why should I be faithful, or shy, like a doe, when I really love to do wicked things.” She is self-centered and acts only for her own good. She endangers male characters, even causing the death of one, and logically, at the end she is punished with death. Although the film itself cannot be labeled a film noir, it does share some cinematographic features with the genre that would become so prominent in the course of the 1940s, such as the use of *chiaroscuro* lighting and lighting symbolic of the big city, such as neon lights. In addition, despite her fatal end, Kora could arguably be

⁹⁸⁴ Lowry, “Ideology and Excess in Nazi Melodrama,” 131. See the seminal work of Stuart Hall on mass media, especially television in Stuart Hall, “Encoding/Decoding,” in *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-1979*, ed. University of Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (London: Hutchison, 1980), 128-138.

⁹⁸⁵ See the excellent analysis of the regime view of the female audience in Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, 10–16.

⁹⁸⁶ For scholarship of how female spectator can identify and draw pleasure from the powerful *femme fatale* in cinema, even when these are killed in the end, see, among others, Janey Place, “Women in Film Noir,” in *Women in Film Noir* (London: British Film Institute, 1998), 47–68. On *femme fatale* in film noir see also Julie Grossman, “Film Noir’s ‘Femme Fatales’ Hard-Boiled Women: Moving Beyond Gender Fantasies,” *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 24, no. 1 (2007): 19; Hales, “Projecting Trauma”; E. Ann Kaplan, ed., *Women in Film Noir*, Rev. and expanded ed. (London: British Film Institute, 1998).

⁹⁸⁷ James Naremore, *More Than Night: Film Noir in Its Contexts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

⁹⁸⁸ Günther Schwark, “Kora Terry,” *Film-Kurier*, November 31, 1940.

considered the main character of the movie. The title is indeed *Kora Terry*, and not *Mara Terry*. It is Kora, the strong, sexy, independent, and, at least for a while, successful character, who potentially offers positive identification for the female audience.

Rökk's character(s) provided women viewers with a strong female character, allowing for identification. The film displays a total absence of strong masculine characters. Varany appears as a largely effeminate artist, with a history of having been victimized by manipulative women. His eventual success as a classical violinist barely compensates for his weakness. The other male character, Tobias, is constantly shown doing feminine chores such as ironing, sewing, folding and packing clothes, packing, cooking, and nursing Mara. Even the team of German gymnasts are, as Karsten Witte points, "under the command of a woman general [...] with the stern irascibility of Prussia's Frederick the Great."⁹⁸⁹ Contrasted with these male characters, Kora appears even more in control and in a position of power.

In addition, in contrast to the usual treatment of *femmes fatales* and their ultimate deaths, the story of Kora does not end with her death. While for Jo Fox "the conclusion to the film ensures that Kora's memory is eradicated," I argue that Kora very much continued to "exist."⁹⁹⁰ Her public persona and her name become unbearably omnipresent for Mara. In an emotional scene, the blinking light of a giant neon sign with "her" name, "Kora," brings Mara to the edge of a nervous breakdown.⁹⁹¹ Thus, the character of Kora – not only one of the people of the film, Kora as Mara's sister, but also her attributes, features and personality – is consumed, in the sense of being eaten, digested, and

⁹⁸⁹ Witte, "Visual Pleasure Inhibited," 240.

⁹⁹⁰ Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, 120.

⁹⁹¹ Here again this image echoes one of the archetypal film noirs, *Murder, My Sweet* (Edward Dmytryk, 1944), with neon signs lighting up Dick Powell's office.

incorporated. Mara consumes and incorporates parts of Kora before she finally achieves her own destiny and her own success, reminiscent of the way snakes swallow and digest their prey.

This process becomes evident in two further scenes. The first features a rendition by Mara, under the name of Kora, of the song composed by Varany, which Kora turned into a success. It is a very sentimental version of it, close to the original. Mara expresses loneliness and heartache. She is surrounded on stage by happy couples, all engaged in romantic activities, holding hands and kissing, as she wanders across the stage, extremely lonely. After the identity mix-up has been resolved and Mara can assume her own name and identity, she finds herself back on stage in the final scene of the film. She sings the same song again, but with a very different twist. Her rendition of the song and her dance number are stunningly similar to Kora's. In fact it *is* Kora's version of the song, with Mara radiating an energy, a vitality, and a sensuality more reminiscent of her sister's than her own in the previous scenes. In this scene, incorporating, assimilating some of the features of the "bad woman," such as the sensuality and energy described above, turns out to be profitable and is rewarded. After all, it is only the new Mara, who has consumed some of Kora's personality, whom we see kissing Varany.

While the Ufa itself recommended using slogans such as "Twice Marika Röck - as a little beast and a loving woman,"⁹⁹² Goebbels famously detested double roles or roles of twins, like Kora and Mara, officially because he found such plot device too "kitschy."⁹⁹³ Used in *Kora Terry*, such double roles simultaneously push the message and

⁹⁹² Advertisement material for *Kora Terry*, in *Akte Kora Terry*, DIF. Cited in Traudisch, *Mutterschaft Mit Zuckerguß?*, 134.

⁹⁹³ Ilse Whener in *Der deutsche Film* agreed and wished that double roles would completely disappear because "they are often only technical gimmick without any deeper meaning and they force the film that is

allow the message to be challenged. As Jana Bruns explains, “by demonstrating the performativity, and thus, the fluid and changeable nature of gender roles, Rökk [...] contested National Socialist’s essentialist view of womanhood.”⁹⁹⁴ The film presented two possible versions of a woman, one of them antithetical to the regime’s prescription of a woman’s role and duty in society. In addition, we see a “good” woman playing a “bad” one convincingly. This very possibility, and, even worse, its opposite (a bad woman passing as good one), was a threatening scenario.⁹⁹⁵ The repeated reassurance by film reviewers that the film was just that, a film, is striking. Schwark commented in *Film-Kurier* on the “exaggerations” and “improbabilities,” and Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck talked about “a frantic revue film” that disregarded psychological motivations.⁹⁹⁶ Hans Erasmus Fischer pointed, in *Filmwelt*, to the “psychologically not always convincing story, the adventurous fate of two sisters, one fairylike good, the other terribly superficial.”⁹⁹⁷ One senses in these male reviewers, who were certainly not outspoken critics of the regime, a certain uneasiness regarding the implications of such bending of traditional gender roles.

It is not coincidental that such an ambiguous screening of womanhood and sexuality took place within the genre of the revue film, with Rökk as its star. I suggest

built upon them in a straightjacket, which does not suit the film very well and threaten to make it [the film] insane.” Ilse Wehner in *Der deutsche Film*, no. 6 (December 1940), 116. We know that Goebbels ordered substantial changes to the film, but the reasons are unknown and the second version he had made was never shown in public. The propaganda minister had a habit of ordering numerous changes in the final cuts of films, as often for propagandistic reasons as for the sake of dramaturgic consistency. See Lowry, “Ideology and Excess in Nazi Melodrama,” 138; O’Brien, “Male Conquest of the Female Continent in Veit Harlan’s ‘Opfergang’ (1944),” 439.

⁹⁹⁴ Bruns, *Nazi Cinema’s New Women*, 230.

⁹⁹⁵ See the parallel threat of Jews passing as non-Jews and the increasing measures taking by the National Socialist regime, from the prohibition of taking “German names” to the wearing of the yellow star.

⁹⁹⁶ Günther Schwark, “Kora Terry,” *Film-Kurier*, November 30, 1940; Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck, “Vom ewigen Juden zu Kora Terry,” *Film-Kurier*, December 02, 1940.

⁹⁹⁷ Hans Erasmus Fischer, “Filme, die wir sahen: Kora Terry,” *Filmwelt*, no. 50 (December 1940), 22.

that, in the context of the controlling and repressive National Socialist regime, revue films can perform *some* of the functions of the medieval carnivals analyzed by Mikhail Bakhtin.⁹⁹⁸ While they do not, unlike comedies, allow for the “temporary suspension of norms of acceptable behavior,” revue films, because they take place in the “safe” artistic and entertainment milieus where “performability” is the norm, can present its female viewers with alternate forms of behavior.⁹⁹⁹ Such “performability” can be literal, in the form of numerous changes of clothes, and figurative, with the embodiment of different characters, or, in the case of *Kora Terry*, of personalities.

The actress Röck brings an additional believability to these transformations, as improbable as they are. Röck’s type – the energetic, agile woman – as mentioned earlier offered an attractive alternative to Zarah Leander, the diva and suffering woman, or Kristina Söderbaum, the symbol of the self-sacrificing Aryan woman.¹⁰⁰⁰ Röck had been marketed, since her debut in 1934, as full of temperament and very active. While a few pictures in popular magazines depicted her privately in her house, doing chores, many show her on horses or exercising.¹⁰⁰¹ Interestingly the press was sometimes torn about how to explain such energy. In 1938 *Filmwelt* closed its description of her impressive performance in *Eine Nacht im Mai* (A Night in May, Georg Jacoby, 1938) with the comments “[s]he is cheeky and cheery and bold and boisterous, as if she was perpetually and delightfully tipsy!”¹⁰⁰² Only alcohol could explain such energy.

⁹⁹⁸ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Cambridge, Mass: M.I.T. Press, 1968).

⁹⁹⁹ See Cary Natheson analysis of Nazi film comedies using Bakhtin’s model in Cary Nathenson, “Fear of Flying: Education to Manhood in Nazi Film Comedies: Glückskinder and Quax, Der Bruchpilot,” in *Cultural History Through a National Socialist Lens: Essays on the Cinema of the Third Reich* (Rochester NY: Camden House, 2000), 84–108.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Although here too recent scholarship has shown that Söderbaum’s screen persona was more complicated than previously assumed. See Ascheid, *Hitler’s Heroines*; Bruns, *Nazi Cinema’s New Women*.

¹⁰⁰¹ See for example *Filmwelt*, no. 49 (December 1934), and no. 35 (June 1935).

¹⁰⁰² *Filmwelt*, no. 43 (October 1938).

Unlike Zarah Leander or Kristina Söderbaum, who were tied to specific on and often off screen personas, ones that left little room for positive development, Rökk embodied resolute, active women with strong personalities and a strong will, striving for, or even enjoying independence, and whose love for performance – or for food as in *Der Bettelstudent* (The Beggar Student, Georg Jacoby, 1936) – outweighed romantic involvement. That they chose at the end the realm of domesticity and marriage appears more like a heavy handed cinematic convention than a logical development of the characters. In the last scene of the film *Eine Nacht im Mai* we see Rökk and her husband complaining about a fast driving car while pushing a baby carriage. This scene echoes an early scene in the film, in which the unwed Rökk adamantly explained that she would never get married out of fear of losing her independence and being tied down to children, and that she would rather drive her fast car. Despite having demonstrated throughout the whole film her strong will and independence, generic convention and official ideology turn her into a happy wife and mother.

Between these searches for independence and the domesticization of her characters, we follow Rökk in exciting adventures. She flees from an abusive father-in-law to become a successful circus artist (*Leichte Kavalerie*, Light Cavalry, Werner Hochbaum, 1935), participates in horse races and runs away with her own horse to save it from auction (*Heißes Blut*, Hot Blood, George Jacoby, 1936), leaves her boring fiancé behind to try her luck as an artist in America (*Und du mein Schatz fährst mit*, And You My Darling Will Come Along, Jacoby, 1936), and drives cars so fast as to lose her driving license (*Eine Nacht im Mai*).

But Rökk's films offer more complex images than merely those of an active woman trying her luck before getting married. They give rise to an element of possibility, a sense that things do not have to be the way they are, and often they are not what they seem to be. The characters often pretend to be, or are mistakenly taken for someone else. In *Gasparone* (Jacoby, 1937), Rökk's father is actually the bandit Gasparone, who the police has been searching for, and Johannes Heesters plays the charming Ermino, who is incognito on a mission to find and arrest him, while in *Hallo Janine* (Carl Boese, 1939) Heesters portrays a count pretending to be a humble music composer, and the composer to be the count. Rökk finds herself in numerous mistaken identity plots, often more intentional than not. While in *Eine Nacht im Mai*, she is mistakenly taken for the wife of Karl Schönböck, in *Karusell* (Merry-Go-Around, Almin Elling, 1937) Rökk actively seduces, wins over and gets the uncle of her sweetheart to fall in love with her, in order to make him realize what a good, and decent woman she is and to enable her to marry his nephew. In *Hallo Janine!*, Rökk pretends to be her friend Marquise at a masked ball to take revenge of the man who set her up. In *Frauen sind doch bessere Diplomaten* she hides her true identity to achieve her political goals, while in *Die Frau meiner Traäume* (The Woman of my Dreams, Jacoby, 1944) it is to win over her male partner.

Costume changes are often part of the trick. But while in the 1936 *Heißes Blut*, she could still dress as a man in order to overcome the exclusion of women from a renowned horse race – something the advertisement package was quick to notice – such complete cross-dressing plot devices eventually disappeared.¹⁰⁰³ Only in the revue and theater milieu could she continue to cross-dress, as in the film *Und du mein Schatz fährst*

¹⁰⁰³ Werbevorschlag für den Film *Heißes Blut*: "Ob sie mit der ganzen Keckheit eines wilden Jungen – in dessen sportlichem Reitdreß sie steckt – [...] immer zeigt sie sich neu, liebenswert und überraschend!" Deutsche Kinemathek.

mit, where she is dressed in a white smoking jacket, an image that was widely used in publicity.

Her last film made during the Third Reich, *Die Frau meiner Träume*, is particularly interesting in terms of performed gender roles. After a series of mix-ups as she flees the city and the pressure of her professional engagements, the revue star Julia Köster (played by the revue star Röck) finds herself in a train on its way to mountains, clothed solely in a fur coat hastily thrown on over her slip. She finds refuge with two engineers Erwin and Peter, who are working on construction projects. Shortly after her arrival, Peter, while listening to the radio, vents his contempt for superficial, sophisticated women like the singer Julia Köster, not knowing, of course, that the star sits in his chalet. His dislike for the whole genre of the revue film, and the women associated with it, echoes the same arguments found in the press. Finding she likes Peter, Röck then proceeds to convince him of her “good qualities,” exchanging her clothes for simple, traditional clothes with the local *dirndl*, cleaning, and trying to cook for the engineers.

The same skills Röck demonstrates in mastering an impressive array of disparate pieces of clothing are also evident in her purposeful play with gender roles. Karen Ellwanger and Eva-Maria Warth have shown how in *Die Frau meiner Träume*, “the specific dealing with clothes, as an instrument of active self-fashioning of woman, goes hand in hand with a certain strength and independence of the protagonist.”¹⁰⁰⁴ In the same way she changes from revue costumes to a man’s working suit and traditional *dirndl*, Röck switches from revue star to the solicitous woman, eager to please Peter, and then to the star back on the stage. Despite her reunification with Peter in the end, she has made a

¹⁰⁰⁴ Belach, *Wir Tanzen Um Die Welt*; Witte, “Visual Pleasure Inhibited.” On the use of clothing, see Karen Ellwanger and Eva-Maria Warth, “Die Frau meiner Träume; Weiblichkeit und Maskerade,” *Frauen und Film*, no. 38 (1985): 59.

conscious decision, choosing her career, and in the end, it is Peter who comes after her.¹⁰⁰⁵

Thus, in this and other films, Rökk's on- and off-screen persona provides the female audience with ambiguous images. In the absence of reliable Third Reich audience studies the exact impact such films had on the audience, female or male, remains largely unknown. Influenced by the Frankfurt School, analyses of Third Reich cinema have delineated the government's exploitation and manipulation of cinematic productions and processes of identification for ideological ends. Lutz Koepnick, for example, argues that the Nazi entertainment industry provided the viewer with "the illusion that within this highly politicized society certain spaces remained free of control and coordination."¹⁰⁰⁶ *Kora Terry* appears to be a good example. This chapter has shown how the making of the film was made possible by the different parties' interests: the film company, eager to make money by creating and utilizing the star power of its main actress and by providing the audience with a product it wants; the star herself, Rökk, riding on a wave of success and in a position to push for a film she considered more challenging; the audience seemingly getting what it wanted: a popular star in a dazzling movie, with enough dances and drama for the women and eroticism for the men (and perhaps the women); the regime, which needed an entertaining film with a conclusion that seemingly fitted official gender ideology, all while providing the male audience with pleasing images, in and of itself another example of the regime's hypocrisy.

But neither the Nazi regime nor the propaganda minister himself were ever able to achieve absolute control of the making and reception of any given cultural production, as

¹⁰⁰⁵ Davidson gives a detailed analysis of the opening and closing dance routines, with their numerous changes of costumes. Davidson, "Cleavage: Sex in the Total Cinema of the Third Reich."

¹⁰⁰⁶ Koepnick, "Engendering Mass Culture: Zarah Leander and the Economy of Desire," 73.

Goebbels' litany of complaints about the quality of film productions and the unending restructuration of the film industry he ordered attests. There is evidence that the Third Reich members of the audience were acting as "poachers" of filmic texts, picking and choosing individual elements, producing meaning on the basis of the text, but also on the basis of their own experience and cultural situation.¹⁰⁰⁷ The most famous example is the reaction of the female audience to the performance of Ferdinand Marian as the Jew in the infamous anti-Semitic movie *Jud Süß*. The actor who embodied a corrupt, rapist Jew, who in the end is hanged, was flooded with female love letters. Thus what the female audience saw in the movie was the opposite of what the regime aimed at with its anti-Semitic message and the denied and neutralized sexualization of the female body.¹⁰⁰⁸ Similarly, Michelle Mouton has shown the ambivalent success of the political indoctrination of young girls during their time in the *BDM*.¹⁰⁰⁹

Following the model of audience research that has convincingly shown the need for an interactive model of text/audience/context to account for the complexity of the viewing process, this chapter has argued that *Kora Terry* offered its female audience possibilities of reading that go beyond the traditional conservative narrative and the roles

¹⁰⁰⁷ Building on the work of Stuart Hall, adherents of cultural studies use the concept of "cultural poachers," where audience are not passive recipient of culture but create their own meaning. The idea of "cultural poacher" has more readily been used in television studies. Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* (Routledge, 1992); John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture* (Taylor & Francis, 2010).

¹⁰⁰⁸ See Régine Mihal Friedman, "Männlicher Blick und weiblicher Reaktion: Veit Harlans "Jud Süß," in *Frauen und Film*, no. 41 (1986), 50-64 and Maria Klotz, "Epistemological Ambiguity and the Fascist Text: *Jew Süß*, *Carl Peters*, and *Ohm Krüger*," in *New German Critique*, no. 74 (Spring-Summer 1998), 91-124. Another example of alternative reading would be the re-appropriation of Zarah Leander, by the post-war German gay community. See Alice A. Kuzniar, "Zarah Leander and Transgender Specularity," *Film Criticism* 23 (1994): 74-93.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Michelle. Mouton, "Sports, Song, and Socialization: Women's Memories of Youthful Activity and Political Indoctrination in the BDM," *Journal of Women's History* 17, no. 2 (2005): 62-86, http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/journals/journal_of_womens_history/v017/17.2mouton.html.

prescribed by the regime.¹⁰¹⁰ The use of such a cultural studies framework allows for more of a dialog between National Socialism and other cultural spheres and deepens our understanding of the functioning of the regime.

¹⁰¹⁰ See how Mary Ann Doane's work on female spectatorship investigates alternative viewing and identification strategies. Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s*.

PART IV: FILM AND ITS *NACHWUCHS*

Introduction

On March 5, 1938, at a much-publicized ceremony, Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels laid the cornerstone of the *Deutsche Filmakademie* (DFA or the German Film Academy). The new institution was, as Boguslaw Drewniak notes, “something quite radically new for its time.”¹⁰¹¹ While previous chapters have pointed to individual efforts to address the tensions between film and the other arts and media, it was the first time that the National Socialist government, or any government for that matter, took such far-reaching, long-lasting responsibility for a major mass culture industry. In an effort to re-examine the role the institution played in the larger ambitions of National Socialism and the history of German cinema, part 4 traces the steps leading to the opening of this heavily funded enterprise and delineates its organization, staff, and curriculum before turning to its successor, the *Lehrstellen für Filmnachwuchs*, Places of Apprenticeship, for the *Nachwuchs*. The next three chapters uncover a much more complex enterprise than its description as a “model community geared to the racial selection and cultivation of the artistic genius” suggests.¹⁰¹² They unveil the role that practical concerns in filmmaking as well as personal and institutional competitions played in ideological debates and how these were expressed in the film press, showing that the decision-making processes about matters such as the training of aspiring film professionals, the *Nachwuchs*, were more contentious than previously assumed.

¹⁰¹¹ Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 68.

¹⁰¹² Carter, *Dietrich's Ghosts*, 14.

In addition to situating the DFA within Goebbels' attempts to control the film industry, I argue in chapter 7 that the new institution responded practically to general, often publicly expressed concerns about the film industry's weaknesses. A detailed reading of the period's film press reveals not only the recurrent calls for the creation and institutionalization of film studies, but also the pressing demands, from the regime and film professionals alike, for the training of aspiring film professionals, the *Nachwuchs*. In addition, both Goebbels' ambition and the film professionals' demands must also be seen as part of a sustained trend towards emancipating film from theater, as seen in part 2, and towards establishing it once and for all as an independent, serious art form. Indeed, projects such as the *Ufa-Lehrschau*, the creation of the *Reichsfilm Archiv*, the Reich film archive, and the opening of the *DFA* contributed to the increased institutionalization of film. These efforts were boosted by the newly gained importance of film in the Third Reich, its unprecedented commercial success and new technological advancements such as color film, which prompted many – from individual filmmakers to Goebbels himself – to see film as having the potential to become the ultimate work of art, the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

Analyzing information gathered from the film press, the internal memos from the Propaganda Ministry and the film companies, as well as Goebbels' diaries, chapter 7 first locates the forerunners of the Academy and the motivations behind the 1937 decision to open it. Chapter 8 then details how it functioned and the people involved, expanding Erica Carter's reading of the *DFA* as mostly a product of National Socialist ideology. While the Academy had to shut down after the outbreak of the war, the issue of *Nachwuchs*, which first disappeared from the press, remained a contentious one. Chapter

9 shows how important efforts in this matter were pursued until 1945, raising question about the motivations behind such investment.

Chapter 7

Calls for a Systematic *Nachwuchs* Training

Goebbels' Plans for German Cinema and the Year 1937

While the factors leading to the opening of the German Film Academic are numerous, its creation was first of all undoubtedly an additional step in Goebbels' endeavor to not only control, but also to "rejuvenate film art."¹⁰¹³ After an ominous speech to the prominent figures of film industry and filmmaking on March 28, 1933, in which he announced in an half-forthcoming, half-threatening tone, the "reorganization of the film industry," the propaganda minister had embarked upon this process as early as July 1933 with the creation of the Reich Film Chamber.¹⁰¹⁴ The next couple of years saw the rapid *Gleichschaltung* of the film industry. 1937 marks the beginning of what Wolfgang Becker has described as the second phase of control, the *Herrschaftstabilisierung* or stabilization of this control.¹⁰¹⁵ As the Tobis film company gradually came under state control, for example,¹⁰¹⁶ Goebbels was able to finalize the takeover of Germany's largest film company Ufa on March 20, 1937, after months of tense, and not always fair, negotiations with the main shareholder, Sherl-Verlag (Hugenberg Group).¹⁰¹⁷ He noted enthusiastically in his diary on that day: "Ufa finally

¹⁰¹³ Ibid., 25.

¹⁰¹⁴ Speech reprinted in full in Albrecht, *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik*, 439ff.

¹⁰¹⁵ Becker, *Film Und Herrschaft*. Julian Petley, *Capital and Culture: German Cinema 1933-1945* (London: BFI, 1979).

¹⁰¹⁶ For Tobis see Daniel Otto, "Der Bürgermeister Und Der Filmkonzern: Gleichschaltung Und Verstaatlichung Der Deutschen Filmindustrie Am Beispiel Der Tobis AG," in *Tonfilmfrieden / Tonfilmkrieg: Die Geschichte Der Tobis Vom Technik-Syndikate Zum Staatskonzern*, ed. Jan Distelmeyer (Hamburg: Edition Text + Kritik, 2003), 107–125.

¹⁰¹⁷ On the nationalization of the film industry see Spiker, *Film Und Kapital*; Becker, *Film Und Herrschaft*. Also in Kreimeier, *Die Ufa-Story: Geschichte Eines Filmkonzerns.*, especially chapter 2. See Chapter 22, "Eine neue "Hamburgische Dramaturgie." Die Ufa im Staatsbesitz," 300-312. On the Tobis see

bought [...] This means I have an instrument in my hands with which I can work.”¹⁰¹⁸

His pursuit of the nationalization of the film companies reflects his eagerness early on to find ways to control the filmmaking process directly. As Felix Moeller points out, the creation of the *Reichfilmdramaturgie*, the Reich Film Dramaturge, and especially the experiment of the *Kunstausschüsse*, the artistic committees, have to be seen in this context.¹⁰¹⁹ Erica Carter has shown how these measures were part of the “numerous policy initiatives [...] including the promotion of creative practitioners to powerful managerial position within the industry, training initiatives to bring on a new generation of creative personnel [...] designed to mold public taste to the shapes and patterns of an (apparently) quintessentially film aesthetic.”¹⁰²⁰

While already tentatively in place at the Tobis, the idea of such committee, in which artists should take over the autonomous decisions about film-making usually reserved for a company's board of directors, was met with strong opposition at Ufa.¹⁰²¹ Such “experiments” were part of Goebbels’ attempts to separate art (film production) and business (distribution, export, profitability).¹⁰²² Only then, as he put it, could German cinema develop into “real and pure art.”¹⁰²³ The takeover of Ufa put an end to Goebbels’ complaint that “distribution and management have far too much to say for themselves” and gave him a free hand to rearrange the film industry.¹⁰²⁴ On May 5, 1937, two months

Jan Distelmeyer, ed., *Tonfilmfrieden / Tonfilmkrieg: Die Geschichte Der Tobis Vom Technik-Syndikat Zum Staatskonzern* (Hamburg: edition text+kritik, 2003).

¹⁰¹⁸ See a short summary of Goebbels’ intimidating tactics in Felix Moeller, *The Film Minister: Goebbels and the Cinema in the “Third Reich”* (Stuttgart: Axel Menges, 2000), 37–40.

¹⁰¹⁹ About the *Reichfilmdramaturgie* see Introduction in *Ibid.*, 44-50.

¹⁰²⁰ Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*, 25.

¹⁰²¹ See “Rede des Reichministers Dr. Josef Goebbels auf der ersten Jahrestagung der Reichsfilmkammer am 15 März in der Krolloper, Berlin,” in Albrecht, *Der Film im Dritten Reich*, 55.

¹⁰²² See Moeller, *The Film Minister*, 41.

¹⁰²³ Goebbels’ diaries, September 25, 1941.

¹⁰²⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, January 4, 1937.

after the take-over was finalized behind the scenes, *Film-Kurier* publicly announced a “reorganization of the film industry.”¹⁰²⁵ Numerous board members “gave up their office” and artistic committees were put in place. Ufa’s board now included film director Professor Carl Froelich; *Intendant*, theater manager, Eugen Klöpfer; state actor Paul Hartmann; director-producer Karl Ritter; vice president of the Reich Film Chamber Hans Weidemann; actor Mathias Wieman; and Ufa director general Ludwig Klitzsch.¹⁰²⁶ In a similar move, Tobis was now officially adorned with an artistic committee of its own. *Film-Kurier* presented it as a “triumvirate of artists” comprised of actor-director Gustaf Gründgens, state actor Emil Jannings, and actor-director Willy Forst.¹⁰²⁷ Directors Veit Harlan and Hans Zerlett would soon join the committee.

Erica Carter has shown how the choice of these well-known film professionals was part of “Goebbels’ fantasy of a film industry driven by creative personalities and their aesthetic impulse.”¹⁰²⁸ While convincing when applied to the artistic committee of the Ufa, her explanation for the choice of these men as “creative personalities [...] as bearers of the artistic “idea” and as the individual voice of a collective essence of race, state and nation,” does not hold with the members of Tobis, especially the cosmopolitan, sexually ambiguous Gustaf Gründgens and Willi Forst. Their nominations illustrate how, in the field of culture, practical and pragmatic reasons – in this case securing the collaboration of renowned filmmakers and theater personalities – often trumped ideological ones.

¹⁰²⁵ *Film-Kurier*, May 5, 1937.

¹⁰²⁶ Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*, 36ff.

¹⁰²⁷ “Triumvirat der Künstler. Gründgens, Jannings, Forst im Aufsichtsrat der Tobis,” *Film-Kurier*, January 21, 1937. See also Renata Helker, “Kunst-Ausschuss: Emil Jannings Als Schauspieler Und Produzent,” in *Tonfilmfrieden / Tonfilmkrieg. Die Geschichte Der Tobis Vom Technik-Syndikate Zum Staatskonzern*, ed. Jan Distelmeyer (Hamburg: Edition Text + Kritik, n.d.), 150–158.

¹⁰²⁸ Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*, 35.

Official announcements about the creation of these artistic committees in *Film-Kurier* appear anxious not only to explain the decision, but also, in more subtle ways, to justify the government's action, which was presented as necessary and beneficial for not only the film industry but most importantly for the German *Volk*.¹⁰²⁹ The wording of such announcements reveals how cautious the government was not to alienate the film community and to present itself as a benefactor. Praising the work of the government as the beginning of a new area, *Der deutsche Film* was also careful to point that such measures were not a blow against the economists and industrials, but were designed to help all filmmakers.¹⁰³⁰ We see here again, a balancing act between regime, businessmen, and artists.

Now "owner" of the major film companies, Goebbels wrote on March 23, 1937: "I shall now involve myself very closely in all questions affecting production and casting. I will gradually get on top of things."¹⁰³¹ To give himself the tools to do so, he proceeded to further major restructuring throughout 1937, increasing his control, but also responding to comments from the film community. The appointment of Ewald von Demandowsky as the new *Reichsfilmdramaturg*, the Reich Film Dramaturge, in April 1937 was welcomed by the press, which lauded Demandowsky's artistic experience and knowledge.¹⁰³² Reich Film Chamber president, Professor Dr. Lehnich had personally met with the editors-in-chief of the important film press organs to inform them about and

¹⁰²⁹ *Film-Kurier*, January 21, 1937.

¹⁰³⁰ "Unter der Führung des Künstlers," *Der deutsche Film*, June 1937.

¹⁰³¹ Goebbels' diaries, March 23, 1937.

¹⁰³² "Wechsel in der Reichsfilmdramaturgie. Demandowsky berufen," *Film-Kurier*, April 23, 1937. Demandowsky followed the footsteps of Willy Krause and Hans-Jürgen Nierentz. We learn that his father was an actor, play writer and later theater director. Ewald Demandowsky was an actor from 1924 until 1932. From 1933 on, he worked as a journalist. He also wrote novels, newspaper articles, and three theater plays. In June 1933, he started as the chief editor of the cultural section of the *Völkische Beobachter*, where film discussions played an increased role. On Goebbels' staffing difficulties and disappointments see Moeller, *The Film Minister*, 44–62.

promote the reorganization of the dramaturgy department. Lehnich carefully delineated the role of the Reich Film Dramaturge and the newly created *Film-Kunst-Abteilung*, the Department of Film Art.¹⁰³³ The latter was in charge of evaluating screenplays before they reached the Film Credit Institute, which then could make an informed decision about funding. The other major function of the *Film-Kunst-Abteilung*, dealing with issues of casting, seems to have been a response to contemporary comments of the weaknesses of the film industry in this regard. The article quoted a recent speech by renowned actor Mathias Wieman, in which he “bemoaned the casting of couples in German film production.”¹⁰³⁴ In addition to promoting state sponsored political film, the *Film-Kunst-Abteilung* would now be able to “act in fruitful ways” in questions of casting, a reaction to public comments from the film community.¹⁰³⁵ More restructuring followed, such as the implementation of an artistic committee at Terra on September 17, 1937. Its members included director Karl Hartl, state actors Harald Paulsen, Heinrich George, and Theodor Loos, and actor-director Wolfgang Liebeneiner.¹⁰³⁶

As Moeller points out, 1937 was characterized by “clashes about production and material selection between film companies and the Propaganda Ministry.”¹⁰³⁷ Ufa’s minutes as well as Goebbels’ diaries both reveal the latter’s increased involvement in, and his disappointment with, film productions. With the exception of few films such as *Der Herrscher* (The Ruler, Veit Harlan, 1937) and *Patrioten* (Patriots, Karl Ritter, 1937), Goebbels bemoaned the lack of good political films and the “shallow entertainment at the

¹⁰³³ “Reichsfilmkammer als Kontrolzentrale. Beobachtung der Filme von der Planung bis zur Auswertung,” *Film-Kurier*, July 31, 1937. Invited were Herr Scheider of *Lichtbildbühne*, Herr Betz of *Film* and the editor-in-chief of *Film-Kurier*.

¹⁰³⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁶ “Kunstausschuß der Terra-Kunst. Auch der Aufsichtsrat bestellt,” *Film-Kurier*, September 17, 1937.

¹⁰³⁷ Moeller, *The Film Minister*, 70.

pictures,” as he saw exemplified by Gustaf Gründgens’s *Capriolen*. Tired of the “lack of standard of the contemporary films,” he planned on “firing the directors of *Austernlilli* and *Karussell*. Get new workers. Young talent to the forefront. Away with the old reactionaries.”¹⁰³⁸ His frustration was aggravated when some of his staffing decisions proved to be ill chosen and the new system of artistic committees was impractical, due to the lack of clear division of powers. Major problems also originated with the members themselves, who acted like prima donnas, more interested in their personal projects than in the laborious work required by the committees. As early as May 1937, Goebbels complained about them in withering terms: “artists can not and do not do anything by themselves,”¹⁰³⁹ and “The artistic committees work too slowly or do not work at all. I apply pressure.”¹⁰⁴⁰ Goebbels was “unhappy with the situation at Tobis. Nobody is responsible there. One mishap after another. [...] The *Kunstausschüsse* [the artistic committees] haven’t achieved much either. Artists are completely unsuitable for practical work, organization in particular.”¹⁰⁴¹ The artistic committees were finally dissolved on December 10, 1938.

1937 saw other major changes in German cinematic landscape. Goebbels spoke harshly of the state of film production, which had not improved despite the changes he had instituted. Further measures had to be taken. A new institution such as the Film Academy would enable Goebbels to nurture, train, or, depending on the interpretation, “breed” new filmmakers.¹⁰⁴² Technicians, writers, actors would be trained according to

¹⁰³⁸ Goebbels’ diaries, August 3, 1937.

¹⁰³⁹ Goebbels’ diaries, May 21, 1937.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Goebbels’ diaries, June 2, 1937.

¹⁰⁴¹ Goebbels’ diaries, October 14, 1937.

¹⁰⁴² As early as November 1933, Goebbels used the word *züchten*, which can be used in all three cases of nurturing or training, cultivating or farming, and the more ominous breeding: “Wir wollen einen deutschen

Goebbels' ideas about cinema. On October 7, 1937, Goebbels summoned the heads of film production. He noted in his dairies: "I outlined the necessity of stars and of the fostering of *Nachwuchs*, [announced] the creation of a Film Academy, etc... [...]" Klitzsch has drafted a good memorandum about the Film Academy. We will proceed after it."¹⁰⁴³

Public Demands for Reforms

While the steps leading to the decision of creating a Film Academy certainly drew on the regime's awareness of the failure of earlier implemented measures and from the grand plan to revolutionize film under National Socialist government, public discourse about film production was also taken into consideration. We know that Goebbels was responsive and sensitive to criticism of film production.¹⁰⁴⁴ While outright criticism was rare and confined to political publications, one finds numerous "comments" about the current state of the film industry in the film press. Thus, the creation of the Film Academy can be seen as a response to two main and recurring comments found in the film press: calls for the institutionalization, if not the creation, of film studies, and the need to train upcoming film professionals, the *Nachwuchs*. These elements were part of a larger effort, this time from the film industry and filmmakers themselves, towards the valorization of cinema as an independent and serious form of art, especially in its relationship to theater.

A close reading of the film press, from the trade paper *Film-Kurier* to the popular

Künstlertyp züchten, der bewußt und offen, mit Stolz und Eigenart den Aufgaben dient, die die Zeit uns gegeben hat." In "Präsident Dr. Goebbels. Die Sendung der Reichskulturkammer," *Film-Kurier*, November 16, 1933.

¹⁰⁴³ Goebbels' dairies, October 7, 1937.

¹⁰⁴⁴ See, for example, his reaction to the rebellious article of the Hitler Youth magazine *Wille und Macht* in Moeller, *The Film Minister*, 78. See also his entry on August 18, 1937 and November 14, 1937, about an article in the *Essener Nationalzeitung*.

Filmwelt, and, from 1936 on, *Der deutsche Film*, allows us to trace the reaction to the rapid changes imposed by Goebbels. As described in chapter 2, broad structural changes, such as the creation of the cultural chambers in 1933, were presented in a feverish, revolutionary tone as important reforms and celebrated as enabling the coming of a new age of German film, with Goebbels presented as the protector of “art from the people, for the people.”¹⁰⁴⁵ Proclamations of “principles of the new cinema” often simply rehashed National Socialist cultural critiques, which included denunciations of the “sickness of materialism,” praise of the German *Volk* as “creator” (*Schöpfer*) and attacks on “international modernism.”¹⁰⁴⁶ Despite numerous articles attempting to define what the new *völkisch* cinema ought to be,¹⁰⁴⁷ the description of a “Nordic-Aryan cultural renaissance” remained extremely vague.¹⁰⁴⁸ On the other hand, the acute lack of an institutional framework for film study and the need to train *Nachwuchs* were discussed in more details in the press.

Institutionalizing Film Studies

As well as calls for the practical training of film professionals, demands for the comprehensive teaching of film related materials abounded in the film press. Due to its young age and the fierce opposition it originally experienced, cinema had not yet been canonized as an topic worthy of independent study.¹⁰⁴⁹ The film press often complained

¹⁰⁴⁵ See for example: “Das Reformwerk des deutschen Films geht weiter,” *Film-Kurier*, June 17, 1933 or “Der neue Geist in der Film-Reform,” *Film-Kurier*, June 20, 1933 and “Kunst aus dem Volk für das Volk,” *Film-Kurier*, *Film-Kurier*, August 7, 1933.

¹⁰⁴⁶ “Das Fundament des neuen Films” *Film-Kurier*, September 7, 1933.

¹⁰⁴⁷ See Bruno Roemisch “Was is ein Volksfilm?” *Film-Kurier* April 19, 1933, “Was will der neue Film? Autor, Komponist, Regisseur sprechen mit Kinobesucherin über Filmziele,” *Film-Kurier* May 20, 1933, “Die Aufgaben des Volkshaften Films. Statt oberflächlicher Zerstreung – neue Kraftquellen für das Volk,” *Film-Kurier*, August 21, 1933.

¹⁰⁴⁸ “Das Fundament des neuen Films” *Film-Kurier*, September 7, 1933.

¹⁰⁴⁹ On the *Kino-debatte*, see for example Helmut H. Diederichs, “Frühgeschichte deutscher Filmtheorie: Ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg” (J.W. Goethe University, Sociology, 1999).

that film related topics were taught in connection with theater, journalism, or psychology, but not as an independent film study.

Following the request of Ufa Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ludwig Klitzsch, Oskar Kalbus and Dr. Hans Traub had written in 1932 a comprehensive plan to provide German film with a teaching and research facility, entitled “Path to a German Film Institute.”¹⁰⁵⁰ Addressing several weaknesses of the film industry, the plan was to create “a film research institute whose work in universities and technical institutions of higher education would be intimately connected to its role in training new generations of film practitioners.”¹⁰⁵¹

The plan echoed and was answered by articles in the film press, emphasizing, for example, how the scientific study (*Forschung*) of the complex and intertwined aspects of film would benefit the film industry itself.¹⁰⁵² The industry, and the state, were called upon to recognize these benefits and to help foster film studies, free from any ideological aspects (*Weltanschaulichkeitsfragen*). As seen in the introduction, the governmental control and take over of German cultural institutions after 1933 exceeded any calls for “state intervention” and were all but free of ideology.

Throughout the Third Reich, *Film-Kurier* regularly reported on and advertised existing academic offerings, originally found solely in Munich, Berlin, and Leipzig.¹⁰⁵³ While in 1933 the trade paper rejoiced about the increase of film related courses and

¹⁰⁵⁰ Hans Traub, “Fünf Jahre Ufa-Lehrschau. Von Dr. phil. Habil. Hans Traub, wissenschaftlichem Leiter der Ufa-Lehrschau,” *Film-Kurier*, February 1, 1941. On Hans Traub see Biermann, “Hans Traub (1901-1943).”

¹⁰⁵¹ Oskar Kalbus and Hans Traub, *Wege zum Deutschen Institut für Filmkunde* (broschüre, n.d., c. 1933), HFF C532, quoted and translated in Carter, *Dietrich's Ghosts*, 43.

¹⁰⁵² “Probleme der Filmforschung. Ein Gespräch mit Professor Hinderer,” *Film-Kurier*, January 1, 1933.

¹⁰⁵³ “Deutsche Schauspiel- und Filmschule in München e.V.,” *Film-Kurier*, June 2, 1933, Heinz Küttner, “Filmkunst an der Universität Leipzig,” *Film-Kurier*, May 6, 1935.

academic works, all of them in an “appropriate National Socialist spirit” (*in nationalsozialistischen Geist*), such offerings were limited and lacked a general introductory lecture.¹⁰⁵⁴ The following years, the number of courses and academic publications on film related topics increased steadily and, in the winter of 1934/1935, were offered in Greifswald, Cologne, Halle, Münster, and Heidelberg. By the summer of 1936, Bonn, Freiburg, Karlsruhe, and Dresden were added to the list.¹⁰⁵⁵ Despite this progress, film was still taught solely within journalistic or theater study courses, or sometimes in disciplines such as psychology and pedagogy.¹⁰⁵⁶ In the “Necessity of Film Studies,” author Gerd Eckert wanted to expand the few individual lectures or courses to classes on the history of film, the technical or financial aspects of filmmaking. He suggested that film’s specific relationships between image, word, music, and sound should be studied, as well as topics such as the dramaturgy of film or the psychology of the audience. Filmmaking should be treated as art *and* as a product.¹⁰⁵⁷ Eckert was also quick to add that such film studies would, of course, never replace the necessary practical

¹⁰⁵⁴ Gerd Eckert, “Film und Universität. Wachsende akademische Beachtung,” *Film-Kurier*, January 24, 1933.

¹⁰⁵⁵ “Filmkundliche Vorlesungen im Sommersemester 1936,” *Film-Kurier*, June 3, 1936. See also “Filmkunde an deutsche Hochschulen,” *Filmwelt*, no. 24 (June 1936).

¹⁰⁵⁶ Gerd Eckert, “Der Film als Wissenschaft. Im Vorlesungsverzeichnis der Universitäten zahlreiche Vorlesungen,” *Film-Kurier*, February 2, 1934; Heinz Mohrmann, “Der Film im Schrifttum der Universitäten” in the column *Filmforschung und Filmkunde*, *Film-Kurier*, March 7, 1934; Hans Traub, “Film und Universität. “Das tönende Laufbild ist ein für allemal Verständigungsgut der Menschheit geworden,” *Film-Kurier*, May 16, 1935. See how Friedrich Martens, for example, outlined and praised the existing study of film in the field of psychology, where the emphasis was on the effect of film, especially on young people, in “Film als Gegenstand der psychologischen Forschung,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2 (August 1936). Specifically about Heidelberg see K.A. Götz, “Film an der Heidelberger Universität. Ergebnisse einer Arbeitsgemeinschaft,” *Film-Kurier*, June 24, 1935. For Köln see “Film an der Universität,” *Film-Kurier*, October 25, 1935. For München, “Film an der Universität in München,” *Film-Kurier*, November 12, 1935; “Film an der Münchener Universität,” *Film-Kurier*, May 5, 1936 and “Filmreferate an der Münchener Universität,” *Film-Kurier*, June 26, 1936. For Leipzig, “Filmkunde an der Universität,” *Film-Kurier*, April 8, 1936 and “Filmkunde an der Universität Leipzig,” *Film-Kurier*, April 23, 1936.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Gerd Eckert, “Von der Notwendigkeit einer Filmwissenschaft. Einheitliche Erfassung – Keine Zergliederung in einzelne Wissensgebiete,” in *Film-Kurier*, October 26, 1933.

training.

One of the reasons for the lack of independent film studies was that film still had to fight off prejudices about its seriousness as an academic topic. Articles in the film press felt the need to recall cinema's status as an art and to argue for the need to study its own artistic principles.¹⁰⁵⁸ Listing the academic offerings for the 1937 winter semester, *Filmkurier* had to remind his readers that film, "one of the most important artistic and propagandistic means of expression of our time, has the right to get a scientific treatment."¹⁰⁵⁹ Emphasizing that film studies were not "purely" academic and had direct contact to practice was often used as a way to defend them. Another author justifying the need for film studies used an interesting, circular, argumentative twist.¹⁰⁶⁰ He argued that, "the sponsorship [of film studies] through film companies and governmental agencies – especially the Reich Film Chamber – demonstrates the interest in [creating film studies]. The ever increasing number of attendees to these seminars was more proof of the [popular] interest in film studies."¹⁰⁶¹ The author uses a common strategy for pushing or justifying a specific agenda during the Third Reich. We see first how he relies on and quotes official decision makers, in this case Propaganda Minister Goebbels and the Reich Film Chamber. He then used a second trope, the idea of the interest of the *Volk*, arguing that such popular seminars responded to the interest of German people and therefore should be supported.

Film-Kurier did function as public forum with engaged discussions, pleas for

¹⁰⁵⁸ "Filmkunde an Universitäten. Zunehmende Beschäftigung mit filmischen Fragen," *Film-Kurier*, June 4, 1936.

¹⁰⁵⁹ W.P. "Der Film an den Universitäten. Zum Beginn des Wintersemesters," *Film-Kurier*, October 24, 1936.

¹⁰⁶⁰ "Filmkunde an Universitäten. Zunehmende Beschäftigung mit filmischen Fragen," *Film-Kurier*, June 4, 1936.

¹⁰⁶¹ *Ibid.*

causes, praises for achievements and many critiques, which could then be rebuked. A speaker for the federation of high school teachers, for example, answered the accusation that “detailed attention to film’s artistic problem has still not been given,” by listing the training offered to its members to understand and use film material in their classes.¹⁰⁶²

Discussions about the necessity of independent film studies increased in the years 1936-1937. Some writers seemed confident about the imminent materialization of their calls for the creation of film studies. As seen earlier, Dr. Hans Traub had been especially vocal about the topic, pushing for the creation of a Film Archive and a Film School since 1932. In a November 1936 article published in the paper *Geistigen Arbeit*, Traub spoke with confidence about how “the future Film Academy” should transmit special, as well as comprehensive knowledge.¹⁰⁶³ Traub, who in the meantime became the head of the *Ufa-Lehrschau*, saw his effort rewarded a year later, when the opening of the academy was announced.¹⁰⁶⁴

The Example of the *Lessing Hochschule*

In addition to seminars offered at the universities, the *Lessing Hochschule* offered in Berlin regular lectures on the topics of film, whose full texts were occasionally reprinted in *Der deutsche Film*.¹⁰⁶⁵ The trade press regularly praised the work done at the institute as an example to follow. The *Lessing Hochschule* was an internationally renowned

¹⁰⁶² “Der Film an den deutschen Hochschulen. Eine Ergänzung zum Aufsatz des “F.-K.” October 24, “Der Film an den Universitäten,” *Film-Kurier*, October 26, 1936. It answered W.P.’s article “Der Film an den Universitäten. Zum Beginn des wintersemesters,” October 24, 1936. W.P. used the talk Leonhard Fürst gave during the IV. Color-Sound-Study Congress (Kongreß für Farbe-Ton-Forschung) Hamburg 4-11, October 1936, “Filmwissenschaft als Grundlage moderner Filmkunst und Filmherstellung.”

¹⁰⁶³ See Dr. Hans Traub’s article, “Film als ein Forschungs- und Lehrgebiet der deutschen Uniiversitäten,” quoted in *Der deutsche Film*, November 1936.

¹⁰⁶⁴ “Dr. Goebbels sprach vor den Kulturschaffende. Deutschland wird eine Film-Akademie erhalten,” *Film-Kurier*, November 26, 1937.

¹⁰⁶⁵ See for example Günter Keiser, “Die Dreidimensionalität des Filmschaffens,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 12 (June 1937). For an incomplete list of the lectures see Appendix 7.

institute, where some of the greatest minds of the century had lectured. The format usually consisted of evening lectures, open to the public for a small fee. The impressive list of guest lecturers until 1933 included, among many others, Thomas Mann, Albert Einstein, Carl Gustav Jung, Walter Rathenau, and Gustav Stresemann. The *Hochschule* also prided itself on featuring many prominent film and theater artists such as Fritz Lang, Gustaf Gründgens, Max Reinhardt, and Tilla Durieux. After 1933, the head of the department *Film und Film Wesen*, Film and the Essence of Film, Dr. Johannes Eckardt utilized the facilities and continued to offer, within the *Lessing Hochschule*, regular lectures and seminars throughout the Third Reich.¹⁰⁶⁶ These lectures touched upon all major contemporary film topics. Prominent film practitioners, including scriptwriter Thea von Harbou, actor Heinrich George, animation artist Lotte Reiniger, and director-actor Leni Riefenstahl, as well as director Franz Wysbar, actor Willy Birgel, director Fritz Aeckerle, and cameraman Walter Frenz gave well-attended lectures.¹⁰⁶⁷ Topics spanned from the “*Sturm- und- Drang*” period of film art, its development from silent to sound, to the new directions film art was taking.¹⁰⁶⁸ The representation of reality in film, the use of word and dialogue in film, as well as the constitutive role of the audience in film

¹⁰⁶⁶ “Lessing-Hochschule beginnt Ende Oktober,” *Film-Kurier* October 12, 1936. Eckardt himself gave several lectures. See for example, “Wort und Dialog im Film,” *Film-Kurier*, November 12, 1936.

¹⁰⁶⁷ “Heinrich George in der Lessing-Hochschule,” *Film-Kurier*, January 24, 1935; “In der Lessing Hochschule. Lotte Reiniger sprach über ihre Arbeit,” *Film-Kurier*, March 21, 1935; “In der Lessing Hochschule. Leni Riefenstahl sprach,” *Film-Kurier*, April 4, 1935; “Willy Birgel’s “Bekenntnis zum Film.” Seminar in der Lessing-Hochschule,” *Film-Kurier*, March 4, 1937; “Kameramann Walter Fenz. Der filmische Film. Vortrag in der Lessing-Hochschule,” *Film-Kurier*, February 03, 1938. Frank Wysbar was a regular participant to the Lessing Seminar. See “In der Lessing Hochschule: “Die Künstlerische Gestaltung der Wirklichkeit im Film,” *Film-Kurier*, March 14, 1935, and “In der Lessing Hochschule. Wysbars Filmbekenntnis,” *Film-Kurier*, December 5, 1935.

¹⁰⁶⁸ See the lecture from Johannes Eckardt in “In der Lessing Hochschule. “Sturm- und Drangjahre des Films,” *Film-Kurier*, November 29, 1935, and from Paul Wegener in “Wegener in der Lessing Hochschule. Filmpredigt – launig gesehen,” *Film-Kurier*, December 20, 1935.

production were discussed at length.¹⁰⁶⁹ An entire seminar was spent analyzing the success of the militaristic film *Unternehmen Michael* (The Private's Job, Karl Ritter, 1937), considering its lack of "typical" plot elements such as a romance or a cabaret scene.¹⁰⁷⁰ The lectures also analyzed foreign films such as King Vidor's *Our Daily Bread* or W.S. Van Dyke's *San Francisco* and used the 1923 Japanese film made in France *La Bataille* (Sessue Hayakawa) to discuss what a political film ought to be.¹⁰⁷¹ Dr. Leonhard Fürst showed the possibilities of filmic expression in René Clair's *Sous les toits de Paris* (Under the Roofs of Paris, 1930).¹⁰⁷² Foreign filmmakers such as the Russian "Avantgardist" Alexander Alexeieff who was exiled in Paris, were also invited to talk about their films, while the lyrics and dynamics of current Japanese films, such as the award-winning *Mond über den Ruinen* were discussed, and Polish cultural films were still presented in 1937.¹⁰⁷³ Concrete German productions were used to exemplify filmic difficulties. While Dr. Gauger talked about his work on the script of *Die ewige Maske* (The Eternal Mask, Werner Hochbaum, 1935), Tobis director Fritz Mainz was invited to discuss the relationship between art and commerce.¹⁰⁷⁴ Koetsier-Müller turned to the "speech, mimic and gesture of film" and *Olympia*'s cameraman Walter Frenz was eager

¹⁰⁶⁹ "In der Lessing Hochschule: "Die Künstlerische Gestaltung der Wirklichkeit im Film," *Film-Kurier*, March 14, 1935; "Dr. Eckard in der Lessing-Hochschule. Wort und Dialog im Film," *Film-Kurier*, November 12, 1936 and *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1937):218; "Fröhliche Dramaturgie. Dr. Fürst in der Lessing-Hochschule," *Berliner Tagesblatt*, no. 583 (December 10, 1935). "In der Lessing Hochschule: Verbesserte Filmpublicum – bessere Filme," *Film-Kurier*, March 29, 1935.

¹⁰⁷⁰ "Warum wurde "Unternehmen Michael" ein so großer Erfolg," *Filmwelt*, no. 50 (December 1937).

¹⁰⁷¹ "In der Lessing Hochschule. Joseph Pfister "Der politische Film," *Film-Kurier*, March 7, 1935; -eib-, "In der Lessing Hochschule. Unser täglich Brot," *Film-Kurier*, November 23, 1935

¹⁰⁷² Dr. Georg, "Lessing-Hochschule im neuen Jahr," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April 1938).

¹⁰⁷³ Frank Avril, "Filmseminar der Lessing-Hochschule. 2. Alexander Alexeieff spricht zu seinem Film," December 1936; "Mussorgskijs Musik im Film," *Filmwelt*, no. 46 (November 1936); Frank Avril, "Filmseminar der Lessing-Hochschule," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 6 (December 1937); Joachim Rutenberg, "Polen zeigt Kulturfilme. In der Lessing-Hochschule," *Film-Kurier*, September 16, 1937.

¹⁰⁷⁴ -eib-, "Was wollen wir mit dem Film 'Die ewige Maske.' Dr. med. Gauger in der Lessing-Hochschule," *Film-Kurier*, March 14, 1936; Schu., "Fritz Mainz. Kunst und Geschäft im internationalen Film. Filmseminar der Lessing-Hochschule," *Film-Kurier*, December 12, 1936.

to explain what a “filmic film” is. Scriptwriter Dr. Georg C. Klaren asked if there was “an author problem in German film,¹⁰⁷⁵ while author Dr. Eckard talked about the difficulties of having several plot lines in the film *Verräter* (The Traitor, Karl Ritter, 1936).¹⁰⁷⁶ Cultural films, animated films, as well as the promises of color film found enthusiastic audiences.¹⁰⁷⁷ According to the journalists, these lectures and seminars were themselves the occasion of heated discussion, which often did not refrain from criticizing existing practices and organizations.¹⁰⁷⁸ While *Film-Kurier* mentioned them briefly, *Der deutsche Film* provided the most complete report about the lectures. The seminars and lectures offered by the *Lessing-Hochschule* presented an ideal format, combining theoretical lectures with concrete practical examples, all while inviting film professionals to lecture and to share their experiences. The Film Academy took the example of this format and ensured that film professionals performed the teaching.

Reich Film Archive and the Ufa-Lehrschau

In addition to the greater numbers of seminars and classes taking film “seriously,” there were further innovations in the 1930s, which illustrate the increasing interest and value attributed to film making and film as a form of art. Announced in December 1933, the future Reich Film Archive was conceptualized as the corner stone of the “upcoming

¹⁰⁷⁵ Schu., “Koetsier-Muller: Sprache, Mimik, Gestik des Films. Vortrag mit Beispielen in der Lessing-Hochschule,” *Film-Kurier*, January 28, 1937; “Kameramann Walter Frenz. Der filmische Film. Vortrag in der Lessing-Hochschule,” *Film-Kurier*, February 3, 1938; “Ein Autor hat das Wort. Georg C. Klaren an der Lessinghochschule,” *Film-Kurier*, February 10, 1938.

¹⁰⁷⁶ “Verräter in der Lessing-Hochschule,” *Filmwelt*, no. 45 (November 1936). See also Frank Avril, “Filmseminar der Lessing-Hochschule. 2.”Verräter wird diskutiert,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 6 (December 1936).

¹⁰⁷⁷ Schu., “In der Lessing Hochschule. Kulturfilm- Wesensfragen,” *Film-Kurier*, March 26, 1936. See also the March 11, 1937 front page article “Wirkliche Unwirklichkeit. Die Filmkunst des Tricks.” Schu., “Vor der Lessing-Hochschule: Aussprache über Farbfilmfragen am Beispiel “Ramona,”” *Film-Kurier*, April 15, 1937. Joseph Pfister presented about the cultural film. See *Der deutsche Film*, no. 7 (January 1937): 219.

¹⁰⁷⁸ -eib-, “In der Lessing-Hochschule. Ein Kulturfilm wird besprochen,” *Film-Kurier*, February 11, 1937.

German Film Academy.”¹⁰⁷⁹ Dr. Paulheiz Diedrich even argued in 1934 for the creation of a Reich Film Museum, which would be “in the service of film and *Volk*.”¹⁰⁸⁰ In February 1935, H. E. Fisher celebrated the opening of the Reich Film Archive in Dahlem with more than twelve hundred films, to which soon came films created by the *Bild und Film Amt* (*Bufa*, the Photo and Film Office) established in 1917 by the German army.¹⁰⁸¹ This was complemented in 1937 by an archive for film study, containing written materials such as an impressive collection of film magazines and film books.¹⁰⁸² In July 1937, Goebbels created the “commission for conservation of contemporary documents” and turned the Reich Film Archive into a Reich agency as part of the propaganda ministry. The Reich took great measures to increase its collection. For example, no film material could be destroyed before being first submitted to the film archive. The creation of the International Federation of Film Archives allowed for exchanges and the buying and selling of materials. Led by Richard Quass and containing over four million meters of film, the archive also struggled with the conservation of rapidly deteriorating material, securing multiple copies of materials that were then kept in cool (twelve degrees Celsius) rooms. Little information transpired about the archives, with the exception in April 1939 of a lengthy and enthusiastic article from Frank Maraun in *Der deutsche Film*, praising the *Reichsfilmarchiv* as the new tool allowing for a “brand new way of experiencing

¹⁰⁷⁹ “Reichsfilmarchiv geplant,” *Film-Kurier*, December 16, 1933; “Aufruf zum Ausbau des Reichsfilmarchivs,” *Film-Kurier*, February 6, 1934; “Das Reichsfilm-Archiv. Grundstein zu einer kommenden deutschen Film-Akademie,” *Film-Kurier*, February 14, 1934; “Althoffs Archiv-Filme Öffentlichkeit zugänglich,” *Film-Kurier*, November 23, 1937;

¹⁰⁸⁰ Dr. Paulheiz Diedrich, “Reichsfilmwoche – Reichsfilmmuseum. Dienst am Film – Dienst am Volk,” *Film-Kurier*, January 23, 1934.

¹⁰⁸¹ H.E.Fischer, “Die Bibliothek der stummen und tönenden Bilder,” *Filmwelt*, February 3, 1935; Frank Maraun, “Weltgeschichte auf Zelluloid. Besuch im Reichsfilmarchiv,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April 1939): 289-291.

¹⁰⁸² H. Otto, “Aus dem Archiv für die Filmwissenschaft. Stülerstr. 2,” *Film-Kurier*, March 6, 1937 and May 10, 1937.

history.”¹⁰⁸³

The Ufa-*Lehrschau* enjoyed greater popularity and press coverage throughout the Third Reich. Opened on February 1, 1936, the *Lehrschau* was a privately funded and organized exposition, whose goal was to teach about filmmaking from an artistic, technical, and financial point of view.¹⁰⁸⁴ Ufa CEO Klitzsch had developed an originally small scale, private exposition organized in April-May 1935 in the context of the International Film Congress.¹⁰⁸⁵ This was to become an exhibition about national filmmaking. The *Lehrschau* was divided in three complexes: the exhibition itself, a library founded in 1937, and a collection of film artifacts, from programs and flyers to pictures and posters.¹⁰⁸⁶ An original Lumière Cinematograph from 1894 and Kinetoskop from Edison were two of the many artifacts on display (Figure 7.1). At the opening, Reich Film Chamber president Prof. Dr. Lehnich praised the exposition and emphasized its importance for film practitioners, especially the *Nachwuchs*, as well as for journalists.¹⁰⁸⁷ The latter now had the possibility to acquire necessary knowledge for informed articles about films. Lehnich’s comment, followed by a small speech from the head of the German Press association (*Reichsverband der Deutschen Presse*) Wilhelm Ihde, points to the tension between film and press industry, both sides unhappy with each other. Both Lehnich and Ihde expressed their hope for an improved future collaboration.

¹⁰⁸³ Frank Maraun, “Weltgeschichte auf Zelluloid. Besuch im Reichfilmarchiv,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April 1939): 289-291. He called film “the magic carpet from the fairy tales, with which one can experience the otherwise lost realms of this past century.”

¹⁰⁸⁴ “Lehrschau eröffnet. In Anwesenheit Prof. Lehnichs,” *Film-Kurier*, February 1, 1936; “Der Film, wie man ihn noch nie sah. Die Ufa-Lehrschau – eine deutsche Kulturtat,” *Filmwelt*, no. 6 (February 1936) and see also Manfred Lichtenstein, “Die Ufa-Lehrschau,” in *Babelsberg. Ein Filmsutdio*, ed. Wolfgang Jacobsen (Berlin: Argon Verlag, 1992), 235–238.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Choy, “Inszenierungen Der Völkischen Filmkultur Im Nationalsozialismus: ‘Der Internationale Filmkongress Berlin 1935’.”

¹⁰⁸⁶ Hans Traub and Franz Steinaecker, *Die Ufa-Lehrschau: Der Weg Des Films Von Der Planung Bis Zur Vorführung* (Berlin: Ufa-Buchverlag, 1941).

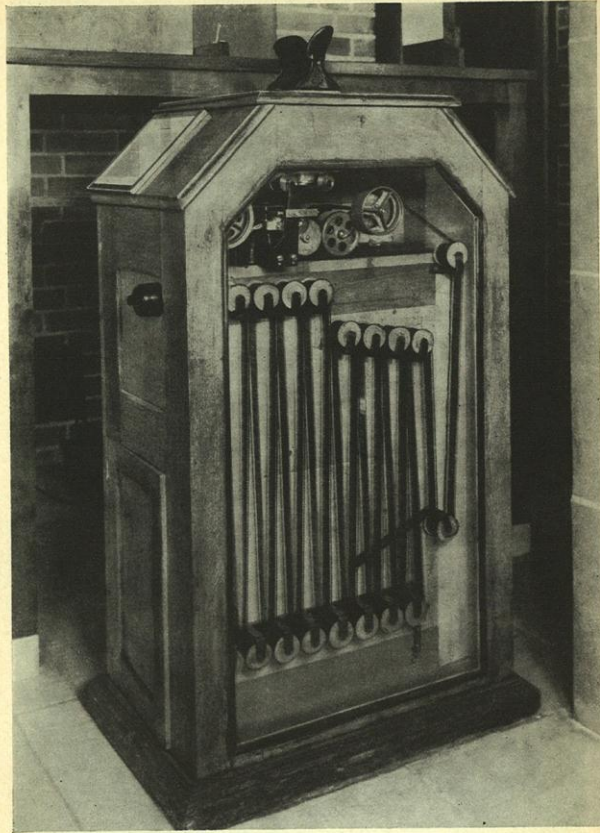
¹⁰⁸⁷ “Lehrschau der Ufa eröffnet,” *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (February 1936).

Describing the functions of the *Lehrschau*, Klitzsch listed its main priority: providing information and knowledge for film practitioners and upcoming film professionals. Further targeted audiences were teachers and students, and academic programs dealing with films.¹⁰⁸⁸ The press was also invited to attend seminars. In addition to the general public, foreigners were especially invited to gain insight in German achievements, a sign of the propagandistic role of the *Lehrschau*.

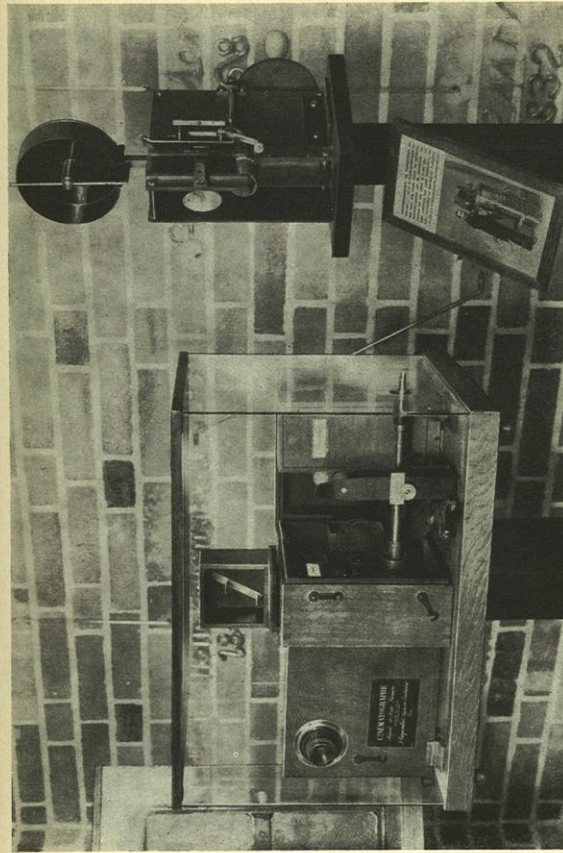
Traub retroactively delineated the connection between the *Lehrschau*, the questions of film study, and the *Nachwuchs* in his article celebrating the five-year anniversary of the *Lehrschau*.¹⁰⁸⁹ He described how the Ufa exhibition was the first step in a comprehensive plan to provide German film with a teaching and research facility.

¹⁰⁸⁸ “Die neue Lehrschau der Ufa,” *Film-Kurier*, February 1, 1936.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Hans Traub, “Fünf Jahre Ufa-Lehrschau. Von Dr. phil. Habil. Hans Traub, wissenschaftlichem Leiter der Ufa-Lehrschau,” *Film-Kurier*, February 1, 1941.



Original-Kinetoskop von Edison mit Einblick in den Lauf des Filmbandes aus der Vorhalle der Ufa-Lehrschau



Die Anfänge der Kinematographie
Eine Originalkamera der Gebrüder Lumière und ein Modell des ersten Vorführgerätes von Oskar Messter in der Ufa-Lehrschau. Der Filmtransportmechanismus des Lumièreschen Apparates wurde maßgebend für alle

Figure 7.1: An original Lumière Cinematograph from 1894 and Kinetoskop from Edison in Hans Traub and Franz Steinaecker, *Die Ufa-Lehrschau: Der Weg des Films von der Planung bis zur Vorführung* (Berlin: Ufa-Buchverlag, 1941).

This first and only “laboratory” of German film was designed to facilitate the understanding of the complexities of filmmaking and thus to enable the *Nachwuchs* to acquire the necessary knowledge. *Film-Kurier* enthusiastically reported about the four thousand visitors who had attended the exhibition by the summer of 1936.¹⁰⁹⁰

By 1938, more than seventeen thousand people had visited the *Lehrschau*. Coverage was more extensive and regular on the pages of *Filmwelt*, which published a series of articles by Traub.¹⁰⁹¹ The *Lehrschau* was quite innovative and combined different pedagogical methods and tools. In addition to using archival material, models, and a growing number of film programs and film photos, the organizers started in 1938 to use film itself to illustrate filmic techniques and themes.¹⁰⁹² The emphasis was, once again, on the combination of theory and practice, something the Film Academy endeavored to implement.

The *Nachwuchs* problem(s)

Parallel to calls and efforts to institutionalize film studies, we see in the film press an increasing number of articles devoted to the issue of *Nachwuchs*.¹⁰⁹³ A look at the publications *Filmwelt* and *Film-Kurier* reveals two different approaches. The popular magazine *Filmwelt* dealt with the topic of *Nachwuchs* from a “popular” point of view, with a readership consisting foremost of “ordinary” film viewers. Throughout the years

¹⁰⁹⁰ “4000 Besucher der Lehrschau der Ufa,” *Film-Kurier*, July 10, 1936.

¹⁰⁹¹ Hans Traub, “Ein Künstlerwerkstatt – das Film-Atelier,” *Filmwelt*, no. 31 (August 1936); “Bewegung in Raum und Licht,” *Die Kamera im Filmatelier*, *Filmwelt*, no. 44 (November 1936). See also “Ein Kapitel über den Raumkünstler. Das Bild des deutschen Film sin der Ufa-Lehrschau,” *Filmwelt*, no. 52 (December 1936).

¹⁰⁹² “Film unter die Lehmittel der Ufa-Lehrschau aufgenommen,” *Film-Kurier*, May 10, 1938.

¹⁰⁹³ The numbers of articles devoted specifically to the issue of *Nachwuchs* are following. For *Film-Kurier*: 1933, 14 articles; 1934, 34; 1935, 34; 1936, 40; 1937, 50; 1938: 40; 1939: 34; 1940: 17; 1941: 23; 1942: 15; 1943: 6; 1944: 13. Note the increase in 1936 and 1937. For *Filmwelt*: 1933: 7; 1934: 13; 1935: 15; 1936: 29; 1937: 23; 1938: 33; 1939: 25; 1940: 15; 1941: 10; 1942/43: 11.

the magazine introduced numerous *Nachwuchs* talents, most of them women but also a few young men. The regularity of these presentations could not but create or fulfill a desire, a dream, in the readers to, one day, be one of these “new faces” presented in the magazine.¹⁰⁹⁴

The articles answered the recurrent questions from readers about “how to get into film.”¹⁰⁹⁵ Every year *Filmwelt* featured a series of articles about the different film professions, from cutter to set designer, introducing the art of “scriptwriter,” or production manager.¹⁰⁹⁶ It also included, in 1936, two sets of articles about women’s professions.¹⁰⁹⁷ But the articles also functioned as cautionary tales. *Filmwelt* emphasized the need for thorough training, often to be found in the theater, “patience, hard work, and a constant enthusiasm for the art,” as well as good looks, and warned against utopian aspirations.¹⁰⁹⁸ The 1935 series “Which film job?” for example, ended with the conclusion that there were far less positions available than people eager to get a job in

¹⁰⁹⁴ In 1937 alone, *Filmwelt* featured eleven articles with new actors and actresses: no. 6 (February 7): Geraldine Katt, no. 7 (February 14): Friedrich Krahmer, no. 8 (February 21): Hubert Endlein, no. 10 (March 7): twenty two new *Nachwuchs*, no. 21 (May 23): Gusti Wolf and Richard Korn, no. 33 (August 15): Erika Drusovich, no. 36 (September 5): Rolf Moebius and Geza von Földessy, no. 37 (November 14): Elisabeth Ried and Iwa Wanja, no. 47 (November 21): Maria Eiselt and Rosita Alcaez, no. 50 (December 12): Edith Schollwer, Heinz Schorlemmer, and Hertha Feiler.

¹⁰⁹⁵ “Many young people think that, if given a chance, they could make it in film, become a Brigitte Helm or Hans Albers or Willy Fritsch,” in *Filmwelt*, no. 28 (July 1933).

¹⁰⁹⁶ See for example the jobs of female cutter no. 11 (March 1933); sound editor no. 14 (April 1934); animator no. 19 (May 1934); cameraman no. 20 (May 1934); projectionist no. 24 (June 1934). Following an introductory article about the specific functions of the profession “Der Produktionsleiter. Der Diplomat im Filmreich – Zwischen Kunst und Kalkulation” no. 17 (April 1936), *Filmwelt* introduced some of the current production managers: Max Pfeiffer no. 18 (May 1936), Bruno Duday no. 21 (May 1936), Karl Ritter no. 26 (June 1936), Hans von Wolzogen no. 35 (August 1936), Ludwig Behrends no. 46 (November 1936), Ulrich Mohrbutter no. 5 (January 1937), Erich von Neusser no. 10 (March 1937), Helmut Schreiber no. 18 (May 1937).

¹⁰⁹⁷ Anneliese Maurer, “Frauenberuf rund um den Film,” *Filmwelt*, no. 50 (December 1936) and no. 51 (December 1936).

¹⁰⁹⁸ “Der Weg zum Film,” *Filmwelt*, no. 20 (May 1934). While the journal had sporadically talked about film jobs, it started on September 30, 1934, a new series entitled “Which film job?” whose focus was on the necessary background and practical training needed. The professions introduced were cameraman (October 7); sound technician (October 21); cutter (October 28); production designer, called in German “film architect” (November 25), all 1934. In 1935 the professions of still photographer (January 1); makeup artist (January 27); jobs in the print lab (February 17) were presented.

film.¹⁰⁹⁹

The magazine also identified *Nachwuchs* as a problematic issue that needed to be dealt with. As early as August 1933, *Filmwelt* suggested that more short films should be made, one reason being that it provided an opportunity for the *Nachwuchs* to get hands-on training.¹¹⁰⁰ The magazine was quick to praise the work of its publisher, the Ufa film company, which “had always been aware of its responsibility for the promotion of *Nachwuchs*.”¹¹⁰¹ In a lengthy three page article, the work of Ufa’s casting office was presented, from extensive visits of the Reich’s theaters, to screen tests and an elaborate filing system with the data of the aspiring film professionals.¹¹⁰² Readers of *Filmwelt* were thus told until 1935 that the responsibility was with the film companies and the solution was to look in theaters for new talent, while, from 1935 on, the state took increasing responsibility for, and control of, the *Nachwuchs*. But while the issue of training was touched upon in the pages of *Filmwelt*, there was no thorough discussion of the repercussion of the need for *Nachwuchs*.

Addressed to film professionals, *Film-Kurier*, on the other hand, allowed different parties to exchange opinions. The discussions revolved around three major interconnected themes. The first was a sober evaluation of the situation, denouncing a dysfunctional system of *Nachwuchs* training. Second, the negative repercussions of this non-existing system, which included high salaries for the few established stars, were

¹⁰⁹⁹ See also in *Filmwelt*, no. 28 (July 1935) no. 30 (July 1935), no. 30 (July 1935) and no. 31 (August 1935). Curt Belling stated bluntly that they were enough acting professionals and that only 1/7 of all the film actors/actress are employed full time and the rest have to have one or two additional jobs to make ends meet. See “Am Film hängt –nach dem Film drängt alles!” *Filmwelt*, no. 10 (March 1936).

¹¹⁰⁰ “Wiederkehr des Kurzfilms,” *Filmwelt* no. 32 (August 1933) and “Kurztonfilme,” *Filmwelt* no. 3 (January 1933).

¹¹⁰¹ “Filmmärchen wird Wirklichkeit,” *Filmwelt* no. 14 (April 1934).

¹¹⁰² “Der Weg zum Film,” *Filmwelt*, no. 20 (May 1934).

discussed at length and often led to finger-pointing at the producers and/or the directors, who were declared responsible for the lack of talented *Nachwuchs*. While state intervention seemed to emerge as the only solution in view of the lack of any progress in the industry when left to its own devices, the third theme, the issue of “talent versus hard work,” as an aspect of film quality, remained unresolved.

A Dysfunctional Training System and its Negative Impacts

A consensus about the need for a “serious consideration of the *Nachwuchs* problem” emerged as early as 1933 in the pages of *Film-Kurier*. Members of the *Neues Deutsches Lichtspiel-Syndikat* film company (NDLS) argued that, in addition to promoting young, often National Socialist-minded, *Nachwuchs*, using unknown film professionals would reduce costs, offering an alternative to “film gods and goddesses and their exaggerated salaries.”¹¹⁰³ While NDLS members expected the press and advertisement departments to help raise the audience’s curiosity about these new talents, it was ultimately the directors who were held responsible for not hiring newcomers and were criticized for being too lazy to make the effort to train and to educate the *Nachwuchs*. The lack of appropriate *Nachwuchs*’ care was blamed not only on the directors, but also the producers, accused of spoiling the newcomers, who were painted as victims of exaggerated advertisement that marketed them as the next “big stars.” They argued that promoters should have instead taken more time to slowly nurture the talent they had.¹¹⁰⁴ The haste with which newcomers were treated and the lack of time granted

¹¹⁰³ “Nachwuchspflege ernstgenommen. NDLS will für Beschäftigung jünger Kräfte in der Produktion sorgen,” *Film-Kurier*, September 29, 1933.

¹¹⁰⁴ “Nachwuchs – Künstler – ungelöste Dialogfragen” in the column “Autor and Dramaturgie” in *Film-Kurier*, July 3, 1934.

for their development was a regular critique found in the film press.¹¹⁰⁵ Aspiring director Eberhard Meichsner, for example, suggested taking the theater as a model and training *Nachwuchs* for a couple of years in supporting roles, giving them time to learn the craft: “What we wish is a continuous, long term *Nachwuchs*’s sponsorship, not *ad hoc* employment for a specific role, without a second chance.”¹¹⁰⁶ As seen in part 2, the example of the theater was ambiguous. While many took inspiration from its structured and consistent way of training *Nachwuchs*, the necessity to train *film specific Nachwuchs* was emphasized.¹¹⁰⁷

As with other topics, *Film-Kurier* offered the film community a forum where common concerns and disagreement could be expressed. The articles published triggered numerous reactions, establishing not only a dialogue between film professionals, but leading to responses from the men in power, who were willingly taking things into their own hands. For example, a January 1935 front-page article celebrating the high number of new film directors but acknowledging at the same time, “unfortunately, the remarkable performances were seldom,”¹¹⁰⁸ was followed, a week later, by a round table about the “debate about young film talent.”¹¹⁰⁹ Dr. Scheuermann, president of the Reich Film Chamber, Carl Auen, head of the *Fachschaft Film*, the Professional Film Association,

¹¹⁰⁵ “Was die Branche bewegt. Prozente Nachwuchs Kritik. Fragen, die nicht zu Ruhe kommen,” *Film-Kurier*, October 8, 1935. *Filmwelt* featured in 1933 a heart-wrenching story about Valery Boothy, a young actress who committed suicide. The magazine suggested that the reason was that she had started her career as a Vamp and had then been constrained by the film industry in this type of role. *Filmwelt* hoped that “this desperate case will draw attention to, and will put a damper on the unscrupulous promotion of “Nachwuchs.” *Filmwelt*, no. 26 (June 1933).

¹¹⁰⁶ Eberhard Meichsner, “Richtige Nachwuchspflege. Die Gefahr der “großen” Rolle,” *Film-Kurier*, January 15, 1936.

¹¹⁰⁷ See previous chapter. For example Hans Nicklisch’s demand for a more natural speech in film, instead of the theatrical diction in “Zur Debatte: Weg vom Theater – Der Weg zum Film,” *Film-Kurier*, August 20, 1935. Curt Belling, on the other hand, stated in 1936 “The path to film leads through the stage,” in “Am Film hängt –nach dem Film drängt alles!” *Filmwelt*, no. 10 (March 1936).

¹¹⁰⁸ “24 neue Regisseure. Der Regie-Nachwuchs schuf im Jahre 1934 37 Filme,” *Film-Kurier*, January 4, 1935. Twenty-four out of the forty-one directors were new film professionals.

¹¹⁰⁹ “Debate über Nachwuchs. Reichsfachschaft plant Fachschule,” *Film-Kurier*, January 11, 1935.

and several members of the Reich Theater Chamber assessed the situation.¹¹¹⁰ Blaming the producers once again for not involving *Nachwuchs* in filmmaking, Scheuermann reiterated his proposal to have the main roles rehearsed by two actors, as a way to provide the *Nachwuchs* with experience.¹¹¹¹ Auen's speech was the most critical in its evaluation of the current state of affairs in the film industry, and the most specific in offering solutions. Auen first mourned the lack of talent among many novice artists and reminded listeners that nurturing the artistic talent was a very different activity than the pedagogy of other professional apprenticeships, where quantity mattered most. Too many of the "new talents" who appeared on screen were "just not talented."¹¹¹² Auen announced plans for a professional school, where "people, whom one suspects could give something to film, will be vetted, in order to avoid disappointment for themselves, and for the production."¹¹¹³ Students would be given the means to produce their own short films, and thus have the opportunity to experience all the difficulties and complexities of filmmaking. As shown later, the Film Academy implemented several of Auen's suggestions, especially his emphasis on practical training. Auen added that, due to the costs and organizational difficulties, such a school would be centralized and led by the Reich Film Council. All the participants emphasized that the state sponsoring of film was something quite novel, especially compared to the theater, which had traditionally enjoyed the special care of the state. In a final note, Auen warned against the unrealistic

¹¹¹⁰ An actor himself, Auen has been appointed head of the *Fachschaft Film*, and had been the head of a board of examiners, testing film aspirants. The board included Klein-Rogge, Alberti, Mayer-Falkow, Karl Walter, Meier, Böse, Zweißler and Bruckbauer. See Mara Krüger, "Filmnachwuchs präsentiert sich in der Reichsfachschaft," *Film-Kurier*, February 3, 1934. A second admission test was administered on March 5, 1934. "Zweite Nachwuchsprüfung in der Reichsfachschaft Film," *Film-Kurier*, February 27, 1934.

¹¹¹¹ It seems that such a previous proposal had not yet born fruition.

¹¹¹² "Debate über Nachwuchs. Reichsfachschaft plant Fachschule," *Film-Kurier*, January 11, 1935.

¹¹¹³ *Ibid.*

expectation of finding numerous “geniuses;” for him, hard work distinguished the talented film professional. What state and producers needed to do is to recognize and train those with “potential for artistic genius.”¹¹¹⁴

Talent versus Training

Auen’s point about talent and genius, inherent or trained, was part of a broad discourse found especially in the cinematic field. In a November 24, 1933 article, for example, an anonymous author described how the new generation of film directors had shown that “what is crucial is the absolutely instinctive sense for the specific laws and tasks of film making – this feeling is not learnable.”¹¹¹⁵ A few months earlier, two articles had debunked the romantic myth of the *Nachwuchs* director who, almost magically, ends up behind the camera.¹¹¹⁶ Hard work and training, especially strong knowledge of script and filmic topics, as well as sensitivity to the harmony of sound and image were considered the prerequisites for a good filmmaker. Aspiring actors and actresses were also required to go through a thorough training. Following the example of the Reich Theater Chamber, in February 1935 the *Reichs Fachschaft Film* instituted a new set of requirements and hard training, from fencing to voice training, to help “separate the wheat from the chaff,”¹¹¹⁷ and nurture the ones who “had the blessing of heaven, the character,” to succeed.¹¹¹⁸

¹¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹¹⁵ “Vom Regienachwuchs,” *Film-Kurier*, November 24, 1933.

¹¹¹⁶ “Für den Nachwuchs beim Film. Statt Anfänger-Romantik, deutsche Künstlerideal,” *Film-Kurier*, July 28, 1933.

¹¹¹⁷ “Quart-Schlag-Stoss!,” *Filmwelt*, no. 7 (February 1935).

¹¹¹⁸ “Reis am Stamme. Eine österliche Betrachtung über den deutschen Film-Nachwuchs,” *Filmwelt*, no. 16 (April 1934). On the German concept of *Persönlichkeit*, which cannot be translated simply into personality, see Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*.

Such contrasting views of the cinematic artistic abilities were not uncommon and mirrored the unsolved tensions at play. Rebuking allegations of lack of support for new artists, film director and producer Frank Wysbar responded in 1935 that, on the contrary, much had been done for the *Nachwuchs* in the last couple of years.¹¹¹⁹ The failures of the *Nachwuchs* were rooted, according to Wysbar, in their lack of talent, their failure to embrace hard work, and often their arrogance. He reminded the reader that the careers of film writers, and even more so, of film directors demanded years of practice and study in order to comprehend the complexities of filmmaking. While concluding that the most important feature of a genius was “work, work, work,” Wysbar also touched upon the “undefined something” that one needs to be able to make film, the quality that was “not teachable and not learnable.”¹¹²⁰ He was seconded by aspiring director Eberhard Meichsner, who argued that, while directing a film requires foremost talent (*Begabung*), since no specific laws of film dramaturgy exist, even a naturally gifted artist needed to work hard and learn many technical and economic matters.¹¹²¹

Such tensions were not merely experienced and expressed in the film community. One of the many unresolved paradoxes of Third Reich ideology was the extolling of hard work, often presented as an inherent German value, and its concomitant glorification of the “genius,” especially the many artistic geniuses Germany prided itself of having produced. The “genius” character of the German artist was an especially common trope

¹¹¹⁹ Frank Wysbar, “Kleine Epistel für den Nachwuchs,” in *Film-Kurier*, September 18, 1935.

¹¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹¹²¹ Eberhard Meichsner, “Richtige Nachwuchspflege. Die Gefahr der “großen” Rolle,” *Film-Kurier*, January 15, 1936. I trace later the beginning of a discourse about directors, especially the “writer-director” as the optimal type of filmmaker.

in National Socialist ideology.¹¹²² While Linda Schulte-Sasse has delineated the aestheticization of the artistic genius in Third Reich films, Erica Carter has carefully shown “the centrality of the Aryan genius, or ‘personality’, and his capacity to embody the essence of nation, and later, race,” in Goebbels’ conception of national popular art.¹¹²³ As will be shown later, the Film Academy was the place where such contradictions were played out: tropes of artistic genius cohabitated with a stern and arduous curriculum emphasizing the necessity of hard work.

Precursors of the Academy: Practical Training versus Theory and Financial Questions

Auen’s plan for a professional film school was one of the many attempts to address the *Nachwuchs* problem, which concerned actors and actresses but also technicians, writers, directors, and even producers.¹¹²⁴ The Reich Film Chamber increasingly took initiatives, such as organizing “open nights” to introduce the *Nachwuchs* to established film professionals.¹¹²⁵ It also implemented strict regulations about the employment of *Nachwuchs*, and created an agency, the Office of Film Licensing, which functioned as an

¹¹²² George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964); Linda Schulte-Sasse, “National Socialism’s Aestheticization of Genius: The Case of Herbert Maisch’s Friedrich Schiller – Triumph eines Genies,” *Germanic Review* 66, no. 1 (1991): 4–15; Eric Michaud and Christopher Fox, “National Socialist Architecture as an Acceleration of Time,” *Critical Inquiry* 19, no. 2 (1993): 220–233; Eric Michaud, *The Cult of Art in Nazi Germany* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

¹¹²³ Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*, 32ff.

¹¹²⁴ “Tonfilm in der Universität,” *Film-Kurier*, July 30, 1934. About the producers, see “Schöpferische Filmproject. Nachwuchs der Produzenten,” *Filmkurier*, January 29, 1936. Following an introductory article about the specific functions “Der Produktionsleiter. Der Diplomat im Filmreich – Zwischen Kunst und Kalkulation” *Filmwelt*, no. 17 (April 1936), *Filmwelt* introduced some of the current production managers: Max Pfeiffer in no. 18 (May 1936), Bruno Duday no. 21 (May 1936), Karl Ritter no. 26 (June 1936), Hans von Wolzogen no. 35 (August 1936), Ludwig Behrends no. 46 (November 1936).

¹¹²⁵ “Nachwuchs an die Front. Der erste Stegreif-Abend der Reichsfilmkammer,” *Film-Kurier*, March 16, 1935. The novices, among them future stars such as Grete Weiser, performed and were able to establish personal contacts with film professionals. A second meeting took place a few months later. See “Nachwuchs stellt sich vor,” *Filmwelt*, no. 39 (September 1935) and in *Film-Kurier*, September 29, 1935.

“advice center and employment agency,” dealing with issue of casting.¹¹²⁶ As shown in chapter 3, the issue of scriptwriters remained unresolved despite efforts of film companies such as Tobis and the Association of Film Writers.

In 1936, actor-director Johannes Riemann proposed a “college-like introduction to film work” for *Nachwuchs*, echoing Auen’s plans.¹¹²⁷ Once passed, an exam would grant the young actors and actresses access to jobs in film. Classroom instruction should, of course, be enhanced through trips to film sets, a suggestion Meischner welcomed. The aspiring film director argued nevertheless that concrete practical experience, and not solely observation and theory, were essential.¹¹²⁸ Agreeing with the primacy of practical training, author S.K. proposed that universities then should provide the basic knowledge in film dramaturgy and train the necessary critical senses, something the curriculum of the Film Academy was designed for, as a response to the necessity of broad comprehensive training.¹¹²⁹

Underlying many discussions was the issue of the high costs involved, which made producers reluctant to train film *Nachwuchs*, especially aspiring directors, and led them to hire instead stage professionals.¹¹³⁰ Riemann, for example, explained how lack of experience on the set costs time, which in turn costs money.¹¹³¹ The lack of technical knowledge observed in many films was often attributed to the lack of training, and to the

¹¹²⁶ “Richtlinien für den Filmnachwuchs. Maßnahmen zur Nachwuchs-Förderung,” *Film-Kurier*, May 15, 1935. In 1937, Lehnich described it as an “advice center and employment agency for film practitioners,” in Oswald Lehnich, *Jahrbuch des deutschen Films 1937*, 1938, 35.

¹¹²⁷ “Ein Regisseur zum Nachwuchs-Problem. Warum ist der Nachwuchs so teuer? Ein Vorschlag: Abhilfe durch studienmäßige Einführung in die praktische Arbeit,” *Film-Kurier*, March 24, 1936.

¹¹²⁸ Eberhard Meischner, “Nachwuchs will lernen! Gibt ihm Gelegenheit!” *Film-Kurier*, March 25, 1936.

¹¹²⁹ S-K., “Auch Regisseure müssen lernen. Die Klaviatur der Films. Noch kein Meister von Himmel gefallen,” *Film-Kurier*, November 30, 1936.

¹¹³⁰ “Was die Branche bewegt. Prozenste Nachwuchs Kritik. Fragen, die nicht zu Ruhe kommen,” *Film-Kurier*, October 8, 1935.

¹¹³¹ “Ein Regisseur zum Nachwuchs-Problem. Warum ist der Nachwuchs so teuer? Ein Vorschlag: Abhilfe durch studienmäßige Einführung in die praktische Arbeit,” *Film-Kurier*, March 24, 1936.

use of stage directors, who despite being undeniably talented, had not fully mastered the technical complexities of filmmaking.¹¹³² Among the solutions proposed: systematic training, as “directors have to learn too.”¹¹³³

Financial considerations were not only important for producers, but also for the *Nachwuchs*. Only secure income could assure professional development and prevent the proliferation of nepotism. Like Meischler, cameraman Fritz Aekerle called for a long-term program of *Nachwuchs* sponsorship, which would be financially secured; something the Film Academy, as a generously state funded institution, would endeavor to accomplish with the granting of scholarships.

Another debated issue was “the problem of the screen tests,” which were usually done under such poor conditions that they ended up being useless.¹¹³⁴ Aware that film companies would have to assume the heavy costs, many articles argued that supporting the *Nachwuchs* and improving the quality of the screen tests, constituted an investment from which companies would profit in the end: they would be able to cut the high salaries of scarce stars, but “only if [the tests were] done seriously and with the appropriate means.”¹¹³⁵ *Filmwelt* reported that Ufa had done “more than one hundred screen tests recently,” using the best film professionals.¹¹³⁶ Costs remained an issue though and a centralized and state-sponsored institute such as the Film Academy would replace small-

¹¹³² Leo de Laforge, “Vorbedingungen des Regienachwuchses. Ein Beitrag zur Nachwuchsdebatte,” *Film-Kurier*, March 12, 1937; Fritz Aekerle, “Wer ist begabt ? Kleine Anfrage zum Thema ‘Regie-Nachwuchs,’ ” *Film-Kurier*, April 21, 1937; Jürgen von Alten, “Zur Nachwuchs-Diskussion. Ein Regisseur hat das Wort. Drei Fälle aus der Praxis,” *Film-Kurier*, April 22, 1937.

¹¹³³ S-K., “Auch Regisseure müssen lernen. Die Klaviatur der Films. Noch kein Meister von Himmel gefallen,” *Film-Kurier*, November 30, 1936; Eberhard Meischner, “Nachwuchs will lernen! Gibt ihm Gelegenheit!” *Film-Kurier*, March 25, 1936.

¹¹³⁴ Jan Koetsier-Muller, “Das Problem der Probeaufnahmen,” *Der deutsche Film*, December 1936. See also Schu., “Koetsier-Muller: Sprache, Mimik, Gestik des Films. Vortrag mit Beispielen in der Lessing-Hochschule,” *Film-Kurier*, January 28, 1937.

¹¹³⁵ Hermann Hacker, “Probeaufnahmen,” *Film-Kurier*, March 3, 1937.

¹¹³⁶ Günther Schwark, “Probeaufnahme!” *Filmwelt*, no. 6 (February 1937).

scale, often reluctantly funded private programs and amortize the costs of the screen tests.

1937: The Decisive Year

The intensified debates about *Nachwuchs* culminated during the first annual convention of the Reich Film Chamber on March 6, 1937.¹¹³⁷ As Erica Carter points out, the convention was the occasion for Goebbels to take stock of the film industry's situation.¹¹³⁸ I have shown how Goebbels had secured control of the major film industries and implemented major changes, some more successful than others. Goebbels rejoiced, for example, that the Film Chamber had been finally "thoroughly organized" and streamlined, which implied "free of Jews," but he was very unhappy about the quality of many films and the work of the artistic committees he had put in place.

Goebbels used the convention to address some of the problems encountered by the film industry and the film community, such as the lack of "film specific laws or principles." He compared the state of the industry to the one of the theater when Lessing wrote his seminal work on theater dramaturgy in 1767.¹¹³⁹ Using the trope of the artistic genius, the propaganda minister confidently declared that, once again, Germany would produce the man who would "now give film its firm and unalterable principles [in the way Lessing did it for the theater]."¹¹⁴⁰ The state had thus a responsibility and a duty to "help artists reach their artistic goals," as both shared much in common. After all,

¹¹³⁷ "Jahrestagung der Reichsfilmkammer," *Film-Kurier*, February 11, 1937. For a good, but biased summary of the congress see "Mobilmachung für die deutsche Kunst," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April 1937): 10, and the March 6, 1937 edition of *Film-Kurier*.

¹¹³⁸ Carter, *Dietrich's Ghosts*, 26.

¹¹³⁹ Not unsurprisingly, Goebbels did not publicly take account of the Weimar theoretical works of Rudolf Arnheim, Béla Balázs and Siegfried Kracauer, not to mention the works of the Soviet directors Sergei Eisenstein or Pudovkin.

¹¹⁴⁰ "Dr. Goebbels fordert das Primat der Kunst. Schaffengrundsätze für das kommende Jahr," *Film-Kurier*, March 6, 1936. Gotthold Lessing's essay on literature and aesthetics *Laokoon oder Über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie* (1766), translated in 1836 as *Laocoon: or, The limits of Poetry and Painting*, was one of the early classics of art criticism. See chapter 2.

“filmmakers were forming individuals, while politicians were forming *Völker*.”¹¹⁴¹ The National Socialist state had for example helped German cinema free itself from *l’art pour l’art*, art for art’s sake, and find the connection to the *Volk*. In this instance, the National Socialist ideologues walked a difficult line. As seen before, they claimed to have rescued art and film from materialism and created the “primacy of art over commerce.” But there was never a plan to let art be just for art’s sake, and the instrumentalization of art, often justified as serving the *Volk*, or, more out rightly serving the state, was clear from the beginning.

The convention was mostly a self-congratulatory moment for Goebbels, who listed the improvements achieved since 1933, whilst warning that much still needed to be done. Although expressing his opinion about every topic from film materials and casting to the primacy of art over commerce, the propaganda minister remained vague on some issues and other participants were much more direct. President of the Reich Film Chamber Professor Dr. Lehnich addressed problems of scripts and the increased production costs finance, and Walter Gronostay complained about kitsch.¹¹⁴² Third on actor Mathias Wieman’s list of “four wishes” for the future of German Cinema was the desire to “develop the *Nachwuchs* organically.”¹¹⁴³ In the absence of a school, where one could learn the craft of filmmaking, Wieman advocated practice and hard work, something few of the *Nachwuchs* who were hastily launched as new stars could do.

Goebbels self-congratulatory statements were sobered by later reports about the

¹¹⁴¹ “Dr. Goebbels fordert das Primat der Kunst. Schaffengrundsätze für das kommende Jahr,” *Film-Kurier*, March 6, 1936.

¹¹⁴² Lehnich, “Die Eigengesetzlichkeit des Films” *Film-Kurier*, March 6, 1937; Walter Gronostay, “Der Film im Strom der Geistesgeschichte;” Matthias Wieman, “Gebraucht Eure Macht erbarmungslos zum Guten!” *Film-Kurier*, March 6, 1937.

¹¹⁴³ Mathias Wieman, “Gebraucht eure Macht erbarmungslos zum Guten,” *Film-Kurier*, March 6, 1937.

state of the German film industry.¹¹⁴⁴ The *Nachwuchs* situation had not progressed much and was still in dire need of improvement. For the film press, producers and directors were found guilty of not taking the time or giving the young film practitioners the opportunity to develop a “personality,” the prerequisite for every true star, the something that cannot be trained.¹¹⁴⁵

Film-Kurier featured, in May 1937, a renewed comprehensive plea for the necessity of a “planned scholastic film education and practical training.”¹¹⁴⁶ Echoing the debates of the previous years, Hermann Meyer emphasized the need for a comprehensive interdisciplinary training, where film practitioners serve as teachers in order to guarantee firsthand experience. Such organized training of *Nachwuchs* would regulate the supply and demand, and enable a constant pool of competent film professionals, a dire necessity for a film industry plagued by the lack of film professionals and the reliance on a limited, and expensive, number of stars.

Among the participants in the debate about the need for a systematic training, Germany’s most famous filmmaker, Professor Carl Froelich, certainly had a great impact.¹¹⁴⁷ He bemoaned the lack of talented writers able to fully integrate both cinematic elements of image and sound in their works and addressed the need for film specific acting training, especially the diction: “We are missing here in Berlin a school of acting, similar to the one in Vienna, where a group of the best women and men would provide

¹¹⁴⁴ W. Hoepfner, “Entdeckt oder erzogen? Zur Filmnachwuchsfrage,” *Film-Kurier*, April 17, 1937.

¹¹⁴⁵ Using the example of the American dancer and actress Eleanor Powell, Hermann Gressieker even argues that “personality” can help compensate for weak acting skills. Hermann Gressieker, “Muß ein Filmstar gegabt sein?” *Der deutsche Film*, August 1937, 47.

¹¹⁴⁶ Hermann Meyer, “Der Weg in die Praxis und Fragen, die damit zusammenhängen,” *Film-Kurier*, May 22, 1937.

¹¹⁴⁷ “Carl Froelich zur Nachwuchsfrage. ‘Uns fehlt in Berlin eine Hochschule des Schauspielkunst’,” *Film-Kurier*, June 3, 1937.

high quality education for the talented *Nachwuchs*.”¹¹⁴⁸

Another vocal defender of the need for a film school was Leonhard Fürst. The editor of *Der deutsche Film*, devoted a lengthy two part article to the *Nachwuchs* question entitled “System or pure luck?”¹¹⁴⁹ Fürst warned that a film school was not the ticket to “fast money and stardom,” but the foundation of a long career and noticed how “shallow know-how and expertise are in this job.”¹¹⁵⁰ He pleaded for comprehensive training, including theoretical and practical training, with dramaturgy at its core. In November 1937, the same month the creation of the Film Academy was publically announced, he laid out an extremely detailed plan for a film school, with four main departments (film dramaturgy, film music, camera, film directing, set production, and acting) as well as three secondary departments (sound technicians, film dance, and film distribution). The *DFA* would have a lot in common with this proposal, with the exception of a stronger emphasis on “National Socialist world view.” In the same issue, *Der deutsche Film* praised actor-director Wolfgang Liebeneiner for his “intelligence, sense of art, character and self-assertion against the attraction of stardom.” The magazine announced his nomination as a member of the newly created artistic committee of the Terra, noticing that “despite, or maybe because of his youth, [he] thinks through the problems of cinema with an almost mathematical precision.”¹¹⁵¹ Liebeneiner would later be chosen to be the head of the artistic department of the Film Academy, where Leonhard Fürst would also teach.

¹¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁴⁹ Leonhard Fürst, “System oder Zufall? Zur Frage der Ausbildung des filmschaffenden Nachwuchses,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 3 (September 1937) and no. 4 (November 1937).

¹¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁵¹ *Der deutsche Film*, no. 4 (November 1937):132.

Influence of Foreign Developments

Another aspect that should be taken into consideration when reviewing the years leading to the opening of the Film Academy is the attention that the German press and the government were paying to developments abroad. As shown in chapter 2, reports about European neighbors' film industries appeared regularly in the film press, especially that of France.¹¹⁵² While American cinema was taken as an example to be followed and to simultaneously avoid, the German film press paid keen attention to the new measures taken by the Italian fascist government.¹¹⁵³ In addition to organizing and hosting a renowned international film festival since 1932, the Mostra internazionale di Arte Cinematografica, Italy took one innovative step in nurturing *Nachwuchs* with the creation of the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia on November 18, 1935.¹¹⁵⁴ Modeled after Russian and American film schools, the "center for film experiment," under the leadership of Luigi Chiarini, was actually the first state operated film school in existence. *Film-Kurier* described in detail its curriculum, philosophy, and organization.¹¹⁵⁵ As is well known, the German-Italian relationship was characterized by rivalry between the two dictators.¹¹⁵⁶ Hitler and Goebbels were certainly not pleased that Italy was taking the lead in innovative film reform. The opening of the Città del cinema, or Cinecittà, in April

¹¹⁵² See for example, Frank Maraun, "Menschlichkeit und Natürlichkeit im französischen Film," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 6 (December 1937):155-160; Leonhard Fürst, "Das "wholtemperierte Klaver" des Films 'Sous les toits de Paris'," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 8 (February 1938): 224-226; Dr. Hermann Gressieker, "Große Gefahren eines großen Erfolges. Der Fall Sacha Guitry," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 11 (May 1938): 296-297.

¹¹⁵³ In addition to the seminal work of Victoria de Grazia, see Reich and Garofalo, *Re-viewing Fascism*; Clemens Zimmermann, *Medien in Nationalsozialismus. Deutschland, Italien Und Spanien in Den 1930er Und 1940er Jahren* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2007).

¹¹⁵⁴ Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia, *Centro Sperimentale Di Cinematografia: 1935-2005* (Roma: Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia, 2005).

¹¹⁵⁵ "Italina sorgt für Filmnachwuchs. Vorbildliche Film-Lehranstalt- und Experimentierzentrum in Rom errichtet!" *Film-Kurier*, November 30, 1935.

¹¹⁵⁶ Richard Bessel, *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany: Comparisons and Contrasts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Bruce F. Pauley, *Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini: Totalitarianism in the Twentieth Century* (Wheeling, Ill.: Harlan Davidson, 2003).

1937 was an even bigger threat to the German efforts to establish Neubabelsberg as the European Hollywood.¹¹⁵⁷ Almuth Püschel has traced the lengthy proceedings to turn Babelsberg into the “biggest film city of the world.”¹¹⁵⁸ Former student director Peter Pewas recalled in an interview the importance of the academy for the government: “The academy was [...] a well financed project. Europe had to be conquered and the European film market needed to be supplied with good German films.”¹¹⁵⁹ Although the influence of the Centro Sperimentale is never mentioned, a closer look at the German Film Academy program and structural organization reveals numerous resemblances. Thus, the opening of an Italian center for *Nachwuchs* training might have been an additional impetus to start the German academy in 1938.

I would thus argue that 1937 saw a general increase in discussions about *Nachwuchs* and the need for specific film training. *Film-Kurier* especially played a substantial role in tracing major discussions and issues relevant to film professionals. The daily trade paper emerged as a forum for discussions and a place for assessments, slightly more critical than the official proclamation of progress and improvement found in the regular press. These discussions, even debates, triggered reactions, which led to practical measures, as seen in the creation of the “author workshop.” The film press also played a substantial role by introducing newcomers to its readers. *Der deutsche Film* started in September 1936 a new column entitled “We present,” and *Film-Kurier* followed up in

¹¹⁵⁷ Interestingly, the first time *Der deutsche Film* talked about the Cinécitta was in August 1938, in the same issue that introduced the German Film Academy.

¹¹⁵⁸ Almuth Püschel, “‘...die Bedeutendste Der Welt’. Das Projekt Der Filmstadt Babelsberg, 1937-1943,” in *Brandenburg in Der NS-Zeit. Studien Und Dokumente*, ed. Dietrich Eichholtz (Berlin: Verlag Volk und Welt GmbH, 1993).

¹¹⁵⁹ Peter Pewas cited in Rolf Giesen, *Nazi Propaganda Films: A History and Filmography* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2003), 49–51.

February 1937 with the new column “Film *Nachwuchs* presents itself.”¹¹⁶⁰ A small paragraph summarizing previous achievements and future plans was illustrated with a photograph. The columns appeared regularly, once or twice a month in *Film-Kurier*, and made the topic of *Nachwuchs* omnipresent. Most *Nachwuchs* were introduced on the glossy pages of *Filmwelt* whose use of full-page photographs had a different impact than the other film press.

In addition to sustained coverage of the topic of *Nachwuchs* in the press, the announcement of the upcoming opening of the Film Academy on November 26, 1937 had thus been triggered by several elements.¹¹⁶¹ Although 1937 was a year of major changes, from the creation of the artistic committee and the *Reichsfilmdramaturgie* to numerous personnel changes, Goebbels was still unsatisfied with the state of the film industry, especially with the artistic committees he had put in place. The Propaganda Minister needed a move forward to solve obvious weaknesses of the film industry. In the race over the domination of European cinema, Goebbels felt pressured by the example of Italy. In addition, I have shown that in the years preceding 1937, discussions about *Nachwuchs* got more specific and included detailed plans for training (see Auen and Weidemann, as well as Fürst), as well as private efforts such as the Tobis author internship. Thus, Goebbels’ decision to open the Film Academy can also be seen as a response to publicly discussed problems. In view of the costs of such project, the film industry, once again, welcomed state intervention. Following a common pattern,

¹¹⁶⁰ “Wir stellen vor: Maria von Tasnady, Manja Behrens, Heinz König,” *der deutsche film*, September 1936; “Filmnachwuchs stellt sich vor” Dora Ruth Sylvester, Paul Hoffmann, Kurt Wieschala,” *Film-Kurier*, February 5, 1937.

¹¹⁶¹ “Goebbels sprach vor den Kulturschaffenden. Deutschland wird eine Film-Akademie erhalten,” *Film-Kurier*, November 26, 1937; “Die Jahrestagung der Kulturkammer. Aus der Rede des Reichsminister Dr. Joseph Goebbels,” *Film-Kurier*, November 27, 1937.

Goebbels could thus appear as the “patron” of the cinema, while securing control of the new institution and implementing his vision of a German cinema.

The first concrete talks about the creation of a Film Academy were recorded on August 22, 1937. Goebbels announced the project to the heads of the production on October 7, following a memorandum by Klitzsch. On November 19 and 24, 1937 he revised and approved the drafts for the Academy, whose upcoming construction was publically announced in the press on the next day. Other public events such as the Annual Meeting of the Reich Culture Chamber and meeting of *Kraft durch Freude*, provided opportunities to praise the beneficial role of the government and its patronage of the arts, announcing the creation of a pension scheme for artists and the upcoming theater and film academy.¹¹⁶² The propaganda minister spent the next couple of months fine-tuning the planning (January 25 and 26, 1938), considering potential presidents (Müller-Scheld on February 4), and making financial decisions.¹¹⁶³ Everything was ready to be announced at the second annual meeting of the Reich Chamber of Culture.

¹¹⁶² “It is true that, in the long run, every great art can only live from its *Nachwuchs*. [...] We follow the principle that a solid education and a good amount of skills are the best starting points for the advancement of a talent or the breakthrough of a genius,” *Filmwelt*, no. 49 (December 1937). See also no. 50 (December 1937).

¹¹⁶³ “The tuition will be 2,500 RM for two years. I give half of the students grants. So that the program does not only benefit the wealthy ones,” in Goebbels’ diaries, February 5, 1938.

Chapter 8

Between Ideology and Pragmatism: The German Film Academy

In best propagandistic manner, Goebbels utilized the annual meeting of the Reich Chamber of Culture on March 4, 1938, to announce the opening of the Film Academy and the Institute for Cultural Films on the property of the Ufa in Neubabelsberg.¹¹⁶⁴ In the presence of political luminaries and the *crème de la crème* of German film industry, the Propaganda Minister laid the foundation stone and declaimed the three principles of the academy (Figure 8.1).¹¹⁶⁵

Art has more to do with skills than with aspiration

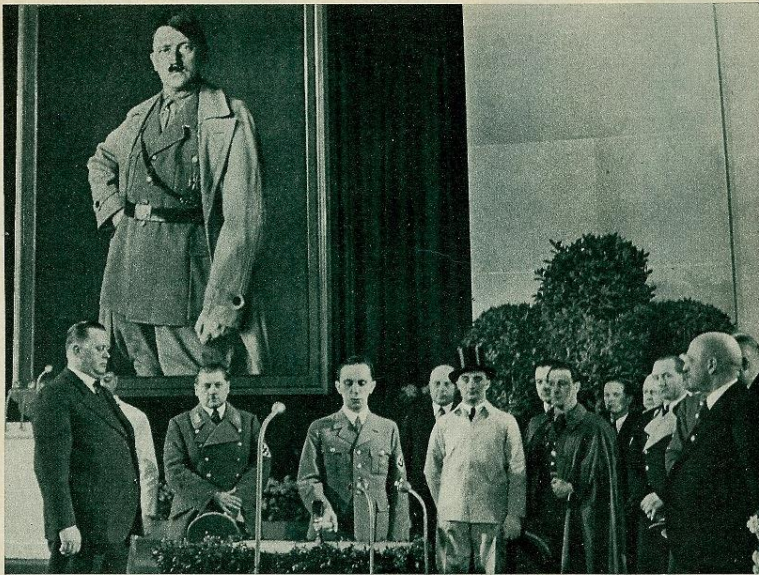
Economic and technique are subordinate to art

To serve the *Volk* is the highest honor and the highest duty of our life and our work.

The second and third points were common topoi in Goebbels' rhetoric. As already discussed, he was (at least publicly) a staunch defender of the primacy of art over financial interests. We also noticed how plans or reforms were often justified as being for the benefit of the *Volk*. The first point, the emphasis on actual skills is more interesting. As mentioned earlier, many discussions dealt with the question of whether artistic skills were inherent and thus reserved for geniuses *or*, (and many would say *and*) were learned through hard work. In addition, there were many complaints in the press about people

¹¹⁶⁴ "Die Deutsche Filmakademie entsteht," *Filmwelt*, no. 10 (March 1938). For an extensive coverage of the convention and a good summary of the individual speeches, see Dr Hans Spielhofer, "II. Jahrestagung der Reichsfilmkammer," *Der deutsche Film* 2, no. 10 (April 1938): 277-284.

¹¹⁶⁵ For a list of the major guests see "Die Deutsche Filmakademie. Feierliche Grundsteinlegung durch Dr. Goebbels in der Ufastadt," *Film-Kurier*, March 5, 1938. See also "Dr. Goebbels legt den Grundstein zur deutschen Film-Akademie. Ein Markstein im deutschen Filmschaffen," *Filmwelt*, no. 11 (March 1938).



**Dr. Goebbels
legt den Grundstein zur Deutschen Film-Akademie
Ein Meilenstein im deutschen Filmchaffen**

Der Schirmherr des deutschen Films, Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels, nahm in festlichem Rahmen die Grundsteinlegung zur Deutschen Film-Akademie in der Ufa-Stadt Babelsberg vor. Dem feierlichen Akt, der den Auftakt zu einer neuen Epoche des deutschen filmkünstlerischen Schaffens darstellte, wohnten zahlreiche hohe Vertreter von Partei und Staat und alle maßgebenden Persönlichkeiten des deutschen Films bei.

Eine Stätte, die sonst der aktiven Filmarbeit dient, die große Aufnahmehalle der Ufa-Stadt Babelsberg, war für die Grundsteinlegung besonders festlich hergerichtet worden. An der Stirnseite der Halle waren zu beiden Seiten des Führerbildes zwei riesige Modellbilder angebracht, die in ihren monumentalen Ausmaßen einen nachhaltigen Eindruck von der Größe der neuen Akademie vermitteln.

Unter der großen Zahl der Ehrengäste sah man u. a. die Reichsleiter Stabschef Lutze, Böhler und Dr. Dietrich, Reichsminister Kerll, die Gauleiter Sauckel und Böhle, die Staatssekretäre Hanke und Muhs, Generalmajor Seyffert, General Dalweg, Generalleutnant Christiansen, die SS-Obergruppenführer Sepp Dietrich und Krüger, SA-Obergruppenführer von Jagow, Stellvertretender Gauleiter Görliczer sowie Staatsminister a. D. Esser.

An der Spitze der anwesenden deutschen Filmschaffenden sah man den Präsidenten der Reichsfilmkammer, Professor Dr. Lehmann, den Leiter der Abteilung „Film“ im Reichspropagandaministerium, Reichsleiter Dr. Demandowski, den Reichsfilmproduzenten von Demandowski, den Vizepräsidenten der Reichsfilmkammer, Weidemann, und mit ihnen alle die Persönlichkeiten aus Filmwirtschaft und Filmtechnik, Filmregie und Filmgestaltung, die an dem Aufstieg und der Entwicklung des deutschen Films der letzten fünf Jahre maßgebend beteiligt waren.

Es waren ferner anwesend zahlreiche führende Persönlichkeiten der deutschen Kunst, die Reichskulturwalter und die Präsidenten der Einzelkammern der Reichskulturkammer, zahlreiche Inten-

danten, Regisseure und Schauspieler des Theaterlebens und die Direktoren der Berliner Hochschulen.

Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels wurde bei seiner Ankunft in der Ufa-Stadt Babelsberg von den Gefolgsgliedern der Ufa und anderer großer deutscher Filmunternehmen, die in einem langen Spalier Aufstellung genommen hatten, herzlich begrüßt. Die in der Festhalle versammelten Filmschaffenden grüßten den Schirmherrn des deutschen Films mit erhobenen Rechten. Beethoven's „Die Weihe des Hauses“, gespielt von den Ufa-Symphonikern, leitete die festliche Stunde ein.

Darauf ergriff der Generaldirektor der Universum-Film-Aktiengesellschaft Ludwig Klitzsch das Wort zu einer Ansprache. Nach Begrüßung der Ehrengäste wandte er sich mit besonderen Dankesworten an Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels und erklärte: „Wir alle haben Ihnen Herr Reichsminister, heute zu danken für einen Entschluß, dem im Zuge des von Ihnen geleiteten deutschen Filmaufbaues eine ganz besondere Bedeutung zukommt, für den Entschluß, eine Deutsche Film-Akademie und ein damit eng verbundenes Arbeitsinstitut für Kulturfilmschaffen ins Leben zu rufen mit der Bestimmung, daß die hierfür notwendigen großzügigen Bauten auf dem Ufa-Gelände in Neubabelsberg errichtet werden.“

Der Redner bezeichnete es als die vornehmste Zweckbestimmung der Deutschen Film-Akademie, die Heranbildung eines befähigten Nachwuchses in lebendigster Verbindung mit der Praxis durchzuführen. Kaum ein Gebiet unseres geistigen und wirtschaftlichen Lebens ertreue sich einer solchen Popularität und habe gleichzeitig einen solchen Einfluß erlangt wie alles das, was heute unter Filmschaffen und Filmwirtschaft verstanden werde. Der Redner gab dann einen Überblick über die einzelnen Gebiete des nationalen Filmschaffen. Er würdigte die künstlerische Gestaltung des Spielfilms, die unermüdete Eiferigkeit der Wochenzeitschau, das fruchtbarere Arbeitsfeld des Kultur- und Lehrfilms und die große Bedeutung des Wirtschafts- und Reklamefilms. Der Querschnitt eines solchen

in künstlerischer und technischer Form auf höchster Stufe stehenden umfassenden Filmschaffen sei wie kein anderes Mittel dazu geeignet, ein getreues Spiegelbild des Kulturzustandes eines Volkes zu geben. Hierdurch gewinne der Film eine staatspolitische Bedeutung in inner- und außenpolitischer Hinsicht.

Der Redner wandte sich dann dem Nachwuchsproblem des Films zu und erklärte, die Nachwuchsauslese sei für die Filmzukunft Deutschlands von ausschlaggebender Bedeutung. Ihr solle die Deutsche Film-Akademie durch Heranbildung eines Nachwuchses für die Praxis in erster Linie dienen. Sie werde drei Fakultäten umfassen: die filmkünstlerische Fakultät, die sich mit der Heranbildung und Schulung des Nachwuchses auf den Gebieten der Schauspiel-, Tanz- und Gesangs Kunst, der Komposition und der Regieführung usw. beschäftige; die filmtechnische Fakultät, die alle Gebiete der Filmtchnik in bezug auf Kamera und Ton, Atelier und Bau umfasse; und endlich die filmwirtschaftliche Fakultät, die die eigenen Gesetze des Films in rechtlicher und wirtschaftlicher Beziehung behandeln solle. Die Angliederung eines Arbeitsinstituts für Kulturfilmschaffen an die Deutsche Film-Akademie entspreche jener besonderen Stellung, die Deutschland auf dem Sondergebiet der Kulturfilms einnehme. Diesem Arbeitsinstitut soll eine Sammlung der bemerkenswertesten Lehr- und Kulturfilme der ganzen Welt angeschlossen werden.

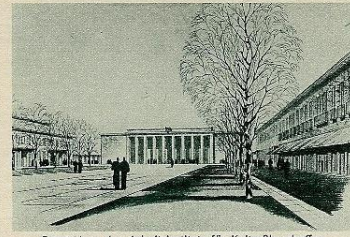
Generaldirektor Klitzsch teilte hierzu mit, daß die Ufa ihr gesamtes Material, das etwa 700 Filme umfasse, als Grundstock zur Verfügung gestellt habe. Auch die systematische Darstellung des ganzen deutschen Filmschaffen und die Zentralschreiberei, die Archive und die Leihmittelsammlung der Ufa-Lehrschau sollen der Film-Akademie angeschlossen werden.

„Das deutsche Filmschaffen“, so erklärte der Redner abschließend, befindend sich im Zustand kräftigster Neuaufbaus, der sich nach den Weisungen des Reichsministers Dr. Goebbels auf allen seinen Gebieten planmäßig vollzieht. Der Tag, an dem wir heute erlaben dürfen, besitzt für das deutsche Filmschaffen historische Bedeutung.“

Generaldirektor Klitzsch verlas nunmehr ein Dokument, das später in den Grundstein des Akademiegebäudes eingeschlossen werden sollte (Den Wortlaut des Dokuments geben wir hier in Faksimile wieder).

Der Präsident der Reichsfilmkammer, Professor Dr. Lehmann, bezeichnete in seiner Ansprache die Grundsteinlegung der Deutschen Film-Akademie und des Arbeitsinstituts für Kulturfilmschaffen als ein Ereignis von denkbar größter Tragweite. Durch den Entschluß des Reichsministers Dr. Goebbels erhalte der deutsche Film die Bildungsstätte seines Berufs-

Unten: Vogelschau auf einen Teil des Babelsberger Ufa-Geländes. Im Vordergrund das Akademiegebäude mit den Nachwuchsateliers und der Lehrschau. Dahinter die großen Ufa-Ateliers. Im Hintergrund das Gelände und die Aufnahmeateliers des Arbeitsinstituts für Kulturfilmschaffen.

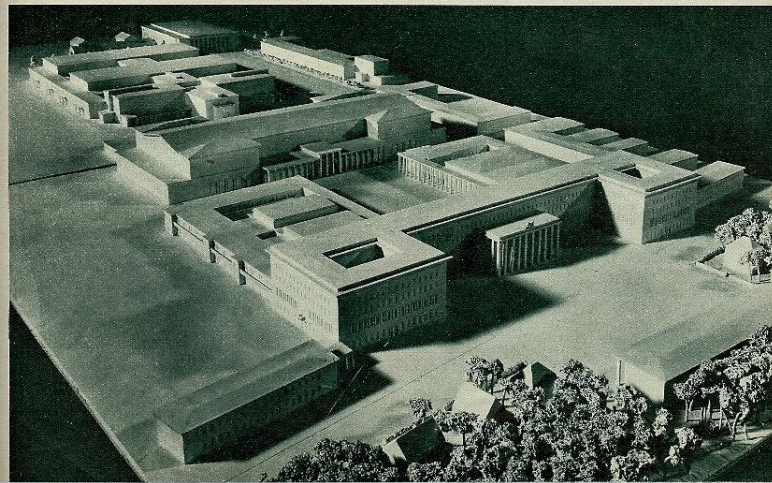


Frontschau des Arbeitsinstituts für Kulturfilmschaffen

standes, und dafür seien alle, die am deutschen Film arbeiten, dem Minister von Herzen dankbar.

Professor Dr. Lehmann bezeichnete die Berufsausbildung im Film als eines der schwierigsten Probleme des Films überhaupt. In allen Filmländern der Welt habe es an Versuchen zu einer Sicherung des Filmnachwuchses nicht gefehlt, aber nirgends habe man eine zusammenschließende Heranbildung des ganzen Standes in Angriff genommen. Der Redner ging sodann im einzelnen auf die früheren Versuche in Deutschland, eigene Filmartistenschulen zu gründen, ein. Er würdigte sodann insbesondere die Einstellung der Universitäten und technischen Hochschulen zum Film, der in Einzelfällen von den Fakultäten der Theaterwissenschaft und der Zeitungs- und Zeitungswissenschaft behandelt wurde.

In den großen Fakultäten habe der Film mit seinen zahlreichen Problemen aber bis heute keine Aufnahme gefunden. Der Studierende habe insbesondere durch die Aufstellung der verschiedenen publizistischen, soziologischen und technischen Fragen des Filmwesens auf die einzelnen Fakultäten kein Bild davon erhalten können, wie eng filmtechnische, filmkünstlerische und filmwirtschaftliche Kenntnisse miteinander verknüpft sein müssen, um den Aufgaben in der Praxis später gerecht zu werden. Die Deutsche Film-Akademie habe als Bildungsanstalt des Filmberufstandes nunmehr zwar andere Aufgaben zu erfüllen als die



Aufnahme Ufa

Figure 8.1: “Dr. Goebbels laid the first stone of the German Film Academy. A mile stone in German filmmaking,” *Filmwelt*, no. 11 (March 1938).

who considered themselves “artists” and explained their lack of success with the world’s inability to recognize their talent and genius. Summarizing Goebbels’ longer speech on the next day, *Film-Kurier*’s headline captured the goal of the Film Academy:

“Methodical nurturing of the capable workforce, and systematic training of a qualified *Nachwuchs*.”¹¹⁶⁶

The emphasis on the *capable* workforce resonated with Goebbels’ further statement that, in order to be up to the new possibilities offered to German film making – thanks to the governmental reorganization of the industry – “we must get rid of the useless weight of lack of ability, so that the layer of untalented people does not block the way for the real talented ones.”¹¹⁶⁷ This statement is quite odd, considering that the purging of the film industry was actually completed by March 1938. It mirrors Goebbels’ dissatisfaction with the film industry and some of its workforce.

The speech also shows that Goebbels has been attentive to the increased discussions in the press.¹¹⁶⁸ He judged such discussions about “the problems of film” to often only superficially touch the real issues. Goebbels announced the creation of a committee, responsible for carving out the actual problems, and he addressed himself some of the most discussed topics.¹¹⁶⁹ His suggestion that “once recognized and put to debate, such problems will be quickly solved,” was pure propaganda, considering that numerous

¹¹⁶⁶ “Dr. Goebbels vor der Filmschaffende. Der Film muß Lebensnähe haben! Planmäßige Pflege der Kräfte, die etwas können, und systematischen Erziehung eines befähigten Nachwuchses,” *Film-Kurier*, March 5, 1938.

¹¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁶⁹ Topics ranged from the question of the predominance of dialog or plot in film. Goebbels did not answer “either or” but argued for “dialog *and* plot.” He also advocated the making of films closer to life and reality. He once again lambasted against what he called unknowledgeable film critics. He dismissed as superficial the discussions about whether star films or ensemble films, before advocating the necessity for light entertainment as well as for more serious films. He finally rebuffed complains from professional groups about the representation of their members.

topics had been actively discussed for years and yet remained unresolved.¹¹⁷⁰

Talking about *Nachwuchs*, Goebbels observed that film talent could not be found solely in the theater, and that finding such talent could not be left to pure luck.¹¹⁷¹ He assured that the Film Academy would be dedicated to the “scientific systematization of the teaching of film,” and that such task will be implemented “with Teutonic thoroughness.”¹¹⁷² Adding to Goebbels’ speech, Ufa CEO Ludwig Klitzsch clarified that the Film Academy would first and foremost provide “the development of competent *Nachwuchs* in the most lively connection to practice,” and that universities and technical institutes of higher education would be in charge of the film studies and scientific film research.¹¹⁷³ Such film studies would exclusively deal with film and be finally separated from theater studies; a clear response to the numerous calls for practical training and for independent film studies.¹¹⁷⁴ As for the issue of talent versus training, the Academy’s task would be to screen, among the many aspiring to become film professionals, the few that were “truly chosen and destined” to become such, and train them; a compromise between the two approaches.¹¹⁷⁵

President of the Reich Film Chamber Prof. Dr. Lehnich situated the Academy within a history of noteworthy but failed efforts.¹¹⁷⁶ The radical importance of film, the medium of the masses, justified the involvement of the state, whose numerous restructurings had created the necessary conditions for the opening of the academy.

¹¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁷¹ Goebbels might have been answering Fürst’s article entitled “System or pure luck?” See chapter 2.

¹¹⁷² “Dr. Goebbels vor der Filmschaffende,” *Film-Kurier*, March 5, 1938.

¹¹⁷³ “Ansprache von Prof. Dr. Lehnich,” *Film-Kurier*, March 5, 1938. Also reprinted in Wolfgang Jacobsen, *Babelsberg: Ein Filmstudio* (Berlin: Argon Verlag, 1992), 239–243.

¹¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁶ Ibid. He mentioned the opening of the Ufa-school 1926, and the German Film School in 1921.

While presented as a logical step in a carefully crafted plan, the decision to open the Academy appears to have been motivated by external factors such as the calls for better *Nachwuchs* training and Goebbels' dissatisfaction with the conditions of the film industry.

The grand plan of the Academy was thus laid out in March 1938.¹¹⁷⁷ The Film Academy was divided into three faculties: an artistic, a technical, and an economic and judicial faculty.¹¹⁷⁸ The geographic proximity of the Academy buildings to the Ufa guaranteed close collaboration between the two. The Ufa had already agreed to put over seven hundred of its films at the disposition of the *Nachwuchs*. Thus the DFA was supposed to be a training and research institution.¹¹⁷⁹ The number of students was limited; applications needed to be sent by January 1, as classes were to start on April 15, 1939. The calculated cost for a four semesters of education was estimated at 2500 *Reichsmarks* (RM) for students and 500 RM for auditors, with possibilities for fellowships. A newly constructed dorm would be able to accept up to one hundred persons for 150-230 RM per semester, plus 0,50 RM for breakfast.¹¹⁸⁰ While the academy targeted foremost young, aspiring film professionals, its goal was also to “fill up the gaps in the education” of film professionals. The lectures were thus open to auditors, well-established professionals.

Erica Carter has described the academy as the systematic effort to “create as the cornerstone of German film art a model community geared to the racial selection and

¹¹⁷⁷ “Wer will auf die Filmakademie? Aufnahmebedingungen, Unterrichts- und Prüfungsordnung,” *Film-Kurier*, March 9, 1938.

¹¹⁷⁸ “Der Aufbau der Deutschen Filmakademie,” *Filmwelt* no. 12 (March 1938), and “Der Unterrichtsplan der deutschen Film-Akademie,” *Filmwelt*, no. 13 (March 1938).

¹¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸⁰ *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April 1938).

cultivation of artistic genius.”¹¹⁸¹ While the application process required proofs of citizenship, and of Aryan ancestry, in addition to age, civil status, and further information about kinship, such requests were common in 1938 and were not specific to the Film Academy.¹¹⁸² A closer look at the selection process for students, and for faculty members, revealed that practical, more than ideological, motivations were often at play.

Officially created as “a Reich’s institution in order to secure the development of the art of film (*Filmwesen*), especially film art (*Filmkunst*), “in a national socialist spirit” (*im Geiste des National Sozialismus*),¹¹⁸³ the Academy was under Goebbles’ responsibility, who choose as president, Wilhelm Müller-Scheld, former Director of Propaganda in Hessen-Nassau and Chief of the *Reichspropagandaamt*, the Central Propaganda Office.¹¹⁸⁴ The active and beneficiary role played by the state, especially Hitler and Goebbels, was often emphasized in the press. In propagandistic terms, it was proudly read as a particularity of the German state, which had recognized the value and importance of film art for the *Volk*.¹¹⁸⁵

The announcement of the opening of the academy triggered renewed efforts, and hopes for the promotion of film teaching and training, with filmmaking now integrated into universities’ curricula.¹¹⁸⁶ Film related teaching was also to be expanded in order to break the often-criticized insularity of film industry, with film theater owners, for

¹¹⁸¹ Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*, 44.

¹¹⁸² Jochen Schmidt, *Die Geschichte Des Genie-Gedankens in Der Deutschen Literatur, Philosophie Und Politik, 1750-1945* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2004).

¹¹⁸³ BA R2 RFM 4827, 2. Also reprinted in *Film-Kurier*, “Führer-Erlass für die Filmakademie,” March 26, 1938. See also Wulf, *Theater Und Film Im Dritten Reich*, 334.

¹¹⁸⁴ See “Ausbildung im Ort. Dokumente zur deutschen Filmakademie,” in Jacobsen, *Babelsberg*, 239–44.

¹¹⁸⁵ “Zu einer Auslandsumfrage. Bei uns ist es anders! In Deutschland ist die Pflege der Filmkunst eine nationale Aufgabe aller staatlichen Stellen,” *Film-Kurier*, April 4, 1938.

¹¹⁸⁶ P., “Wo bleibt die Filmkunde? Die Errichtung der Filmakademie verpflichtet die Hochschulen zu stärkerem Interesse im Film,” *Film-Kurier*, April 21, 1938, and H.M., “Filmkunde im Sommer-Semester,” *Film-Kurier*, May 7, 1938.

example, having no idea of the extent of the work done on film sets, and vice versa.¹¹⁸⁷ Comprehensive training would introduce future generations of film professionals to the complexities of not only filmmaking, but also of distribution and marketing. A practical response to such optimistic mood was the two-day seminar for the self-employed around the topic of Film organized by the German Labor Front (DAF) section of Sachsen in June 1938.¹¹⁸⁸

A Costly Project

Once announced, the implementation of the ambitious project was supposed to quickly move forward, with the first financial decisions made in June 1938. The Reich Commissioner for the German Film Industry, Dr. Max Winkler, estimated the cost for the “monumental construction” given to Professor Spree in the range of eight to nine and a half million RM.¹¹⁸⁹ Due to the close relationship of the Film Academy to film production, it was decided to construct the new building on the Ufa’s property in Neubabelsberg.¹¹⁹⁰ The Ufa was indeed tightly involved. In addition to the physical proximity and shared buildings, the film company was expected to invest twenty-five million RM into the project. Archives unveiled the careful wording of the contract, which

¹¹⁸⁷ “Fragen der Berufserziehung. Einseitiges Fachwissen führt zu Vorurteilen. Die in den einzelnen Filmsparten Tätigen sollten mehr von den “Sorgen der Anderen” erfahren,” *Film-Kurier*, May 13, 1938.

¹¹⁸⁸ “Auftakt in Kipsdorf. Großelehrgang “Film” in Sachsen DAF-Schule. Theaterbesitzer und Betriebsobmänner aus allen Teilen Deutschlands sind vertreten,” *Film-Kurier*, June 14, 1938. On the Deutscher Arbeiterfront, DAF, see Rüdiger Hachtmann, *Ein Koloß Auf Tönernen Füßen: Das Gutachten Des Wirtschaftsprüfers Karl Eicke Über Die Deutsche Arbeitsfront Vom 31. Juli 1936* (München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, n.d.); Ronald M. Smelser, *Robert Ley, Hitler’s Labour Front Leader* (Oxford: Berg, 1988); Michael Schneider, *Unterm Hakenkreuz: Arbeiter Und Arbeiterbewegung, 1933 Bis 1939*, *Geschichte Der Arbeiter Und Der Arbeiterbewegung in Deutschland Seit Dem Ende Des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Bonn: Dietz, 1999); Karl Heinz Roth, *Facetten Des Terrors: Der Geheimdienst Der “Deutschen Arbeitsfront” Und Die Zerstörung Der Arbeiterbewegung 1933-1938* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2000).

¹¹⁸⁹ In 1937, the NS-state budgeted sixty million RM per year to turn Berlin into the “World City Germania.” The Olympia Stadium for example, cost forty-two million RM. See Harald Engler, *Die Finanzierung Der Reichshauptstadt* (Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 398ff.

¹¹⁹⁰ BA R2 4790/ 92.

stated that the construction of the Academy's buildings was under the responsibility (and the ownership) of the Reich and emphasized the fact that soil and land had to be clearly in the possession of the Reich. Contacts with the Ufa were clearly delineated and Winkler appears to have been very careful to avoid unclear connections with the Ufa in order to prevent future complications. Because the Ufa was also involved in several big constructions at the same time, Winkler warned against the danger of overlapping and of expensive construction costs being pinned on the Reich.¹¹⁹¹ Winkler also made clear that if the Ufa was to use the production rooms of the Film Academy, the company had to pay a rent.¹¹⁹²

On June 24, 1938 a first sum of five million RM was immediately transferred to the account of the Cautio Treuhand Gesellschaft at the Dresdner Bank to the disposition of Dr.h.c Winkler.¹¹⁹³ The Film Academy was part of an extensive policy of media acquisition, with the Cautio buying not only shares from the major film companies (Ufa, Tobis, Bavaria, and Wien Film), but acquiring film theaters as well as publishing houses. The process of nationalization of the film industry was in full swing.

The Film Academy itself was a costly project and securing the financing was vital for President Müller-Scheld. In a memorandum to the propaganda minister, or ProMi, about the upcoming opening, he noted that "the City of Babelsberg confirmed the sum of ten thousand RM in its upcoming budget for fellowships."¹¹⁹⁴ In September 1938,

¹¹⁹¹ Winkler's caution and suspicion were confirmed, when in 1940-1941, he had to battle with Ufa to take over some of the costs of the ateliers. By that time, the academy was closed and the Ufa was using, for free, the buildings, paid by the Reich in 1938. See BA R2 4828/ 3-12.

¹¹⁹² BA R2 RFM 4827/ 7.

¹¹⁹³ BA R2 RFM 4827 / 8-10. On the Cautio Treuhand Gesellschaft see Spiker, *Film Und Kapital*. The propaganda ministerium had a budget of over fourteen million RM in 1939. See Engler, *Die Finanzierung Der Reichshauptstadt*, 302.

¹¹⁹⁴ BA 55 21253/ 48-50, from 9.19.1938.

Müller-Sheld estimated a budget of 450,000 RM for the first year and 650,000 RM for the future years.¹¹⁹⁵ By the fall of 1938, over six hundred applications had been already received, and more were coming in. The plan was to have around fifty students, thirty of them were to pay tuition, the rest was supposed to receive grants.¹¹⁹⁶ The Academy's own income was to be minimal, with tuition contributing for only 15,075 RM per year and the rest, 389,830 RM, through aid from the Propaganda department, for a total budget of 404,895 RM. The 1939-1940 budget was even more ambitious with tuition income lower (10,050 RM) and governmental aid higher (769,300 RM) for a total budget of 779,350 RM.

Choosing the Right Staff

As the official publication of the Reich Film Chamber, *Der deutsche Film* provided in August 1938 the first lengthy article about the Academy and an interview with president Müller-Sheld.¹¹⁹⁷ Deputy editor-in-chief Ilse Wehner presented the Academy, a product of Dr. Goebbels' foresight, as a way to "study and learn from past mistakes," something the fast working film industry has no time to do.¹¹⁹⁸ While Wehner remained vague about the head of the artistic faculty, "one of the most successful directors in German film," Müller-Sheld's appointment was justified with a mixture of military duties, political and artistic work.¹¹⁹⁹ Born in 1895, Müller-Sheld fought as a

¹¹⁹⁵ BA R 55 21253/ 51. This substantial sum was relatively small compared to the theater budget. Prussia, for example, spent about fourteen million RM per year. See Engler, *Die Finanzierung Der Reichshauptstadt*, 342.

¹¹⁹⁶ BA R2 RFM 4827/ 140.

¹¹⁹⁷ Ilse Wehner, "Der Vollendung entgegen. Die deutsche Filmakademie. Bedeutung und Aufgaben, Grundsätze künftiger Arbeit – nach einem Gespräch mit dem Präsident Müller-Sheld," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2 (August 1938): 34. Since June 1938, Ilse Wehner acted as the editor-in-chief, for Leonhard Fürst, who, according to the magazine, was dealing with matters of film production. See announcement in *Der deutsche Film*, no. 12 (June 1938): 344.

¹¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

volunteer from 1914 until the end of the war and was severely injured.¹²⁰⁰ After studying journalism, theater and literature, he wrote “militantly critical brochures” and theater plays. He was active in the *Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur* (the Militant League for German Culture), as SA-Führer and Gau speaker, before he became, in 1932, the Director of Propaganda for the NSDAP in Hessen-Nassau. Besides being a member of the Reich Film Chamber Council, he was also the Chief of the Central Propaganda *Office* as well as a writer. His play *Ein Deutscher namens Stein*, (A German Man Named Stein) had been “especially successful.”¹²⁰¹ Müller-Scheld was also active in the film milieu. Early 1937, Goebbels considered him to become the new staff manager of the Ufa, but was later dissatisfied with his work: “Müller-Scheld gives me his report about the examination of the Ufa. He only palavers about art, and in such a childish way. No sense of organization.”¹²⁰² Müller-Scheld’s revision must have satisfied the propaganda minister,¹²⁰³ because he was considered for the post of president of the Film Academy.¹²⁰⁴ According to Carter, wrongly quoting Frank Maraun, “Müller-Scheid (sic) took the role of ideological policeman for the Academy.”¹²⁰⁵ While Müller-Scheld’s longstanding loyalty to the National Socialist Party undoubtedly motivated his appointment, his artistic and propagandistic work, as we will see, certainly figured in the decision. Goebbels often expressed his frustration with him, calling him “too theoretical,”

¹²⁰⁰ BA R2 RFM 4827, 32ff, Deutsche Filmakademie (ed.), *Deutsche Filmakademie mit dem Arbeitsinstitut für Kulturfilmshaffen* (inaugural brochure) (Babelsberg-Ufastadt: Deutsche Filmakademie, 1938).

¹²⁰¹ Interestingly, Müller-Scheld’s 1929 diatribe against Erich Maria Remarque’s “Im Westen nichts Neues” is not mentioned.

¹²⁰² Goebbels’ diaries, April 17 and August 16, 1937.

¹²⁰³ Goebbels’ diaries, October 8 and 9, 1937.

¹²⁰⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, February 4, 1938.

¹²⁰⁵ Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*, 44. Carter quotes Frank Maraun, “Kostümgestalter und Trickfilmzeichner gesucht! Abteilung Bildende Künste: ein Lehrgebiet der filmkünstlerischen Fakultät,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1938): 126. Maraun though did not interview Müller-Scheld personally but Dr. Eduard Gudenrath, head of the animation department.

with not enough practical experience.¹²⁰⁶ A close look at Müller-Scheld's work as the head of the academy reveals an engagement with the academy and "his students," which went beyond the ideological rhetoric he used publicly.

With the beginning of the classes now officially scheduled for November 1, 1938, and the number of students capped at fifty, Goebbels made the composition of the faculty public.¹²⁰⁷ Head of the faculty of Film Art was actor-director Wolfgang Liebeneiner. Thun Rudolph was in charge of the faculty of Film Technology and Dr. Günter Schwarz was the director of the Economics department.¹²⁰⁸ CEO Oskar Schmitt-Halin would supervise four faculties, one assistant, one bookkeeper, six secretaries, and one technical worker.

The three institutes were further divided among several departments, covering all aspects of filmmaking. The artistic department under Liebeneiner for example did not limit itself to training actors and actresses. It was divided among three learning groups: dramaturgy, acting, and plastic arts. While the brochure prided itself with a long list of well-known film professionals, who had "confirmed" their future collaboration, the actual faculty members were all experienced film practitioners – some of them had previously worked with Liebeneiner– and also had previous teaching experience. Dr. Hermann Gressieker was a prolific film and theater critic, among others for *Der deutsche Film*, and had written radio and film scripts. He also had been the chief dramaturge at the Deutsches Theater under Heinz Hilpert.¹²⁰⁹ His friend and editor in chief of *Der deutsche Film*,

¹²⁰⁶ Goebbels' diaries, July 29, 1938.

¹²⁰⁷ "Beginn der Lehrtätigkeit der Deutschen Film-Akademie am 1. November," *Film-Kurier*, September 3, 1938; "Dr. Goebbels ernannte. Die Fakultätsleiter der Filmakademie," *Film-Kurier*, September 5, 1938.

¹²⁰⁸ BA R55, 2153/ 48-50.

¹²⁰⁹ BA RKI / 2106 and 2076-2080. On his personal questioner Gressieker had listed Fürst as eligible to provide reference.

Leonhard Fürst was also part of the faculty, and so were National Socialist hardliner Fritz Hippler and former leftist director Werner Hochbaum.¹²¹⁰ Weimar cameraman Carl Hoffmann, composer Wolfgang Zeller, and conductor Julius Kopsch completed the team.¹²¹¹ Many faculty members had an eclectic past, indicating that their professional qualifications and their willingness to work with the national socialist regime at the Academy, more than their party allegiances, or lack of, had motivated their appointment.¹²¹²

Continuing its coverage of the Academy, *Film-Kurier* featured front-page interviews with the head of the faculties. On October 12, 1938, Dr. Günther Schwarz detailed the program of the Economics Department.¹²¹³ Schwarz appeared to be a qualified choice for the position. Born in 1902 in Neuwied, he had studied law and political economics. Eleven years ago, he had become a member of the Film Economic

¹²¹⁰ *Der deutsche Film* also devoted a two pages article on Werner Hochbaum. See *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April 1937). See Gressieker's application to the post at the Film Academy in BA R55 / 176, 213-216. We realized how small the film world was, and how despite claims to fight nepotism, it seems that a relatively small group of men were part of such big project. Dr. Günther Schwarz had also contributed to *Der deutsche Film* and would be appointed Head of Film Export of the RFK in November 1939. The official publication of the Reich Film Chamber, *Der deutsche Film*, seems more than eager to talk about Liebeneiner's artistic successes, before and after his appointment.

¹²¹¹ Car Hoffmann had worked on Liebeneiner's first film *Promise me Nothing*, in 1937, and Hans Spielhofer also devoted a two pages article to the cameraman. See "An der Kamera: Carl Hoffmann. Einer Meister der Aufnahme," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 12 (June 1937).

¹²¹² Wolfgang Zeller for example had worked with Jürgen Fehling and Erwin Picator before he composed the music for Walter Ruttmann's documentary "*Melodie der Welt*" in 1928, the first full length German sound film. He taught film music at the *Institut für Mikrofonforschung* at the *Berliner Klindworth-Scharwenka-Konservatorium* and was since 1933 the head of the Society of the music film authors. During the Third Reich he composed the music for serious, dramatic movies for well-established directors such as Veit Harlan (*Der Herrscher*, 1937, *Jüd Süß*, 1940 and *Immense*, 1943), Jacques Feyder (*Fahrendes Volk*, 1938) and the head of the artistic faculty, Wolfgang Liebeneiner (*Du und Ich*, 1938, *Ziel in den Wolken*, 1938). See Christine Raber, *Der Filmkomponist Wolfgang Zeller: Propagandistische Funktionen Seiner Filmmusik Im Dritten Reich* (Berlin: Laaber-Verlags, 2005). Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck reported in length about the composer in "Von der Volksbühne zur Filmakademie. Gespräch mit dem Komponisten Wolfgang Zeller," *Film-Kurier*, June 26, 1939.

¹²¹³ "Unterredung mit Dr. Schwarz. Ziele und Aufgaben der wirtschaftlichen Fakultät. Zusammenarbeit mit Praxis – Später Gründung eines Instituts mit internationalen Arbeitsgebiet," *Film-Kurier*, October 12, 1938.

Federation and had a big impact on the development of the film industry.¹²¹⁴ At the time of the opening, Schwarz was working on national and international questions of film foreign trade and he was also co-chief executive of the *Filmkredit Bank* and the German Film Export GmbH. In his interview with *Film-Kurier*, Schwarz emphasizes, in addition to the attention to *weltanschauliche Fragen* and physical fitness, the practical aspect of the training, which was designed for newcomers, as well as experienced economists, who wish to work in the film industry. While Schwarz's plan of a future institute for film economics and film judicial questions with an "international field of activity" might signal future brutal territorial German expansions, it did address the concrete situation of cinema and films as global products. Schwarz himself had regularly reported on questions of film export, import, and of copyright in the film press.

An interview with Müller-Scheld followed on October 21, 1938. The president of the Academy felt the need to rectify "the wrong perception of the goals and duties of the Academy, which predominated in the film industry and public opinion."¹²¹⁵ The article focused on few major points, such as, once again, reassuring the public that the Film Academy would not be too theoretical and "unworldly" (*lebensfremd*), but would focus on practical training, and result in the making of a feature film. The curriculum guaranteed an education with a National Socialist worldview (*Weltanschaulichung*). While Müller-Scheld assured that a system of fellowships would allow talent from all social classes from the *Volk* to attend the Academy, he also reminded the readers – and potential applicants – that the selection would be very careful, due to the "utter

¹²¹⁴ BA R 2 / 4827, 57 ff.

¹²¹⁵ Rut., "Auftakt zur Jahrestagung der DKG. Müller-Scheld über Ziele der Deutschen Filmakademie. Gegenwartsnahe Filmgestaltung – schöpferische Menschen aus allen Schichten sollen herangebildet werden," *Film-Kurier*, October 21, 1938.

importance and the drastic influence of film.”¹²¹⁶ A doctor treats maybe a thousands patients in his life; a feature film reaches up to twenty to thirty millions. Müller-Scheld also compared film to theater, where a good theater play shown on one hundred stages can only reach eight hundred thousand people.¹²¹⁷

Liebeneiner’s interview was published on October 27, 1938. The head of the Film Artistic faculty, who just finished shooting his film *Ziel in den Wolken* (Goal in the Clouds) was staging the premiere of Shaw’s piece *Der Arzt am Scheideweg* (The Doctor’s Dilemma) while his most recent film *Du und Ich* (You and Me) just opened. Liebeneiner described his two main foci: the training of authors and dramatists and the training a new generation of film actors and actresses.¹²¹⁸ In other interviews, he emphasized the new pedagogical teaching style, summarized in the headline: “as non-academic as possible.”¹²¹⁹ “Lively exchange between teachers and students”, “no dry lectures, no aesthetic observations but rather a common experience of the field of knowledge” were to be the foundation of the teaching and learning.¹²²⁰

The Film Artistic Faculty was viewed as the most significant and the appointment of the young Liebeneiner at its head, “Germany’s most successful young director,”¹²²¹ deserves close attention, especially knowing Goebbels’ use of staff policy as a “revolutionary element.”¹²²² “Far-sighted personnel policy,” the propaganda minister noted on July 30,

¹²¹⁶ Ibid.

¹²¹⁷ Ibid. The article mentions the one hundred thousand RM stipend from the city of Babelsberg.

¹²¹⁸ “Unterredung mit Wolfgang Liebeneiner. Wie er sich seine Arbeit als Fakultätsleiter denkt, “*Film-Kurier*, October 27, 1938.

¹²¹⁹ BA R2 RFM 4827/22, “So unakademisch wie möglich! Interview with Wolfgang Liebeneiner,” *Danziger Vorposten*, November 15, 1938.

¹²²⁰ Ibid.

¹²²¹ Ilse Wehner, “Deutschlands erfolgreichster junger Regisseur – Fakultätsleiter an der Deutschen Filmakademie,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1938): 118.

¹²²² Moeller, *The Film Minister*, 57.

1937, “is the most important thing in all fields.”¹²²³ What could have then been the reasoning behind Liebeneiner’s appointment? Born in Liebau, Silesia, Germany – now Lubomierz, Poland – in 1905, Liebeneiner first acted in 1928 at the Münchner Kammerspiele. He had been working as an assistant stage director since 1929, and, from 1931 on, as a stage director. After his debut at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin in 1930, he became a permanent member until 1934. Parallel to his theatrical career, Liebeneiner had been starring in films since 1931. His breakthrough came with his role in Max Ophuls’ adaptation of Schnitzler’s play *Liebelei*, as an Austrian officer, who ends up killed in a duel caused by an antiquated code of honor. Liebeneiner specialized in the type of the romantic lover, in films often set in artistic, intellectual milieus. Not really the “fascist man of steel” type Erica Carter wants to see in him.¹²²⁴ Gustaf Gründgens brought him to the Staatstheater in 1936, where Liebeneiner worked as an actor and stage director until the closing of the theater in 1944. He drew Goebbels’ attention, who described him on June 11, 1937 as “young, modern, ambitious, industrious and fanatical,”¹²²⁵ and praised his first film as a director, *Promise me Nothing*, on July 21, 1937. The press celebrated the premiere of the film, calling it “a film thought through and mastered, up to the last centimeter.”¹²²⁶ The virtuosity of the dialog and the wonderful acting were credited to Liebeneiner’s theatrical background and his insistence on extensive rehearsals. Liebeneiner was appointed member of the Terra’s artistic committee a few months later.¹²²⁷ This first official position was the first of a long list of prestigious appointments and rewards, none of which would have been possible without

¹²²³ Goebbels’ diaries, July 30, 1937.

¹²²⁴ Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*, 46.

¹²²⁵ Goebbels’ diaries, June 11, 1937

¹²²⁶ Georg Herzberg’s review in *Film-Kurier*, August 31, 1937.

¹²²⁷ “Kunstausschuß der Terra-Kunst. Auch der Aufsichtsrat bestellt,” *Film-Kurier*, September 17, 1937.

Goebbels' approval and support.¹²²⁸ Liebeneiner's impressive debut was celebrated by *Film-Kurier*, which granted him a "*Nachwuchs* Palme" in December 1937, noting the speed and the success of his burgeoning film career.¹²²⁹ The newcomer had directed two financially and artistically successful movies with a moderate budget, something no one had ever done before. His second film *Der Mustergatten* (The Model Husband) with Heinz Rühmann, Heli Finkenzeller, and Leny Marenbach had received an international acclaim at the Parisian World Fair in December 1937. The enthusiastic reception of the French critics and the French press were especially highlighted, giving Liebeneiner an international *caché* few of his colleagues had.¹²³⁰ Although the German reviews focused on Rühmann's performance, which culminated in an "alcohol orgy," Liebeneiner's directing style was highly praised. According to the reviewer Günther Schwark, the director's theatrical background, once again, had "sharpened his ear for the dialogue's naturalness and its propensity to improvisation." Liebeneiner's use of visual elements, especially the slapstick scenes with the two drunken characters, was especially engaging. Topping this media exposure, Liebeneiner published a full-page essay in *Film-Kurier* on December 31, 1937.¹²³¹ Entitled "Paths to Filmic Work of Art," the essay echoed many of Goebbels's principles for cinema: audiences feel and do not think (they are emotionally involved and do not analyze); the artist relies on his own feelings, his gut, and only by doing so is he able to communicate these sensations to the audience, and to

¹²²⁸ Dietrich Kuhlbrodt, "De Kult Des Unpolitischen: Produktionschef Wolfgang Liebeneiner," in *Das Ufa-Buch*, ed. Hans-Michael Bock and Michael Töteberg (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1992), 446–449.

¹²²⁹ "Gespräch mit Wolfgang Liebeneiner," *Film-Kurier*, September 23, 1937, and "1937 in Zahlen," *Film-Kurier*, December 31, 1937.

¹²³⁰ See review in *Film-Kurier*, October 14, 1937. On the French reception see "Mustergatte in Paris. Ein erfolgreicher Start," *Film-Kurier*, November 19, 1937; "Pariser Echo zum "Mustergatten," *Film-Kurier*, December 21, 1937.

¹²³¹ Wolfgang Liebeneiner, "Im entscheidenden Augenblick darf man nur sich selber fragen. Wege zum filmischen Kunstwerk," *Film-Kurier*, December 31, 1937.

passionately stand behind his work. Thus, for Liebeneiner, the essential requisite for the regeneration of filmmaking lays in the passion for the material and the courage to fight for it. Like Goebbels, Liebeneiner considered the economics concerns important, but secondary to the artistic ones. Technical questions were also of secondary importance; Germany would eventually catch up with Hollywood's technical virtuosity, but this would not make German film better. Like Goebbels again, Liebeneiner was appreciative of French and especially American filmmaking, for its technique, mastery of dialog, and situations, which mix drama and comedy. But he also pointed to the fact that German film making was different in so many ways, that replicating American formulas would just come across as "unnatural." Liebeneiner concluded his essay with a list of principles, which can be retroactively read as a "teaching and filmmaking philosophy," emphasizing, for example, the role and duties of the film director, the primacy of art over commerce, the false infatuation with new things and with anything that is foreign.¹²³²

After announcing the creation of the academy in March 1937, Goebbels was certainly careful to choose the head of the Film Art faculty. Liebeneiner must have come across as a logical choice. He was the rare combination of a man with experience as both an actor and a director, a man who had been successful in both film and theater, a man with an international *caché*.¹²³³ Although he was not a self-proclaimed National Socialist, Liebeneiner's conceptions of film art echoed Goebbels' own statements. In the summer of 1937, Liebeneiner began shooting his new film, *Ziel in den Wolken*, (Goal in the

¹²³² For Liebeneiner, a film director can only be called one if he "directs" his film three times: when he works on the script, when he directs on the stage, and in the cutting room. Throughout his career, Liebeneiner regularly wrote about filmmaking and many of these articles were published in the film press.

¹²³³ *Der deutsche Film* listed his films (*Versprich mir nichts*, *Der Mustergatte*, *Yvette*) as German productionn being as good as American film. See Fran Maraun, "Der wichtigste Film des Monats: *Ich liebe Dich*," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 3 (September 1938): 84.

Clouds), about the beginning of German aviation, doubtlessly a topic Goebbels appreciated.¹²³⁴ Müller-Scheld summarized the main reasons for hiring Liebeneiner in an interview with *Filmwelt*:

Liebeneiner brings all the conditions for this big task. He is young and is full of boundless energy but at the same time has a well-rounded personality. As a director he pushed with all his films new boundaries and truly created a new film style; as a person he has a complete lack of vanity and is only obsessed with his task. Liebeneiner's name is a whole program by itself, and I am lucky that it will be the artistic program of the Film Academy.¹²³⁵

Reporting on a speech Liebeneiner gave in Hamburg on November 7, 1938, *Film-Kurier* speculated that his appointment was rooted in the fact that he was himself a young film director who had to struggle with the problems of filmmaking and thus would not drift away from practical work in his teaching. Interestingly the paper also gave his age, equal to many of the students, as a good reason for hiring him, guaranteeing “more natural way of understanding each other.”¹²³⁶

While Liebeneiner's appointment received much attention, the Academy as a whole was the subject of much propaganda. The Reich Film Chamber publication, *Der deutsche Film*, brought out a special issue about the Film Academy in November 1938.¹²³⁷ While praising the academy as a “one-of-its-kind” institute (and by that willfully omitting the Italian innovative efforts), Müller-Scheld seemed to be still slightly on the defensive. He justified the high costs, especially for a selection of thirty-five to

¹²³⁴ ‘Wolfgang Liebeneiner dreht in Borkheide einen Film aus der anfangszeit der Fliegerei,’ *Film-Kurier*, August 30, 1937. See the review von Hans Schuhmacher *Film-Kurier*, March 11, 1939. Schuhmacher spoke of “an important, a necessary topic. [...] A film had to be made about it.”

¹²³⁵ Gabriele Müller-Schwarz, “Deutsche Filmakademie. Die hohe Schule des Films vor der Eröffnung,” *Filmwelt*, no. 41 (October 1938).

¹²³⁶ “Liebeneiner sprach in Hamburg. Durchdringung der Materie und Klarheit des Zieles. Künstler dürfen nicht uns Uferlose wirtschaften, sondern sind Treuhänder einer Volkskapitals,” *Film-Kurier*, November 7, 1938.

¹²³⁷ “Sonderheft Deutsche Filmakademie,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1938).

forty students, by reminding the readers that cinema was the only art which can influence such a mass of people. I read his comments that “every applicant desiring future acceptance into the Academy must [...] show traces of genius,” not solely as “a summary of the Academy’s social-Darwinist vision of the racial selection of creative excellence,” as Erica Carter has suggested, but as comments that were part of a conventional National Socialist rhetoric of artistic genius. It was a rhetoric Müller-Scheld was also using to justify the expenditures related to the academy. Müller-Scheld might also have used the concept of genius interchangeably with talent. His remark that “the main prerequisite for acceptance – and this must be emphatically emphasized – is not the desire to go to film, but the talent for film,” can also be understood as a deterrence to the hundreds of applicants.¹²³⁸

In addition to an interview with Liebeneiner and a short portrait of Günter Schwarz, the head of the economic and judicial faculty, *Der deutsche Film* introduced Rudolph Thun, the head of the technical faculty, whose professional experience made him an ideal choice for the position.¹²³⁹ A student of physics at the University of Berlin, Thun had worked as an engineer and physician in the field of electrical measurement, using film as a measurement tool. In 1922, he founded the Fachfilm GmbH, which produced technical, educational and advertising films. At the beginning of sound film,

¹²³⁸ *Filmwelt* reported in October 1938 that the *DFA* had received more than seven hundred applications. *Filmwelt*, no. 41 (October 1938). The interest was so high that the magazine had to ask its readers to refrain from sending questions and promised to print more information about the *DFA* as soon as possible. *Filmwelt*, no. 38 (September 1938).

¹²³⁹ For Günther Schwarz see BA R2 / 4827, 57. For Rudolf Thun see BA R2 / 4827, 48 and BA R55 / 176, 201-206. *Der deutsche Film* also introduced Dr. Eubard Gudenrath, in charge of the graphic arts department, part of the artistic faculty and Dr. jur. Georg Roeber, head of the Film Law Faculty. See Frank Maraun, “Kostümgestalter und Trickfilmzeichner gesucht-! Abteilung Bildende Künste: ein Lehrgebiet der filmkünstlerischen Fakultät,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1938): 124-125, and “Dr. Georg Roeber. Filmrecht als Lehr- und Forschungsaufgabe. Die Deutsche Filmakademie beabsichtigt keine Uasbildung zum “Filmrechtswahrer,” *Film-Kurier*, November 30, 1938.

Rudolph Thun developed his own system of synchronization. In the year preceding 1938, the engineer was also involved in the field of television.¹²⁴⁰ While the presentation of the faculty members stressed their ideological appropriateness, professional experience seems to have constituted an important factor in the choice of the faculty members.¹²⁴¹

From the point of view of the faculty members, working at the Academy had many advantages. In the fall of 1938, president Müller-Scheld, acknowledging the dilemma of many teaching faculty members caught between their own filmmaking activities and their teaching activities, requested the authorization to found his own film production company, which was to operate in the buildings of the Film Academy. On December 21, 1938, Dr. Winkler answered positively on behalf of the propaganda minister.¹²⁴² Presented as an opportunity to provide the students of the Academy with practical experience, the Müller-Scheld productions, directed by Wolfgang Liebeneiner, were to be distributed by the Terra film Company. Müller-Scheld, who emphasized his artistic qualifications, was responsible for choice of material and design, choice of director and staff.¹²⁴³ His plan was ideal. He could use the newest and most modern film sets in Germany, some of the best film professionals who were already working at the Academy, and could give students in their third semester the opportunity to participate in a “real,” commercial feature film. Such artistic position and responsibilities exceeded the functions of an Academy president. Müller-Scheld, as well as Liebeneiner, seemed to

¹²⁴⁰ BA R 2 / 4827- 48. See “Rudolph Thun. Die filmtechnische Fakultät der Deutschen Filmakademie,” and “Günter Schwarz. Der Aufbau der filmwirtschaftlichen und filmrechtlichen Fakultät der Deutschen Filmakademie,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1938): 119-121. Schwarz had been a member of the NSDAP since 01.05 1933, with the number 2.894.404. See BA R2/ 4828, 55 and BA R55 / 176, 208-211.

¹²⁴¹ Every faculty members had to fill a personal questioner (*Fragebogen*) and present a “political certificate/record” (*politische Führungszeugnis*). See BA R2 / 4828, 55.

¹²⁴² BA R 55 / 21253, 72.

¹²⁴³ BA R 55 / 21253, 57-61. Müller-Scheld to Dr. Goebbels, February 21, 1939.

have exploited their position at the Academy for personal gains, showing an opportunism not unusual for the time.

The Students

Despite the optimistic declaration of Goebbels about the future artistic geniuses Germany would produce, the selection of capable and promising students turned out to be harder than expected. One of Müller-Scheld's goal was to break the closed circles of film professionals, "who hire their acquaintances and friends."¹²⁴⁴ While the president of the Academy presented such a move as part of a project to enable "members of all social classes to participate in this powerful tool of expression," one senses a real concern about the lack of control over film professionals, whose actions were motivated by personal gains and did not fit into the National Socialist project of a new German cinema.

Out of the two thousand applicants who were asked to send further information only 240 were considered "seriously."¹²⁴⁵ Müller-Scheld personally interviewed 110 of them, read their handwritten application and attended their entrance exam. The president identified a very superficial knowledge of filmmaking, generated by a frivolous idea of the life of filmmakers. In a speech given at the "Day of Film" in Konstanz on November 28, he disputed the wrong impression about the carefree lives of actors and actresses, an image often propagated, if not created, by film magazines such as *Filmwoche* and *Filmwelt*.¹²⁴⁶ He emphasized the hard work of not only actors and actresses but also of the numerous, and often forgotten, film professionals involved in film making.

¹²⁴⁴ See the speech given in front of the heads of the propaganda departments on October 5, 1938 in BA R 55/ 21254, 95-96.

¹²⁴⁵ BA R 55 / 21253, 42-46. Müller-Scheld to Dr. Goebbels on November 11, 1938.

¹²⁴⁶ See the letter responding to Müller-Scheld's speech in Konstanz and complaining about depiction of luxurious houses of artists in *Filmwoche*. BA R55/ 21254, 73.

The first batch of sixty-two regular students and auditors was presented to the Propaganda Minister on November 14, 1938.¹²⁴⁷ Goebbels was “not satisfied” with the meeting and wrote in his diary, “[g]ave a speech at the Film Academy. About the Goals and Duties of Cinema. But what Müller-Scheld has selected as *Nachwuchs* is crap. No good prospect.”¹²⁴⁸ Goebbels was not satisfied with the results, which did not match his vision of a new generation of film professionals. Müller-Scheld was anxious to justify his choice of students. In a five pages memo, he explained the poor general level of education of the students with their young age and the fact that many came fresh from the countryside and needed some adjustment in the capital.

Academy lecturer Oskar Kalbus remembered Müller-Scheld’s difficulties finding talented *Nachwuchs*.

In the beginning only girls and boys from wealthy family let themselves register in the Film Academy, but Goebbels categorically demanded that working class children should be educated to become film stars too. So the President drove straight to the Ruhr [Germany’s industrial area] and brought a girl from a miner’s family who had a speech impediment which on the tape recording of test takes became even more evident. The faculty of film art suggested to send the disappointed girl as soon as possible back to her parental home. The President, however, took the disappointed girl to Berlin’s *Charité* hospital where she was operated on at the expense of the Academy, but that operation was not able to work miracles and create a suitable voice for sound films. After that the desperate President went to the seaside resorts of the Baltic and the North Sea where workers spend their holidays sponsored by [the organization] “Kraft durch Freude.” Here the talent scout with an expert eye studied bathing youth in order to motivate the most beautiful girls to enter the Film Academy. The Strand Police, which didn’t know of the worries of the sorely tried President of Film Academy, debated if the uncanny visitor might be a white-slave trader and if it should grab him for the sake of the youth. The President left the seaside without having achieved anything.¹²⁴⁹

Former DFA student Peter Pewas confirmed Müller-Scheld’s challenges: “the criteria of the selection were strange. The head of the Academy, Müller-Scheld, a former

¹²⁴⁷ The composition of the students was: Faculty of Economics: two women and four men; Faculty of Film technique: seven men; Faculty of Film Art: dramaturgy men, film music three men, costume two women, acting five men and fourteen women.

¹²⁴⁸ Goebbels’ diaries, November 15, 1938.

¹²⁴⁹ Giesen, *Nazi Propaganda Films*, 49–50. No Indication where he found this quote.

dramatist, was looking for the big talents, naturally, but among National Socialist offspring he found more *Gesinnung* (convictions) than real talents. Later only a handful of graduates could catch on.”¹²⁵⁰ As can be seen in the curriculum, Goebbels and Müller-Scheld had high expectations.

Teaching Methods, Schedule and Curriculum

While the president experienced difficulties, the Academy enjoyed broad press coverage. *Film-Kurier*, for example, informed its readers about requirements, schedules, and appointed faculty members.¹²⁵¹ The information was clearly provided by the Academy itself and much of it consisted of the reproduction of the lavish inaugural brochure, which was published a little later in November.¹²⁵² As always, the tone in the press was complimentary, emphasizing the beneficial role of the government, the novelty of the institution, and its crucial role for the German *Volk*.

In addition to addressing longstanding demands from film professionals, the information provided by the official brochure and the press seemed also designed to prevent critiques ranging from the usefulness of the Academy to its costs and teaching methods.¹²⁵³ Thus, the innovative teaching methods and the practical and “lively” side of the training were repeatedly underlined. A further teaching emphasis was on the plurality

¹²⁵⁰ Ibid., 49.

¹²⁵¹ See “Arbeitsplan der filmkünstlerischen Fakultät der Deutschen Filmakademie. Kein trockenen Vorträge, keine ästhetisierende Betrachtungen, sondern gemeinsames Erleben des Wissensgebietes,” *Film-Kurier*, September 29, 1938; “Arbeitsplan der filmtechnischen Fakultät der Deutschen Filmakademie,” *Film-Kurier*, September 30, 1938; “Arbeitsplan der filmwirtschaftlichen und filmrechtlichen Fakultät der Deutschen Filmakademie,” *Film-Kurier*, October 1, 1938.

¹²⁵² BA R2 RFM 4827, 32ff, Deutsche Filmakademie (ed.), *Deutsche Filmakademie mit dem Arbeitinstitut für Kulturfilmshaffen* (inaugural brochure) (Babelsberg-Ufastadt: Deutsche Filmakademie, 1938). See the announcement of the publication in “Was alle Filmakademie-Studenten mitmachen müssen. Der Pflichtlehrplan für die Studierenden aller Fakultäten,” *Film-Kurier*, December 16, 1938, and “Aus der Filmakademie. Der Arbeitsplan der filmkünstlerischen Fakultät,” *Film-Kurier*, December 21, 1938.

¹²⁵³ See for example, Dr. Ro, “Die Deutsche Filmakademie eröffnet,” *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, November 2, 1938. Reprinted in Wulf, *Theater Und Film Im Dritten Reich*, 334f. Excerpts of the official brochure are also reprinted in *Babelsberg*, 242–3.

of the acquired knowledge, to prevent that filmmakers “proud of [their] specialty, [are] without any understanding of the other collaborators on a common project.”¹²⁵⁴ The teaching underlined the “complex film,” so that everyone could understand that every part of the work was important for the final work. Therefore, every student was expected to attend the most important lectures from his neighbor’s field. Appropriately, the morning part of the daily schedule was devoted to lectures and seminars mandatory for every student, while the afternoon classes covered specific areas.¹²⁵⁵ In addition to introductions to “literature,” “image and sound technique,” “film economics and laws,” as well as “film theater business,” the early classes dealt with “history and world-view,” and “gymnastic and sports,” where students’ health was medically monitored.

The attention to “world view education,” (*weltanschauliche Ausbildung*) was in line with general National Socialist rhetoric.¹²⁵⁶ According to the brochure

only someone who is constantly aware of the tradition, history and evolution of his folk can be artistically productive. The development of the National Socialist movement, its essence and goals are of utter importance; because in the Third Reich, no artists, no matter which field he is in, can create something of general significance (*allgemeines Gültiges*) and general worthiness (*allgemeines Wertvolles*) if he does not get his inspiration from the power center of Adolf Hitler’s movement.

Such argumentation was quite common during the Third Reich and the insistent reassurance that the film *Nachwuchs* would be appropriately ideologically educated seems also intended to curtail the image of film professionals associated with the hedonistic, amoral, degenerate, and needless to say leftist, Weimar culture. It is therefore

¹²⁵⁴ See also “Fragen der Berufserziehung. Einseitiges Fachwissen führt zu Vorturteilen. Die in den einzelnen Filmsparten Tätigen sollten mehr von der ‘Sorgen der Anderen’ erfahren,” *Film-Kurier*, May 13, 1938.

¹²⁵⁵ BA R2 RFM 4827, 32ff, Deutsche Filmakademie (ed.), *Deutsche Filmakademie mit dem Arbeitinstitut für Kulturfilmshaffen* (inaugural brochure) (Babelsberg-Ufastadt: Deutsche Filmakademie, 1938).

¹²⁵⁶ A shortened copy of the worldview education program is reprinted in Wulf, *Theater Und Film Im Dritten Reich*, 335f.

not surprising that the detailed description of the course in the eighty-page brochure starts with the “world view” classes.

The packed schedule, with classes from 8:30 to 19:45, including a lunch break, also implicitly reveals the Academy’s position in the debate talent vs. hard work. According to the brochure, no artist would successfully graduate from the Academy, if he did not bring with him the necessary talent; “for the creative forces of fantasy and passion are genetic (*Erbanlagen*).” The role of the Academy was to provide such person with the necessary training and knowledge in order to “lead him to pure creation of art.” According to this principle, while hard work was necessary for success, it was useless without inborn talent; but talent by itself led to nothing without hard work.

Thus, the Academy was an ambitious project, whose goal to provide high quality education and training for Germany’s future filmmakers. Goebbels and Müller-Scheld were willing, in 1938, to provide the necessary conditions. In addition to funding, the latest technical innovations and qualified teachers, the students had also privileged access to foreign films. We know that Goebbels had always been eager to stay competitive with other film industries and that he knew that a close study of their films was necessary and fruitful. Therefore, the Academy’s schedule included a daily film screening, “Films from the beginning of silent film to the present.” Former student Peter Pewas confirms that, utilizing the embassies of individual countries, the Academy had acquired “every possible ‘heavenly’ film that existed.”¹²⁵⁷ He recalls having seen many films such as *Gone with the Wind* as well as exiled directors’ films such as Lubitsch’s *Ninotchka*.

¹²⁵⁷ See interview with Peter Pewas in Jacobsen, *Babelsberg*, 243–44. See appendix for a list of the screenings.

Russian films as well as French productions, such as Carné's *Le jour se lève* (Daybreak, 1939) had left a big impression on him.

Müller-Scheld also organized regular “private educational screenings,” (*geschlossene Studienvorführung*), of these rare and often forbidden films, attended by invited party members and film professionals. The eclectic list encompassed many influential contemporary and past films. In addition to short films from Disney, two French films from Sacha Guitry, a silent Russian film, British productions, Italian and several American films, including German exilé Fritz Lang's American film *Fury*, were shown to the selected few. The series ended with the infamous *Jud Süß* (Veit Harlan), shown on April 2, 1940, and a final American film, *Mr. Deeds goes to Town*, shown on April 23, 1940, listed as the twenty-seventh of such screenings.¹²⁵⁸ The end of the “special screenings” coincides with the closing of the Academy in the spring of 1940.¹²⁵⁹

Oskar Kalbus' Lectures

While faculty and students got to work, little information was offered to the public. Oskar Kalbus' lectures were the only classes reported about in the press. The Berliner had worked for the Ufa since 1920, first in the cultural film department and then as a member of the board of directors in 1933.¹²⁶⁰ A staunch nationalist, Kalbus had welcomed the arrival of the Nazis and but did not become a party member until 1940.¹²⁶¹ Author of several books about educational film, Kalbus wrote, together with Hans Traub,

¹²⁵⁸ BA R 109 I / 5263, 480-512.

¹²⁵⁹ Goebbels also forbade Hippler to “continue to show banned film for a circle of snobs.” Goebbels's diaries, July 2, 1940.

¹²⁶⁰ Achim Bonte, “Happy End Für Eine Filmbibliothek? Die Filmbibliothek Kalbus in Der Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg”, 2005, <http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/archiv/5370>.

¹²⁶¹ Sabine Hake describes his early work and articles in the paper *Kinematograph* as foreshadowing official National Socialist film as he “praised film as a means of social pacification, emphasized its separation from party politics and daily politics, and contributed to political and cultural education,” in Hake, *The Cinema's Third Machine*, 209–211.

the memorandum “Path to a German Film Institute” in 1932, which was realized in 1936 with the creation of the *Ufa-Lehrschau*. 1935 saw the publication of his popular two-volume work entitled *The Formation of German Film Art*, covering respectively the periods of silent and sound film.¹²⁶² Starting on November 11, 1938, Kalbus gave a series of twenty weekly lectures at the Film Academy, many reproduced in *Film-Kurier*.¹²⁶³ His first lecture was quite inflammatory, with the stated goal of introducing the student to “the essence and the history of film,” and breaking the taboo about the influence of “Jews and Talmudic thoughts on German film.” The following lectures took a more professional aspect and refrained from heavy ideological taint. They covered all aspects of filmmaking, from its very inception and early equipment,¹²⁶⁴ to the “psychological conditions of seeing.”¹²⁶⁵ While celebrating national successes such as Anschütz’s Projecting Electrotachyscope,¹²⁶⁶ or the first public cinematographic screening organized by the brothers Skladanowsky, *before* the brothers Lumieres, the lectures were extremely

¹²⁶² Oskar Kalbus, *Vom Werden Deutscher Filmkunst. 1. Teil: Der Stumme Film* (Altona-Bahrenfeld: Cigaretten-Bilderdienst, 1935); Kalbus, *Vom Werden Deutscher Filmkunst. 2. Teil: Der Tonfilm*.

¹²⁶³ “Dr. Kalbus eröffnete seine Vortragsreihe in der Filmakademie,” *Film-Kurier*, November 11, 1938; “Vom altägyptischen Schnitter-Relief bis Wilhelm Busch. Dr. Kalbus in der Filmakademie: Das Prinzip der Phasenwiedergabe ist uralte,” *Film-Kurier*, November 23, 1938.

¹²⁶⁴ “Vom Lebensrad zum Praxinoskop. Dr. Kalbus über die kinematographischen Urapparate,” *Film-Kurier*, December 1, 1938.

¹²⁶⁵ “Dr. Kalbus in der Filmakademie: Die Psychologischen Bedingungen des Sehens und Ihre Berücksichtigung in der Kinematographie,” *Film-Kurier*, December 13, 1938.

¹²⁶⁶ “Vom fotografierten Venus-Durchgang bis zum Schnellseher von Anschütz,” *Film-Kurier*, December 19, 1938.

thorough, praising French and American technological achievements.¹²⁶⁷ The tone was nationalist but far from the strident anti-Semitism of the first lecture.¹²⁶⁸

Müller-Scheld on the Defensive

The Academy had triggered a lot of interest. Invited by several groups, from the Hitler Youth to the Society of Kino Technique, the president of the Film Academy gave a series of talks throughout Germany during the first year of the Academy.¹²⁶⁹ Traveling from Berlin to Vienna, Konstanz, Bremen and Frankfurt, Müller-Scheld gave keynote speeches about the “Goals of the Film Academy.” While summarizing the structural aspects of the institution, he also emphasized the importance of film for enlightenment, entertainment, and as a gigantic tool of influence, thus justifying the role of the state in funding the Academy.

However, when giving a report of the first two months of the academy on New Year’s Eve 1938, Müller-Scheld was on the defensive. He justified the selection of the faculty and the few students, and emphasized the practical training and the discipline, which reigned in the Academy.¹²⁷⁰ The Academy was obviously not immune to criticism and its opening did not stop the “discussions” about the *Nachwuchs*. In a March 7, 1939 article published in *Film-Kurier*, acting teacher Karl Vogt advocated for a “development” of the actors, instead of just focusing on *Nachwuchs* and spending money on expensive

¹²⁶⁷ “Dr. Kalbus vor der Filmakademie. Edison, Paul, Skladanowsky,” *Film-Kurier*, December 29, 1938. Dr. Kalbus vor der Filmakademie, “Wer war der erste. Zum 1. November 1895,” *Film-Kurier*, January 10, 1939 or “Die Verdienste Meßters,” *Film-Kurier*, February 13, 1939. See also “Von der photographischen Flinte zum ersten Zelluloid-Film “Das tanzende Skelett,” *Film-Kurier*, December 24, 1938, “Edisons “Tonfilmatelier,” *Film-Kurier*, January 24, 1939, “Lumière,” *Film-Kurier*, February 7, 1939, “Vom Schaltmechanismus zum Kinoindustrie,” *Film-Kurier*, February 22, 1939; “Rückweise Filmtransporte. Erklärung zur Meßters erstem Gebrauchsprojektor,” *Film-Kurier*, February 27, 1939.

¹²⁶⁸ Kalbus is also said to have had a third volume of his book on German film art forbidden because he dealt with Jewish actors and actresses; a claim that could not be verified.

¹²⁶⁹ See the list in BA R 55 / 2154, 1 and 54-95.

¹²⁷⁰ Müller-Scheld, “Zwei Monate Akademiearbeit,” *Film-Kurier*, December 31, 1938.

screen tests, which were of little use.¹²⁷¹ Underlining Vogt's article was a reproach of the industry's tendency to launch "new faces" at the costs of providing true experience (*Erlebnis*) for the audience. Continuing its role as a public forum where opinions could be exchanged, *Film-Kurier* hoped that "this article would trigger further discussion of the problem [of *Nachwuchs*]."¹²⁷²

Müller-Scheld's defensiveness about the Academy did not abate. On March 13, 1939, *Film-Kurier* printed a lengthy contribution of the president of the Academy in which he situated the Film Academy as a project supported by the *Führer* and Goebbels themselves, who considered film as part of the "holy mission, which obligates one to fanaticism" of art (*eine heilige, zum Fanatismus verpflichtende Mission*). In addition to the practical training, Müller-Scheld was of course careful to assure the ideological "correctness" of the education. With this political backing, the president of the Academy proceeded to remind the readers of the exceptional importance of cinema, the only medium which can reach up to six hundred million people.

This article was one of many by Müller-Scheld and the heads of the different faculties published in the Spring of 1939, whose purpose seems to have been the justification of the very existence of the Academy and the high costs of an institution designed to train "only" fifty students; a number justified by the limited number of films produced every year (about 120).¹²⁷³ In the face of increasing criticism, the Academy was positioned as a bastion of national ideology. The outbreak of the war in September 1939

¹²⁷¹ Karl Vogt, "Nachwuchs oder Wachstum?" *Film-Kurier*, March 7, 1939. Vogt had taught at the Düsseldorf Theater Akademie, the Mannheim Theater School and the sound film workshop of the school "Kunst und Werk" in Berlin.

¹²⁷² Ibid.

¹²⁷³ Wolfgang Liebeneiner, "Die Harmonie von Bild, Wort und Musik im Film," *Fimkurier*, March 13, 1939; "Filmtechnische Fakultät der Deutschen Filmakademie und Leistungssteigerung. R. Thun sprach über Aufbau und Ziel," *Film-Kurier*, March 25, 1939. See also Müller-Scheld's speech during the yearly convention of the Reich Film Chamber. See *Filmwelt*, no. 12 (March 1939).

increased this trend. Looking back at one year since the opening of the Academy, a front-page article of *Film-Kurier* emphasized the importance of the Academy, where in a time of crisis and war, media plays a major role. “According to the high political and cultural meaning of film,” students of the Academy were described as attending about eighty hours of “intellectual and world-view” education within the two-year program.¹²⁷⁴

In his “end-of-the-semester” speech given to students and faculty on October 8, 1939, president Müller-Scheld first glossed over the difficulties surrounding the creation of the Academy, from the crisis in Tchechen and the war of Westwall, which delayed the construction of the Academy, to the challenge of hiring faculty members and attracting them away from esteemed jobs.¹²⁷⁵ Thus, underneath the celebration of the Academy’s achievements, there remained problems such as staff and discipline issues. The president appealed for a dedication to the Academy and asserted that this commitment required a price. The Academy was to be a priority in everyone’s life, taking precedent over personal or private matters. Müller-Scheld also emphasized the importance of internal and external conduct, where discipline is primordial and “missing classes, smoking, and talking about opinions expressed in the Academy” are not allowed.¹²⁷⁶

Despite his defensiveness Müller-Scheld could present some results. After two semesters of training the Academy had produced “four good cameramen, fifteen above-average students, thirty talented ones and the rest satisfying.”¹²⁷⁷ The president could also look back at a new important program within the Academy, the training of film theater

¹²⁷⁴ “Erfahrungen nach einem Jahre Filmakademie. In Zukunft wird die Auswahl noch strenger werden,” *Film-Kurier*, October 31, 1939.

¹²⁷⁵ BA R55 / 21254, 101-103.

¹²⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷⁷ “Erfahrungen nach einem Jahre Filmakademie. In Zukunft wird die Auswahl noch strenger werden,” *Film-Kurier*, October 31, 1939.

owners. The executive secretary of the professional group of the film theater owner, Theo Quadt announced that every person employed in a film theater was now obligated to participate in a professional workshop offered by the Film Academy.¹²⁷⁸ Quadt presented this measure as a welcome improvement, a further step to the constitution of a recognized profession, eliminating speculation regarding the work of a film theater owner and guarantying a minimum of necessary knowledge for an effective leading of the film theater. Anchoring the training of film theater owners in the Academy expanded its “use,” justifying its operating costs. Such measure also contributed to the institutionalization of the Film Academy by turning it into a recognized site of practical training and thus helped shield it from criticism. The implementation of the measure went quite swiftly and the first three months training course, announced in May 1939, were to start as early as June 5, 1939.¹²⁷⁹ For a sum of 340 RM, employees in other fields who wanted to change and become a film theater owner could participate to the training. The professional group of film theater owners planned on offering further seminars, targeting persons already working in film theaters. The training was so popular that *Film-Kurier* reported the first seminar full and plans for future ones – four seminars for the upcoming year.¹²⁸⁰ Thirty-two participants, including eight women, were offered a well-rounded

¹²⁷⁸ Dr. Theo Quadt, “Die Entwicklung des deutschen Filmtheatergewerbes. Wer künftig den Beruf eines Filmtheaterbesitzers ergreifen will, muß die Filmakademie besucht haben,” *Film-Kurier*, March 14, 1939.

¹²⁷⁹ “1. Lehrgang für Filmtheaterbesitzer-Anwärter an der deutschen Filmakademie,” and “Zur Vorbildung und beruflichen Ausbildung von Filmtheaterbesitzern,” in *Film-Kurier*, May 10, 1939. See also “Filmtheaterbesitzer auf der Deutschen Filmakademie. Besuch bei dem von der RFK veranstalteten Sonderkurs,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2 (August 1939): 56-57.

¹²⁸⁰ As the journal of “film theater owners” *Film-Kurier* reported very carefully and in great details about the new seminars. See “Zum 1. Lehrgang für Filmtheaterbesitzer an der der Deutschen Filmakademie,” *Fimkurier*, May 24, 1939. See “Am 16. Oktober beginnt. 2. Ausbildungslehrgang für Filmtheaterbesitzer an der Deutschen Filmakademie,” *Film-Kurier*, September 30, 1939 and “2. Ausbildungslehrgang für Filmtheaterbesitzer an der Deutschen Filmakademie,” *Film-Kurier*, October 11, 1939, for the second seminary from October 16 until December 23, 1939. See “Zwei weitere Lehrgänge für Filmtheaterbesitzer,” *Film-Kurier*, December 18, 1939, for the third seminar from January 8 until April 6,

instruction by well-connected men in film such as Dr. Quadt, Dr. Schwarz, and engineer Thun, as well as Dr. Schwark, the editor in chief of *Film-Kurier*, *Reichfilmintendant* Dr. Müller-Görne, and Karl Melzer, the Vice President of the Reich Film Chamber.¹²⁸¹

Relatives, especially the wives of theater owners who had been drafted into the military, were especially invited to participate to the seminars. Required for registration were usual documents such as a short *vitae*, three personal photographs, criminal record, proof of Aryan ancestry, and medical certificate confirming the physical aptness to be a projectionist.

Müller-Scheld and the Film Academy addressed another issue that had remained acute during the Third Reich, despite ongoing efforts, the so-called “author question,” the lack of talented film writers.¹²⁸² Here again, one can see how the press kept the topic alive. The professional press, *Film-Kurier* and *Der deutsche Film*, bemoaned the lack of film specific material and the use of adaptations of novels or plays, and devoted numerous articles to the issue.¹²⁸³ *Filmwelt* also addressed the topic, running in the spring of 1938 a series of articles such as the five parts “I want to write a film,” which covered

1940, and a fourth one in April. See “Der neue Lehrgang der Filmtheaterbesitzer,” *Film-Kurier*, April 22, 1940.

¹²⁸¹ “Der Theaterbesitzer-Kursus in der Filmakademie,” *Film-Kurier*, July 12, 1939.

¹²⁸² Famous director Carl Froelich explained in March 1938 in an interview with *Der deutsche Film* that filmmakers were forced to use novels or plays due to the lack of original film material. “13 Fragen über Filmkunst – Carl Froelich antwortet!” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 9 (March 1938): 240-242.

¹²⁸³ See, for example, in *Der deutsche Film* articles such as “More Dialog?” no. 3 (September 1936), Dr. Hermann Gressieker, “Die geistigen Rohstoffe,” no. 6 (December 1936): 165-166; Eberhard Frowein, “Romane werden verfilmt,” no. 2 (August 1938): 36-38; Dr. Hermann Gressieker, “Die Kunst des Exposés,” no. 8 (February 1939): 207-210 and “Verfilmen oder – filmen?” no. 9 (March 1939): 250-252. The magazine also compiled lists of articles dealing with film. Among those: Alwin Elling, “Der Originalstoff im Film,” *Lichtbildbühne*, no. 53 (1938); Feliz Henseleit, “Im Namen des guten Films! Die Arbeit des Autors – das Generalthema des Films,” *Lichtbildbühne*, no. 35 (1938): 1-2; Fritz Röhl, “Haben die Dramaturgen alleine schuld?” *Der Film*, no. 5 (1938): 2; Gerd Eckert, “Braucht der Film Dichter?” *Deutschen Volkstum*, August 1938. See Rolf Lauckner, “Von den Grenzen zwischen Bühne und Film,” *Lichtbildbühne*, no. 78 (1938): 27, and Martin Richard Möbius, “Über die Grenzen von Film und Dichtung,” *Die neue Literatur*, no. 4 (1938): 179-184; Ernst Jerosch, “Literatur oder Originalstoff,” *Autor*, no. 7/8 (1938); Dr. Karl Pempelfort, “Theater und Film,” *Autor*, no. 12 (1938).

topics such as the plot, the “intrinsic law” of film, the shaping of the idea or the depiction of the character.¹²⁸⁴ It was followed by a series of “talks with film authors” such as Phillip-Lothar Mayring, Felix Lützkendorf, Georg C. Klaren, B.E. Lühge, Thea von Harbou, Erich Ebernmeyer, to answer the question “How did they come to film,”¹²⁸⁵ while the *Lessing Hochschule* organized a lecture entitled “Is there such thing as a ”Filmpoet?”¹²⁸⁶ We see essays about the need for a film poet and publication of parts of scripts, such as Wolfgang Liebeneiner’s *Ziel in der Wolken*, or, as in the case of *Das unsterbliche Herz*, the entire script of the upcoming film.¹²⁸⁷

Addressing these concerns, Müller-Scheld organized, from November 1939 on, so-called “Orientation Courses on the Essence of Film.”¹²⁸⁸ Presented as yet another evidence of the strength of the home front, the courses were targeting creative writers and authors, who were “high in demand.”¹²⁸⁹ Led by Dr. Fürst, these two-week-seminars were to help determine whether these artists could devote a part of their talent to film, this important new form of art. The first seminar was scheduled to take place from 6-18

¹²⁸⁴ RK, “Kleine Bemerkungen zm Kapitel: Ich will einen Film schreiben,” *Filmwelt*, no. 18 (April 1938); Part II: “Was ist eigentlich eine ‘Handlung?’” *Filmwelt*, no. 19 (May 1938); Part III: “Die innere Gesetzmäßigkeit,” *Filmwelt*, no. 20 (May 1938); Part IV: “Die Gestaltung der Idee,” *Filmwelt*, no. 22 (May 1938); Part V: “Die Zeichnung der Charaktere,” *Filmwelt*, no. 25 (June 1938).

¹²⁸⁵ Hansjürgen Wille, “Wie sie zum Drehbuch kamen. Gespräch mit Filmautoren,” *Filmwelt*, no. 30 (September 1938). The other interviews were published in no. 41 (October 1938); no. 45 (November 1938); no. 1 (January 1936); no. 5 (February 1939); no. 20 (May 1939).

¹²⁸⁶ Dr. Hannes Schmidt, “Gibt es einen ‘Filmdichter?’” Vortrag in der Lessing-Hochschule,” *Filmwelt*, no. 45 (November 1938). In *Der deutsche Film*, Bruno Rehlinger had argued that, unlike the theater, there was no poet, *Dichter*, in film, but an author and that the “real creator of the film is the director” not the author of the play. Like others before him, Rehlinger explains how “in the ideal situation, film author and film director are one and the same person.” *Der deutsche Film 2*, no. 11 (May 1938): 303-304.

¹²⁸⁷ “Ziel in der Wolken,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 4 (October 1938): 106-107. See also “Ein vollständiges Filmmanuskript. “Das unsterbliche Herz,” *Filmwelt* no. 4 (January 1939). The entire script was published over the course of twenty weeks and ten issues, from January until March 31, 1939.

¹²⁸⁸ S-k., “Müller-Scheld über Wege und Ziel heutigen Filmschaffens,” *Film-Kurier*, November 7, 1939.

¹²⁸⁹ Dr. Hans Spielhofer, “Autoren und Dramaturgen stark gefragt,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 6 (December 1939): 121-122.

November, from 9 to 4:30, in the Berlin film theater “Die Kurbel” for 100 RM.¹²⁹⁰ Every day was to start with a film screening, with introduction and comments, followed by a one or two lectures.¹²⁹¹ In his opening speech, Müller-Scheld underlined the need for film specific writing.¹²⁹² Reminding the audience of the importance of film in shaping people’s character, the president of the Academy complained about recent film productions, which display alcoholism or disregard any racial logic in terms of offspring. He also answered to critics, who “sneered at the Academy,” and argued that the place to learn filmmaking is on the film set. But with their busy schedules, film sets were no place to allow new talents to grow. According to Müller-Scheld, the Academy offered such place and schooled future filmmakers with the appropriate world-view. Following Müller-Scheld’s speech, Wolfgang Liebeneiner introduced two silent films, in order to exemplify the development of silent film: the 1919 Swedish *Sir Arne’s Treasure* (Mauritz Stiller) and the famous Russian production *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei M. Eisenstein, 1925).¹²⁹³ The seminar tackled important topics such as probability as the basic rule of film, metaphysic, superstition, and irony in film, and examples of successful comedies

¹²⁹⁰ “Oreintierungskurse über das Wesen des Films,” *Film-Kurier*, October 27, 1939.

¹²⁹¹ The films included productions from Russia, Sweden, Italy, and Holland (1), France (3), America (3 plus one Disney Film), and twelve German films.

¹²⁹² S–k., “Müller-Scheld über Wege und Ziel heutigen Filmschaffens,” *Film-Kurier*, November 7, 1939.

¹²⁹³ Numerous films were used as illustration for each lecture: Germans, from *Tabu* (Murnau, 1931), Weimar leftist film, *Kuhle Wampe* (Dudow, 1932), to current productions, *Fährmann Maria* (Frank Wysbar, 1936), *Versprich mir nichts* (Liebeneiner, 1937), *Wenn wir alle Engel wären* (Carl Froelich, 1936), *Mustergatte* (Liebeneiner, 1937), *Flüchtlinge* (Gustav Ucicky, 1933), *Urlaub auf Ehrenwort* (Karl Ritter, 1938), *Triumph des Willens* (Leni Riefenstahl, 1935). But Russian (*Das Ende von St. Petersburg*, Pudovking, 1921), French, (*Sous les toits de Paris*, René Clair, 1930, *Un carnet de Bal*, Julien Duvivier, 1937, *Remontons les Champs Elysees*, Sacha Guitry, 1938), Italian (*Ma non è una cosa seria*, Mario Camerini, 1937), Dutch with *Totes Wasser* (Gerard Rutten, 1934), and American films were also shown *Shanghai-Express* (Joseph von Sternberg, 1932), *Peter Ibbetson* (Henry Hataway, 1935), *Der Musterdienner* (Leo MacCarey, 1935), *Merrily we live* (Norman Z. McLeod, 1938), *Top Hat* (Mark Sandrich, 1935).

and musicals. The seminars were strongly attended and twelve of the participants registered for a special course on dramaturgy lasting several months.¹²⁹⁴

The response in the press was very positive, especially from *Der deutsche Film*, which covered the seminar extensively but also critically.¹²⁹⁵ The interest of the magazine might also be rooted in the fact that several individuals who worked for the Film Academy and of the workshops mentioned before, contributed also to the magazine.¹²⁹⁶ Among the speakers, author and scriptwriter Heinrich Spoerl sharply criticized contemporary productions, which demonstrated a lack of psychological motivation and did not respect the basic elementary artistic rule.¹²⁹⁷ Such a critique of “chaos and confusion in the film production,” was refuted in *Film-Kurier* by an irate Ewald Demandowsky, the newly appointed head of the Tobis, who, in turn, pointed to the lack of talented writers.¹²⁹⁸

In the spring of 1940, the literature department of the propaganda ministry organized an “author convention.”¹²⁹⁹ While not officially associated with the Film Academy, the convention featured many participants such as Dr. Leonhard Fürst, Dr.

¹²⁹⁴ Dr. Hans Spielhofer, “Autoren und Dramaturgen stark gefragt.”

¹²⁹⁵ “Auch das Grundgesetz des Films heißt Wahrhaftigkeit,” *Film-Kurier*, November 22, 1939. In *Der deutsche Film* Dr. Hans Spielhofer comments on the lack of consistent definitions used by the different speakers, some working at the Film Academy, others invited guests such as Dr. Heinrich Spoerl and councilor Zimmermann.

¹²⁹⁶ We see indeed a lot of cross-references. In the previously mentioned article, Dr. Hans Spielhofer talked about all the participants, many of them regular contributors *Der deutsche Film*. In addition to Dr. Fürst, Liebeneiner and Spoerl, Dr. Hermann Gressieker, the technicians Kurt Werther, Adolf Otto Weitzenberg, councilor Zimmermann, documentary film maker Dr. Franck, color film technician A. v. Lagorio and head of the technical department Thun, as well as Dr. Schwarz, the head of the film business department. Dr. Gressieker, for example, was the head of the group dramaturgy at the Film Academy and regularly praised the work of the later in *Der deutsche Film*. See for example no. 3 (September 1939): 65. See also Victor Schamoni, “Der filmische Film,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 9 (March 1940): 167-168.

¹²⁹⁷ As an example for this type of films, Spoerl describes, without naming it, Zarah Leander’s film *Das Lied der Wüste*, 1939.

¹²⁹⁸ “Ein Antwort Ewald Demandowskys. Theorie und Praxis. “Wir verbitten uns, als Banausen hingestellt zu werden,” *Film-Kurier*, November 24, 1939.

¹²⁹⁹ “Der Film sucht nach neuen Autoren,” *Filmwelt*, no. 15 (April 1940): 17.

Hermann Gressieker, and Wolfgang Liebeneiner, who were working at the Film Academy and contributed to the magazine *Der deutsche Film*, which in turn reported extensively about the convention.¹³⁰⁰

With the exception of the above-mentioned classes and seminars, very little information leaked out about the Academy and its students. Teaching took place in provisional buildings, while the construction of the studios continued.¹³⁰¹ Archival materials reveal that the construction costs rose up to one million *Reichsmarks*, indicative of a heavy funding on the part of the state.¹³⁰² The absence of public information about this ambitious project is surprising, especially when considering the news reports about the Italian Film Academy. On January 17, 1940 for example, a front page article of *Film-Kurier* reported how Mussolini ceremoniously opened the new film studios of the Italian institute.¹³⁰³ The silence about the Academy might have been rooted in Goebbels' disappointment and in the fear of criticism about the high costs, especially in a time of war.

At the end of 1939, *Film-Kurier* featured a two-page-article introducing the new comers of the past year.¹³⁰⁴ On the surface, the article appears to fulfill a popular demand for news about upcoming stars. But while the tone was optimistic about the large number

¹³⁰⁰ The issue of film poet/author never disappeared from the pages of *Der deutsche Film*. See Frank Maraun, "Der Film und der Dichter," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April 1940): 181-185. Maraun ponders once again "who the creator of the film is? The director or the author?" and answers "Director and author." See in the same edition how Werner Eplinius delineated the work of the author from treatment to script in "Kann der Autor sparen helfen?" 187-190. For the 1940 author convention, see Ma., "Der Ruf nach dem Filmdichter. Dichter versammeln sich um den Film," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 11 (May 1940): 216-218. Further articles about the topic of the film author include Victor Schamoni, "Der schwierige Autor oder Die andere Seite eines wichtigen Problems," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1940): 7-9. See also chapter 3, as the stage-screen debates were closely related to the lack of film writers.

¹³⁰¹ "Richtkrone über neuen Nachwuchsatelier in Ufastadt," *Film-Kurier*, March 20, 1939.

¹³⁰² BA R2 / 4802, 130-131.

¹³⁰³ Irmgard Johannes, "Die römische Filmakademie. Nachwuchs-Steuerung in Italien," *Film-Kurier*, August 9, 1939, and January 17, 1939, "Der Duce eröffnete neue italienische Filmakademie."

¹³⁰⁴ Schu., "Die neu ins Atelierlicht traten... Die Nachwuchs soll gepflegt werden, nicht verhätschelt, denn die Leistung wächst aus der Zucht!," *Film-Kurier*, December 30, 1939.

of talented new actors and actresses who had their breakthrough in 1939, the author stressed the need for a better *Nachwuchs* training, one which would cultivate their talent but not coddle them or push them into a premature fame, which ends up spoiling them.¹³⁰⁵ Thus, after six years of National Socialist film politics, and more than a year after the opening of the Film Academy, the problems seemed to have stayed the same, with no solution in sight. Next to the “efforts of the Film Academy to train a film specific *Nachwuchs*,” the theater schools and the hard but necessary apprenticeship of playing on small stages throughout the Reich remained the way to success – when coupled with the necessary hard work. In the fall of 1939, Gustaf Gründgens gave a concrete example with his new film *Zwei Welten* (Two Worlds) in which he hired the four main characters from his theatrical ensemble, and pledged to follow them.¹³⁰⁶ Even a year after the opening of the Film Academy, the head of the Staatstheater argued that “there was no lack of *Nachwuchs*, but rather a lack of the right *Nachwuchs* nurturing.”¹³⁰⁷

Closing the Academy

The Film Academy was altogether in a difficult position. The outbreak of the war caused a shortage of men and material, even for the heavily funded project. During the first Academy year 1938-1939 the budget consisted of fifteen thousand *Reichsmarks* of paid tuition and 389,820 RM of government funding. In 1939-1940, the governmental

¹³⁰⁵ See also Robert Volz, “Gewogen – und nicht zu leicht befunden! Vom Nachwuchs der letzten Produktion,” *Der deutsche Film* 4, no. 3 (September 1939): 68-70. Praising the great work done at the Film Academy, Volz talked, once again, about how the *Nachwuchs* is like a fragile plant, which “needs to be nurtured and not be thrown under the bright lights of a premature stardom to be then dropped like dirty socks.”

¹³⁰⁶ Schu., “Wir spachen mit Gründgens. “Zwei Welten” – heiter kontrastiert in seinem neuen Terra Film,” *Film-Kurier*, September 19, 1939.

¹³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

help increased to 769,300 RM while the tuition comprised only 10,050 RM.¹³⁰⁸ As always the bulk of the expenditure were the salaries.¹³⁰⁹ Asked in October 1939 to cut one third of the total budget of 750,000 RM, Reich Trustee Max Winkler answered that he could cut maximal 115,000 RM and was in no way able to cut the requested 250,000 RM.¹³¹⁰ Winkler, who was also Reich Commissioner for German Cinema, pleaded for the continuation of the Academy and against any reduction of its budget. “Confronted with a longer duration of the war and a stronger strain on men,” he argued, “the problem of training and providing appropriate replacement [for the men drafted] will become even more pressing.”¹³¹¹ Winkler was aware of the necessity of sustaining cinematic production in time of war and of the need for talented *Nachwuchs*. He seemed convinced that the Film Academy was playing an instrumental role in training future film professionals.

Goebbels on the other hand was unsure about what to do: “[s]hould I keep the Film Academy open,” he pondered on December 6, 1939, “[v]oices for and against it. I need to hear a couple of experts.” The debate continued and the propaganda minister decided on December 13, “I let [the academy] continue its work for right now, in order to see the first results. After that, its fate will be decided. What I see on screen tests is pretty good. The technical department accomplishes useful work.”¹³¹²

¹³⁰⁸ BA R2 / 4802, 141.

¹³⁰⁹ BA R2 / 4802, 145. The salaries were as follow: President: 31,200 RM; Heads of the faculties: 58,800 RM; CEO: 11,400 RM; 6 teachers: 70,200 RM; 8 assistants: 50,820 RM.

¹³¹⁰ BA R2 / 4827, 217-218.

¹³¹¹ Ibid.

¹³¹² Goebbels’ diaries, December 13, 1939.

Intriguingly, there were several hires in the fall 1939.¹³¹³ Müller-Scheld requested permission to hire cameraman Adolf Weitzenberg and writer and dramaturge Leonhard Fürst.¹³¹⁴ Although he was not a member of the NSDAP, Fürst had worked as the dramaturge of the Reich Film Chamber from 1935 until 1937, before becoming the editor in chief of *Der deutsche Film* from 1936-1938.¹³¹⁵ In addition to his script for the propaganda film *Der Verräter* and other freelance contracts for different film companies, Fürst had regularly published and lectured about cinematographic issues, especially the use of music and film.¹³¹⁶ Fürst had been originally listed as a faculty member in 1938, but never held a position at the Academy. The hiring is surprising considering that Müller-Scheld was facing a potential closure of the Academy. In addition to his qualifications, Fürst's friendship and previous collaboration with Hermann Griesseker might have secured him the position of a lecturer, responsible for six lectures on dramaturgy, screen writing and music dramaturgy. Müller-Scheld also pleaded to be able to offer him a salary of one thousand *Reichsmarks* a month, in order "to match [Fürst] former income and secure his participation."¹³¹⁷ Thus Müller-Scheld seemed anxious to assure Fürst's hiring. We do not know exactly who was sent to the front, but the president of the Academy was certainly eager to guarantee a core-teaching faculty in order to be able to sustain teaching at the Academy.

¹³¹³ BA R55 / 176, 181.

¹³¹⁴ See Fürst's personal questioner in BA R 55 / 176, 166-189.

¹³¹⁵ On his NSDAP non-membership see BA R 55 / 176, 241. This information, provided as part of his application to the Film Academy, had been underlined by whoever read it.

¹³¹⁶ See "Meine Film-Publikationen," in *Leonhard Fürst, Personal Collection*, August 27, 1948.

¹³¹⁷ Fürst and Gressieker had worked together at *Der deutsche Film* and on ten film treatments for the Ufa and other film companies. See BA R55 / 176, 216. They continued this collaboration after the war. The average wages for the working class was forty *Reichsmarks*.

In December 1939, Dr. Hans Spielhofer, another colleague of Dr. Fürst at *Der deutsche Film*, published a two-page article in *Filmwelt* in a last effort to promote the essential work of the Academy (Figure 8.2).¹³¹⁸ The emphasis was, once again, on the practical work and how the film companies hired some of the students.¹³¹⁹ Having lost some faculty members who were drafted, and faced with potential closure, Müller-Scheld wrote to Goebbels, on January 5, 1940, a long memo describing how the Academy was not about “the accumulation of knowledge, but rather a process of development and maturation.”¹³²⁰ Such process could not be interrupted, without jeopardizing all the acquired skills. Müller-Scheld was adamant that “the students would have to start from the beginning.” He proceeded then to list twelve out of the twenty-six male students who had been drafted whom he described as exceptionally talented and requested to allow them to finish their training at the Academy.¹³²¹ It was decided in January 1940 to let the current students finish their training until 1941, when no new students were to be admitted. Goebbels was to reconsider the question of the continuation of the Academy in October of 1940.¹³²²

¹³¹⁸ Dr. Hans Spielhofer, “Der Weg der deutschen Filmakademie,” *Filmwelt*, no. 50 (December 1939).

¹³¹⁹ All the authors and dramaturges have been hired away and actress Waltraut Goettke was chosen for the next film from Wolfgang Liebeneiner, *Die gute Sieben*.

¹³²⁰ BA R55 / 21253, 2-7. Müller-Scheld to Dr. Goebbels, January 5, 1940.

¹³²¹ While we do not have Goebbels’ answer, several of the mentioned men are found in artistic position. Erich Rossel (born 10.4.1917) worked as a cameraman on *Der Große Spiel*, 1942 and *Kleine Residenz*, 1942. Franz Barrenstein will later work as assistant director for several GDR films and directed *Sein großer Sieg*, 1952 and *Sommer Liebe* in 1955. Wilhelm Sohm worked as a photograph in postwar Vienna.

¹³²² BA R2 / 4827, 167.



Figure 8.2: Dr. Hans Spielhofer, "The Path of the German Film Academy *Filmwelt*, no. 50 (December 1939).

In the meantime, *Der deutsche Film* published in February 1940 an article explaining how the Academy has adapted to the war situation, reducing the study cycle and focusing on practical training, especially in the field of business and judicial, in order to have work-ready professionals who could make up for the men drafted.¹³²³ But this attempt to once again justify the very existence of the academy did not work out. The propaganda minister had already made up his mind. The same month he wrote, “The Film Academy has not enough students and costs too much. Will be closed down. Müller-Scheld has obviously not understood his job.”¹³²⁴ The decision “not to close but to temporarily shut down the Academy” was officially taken on March 6, 1940.¹³²⁵ Upon this news, Müller-Scheld started making arrangements about the technical equipment for example, which was to be rented out to film companies. A committee was put in place in order to assure “a successful liquidation,” as wished by Goebbels.¹³²⁶ Among the things that had to be dealt with were the students, none of which had finished their two-year training. It was decided to have them take a test, and upon success, to give them a certificate of competence, which would enable them to be hired by film or theater companies. Students in the technical and dramaturgy department would not have experienced any difficulties in finding a place. The actors and actresses, on the other hand, might have encountered difficulties. The Film Department of the Reich Chamber of Culture was to get in contact with Dr. Winkler, the Theater Department and the theater schools to find accommodation for the students. The Film Academy advised, in cases of hardship, to provide students with a fellowship for a short time.

¹³²³ Theo Schlizio, “Filmakademie und Kriegswirtschaft,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 8 (February 1940): 152-153.

¹³²⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, February 23, 1940.

¹³²⁵ BA R55 / 176, 256.

¹³²⁶ BA R55 / 176, 267.

As for the employees of the Academy, president Müller-Scheld had a contract until March 31, 1941 and was to be “utilized” in other ways. The lecturers’ contracts expired on April 1, 1940, with the exception of Fürst and Werter, whose contracts ran until March 31, 1941. Here again, efforts were to be made to employ them otherwise, although the memo warned that salaries could not be offered in the same scale as at the Academy. Another solution would be to have an early dismissal (*vorzeitige Kündigung*). As for the faculty members, some such as Dr. Guthenrath, Läckbach and Rose, had been already drafted and were still receiving their income.¹³²⁷ The rest were to be found another job and if not possible, laid off with a financial compensation.¹³²⁸ By August 1940 only an “administrative skeleton” (*Rumpfverwaltung*) was still in place.¹³²⁹

The Terra and the Reich Film Chamber now used some of the buildings, such as the provisional buildings.¹³³⁰ The fate of the two *Nachwuchs* studios, on the other hand, was more complicated and debated. The relationship between the regime and the film giant Ufa had always been tense. Winkler’s precaution in wording contract between the regime and Ufa were justified by the latter’s tendency to exploit the situation to its advantage. The negotiations between Ufa and Winkler demonstrate more shrewd business tactics than the much-publicized spirit of *Volkskameradschaft* (the camaraderie of the people). In December 1939, for example, Schmitt-Haling complained about how the Academy teachers and students were lacking the necessary rooms and had to compete

¹³²⁷ The budget of the Academy included for the fiscal year 1941/1942 64,660 RM for salaries. Paid with this money were two full time and one part time employees, as well as eight men drafted and who were paid their full salary, minus their service pay. See BA R55 / 481, 25. Eduard Gudenrath had been drafted in August 1939 and sent to Oslo in October 1940. According to Bogusław Drewniak, Müller-Scheld himself ended up head of the propaganda in Oslo. See Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*.

¹³²⁸ Cameraman Weizenberg for example, whose contract lasted until March 31, 1941, was offered a compensation of 3,720 RM if he did not find another job. See BA R55 / 176, 268.

¹³²⁹ BA R55 / 176, 347.

¹³³⁰ BA R55 / 176, 348.

with Ufa for every bit of new construction.¹³³¹ The Ufa had used Reich money, 1,390,000 RM, lend by the government at zero percent interest, to build two modern film studios. With the Film Academy closed and the studios used solely by the Ufa, the Reich asked Ufa to pay the money back.¹³³² The finance ministry and the Ufa fought over several months to settle the question of property and payment of the construction costs.¹³³³ The question dragged on and was still not solved in September 1943, when the budget ministry claimed from the Ufa the 1,390,000 RM construction cost plus a four percent utilization fee since the completion of the studios in July 1940 for a total of 1,522,166 RM.¹³³⁴ In addition, Ufa was to pay a total of 231,000 RM for equipment and library materials. The 1942 budget of the Cautio reveals that Ufa still owed the Reich a little over 1,6 millions RM.¹³³⁵ In 1944, the balance was finally paid off.¹³³⁶

This incident illustrates some of the dynamics between the National Socialist regime and the film industry. Film companies were willingly working with the regime, welcoming state contracts for propaganda films and even producing their own patriotic films, riding on a wave of heightened nationalism. But such “collaboration” was desired only as long as it fit with the company’s self-interest.

While the opening of the Academy had increased the hopes for a long due academic recognition of film related topics, such hopes did not materialize.¹³³⁷ Author H.M even discerned a decrease in courses offered in the humanities departments, (*Geisteswissenschaft*) such as theater, art, and music studies. He explained this situation

¹³³¹ BA R55 / 482, 123-124.

¹³³² BA R55 / 482, 31.

¹³³³ BA R55 / 482, 31.

¹³³⁴ BA R55 / 482, 56-57.

¹³³⁵ BA R2 / 4953, 68, 78 and 97

¹³³⁶ BA R2 / 4953, 208.

¹³³⁷ H.M., “Die Filmwissenschaft im Sommersemester 1939,” *Film-Kurier*, April 28, 1939.

with the fact that film still does not constitute an official subject; film studies are so broad and manifold that often only part of them are studied; and that film studies require considerable material means and a special institute. Resources were often not sufficient for such a project. Commenting on the high interest students bring to film studies, H.M. wished for more classes and seminars in the future.

What is actually striking is the absence of any “critical discussions” about *Nachwuchs* following the opening of the Academy, doubtlessly a consequence of censorship. The training programs for theater owners were precisely advertised, the success of the *Ufa-Lehrschau* and the continuation of film related courses were all acclaimed as “a remarkable sign of the cultural and scientific strength of *Großdeutschland*.”¹³³⁸ Barely mentioned is the fact that the theater owner seminars were needed due to the departure of the original male owners who were drafted. In a similar twist, the success of the *Ufa-Lehrschau* and its steady number of visitors was rooted in its collaboration with the German Labor Front, in charge of educational and professional training for an increasing number of injured soldiers.¹³³⁹

¹³³⁸ See “Der neue Lehrgang der Filmtheaterbesitzer,” *Film-Kurier*, April 22, 1940 about the fourth, “Vom Wert der Schulung für angehende Theaterbesitzer,” *Film-Kurier*, October 12, 1940 about the fifth, and “Theaterbesitzer-Lehrgänge haben sich bewährt,” *Film-Kurier*, December 20, 1940 for the sixth seminar. In December 1940, it was decided to precede the three-month seminar with a two-month apprenticeship “in order to facilitate the understanding of the many questions encountered during the seminar.” A seventh seminar took place in the spring of 1941, see “Der 7. Lehrgang beendet,” *Film-Kurier*, April 5, 1941.

¹³³⁹ On the *Lehrschau*, see “Lehrschau 1939-1940,” *Film-Kurier*, April 22, 1940, for a total of four thousand visitors to the exhibition and over eleven thousand to the library. See also “Reger Lehrschau-Besuch im 2. Vierteljahr 1940,” *Film-Kurier*, July 7, 1940, “Die Ufa-Lehrschau im 3. Vierteljahr,” *Film-Kurier*, October 11, 1940. See especially “Fünf Jahre Ufa-Lehrschau,” *Film-Kurier*, February 2, 1941. The ZD, on the other hand, reports “over fifty thousand visitors” in December 1940. ZD, Directive 3693, December 13, 1940. In 1941, the official number of visitors was eighty thousand. See in *Der deutsche Film* 6, no. 10 (April 1942): 20, the review of Traub and Steinaecker, *Die Ufa-Lehrschau*. When the book was published in 1941, the total number was 63,998.

While academic courses were still announced before each semester, the *Lessing-Hochschule* lectures were no longer mentioned.¹³⁴⁰ The only public lectures advertised were those organized by the *Urania-Filmseminar*. In March 1940, the first series entitled “The Film and US,” featured Brigitte Horney, who spoke about *Actor and Audience*, Willy Birgel about *Actor and Script*, and Hans Martin Cremer about *Author and Actor*.¹³⁴¹ In November, Johannes Riemann and Olga Tschechowa talked about the role of actors and actresses.¹³⁴² Addressing the question of *Nachwuchs*, Riemann welcomed how its “careful management from the responsible parties in filmmaking has long been taken care of.”¹³⁴³ Remaining silent about the closure of the Film Academy, Riemann focused on the need for careful training of acting professionals but also of writers, whom he considered the alpha and omega of filmmaking. To keep with this spirit of steady work and great achievement in time of war, *Film-Kurier* printed two pages of portraits of fifty newcomers of the year 1940. The short notice reads that, under the care of the German film industry, the accomplishment of these actors and actresses are rooted in their hard work.

Looking back at the eighteen months of the first German Film Academy, the results are less than glorious. None of the students were able to finish their two-year training; several of the male students and faculty members were drafted into the army. Recognizing an actual problem in cultural production, the regime had exploited the need for *Nachwuchs* training, presenting itself, once again, as protector and supporter of the arts, while assuring the control of future film professionals. The Academy was heavily

¹³⁴⁰ See for example “Filmwissenschaft 1940,” *Film-Kurier*, November 1, 1940.

¹³⁴¹ *Filmwelt*, no. 9 (March 1940). Clips from the following films were shown: *Ein Mann will nach Deutschland*, *Verklungene Melodie*, *Der Gouverneur*. See also *Filmwelt*, no. 11 (March 1940).

¹³⁴² “Filmschauspieler über ihr Aufgaben,” *Film-Kurier*, November 11, 1940.

¹³⁴³ *Ibid.*

funded, with ambitious buildings projects, which never saw the light while the Academy was open, as well as modern equipment and impressive material, such as a rich library. The Academy secured the collaboration of teachers, who were remarkable more by their professional qualification, and ambition, than their party and ideological allegiance.¹³⁴⁴

While financial difficulties and political criticism led to the closing of the Academy, the very problems the institution was supposed to address persisted. Goebbels was aware of the continued need for film professionals training. Chapter 9 delineates how the Propaganda Minister pursued his project of training and nurturing a new generation of film talents.

¹³⁴⁴ Famous actor-director Liebeneiner for example experienced critical and commercial successes while teaching at the Academy. Hans Schuhmacher, "Ziel in den Wolken," *Film-Kurier*, March 11, 1939, "Interessante Filmstoffe der Terra-Filmkunst. Liebeneiner inszeniert drei Stoffe," *Film-Kurier*, April 15, 1939. See the review of his "Florentiner Hut," in *Film-Kurier*, April 19, 1939. About his latest project "Die gute Sieben" see *Film-Kurier*, October 18, 1939, "8ung: "Die gute Sieben," in *Film-Kurier*, November 10, 1939, "Ein Film ohne Musik," *Film-Kurier*, November 22, 1939 and the review of the film in *Film-Kurier*, July 16, 1940.

Chapter 9

The Continuing Search for the Film *Nachwuchs*

As seen in the previous chapters, the training of upcoming talents and aspiring film professionals the *Nachwuchs* became especially acute during the Third Reich after the forced exile of hundreds of talented filmmakers. The ambitious project of the German Film Academy (*DFA*) was motivated by several factors. In addition to being part of Goebbels' efforts to control the film industry, the Academy was also responding to general, often publicly expressed concerns about the industry's weaknesses; one of them was the lack of film specific *Nachwuchs* training. It must also be seen as part of a general trend towards an institutionalization of film, and the ongoing struggle to consolidate film's status as a form of art, equal to theater. The outbreak of the war triggered increasing material and men shortages, leading to the closing of the Academy in the summer of 1940. But this did not mean the end of the *Nachwuchs* question, which was still considered highly problematic. This chapter shows how intense work was pursued until 1945 in the form of several *Lehrstellen für Filmnachwuchs* (Apprenticeship Places for the *Nachwuchs*) where future German stars such as Hildegard Knef, Peter Pewas, and Wolfgang Staudte were trained. In contrast to the centralized *DFA*, the government-supervised *Lehrstellen* were first run by individual film companies, which clearly prioritized their own interests. Soon, material shortages and a desire to have more control led, once again, to the centralization of the training.

This chapter presents for the first time the functioning of the *Lehrstellen*; a topic completely neglected by scholars. It uncovers the efforts put into the program and traces the reasons for some of Frank Maraun's, the head of the program, and Goebbels' final

decisions. It unveils how gender and race ideology played a role in the fate of aspiring film professionals, but also how the regime was aware of film market conditions. The press played once again an important role. The popular as well as the professional press kept the topic current with regular articles and presentations of “New Faces,” or “The Film *Nachwuchs* of the Last Year.”¹³⁴⁵ As the official publication of the Reich Film Chamber, *Der deutsche Film* first introduced the new program and its director, Maraun, but remained vague as to the daily operations. As with the Academy, the renewed efforts of the regime in terms of *Nachwuchs* were couched as evidence of the strength of the home front.

The impressive numbers associated with it are surprising and demonstrate how important the program was considered. While the investment of the regime goes back to the creation of the Film Academy, the reasons behind the extensive efforts of the film companies remain unclear. The time and money invested might either have been either for the participants’ own benefits, by securing them employment away from the front lines, rooted in their genuine belief in the value and importance of such program in the middle of a war, or they might represent another example of “working toward the *Führer*,” in this case Joseph Goebbels.¹³⁴⁶ After initial positive results, the propaganda minister became increasingly unsatisfied with the work of the film companies and, once again, centralized the *Nachwuchs* training. That this program should fail, like its

¹³⁴⁵ The numbers of articles devoted specifically to the issue of *Nachwuchs* after the closing of the Film Academy are following. For *Film-Kurier*: 1940: 17; 1941: 23; 1942: 15; 1943: 6; 1944: 13. For *Filmwelt*: 1940: 15; 1941: 10; 1942/43: 11.

¹³⁴⁶ See Ian Kershaw, “‘Working Towards the Führer’: Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship,” *Contemporary European History* 2, no. 2 (1993): 103–118. Kershaw has argued that in Nazi Germany, officials of both the German state and Party bureaucracy usually took the initiative in beginning policy to meet Hitler’s perceived wishes, or alternatively attempted to turn into policy Hitler’s often loosely and indistinctly phrased wishes.

predecessor the *DFA*, was not only rooted in the war and its consequences but also in the illusionary project of controlling artistic process.

Discussions in the Press

Going back to 1938, we notice that the film press, which had been so vocal about the need for *Nachwuchs* training, was reduced to near silence after the opening of the Film Academy. While *Filmwelt* continued to present new actors and actresses, conspicuously avoiding the term *Nachwuchs*, the only topic that continued to be discussed, especially in the trade press, was the weakness of existing scripts and the need for film authors.¹³⁴⁷

Eventually the issue of specific film training reemerged, with the very term *Nachwuchs* still not mentioned, but hinted at, indirectly, in articles about the difficulties and dangers encountered by young theater artists, who tried to make it into film,¹³⁴⁸ and in articles criticizing (mis-)castings in German films.¹³⁴⁹ Artists and journalists once again, explored the complicated relationship between film and theater. Theater provided the film industry with a pool of talented actors and actresses, who often experienced difficulties in adjusting to cinematic acting style. Some articles also examined the system of typecasting, which confined acting professionals to narrow roles and impoverished film production.¹³⁵⁰ Here again, the situation of the theater was taken as an example where actors were offered more diverse roles and could thus develop their full potential.

¹³⁴⁷ See Chapter 3.

¹³⁴⁸ "Falsche und richtige Wege zum Film," *Film-Kurier*, December 11, 1940; "Vom heißen Wunsch: 'Ich muß zum Film!'" *Film-Kurier*, January 24, 1941.

¹³⁴⁹ "Besetzungsfragen des deutschen Films. Die Wesenhaftigkeit der Darsteller muß berücksichtigt werden," *Film-Kurier*, February 26, 1941 and "Keine Typengalerie and keine Erstarrung," *Film-Kurier*, March 11, 1941.

¹³⁵⁰ Felix Henseleit, "Das Rollenfach und der Weg des Schauspielers," *Film-Kurier*, July 14, 1941.

Listing 104 film-related dissertations, Hermann Meyer celebrated the impressive increase, “especially when considering the fact that film studies are still not an official academic field.”¹³⁵¹ A month later, he proudly announced the film-related courses offered for the summer semester.¹³⁵² In a familiar pattern, Meyer only emphasized the positive aspect of this development; the failure to achieve the institutionalization of film studies was simply ignored.

But if the issue of *Nachwuchs* was not discussed per se, *Der deutsche Film* regularly featured photographs of *Nachwuchs*, more often than not women, part of “business as usual” but also as a way to balance the military news by offering images of young and vibrant individuals (Figure 9.1 and 9.2).¹³⁵³

A “Plan to Handle the *Nachwuchs* Question”

While the press abstained from directly addressing the need for *Nachwuchs* training in light of the failure of the Film Academy, this issue had never completely been off the table. In July 2, 1940, Goebbels noted in his diaries: “I am conducting an intense engagement with the *Nachwuchs* problem.” He added right after that, “We also must bring the great acting professionals from other countries to Germany,” pointing to the preoccupation about acting *Nachwuchs*.¹³⁵⁴

¹³⁵¹ Hermann Meyer, “Die Film-Dissertationen, 1934-1941,” *Film-Kurier*, June 16, 1941.

¹³⁵² Hermann Meyer, “Die Filmforschung auf den deutschen Hochschulen,” *Film-Kurier*, July 1, 1941.

¹³⁵³ See the July 1941 and the August/September 1941 issues of *Der deutsche Film*.

¹³⁵⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, July 2, 1940.



Figure 9.1: “Laughing *Nachwuchs* actress Anneliese von Eschtruth,” *Der deutsche Film*, no.2 (July 1941) (Left).
 Figure 9.2: “*Nachwuchs* during fun training,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2/3 (August/September 1941) (Right).

On December 19, 1940, a meeting took place at the Propaganda Ministry to review the two most important points of German film production: production planning (in order to reach the goal of 150 films per year), and the question of *Nachwuchs*.¹³⁵⁵

The fact that film acting professionals were “solely coming from the theater” was considered a major problem, not only because of the question of acting style but also, more pragmatically, because of the conflicts between theater and film contracts, which resulted in higher costs for the film companies. It was decided to constitute a “pool of actors and actresses, who would be free of theater obligations/commitments.”¹³⁵⁶ The different production groups were to work with acting schools, such as the Schule Ackermann, Deutsches Theater, Paul Günther, and Lydia Wegener schools. At the war convention of the Reich Film Chamber in March 1941, Goebbels publicly addressed the issue of *Nachwuchs* declaring that “the *Nachwuchs* can never be cultivated solely in schools or private institutions,” and that “the criterion in the selection of young film talent is practical experience in film production.”¹³⁵⁷ In the summer of 1941, the propaganda minister intensified his involvement with the *Nachwuchs* question, as a result of the unsatisfactory work of the film industry.¹³⁵⁸ He emphasized the primacy of quality

¹³⁵⁵ BA RKK / U62, 1348, December 9, 1940.

¹³⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁵⁷ See *Filmwelt*, no. 8 (February 1941) and Sp. “Die Kriegstagung der Reichsfilmkammer,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 9 (March 1941): 179.

¹³⁵⁸ Goebbels’ diaries, August 21, 1941. “I commissioned Hippler to implement a series of measures for the care of our film artists. I have the feeling the great acting talents we possess are not correctly used. Our heads of production are not carrying any methodical work. They let things come up and only deal with the tasks that are due today, but not the ones that will be due in a few months. As a result we have a serious idling that not only make the artists unhappy, it also costs the *Reich* tremendous amount of money. Artists have to be nurtured/cultivated like the tress of an orchard. One must take care of them every day and everyday brings new chores. The gardener cannot only think of the apple tree when it bears ripe apples. He must look after and take care of it also in winter, in spring and also in summer. In the long term, such treatment will lead to a ensemble consciousness among the artists. We are far from that today. The film still has all the earmarks of an industry, and it will not be long before I have taken away this last feature.”

over quantity: “it is not about having a few new average or underperforming forces per year, but rather that we provide [theater and film] with a few, top-quality *Nachwuchs* talents.”¹³⁵⁹ After several drafts, an internal “Plan to Handle the *Nachwuchs* Question” was laid out in July 1941.¹³⁶⁰ The administration and implementation of the *Nachwuchs* question had to be in the hand of one person, the *Intendant* (a superintendent), completely independent from the film companies and answering only to the Reich Culture Chamber.¹³⁶¹

According to the new plan, the film companies Ufa, Tobis, and Terra would be allocated a trainer (*Lehrmeister*) responsible for the trainees in each company. The training of acting professionals required special attention, to avoid a theater-like style. Taking the example from Tobis, Ufa, and Terra were to create their own studios, where the *Nachwuchs* could be trained, before being deployed in feature films. In terms of financing, free training would be given to the students, and gifted trainees would receive stipends. Theater actors, who became film *Nachwuchs* were to be paid an income equivalent to the one they had or would have received working for the stage. Although it was not yet decided how Bavaria and Wien-Film were to participate in the training of the *Nachwuchs*, all five of the state film companies were to carry the costs of the training.

¹³⁵⁹ Goebbels’ diaries, July 11, 1941. The propaganda minister reiterated the same position, specifically about the theater on July 25, 1941.

¹³⁶⁰ BA RK / U62, 1354-62. See a first draft on January 21, 1941, “Vorschlag zur Lösung der Nachwuchsfrage im deutschen Filmschaffen,” 1336, and on June 10, 1941, 1334.

¹³⁶¹ The word *Intendant* was in the twentieth century mostly associated with the theater, describing the “artistic or commercial head of a theater, a radio or a television institute.”¹³⁶¹ Thus, despite official efforts to differentiate film from theater as seen in chapter two, the two art forms remained intertwined, up to the very vocabulary used. Definition from *Duden, Deutsches Universal Wörterbuch* (Manheim: Duden Verlag, 1989).

It is interesting that the latest version of the “Plan to Handle the *Nachwuchs* Question” was finalized a few days after Ewald von Demandowsky, the head of Tobis, announced in *Film-Kurier* the success of the studio he had instituted to train future film actors and directors.¹³⁶² Twelve short films had been made, giving aspiring directors a chance to show what they could do. While the results were less than satisfying for some who still cleaved to theatrical style, three aspirants had already been hired for a long feature film. Hans Müller the former assistant to Arthur Rabenalt, Peter Pexas a former graphic artist who had temporarily attended the Film Academy to become a director and had assisted Liebeneiner, and the actor Volker von Collande were now given the chance of a lifetime. *Film-Kurier*’s editor in chief Günther Schwark praised Tobis’ initiatives, which carried the financial burden of producing the shorts for about thirteen thousand *Reichsmarks*. The company had also set up a screen test studio to bring new acting professionals to film.¹³⁶³ Tobis was indeed investing a great deal in *Nachwuchs* training. The costs jumped from 25,100 RM in 1939/1940 to 260,300 RM in 1940/1941.¹³⁶⁴ The ambitious von Demandowsky had obviously learned from the experience of the Film Academy, whose principles, such as practical training, were now applied on a smaller, but more effective scale.¹³⁶⁵ Schwark welcomed the new generation of producers who unlike their predecessors, now “took responsibility” for the development of the

¹³⁶² “Praktische Nachwuchsförderung. Regie-Studio der Tobis bewährt sich,” *Film-Kurier*, July 12, 1941.

¹³⁶³ Tobis also set up a color film studio and a cartoon studio to teach the latest technologies.

¹³⁶⁴ BA R2 / 4809, 325.

¹³⁶⁵ About von Demadowsky see Hildegard Knef’s biography and Goebbels’ diaries.

Nachwuchs, a new trend which was to benefit the entire film industry.¹³⁶⁶ Goebbels himself was impressed by von Demandowsky's work, praising the first results.¹³⁶⁷

Thus, it seems that the initiative to actively pursue *Nachwuchs* training came from the film industry itself, an industry that, although controlled by the National Socialist regime, was also reacting to a situation, which endangered its own survival. The regime, and especially Goebbels, was quick to take things back in its hand. While the Academy had to be closed due to financial costs – hard to justify in time of war and increasing material restrictions – the *Nachwuchs* question still needed to be addressed. Goebbels complained regularly about the “recklessness” with which the *Nachwuchs* problem was handled.¹³⁶⁸ He envisioned a more “systematic” *Nachwuchs* training, which would, similar to the political work, “nurture the *Nachwuchs* to higher levels, from training to training.” Such methods would allow film to overcome the last bits of being a money-making industry, (*Industriegeschäft*), and “to transform itself more and more to a real and pure form of art.”¹³⁶⁹ Goebbels expressed repeatedly how the question of *Nachwuchs* was the “key problem of our future film production,” and how, in view of the unsatisfactory work done, he saw himself “compelled to implement a series of vigorous measures in order to finally get the ball rolling about this very important question.”¹³⁷⁰ His motive were not only about the making of quality films but the propaganda minister always had an eye on the financial aspect, especially the conquering of foreign markets.

¹³⁶⁶ Günther Schwark, “Verantwortungsbewußte Nachwuchspflege,” *Film-Kurier*, August 23, 1941.

¹³⁶⁷ Goebbels' diaries, September 27, 1941. He was especially impressed with the quality of the films, made “often for cheap and maximum two days,” and showed an “impressive niveau.”

¹³⁶⁸ Goebbels' diaries, September 26, 1941.

¹³⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁷⁰ Goebbels' diaries, September 27, 1941.

In a move typical of the way National Socialist ruling and administration was working, Goebbels intensified his pressure on Fritz Hippler¹³⁷¹ and brought Hans Hinkel on board, triggering competition between the two.¹³⁷² Hippler reacted quickly and turned in on September 29 a memorandum about the “systematic training of the film acting Nachwuchs,” that Goebbels called “precise and acceptable suggestions,” while he commented on how “Hinkel got to work with great energy.”¹³⁷³

In October 1941, on the occasion of Goebbels’ birthday, a Trust Fund for the Advancement of the *Nachwuchs* amounting to one million *Reichsmarks* was created.¹³⁷⁴ The generous fund was actually financed by the film companies, which had to pitch in two hundred thousand *Reichsmarks* each.¹³⁷⁵ Meanwhile on October 23, Hippler published in *Film-Kurier* a long three page essay entitled “Leadership and *Nachwuchs* in the film industry.”¹³⁷⁶ He described a cinematic industry where the “old-established” film professionals were reluctant to deal with the question of *Nachwuchs*, out of laziness, to save money, and often in order to prevent potential competition. Their only contribution to the *Nachwuchs* question was to launch new, often untalented, faces in the spotlight, only to see them disappear as fast as they came. In his contribution, Hippler basically unveiled the “Plan to handle the *Nachwuchs* question,” calling for the creation of a group of talented men, who, like the American “talent scouts,” are in charge of looking

¹³⁷¹ “Heavy conflicts with Hippler about the *Nachwuchs* question,” Goebbels’ diaries, September 27, 1941.

¹³⁷² Goebbels’ diaries, October 09, 1941. The rabid anti-Semitic Hans Hinkel started contributing to *Der deutsche Film* in July 1941 about “the deployment of art in time of war.” His official title was Reich culture Manager, *Reichskulturverwalter*, and Head of the Special Department “Troops Entertainment.” He would soon rise to prominent position, replacing Hippler as the head of the Film Department in 1942 and becoming Reich Film Superintendent in 1944.

¹³⁷³ Goebbels’ diaries, September 28, 1941, and October 9, 1941.

¹³⁷⁴ See BA R2 / 4824, 75-76. Bayerische Treuhandgesellschaft, no date.

¹³⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁷⁶ Dr. Hippler, “Menschenführung und Nachwuchspflege im Filmschaffen,” *Film-Kurier*, October 23, 1941.

throughout the Reich for the talented individuals.¹³⁷⁷ The film production companies would then train the *Nachwuchs* on a practical basis. They would have to create a new position, dedicated to searching and training, a task Hippler envisioned as taking several years. Underlining Hippler's plan was a call for a higher sense of responsibility and of community among film professionals, especially producers.

Agreeing with Hippler, Max Krüger, the head of casting by Terra, described how such sense of community in the theatre benefits all persons involved and provides a basis for the systematic training of the *Nachwuchs*.¹³⁷⁸ While Krüger once again presented the theatre as the example to be followed, he was aware of the structural differences between the two types of artistic productions. Whereas the 330 to 400 theatres in the Reich, with up to 8000 representations each year, allowed the 330 stage directors to train and nurture theater beginners, the film industry offered 60 active directors few opportunities for long term collaboration throughout the 150 films produced each year. Krüger reformulated the question of *Nachwuchs* as a "social question," appealing to the sense of community and responsibility of the persons involved. A solution would include not only a long-term collaboration with a set of film professionals, but also financial support for the *Nachwuchs*. Director Boleslav Barlog agreed that the model of the theater company and the system of rehearsals were best suited to the long-term training of film *Nachwuchs*.¹³⁷⁹

¹³⁷⁷ Goebbels had consulted a report about the *Nachwuchs* work done in the United States and ordered that, "the methods used successfully in the USA be applied to our circumstances." See Goebbels' diaries October 23, 1941.

¹³⁷⁸ "Zum Thema "Menschenführung und Nachwuchspflege im Filmschaffen." Ensemblebildung im Film. Eine Frage der künstlerischen Schulung des Nachwuchs und eine soziale Frage," *Film-Kurier*, October 25, 1941.

¹³⁷⁹ Director Boleslav Barlog and actress Mady Rahl also contributed to the discussion. See "Ein Filmregisseur und eine Schauspielerin melden sich zum Wort." *Film-Kurier*, October 28, 1941.

He added that film professionals' lack of engagement resulted in the lackluster screen tests, which were detrimental to the *Nachwuchs*.

Thus, the same problems regarding the *Nachwuchs* were still unresolved, after eight years of national socialist film policy. Notwithstanding Goebbels' celebration of the primacy of art over commerce, economic factors were still guiding film productions and, in search of a model to follow, the theater, once again, appeared to be the only model available.

First Measures

By November 1941, the “*Nachwuchs* plan” had been implemented and Goebbels congratulated himself about the new changes.¹³⁸⁰ Each company had an *Intendant*.¹³⁸¹ Ufa chose Dr. Herbert Engler, and Dr. Traub, head of the *Ufa-Lehrschau*, was in charge of finding coaches and creating the schedule. Hans Schulz-Dornburg would be the head of the *Nachwuchs* school. Ufa and Terra were using the studios left by the Film Academy. A few of the Film Academy students were now part of the Ufa *Nachwuchs* department: Monika Burg, Margit Debar, Anneliese von Eschstruth, Gisela Arnold, Sabine von Arnim, and Ruth Buchard among others.¹³⁸² Tobis nominated dramaturge Dietrich Stehr as its *Intendant*. Contacts had been established with the twelve most renowned cultural editors in chief throughout the Reich to help find *Nachwuchs* for the company. Having started its *Nachwuchs* program earlier, Tobis could present the first entire *Nachwuchs* film, *Zwei in einer grossen Stadt*, produced for 420,000 RM. Goebbels

¹³⁸⁰ Goebbels' diaries, November 11, 1941.

¹³⁸¹ BA RK / 62, 1806-1808. V. Reichmeister to Herrn Minister, *Nachwuchs* work, November 21, 1941.

¹³⁸² Maria Milde, *Berliner Glienicker Brücke: Als Hiller-Girl Um Die Welt* (München: Knauer, 1978), 67.

described the cast as “very nice people, young, fresh, energetic and buoyant, with imagination and a lot of enthusiasm; people who can be entrusted with responsibility.”¹³⁸³

Terra chose former stage *Intendant* of Wuppertal, Dr. Günther Stark, as its *Nachwuchs Intendant*. Bavaria was now on board with Franz Osten-Ostermayr as provisory *Intendant*, while Wien-Film chose Ernst Garden, and Berlin Film Kurt Werther, who had had the same position at the Film Academy. By January 1942, each film company had a *Nachwuchs* department, each in the process of finding appropriate buildings and each busy creating networks throughout the Reich to look for and recruit *Nachwuchs*.¹³⁸⁴

Although film was trying to differentiate itself from theatrical tradition, the first places visited were the theaters, with unsuccessful results. In view of the lack of good-looking *Nachwuchs* in the theater, Terra decided to go even “younger” and to train eight to ten pupils in its own film school. Bavaria had received more than 3,058 applications following a series of advertisements in the press, and 150 applicants were now under closer consideration. Tobis organized open contests entitled “The beautiful Vienna girl” or “The beautiful Munich Girl” and got over a thousand applications. Future filmmaker Wolfgang Staudte for example took advantage of one of Tobis’ contests in 1941, a kind of “Speed & Power Test,” where the aspiring directors had to direct their own script within two days.¹³⁸⁵ His work was convincing and he was accepted in a *Nachwuchs* program. In the following months the *Intendanten* traveled throughout the Reich,

¹³⁸³ Goebbels’ diaries, January 25, 1942.

¹³⁸⁴ BA RK / U62, 1798-1802. V. Reichmeister to Herr Minister, *Nachwuchs*, January 23, 1942. New *Intendants* were now in place: Hans-Schulz-Dornburg at the Ufa, Mr. v. Neusser at Wien-Film, Mr. Bartels at Bavaria

¹³⁸⁵ Uschi. Schmidt-Lenhard, *Courage Und Eigensinn Zum 100. Geburtstag Von Wolfgang Staudte* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2006), 18.

shooting screen tests and taking portraits, all while securing talented professionals to become part of their staff. Each film company was creating its own *Nachwuchs* school, while working in close collaboration with the existing acting schools.¹³⁸⁶ The dancer and Hiller-Girl Maria Hilde for example, who got her first engagement at the Munich theater, recalled how she got an invitation from Bavaria for a silent screen test, which led to an offer from the new Ufa-*Nachwuchs* chef Hans Schulz-Dornburg for free training plus a four hundred *Reichsmark* monthly stipend.¹³⁸⁷

In the press, the topic of *Nachwuchs*, which had almost disappeared during the last couple of years, resurfaced in the public forum. Reminiscent of its *Nachwuchs presents itself* column, *Film-Kurier* now featured portraits of new comers and reported about their successes.¹³⁸⁸ The trade press provided news about the *Urania* and the *Lessing-Hochschule*, now in its thirtieth year, and about the academic offerings in the upcoming semester.¹³⁸⁹ With the exception of Hippler's earlier article, no details of the new "*Nachwuchs-plan*" were made public. Audiences could only read about "the different fundamental works done throughout the Reich" about *Nachwuchs*, a topic which remained "the most pressing challenge for our film."¹³⁹⁰

¹³⁸⁶ BA RK / U62, 1794-1798. Frank Maraun to Herr Minister, *Nachwuchs*, March 06, 1942.

¹³⁸⁷ Milde, *Berliner Glienicker Brücke*, 53–63.

¹³⁸⁸ See "Begabter Nachwuchs" with a portraits of Anneliese Uhlig and Elfi Mayerhofer in *Film-Kurier*, August 15, 1941 and "Junge Darstellerin setzt sich durch/ Lotte Koch und ihre bisherigen Filme," *Film-Kurier*, August 1, 1941.

¹³⁸⁹ "Lessing-Hochschule und Urania kündigen an," *Film-Kurier*, September 17, 1941.

¹³⁹⁰ See Hippler, "Vorsätze und Wünsche. Dem deutschen Film zum Jahreswende," *Film-Kurier*, December 31, 1941, and "Der Filmnachwuchs des vergangenen Jahres," *Film-Kurier*, January 7, 1942.

Nachwuchschef Frank Maraun

1942 was supposed to bring major changes for not only film but also theater *Nachwuchs*.¹³⁹¹ Not only were new actors and actresses celebrated on the January 7, 1942 front page of *Film-Kurier*, the seventeen new film authors, including three women, were presented as the fruits of intensive *Nachwuchs* work (Figure 9.3).¹³⁹² The academic offerings for the upcoming semester were announced, next to the latest news about the Italian Film Academy, which was still open and functioning.¹³⁹³ In the meantime, the *Nachwuchs* program was taking shape. In February 1942, Goebbels had appointed Reich Film Dramaturgy's employee Frank Maraun to be the director of the program.¹³⁹⁴ Maraun, or Erwin Goelz, had been a writer for the cultural pages of numerous German papers and magazines such as the *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, where he published, among others, about the issue of *Nachwuchs*.¹³⁹⁵

Since May 1, 1940, he had been working in the Propaganda Ministry as a deputy for the *Reichsfilmdramaturg* Carl-Dieter von Reichsmeister, while continuing his journalistic activities.¹³⁹⁶

¹³⁹¹ Dr. Hermann Wanderscheck, "Der Nachwuchs auf den Berliner Bühne," *Film-Kurier*, January 13, 1942.

¹³⁹² "Der Filmnachwuchs des vergangenen Jahres," *Film-Kurier*, January 7, 1942, and Georg Herzberg, "Filmauroren-Nachwuchs im Jahre 1941. 17 neuen Namen unter 83 Beschäftigten," *Film-Kurier*, January 9, 1942. As always, other reasons for the employment of new writers, such as the draft, were not mentioned.

¹³⁹³ Paolo Uccello, "Blick in die Italienische Filmakademie," *Film-Kurier*, March 17, 1942; C.C.Sch., "Neue italienische Regisseure. Nachwuchs trat in den Vordergrund," *Film-Kurier*, March 03, 1942, "Die Filmwissenschaft im Sommersemester 1942," *Film-Kurier*, April 28, 1942.

¹³⁹⁴ For a short biographical essay on Maraun and a reprint of some of his publications see Rolf Aurich and Wolfgang Jacobsen, *Erwin Goelz: Filmkritiker* (Hamburg: edition text + kritik, 2006).

¹³⁹⁵ Ma. "Filmnachwuchs – Glück und Verdienst" in *Uhr-Abendblatt*, no. 268 (November 15, 1935); Frank Maraun, "Kunst des Werbevorspanns," in *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, no. 3 (January 3, 1937).

¹³⁹⁶ Goebbels made the decision on April 20, 1940, calling the hiring "a pleasant acquisition."

Starting in 1937, Maraun published numerous articles in *Der deutsche Film*, from reviewing “the most important films of the month,” all of them propaganda films, writing portraits of German, and in one occasion French, filmmakers, and praising the work of the Reich Film Archive and the newsreels, to participating in the debates about film poet and the “typical mistakes in film making.”¹³⁹⁷ While his praise of the propaganda films and the work of the government had confirmed his embrace of the National Socialist regime, his insightful comments about filmmaking issues and his work for the Reich film dramaturge made him a valuable candidate for the position. His new job was to coordinate the efforts of the different film companies throughout the Reich.

Maraun titled himself *Nachwuchschef* and his main task was to coordinate the search for potential *Nachwuchs* throughout the Reich in collaboration with the individual film companies. The idea was to contact anyone talented or potentially talented. The aspirants had their pictures taken and, if satisfactory, the film companies would first make a silent screen test, followed by a sound screen test if the person showed higher potential. Maraun then proceeded to a first evaluation of the candidates chosen by the film companies. Every month or so, he would send a selection of screen tests and information about a set of *Nachwuchs* to the Propaganda Minister. After viewing the footage, Goebbels made a decision about the future of the aspiring film professionals.

As early as March 3, 1942, Maraun was quick to report about the *Nachwuchs* work.¹³⁹⁸ Ufa’s *Nachwuchs* director Schulz-Dornburg, for example, had been traveling throughout the Reich, Munich, Nurnberg, Vienna, and Bremen to organize screen tests.

¹³⁹⁷ Frank Maraun published about thirty-five articles out of the eighty issues of *Der deutsche Film*.

¹³⁹⁸ BA R55 / 657. Maraun about *Nachwuchs* work, March 6, 1942.

An April 14, 1942 memo kept track of the measures taken by the film companies.¹³⁹⁹ Following Tobis' example, Ufa looked for *Nachwuchs* among pupils. "Exam tests" (*Prüfaufnahmen*) instead of the usual "screen tests" (*Probeaufnahmen*) for the *Nachwuchs* with acting training had been made with thirty-five candidates, almost all them young women.¹⁴⁰⁰ Tobis announced the completion of another studio film, *Das Band gerissen ...* with *Nachwuchs* director Wolfgang Staudte and actors Else Elster, Gerda Böttcher, and Ernst Waldow. In addition, twenty-four female and nine male candidates had been selected for the acting school. Following up on an event in Hamburg where hundreds of pictures had been taken, seven screen tests had been made but none of them was satisfactory. In a similar fashion, Berlin Film had gathered more than five hundred applications, made seventy pictures and thirty screen tests and Terra's *Nachwuchschef* Dr. Stark had screen tests made in Brussels and Antwerp. Despite the companies' intensive search and increasing monetary investments, the results were by large negative.¹⁴⁰¹ Writing to Goebbels, Maraun pointed to the "difficulties, despite broad and serious efforts, to find *Nachwuchs* who meet the expectations."¹⁴⁰²

In view of the "tenuous results," Maraun advocated an intensification of the *Nachwuchs* work.¹⁴⁰³ He compiled a list of the *Nachwuchs* under contract, with a few

¹³⁹⁹ BA RK / U2, 1778-1790. Maraun to Herr Minister, "Stand der Nachwuchsarbeit," April 14, 1942.

¹⁴⁰⁰ BA RK / U2, 1780. Maraun, Report about *Nachwuchs* work, April 14, 1942.

¹⁴⁰¹ Bavaria for example had spent a little over one hundred thousand RM in October 1941. This budget then doubled and reached between 231,000 and 296,000 per month throughout 1942. See BA R2 / 4836. See page 141 for October 1941, 172 for November 1941, 225 for December 1941, 260 for January 1942, 272 for February 1942, 310 for March 1942, and 343 for April 1942.

¹⁴⁰² BA RK / U2, 1784. Maraun, Report about *Nachwuchs* work, April 14, 1942.

¹⁴⁰³ BA RK / U2, 1790. Maraun to Herr Minister, Situation of the *Nachwuchs*, April 14, 1942.

already employed in feature films.¹⁴⁰⁴ Tobis, which had started its *Nachwuchs* program earlier, had twelve persons under contract, Terra has six, Ufa four, Bavaria and Wien Film each one. None so far for Berlin Film and Prag Film. The *Nachwuchs* were divided among six men and eighteen women. This gender discrepancy caused concerns and prompted a lengthy memo assessing the need for male film professionals – not only actors but even more importantly, the “leading functions of dramaturges, directors and cameramen.”¹⁴⁰⁵ Calling for a “better race of and ideologically reliable pool of filmmakers,” Maraun emphasized the importance of the selection of the *Nachwuchs* and argued that it could only be found among the war-wounded. He suggested the creation of a twelve-man group, to be chosen among the ones already qualified as G.v.H. (*garnisonverwendungsfähig, Heimat*, Fit for Garrison duty in the homeland) and A.v.H. (*arbeitsverwendungsfähig, Heimat*, Fit for Work duty in the homeland).¹⁴⁰⁶

Maraun was very active in his new role as *Nachwuchschef*.¹⁴⁰⁷ He drafted for example the new “apprentice contracts,” between *Nachwuchs* and film companies.¹⁴⁰⁸ The student, “who should consider himself honored to have such contract, was expected to show industriousness, exemplary behavior, excellent discipline, and exemplary lifestyle.” The amount of the monthly income and the social security was left to the

¹⁴⁰⁴ See BA RK / U61, 176-178. Maraun, Memo, April 17, 1942. Some of the acting *Nachwuchs* had appeared in feature films. See Monika Burg, Charlotte Thiele, Hansi Wendler, Hermann brix, Rolf Weih, Karin Himboldt, Gerhild Weber, Eva Immermann, Käthe Dyckhoff. A few just got hired: Gerta Böttcher and Helmi Mareich. Eril Schumann will play post war. For a list of what the *Nachwuchs* had accomplished by the end of the summer see “*Nachwuchs setzt sich durch. Deutsche Filmnachwuchs 1941-1942*,” *Der deutsche Film*, August/September 1942, nr. 2, 34-37.

¹⁴⁰⁵ BA R55 / 658, 65-67. Maraun, Memo, April 28, 1942.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Maraun suggested already two *Nachwuchs* directors: Lieutenant Alfred Berndt and corporal Eberhard Cyran in BA R55 / 658, 67.

¹⁴⁰⁷ See Aurich and Jacobsen, *Erwin Goelz*.

¹⁴⁰⁸ BA RK / U62, 20-26, June 1942.

discretion of the film companies. After a year, the company could decide to either extend the contract or to offer the student a “*Nachwuchs* contract.” The latter guaranteed the trainee an income of seven hundred *Reichsmarks* per month and allowed him to participate in feature films. Maraun pushed that such contracts actually guarantee the *Nachwuchs* thirty days of employment per year.¹⁴⁰⁹ In August it was decided to grant the apprentices a monthly contribution to the living costs of 250 RM for those living with their parents and 400 RM for the ones living on their own.¹⁴¹⁰ Dr. Hilleke, who argued that this amount of money would lead to discipline cases, as young people “become prone to the temptations of the film atmosphere,” supported Maraun’s opposition to a five hundred *Reichsmark* monthly stipend.¹⁴¹¹ Once again it is astonishing to see that the film industry was still, in 1942, considered a dangerous, deviant world, which could spoil young people, after close to ten years of National Socialist film politics. These prejudices against the film world were nothing short of an acknowledgment of failure.

Maraun also composed a set of guidelines, which had to be followed systematically and assiduously while looking for and training the *Nachwuchs*.¹⁴¹² One of his main emphases was the quality of the screen tests. Maraun had designed new sets of appropriate “standard scenes” to give aspiring actors a chance to demonstrate a spectrum of different emotions. Goebbels agreed with having experienced directors shoot the

¹⁴⁰⁹ BA R 109 I / 9. Ninth meeting of the Ufi’s board, April 30, 1942.

¹⁴¹⁰ BA R55 / 657, 124-127. Maraun. Financial help for the *Nachwuchs*. August 24, 1942.

¹⁴¹¹ BA R55 / 657, 128. Dr. Hilleke. Financial help for the *Nachwuchs*. August 25, 1942. See also BA R109 II 16, Minutes, Meeting between Maraun and Hippler, August 8, 1942, point 6.

¹⁴¹² Maraun to Herr Minister, April 15, 1942 in BA R55 / 658, 79-84, and May 12, 1942 in BA RK / U62, 1768-1776.

screen tests and insisted on “a decent human atmosphere” in the *Nachwuchs* studios.¹⁴¹³ He recommended for example that sixteen years old *Nachwuchs* actress Lison Hoffman received “an exceptionally good care and human support. She must keep growing in a clean/ safe milieu.”¹⁴¹⁴ In September, Maraun rewrote the memo about the “spiritual and material care of the *Filmnachwuchs*,” and emphasized the disciplinary measures, including a ban on the frequenting of bars.¹⁴¹⁵ Students were obligated to attend all classes in a punctual manner and attendance sheets were to be passed around. Once again Maraun reminded in his memos how students were expected to lead exemplary lives. Discipline problems had already been a topic Film Academy director Müller-Scheld had to deal with. The actor Kurt-Gerhard Hoffmann, who was said to “have spread rumors about erotic relationships between producers and *Nachwuchschefs* from Berlin Film with female *Nachwuchs* actresses,” had seen his contract terminated.¹⁴¹⁶ Maraun recommended communicating this case to all students as a deterrent example.

While aware of the increasing shortage of men and materials, Maraun stressed the necessity of compiling a photo album for each *Nachwuchs*; the album would then be used for optimal casting.¹⁴¹⁷ Propaganda Minister Goebbels went even further and called for the creation of a card index.¹⁴¹⁸ Maraun also reported about the film school opening in

¹⁴¹³ BA RK / U62, 1712. Frowein to Leiter F, Nachwuchsschaupielers, July 16, 1942.

¹⁴¹⁴ BA RK / U62, 1714-1718. Frowein to Maraun, reports on ministerial decisions, July 16, 1942.

¹⁴¹⁵ BA RK / U62, 1656-1660. Maraun. Memo about the supervision of Filmnachwuchs, September 17, 1942.

¹⁴¹⁶ We know that such rumors were actually true. See how Hildegard Knef had an affair with the head of the Tobis Edwald Demandowski. Maria Milde reports on how Hiller took advantages of the women he employed in Milde, *Berliner Glienicker Brücke*, 38–40.

¹⁴¹⁷ Maraun to Herr Minister, April 15, 1942 in BA R55 / 658, 79-84, and May 12, 1942 in BA RK / U62, 1768-1776.

¹⁴¹⁸ BA RK / U62, 1712. Frowein to Leiter F, Nachwuchsschaupielers, July 16, 1942.

Babelsberg to train dramaturges, editors, directors, production managers and composers. Dr. Hans Traub was at its head and Dr. Hermann Gressiecker took over the dramaturgy department. Maraun negotiated to assure the participation of experienced film professionals as trainers, ready to make compromises. Gressiecker had been a long time contributor to *Der deutsche Film* and worked at the Film Academy. Forced to quit his teaching job at the department of journalism at the university of Berlin due to his “Jewish ancestry, Traub was officially not supposed to be known as the head of the film school.¹⁴¹⁹ Maraun was officially in charge and Traub, who was still head of the *Ufa-Lehrschau*, was to serve as “a consultant” (*Sachbearbeiter*).¹⁴²⁰ Similar to what happened with the Film Academy, we see a relative small circle of men and a willingness to posit personal connection over ideology.

The Nachwuchs Question Back in the Press

The topic of Nachwuchs intensified in the press in the spring 1942. *Filmwelt* reported how Goebbels gave a speech to an invited circle of representatives of film, artistic, business, and technical people professionals. In addition to announcing the reorganization and to stressing the importance of film not only in Germany but also in Europe, the propaganda minister had a few words about *Nachwuchs*. He recommended the heads of production to “pay special attention to the *Nachwuchs*. The question of

¹⁴¹⁹ Biermann, “Hans Traub (1901-1943).”

¹⁴²⁰ BA R109 II / 16&17, Minutes, Meeting between Maraun and Hippler, August 8, 1942, point 5.

Nachwuchs if of the highest urgency and is the object of special attention from the part of the leadership of German film.”¹⁴²¹

In the following weeks, the new *Nachwuchs* system was presented to the public. Maraun published several essays in the film press revealing the set of principles he was acting upon.¹⁴²² In *Film-Kurier*, the newly appointed *Nachwuchschef* addressed mostly young men, whom he described as having embraced the political duties of the time. The example he took, a good looking fighter pilot from the Condor Legion in whom one could read “the toughness of his will and audacity,” points to his attention to physical attributes as a necessity for success. In accordance with the then dominant discourse, Maraun described how film played an equally important role in “the propagation of the ideal modern German person at home and abroad,” and as “a tool for the manipulation of human beings.” Theater on the other hand “has no role in the configuration of this new world” and the old guard of serious actors, such as Emile Jannings or Heinrich George, was having difficulties finding successors. For Maraun, a major problem lay in the fact that the majority of the film *Nachwuchs* were motivated by the search for easy fame and extravagant incomes. Thus, he concluded that “when the youth had understood that filmmaking gives them not a lesser but an equal opportunity to fulfill a national mission, then we will have the *Nachwuchs* that we need and look for.” As Rolf Aurich shown, such an ideologically loaded statement, which naively expected the young *Nachwuchs* to

¹⁴²¹ “Die Neuordnung des deutschen Filmschaffens. Richtungsweisende Rede von reichsminister Dr. Goebbels,” *Filmwelt*, no. 11/12 (March 1942), 82.

¹⁴²² Maraun, “Der Filmnachwuchs und seine Sendung,” *Film-Kurier*, May 20, 1942.

enter the film business as part of a political mission, was probably a sincere expression of Maraun's own feelings about his work.¹⁴²³

Der deutsche Film, to which Maraun had regularly contributed, provided extensive coverage of the new *Nachwuchs* efforts. Reprinting his 1941 essay on *Nachwuchs* training, the magazine situated Fritz Hippler, who had just been named *Reich Film Intendant*, as the leading force behind the *Nachwuchs* program.¹⁴²⁴ The magazine claimed that, inspired by Hippler's essay, film companies had started to implement new measures for the care and promotion of *Nachwuchs*. The *Filmnachweis*, the Office of Film Licensing, and the Film Council, now headed by Wolfgang Liebeneiner, were to increase the *Nachwuchs* work. In the following issue, Frank Maraun got more specific.¹⁴²⁵ While acknowledging the difficult conditions, Maraun emphasized the need for "systematic search, selection and training" of film *Nachwuchs*, echoing word for word Goebbels' demands. The training would focus on the three most needed professions: actors, authors and what he calls "dramaturgical disciplines," including dramaturges, editors, directors, and producers. Due to time and material pressure, there was no possibility for a fundamental, from the ground up teaching. Only persons with a minimum of background and professional experience will be taken in. Actors, on the other hand, must fulfill different conditions such as "an engaging look, an impressive bearing in terms of the ideal of racial beauty, being photogenic, having a pleasant microphone voice, agility and making a strong impression in facial expression and

¹⁴²³ Aurich and Jacobsen, *Erwin Goetz*.

¹⁴²⁴ "Menschenführung und Nachwuchspflege," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 10 (April/March 1942): 2-4.

¹⁴²⁵ Frank Maraun, "Durch die Praxis für die Praxis. Grundzüge der Nachwuchspflege von Frank Maraun," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 11/12 (May/June 1942): 2-4.

gestures.” Intense practical training and integration into the daily production were designed to train specific film artists and move them away from theatrical tradition, especially in terms of movement. Maraun reminded the reader that film was foremost a visual art, an art of moving images. In his address at the Leiziger workshop of the *Bundes Deutscher Film-Amateure* in May, he had made his position in the recurrent debate about the primacy of word or image in film clear.¹⁴²⁶

Asked by *Der deutsche Film* to expand on what is being done about the *Nachwuchs*, Ewald von Demandowsky, the head of Tobis, described how he created a practice film studio to allow *Nachwuchs* directors to practice.¹⁴²⁷ In addition to a musical hear, a sense for movement and mimic art, and a natural authority, von Demandowsky emphasized practical training as the only way to promote *Nachwuchs* directors. Adding to that, script-writer Ottoheinz Jahn adamantly rejected the use of theater actors and actresses for the film, arguing that, while they are “intense” and “interesting,” they learned to play, to “act and simulate,” and thus are lacking what is making a real film actor, the natural way of being.¹⁴²⁸

The same month, *Film-Kurier*'s headline read: “What happened to the acting *Nachwuchs*. Facts about a topic which is often and readily discussed.”¹⁴²⁹ Editor in chief Georg Herzberg attempted to “set the record straight” for an unknowledgeable audience, which he scolded for its impatience and constant hunger for new faces. Herzberg

¹⁴²⁶ “Frank Maraun sprach in Leipzig,” *Film-Kurier*, May 30, 1942.

¹⁴²⁷ Ewald von Demandowsky, “Wie werde ich Regisseur,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1942): 2.

¹⁴²⁸ Ottoheinz Jahn, “Über den Schauspielernachwuchs,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1942): 4-5.

¹⁴²⁹ Georg Herzberg, “Was geschah für den Schauspieler-Nachwuchs? Tatsachen zu einem gern und oft diskutierten Thema,” *Fimkurier*, July 18, 1942.

demonstrated with numerous examples that a substantial number of now well-known actors and actresses have had their debut in the last five or six years, which he interpreted as a sign of a working *Nachwuchs* system, which allowed actors and actresses to develop and mature. Despite Herzberg's criticism of premature exposure of *Nachwuchs*, the press did not refrain from featuring young *Nachwuchs*, especially women.¹⁴³⁰ In the August/September 1942 issue, *Der deutsche Film* devoted four whole pages to new *Nachwuchs*, men and women alike, mentioning also three *Nachwuchs* director.¹⁴³¹

Not unlike what was done with the Film Academy, the press presented the *Nachwuchs* work as a sign of the strength and productivity of the home front and the foresight of the regime. We see graphs showing the films currently shot and reports about the *Ufa-Lehrschau* pointing to the steady number of visitors, now reaching a total of 88,769, and the new additions such as a model of the Prag film studio where Veit Harlan's film, *Die Goldene Stadt* (The Golden City) had been shot.¹⁴³²

Several principles of the training, such as the emphasis on practical training and the need for a common course of studies in order to facilitate collaboration between the different professions, had already been part of the Film Academy program. Now that

¹⁴³⁰ See how the July 1942 issue of *Der deutsche Film* added to Jahn's article about *Nachwuchs* a photo of young women *Nachwuchs* in swimsuits.

¹⁴³¹ "Nachwuchs setzt sich durch. Deutsche Filmnachwuchs 1941-1942," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2/3 (August/September 1942): 34-37. Among the acting *Nachwuchs* mentioned in the article: Margot Hielscher, Winnie Markus, Joachim Brennecke, Maria Holst, Gerhild Weber, Will Quadflieg, Malte Jäger, Hermann Braun, Monika Burg, Hansi Wendler, Elfriede Datzig, Hermann Brix, Karl John, Rolf Weih, Eva Immermann, Annelis Reinhold, Lucie Millowitsch, Bruni Löbel, Dora Komar. Many, such as Susi Nicoletti, Fred Liedwehr, Lotte Koch, Adelheid Seeck, Marianne Simson, Martin Urtel came from the theater. As *Nachwuchs* director we find Volker von Collande, Rolf Hansen, and Dr. Harald Braun.

¹⁴³² "Die Ufa Lehrschau während des ersten Vierteljahres 1942," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1942): 23. While the number of foreigners, 97 or 7%, was emphasized, the fact that 56% of the visitor were soldiers was not developed. "Ein Tag in der in den Berliner Film Ateliers," *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2/3 (August/September 1942): 8-14.

each film company had its own set of *Nachwuchs*, the integration appeared to be easier. The lack of any mention of genius as a necessary condition for a successful artist is noteworthy. After a few years of intense and difficult search for the new generation of talented film actors, Maraun and the other men were talking a more humble position, emphasizing the necessary hard work.

Screening Sessions and Goebbels' Decisions

Maraun's reports about the viewing sessions are very informative and give us insight into the ideology behind the *Nachwuchs* training. Attending the screening, in addition to Goebbels, was a regular group of people including chief dramaturge Herr von Reichmeister, Dr. Rollenberg, Kurt Frowein,¹⁴³³ Hamel, SS-Adjutant Günther Schwägermann, Magda Goebbels, and Maraun himself. While Maraun did the preliminary selection and presented his opinion as to whether to offer the aspiring film professionals a contract with a film school as a trainee or to have them be directly employed in feature films, Goebbels had the final say. On occasion Magda Goebbels would attempt to influence her husband and there is evidence that she managed to extend the contracts of some actresses.¹⁴³⁴

Few of the *Nachwuchs* were directly allowed to be classified as professional actors and ready to be employed. They were then put on List IIv, a new professional list Goebbels created in May 1942. It included "all acting professionals, whose screen tests had been positively evaluated by Goebbels, but whose admission to the II+ List could not

¹⁴³³ Goebbels brought Frowein to Berlin as his press secretary in 1940. Frowein was appointed in June 1943 Reich film dramaturge.

¹⁴³⁴ BA R55 / 657, 180. Maraun. Report on the screen tests for October 15, 1942. October 28, 1942. Lydia Bolichi and Ursula Schmidt-Huth benefited from her intervention.

be processed yet.”¹⁴³⁵ The majority of the reviewed applicants on the other hand got a *Nachwuchs* contract with one of the film companies; the propaganda minister directly rejected an equal number.¹⁴³⁶ One of the major criteria the applicants were judged by was their physical attributes.¹⁴³⁷ While Anneliese von Eschtruth “pleased the Minister through her look,” he did not like Rella Marlo because of her “hard-lined mouth.”¹⁴³⁸ Actresses were criticized for their “irregular face, broad waist, cold visage.”¹⁴³⁹ Sometimes the acting talent won over physical disadvantages. Despite her “sunken cheeks and her way of walking,” Sabine von Arnim was given an apprenticeship with Berlin Film because of her “pleasant diction.”¹⁴⁴⁰ This attention to physical attributes is not surprising in the context of a national ideology obsessed with race and racial features. Cinema, which was recognized as having an immense impact on the population, was expected to be the showcase of the imagined racially pure nation. In his “Observations About Filmmaking,” Hippler described the impact on gender ideas:

Film, aside from causing the spectator’s personal connection with the film protagonist during the filmic unfolding, also creates the desire to be like him. How he clears his throat or spits, how he is dressed, how he acts, if and how he drinks, what and how he smokes, if he is a straight arrow or a bon vivant, all that not only has an effect in the film but also in the spectator’s life [...] After viewing an Albers-film, even the apprentice hairdresser is Albers, and nobody should try to mess with him.¹⁴⁴¹

¹⁴³⁵ Albrecht, *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik*, 215–217.

¹⁴³⁶ BA RK / U61, 426-428. Maraun, Reports on ministerial decision, May 19, 1942.

¹⁴³⁷ Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, 14–16.

¹⁴³⁸ BA R55 / 658, 2. Maraun, Report on the ministerial decisions. January 07, 1943.

¹⁴³⁹ BA RK / U62, 1714-1718. Frowein to Maraun, Reports on ministerial decisions, July 16, 1942.

¹⁴⁴⁰ BA RK / U61, 427. According to fellow *Nachwuchs* Maria Milde, Sabine von Arnim threw herself under a S-Bahn in Ufastadt, 106.

¹⁴⁴¹ Hippler, *Betrachtungen Zum Filmschaffen*. See the full text in Albrecht, *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik*, 508–510.

The stakes were even higher for women.¹⁴⁴²

It is equally indisputable that the women represented in films influence the beauty ideal of the common masses. For this reason, the casting of film roles cannot receive enough attention. It is not only a matter of this or that woman appearing attractive in this or that movie. No, the right woman chosen according to her external appearance as well as to inner qualities and attributes, after repeated and successful use, positively influence the general tastes and beauty ideal of a great number of men, totally unconsciously but with lasting effect. This is not only valuable from the perspective of reproductive politics, but also in the sense of raising qualitative standards.

Hippler had put it bluntly when he wrote in *Film-Kurier* that “even if this provokes the ire of theater fanatics... the film *Nachwuchs* must be good looking!”¹⁴⁴³ Another snide comment about the theater establishment.’

Jo Fox has rightfully noted a gender discrepancy in the evaluations.¹⁴⁴⁴ Women were continually described in physical terms, with such terminology as “natural, attractive, childlike, very attractive blond type, fresh, childish, in possession of the charm of instinctive female cunning.” When physical beauty did not match acting qualities, Goebbels ordered physical exercise and gymnastics, stipulating that the actresses lose weight or in some cases gain some. While Annerose Siedler’s “thighs and waist were too fat,” Sabine von Arnim on the other hand needed to gain five to ten pounds.¹⁴⁴⁵ Goebbels often requested surgical operations to remodel the nose of several actresses. Inge Borgner for example was described as having “negroid nose,” and was to pay for the costs of the

¹⁴⁴² See also Ascheid, *Hitler's Heroines*; Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*; Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Women*.

¹⁴⁴³ Hippler, “Vorsätze und Wünsche. Dem deutschen Film zum Jahreswende,” *Film-Kurier*, December 31, 1941.

¹⁴⁴⁴ Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, 14–16.

¹⁴⁴⁵ BA RK / U62, 134. Maraun, Reports on the ministerial decisions, October 16, 1942

operation, while Ursula Zeitz would be helped paying for a second (!) operation.¹⁴⁴⁶ The most famous case concerns Germany's future stars Hildegard Knef, whom Goebbels described in January 1943 as "nice. But she has to have an operation on her nose."¹⁴⁴⁷ Echoing Hippler's statement, Goebbels relegated the applicants, which did not match his physical criteria, to the theater.¹⁴⁴⁸ It is interesting that while discussion about the film always developed in comparison with the theater, here film wins and relegates its unsatisfactory elements back to the theater. In this case, it is a failure to have to go back to the theater. Film is established as the superior form of art.

Men, on the other side, were judged more on their personal attributes, their characters.¹⁴⁴⁹ Goebbels was attentive to features such as "discipline, self-controlled, with a fresh comedic temperament, humorous." Male *Nachwuchs* were also remarked upon when they appeared "free, relaxed, fresh, open, decent." Needless to say, they were preferably virile and young. Günther Goercke-Pflüger is described as "looking magnificent, the distinct type of the young German man from today,"¹⁴⁵⁰ and Karl Schill embodied "the type of the weak intellectual. [...]" Like their female counterparts, male *Nachwuchs* were also subjected to physical training to improve their "manly features."

¹⁴⁴⁶ BA R55 / 657. Frowein to Maraun. Reports on the ministerial decisions. July 16, 1942. See also Augusta Schrott and Erna Jonas in BA R55 / 658, 128 October 2, 1943.

¹⁴⁴⁷ BA R55 / 658. Maraun, Report on the ministerial decisions. January 7, 1943.

¹⁴⁴⁸ "Inge Borgner should try and make her way in the theater," in Ibid.

¹⁴⁴⁹ For example, Goebbels described Rudolf Bechmann as having "a somewhat big nose, but this is not disturbing for a man." BA RK / U62, 1638.

¹⁴⁵⁰ BA RK / U62, 1696-1698. Maraun, Instruction from Herr minister to the *Nachwuchs* memo from 08.10.1942, August 8, 1942.

Operetta singer Erich Arnold was prescribed boxing training to correct his posture and to “stylize him away from the Operetta-fellow to a distinctively manly guy.”¹⁴⁵¹

Two further criteria for selection emerged from the regular reports: the classification of acting professionals along specific types, and the constant comparison with other film professionals. Despite the regular critiques found in the film press, typecasting was as broadly used in Germany as it was in Hollywood.¹⁴⁵² Goebbels described Anna Dobricza as “a typical example of a salon lady [...] she could later be employed simply as a love interest,” Annerose Siedler reminded him of the “type Renate Müller,”¹⁴⁵³ and Adolf Ziegler received a ticket to “the List II v as a villain.”¹⁴⁵⁴ Erica Balque, the wife of director Helmut Käutner, represented the “type of the intelligent, professionally active woman.”¹⁴⁵⁵ Erneste Schmid was “an interesting woman type, between Pola Negri and Zarah Leander, which should be used as a *cocotte* and a vamp.”¹⁴⁵⁶ Should her career fail, Frau Schmid could confine herself to the continuation of her marriage. Gerty Solten can, “like Brigitte Horney, embody the feisty wilding and the amusing slut.”¹⁴⁵⁷ Charlotte Thiedemann “can play the heartless, cold and covertly

¹⁴⁵¹ BA R55 / 657, 82. Tobis, Report about the screen tests of Erich Arnold, June 22, 1942.

¹⁴⁵² G.H. “Rollengestaltung und Besetzungsfragen,” *Film-Kurier*, January 23, 1943. See also G.H. “Auch für gute Schauspieler durchdachte Rollen,” *Film-Kurier*, November 11, 1939, “Keine Typengalerie und keine Erstarrung. Lohnende Neuentdeckung von Charakterdarsteller,” *Film-Kurier*, March 11, 1941, Felix Henseleit, “Die schauspielerische Leistung und das Gesicht des Films,” *Film-Kurier*, April 12, 1943. For Hollywood cinema see Peter Miles and Malcolm Smith, *Cinema, Literature & Society: Elite and Mass Culture in Interwar Britain* (London, New York: Croom Helm, 1987); Pamela Robertson Wojcik, *Movie Acting, the Film Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2004). See especially chapter 4, Character and Type, 165-190.

¹⁴⁵³ BA R55 / 658. Maraun. Report on the ministerial decisions. January 07, 1943.

¹⁴⁵⁴ BA R55 / 657. Ufa to Goebbels. June 07, 1942.

¹⁴⁵⁵ BA RK / U62, 338. Maraun, Report about the screen tests of Erica Balque, January 15, 1944.

¹⁴⁵⁶ BA RK / U62, 942.

¹⁴⁵⁷ BA RK / U62, 1052. Maraun. Report about screen tests, September 15, 1942.

evil women. She is the perfect type for such roles, and has the charm of a distinctive personality (similar to Françoise Rosay), a type we rarely have in German films.”¹⁴⁵⁸

Goebbels was always the last person to decide. Although Ufa *Nachwuchs* chef Hanns Schulz-Dornburg had offered her a *Nachwuchs* contract, Goebbels, who objected to "her too proletarian type", rejected Maria Milde.¹⁴⁵⁹ Goebbels was especially concerned about the impression female actresses gave. While evaluating screen tests of aspiring actresses, the Propaganda Minister complained about the “whorish look some had.”¹⁴⁶⁰ Maraun confirmed that these women had visited the Lily Ackermann acting school where, “in order to teach young actresses to lose their inhibitions, she took their pudency away.” Maraun pointed to the capitalistic exploitation of such schools and required sharper control and insured the Minister that none of the *Nachwuchs* under him visited these types of schools.

As seen above, typecasting was also combined with comparing and contrasting with existing film professionals, German and international. Edith Rix type for example “lay between Ilse Werner und Danielle Darrieux,”¹⁴⁶¹ while Charlotte Micheal reminded Goebbels of Françoise Rosay.¹⁴⁶² Ursula Zeitz “looks like Luise Ulrich,” and Rudolf Birkemeyer was “along the line of Attila Hörbiger.”¹⁴⁶³ Dithe Sanders was compared to Loretta Young,¹⁴⁶⁴ and Sybille Schmitz,¹⁴⁶⁵ and Erich Arnold “not only looks good, he

¹⁴⁵⁸ BA R 109 II, 18. Maraun. Report about screen tests, June 25, 1942.

¹⁴⁵⁹ Milde, *Berliner Glienicker Brücke*, 80–82.

¹⁴⁶⁰ BA R55 / 658. Maraun, Report on the ministerial decisions. January 7, 1943

¹⁴⁶¹ BA R55 / 657, 11. Maraun, Reports about *Nachwuchs* work, March 6, 1942.

¹⁴⁶² BA RK / U62, 806. Maraun. Report on the ministerial decisions. June 7, 1943

¹⁴⁶³ BA RK / U62, 1640.

¹⁴⁶⁴ BA RK / U61, 427. Maraun, Reports about ministerial decisions, May 19, 1942.

¹⁴⁶⁵ BA RK / U62, 876. Maraun, Reports about ministerial decisions, May 12, 1942.

also represents a psychological type, which is rare here and which is closest to the American prototype.”¹⁴⁶⁶ Rosemarie Wichmann had the potential to develop into a “northern German Paula Wessely,”¹⁴⁶⁷ and Edelgrad Petri could be “a young blond Jenny Jugo.”¹⁴⁶⁸ Goebbels had an eye on the international market and was eager to find actors and actresses who would allow German films to conquer more markets. One of his main impetus to intensify the *Nachwuchs* program had been his disappointment with the *Nachwuchs*, which he judged “mediocre” and making “*a petit bourgeois*” (*kleinbürgerliche*) impression: “Neither with men nor with the women do we have types, which have the potential to make an international impact.” This did not fit with Goebbels’ plan for German film: “This [situation] must be changed. If German film wants to conquer the world, then it must present persons, who can represent ideal for the world.”¹⁴⁶⁹ Such ideas explain his enthusiasm for Conchita Montenegro, a Spanish dancer, whom he describes as being “terrific and of international format.”¹⁴⁷⁰

Making a positive impression on Goebbels could open the doors to aspiring actors and actresses. *Nachwuchs* Robert Tessen and Kristina Sorbon for example got a first role in Heinz Rühmann’s new production, *Sophienlund*.¹⁴⁷¹ But very few *Nachwuchs* received a positive reaction from Goebbels. With the exception of the actresses Kristina Sorbon and Sonja Ziemann, or director Peter Pewas, whose studio film *Zweiklang* Goebbels called a “film poem” (*Filmdichtung*), and future DEFA filmmaker Wolfgang Staudte,

¹⁴⁶⁶ BA R55 / 657, 82. Tobis, Report about the screen tests of Erich Arnold, June 22, 1942.

¹⁴⁶⁷ BA R55 / 657, 139. Maraun, Report about screen tests, September 1942.

¹⁴⁶⁸ BA R55 / 658, 165. Maraun Report about screen tests, April 6, 1944.

¹⁴⁶⁹ Goebbels’ diaries, October 16, 1941.

¹⁴⁷⁰ BA RK / U62, 1696-1698. Maraun, Instruction from Herr minister to the *Nachwuchs* memo from 08.10.1942, August 08, 1942. See also BA R55 / 657, 117-120, August 10, 1942.

¹⁴⁷¹ BA R55 / 657, 114. Maraun, Report on ministerial decisions, August 10, 1942.

whom Goebbels described as someone who “can make a feature film,” all the applicants needed further training.¹⁴⁷² Goebbels seemed satisfied with the first results. His complaints about the “dilettantish/amateurish” way of handling *Nachwuchs*,¹⁴⁷³ the lack of systematic work and the improvisation,¹⁴⁷⁴ gave way to a recognition of “major improvements”¹⁴⁷⁵ under Maraun: “the *Nachwuchs* work is gradually on a steadier path.”¹⁴⁷⁶

Finding talented, or potentially talented *Nachwuchs* proved to be an arduous task for Maraun, who also experienced staffing difficulties. In June 1942, Goebbels’ personal assistant Kurt Frowein scolded Maraun about the late dismissals of two *Nachwuchschefs* and about a third one “who did not bring the time to care about *Nachwuchs* problems.”¹⁴⁷⁷ Terra’s *Nachwuchschef* Günther Stark had to be replaced with Heinz Beck and Paul Günther followed Herr Bartels at the head of Berlin film school.¹⁴⁷⁸ Maraun responded in July with a new plan to “appoint talent scouts.”¹⁴⁷⁹ The search through acting schools and the use of magazine ads had been fruitless. Each film company’s *Nachwuchschef* was now responsible for systematically traveling throughout a specific regional area.¹⁴⁸⁰ While their travel expenses were covered, these representatives did not get a fixed salary and were subject to a system of premiums: two hundred RM when an

¹⁴⁷² BA RK / U62, 1714-1718. Frowein to Maraun, reports on ministerial decisions, July 16, 1942.

¹⁴⁷³ Goebbels’ diaries, May 4, 1942.

¹⁴⁷⁴ Goebbels’ diaries, May 12, 1942.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Goebbels’ diaries, May 16, 1942.

¹⁴⁷⁶ Goebbels’ diaries, July 16, 1942, and again on August 16, 1942.

¹⁴⁷⁷ BA R55 / 657, 69. Frowein to Maraun, Situation of the *Nachwuchs* work, June 20, 1942.

¹⁴⁷⁸ BA R55/ 657, 64-65

¹⁴⁷⁹ BA RK / U62, 1732-1734. Maraun, “Appointment of talent scouts,” July 9, 1942.

¹⁴⁸⁰ Ufa in North Rhine-Westphalia, Tobis in Baden-Wuerttemberg, Terra in Schleswig-Holstein, Friesland, and Hannover, Berlin Film in Lower and Upper Silesia, Bavaria in Bavaria and Wien Film in the district of the Donau.

applicant made a sound screen test; five hundred RM when he got an apprentice contract; one thousand RM for a *Nachwuchs* contract, and five thousand RM when the person received a one year or three film acting contract.

In addition to motivating the *Nachwuchschefs*, Maraun and Hippler had to deal with the lack of effort on the part of the film companies. In July, Hippler had to remind the production and companies' managers, as well as the *Nachwuchschef*, of their mutual responsibility, a sign that collaboration was not optimal.¹⁴⁸¹ In January 1943 Maraun "pointed out, forcefully, again and again, the importance of the *Nachwuchs* training."¹⁴⁸² Following Maraun's suggestion, acting professionals were to practice their roles in collaboration with *Nachwuchs*. Hippler's tone got increasingly frustrated and slightly angry at the lack of response from the production managers as can be seen in the internal report: "Herr Hippler has the impression that the training of *Nachwuchs*, directors as well of authors, which is desperately needed, is not taken care of. Tobis, where such training is systematically done, is the only exception."¹⁴⁸³ As the ultimate threat, Hippler warned, "Herr Minister would soon require a report about the process from the production managers."¹⁴⁸⁴ In the summer of 1943, Goebbels instituted a major restructuring of the staffing and casting system.¹⁴⁸⁵ A substantial part of the lengthy memo was devoted to the *Nachwuchs*. The guidelines summarized the specificities of the screen tests, the role of the film companies, the content of the different contracts, and the appointment to the

¹⁴⁸¹ BA R109I/ 9. Sixth meeting of the Ufi's board, July 3, 1942.

¹⁴⁸² BA R109I/ 9. Fifteenth meeting of the Ufi's board, January 22, 1943.

¹⁴⁸³ BA R109I / 2129 b.

¹⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸⁵ BA R 109 I, 2140. Guidelines for the choice of script and cast, July 30, 1943.

lists (IIv and II+). The major goal was to “rejuvenate and multiply the German film ensemble, through methodical *Nachwuchs* work and the winning over to film artists from the theater and cabaret.”

The lack of talented film professionals was not restricted to actors and actresses. It also included directors and especially authors. Many, such as Hippler, were bemoaning the quality of the film material, despite the writer courses organized by Maraun since October 1940.¹⁴⁸⁶ As a result of these course, the following films had seen light in the summer of 1942: Tobis Film *Weißer Wäsche*, written by Paul Schurek; Terra Film *Der Flachsacker*, author Konrad Beste, and *Zirkus Renz*, from Roland Betsch; Berlin Film *Großstadtmelodi*” from a treatment from Else Felbinder, Frank Maraun’s future wife.¹⁴⁸⁷ Despite these positive results, the so-called “lack of authors and dramaturges” was mentioned again and again during the board meeting of the film companies and in the press.¹⁴⁸⁸

¹⁴⁸⁶ BA RK / U62, 1702-1706, and Aurich and Jacobsen, *Erwin Goetz*, 38.

¹⁴⁸⁷ BA R55 / 657, 135. Maraun, September 1942. Roland Betsch had also written the script for other films; Konrad Beste was a well-known author who wrote scripts for *Tierarzt Dr. Vlimmen*, 1942, and *Wenn die Sonne wieder scheint*, 1943.

¹⁴⁸⁸ BA R109I/ 9. Fifteenth meeting of the Ufi’s board, January 22, 1943; Sixteenth meeting of the Ufi’s board, February 12, 1943; Seventeenth meeting of the Ufi’s board, March 5, 1943. See in the press Günter Ebert, “Der Wunschtraum vom Filmdichter,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 11/12, (May/June 1942):16-17; Alf Teichs, “Die Entdeckung des Films durch den deutschen Schriftsteller,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 1 (July 1942): 6. In August 1942, *Der deutsche Film* interviewed Werner Eplinius who adapted the play *Der Gigant* by Richard Bellinger into a Veit Harlan’s film *Die Goldene Stadt*. This was accompanied by excerpts from the script and numerous photographs. “Vom ‘Gigant’ zur ‘Goldenen Stadt.’ Aus der Keimzelle der Dichtung wächst die Filmszene.” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 2/3 (August/September 1942): 22-25. See also Werner Höfer, “Synchronisierte Welten.” Ein Beitrag zur Frage “Film und Theater,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1942): 6-8. On September 13, 1942, Wolfgang Liebeneiner published in *Das Reich* an article entitled “Film und Dichter,” in which he differentiates between the author, responsible for the content, and the director, responsible for the form and claims that the former does not take responsibility for the film. This triggered a response from Edgar Kahn, the chief dramaturge at Tobis, who in turn argued that authors were not giving the opportunity to be more involved in the film making process and that their work on the film were not often not acknowledged, that the director were give sole credit for the making of the film. “Film und Dichter,” *Der deutsche Film*, no. 6 (December 1942): 8-11.

Goebbels' opinions of the results varied. After viewing a series of screen tests in August 1942 he noted, "The *Nachwuchs* work is now in good hands with Maraun. I think we are on a promising path."¹⁴⁸⁹ On September 1942 though he concluded, "[the screen tests] are not particularly good and only on a few can we set higher hope."¹⁴⁹⁰ But he supported the program and, defended the reserved occupation of the cultural sector, noting that "especially the *Nachwuchs* who promises something significant should be kept back/retained if possible."¹⁴⁹¹

In October 1942, Maraun took stock of the progress made since March 1942.¹⁴⁹² The efforts were impressive: 10,000 applications had been received, leading to 3,194 interviews, 582 photographed, as well as 496 silent and 341 sound screen tests.¹⁴⁹³ The results on the other hand were more modest: only thirteen of the applicants got a "training contract," fourteen got a *Nachwuchs* contract, and eleven qualified for an actor/actress contract (*Fachdarstellervertrag*).

¹⁴⁸⁹ Goebbels' diaries, August 18, 1942.

¹⁴⁹⁰ Goebbels' diaries, August 18, 1942 and September 21, 1942.

¹⁴⁹¹ Goebbels' diaries, October 15, 1942. Goebbels argued, "Although it is an unpopular measure, it has to be made, if we do not want to run the risk to seriously jeopardize the comprehensive cultural upswing that has taking place in the Reich since 1938." See also on October 18, 1942, "We cannot implement any restriction in cultural life because it significantly contributes to the upkeep of the mood/morale in the home front."

¹⁴⁹² BAR55 / 167, 171. Maraun to Goebbels. *Nachwuchsreport*, October 29, 1942.

¹⁴⁹³ For a detail listing of the distribution among the film companies see BA RK / U62, 1726 for July 9, 1942, BA RK / U62 1700 for August 10, 1942, BA RK / U62, 1644, for September 15, 1942; BA RK / U62, 1618, for October 15, 1942; BA R55 / 657, 190 for November 14, 1942 and BA R55 / 657, 201 for December 1942. For 1943 see, BA R55 / 658, 18 for January 15, 1943, BA RK / U62, 1502 for February 15, 1943, BA R55 / 658, 55, for April 15, 1943.

For Maraun the screen tests were a vital part of the selection process.¹⁴⁹⁴ Reminiscent of earlier calls for an improvement of the screen test quality, the *Nachwuchschef* laid out in the fall of 1942 a set of guidelines and principles in *Der deutsche Film*.¹⁴⁹⁵ Despite certain flaws, screen tests can answer four major questions:

1. If the applicant is photogenic
2. If his look is so impressive in terms of ideals of racial beauty that is it worth the effort to awake in him an uncertain talent
3. If he is exceptionally talented or completely untalented
4. If he masters the acting skills or not; if he can already be employed or first must learn, maybe only just learn to switch from theater to film.

Maraun explained how the success of a screen test depended on the talent and the engagement of several individuals, from the make-up artists, and the lighting and camera technicians to the directors. Lackluster work on their part produced unflattering and unusable material. He writes, “the elimination of such habits has already happened with the implementation by the *Reichsfilmintendant* of new guidelines for the execution of the screen tests.”¹⁴⁹⁶

Centralization of the Nachwuchs training

In the fall of 1942, Maraun engineered the centralization of the *Nachwuchs* training under what he called the “apprenticeship place for *Nachwuchs*,” (*Lehrstelle für*

¹⁴⁹⁴ For Dr. Heinz W. Siska screen tests are “the gate to success.” Heinz W. Siska, “Wie Wird Man Filmdarsteller: Das Tor Zum Erfolg: Die Probeaufnahmen,” in *Wunderwelt Film: Künstler Und Werkleute Einer Weltmacht* (Heidelberg: Verlagsanstalt Hüthig & Co, 1943), 15–16.

¹⁴⁹⁵ Maraun, “Traktat von der Probeaufnahmen,” in *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1942): 2 ff.

¹⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Nachwuchs) to be opened on January 3, 1943 in Babelsberg.¹⁴⁹⁷ This move can be seen in connection with the nationalization of the entire German film industry and its centralization into the film monopole Ufi in 1942.¹⁴⁹⁸ Maraun had mentioned that such centralization had been planned from the beginning as an answer for example to the difficulties of finding enough experienced teachers and modern equipment.¹⁴⁹⁹ In a long memo concerning Goebbels' speech for the opening ceremony of the *Lehrstelle*, he laid out five major points that needed to be developed.¹⁵⁰⁰ The first one dealt with the "necessity of the opening of the *Lehrstelle*," which would be the first institution for the "methodical training of a typical filmic acting style," and would give acting *Nachwuchs* the possibility to evolve, in a way that theater provides its own *Nachwuchs*. While the second point delineated the different emphases of the training (training specific scenes, speech technique and microphone speech, sport and gymnastics), Maraun, like the president the Film Academy before him, spent a lot of time stressing the need for enforcing stricter discipline among students.¹⁵⁰¹ Maraun had had several exchanges with Hippler about this. He delineated the improvement made, to the exception of Tobis, where the lack of discipline was due to the fact that Werner Malbran was busy with his professional activities.¹⁵⁰² Maraun writes, "the proper supervision of the *Nachwuchs* will be facilitated with the centralization of the training in Babelsberg [...] by the latest in

¹⁴⁹⁷ BA R109 II / 16 & 17.

¹⁴⁹⁸ On the creation of the giant film monopole Ufa-Film GmbH (Ufi), see Spiker, *Film Und Kapital*. See also BA RK / U62, 1552-1578. Maraun to the seven film companies, November 20, 1942.

¹⁴⁹⁹ BA R55 / 675, 154. Maraun, Reports about *Nachwuchs* work, October 15, 1942.

¹⁵⁰⁰ BA R109 II / 16 & 17.

¹⁵⁰¹ BA R55 / 675, 154. Maraun, Reports about *Nachwuchs* work, October 15, 1942.

¹⁵⁰² BA R109 II / 16&17. Maraun to Hippler, October 8, 1942.

November 1942.”¹⁵⁰³ In the meantime, Maraun reported on the diverse tactics used to deal with discipline cases: Ufa and Terra have instituted a class book; Herr Schulz-Dornburg enforced a system of fines to punish late arrivals and unexcused absences: two RM for the first time, five RM for the second, twenty RM for the third and termination of the contract for the fourth time. Maraun was expecting regular reports and was paying unexpected visits.

The creation of the *Lehrstelle* did not entirely abate these fears about lack of discipline and engagement. Supported by Goebbels, the *Lehrstelle* provided the *Nachwuchs* with “unprecedented favorable conditions.”¹⁵⁰⁴ Maraun feared the danger of “convenience” for students, who would “have an easy life.” He therefore suggested to “put the fear in them,” in order to force them to constantly prove themselves. Likewise, contracts should only be for one year, renewable, and could be terminated without notice. This centralization would also help with the information transmitted to the press, especially any type of contact between *Nachwuchs* actors and actresses and the press.¹⁵⁰⁵ Maraun gave explicit instructions to the film companies about how to advertise the participation of *Nachwuchs* in a new production. The four Berlin film companies, as well as Bavaria, Wien and Prag-Film were now to send their *Nachwuchs* to Berlin, where the teaching would take place in the former buildings of the Film Academy and thus utilize the expensive equipment. As the *Nachwuchschef*, Maraun was the head of the entire

¹⁵⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰⁴ BA R109 II / 16 & 17. Maraun to Reichsfilmintendant, November 30, 1942.

¹⁵⁰⁵ BA RKK / U61, 376. Leiter F to Maraun, February 27, 1943. A March 11, 1943 memo forbade any public information about the acting *Nachwuchs*. Interviews of the individuals *Nachwuchs* were specifically forbidden and would result in the cancellation of the contract. BA RK / U62, 1498, March 11, 1943.

Lehrstelle and more specifically the head of the “dramaturgical fields” department. While the individual film companies were in charge of selecting their *Nachwuchs*, Maraun created a set of general admission criteria, which mirrored his ideology. Applicants for the acting training must first have “an exceptional look/appearance in terms of the ideal racial beauty,” and “an aptitude for acting, capable of development.”¹⁵⁰⁶ Applicants for the “dramaturgical fields,” which included dramaturge, editor, director and producer, were expected to possess “an irreproachable hardness of their physical condition.”¹⁵⁰⁷ Needless to say, men were expected to fill these jobs. The guidelines were once again very similar to the ones of the Film Academy, with for example the training lasting two years, and an emphasis on discipline. A major difference was that now film companies were obligated to employ *Nachwuchs* in their productions.¹⁵⁰⁸

Acting *Nachwuchs* were divided among a “Training class” (*Ausbildungsklasse*), under the direction of Hans Schulz-Dornburg, who was also the head of the Ufa *Nachwuchs* department, and an “Advanced Training class” (*Fortbildungsklasse*), directed by Kurt Werther, head of the Berlin Film *Nachwuchs* department.¹⁵⁰⁹ In January 1943, a total of twenty-two acting *Nachwuchs*, including only two men who were drafted at the time, were divided between two groups.¹⁵¹⁰ By February 1943, the number reached

¹⁵⁰⁶ BA RK / U61, 170. Letter to Maraun, December 3, 1942.

¹⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰⁹ Kurt Werther had been an actor in *Die Herren vom Maxim* (*The Gentlemen from Maxim's*, Carl Boese, 1933). He was considered a director, although his only documented film was *Vier Treppen rechts* (*Room for Rent*, 1944/45). Hanns Schulz-Dornburg had been working as a general theater *Intendant* in Würzburg. In her memoir, Maria Milde describes him as a very reliable and engaged man, eager to help the *Nachwuchs* up to the very last day of the Third Reich. Milde, *Berliner Glienicker Brücke*.

¹⁵¹⁰ BA R55 / 658, 6-16. Maraun, Memorandum about the organization of the acting students and acting *Nachwuchs*, January 09, 1943.

thirty-eight, including five men for the acting department. Three women and one man were in the editor apprenticeship program and two men and one woman in the dramaturge *Nachwuchs*.¹⁵¹¹ The numbers according to the film companies were: Tobis thirteen; Ufa seven; Bavaria six; Berlin Film and Terra five each; Prag and Wien Film one each. Tobis' higher numbers were rooted in its earlier program and the investment the company was putting in *Nachwuchs* work. For the fiscal year 1942/1943 Tobis spent over 660,000 RM. The bulk of the expenditures was devoted to screen tests: 348,753,014 RM for sixty-two screen tests, 133 school tests and 150 silent ones. Tobis had also completed two studio films: *Gewitternacht* (Stormy Night) for 21,000 RM and *Schwarz oder weiß?* (Black or White?) for 30,493 RM. A third Studio film, *Ja oder nein* (Yes or No), was in progress.

Maraun's major goals were to assure the best training with the best film professionals and to have "his" *Nachwuchs* being hired in film productions. Hippler mentioned the lack of interest from prominent filmmakers for *Nachwuchs* work.¹⁵¹² Every fourteen days the producers had to provide a list of directors and cameramen, who were at the time not employed and could be utilize to perform screen tests. The first list was compiled on February 14, 1943.¹⁵¹³

Similar to what had been done at the Film Academy, screenings of foreign film were organized on a regular basis. The list included French films such as *Sous les toits de*

¹⁵¹¹ BA RKK / U61, 180-182. List of the acting and dramaturgy *Nachwuchs*, February 2, 1943.

¹⁵¹² BA R109I / 9. Fourteenth meeting of Ufi board, January 1, 1943.

¹⁵¹³ BA R55/ 658, 45. From February 14, 1943. Chosen were Arthur Maria Rabenalt, Harald Braun, Viktor de Kowa, Erich Engels, Boleslaw Barlog, Josef von Baky, Roger von Norman, Alfred Stöger und Peter Pewas.

Paris (Under the Roofs of Paris, 1930) *Le Million*, (The Million, 1931), both René Clair, and two films from French film maker Jean Renoir: *La Bête Humaine* (1938) and even the anti war film *La Grande Illusion* (!) (Grand Illusion, Jean Renoir, 1937). Among the American films we find, among others, *It Happened One Night* (1934) and *Mister Deeds Goes to Town* (1936) both Frank Capra, *Grapes of Wrath* (John Ford, 1940), and several movies from German exiles: *Ninotschka* (1939) and *Bluebeard's Eight Wife* (1938) both by Ernst Lubitsch with scripts by Billy Wilder, and *Fury* by Fritz Lang (1936). British productions included *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (Harold Young, 1934), *Farewell Again* (Tim Whelan, 1937), and *The Ghost Goes West* (René Clair, 1935). Concluding the list were a few Czech productions such as *Ekstase* (Ecstasy, Gustav Machatý, 1933) and the 1941 *Der Nachtfalter* (The Moth, Frantisek Cáp).¹⁵¹⁴ That the screening of foreign films is documented all the way until May 1943 is surprising considering that Goebbels noted in his diaries in October 1942

The *Führer* also thinks that it is not OK to show foreign enemy films to circles of the party or the states for so-called educational purposes. I have namely noticed, that such screenings have always a depressing effect. The *Führer* mandates/commissions me to reject such screenings for the time of the war. Especially the film *Gone with the Wind*.¹⁵¹⁵

Acting teachers included the silent film star and ex-wife of Paul Wegener, Lyda Wegener-Salmonowa, and Karl Meizner from the Schiller Theater. The detailed schedule included acting training, speech techniques, music and singing as well as gymnastics, dance, horse riding and fencing. Film acting, introduction to film techniques such as the use of a microphone, editing and directing, and “contemporary history” (*Zeitgeschichte*)

¹⁵¹⁴ For a complete list see BA R55 / 658, 73ff, May 1943.

¹⁵¹⁵ Goebbels' diaries, October 4, 1942.

were also part of the curriculum.¹⁵¹⁶ After an unexpected visit Herr Leiter complimented Maraun about the *Lehrstelle*, with the exception of Dr. Gressieker, whose appearance needed to be improved.¹⁵¹⁷

Goebbels, who was following the *Nachwuchs* work very closely, complained to Maraun about the lack of “world view courses during the first year.”¹⁵¹⁸ This prompted Maraun to write a lengthy memorandum where he delineated his plans of having students receive an intense practical training the first year, in order to be able to evaluate their competence.¹⁵¹⁹ Additional reasons for the lack of political classes were the loaded schedule and the difficulties encountered by students who often suffered from insufficient nutrition. In terms of political training, the assumption was that the *Nachwuchs* who entered the program in January 1943 had been through National Socialist schools and through the Hitler Youth or *Bund Deutscher Mädel (BDM)*. Maraun reassured Goebbels that “a thorough political, historical, race theory (*rasenpsychologische*) and literary instruction” would be implemented during the second year. He followed up in July 1943 when he informed Goebbels that the world-view instruction would be given by Dr. Fritz Zierke two hours a week.¹⁵²⁰ Zierke was the political editor on chief of the *Berliner Völkische Beobachter* and had led the Reich School of Press in Dahlem for three years.¹⁵²¹ Twenty-eight of the forty-one *Nachwuchs*, close to seventy percent, had spent several years in the Hitler Youth or *BDM*, one of them had taken two world-view classes

¹⁵¹⁶ See the curriculum reprinted in Milde, *Berliner Glienicker Brücke*, 68.

¹⁵¹⁷ BA R55 / 658, 22. Herr Leiter to Maraun, January 25, 1943.

¹⁵¹⁸ BA R55 / 658, 22. Herr Leiter to Maraun, January 26, 1943.

¹⁵¹⁹ BA R55 / 658, 35-40. Maraun, Additions to the schedule of the “Lehrstelle für Nachwuchs,” January 30, 1943.

¹⁵²⁰ BA R55 / 658, 106.

¹⁵²¹ Müsse, *Die Reichspreseschule - Journalisten Für Die Diktatur?*.

at the Film Academy, several came from a ballet school and had not attended the *BDM*, and five were foreigners.

The *Lehrstelle*, like any other institution of the Third Reich, had to conform to political and ideological standards. The *Nachwuchs*' political liability was "checked out" and they were categorized as "politically harmless" (*politische unbedenklich*).¹⁵²² A telling case involved Harald Holger (Harald Hofmann) who had been denounced by an informant for having publicly stated that "1. Artists from the NS state have no future and that's why he was trying to get as quickly as possible to the United States and 2. He had infected himself on purpose with venereal disease so that he could escape the draft."¹⁵²³ Maraun's answer obviously attempted to protect the young man from further consequences. Maraun stated that, after some investigation, he had found out that Hoffmann had indeed expressed admiration for American films, which prompted Maraun to "vigorously scold" him. He concluded that Hoffmann "actually has nothing against the NS state and no intention to leave."¹⁵²⁴ Furthermore he suffered from typhus and not syphilis. The mistake came from a mix-up of blood samples.

Maraun was also very active with the film companies themselves. The low rate of *Nachwuchs*' employment in current film productions was rooted for Maraun in the fact that "the productions chefs do not know the *Nachwuchs*."¹⁵²⁵ He thus sent a package of screen tests to the film companies, who had to organize, within eight days, a screening with its production managers and directors.

¹⁵²² See for example the June 2, 1943 list, which included Hildegard Knef in BA RK / U62, 154.

¹⁵²³ BA R55 / 658, 94, from June 10, 1943.

¹⁵²⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵²⁵ BA R55 / 658, 59. Maraun, April 1943.

These screen test reports allow us a glimpse into the daily life of Germans. We find several memos about *Nachwuchs* suffering from malnutrition, a sign of the worsening situation in Germany. Maraun for example worried about Dithe Sanders and insisted that, “she utilizes the free Wednesday to spend time in the country side (*in der Nature*).”¹⁵²⁶ Increasing bombing and evacuation become evident in these memos. Gerty Solten for example was granted a set of clothes from the Ufa’s fundus after she had lost everything.¹⁵²⁷

While few *Nachwuchs* were getting their first contract with film companies,¹⁵²⁸ teaching continued and the students were evaluated on a quarterly basis with each faculty member of the *Lehrstelle* evaluating the *Nachwuchs* according to their own field. Out of Sybille von Gymnich’s evaluation in April 1943, we learn from Herr Bing that “she has a very pleasant filmic face and a good figure, and great assiduity.”¹⁵²⁹ Frau Deecke judged her incredibly unmusical, but confirms her efforts and conscientiousness, while Frau Holl agreed about her talent and industriousness but bemoaned her lack of concentration. Frau Lyda Wegener discussed the fact that Sybille had many domestic demands at home, had been sewing her own clothes for years and that, despite malnutrition last summer, was very assiduous and made constant progress.

Meanwhile the selection of new *Nachwuchs* continued and Goebbels became more authoritarian. Maraun noted how [Goebbels] “only orders and does not tolerate any

¹⁵²⁶ See Dithe Sanders in BA RK / U62, 894.

¹⁵²⁷ BA RK / U62, 1032. Reichsfilmintendant to Gerty Solten, January 7, 1944.

¹⁵²⁸ BA RK / 62, 984. Contract between Gisela Schmidting and Ufa, February 11, 1943.

¹⁵²⁹ BA RK / U61, 514. Memo about Sybille von Gymnich, April 1943.

discussion on the basic question.”¹⁵³⁰ The miscasting of Hilde Krahl in the film of her future husband, Wolfgang Liebeneiner, *GroßstadtMelodie* (Melody of a Great City, 1943), triggered a ban on the use of *Nachwuchs* actress, especially by *Nachwuchs* directors. The propaganda minister rejected applicant Edelweise Malchin, who he described as “a fat and vulgar type like Geraldine Katt,” and refused to give her a *Nachwuchs* contract or put her on the List IIv. He argued that such types were not desired and “a certain level of culture was required, even in comedies” (as seen with Fita Benkhoff and Carsta Löck). Despite his condemning judgment, Goebbels allowed her to be employed in roles up to five days, and whoever liked her could use her further.¹⁵³¹ This decision is intriguing and might point to the lack of available actress. Why allow her to be employed if he so adamantly rejected her? Created in February 1941, the Berlin Film company had been having trouble finding actors and actresses, as the well known ones were already under contract with the existing film companies. Hence the investment in *Nachwuchs* training, with a risk, as the new head of the company Herr Jahn put it in July 1944, “to bring out young actors, much earlier than we once would have done.”¹⁵³²

Other *Nachwuchs* were luckier. Goebbels loved Ulrich Erfurth’s film *Der Glücksgroschen* (The Lucky Penny). The longtime theater director and friend of Gustaf Gründgens, with whom he had worked on *Friedemann Bach*, got a chance to direct his

¹⁵³⁰ BA R55 / 658, page unknown. Maraun, Reports about ministerial decisions, June 17, 1943.

¹⁵³¹ Goebbels was, of course, not always accurate in his judgment. Edelweiß Malchin went on to enjoy a steady career through the 1960s, including three films during the Third Reich: *Gabriele Dambrone*, 1943, *Der Große Preis*, 1944 and *Seiner zeit zu meiner Zeit*, 1944.

¹⁵³² BA R2 / 4845. Niederschrift über die Produktion und Firmensitzung, June 1, 1944.

own feature film. In 1944, Erfurth directed the comedy *Erzieherin gesucht* (Governess Wanted) with a script by Thea Harbou and Franz Weihmayr as his cameraman.¹⁵³³ Ulrich Erfurth was one of the ten *Nachwuchs* directors, who by September 1943, had already or were scheduled to participate in the making of a feature film.¹⁵³⁴ Three of these were even preparing their second film: Wolfgang Staudte, Geza von Cziffra, and Helmut Weise.

The good results of the program gave Maraun reason to rejoice. Nine of the *Nachwuchs* acting professionals had had a leading part in a feature film. Maraun considered them “star contenders,” and reported that two, Angelika Hauff and Robert Tessen have already passed the test. The *Nachwuchschef* was eager to indicate that five of the nine successful actors did not have any previous acting experience and had been trained, from the ground up, “in the teaching institute [Maraun had] established.” In addition the author course he had instituted in October 1940 bore fruition. 15%-20% of the participants were continuously employed and 25% of the material and scripts used in present films originated in the course.

The search for *Nachwuchs* continued and Maraun was also able to suggest to Goebbels four apprentice contracts, two *Nachwuchs* contracts, four applications for a List IIv, and two directors for a feature film. As the propaganda minister rejected three of them, he noticed the lack of improvement of Sybille von Gymnich. Maraun informed him about the difficult domestic situation of the young woman who was taking care of

¹⁵³³ Weymar had worked as a cameraman since 1924, participating to some of Germany’s most famous films such as *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931), *Triumph of the Will* (1935) and all Zarah Leander’s films.

¹⁵³⁴ BA RKK / U62, 1376-1384. Maraun to Goebbels, Report about the *Nachwuchs* work, September 23, 1943.

her dying mother. Goebbels advised her to make a decision and focus all her energy and thought on the training or her contract would not be renewed. Von Gymnich's case gained momentum in March 1944, when Wolfgang Liebeneiner, now Ufa production chef, took stock of "the case Gymnich."¹⁵³⁵ He argued that, while talented, Sybille had not the potential of a becoming a star like Paula Wessely. Liebeneiner reminded Maraun that the goal of *Nachwuchs* work was to train people, who could one day carry a film on their shoulders, even if they have to be employed in small roles for years before that. Liebeneiner's straightforward memo is informative about the way men like him in high position were thinking about the *Nachwuchs*. Von Gymnich was the first case of someone who, because of engagement, hard work (and minimum wage from Herr Minister) had entertained the dream of a career. Liebeneiner asked, "how far do we have to feel responsible and take care of this young woman?" He suggested that Sybille should go to the theater where her look would be much better than her colleagues and her talent would secure her a career. The Theater Department should be involved and offer her a three-year contract (two as a beginner and one all full-value member.) Because this case set a precedent, Liebeneiner suggested to "force it through and to be consistent." In April 1944, Maraun agreed with Liebeneiner's diagnosis but argued that the film industry has somehow "if not judicially at least morally" a responsibility for this *Nachwuchs*, who was extremely industrious. Until her entrance examination, a monthly stipend of four hundred RM was allocated. In his lengthy memo, Maraun comes across as very sensitive and pleas

¹⁵³⁵ BA RKK / U61, 488-490. Liebeneiner to Maraun, March 1, 1944.

for a special support for Sybille von Gymnich and her mother who was dying of breast cancer.¹⁵³⁶

What is astounding is that the *Nachwuchs* work was pursued among increasingly almost surreal conditions. Since summer 1943, the *Lehrstelle* had to be, again and again, evacuated following a series of heavy bombings and the ensuing damage.¹⁵³⁷ As Hildegard Knef got her three-year apprentice contract in August 1943, the film school had moved to Wolterdorf.¹⁵³⁸ Many students and teachers have themselves been bombed out and had been relocated in an inn, where they were happy to have a roof over their head.¹⁵³⁹ The training continued, interrupted by air raid alarms, with the available teachers: Karl Meixner, Frau Wegener, Kaminski, and Bongers. After three months, the school went back to the Ufa grounds, where ballet, fencing with Frau Gerresheim, singing and speech techniques with Frau Rösler and Frau Kaminsky and *chansons* with Inge Bartsch resumed.¹⁵⁴⁰ Maraun even informed Goebbels in January 1944 that, “despite the increasing difficulties connected with the restriction of the total war, the search for talent continue intensively.”¹⁵⁴¹ He presented the result of such searches and lists of potential *Nachwuchs* on January 15, 1944 and April 6, 1944.¹⁵⁴²

¹⁵³⁶ Sibylle von Gymnich (name changed) would pursue a career as an actress in post war Germany.

¹⁵³⁷ Milde, *Berliner Glienicker Brücke*, 92ff.

¹⁵³⁸ BA R 109 I, 1745. Memo from Ufa February 4, 1944. Hildegard Knef, *Der Geschenkte Gaul: Bericht Aus Einem Leben* (Wien: Fritz Molden, 1970), 59.

¹⁵³⁹ Among the identified students Sibylle, Annerose, Dolores, Friedhelm, Hilde, Heinz Lausch, Heidi Scharf, Ellinor, and Hildegard Knef. See BA H193, 1683 about Lyda Wegener/Salmonova evacuation.

¹⁵⁴⁰ Knef, *Der Geschenkte Gaul: Bericht Aus Einem Leben*, 63–64.

¹⁵⁴¹ BA R55 / 658, 145. Maraun to Goebbels, January 15, 1944, and BA R55 / 658, 160, April 6, 1944

¹⁵⁴² *Ibid.*

In May 1944, Maraun submitted a proposal to use theater agents to search for *Nachwuchs*.¹⁵⁴³ In an interesting departure from earlier essays and articles, which emphasized the need for specific film training and a differentiation from theater acting style, Maraun explained, “film specific actors do not, to the exception of a few star, exist, especially not among the *Nachwuchs*.” Two years of experiences had taught Maraun that acting *Nachwuchs* could only achieve their artistic maturity when they play simultaneously in film and in theater. They actually had to play in the theater as film did not provide enough employment.¹⁵⁴⁴ Stage director Hiplert was to hire Hildegard Knief in an upcoming production. In addition, Maraun explained how the “training institution he has created serves film as well as theater.” While some talents are first discovered in theater and then fully developed in film, other film *Nachwuchs* realized that they had more theatrical skills and were redirected to the theater. Among the fifteen film-acting students, four were to take the admission test at the Reich Theater Chamber.

Reality got a hold of them and their relatively privileged, albeit precarious situation was endangered when, in the spring of 1944, a memo required *Nachwuchs* and faculty members to participate to the war efforts in the armament industry. Maraun called upon Goebbels on March 10, 1944.¹⁵⁴⁵ His justifications for keeping the female *Nachwuchs* from work duty were in sink with an ideological system, which valued women for their physical appearances. Maraun argued that for these actresses, their body was their artistic creative tool and that working in factory would lead to “a coarsening

¹⁵⁴³ BA R109II / 16&17. Maraun to unknown, May 8, 1944.

¹⁵⁴⁴ Writing about the importance of screen tests, Dr. Heinz W. Siska had stressed how “only the ones with a theatrical training have a chance to get a screen test.” Siska, “Wie Wird Man Filmdarsteller.”

¹⁵⁴⁵ BA R55 / 658, 150-151.

and fattening of their figure,” something they would never be able to reverse.¹⁵⁴⁶ He even used an analogy between working and racehorses. Goebbels answered positively and asked to be notified about each individual in order to decide.¹⁵⁴⁷

In April 1944, Maraun composed a long, self-congratulatory memo tracing back the genesis and the success of the *Lehrstelle für Nachwuchs*.¹⁵⁴⁸ The “tenuous results of the Film Academy” had generated mistrust among the film companies, whose attitude towards the *Lehrstelle* was “more observant, skeptical, and even malicious than supporting and sympathetic.”¹⁵⁴⁹ The *Nachwuchschef* was happy to announce that the *Lehrstelle* has passed two important tests and won the trust of the film companies. The first one was a cabaret program with *chansons* and sketches presented to the military troops in the Sigselfeld camp near Stahnsdorf, south of Berlin. It was so successful that the commandant requested a repetition on the following days.¹⁵⁵⁰ The program was expanded and a few of the *Nachwuchs*, such as Hildegard Knef, Heidi Scharf, and Heinz Lausch, gave several performances in Postdam, Rathenow, and Gardelegen in the following weeks. Maraun was working on expanding the army entertainment programs so that acting professionals would spend their shooting free day in the surrounding sickbays.

The second pivotal event was a two and a half hour meeting with the heads of the Berlin film companies, during which Maraun could demonstrate the seriousness and energy put in the *Lehrstelle*. The high level of accomplishment was acknowledged and

¹⁵⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴⁷ BA R55 / 658, 148. Goebbels to Maraun, March 20, 1944.

¹⁵⁴⁸ BA R55 / 658, 153-159. Maraun, Situation of the *Lehrstelle für Nachwuchs*, April 6, 1944.

¹⁵⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵⁰ On the extent of the entertainment programs for the troops, see Frank Vossler, *Propaganda in Die Eigene Truppe. Die Truppenbetreuung in Der Wehrmacht 1939-1945* (Paderborn: Schöningh Verlag, 2005).

one agreed to repeat such fruitful meeting. An immediate effect was the hiring of several of the presented *Nachwuchs* in small roles, as a first step on their way to bigger roles. This would also give them vital professional experience. Maraun emphasized the industriousness, discipline, and comradeship of the teaching faculty and the students themselves, who stayed extremely committed, despite unfavorable circumstances and numerous material setbacks. Maraun's own tenacity and engagement had also been critical for the success of the project.

Despite Maraun's confident tone, things were falling apart. Airstrikes destroyed more than seventy-five percent of the studios in Berlin. The studios, material, and staff used for *Nachwuchs* training were now in the service of the regular production. Maraun's request to allocate one studios for *Nachwuchs* work on May 31, 1944 was denied.¹⁵⁵¹ Shortly after Hinkel informed Maraun that "the whole department *Film Nachwuchs* will have to be soon rearranged," the *Nachwuchschef* volunteered to military service on July 31, 1944.¹⁵⁵² He asked for a four weeks vacation "in order to get back in shape" as he had not have any vacation in the last five years.

The pursuit of this expensive project was now publically criticized. On August 10, 1944, journalist Hans-Hubert Gensert wrote in the *DKD (Deutsche Kulturdienst*, see Chapter 1) that "it would be a mistake to answer *now* the call for film *Nachwuchs*."¹⁵⁵³ Gensert argued that the film industry was a well-organized enterprise, which "will not get

¹⁵⁵¹ BA R109 II / 16&17. Maraun to unknown, May 31, 1944.

¹⁵⁵² BA R109 II / 16&17. Hinkel to Maraun, July 24, 1944 and Maraun to Hinkel, July 31, 1944.

¹⁵⁵³ BA R34 / 171, 184. Hans-Hubert Gensert, "Brauchen wir – Filmnachwuchs?" in *Deutscher Kulturdienst*, August 9, 1944.

worse, if it does not receive young, new workers in the next few months or years.”¹⁵⁵⁴ An easy way to keep entertaining the audience and offer variety would be to break the system of typecasting, which still reigns in Germany. Gensert noted that the majority of acting professionals came from the theater where they were trained to excel in a variety of roles. The film industry needed to learn to utilize these talents. Gensert concluded this very critical article by reminding the audience and the film producers that, “the state sponsored cinema for the sake of audience and not the sake of the film producers.” We see how film was still considered a by-product of theatrical training and how producers, despite having been nominated by Goebbels, were still considered the culprits for an inefficient *Nachwuchs* system.

In August 1944, Frowein, now Reich film dramaturg, ordered the release of all the Berlin *Nachwuchs* for work duty, and made sure that *Nachwuchs* in Prague and Vienna would be allocated to the workforce too.¹⁵⁵⁵ On August 8, 1944, a handful of female *Nachwuchs* who had shown no progress, and the forty members of the Reich Film Ballet were assigned “to the Company Osram for fine mechanical work.”¹⁵⁵⁶ In September 1944, *Film-Kurier* announced the “rationalization of filmmaking,” and reprinted *Reichsfilmintendant* Hans Hinkel’s guidelines regarding the release of the film workforce

¹⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵⁵ BA RK / U62, 1392. Frowein’s memo. August 19, 1944. See also BA R 109II, 37. *Reichsfilmintendant* to Prag Film regarding *Nachwuchs* Helene Heift, August 17, 1944, and BA R109 II 57, *Reichsfilmintendant* to Wien Film regarding *Nachwuchs*, August 17, 1944.

¹⁵⁵⁶ BA RK / U62, 1426. The female *Nachwuchs* consisted of Margrit Debra, Anneliese v. Eschtruh, Erneste Holm, Helmi Mareich, Dithe Sanders and Charlotte Michael.

for the front and the armament industry.¹⁵⁵⁷ The film school closed its doors the same month.¹⁵⁵⁸ Film production continued to the very last day of the Third Reich.

The Film Academy and its “sister” institution, the *Lehrstelle für Nachwuchs*, have been largely neglected in the cultural histories of the Third Reich.¹⁵⁵⁹ For the few historians mentioning them, the projects were doomed from the beginning. Rolf Giessen, for example, concluded his three-page chapter on the Film Academy with the lapidary comment that “it was a failure from the beginning. One cannot confuse art with (reactionary) convictions.”¹⁵⁶⁰ In her analysis of the ideology behind the project and its staffing decisions, Erica Carter sees the Film Academy as being one of “the generative measures designed to stimulate modes of artistic production that were consonant with fascism’s aesthetic claims.”¹⁵⁶¹ In the face of the material and practical circumstances surrounding such decisions, her argument of a politics of assigning “towering personality” at the head of the Film Academy in order to achieve a racially pure German film culture fails to convince entirely. Although accurate, such readings, in addition to completely neglecting the *Lehrstelle für Nachwuchs*, leave out important aspects of the projects, which were more than “Goebbels’ latest favored project.”¹⁵⁶²

Striking is first of all the sheer amount of money and time spent on the projects. Seeing the Film Academy, together with the constitution of the Reich Film Archive, as

¹⁵⁵⁷ “Rationalisierung in der Filmherstellung,” *Film-Kurier*, September 1, 1944.

¹⁵⁵⁸ Soja Ziemann, *Ein Morgen Gibt Es Immer. Erinnerungen* (München: Langen, 1998), 48.

¹⁵⁵⁹ The standard reference works do not even mention the Film Academy. See Tim Bergfelder, Erica Carter, and Deniz Gokturk, *The German Cinema Book* (London: British Film Institute, 2002); Jacobsen, Kaes, and Prinzler, *Geschichte Des Deutschen Films*. The monumental 990 pages work of Boguslaw Drewniak has only three pages about it. Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 67–69.

¹⁵⁶⁰ Giesen, *Nazi Propaganda Films*.

¹⁵⁶¹ Carter, *Dietrich’s Ghosts*, 25.

¹⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, 42.

merely another one of a long series of state funded projects, often of monumental size, and serving propagandistic purposes,¹⁵⁶³ would fail to take into consideration the steps leading to its opening. Calls for such institution saw the light during the Weimar period. The crippling talent shortage caused by the National Socialist purge made its creation even more pressing. In addition, training of a new generation of filmmakers would help curtail the costs of the few existing German films stars. It was also part of a series of efforts to differentiate film from theater, and to establish the former, once and for all, as a recognized form or art.

As shown previously, these plans all but failed. The salaries of stars got out of control, despite Goebbels repeated attempts to contain them.¹⁵⁶⁴ As for the effort to create a film specific training, which would lead to film specific technical and acting skills, it seems that things returned to square one. Hans-Hubert Gensert, like many before him, held to the very end the theater as the example to be followed in terms of training.¹⁵⁶⁵

Even Goebbels' attempt to break down the traditional nepotism in the film milieu failed. We see numerous example of "connections" utilized to further a career in film: *Nachwuchs* actress Lisca Hoffman, was the daughter of Malbraun head of the *Nachwuchs* program at Tobis,¹⁵⁶⁶ her colleague Eva Maria Meinecke was married to actor Siegfried Breuer,¹⁵⁶⁷ and Annerose Siedler was the wife of Leo Siedler, who led the Admiral Palast. Some alumnae became successful film professionals: Wolfgang Staudte was a

¹⁵⁶³ Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs* (New York, 1982). Speer himself talks about "Architectural Megalomania," 50ff.

¹⁵⁶⁴ See Goebbels' numerous diaries entries. See also Drewniak, *Der Deutsche Film, 1938-1945*, 150–170.

¹⁵⁶⁵ Hans-Hubert Gensert, "Brauchen wir – Filmnachwuchs?" in *Deutscher Kulturdienst*, August 9, 1944.

¹⁵⁶⁶ BA RK / U62, 608. Maraun, Reports about ministerial decisions, September 15, 1942.

¹⁵⁶⁷ BA RK / U62, 790. Maraun, Reports about screen tests, June 1, 1943.

renowned filmmaker in East and then West Germany,¹⁵⁶⁸ Hildegard Knef enjoyed an international career.¹⁵⁶⁹ In addition the circle of men involved in the project, from the journalists and film professionals calling for a systematic training to the men hired to organize the very training, was relatively small, a sign of not only enduring cronyism but also of the relative small number of capable, knowledgeable, and regime friendly men.

One also notices the role of the press in covering the topic. I have traced how demands for the institutionalization of film studies and the creation of a more systematic *Nachwuchs* training appear to have had an impact on the decision making process. If nothing else, the press offered a public forum where such demands could be made and the topic discussed. That this public forum was under the “oversight” of the regime becomes evident when the issue of *Nachwuchs* all but disappeared after the closing of the Film Academy. The fact that the topic never completely disappeared though and that it resurfaced in 1942, underlines the role played by the press. On one hand, popular and trade press alike catered to audience’s interest for “new faces” by publishing regularly reports about *Nachwuchs*, including pictures, thus feeding the very thing that Goebbels and film professionals alike complained about. In addition, we notice how new measures

¹⁵⁶⁸ Malte Ludin, *Wolfgang Staudte* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1996); Schmidt-Lenhard, *Courage Und Eigensinn Zum 100. Geburtstag Von Wolfgang Staudte*; Michael. Grisko, *Nachdenken Über Wolfgang Staudte: Eine Dokumentation Zur Veranstaltung Im Filmmuseum Potsdam Zum 100. Geburtstag* (Siegen: Börschen, 2008).

¹⁵⁶⁹ In addition to her autobiography see also Knef, *Der Geschenkte Gaul: Bericht Aus Einem Leben*; Johannes von Moltke and Hans-J. Wulff, “Trümmer-Diva: Hildegard Knef,” in *Idole Des Deutschen Films: Eine Galerie Von Schlüsselfiguren*, ed. Thomas Knef (München: editon text + kritik, 1997), 304–316; Jürgen Trimborn, *Hildegard Knef. Die Biographie* (München: Goldmann., 2007). The “first officially authorized biography” was timely out for the new film about her life *Hilde*, with Heike Makatsch. Petra Roek, *Fragt Nicht, Warum: Hildegard Knef - Die Biografie* (Hamburg: Edel Vita, 2009).

were announced to audience and film professionals alike through the film press. Maraun, for example, laid out his grand plan and guidelines for screen tests on the front page of *Film-Kurier* and in *Der deutsche Film*.¹⁵⁷⁰ In addition to unveiling how the regime was eager to justify many measure taken, this illustrates also how it used the film press for positive propaganda, as any activity, even such futile ones as the search for *Nachwuchs* in the middle of the war, was seen as a sign of the strength of the home front.

On a more structural level, the shadow of the national socialist practices hampered any immediate post-war efforts to institute any form of systematic film training, left alone a film academy. In the absence of any educational centers in the new Federal Republic of Germany, and the lack of interest from the state and film industry, a new generation of aspiring filmmakers took the initiative more than fifteen years after the end of the Nazi regime. The members of the groups “DOC 59” opened a film department in the *Hochschule für Gestaltung* (College for Design) in the late 1950s. In Ulm, a new generation of film professionals saw the light: Bernhard Dörries, Alexander Kluge, Edgar Reitz, Detten Schleiermacher, and Haro Senft. In 1962 they signed and publicized the Oberhausener Manifest, considered by many as the birth of the New German Cinema.¹⁵⁷¹ Not before 1965, with the Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin GmbH (DFFB), and 1966, with the Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film (HFF) in Munich, would state sponsored film training institution be created to promote a German cinema, that will still

¹⁵⁷⁰ Maraun, “Traktat von der Probeaufnahmen,” in *Der deutsche Film*, no. 5 (November 1942): 2 ff.

¹⁵⁷¹ See John Sandford, *The New German Cinema* (Da Capo Press, 1982); Thomas Elsaesser, *New German Cinema: A History* (New Brunswick N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1989); Caryl Flinn, *The New German Cinema: Music, History, and the Matter of Style* (University of California Press, 2004); Julia Knight, *New German Cinema: Images of a Generation* (Wallflower Press, 2004). On New German Cinema and gender see Sandra G. Frieden, *Gender and German Cinema: Gender and Representation in New German Cinema* (Berg, 1993); Julia Knight, *Women and the New German Cinema* (Verso, 1992).

struggle for years to come to differentiate itself from the legacy of Third Reich cinema and practices.

CONCLUSION

One of the surprising results of this extended analysis of the German film press during the Third Reich is the limited and careful politicization of the magazines and papers studied. How do we account for that and the fact that it remained a place where diverse opinions about filmmaking could be exchanged? We know that the National Socialists, and Hitler in particular, had great designs for the use of art and media in the new German society.¹⁵⁷² They attempted to promote national integration through the display of images that fostered the cultivation of a *Volksgemeinschaft* but also utilized the visual arts to serve as a display of Germany's power and authority. This was translated most effectively in the realm of painting, sculpture, and architecture, as well as the innumerable rallies and public gatherings so masterfully captured by Leni Riefenstahl.

But if the regime was very directive in eliciting if not imposing a specific “fascist” style, leading for example to a banal restatement of classic expressionism in painting and monumental sculptures, its use of mass media, especially film, was in a sense more limited, and this for several reasons. Despite recurrent claims by Goebbels in particular that the National Socialist regime had freed cinema and allowed it to become a true form of art, film was and remained a commercial product. Filmmaking was a costly enterprise and film companies and the regime alike were eager to get high returns on their investments. Following the brutal occupations of most of Europe, Goebbels regularly

¹⁵⁷² Petropoulos, *Art As Politics in the Third Reich*; Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain*.

rejoiced in his diaries about how well German cinema was doing and how much money it was bringing in.

Because it was both a product conditioned by market rules and a political tool used to provide entertainment and pleasure to the German masses, filmmaking was required to satisfy audience's expectations. Cinema was already established as one of if not the most popular media of the time, and audiences were accustomed to and expected to be provided with familiar genres and well known stars.¹⁵⁷³ Although he privately disapproved of many films, acting professionals, and even genres, Goebbels knew he had to work with Hans Albers and Gustaf Gründgens, and knew how to utilize extravagant revue films such as *Kora Terry*. This willingness and this necessity to compromise characterized the cultural policy of the regime.

The regime of course purged German cinema of its “undesirable” elements and instituted a bureaucracy of censorship and enticements that guaranteed that films would in no way be critical of the regime and would adhere to its broad tropes such as nationalism and to a certain extent militarism, but it did not intervene into aesthetic matters in the way it did with painting or sculpture. In addition to being a collective enterprise, involving high numbers of professionals (and hence more difficult to control), film did not rely on centuries old tradition and had thus no points of comparison, as Weimar was outrightly rejected, at least in public discourse. Film professionals and the film press were actually was in the process of working through and figuring out what film actually was and what it should be. Articles in the film press mirror this process and

¹⁵⁷³ Looking at 350 bestsellers of that time, Adam makes a similar surprising discovery about what was popular, including for example a significant number foreign novels in Adam, *Lesen unter Hitler*.

delineate the main points of contentions: film's relation to theater and music and the need to train upcoming film professionals.

Situated at the nexus of regime, professionals, and audience, the film press is thus an essential source to get insights into German society during the Third Reich by looking at the production of culture. By introducing the three major magazines and papers, this dissertation lays the groundwork for future research, which will hopefully come up with new questions and interpretations about this rich material.

Appendix A: Incomplete list of lectures offered at the Lessing Hochschule, some with film screenings

- November 1935: *Our Daily Bread* (King Vidor)
November 1935: “Sturm und Drang des Films.”
December 1935: Frank Wysbar talked about his film *Fährman Maria*
December 1935: Paul Wegner talked about his films
March 1936: Dr. med. Gauger, “What did we want with the film *Die ewige Maske*?”
March 1936: Cultural Films
October 1936: Discussion of the film *Verräter*
November 1936: Alexander Alexeieff
November 1936: Dr. Johannes Eckardts, “Wort und Dialog im Film”
December 1936: Director Fritz Mainz (Tobis) about “Kunst und Geschäft im internationaler Film.”
January 1937: *San Francisco*
January 1937: Joseph Pfister, “S-O-S um 9.15 Uhr. Vorprogram Kulturfilm.”
January 1937: Jan Koetzier-Müller, “Sprache, Mimik, Gestik des Films.”
February 1937: Dr. Günther Keiser, “Die Dreidimensionalität des Filmschaffens.”
February 1937: J. Wenske (Tobis Cultural Film Department) about cultural films.
February 1937: Karl Ritter, “Zeitfilm- Zeitgeschichte”
February 1937: Joseph Pfister, “*Peter Ibbetson* und der transzendente Film” des amerikanischen Avantgardisten Henry Hathaway.”
March 1937: Paul Liesegang, “Vom lebensrad zum Tonfilm”
March 1937: Willy Birgel, “Mein Bekenntnis zum Film.”
March 1937: Kurt Wolfes, “Die Filmkunst des Tricks.”
April 1927: Dr. Johannes Eckardts talks about color film, using the example of the film *Ramona*
April 1937: Dr. Carl Lamb’s “Raum im kreisenden Licht”
April 1937: Dr. Johan Wolfgang Schottländer spoke about Music in film
April 1937: Ministerialrat Dr. Eugen Langske, Wien, “Die deutsch-österreichische Zusammenarbeit im Film
September 1937: Polish cultural films
November 1937: Joseph Pfister (now head of press by Tobis) talked about film advertisement
December 1937: Two lectures about connection abroad: one with Austrian cultural film. Second evening was about Japanese film.
January 1938: Dr. Trautwen, “Elektromusik, die Zukunft des Tonfilms?”
February 1938: Cameraman Walter Frenz about the “Filmic film and the duties of the Avant-garde.” Showed film from Willy Zielke.
February 1938: Scriptwriter Dr. Georg C. Klare, “Gibt es ein Autorenproblem im Film?”

Other lectures in the first quarter of 1938, without specific dates:

Dr. Hans Karbe, from Essener National-Zeitung, "Unternehmen Michael."

Dr. L. Fürst about Rene Clair's *Sous les Toits de Paris*

Dr. Eckardt, "Wir hören auf!" about the treatment of cultural short film

Presseleiter des Reichbundes für Leibesübungen, Gärtner, talked about film and physical exercises.

Werner Flinck about humor

Dr. Karbe about Sacha Guitry's *Le Roman d'un Tricheur*

Herbert Tjaden about his experience in Japan

Koetsier-Müller about the logic in film

On September 17, 1941, *Film-Kurier* announced the upcoming September-December 1941 program of the Lessing-Hochschule now in its thirtieth year.

Listed were:

September 28, 1941: Paul Rose, director of the Rose Theater, about "Berlin – in its theater and its songs."

October 17, 1941: Prof. Dr. Hopper about Berlin as capital of the Reich; Dr. Theodor Demmier, director of the state museum, about Andreas Schlüter, and Oswald Schrenk about "Berlin – the music city of the world."

Appendix B: List of Foreign Films shown at the German Film Academy, with date of screening

November 7, 1939: *Remontons les Champs-Élysées* (Sacha Guitry)
November 14, 1939: *Konez Sankt-Peterburga* from Wsewolod Pudowkin, 1927
November 21, 1939: *Victoria the Great*, (Herbert Wilcox, 1937)
November 24, 1939: short films from Disney
December 5, 1939: Italian films (*Ma non è una cosa seria*, Mario Camerini, 1938)
December 12, 1939: *One Hundred Men and One Girl*, (Henry Koster, 1937)
January 9, 1940: British productions (Flaherty's *Man of Aran*, 1934)
January 23, 1940: Fritz Lang's American film, *Fury*
February 4, 1940: *Jud Süß* (Veit Harlan)
April 9, 1940: *Faisons un rêve* (Sacha Guitry)
April 23, 1940: *Mr. Deeds goes to town* (Frank Capra, 1936)

Also shown without explicit dates: *The Story of Louis Pasteur* (William Dieterle, 1935).

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