

In and Out of War: Space, Pleasure and Cinema in
Hamburg 1938 – 1949

by

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To James Masschaele

who saved me from mice and
opened the doors to an altogether different
world

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List of Abbreviations

BArch	Bundesarchiv (Federal Archive of Germany)
BDM	Bund Deutscher Mädel (League of German Girls)
BFI	British Film Institute
COI	Coordinator of Information
DAF	Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front)
DEFA	Deutsche Film-Aktiengesellschaft
Degeto	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ton und Film
DDP	Deutsche Demokratische Partei (German Democratic Party)
DM	Deutsche Mark
DNVP	Deutschnationale Volkspartei (German National People's Party)
DSfP	Deutsche Staatspartei (German State Party)
DTA	Deutsches Tagebucharchiv (German Diary Archive)
DVP	Deutsche Volkspartei (German People's Party)
FIS	Foreign Information Service
FKB	Film Kredit Bank (Film Credit Bank)
FZH	Forschungstelle für Zeitgeschichte
GB	Great Britain
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei (Secret Police)
HJ	Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth)
KdF	Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy)
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (German Communist Party)
Kripo	Kriminal Polizei (Criminal Police)
MGM	Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer
MPEA	Motion Pictures Export Association
NS	National Socialist
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei (National Socialist German Workers Party)
NSV	Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt (National Socialist People's Welfare)
OND	Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro (Official Italian Leisure Organization)
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
OWI	Office of War Information
PCA	Production Code Administration

POW	Prisoner of War
RFK	Reichsfilmkammer (Reich Film Chamber)
RKK	Reichskulturkammer (Reich Culture Chamber)
RM	Reichsmark
RMVP	Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda (Propaganda Ministry)
RWU	Reisen Wander und Urlaub (Office for Travel and Vacation)
SD	Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service)
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (German Social Democratic Party)
SPIO	Spitzenorganisation der Deutschen Filmwirtschaft (Organization of the German Film)
SS	Schutzstaffel
StAHH	Staatsarchiv Hamburg (State Archive, Hamburg)
STD	Sexual Transmitted Disease
Ufa	Universum Film AG
Ufi	Ufa-Film-GmbH
VW	Volkswagen
ZAC	Zonal Advisory Council (Zonenbeirat)

A Note On Terminology

The challenge of defining terms that are often used interchangeably in everyday language is always a difficulty. In the present study “film” refers to a cultural product, whether primarily conceived of as an art form or as a medium of entertainment and information. The use of “film” here includes documentary and feature films, which may also occasionally be referred to as movies. In contrast, “the cinema” is used more comprehensively to describe the industrial apparatus of production, distribution, exhibition in addition to the body of films circulated through its various venues. The “movie theater,” “the movie palace,” or the simply the “theater” are terms that indicate the actual physical space in which films are screened for the benefit of patrons who engaged in the activity of “moviegoing.” At the expense of variation, I have tried to maintain a rigid adherence to these to help prevent misconceptions on the part of my readers.

This study consciously retains the descriptor “Nazi cinema” to describe the films of and the apparatus for their deployment in the Third Reich. Sabine Hake has made a compelling case against the use of such terms as “Nazi cinema” or “Nazi film” since they “suggest a complete convergence of narrative cinema, cultural politics, and Nazi ideology, pleasure and power” that was never achieved.¹ Precisely because of the important work by Sabine Hake, Linda Schulte-Sasse, Eric Rentschler and others, who have demonstrated the overdetermined, contradictory, and temporally mobile character of films produced in Nazi Germany, I feel confident that my continued use of “Nazi cinema” will no longer invoke the passé claims of scholars who see film as a primary

¹ Sabine Hake. *German National Cinema*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 59

instrument to indoctrinate the population of the Reich ideologically. Instead, I argue that “Nazi cinema,” far from defining a uniform, coherent body of films or political practices, nonetheless best captures the particular self-understanding of its advocates who, despite their imperfect abilities, did aspire to absolute control.

Lastly, “Nazi cinema” continues to be a useful term because it can contain the variability and range of National Socialist production in its search for a coherent and mature artistic style. While that style was never realized in full, films made in the Third Reich did develop economic, formal, stylistic and narrative trajectories that, though never independent of earlier or parallel cinemas, became recognizable as a coherent body of work by the early 1940s. A product of its time, “Nazi cinema” should not be held to unrealistic level of artistic consistency that we would reject for Weimar cinema, Soviet cinema, Hollywood cinema and any other national variant. To reject the descriptor “Nazi cinema” because it was less consistent than Joseph Goebbels would have willed it to be, elevates Goebbels’ role to a more decisive position than he deserves.

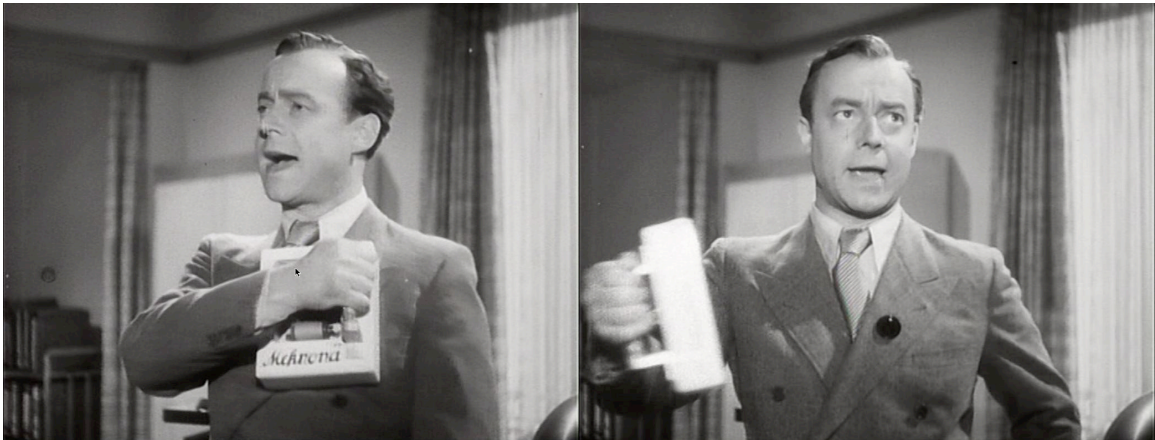
Chapter 1

The Visual Landscape of the *Meknonä*

An Introduction

Nazi cinema is most famous for these iconic images: Veit Harlan's sacrificial females and racialized villains, the tap-dancing of Marika Röck and Lilian Harvey's boyish face, Joseph Baky's cannonball cavalier, Zarah Leander's alto voice, Fritz Hippler's distortions of Jewish life and most of all, Leni Riefenstahl's beautiful divers and powerful leaders descending from the skies. These images mark the main road across the Thousand Year Reich's visual landscape. Most histories of Nazi cinema take us on a tour through Hitler's Germany via this filmic autobahn. Instead, my study was inspired by the back roads of a cinema that wanted to conquer the world. It begins with the image of the *Meknonä*.

The *Meknonä*, short for *mechanischer Knopfannäher* or mechanical button stitcher is the latest invention of Peter Trost (Heinz Rühmann), a small-scale entrepreneur of the firm *Jungesellentrost* [bachelor's comfort] in the action-packed romantic comedy *Ich vertraue dir meine Frau an* [I entrust my wife to you] (Kurt Hoffmann, 1942/3). Introduced in close-up, the *Meknonä* is one of the company's products developed to alleviate the burdens of bachelorhood, assist with daily household chores, and facilitate male self-reliance. However, like the *Mefrühstrei* or *mechanischer Frühstücksbrotstreich- und Einwickelapparat* (a mechanical sandwich maker) and the *Selstrühsto* or *selbsttätiger Strümpfestopfer* (an automatic sock mender), the *Meknonä* does not add much to the domestic skills of the prototypical man. The socks of the entrepreneur have holes in them and he still goes hungry since the wrapping paper ends up molded into the sandwich rather than wrapped around it. When Peter presses the *Meknonä* apparatus to his heart to demonstrate the superfluousness of women, it perfectly



Figures 1 and 2: Peter Trost (Heinz Rühmann) demonstrates the *Meknonä*

sews a clunky black button to the lapel of his suit. As his secretary coquettishly giggles under her breath, Peter smugly smiles into the camera, announcing the new age of the single man.

The remainder of the film chronicles the reformation of Peter from a stalwart bachelor (who when he looks at the low-cut and short-skirted dress of his secretary worries that she might catch a cold) into a more conventional man. Peter's high-school friend Robert (Werner Fuetterer) is unable to resist his secretary's charms. But his wife, Ellinor (Lil Adina) vows to commit adultery if the secretary accompanies her husband on a business trip. Trying to forge a solution, Robert asks Peter to act as a wife-sitter, thinking this is a safe bet given his friend's commitment to bachelorhood. After numerous chases, an arrest, an incident of near drowning, and a host of mix-ups and delicate embroilments, Ellinor ends up sewing Peter's buttons and making his sandwiches instead.

Ridiculing consumer society, which the Nazis had advocated with such fervor only a few years earlier, *Ich vertraue dir meine Frau an* comes to the predictable conclusion that gadgets cannot replace the companionship of a wife. Reminiscent of the *Volksprodukte*, or people's products, the *Meknonä* was a composite image of German

philistinism and American mass produced household aids.¹ Since August 1933, when Joseph Goebbels launched the *Volksempfänger* or people's radio, which was the first of the prestigious people's products, the promise of an intrinsically German consumer society had become an essential aspect of the National Socialist vision for a prosperous future. By 1943, the notion of an automatic housekeeper and wife replacement appeared painfully comic. It rendered the wartime lack of consumer products a virtue and turned the broken promise of prosperity into a critique of American consumerism.²

Between July 25 and August 3, British and American bombers dropped 8,500 tons of bombs on Hamburg that caused massive conflagrations, destroyed half of the remaining housing stock, and killed 34,000 people. The infrastructure of Hamburg was completely disrupted and about 900,000 citizens lost their homes to the bombs or fire. After 'Operation Gomorrha,' parts of the city remained without running water and electricity for months to come, thousands of citizens were forced to live in makeshift shelters for years, and the rubble would serve as reminder of war into the 1950s. However, only a week after the last raid, movies started playing again in Hamburg's

¹ Wolfgang König, *Volkswagen, Volksempfänger, Volksgemeinschaft. 'Volksprodukte' im Dritten Reich: Vom Scheitern einer nationalsozialistischen Konsumgesellschaft*. (Paderborn, München, Wien, Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2004). König traces the visions and plans for a Nazi consumer society and its ultimate failure. More significant still is Adam Tooze's *Wages of Destruction* which not only sets Nazi ambitions for a consumer society in its international context but also illustrates how Nazi visions of prosperity were intimately bound up with their politics of expansion and genocidal war. For a detailed overview of the place of people's products in the Nazi economy see Adam Tooze's brilliant study on the Nazi economy *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy*. (New York: Penguin, 2008), 147-165.

² See in particular "So wirtschaftet die Hausfrau in England" in *Hamburger Tageblatt* 19 Feb 1939 which ridicules the British housewife for her dependence on canned foods and her inability to be self-sufficient. "Macht der Zucker dick?" in the rubric "Die Frau" in *Hamburger Tageblatt* 10 Feb 1939. The paper warns the German housewife against the dangers of canned foods (American Style) while lauding the natural qualities of sugar. The *Hamburger Tageblatt* regularly printed recipes and instructions to German women as pre-war food rationing became a fact of everyday life. See "Speisequark und Milcheiweißpulver: Zwei wichtige 'Rohstoffe' der modernen Ernährung in vielfältiger Verwendung" in *Hamburger Tageblatt* 11 Feb 1939. The gloss by Gunther Fischer "Edamer – Bezugscheinfrei" in *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* 11 Sept 1940 ridicules a certain fictional Herr Plisch for buying two gigantic rounds of Edamer cheese from his local deli, which appear to be unregulated, because, as Plisch finds out soon enough, they are window dressings made from wood. In the absence of basic consumer goods, Nazi ideologues reminded war-weary population of the power inherent in the 'little things.' See Otto Schmidt, "Von der Macht der kleinen Dinge" in *Volkstum und Heimat* (Aug/Sept 1942), 113-116.

theaters.³ When *Ich vertraue dir meine Frau an* first ran in Hamburg later that August, there was a lot to mend and not quite enough to make a sandwich.⁴

The starting point for my investigation of German cinema during the Second World War and its immediate aftermath is the Nazi promise of “good times” and of prosperity to come.⁵ Historians of everyday life have long since pointed out that the lived experiences of people did not neatly align with the political caesurae of 1933, 1939, and 1945. Ulrich Herbert suggests a periodization that isolated the Nazi “good times” of economic and military expansion from the “bad times” of political instability, economic uncertainties, low living standards, war, defeat and occupation. In contrast to the scarcity and hardship pervading the years before the Nazi consolidation of power in 1933 and the end of German military victories in the winter of 1942, the “good times” were recorded as quiet, normal, and predominantly ‘private’ times in people’s memories.⁶

When Germans waited for the end of the war and envisioned a return to normality under Allied occupation, the Nazi “good times” were their primary frame of reference. Adam Tooze’s path breaking study on the Nazi economy demonstrated that the initial recovery in 1933 and 1934 was not the result of Nazi economic policy.⁷ Tooze further revealed the retrospective exaggerations of the extent of National Socialist achievements

³ See “Wochenschau und Filme” *Hamburger Zeitung* 11 Aug.1943.

⁴ See Ursula Büttner. "'Gomorra' und die Folgen. Der Bombenkrieg." *Hamburg Im 'Dritten Reich'*. Ed. FZH. (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2005): 613-32 and Hans Brunswig. *Feuersturm Über Hamburg: Die Luftangriffe auf Hamburg im Zweiten Weltkrieg und ihre Folgen*. 3rd ed. (Stuttgart: Motorbuch Verlag, 1979) For the advertisement of *Ich vertraue dir meine Frau an* see Advertisement. *Hamburger Zeitung* 26 Aug 1943.

⁵ Ulrich Herbert’s periodization divided the Third Reich in “good” and “bad” times based on his careful interpretation of personal interviews with *Zeitzeugen*. See Ulrich Herbert. “Die guten und die schlechten Zeiten’: Überlegungen zur diachronen Analyse lebensgeschichtlicher Interviews” in *“Die Jahre die weiss man nicht, wo man die heute hinsetzen soll”’: Faschismuserfahrungen im Ruhrgebiet* ed. Lutz Niethammer et al. (Berlin: Dietz, 1983): 67-96. A shorter version of the article was published as “Good Times, Bad Times.” *History Today* 36 2 (February 1986): 42-48.

⁶ Ulrich Herbert. ""Die Guten Und Die Schlechten Zeiten," 85

⁷ Tooze, 65

as a welfare and consumer society.⁸ Looking westward, Hitler was unwilling to accept Germany's position "within a global economy dominated by the affluent English-speaking countries" of Great Britain and the rising superpower of the United States.⁹ Tooze rationalizes Hitler's aggression as "an intelligible response" and "an epic challenge" to a world order of global capitalism.¹⁰ The eastward expansion of German *Lebensraum* "would create the self-sufficiency for domestic affluence and the platform necessary to prevail in the coming superpower competition with the United States."¹¹

I suggest that we view Nazi cinema as part of Hitler's drive for world power featuring popular consumption as a reward and an economic motor. After 1933, the Nazi state's resolve to reorganize the industry had spawned a profligate bureaucracy that consolidated control over personnel and resources. Nevertheless, the film industry did not recuperate significantly from the slump it had been in since the Depression until military expansion dramatically increased the audiences for film.¹² Attempting to understand Nazi cinema in its local contexts, I rely on important new trends in the historiography of the Third Reich on the one hand and the paradigmatic shifts in Nazi cinema studies from a focus on propaganda¹³ to text based studies of entertainment films,¹⁴ and finally to an emphasis on cinema as part of popular culture on the other.¹⁵ Tooze provocatively

⁸ For example the average weekly earnings of Germans in 1936 amounted to 30 Reichsmark and hourly rates were still calculated in Pfennigs. If we take per capita income as a measure for the standard of living, Germans fared about half as well as US citizens, while the British though their GDP compared to that of Germany, had only about 10 % less money to spend than their American counterparts. In addition, Germany was the heaviest taxed country in Europe. Compare Tooze, 136 and 141-2, 256

⁹ Tooze xxiv

¹⁰ Tooze xxiv

¹¹ Tooze, xxiv

¹² Still Jürgen Spiker's account on the film industry in Nazi Germany remains the most useful overview of the economical restructuring under Goebbels' guidance. *Film und Kapital: Der Weg der deutschen Filmwirtschaft zum nationalsozialistischen Einheitskonzern*. (Berlin: Verlag Volker Spiess, 1975)

¹³ For the most useful work on Nazi film propaganda see David Welch. *Propaganda and the German Cinema 1933-1945*. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983).

¹⁴ Eric Rentschler. *The Ministry of Illusion: Nazi Cinema and Its Afterlife*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996) and Linda Schulte-Sasse. *Entertaining the Third Reich: Illusions of Wholeness in Nazi Cinema*. (London: Duke University Press, 1996).

¹⁵ Sabine Hake. *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*. (Austin: Texas University Press, 2001)

suggested that favoring excessive military spending and armaments production over private consumption was not merely a sacrifice in anticipation of war, but rather “a form of collective mass consumption” in itself.¹⁶ Whereas tanks and weapons were “assertions of national strength, the common property of the German nation, to be handled by the pick of German manhood,” I argue that film extended this particular form of war-driven consumption to an even larger collective of German men *and* women, while conveniently promoting the stature of the Reich beyond its geographical boundaries.¹⁷

Inspired by Erica Carter’s *Dietrich’s Ghosts* which asserts the importance of the Nazis’ bid for hegemony, *In and Out of War* approaches cinema as a political space that enlisted the active participation of local governments, cultural experts, and audiences in the making of the Nazi state.¹⁸ Rather than reverting to arguments about film’s power in forging ideological consent to the Nazi regime, I show that the discussions of individual films, the intellectual debates over cinema as a National Socialist art form, and the actual practice of going to the movies constituted locally specific public venues for political participation. It is not my intention to invoke the many pluralist, parliamentary, and democratic connotations generally associated with ‘participation.’ For lack of a descriptor free of such resonances I continue to use the term ‘participation’ to capture the initiative and zeal with which local functionaries, activists, and consumers articulated and maintained locally specific visions of Nazism. These visions were not always in congruence with the exhortations and directives emanating from Berlin, and they certainly never posed a challenge to Nazism per se. However, they do illustrate that terror

¹⁶ Tooze, 163

¹⁷ Tooze, 164

¹⁸ Erica Carter. *Dietrich's Ghosts: The Sublime and the Beautiful in Third Reich Film*. (London: BFI, 2004).

and repression notwithstanding, even the tightly coordinated and top-down administered realm of cinema rested on more eclectic footing.¹⁹

During the prewar period, Hamburg's administrators attempted to integrate local traditions into the celluloid history of the Reich to underscore the city's successful Nazification. Similarly, local cineastes self-coordinated in the name of a new National Socialist avant-garde. Rather than a loose collective of creative and innovative individuals, the Nazi avant-garde envisioned by Joseph Goebbels and taken to new extremes by zealots in Hamburg was a militant first front in the name of *Bodenständigkeit* (rootedness in the soil) and *Wirklichkeitsnähe* (verisimilitude). They explicitly rejected the experimental art cinema of the Weimar period but aspired to achieve comparable international acclaim with a self-consciously National Socialist film art. Before the war, both the Reich Film Chamber (RFK) and local advocates of film, worked together in defining the parameters and functions of film in the New Germany.

The coming of war dramatically altered the perspectives of local and national agents. Hamburg's administrators dropped their discussions of film as an art form and a medium of instruction and recreational entertainment. Instead, they focused on the imbrication of film in the urban economy of pleasure and the potentially disruptive practices of moviegoing and popular reception. With the outbreak of war welfare workers revived earlier concerns about the sexualizing and corrupting effects of film. The usage of public space exposed the limits of social control. Concerns about loitering adolescents and female self-abandon refocused discussions about film's place in the Reich in spatial terms: the movie theater, the bar and the bordello were more similar than Goebbels' rhetoric about National Socialist film art had implied.

The war forced the historical connection between moviegoing and urban amusements back onto the agendas of concerned local administrators. At the same time, it

¹⁹ The extent to which the implementation of the Nazi *Führerstaat* proceeded according to and was reflective of Hitler's express wishes has been subject of intense political debate and historians have since accepted that a more complicated view of a system that at times was in fact "chaotic" rather than the result of linear top-down administration. In the aftermath of the policies of *Gleichschaltung* competing centers of power in sustained the regime in a polycratic character. For an excellent summary of these debates see Ian Kershaw "Hitler: 'Master in the Third Reich' or 'Weak Dictator'?" in *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* 4th ed. (London: Arnold, 2000), 69-92.

functioned as a catalyst propelling the cinema to hitherto unattained heights. Ticket-sales exploded during the war, peaking in 1943, Germany perfected its color-film production and filmmakers developed a more self-confidently populist style. Despite pervasive shortages of raw film after 1942, Goebbels' insistence on artistic quality continued to exacerbate production costs. German film companies recorded net profits for the first time in 1942 at the apex of German military success and before its inevitable downward spiral.²⁰

As war destroyed the fabric of everyday life and took scarcity and state terror to new extremes, Nazi cinema continued to nurture German ambitions of cultural preeminence and promised better times to come following the war. The *Volksgemeinschaft* was rationed to bits, but film remained available despite raw material shortages, the destruction of theaters by Allied bombs and near continuous air raid alarms. Moviegoing not only remained the last of the small pleasures available throughout the war; it was also among the first to be revived by the occupying powers. When the British reopened ten movie theaters to the general public in Hamburg in July 1945, *Ich vertraue dir meine Frau an* was one of the first films selected to pacify a populace suffering from severe food and housing shortages.²¹ Within months, local cineastes, politicians, cultural experts and journalists turned to film (and to German culture more generally) as they attempted to convert Germany to democracy. Cinema functioned again as a political space that allowed local activists to reject British instruction and produce explicitly German versions of entertainment, education, and art. Film, as a reflection of a loosely defined national essence, became the platform on which

²⁰ I am relying on Tooze's analysis of the Nazi economic machine and his argument that because of Hitler's mad logic about an existential threat to the German race propelled German into war at a time when its economy was simply incapable of sustaining that war. Locked into the transatlantic arms race and as of 1941 at war on three fronts, against the Anglo-American alliance, Stalin's Red Army, and the civilian population of Eastern Europe, Nazism was bound to fail. "This global Blitzkrieg, this grand strategy of racial war, turned out, however, to be a strategy not of victory but of defeat" Tooze suggests. Compare Tooze, xxiv, 661-668

²¹ "Wiedereröffnung der Hamburger Kinos" *Hamburger Nachrichtenblatt* 26 Jul 1945. Compare also Gabriele Clemens. *Britische Kulturpolitik in Deutschland 1945-1949: Literatur, Film, Musik und Theater*. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1997), 233

people in Hamburg and elsewhere mobilized in a search of useable traditions and politically palatable projections of the future in the face of Allied Occupation.

Beyond a National Perspective

The literature on Nazi cinema analyzes film from a predominantly national perspective and against the backdrop of the expressly international cinema of the Weimar years.²² More comprehensive explorations of the narrative and formal convergences between Nazi cinema and its Fascist counterparts are indeed overdue.²³ However, the notion of a national cinema should not only be tested against the international background of Fascist and/or European cinema but also be examined in the particular contexts of its reception. This study offers a first attempt at grounding the study of Nazi film in an explicitly local context.

The local focus also turns my attention to the various spaces in which the meaning of the local could be rehearsed, performed, and experienced. I use the term ‘space’ to refer to actual physical spaces (such as movie theaters, the city’s streets, local pubs, personal apartments and communal bunkers) and discursive or conceptual spaces which in turn were essential in the processes of *placemaking* – of turning space into place. Here my thinking has been particularly influenced by Henri Lefebvre’s concept of “social space” and Tim Cresswell’s definition of “place - a meaningful location.”²⁴ While the meaning of Hamburg was inscribed in the urban grid, it was also produced discursively in spaces neither representable nor touchable, however clearly demarcated by Nazi pre- and

²² On the relevance for international context of Weimar cinema with particular attention to the work of Kracauer see Thomas Elsaesser. *Weimar Cinema and After: Germany's Historical Imaginary*. (London: Routledge, 2000). The most recent contributions to the literature on film during the Third Reich illustrate the continuing pervasiveness of the national perspective. Jana Bruns. *Nazi Cinema's New Woman*. (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2009) and Susan Tegel. *Nazis and the Cinema*. (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007)

²³ See Johannes von Moltke in his article “Nazi Cinema Revisited” in *Film Quarterly* 61:1 (Fall 2007), 71. Herein von Moltke takes stock of the state of the field and makes a compelling argument for the exploration of Nazi cinema in relation to the cinema of other Fascist countries.

²⁴ Tim Cresswell. *Place: A Short Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 7 and Henri Lefebvre. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Nicholson-Smith, Donald. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

proscriptions and further shaped by the different experiences in peace and war space-time.²⁵

Inspired by recent micro-historical investigations, I argue that the local trajectories and experiences that surrounded and contained film exhibition and moviegoing fundamentally change our understanding of film in the Third Reich. They provide a nuanced view of film's *place* in everyday life, local politics, and an international frame of references that resonated with local particularities.²⁶ Moreover, a local focus also allows us to draw different continuities through the rise and rubble of Nazism than its historical endpoints suggests.

Nazi cinema was not willed into existence with the creation of the Reich Film Chamber in March 1933 and it did not disappear from view with the dismantling of the Ufa empire in 1945. However, Nazi cinema also did not follow the periodization that differentiates between “good” and “bad times.” In fact, film culture is one of few continuities linking them. The making of Nazi cinema was a complicated process that involved more than the creation of institutions to control film production, distribution and exhibition. The cultural bureaucracy created in the first two years of the regime explicitly looked to film to reflect the ideological underpinnings of the new Germany. However, neither Goebbels nor German filmmakers had a clear vision of what the new National Socialist film was supposed to look like. The discussion between local and national

²⁵ Massey argues that space does not exist prior to identities or entities but that “the identities/entities, the relations ‘between’ them and the spatiality which is part of them, are all constitutive.” Thus Massey emphasizes “embedded practices,” when arguing against the prioritization of time over space, in fact against their separation and argues that it is essential to recognize society as both temporal and spatial. All space she argues “is dislocated” and unrepresentable. Representation (visual or otherwise) generally has space-time as its object. Doreen Massey. *For Space*. (London: Sage, 2005), 10, 27.

²⁶ The work of Andrew Bergerson *Ordinary Germans in Extraordinary Times: The Nazi Revolution in Hildesheim* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004) and Paul Steege, *Black Market, Cold War: Everyday Life in Berlin, 1946-1949*. (Cambridge/ New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007) are particularly useful. Bergerson offers truly compelling insights about life in Nazi Germany and the forging of popular consent. Relying on oral histories and ethnographic methodology, Bergerson is able to show the links between the habitual everyday practices of Hildesheimers and their place in establishing as normal a criminal, self-policing regime. Steege's study on Berlin provides a refreshing perspective of the genesis of the Cold War in Europe. Writing its history “inside out,” Steege emphasizes the fragmentary nature of Berliner's existence and as a result of their histories. More recent studies on individual cities include Gregor Neil. *Haunted City: Nuremberg and the Nazi Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) and Ralf Blank. *Hagen im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Bombenkrieg, Kriegsalltag und Rüstung einer westfälischen Großstadt* (Essen: Klartext, 2008)

experts as well as the reactions of audiences were central to the development of a Nazi film language. Ultimately Nazi cinema was made by war and not by artists. As my discussion illustrates, the rhetoric on the relevance of Nazi film avant-garde and its vision for internationally palatable Nazi art, remained insubstantial until the regime's expansionism guaranteed international markets and potentiated film audiences. And while the dismantling of the Nazi film industry by the occupying powers over the course of 1945 was extremely thorough, its filmic language, stars and promises lived on in the nostalgia for affluence and world-recognition.

After the collapse of the Reich, the desire to understand why millions of Germans supported or at least failed to object to the genocidal policies of the Nazis produced two kinds of explanations, both of which took their vantage points from Nazism itself. Since the regime presented itself as the answer to the *Volk's* will and proclaimed the *Führer* the executor of the national will, scholars originally explained the rise of Nazism with the intrinsic predispositions and internal tendencies of the German people.²⁷ On the other hand, many historians took the Nazis' drive for total control as their starting point, and hence focused on the architects of the Third Reich, its institutions, and its ability to wield terror.²⁸ Along these lines a "first wave" of film historians and sociologists distanced themselves from Siegfried Kracauer's teleological approach in which he read Nazism as a refraction of Weimar's failures. However, they retained the premise that film and

²⁷ The magnitude of the Nazi crimes and the *Zivilisationsbruch* of Auschwitz cast questions about Nazism as questions about humanity, about progress, about modernity in general. Theodor W. Adorno, and et al. *The Authoritarian Personality*. (New York: Norton, c1950) Stanley Milgram. *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View*. (London: Printer & Martin, c1974). Historians in contrast looked for continuities in German history that came to be known as the *Sonderweg* of Germany's path to modernity that provided the dominant frame for understanding Nazism until the publication of David Blackbourn's and Geoff Eley's compelling critique and fundamental revision of the *Sonderweg*-thesis. For a review of the arguments for a German *Sonderweg* and a definitive critique thereof see David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley. *The Peculiarities of German History*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984) Much like historians, the first work on Nazi film published originally in 1947 sought to explain the rise of the Nazi regime from the perspective of the collective. Siegfried Kracauer thus read the films of the Weimar period as a roadmap for the genesis of Nazism. *From Caligari to Hitler. A Psychological History Fo the German Film*. Revised and Expanded Edition. Leonardo Quaresima ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004)

²⁸ The earliest work in this line is Franz Neumann. *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism*. (London: V. Gollanez, 1942). Numerous later contributions focused on the totalitarian nature of the Reich such as Alan Bullock. *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*. (London: Odhams Press, 1952); Joachim C Fest. *Das Gesicht des Dritten Reiches: Profil einer totalitären Herrschaft*. (München: R. Piper, 1963) and Karl Dietrich Bracher. *Die deutsche Diktatur: Entstehung, Struktur, Folgen des Nationalsozialismus*. (Berlin: Ullstein, 1979).

propaganda offered compelling insights into the particular relationship between the state and society in Nazi Germany.²⁹ These studies documented the political importance of film, its function in the production of political hegemony, and its unsurpassed status as an instrument of Nazi propaganda. As a result, these earlier histories reified the boundaries that separated the Third Reich from its political precursors and successors.

In many ways the tenor of the literature on National Socialist film and film in the Third Reich has shifted from an emphasis on the political – from ideology as dogma, from propaganda and deliberate political manipulation – to more plastic aspects of ideology as embedded in the popular, the imaginary and the fantastic. In addition, scholars are examining film's extranarrative elements, its textures, excesses, and formal inconsistencies.³⁰ Genre conventions have been recognized as traversing different political regimes in different historical periods, so that films produced under the Nazis stand out less as 'artistic' and formal oddities but are analyzed within a set of international and historical continuities.³¹ Explorations of a gendered star culture in the Third Reich have further contributed to an appreciation of National Socialist film as a

²⁹ See in particular David S. Hull, *Film in the Third Reich*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973); Erwin Leiser, *Nazi Cinema*. Translated by Gertrud Mander and David Wilson. (New York: Collier, 1975) and David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema 1933-1945*, (Oxford: Clarendon 1983) and Gerd Albrecht *Der Film im Dritten Reich. Eine Dokumentation* (Karlsruhe: Schauburg, 1979) and Gerd Albrecht *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik. Eine soziologische Untersuchung über die Spielfilme des Dritten Reichs* (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke, 1969).

³⁰ For pioneering work see Eric Rentschler, *The Ministry of Illusion* and Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich* Their work was in turn inspired by Karsten Witte, "Film im Nationalsozialismus" in *Geschichte des Deutschen Films* ed. Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes and Hans Helmut Prinzler (Stuttgart and Weimar: J.B. Metzler, 1993),170. For more recent contributions to this 'second wave' see Jana F. Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Woman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), Antje Ascheid's *Hitler's Heroines: Stardom and Womanhood in Nazi Cinema* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003) whose work is informed by Jackie Stacey's classic study *Star Gazing: Hollywood Cinema and Female Spectatorship* (London: Routledge, 1994). See further the contributions to *Cultural History through a National Socialist Lens: Essays on the Cinema of the Third Reich* edited by Robert C. Reimer (Rochester NY: Camden House, 2002). Also Marry-Elizabeth O'Brien. *Nazi Cinema as Enchantment: The Politics of Entertainment in the Third Reich*. (Rochester: Camden House, 2004).

³¹ See Patrice Petro. *Joyless Streets : Women and Melodramatic Representation in Weimar, Germany*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989). Sabine Hake, *German National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2002); *Die Geschichte des deutschen Films* edited by Wolfgang Jacobson, Anton Kaes und Hans Helmut Prinzler (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1993) and Johannes von Moltke *No Place Like Home: Locations of Heimat in German Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) For attention to Nazi cinema's international continuities see Lutz Koepnick, *The Dark Mirror: German Cinema between Hitler and Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) The institutional history offered by Klaus Kreimeier *The Ufa-Story: A History of Germany's Greatest Film Company, 1918-1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996) also provides a more comprehensive picture of film production in Germany.

cinema that addressed an audience and not merely disciples eager to await the next call to arms by the Nazi Propaganda Minister.³² Still, most studies of film in the Third Reich tend to be neatly defined by ruptures prescribed by political history. The attention to so-called *Überläuferfilme* tends to reinforce rather than problematize the coincidence of political and cultural history.³³

As Johannes von Moltke illustrates in his review of the current state of Nazi Cinema Studies, the shift from a “first” historical to a “second” wave in film studies might be in fact too neat.³⁴ Rather than merely a disciplinary shift, the historiographical emphases should be seen in light of a renewed concern with *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in Germany since the late 1980s, a phenomenon that was intimately tied to the cinematic representations of Nazism and particularly the Holocaust.³⁵ The revival of interest in the relationship between national history, Nazism and film extended far beyond academia. It became a public history project of sorts, pushed forth by the grandchildren of the

³² The work of Erica Carter is most revealing in this context. The star ‘personalities’ Carter engages with do not merely reflect a German response to a Hollywood star system. Rather, Carter illustrates that stardom functioned within “Nazism’s drive for ‘hegemony’” rather than in opposition to it. Taking seriously what Nazi cultural critics and film theorists had to say about ‘their’ cinema, Carter provides a more nuanced view of the role of film in Nazi Germany and National Socialist notions of art, of the popular, and of the personae of star and genius. Thus Carter writes against the grain of a literature still exploring the Third Reich’s “diverse manifestations.”

³³ Both Eric Rentschler and Sabine Hake are committed to questioning the neat boundaries of Third Reich cinema by its historical endpoints by focusing on *Überläuferfilme* and legacies. Yet in each case the analysis does not automatically challenge the boundaries per se but illustrates how earlier traditions spilled over into the Third Reich (Hake, 23-45) or outlived its collapse (Rentschler, 218-222 in particular). In contrast, Hake traces stylistic continuities as well as the public importance of star personae beyond 1945 to convincingly illustrate the permeability of presumably fixed historical boundaries (Hake, 210-230)

³⁴ Johannes von Moltke, “Nazi Cinema Revisited” *Film Quarterly* 61:1 (Fall 2007), 68-72

³⁵ With the original screening of the miniseries *Holocaust* in 1979 that for the first time since 1945 solicited a public outcry of *Betroffenheit* and an overwhelmingly emotional public response, German popular and academic culture began an exchange that became intensely political: Helmut Kohl’s visit to Bitburg (1986), the publication of Ernst Nolte’s article in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* entitled “The Past that will not pass away” and the ensuing *Historikerstreit*. See Alf Lüdtke, “Coming to Terms with the Past: Illusions of Remembering, Ways of Forgetting Nazism in West Germany.” *The Journal of Modern History* 65, no. 3 (1993): 542-72. Also see Geoff Eley. “Nazism, Politics and the Image of the Past: Thoughts on the West German Historikerstreit 1986-1987.” *Past & Present* 121 (Nov 1988): 171-208 and Geoff Eley, “Ordinary Germans, Nazism, and Judeocide” in *The “Goldhagen Effect” : History, Memory, Nazism –Facing the German Past* Edited by Geoff Eley. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 1-31.

perpetrator generation.³⁶ With the release of *Schindler's List* in 1994, this revival functioned as an international barometer of Germany's ability and willingness to come to terms with a troubled past.³⁷ While film and film discourse served as the primary venue through which Germans could engage with their recent history beyond scripted exercises in *Betroffenheit*,³⁸ it is not a coincidence that academic interest in Third Reich film renewed itself in a parallel fashion.³⁹ During the 1980s, a cohort of younger historians called the dominant focus of political history and the history of society or *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* into question.⁴⁰ History workshops, oral history projects and most notably the pioneers of *Alltagsgeschichte* (everyday life history) moved beyond the traditional set of historical sources. They challenged historiographical paradigms, and by

³⁶ For a generational approach to Germany's coming to terms with its past see Harold Marcuse. *The Legacies of Dachau: The Uses and Abuses of a Concentration Camp, 1933-2001* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

³⁷ See particularly, Geoff Eley and Atina Grossman "Watching Schindler's List" in *New German Critique* 71 "Memories of Germany" (Spring/Summer 1997): 41-62 and Miriam Hansen, "Schindler's List' is not 'Shoa': The second commandment, popular Modernism and public memory" in *Critical Inquiry* 22, 2 (Winter 1996): 292-312.

³⁸ See in particular Klaus Neumann. *Shifting Memories: The Nazi Past in the New Germany* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2000)

³⁹ The renewed interest also accounted for a second 'spring' of some of the more notorious works, such as Richard Taylor, *Film Propaganda: Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany* 2nd. rev. ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998, ©1979) and Hilmar Hoffmann, *The Triumph of Propaganda: Film and National Socialism, 1933-1945* (Frankfurt a.M.: Berghahn Books, 1997). The latter was originally published in German as *Und die Fahne führt uns in die Ewigkeit* by Fischer Verlag in 1988.

⁴⁰ Hans Ulrich Wehler is generally credited as the father of German *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* that located an equally totalizing history of structures and processes in the schematically sketched realms of *Gesellschaft* of politics, economy, the social, and culture in which the modernization pressures work themselves out. *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte* Band I - IV.

initiating the so-called ‘cultural turn’ softened disciplinary boundaries.⁴¹ In front of this larger context film scholars began to explore Nazi cinema as a dynamic cultural force rather than merely as an instrument of the state. But as scholars continued to expand on the pioneering work of Eric Rentschler and Linda Schulte-Sasse, an interest in Nazi film propaganda experienced revival of its own.⁴²

After Rentschler and Schulte-Sasse dissolved the dichotomy between propaganda and entertainment and highlighted some of the ideological paradoxes that characterize not just Nazism in general but also its films, the notion of the popular more than any other framing concept has emerged as the dominant theme in the literature. In particular, the work of Sabine Hake has shifted the analysis of individual films to the “social, cultural, economic, and political practice” of popular cinema in a deliberate attempt to “normalize” German film history.⁴³ The essays that comprise Hake’s study present a “kaleidoscopic” overview of the place of the cinema of the Third Reich in German cinema. Rehabilitating films previously labeled as too ‘escapist’ for scholarly investigation, Hake’s eclectic approach provides compelling insights into cinematic style,

⁴¹ Richard Bessel. Ed. *Life in the Third Reich*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); David F Crew. "Alltagsgeschichte: A New Social History 'from Below'?" *Central European History* 22: 3/4 (September/December 1989): 394-407; Geoff Eley, *Labour History--Social History--Alltagsgeschichte : Experience, Culture, and the Politics of the Everyday : A New Direction for German Social History?* (Ann Arbor Mich.: University of Michigan, 1989.); Alf Lüdtke *Alltagsgeschichte : Zur Rekonstruktion historischer Erfahrungen und Lebensweisen* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1989). Lüdtke, Alf. *Eigen-Sinn : Fabrikalltag, Arbeitererfahrungen und Politik vom Kaiserreich bis in den Faschismus* (Hamburg: Ergebnisse Verlag, 1993);. Medick, Hans, ""Missionaries in the Row Boat"? Ethnological Ways of Knowing as a Challenge to Social History." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 29, no. 1 (1987): 76-98. For an excellent overview of the developments in German historiography see Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005). For challenges levels against the totalizing models of *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* see in particular the Chapter entitled “Disappointment” (61-114) where Eley examines the trajectory of *Alltagsgeschichte* as well as Mason’s important work on social policy of the Third Reich. In relation to the so-called cultural turn Eley stresses the work of feminist historians, the recognition of the work of Michel Foucault by historians, the emerging field of subaltern studies, as well as the fruitful cross fertilizations between in the new field of cultural studies and historians in the 1980s. See in particular his chapter “Reflectiveness” (115-182), therein particularly 121-133.

⁴² Rolf Giesen’s *Nazi Propaganda Films: A History and Filmography* (London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2003) seems to pick up where historians in the 1970s and 80s left off but without being very historical. Daniel Knopp, *NS-Filmpropaganda: Wunschbild und Feindbild in Leni Riefentzahls ‘Triumpf des Willens’ und Veit Harlans ‘Jud Suess’* (Marburg: Tectum, 2004) But also the carefully researched book by British historian David Welch’s *Propaganda and the German Cinema, 1933-1945* was reprinted (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006). Tegel, Susan. *Nazis And the Cinema*. (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007).

⁴³ Hake ,vii-ix

transatlantic and international connections, *auteurism*, and the place of gender in films made during the Third Reich. As the first study that takes seriously the audiences for film in the Third Reich, Hake's exploration of cinematic practice has successfully broadened the focus from the realms of production to the more complex and ambiguous contexts of popular reception.⁴⁴

Inspired by the many provocative questions Hake raises, *In and Out of War* takes the emphasis on "practice" further still. Investigating the place of cinema in local politics, this study brings actors and agents into view that heretofore have not appeared in studies of Nazi cinema. In fact, thus far neither historians nor film scholars have considered the roles played by local administrators, cultural experts, cineastes or welfare workers in defining the place of cinema in the Nazi state. A local study allows us to decenter the nation and shift the emphasis from the Reich Film Chamber and Goebbels' Propaganda Ministry, industry spokespersons, directors and actors to localized discourses and their primary advocates. However, a localized investigation of cinema in the Third Reich necessitates that we pay careful attention to agents and discourses at various levels within the political and cultural hierarchies of both Hamburg and the Reich. It also requires a slightly broader view that explores continuities and ruptures in reference to everyday life and local politics.

This study attempts to resituate cinema in the context of popular urban leisure and entertainment.⁴⁵ The New Film History has demonstrated that "there is no 'film' apart from exhibition," and carefully restored the various urban and socio-cultural contexts for European cinema and moviegoing in America. Unfortunately, scholars of Nazi film have

⁴⁴ Hake, 68-86

⁴⁵ Inspired by scholars who work on different geographic locations and temporalities and who pay careful attention to a variety of social practices that shape the film going experiences, I attempt to broaden our understanding of moviegoing publics in a National Socialist urban context. See in particular Miriam Hansen. *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1991) and for Africa see James Burns. *Flickering Shadows: Cinema and Identity in Colonial Zimbabwe*. (Athens, Ohio, 2002) as well as Charles Ambler's articles "Mass Media and Leisure in Africa." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 35, no. 1 (2002): 119-36 and "Popular Films and Colonial Audiences: The Movies in Northern Rhodesia." *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 1 (February, 2001): 81-105

not yet ventured down this path.⁴⁶ I approach film as part of Hamburg's economy of urban pleasures and explore its potential for articulating both local *and* National Socialist identities within an international context shaped by war. Suggesting that a national frame is neither adequately inclusive nor sufficiently specific, this study illustrates the intricate connections between the local, the national, and the transnational by focusing on one particular place: the city of Hamburg.

Film, Its Publics, and the Making of the Nazi State

Typical B-pictures such as *Ich vertraue dir meine Frau an* do not fit as evidence of the “media mobilization”⁴⁷ of a state-controlled “dream factory” aiming at “nothing less than the control over perceptual possibility.”⁴⁸ It is hardly surprising that popular Rühmann comedies and jealousy-dramas are rarely cited as evidence in the literature that has successfully rewritten the earlier arguments about the twofold role of film in the Reich – of apolitical entertainment on the one hand and political mass indoctrination on the other.⁴⁹ In what follows, I will not provide an exhaustive or even a preliminary reading of the body of films like *Ich vertraue dir meine Frau an*, *Nanette*, *Der Mustergatte*,

⁴⁶ See in particular the collection of sources interspersed with scholarly articles that chronicle the moviegoing experience in the US. Waller, Gregory A., ed. *Moviegoing in America*. (Oxford Blackwell, 2002), also important for the US context is a superb collection of essays Maltby, Richard, Melvyn Stokes, and Robert C. Allen, eds. *Going to the Movies: Hollywood And the Social Experience of Cinema*. (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2007) For the European context see in particular Richard Abel's work on early French cinema Richard Abel. *The Ciné Goes to Town: French Cinema 1896-1914*. (Berkeley: Berkeley University Press, 1994) and even more importantly *Americanizing the Movies and “Movie-Mad” Audiences, 1910-1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). For a more general perspective on the place of silent film in early twentieth-century culture see Abel, Richard, ed. *Silent Film*. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996). The quote comes from Waller, 3

⁴⁷ Harro Segeberg. Ed. *Mediale Mobilmachung I: Das Dritte Reich und der Film* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2004)

⁴⁸ Rentschler, *Ministry of Illusion*, 68

⁴⁹ Notable exceptions are Sabine Hake's chapter on the star persona of Heinz Rühmann in *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, 87-106 and also the work of Karsten Witte. “The Indivisible Legacy of Nazi Cinema” *New German Critique* 74 Special Issue on Nazi Cinema (Spring - Summer, 1998): 23-30. Moreover, see Witte, “Film im Nationalsozialismus: Blendung und Überblendung” in *Die Geschichte des deutschen Films* ed. Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes and Hans Helmut Prinzler. (Stuttgart and Weimar: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 1993), 134-138.

Sommernächte, Weltrekord im Seitensprung and *Die Feuerzangenbowle*.⁵⁰ Instead, I suggest that these films, rather than examples of apolitical escapism, were part of a more complex apparatus for the deployment of pleasure in the Reich. Their existence is a starting point for me to probe further into the amalgamation of politics and culture that undergirded the Nazi state. I suggest that a focus on film sharpens our appreciation of the continuing dependence of the Nazi state on the participation and cooperation of a wide range of actors at the level of the state, the region, and the city. In drawing attention to local agents I would like to emphasize that the making of Nazi cinema was multi-layered and not without its contradictions despite being ideologically contained within the repressive hegemonic structures. Local actors had a great interest in shaping National Socialism and maintained self-confident publics beyond party functionaries and government agents that extended into very fabric of everyday life.

Historians have deepened our understanding of the Nazism by demonstrating the antagonistic dualism between party and state,⁵¹ an irrational proliferation of competencies within the central administration⁵² and the very real limits of social control.⁵³ The notion of polycracy posed a direct challenge to earlier models of both authoritarianism and totalitarianism and has inspired one of the most fruitful historiographic controversies on

⁵⁰ Gerd Albrecht's categorization of films in fact reflected the evaluation of the occupying powers in deciding which films would be permitted to run in German theaters after the war. Gerd Albrecht. *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik*. For the return to Nazi film in postwar Germany see Gabriele Clemens. *Britische Kulturpolitik in Deutschland 1945-1949: Literatur, Film, Musik und Theater*. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1997).

⁵¹ See in particular Peter Diehl-Thiele. *Partei und Staat im Dritten Reich*. (München: Beck, 1969).

⁵² To describe the competing competencies at the highest administrative levels, Peter Hüttenberger described the Nazi State as a polycratic entity. Peter Hüttenberger, "Nationalsozialistische Polykratie" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft: Zeitschrift für historische Sozialwissenschaft* 2 (1976): 417-42.

⁵³ See in particular Kershaw, Ian. *The "Hitler Myth": Image and Reality in the Third Reich*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) and Gerhard Paul and Klaus-Michael Mallmann. *Die Gestapo – Mythos Und Realität*. (Darmstadt: Primus, 1996)

the history of the Third Reich to date.⁵⁴ While arguments about competition within the political hierarchy continue to focus primarily on the highest level of the Nazi state and generally retain the premise of a separate political realm, they have led to investigations of the processes by which the regime solicited consent and maintained popular legitimacy.⁵⁵

The best work in this regard has expanded beyond the top down administered system of consciously manipulated terror and reward and begun to examine the effectiveness of individual people in navigating the system and making it ‘work’ for their own particular interest.⁵⁶ Historians’ views have long rested comfortably next to more widely held conceptions of Nazism was hostile to sex, entertainment and leisure as sources of pleasure in their own right. Until recently, a majority of studies have argued

⁵⁴ Since the late 1960s historians have begun to fundamentally challenge Hitler’s omnipotent role in the Third Reich and began to de-emphasize his personal intentions as providing the only valid explanation for policy and its execution. See in particular Martin Broszat. *Der Staat Hitlers*. (München: DTV, 1969); Hans Mommsen, “Hitler’s Stellung im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem” in *Der ‘Führerstaat’: Mythos und Realität*. edited by Gerhard Hirschfeld and Lothar Kettenacker (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981): 43-72; Timothy Mason, “Intention and Explanation. A Current controversy about the Interpretation of National Socialism” in Timothy Mason. *Nazism, Fascism, and the Working Class*. Jane Caplan, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): 212-230. For a definitive summary of these debates see Ian Kershaw “Hitler: ‘Master in the Third Reich’ or ‘Weak Dictator’?” *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* 4th ed. (London: Arnold, 2000), 69-92.

⁵⁵ See in particular Rebutisch, Dieter. *Führerstaat Und Verwaltung Im Zweiten Weltkrieg*. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1989) and Gerhard Otto and Johannes Houwink ten Cate, eds. *Das organisierte Chaos: ‘Ämterdarwinismus’ und ‘Gesinnungsethik’. Determinanten nationalsozialistischer Besatzungsherrschaft*. (Berlin: Metropol, 1999). A notable exception that extends the investigation of systemic competition to the level of the municipal administration is Bernhard Gotto. *Nationalsozialistische Kommunalpolitik: Administrative Normalität und Systemstabilisierung durch die Augsburger Stadtverwaltung, 1933-1945*. (München: Oldenburg Verlag, 2006).

⁵⁶ See Detlev J. K. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life*, tr. Richard Deveson (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1987). His book serves as an excellent example of the turn away from superstructures to the everyday practices of National Socialism. Also see Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Gerhard Paul’s essay “Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent? Gestapo, Society and Resistance” in *Nazism and German Society, 1933-1945*. ed. David Crew. (London: Routledge, 1994). The authors destabilize the image of the ‘omnipotent supermen in black’ and instead illustrate how the means available to the Gestapo fall short of those employed by the underground Communists. They convincingly argue that repression depended ‘upon a system of insinuation and suspicion’ of cooperation of Germans that makes the view of the Gestapo as a ‘foreign institution imposed upon the population’ impossible. For a more comprehensive approach to popular consent see Robert Gellately. *Backing Hitler: Consent and Coercion in Nazi Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. For an excellent review of the development and treatment of such questions see Geoff Eley’s review “Hitler’s silent majority? Conformity and resistance under the Third Reich” in *Michigan Quarterly Review* 42, 2 and 3 (Spring, 2003), 389-425 and 550-583. The work of John Connelly. "The Uses of Volksgemeinschaft: Letters to the NSDAP Kreisleitung in Eisenach." *The Journal of Modern History* 68: 4 (Dec 1996): 899-930 as well as Drew Bergerson’s study on Hildesheim *Ordinary Germans in Extraordinary Times* provide compelling examples in a local context.

that the Third Reich promoted leisure activities not for the sake of individual or collective enjoyment but as part of the Nazi racial project and the war effort, or simply as a form of reward for loyal duty and self-sacrifice.⁵⁷ Such arguments often grew from the assumption that Nazi ideologues and statesmen used leisure and especially tourism to appease the population in general and the working classes in particular.⁵⁸

More recently, investigations into leisure and consumption have taken seriously the Nazi promise for a consumer culture that would eventually be able to compete with the American model.⁵⁹ As Frank Trentman argues, the history of consumption still centers on material acquisition and the necessary acquisitionist mentalities (i.e. consumer desires) as a measure of Western modernity.⁶⁰ Since Nazism's modernity is still subject to fierce scholarly debate, it should come as no surprise that the history of a German consumer society is most strongly developed for the 1950s when at least the (West) German *Wirtschaftswunder* underwrote claims about the nations belated completion of the

⁵⁷ Peter Reichel's book *Der Schöne Schein des Dritten Reiches: Faszination und Gewalt des Faschismus* (München: Carl Hauser, 1991) serves as a telling example. See p. 243. Similarly, Peter Monteath in "Swastikas by the Seaside" in *History Today* 50, 5 (May 2000) argues that vacations and excursions offered through the Nazi leisure organization 'Strength through Joy' were simply examples of the "sparingly deployed carrot" next to the "frequently wielded stick" (p. 31).

⁵⁸ See Hasso Spode. "Arbeiterurlaub im Dritten Reich." in *Angst, Belohnung, Zucht und Ordnung*. eds. Carola Sachse, Tilla Siegel, Hasso Spode and Wolfgang Spohn. (Opladen: Westdeutscher, 1982), 275-328. This is an excellent and especially illustrative example of critical work on working class positionality in the Third Reich, aware of earlier research's pitfalls. Also see Timothy Mason's essays in *Nazism, Fascism and the Working Class*. ed. Jane Caplan. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), among these especially "The containment of the working class in Nazi Germany" and "The domestic dynamics of Nazi conquests. A response to Critics" in which Mason distances himself from his earlier, less complex position on working class resistance. For yet another, more synthetic approach that links work and leisure in Nazi Germany, see Peter Reichel, *Der Schöne Schein*. As the earliest extensive study on Strength through Joy, see Wolfgang Buchholz, *Die Nationalsozialistische Gemeinschaft 'Kraft durch Freude'. Freizeitgestaltung und Arbeiterschaft im Dritten Reich*. Diss. (Munich, 1976)

⁵⁹ See in particular Wolfgang König. *Volkswagen, Volksempfänger, Volksgemeinschaft. 'Volksprodukte' Im Dritten Reich* and Nancy Reagan. "Comparing Apples and Oranges: Housewives and the Politics of Consumption in Interwar Germany." *Getting and Spending: European and American Consumer Societies in the Twentieth Century*. Eds. Strasser, Susan, Charles McGovern and Matthias Judt. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 241-62.

⁶⁰ Frank Trentmann. "Beyond Consumerism: New Historical Perspectives on Consumption." *Journal of Contemporary History* 39: 3 (July 2004): 373-401. In particular, 375-80

peculiar path to modernization.⁶¹ The recent attention given to the German Democratic Republic by historians in the United States is an important contribution to decouple the history of consumption from the trajectory of the development of modern participatory democracy.⁶² And it is precisely in light of the pervasive absence of “consumer choice” that historians were forced to examine a much broader range of consumer practices beyond the acquisition of mass produced material goods. Thus it is perhaps no coincidence that the memories of Nazi consumption are characterized by a certain fluidity between the consumption of various pleasures be they visual (film and to a lesser extent with travel), material (food stuffs, commodities and mass produced goods) or experiential (a broad range of leisure activities, mass rallies, radio and communal activities).⁶³ Rather than understanding leisure, tourism, and consumption as merely the flip side to an omnipotent apparatus of terror, historians now see Nazism as a system that actively promoted pleasure and violence as both a distraction *and* as a way of life.⁶⁴

The most radical challenge along these lines has been leveled by historians of sexuality, who refuse to conceptualize pleasure as merely a form of reward for penultimate sacrifices in the name of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. Dagmar Herzog has charted

⁶¹ Among the best studies on the development of a consumer society in Germany see in particular Erica Carter. *How German Is She?: Postwar West German Reconstruction and the Consuming Woman* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997); Hanna Schissler. *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); While the idea of a German *Sonderweg* has been successfully deconstructed since the 1980s and carries even less explanatory power in light of the substantive revisions of the very concept of modernity by historians working on non-western societies, it appears to linger in the uneasy marriage between consumer society and modernity that in Germany was supposedly concluded in 1948/9 with the monetary reform and the foundation of the Federal Republic.

⁶² See in particular Eli Rubin. *Synthetic Socialism: Plastics & Dictatorship in the German Democratic Republic*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008) and David F. Crew. *Consuming Germany in the Cold War* (Oxford: Berg, 2003).

⁶³ With regards to film consumption, Sabine Hake’s work is truly pathbreaking. In this context, Shelly Baranowski’s suggestive observation that travel in the Third Reich was predominantly a form of visual consumption by ways of which Germans interacted with the foreigners in the countries they visited. The contrast in perceived living standards allowed Germans to transform themselves from “a begging people into master race.” See Shelly Baranowski, *Strength through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2004), 192.

⁶⁴ The most recent book on the subject is Shelly Baranowski’s excellent study on the Nazi official leisure organization *Strength through Joy*. See also Koshar, Rudy. “Germans at the Wheel: Cars and Leisure Travel in Interwar Germany” in Rudy Koshar Ed. *Histories of Leisure* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 215-252 and Rudi Koshar *German Travel Cultures*. (New York: Berg, 2000)

the complex role played by sexuality and sexual pleasure in the Reich. She argues that most people experienced the sexual policies of the Third Reich as a racialized continuation of the liberalizing tendencies that characterized German society since the turn of the century, despite the pervasive rhetoric about moral purity and conservative values.⁶⁵

Without insinuating identity between different kinds of consumption, be they leisure, cinema, sexual service, travel, victuals, or mass produced goods, their intermittent parallelization in this study is the result of my rethinking these different aspects of popular consumption in light of the production of pleasure. Inspired by arguments against Nazism's intrinsic hostility to pleasure (sexual or otherwise), I argue that the study of cinema constitutes a useful lens for refining our understanding of popular consent as part of the multi-faceted consumer practices that rendered Nazi Germany an entity in which local actors could recognize their particular histories, ambitions, and sensibilities. This is not to diminish the thrust of repressive policies or the importance of the centralized apparatus put into place to control the cinema from the inception of a film project to the reception of the finished film. Rather, I suggest that within this repressive and indeed totalizing frame, there remained nonetheless venues and incentives for embellishing or refining the picture the frame contained.

When Joseph Goebbels implemented his policy of general "spiritual mobilization [*geistige Mobilmachung*]" of the masses, he wanted to harness the potential inherent in the very notion of 'the masses' and simultaneously to transform them into a fully

⁶⁵ Dagmar Herzog. *Sex After Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003). The first path-breaking contributions to the study on sexuality were published as part of a special issue of the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 11 (Jan/Apr. 2002), introduced by Dagmar Herzog, which has meanwhile been published as an edited collection. In particular see Elizabeth Heineman, "Sexuality and Nazism: The Doubly Unspeakable?" in the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 11, 1,2 (Jan. Apr. 2002), 28. For the role of sex in the Nazi judiciary and attitudes towards inter-racial sex see Patricia Szobar, "Telling Sexual Stories in the Nazi Courts of Law: Race Defilement in Germany, 1933-1945." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11, ½ (Jan/Apr. 2002), 131-163. For Nazi attitudes towards prostitution see Julia Roos, 'Backlash against Prostitutes' Rights: Origins and Dynamics of Nazi Prostitution Policies" and Annette Timm, "Sex with a purpose: Prostitution, Venereal Disease, and Militarized Masculinity in the Third Reich." both in *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11, ½ (Jan. Apr. 2002), 67-94 and 223-255. For Nazi attitudes towards homosexuality see Harry Oosterhuis, "Medicine, Male Bonding and Homosexuality in Nazi Germany" *Journal of Contemporary History* 32,2 (Apr. 1997), 187-205 and Stefan Micheler, 'Homophobic Propaganda and the Denunciation of Same-Sex-Desiring Men under National Socialism" *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11, ½ (Jan./Apr. 2002), 95-130.

coordinated instrument of state power.⁶⁶ Goebbels implicitly addressed very real and well-founded concerns about the potential threat posed to the Nazi hegemony by a large unemployed and discontented population.⁶⁷ Since the November Revolution of 1918, the political right had discussed ‘the masses’ in terms of the need for their containment. In contrast, leftist intellectuals considered ‘the masses’ an immature and ultimately irrational formation in need of education, representation, and state protection.⁶⁸ Rather than looking with disgust at the proclivity for disorder and decay as characteristic of the masses, Goebbels considered them to be the raw materials out of which the transcendental *Volk* would be formed.⁶⁹ The spectacular demonstrations of synchronized mass movement, whether in organized marches throughout German cities on the first May Day celebration in 1933 or in Riefenstahl’s documentary on the 1934 party-rally *Triumph of the Will*, attested to the regime’s success in governing the masses and unleashing their gargantuan

⁶⁶ Joseph Goebbels. 25 March 1933. Ansprache an die Intendanten und Direktoren der Rundfunkgesellschaften im Haus des Rundfunks, Berlin. “Die zukünftige Arbeit und Gestaltung des deutschen Rundfunks” in *Goebbels-Reden*. Ed. Helmut Heiber. Band 1: 1932-1939 (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1971), 89.

⁶⁷ For Goebbels’ views on the masses see Ralf Georg Reuth. *Goebbels*. Trans. Krishna Winston. (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1993), 172. In the context of the election results of 5 March 1933, which did not provide the endorsement the Nazis had hope for, the masses provided an acute threat. Only 43.9 % of the population voted for the Nazi Party despite the terror unleashed against potential opponents, particular social democrats and communists, after the Reichstag’s Fire on 27 February 1933. In national comparison, Hamburg returned by far the fewest votes in support of the new regime. Compare Frank Bajohr. “Die Zustimmungsdiktatur: Grundzüge nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft in Hamburg” in *Hamburg im ‘Dritten Reich’*, ed. Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg (HH: Wallenstein Verlag, 2005): 69-121

⁶⁸ Siegfried Kracauer. *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*. Trans. Levin, Thomas Y. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). The debates over censorship during the Weimar republic are instructive here as they are explicitly conceived as *Schutzmassnahmen* either for the democratic project itself or the population. Conservative or religiously motivated critique of the cultural status quo advocated social control and behavior modification in the name of a stylized national whole (Volksganzen). In contrast, progressives, rooted in a humanist tradition, focused on education in order to elevate the national standard as a means of overcoming class conflict. See in particular Klaus Petersen. *Zensur in der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1995). Moreover, consult Andrew Lees. *Cities, Sin and Social Reform in Imperial Germany* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2002).

⁶⁹ Welch argued that Goebbels and Hitler “despised the gullibility of the masses” yet both very much built and depended on exactly the trait they held in such contempt. The contempt paired with meticulous organization and choreography, in turn, rendered the masses less threatening, even though hardly more respectable. In contrast to Welch, I think the contempt that both Hitler and Goebbels display in their writings about the masses, must be seen as the flip side of their reverence of *Volk*. See David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda* (London: Routledge, 1993), 26. See also Joseph Goebbels. July 18, 1932 Rundfunkansprache “Der Nationalcharakter als Grundlage der Nation” in *Goebbels-Reden*, 52

force in the service of the state.⁷⁰ The complicated bureaucratic structures of the German Labor Front (DAF) and the Propaganda Ministry notwithstanding, popular pastimes were never contained by the Nazis' official leisure organization Strength through Joy (KdF), and Goebbels was only marginally successful in elevating film to a higher cultural plane.⁷¹

As *Schirmherr* of the German film industry, Joseph Goebbels prohibited film criticism, made it illegal for municipalities to run theaters, imposed censorship, and streamlined production in order to eliminate intermediate authorities and place film, a very modern tool of popular persuasion, under the direct control of the Ministry of Propaganda. While film policy remained the prerogative of the Reich, films reached their audiences via local networks of exhibition. Municipal authorities were responsible for enforcing stipulations and policing public spaces.⁷² However, the simultaneous deployment of film as an implement of ideological education, a form of populist art, a site of popular respite, and an intrinsic part of an idealized Nazi consumer culture structured everyday life and reconfigured urban space. This happened *because* of local agents, not in spite of them.

A careful investigation of the interactions between and among the regime, its local representatives, cultural experts and the population illustrates that the changes wielded in the name of National Socialism did not find universal support in the Reich. In fact, I demonstrate that in the context of film and cultural policy, local authorities found a safe position from which to question decisions made in Berlin, advocate for alternative interpretations, and negotiate responsibility for obvious shortcomings and insufficiencies

⁷⁰ This argument is most clearly advanced in Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1935) which visually anchored the process that Goebbels identified as *Volkwerdung*. On Riefenstahl see Rainer Rother "Leni Riefenstahl und der 'absolute' Film" in *Mediale Mobilmachung I: Das Dritte Reich und der Film* ed. Harro Segeberg. (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2004). See also *Riefenstahl Screened: An Anthology of New Criticism* edited by Neil Christian Pages, Mary Rhiel and Ingeborg Majer -O'Sickey. (New York: Continuum, 2008)

⁷¹ The parallel development of leisure and film in two bureaucratic superstructures is suggestive not least in the major rivalries which they represent. On the rivalries between Rosenberg and Ley of the DAF/KdF complex on the one hand and Goebbels on the other see Ernst Piper. *Alfred Rosenberg: Hitler's Chefideologe* (München: Karl Blessing Verlag, 2005), 323 ff.

⁷² I am at no point suggesting that the local participation in a national discourse about film was in any way subversive or inspired by a desire to resist National Socialism or its pre and proscriptions.

without ever mounting a political challenge to Nazism. In the context of war, questions about sexuality, age and gender played an increasingly important role. While Joseph Goebbels conceived of film as a direct link between the regime and individual *Volksgenossen*, film remained locally bound to an economy of leisure despite the concerted efforts of propagandists (both local and national) to remove film from its *place* in the urban geography of pleasure, to rescue the medium from its associations with Weimar ‘mass culture’ and to deploy it as liberated *Volkskultur*. When local welfare workers highlighted the shortcomings of the Minister’s goals, they did so from safely within Nazism’s ideological frame.

Taking rather frugal productions like *Ich vertraue dir meine Frau an* as a cue, I argue that the quality of the great majority of films produced between 1933 and 1945 attests not to the self-containment of Nazi culture, but to the immaturity of Nazi Cinema and its callowness in fusing mass politics and mass entertainment, Hollywood-style glamour and authentic renditions of *Heimat*, visual spectacle and avant-gardism.⁷³ The exodus of prominent script-writers, directors, actresses and actors presented additional challenges to establishing the artistic grandeur Goebbels ultimately aspired to achieve.⁷⁴ While total artistic and political convergence was never achieved, film production did develop a certain level of artistic coherence and a recognizable style during the war and attained an international status never realized before or since.

Film policy in the Third Reich was never solely about the integration of entertainment and indoctrination. It was also, if not primarily, about markets, despite the Nazis’ marginal attention to fiscal responsibility.⁷⁵ The reorganization of the film industry under the tight control of the Reich’s Film Chamber (RFK) should be understood in this light. Only a well-funded industry could be expected to produce truly impressive and technologically innovative films that were able to compete in and eventually dominate the European market, if not the world. In preparation for war, the Reich exported films

⁷³ See Rentschler for Hitler Youth Quex, 53ff

⁷⁴ See Hake, 128 ff.

⁷⁵ Tooze, 230ff, 290.

directly to the neutral countries of the Americas in order to create sympathy for Hitler's policies and to ensure the continued access to much needed raw materials. Nazi officials were not interested in international markets for the recruitment of Nazis. Rather, the Third Reich wanted the international public to validate Germany's rise to the position of a world power. More than a window into the wider world, film offered a stage on which Nazism could perform its cultural ascendancy. The organization of the industry was a prime facilitator of the "triumphal procession" of German film to a dominant force in the European film market and of the transformation of Germans into Nazis.⁷⁶

Over the course of the 1930s, Hamburg enthusiastically embraced film to record its transformations into Nazified urbanity. However, the exigencies of war, the blackout regulations, and the absence of male authority figures pitted the anxieties of local administrators against national prescriptions. A need to discipline the masses, clearly articulated before and during the Weimar Republic, was revived as a result of these conditions. While national institutions such as the Reich's Film Chamber continued to laud film as an educational tool, local administrators came to the conclusion that the cinema as a serious threat to the German *Volkskörper* in the context of war.

At the same time, film came closest to realizing Goebbels' ambitions for national cinema as the penultimate cultural form. Entertainment establishments were closed to free labor for the war effort and the Reich declared popular amusements to be untimely. Bars and restaurants were shut down only to later reopen after officials recognized their essential function in providing for a bunker society. The movie theater remained the only form of personal consumption not subjected to general rationing and therefore was much more than just a location where one could find a few hours of distraction in a cityscape disfigured by war. The moviegoing experience, though altered by bomb alerts and *Stromsparverordnungen*, remained a viable example of prewar 'normality' and a simultaneous promised postwar prosperity during a permanent state of emergency.

⁷⁶ "Der Weg des Films im neuen Reich" in *Hamburger Anzeiger* March 28, 1936. The formulation in this sentence deliberately invokes Peter Fritzsche's important book *Germans into Nazis* in which he identifies Nazism not as an alien force or a *Betriebsunfall* (systemic accident) but as a socially inclusive ideology that depended on and successfully enlisted the active participation of broad segments of society to realize the desire for national cohesion and military strength. See Fritzsche, Peter. *Germans into Nazis*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997)

A local history of cinema must also take seriously the actual audiences that were the focus of the cooperation and competition between local, national, cultural and social authorities. Remarkably, the literature on reception and spectatorship during the Third Reich is almost nonexistent.⁷⁷ While reactions to individual films by contemporary audiences remain irretrievable, the contexts in which these readings and reactions took place are not.⁷⁸ A careful exploration of film in everyday life suggest a rather banal insight that has been confirmed by scholars for American movie audience.⁷⁹ Going to *any* rather than to *a particular* movie was key. A context-specific approach to film reception illustrates that the social significance attributed to moviegoing rendered individual films momentary variations of a predictable pleasure. For wartime audiences the significance of a film lay in its access and in the pleasure of consuming something that under different circumstances would be considered ordinary.

At the local level, people negotiated responses to national policies in their own neighborhoods through interactions with administrative officials and party representatives. They read the paper, listened to radio, talked to neighbors and went to the movies. The movie theater allowed spectators to view films which mirrored their particular *Heimat* while they simultaneously provided a window into the wider world.

⁷⁷ See Gerhard Stahr's *Volksgemeinschaft vor der Leinwand: Der nationalsozialistische Film und sein Publikum* (Berlin: Hans Theissen, 2001) provides important statistical evidence on moviegoing during the Nazi period and a careful evaluation of official SD reports, but does not extend his inquiry to include the ways in which individual film or certain genres of film fit into the exhibition landscape he sketches. In contrast, the literature on spectatorship in the field of American film history is much better developed. See in particular, Miriam Hansen, *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1991); For an important overview of the literature on spectatorship see Judith Mayne, *Cinema and Spectatorship*. (New York: Routledge, 1993.) Mayne who remains sympathetic to psychoanalytic approaches to film studies in general and spectatorship in particular, maintains, however, that "the relationship between the 'subject' the position supposedly assigned to the film viewer by the institutions of the cinema, and the 'viewer', the real person who watches the movies, has never been resolved." (8)

⁷⁸ Here I am relying particularly on the important work of Janet Staiger who takes a materialist approach to spectatorship and reception in *Interpreting Films: Studies in the Historical Reception of American Cinema* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) has argued that one of the main problems in studying audiences is that historians assume that their subject proceed with the same level of coherence and have one, logical relation to movies they see. An interesting approach is further offered by Mark Jancovich and Lucy Faire *The Place of the Audience: Cultural Geographies of Film Consumption*. (London: BFI, 2003) on the place of filmgoing in Nottingham, Great Britain.

⁷⁹ In the context of the 1930s a claim such as Gilbert Seldes' may not have seemed particularly radical. Suggesting that "the fundamental passion is a desire to go to the movies, which means to go to any movie rather than not go at all" Seldes provides instead a temporally specific insight into the place of moviegoing as part of Urban entertainment more generally. Cited in Waller, 1.

Travel-films and *Landschaftsportraits* provided cheap supplements to KdF travel and feature films also offered viewers worlds both imagined and real.⁸⁰ International films (by French, Czech, and Hungarian filmmakers) were a consistent part of the regular fare even after the Reich banned Hollywood films in March of 1941.⁸¹ International opinion clearly functioned as a barometer of Nazi cinema's success.

After the collapse of the Reich, the occupation of Germany, and the years of postwar hardship, elites in Hamburg rediscovered culture politically palpable force. The continuities of image and identity that marked the development of film since the middle of the 1930s and shaped the interaction of local cultural experts with the regime were subsequently revived under the British occupation, at least in part. National identity and history could only be affirmed and projected in the realm of culture, after the extent of Nazi crimes irreversibly discredited Germany's social institutions, its political traditions, and its place in the international community. The decision by the British military government to open German movie theaters with films from the last production cycles before the collapse suggested to the hastily denazified intellectuals, journalists, and filmmakers that German culture had survived the Nazi menace relatively unscathed. Again, film discourse constituted a venue for local politics. Saturated with the language from the Nazi period, German culture became the primary site to explore and appropriate the still insufficiently understood concept of democracy.

Roadmaps

The choice of place for a local study is always problematic. I settled on Hamburg for a variety of reasons. As Germany's most important port city, Hamburg cultivated a cosmopolitanism and worldliness based on its proud history as a free city-state in Germany that did not always allow for seamless integration into the larger national

⁸⁰ Koshar, Rudy. "Germans at the Wheel: Cars and Leisure Travel in Interwar Germany" in Rudy Koshar Ed. *Histories of Leisure* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 215-252 and Rudi Koshar *German Travel Cultures*. (New York: Berg, 2000)

⁸¹ "Nazi Says 'Honor' Dictates Film Ban" in *The New York Times* 9 March 1941.

whole.⁸² The city's economic and cultural position helped establish it as a crossroads between national and international ambitions and loyalties that, as I demonstrate in this study, also characterized Hamburg's relationship to the Nazi regime.⁸³ Moreover, the city's idiosyncratic leisure culture in and around the amusement district of St. Pauli makes Hamburg a particularly useful starting point for a reevaluation of cinema in the context of urban entertainment. Still, the decisive reason for my choice of Hamburg was the city's experience of war and its iconic position as a victim of the air war.⁸⁴ Moreover, Hamburg as the second largest city in the Reich before the *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938, inspired numerous filmic treatments of its history, its idiosyncrasies, and in particular its economy of pleasure, which is, of course, an added benefit.

This study is based on a wide variety of different and at times disparate sources. I heavily rely on archival sources, but also look very carefully at individual films, which I use in two distinct ways. All the films I analyze as part of this study have an intimate connection to the city of Hamburg. *Ein Mädchen geht an Land* (Hochbaum, 1938) and *Große Freiheit Nr 7* (Käutner, 1943/44) were made as tributes to Hanseatic *Eigenart* and traditions. I read these films through the local discourses on Hamburg's Nazification as a continuation of these traditions and idiosyncrasies. In contrast, the postwar feature *In jenen Tagen* (Käutner, 1946/47) does not figure in my analysis as the object of a discourse on Hamburg's identity. Rather, because it was produced in the city, it was welcomed as an authentic voice and a local perspective on the relationship between

⁸² Werner Jochmann. Ed. *Hamburg. Geschichte einer Stadt und ihrer Bewohner: Vom Kaiserreich bis zur Gegenwart*. (Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 1985)

⁸³ See especially *Hamburg im 'Dritten Reich'* ed. Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg (HH: Wallenstein Verlag, 2005). *Kein Abgeschlossenes Kapitel: Hamburg im 'Dritten Reich'* ed. Angelika Ebinghaus and Karsten Linne (Hamburg: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1998). Frank Bajohr. *'Arisierung' in Hamburg: Die Verdrängung der jüdischen Unternehmer, 1933-1945* (Hamburg: Christians, 1997)

⁸⁴ After Jörg Friedrich's controversial book *The Fire: The Bombing of Germany, 1940-1945*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006) and the ensuing focus on German suffering and victimization, it is important to highlight not just the complicity of the population at large but the participatory character of National Socialism. For an excellent overview of the public and scholarly debates that followed in the footsteps of Friedrich's original publication in German *Der Brand. Deutschland im Bombenkrieg 1940-1945* (München: Propyläen, 2002) see Moeller, Robert G. *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003) and Childers, Thomas. "'Facilis Descensus Aveni Est': The Allied Bombing of Germany and the Issue of German Suffering." *Central European History* 38 1 (2005): 75-105.

German guilt and German victimhood. In these ways, this study provides an integrated analysis of individual films *and* their historical contexts.

In and Out of War draws on both local and national German archives, yet it is my use of local sources that distinguishes this study from historically grounded recent work on German film. I rely on archival material that has never been evaluated with respect to its relevance to the study of film and cinema, such as records from the Office for Social Welfare in Hamburg, the Trade Supervisory Office, Public Relations Office, the Department for Economics and Trade, the Department for Youth Welfare and the police and trade police departments. Furthermore, I draw on local, national and foreign newspapers and trade journals which I read alongside the public and inter-administrative debates. These readings are moreover often refracted through the perspectives of personal letters and diaries. Examining these sources in conjunction with records of the Propaganda Ministry, the Reich's Film Chamber and the published sources by the Nazi State and its various organs, allows me to uncover the conflicted ways in which national policy was put into practice at the local level.

My dissertation suggests that Nazi film culture was less isolated and less self-contained. I argue that local power struggles over cinematic practice and the meaning of film fundamentally change our understanding of the history of film in the Third Reich and beyond. Chapter 2 focuses on the transformation of Hamburg into a National Socialist city, by paying particular attention to the historic imbrications of leisure, film, and sexual pleasure in Hamburg. Chapter 3 focuses on official Nazi film policy and its impact on Hamburg's need to reevaluate its identity as Germany's 'gateway to the world' in the context transnational responses to Nazism. Analyzing Werner Hochbaum's film *Ein Mädchen geht an Land* [*Landward-bound: The Journey of a Northern German Maiden*] (1938) in Chapter 4, I trace the political compromise regarding film between Hamburg and the Reich over the course of the 1930s by reconstructing the efforts of Hamburg's administration to mobilize film as a means of documenting the city's transformation into a National Socialist cultural center. The Nazi goals of elevating the cinema into the realm German high culture clashed with older premonitions about the negative effects of mass

culture, its lure, its social contamination and its sexualizing effects, which I examine in Chapter 5. Concerns about the future generation produced an alternative discourse on film in the city and local administrators began to view the cinema as a potential danger zone rather than as an instrument for popular instruction. In the final chapter, I focus on the experience of war and the years of British military occupation. Postwar film politics, I suggest, bore a striking resemblance to prewar attempts to harness film's representational powers. During the last years of war film had 'deteriorated' into a mere pastime and assumed many of the functions that were (theoretically at least) reserved for an urban economy of pleasure. Following the conflict, both the British occupying forces and their German administrative partners viewed film in light of its ability to transmit cultural values. By reclaiming the city's 'cultural heritage,' film enthusiasts in Hamburg began their conversion to democracy as they built, with a considerable degree of independence, a new (democratically inflected) national sense of self.

Chapter 2

The Making of National Socialist Hamburg and the Politics of Space

Prior to the Nazi seizure of power, Hamburg was a bourgeois economic center, a trading hub, an interchange for raw materials and goods, capital and people. Yet with its clean streets, its mercantile architecture, its lavish parks, and its posh citizens, the second largest city of Germany was also strikingly provincial.¹ Hats, heels, walking-sticks, collars, scarves, and overcoats were donned with pride and communicated the particularity of the *Hanse* and its lionized traditions, symbolized by the building complex physically connecting *Rathaus* and *Börse*.² As one of the city's most imposing architectural monuments, city hall signified the triumph of representational government, of political independence, prosperity and trade. Rising above the city, the *Rathaus*, its dominance challenged by only a few steeples, watched over the palm trees in front of the Alster Pavillion on Jungfernstieg, the inner city



Figure 3 *Hamburg Rathausplatz*

¹ See Joachim Paschen. *Hamburg vor Hundert Jahren* (Hamburg: Zeise Verlag, 1999) and Paschen, *Hamburg vor dem Krieg. Bilder vom Alltag, 1933-1940*. (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2003) for illustrations. For Hamburg's provincialism, see Jennifer Jenkins, *Provincial Modernity: Local Culture and Liberal Politics in Fin-de-Siècle Hamburg* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003)

² *Führer durch Hamburg*. Hrsg Verband Hamburgischer Verkehrsvereine E.V. (Hamburg, 1927)

boulevards, countless stores, shops and restaurants, the many bridges, and the numerous canals once instrumental in connecting the inner city with its economic center, the harbor. Left and right of the tower spire, two massive wings extending from the *Rathaus* framed the market square in an embrace that seemed to promise protection to the orderly crowds



Figure 4 *Jungfernstieg and Alsterpavillion*

that powered the city machine. An emulation of the historic merchant capital of Venice, Hamburg's iconic facade, its postcard panorama, stoically endured the political transformation of 1933 and the subsequent administrative restructuring.³ Even on 3 May 1945 when Governor and *Gauleiter* Karl Kaufmann⁴ surrendered the city to British forces, the opulent frontage on the Alster was still recognized (and recognizable) as a

³ As Bose et.al illustrate however, Hitler was personally interested in turning 'Hamburg's face' outward toward the Elbe river as a frontage of the Reich's grandeur rather than of the city's historic independence. The massive plans for reconstructing the riverside of the Elbe by Konstanty Gutschow give a sense of the representative function the face of Hamburg was to hold for the Reich. Compare Bose et al '... *ein Neues Hamburg entsteht*' *Planen und Bauen von 1933-1945* (Hamburg VSA, 1986), 33.

⁴ For biographical information on Karl Kaufmann see Appendix A.

marker of liberalism's earlier triumphs despite the massive destruction that left most of the city a wasteland.⁵

To understand the impact of Nazism and the war on Hamburg, it is necessary to look beyond the city's architecture and the icons representing traditional Hanseatic characteristics. David Harvey and Henri Lefebvre conceive of space as an essentially unfinished product of dialectical processes.⁶ However, in the context of Nazism, Harvey's and Lefebvre's materialism poses more questions than it ultimately helps us answer. The sphere of the social where space is produced in Lefebvrian thought, presents the historian of Nazism with a whole host of problems, precisely when conceived as giving identity to ideology.⁷ When Harvey insists on the dialectic and mutually constitutive relationship between a city (a "thing") and the social processes of its making, he conceives of cities as sites of contestation.⁸ However, similarly to Ebenezer Howard or Le Corbusier, the Nazis also took the "thing" of the city and "gave it power over process" imagining the city, the *Gau*, the Reich to be able to define and contain a certain kind of community fixed "forever in harmonious state."⁹ Did cities change more readily into Nazified urbanity than they are currently able to be transformed into postmodern utopias? Did cities or their

⁵ For detailed description of the extent of the destruction see Jörg Friedrich's controversial book *The Fire: The Bombing of Germany, 1940-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 167-8. Friedrich illustrates that the heart of the city, between main station and Gänsemarkt was not severely hit until 18 June 1944 and then only by accident when eight hundred bombers set out to destroy the shipyards of Blohm & Voss and accidentally dropped the bombs a bit to the north. "Although Hamburg accounted for 56 million of the 523 million cubic yards of rubble that bombs left behind in Germany" Friedrich remarks, "the face of the city had not been disfigured beyond recognition as was the case in Cologne, Nuremberg, Darmstadt, Kassel, Würzburg, and Düren." Thomas Childers explained that Friedrich's book which triggered a national catharsis in Germany, revealed in gripping detail the brutality of the airwar but his "myopic absorption with German suffering" effectively decoupled "the air assault on Hitler's Germany from its proper historical framework." For an excellent overview of the debates ensuing the publication of Friedrich's book see Thomas Childers "'Facilis descensus averni est': The Allied Bombing of Germany and the Issue of German Suffering" *Central European History* 38:1 (2005):75-105, here 78.

⁶ David Harvey. "Contested Cities: Social Process and Spatial Form." *The City Reader*. Eds. LeGates, Richard T. and Frederic Stout. 3 ed. (London: Routledge, 2003) 227-34; Henri Lefebvre. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Nicholson-Smith, Donald. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

⁷ Suggesting the the ideology of power reproduces social relations which in turn define the spatial practices or space-producing practices of any given collective again leave the dialectical relationship somewhat lopsided in the case of Nazism. Compare Lefebvre, 44-51.

⁸ Harvey, 231.

⁹ Harvey, 232.

population affect the processes of their remaking? Did cities ‘resist’ Nazification? Such questions take on a distinctly different hue in the context of Nazi Germany. It seems to me that the dialectical approach, as pertinent as it remains, runs the danger of rendering the definitional power (the Nazi state) as positioned in a fundamental (materialist) antagonism to the social body it seeks to control. However, the making of the Nazi state and the collective production of National Socialist space also fundamentally altered the ways in which we can conceptualize the possible social push-back against its respective authority.

I will take the issue of push-back (limited as it was) back up in the next chapter when I talk about placemaking. What concerns me here is the precise relationship between space and time and here Lefebvre proves to be extremely useful to think with. Suggesting that “space brings time under its sway in the praxis of accumulation” and is simultaneously only knowable in and through time, Lefebvre introduces a depth to space.¹⁰ We too often are concerned with what ‘space’ look like and guilty of the flawed spatial imagination Doreen Massey unmask when arguing that space is not closed, fixed, flat, and representable.¹¹ In contrast Massey suggests that space evades representation in much the same way as does time and she insists that space must be understood as a dynamic process of simultaneous multiplicity rather than a surface area waiting to be walked over, shaped, and conquered. In Massey’s understanding a photograph or a description is not a spatialization of time, it is an attempt to stabilize and fix space-time – a slice through space at a particular moment in time that is necessarily always only a lifeless simplification.¹²

Instead of exploring what Hamburg looked like, this chapter probes into the processes of making the city into a National Socialist space. If we do not accept space as an a priori to the creation of identities or as the inevitable result of that identity’s articulation in time, then the making of National Socialist Hamburg was as much about

¹⁰ Lefebvre, 218-219.

¹¹ Doreen Massey. *For Space*. (London: Sage, 2005), see in particular 8, 13, 25, 107.

¹² Massey, 26. In contrast, Lefebvre considers the possibility that spatial representation plays a substantial role in the production of space. Lefebvre, 42.

producing National Socialists as it was about the creation a particular kind of space. Accordingly this chapter does not attempt to map that space (assuming it was successfully constructed). Rather I will focus on the visions and processes that imagined National Socialist Hamburg not as a finished product but as an approximation of assumed and aspired identities.

If space is in fact socially produced as Henri Lefebvre suggests, if space is not a surface on which history unfolds as Doreen Massey argues, if space and time do not exist outside the processes of their making as David Harvey insists, then it serves to look at how Hamburg was imagined and remade as a National Socialist space without assuming that this process was ever completed (contained by time and tamed by representation). Hence instead of turning space into time (i.e. suggesting that because in March 1933 the Nazis took over Hamburg, the city was a national socialist space) this chapter looks at how Nazi ideas about space conceived the National Socialist city and how urban politics and local interventions attempted to render Hamburg an exemplary realization of that those ideals. The remaking of Hamburg from a city of international trade into a center of Nazi leisure and sanitized pleasure was supposed to heighten the Reich's prestige and rested on the assumption that spatial reorganization would ultimately lead to cultural refinement. This chapter proposes that the Nazi politics of space attempted to undermine traditional locations of power, to unmake regional and local specificities, and to reimagine urban neighborhoods as aggregations of prototypical National Socialist subjects.

I devote particular attention to the place of the movie theater in the cityscape and its trace its imbrication in Hamburg's economy of pleasure as I lay out the Nazis's ambitions to remake Hamburg in the image of the official Nazi leisure organization, *Strength through Joy*. The success of Goebbels' decision to deploy the cinema as an instrument of the state depended on his ability to redefine it as a form of folk-bound, populist, and authentically German mass art rather than as mere an amusing entertainment, as I illustrate in the next chapter. But as my examination throughout this dissertation suggests the historic connections between film an urban amusements proved

impossible to unmake. Since the early 1900s film culture was predominantly an urban phenomenon and over the following decades movie theaters came to occupy a central position in the urban economy of pleasure, in Hamburg as elsewhere.¹³ During the prewar years the Nazi regime and its local representatives turned a blind eye to persisting social problems in Hamburg and searched for ways to celebrate the still unfulfilled promises for a glorious future of full employment, material abundance, and communal homogeneity. Instead of addressing the pressing housing shortage throughout the city, the abject poverty in certain districts and the massive unemployment that persisted in Hamburg longer than elsewhere in the Reich, the city's Nazification focused on the refunctionalization of its two most widely recognized characteristics: its status as Germany's most important port city and its international fame as a hotspot for urban pleasure and prostitution.

I begin by describing the city the Nazis found in place when they took over the city government in March 1933. I illustrate the grandiose visions of Nazi urban planners to fit the city into the ideology of *Lebensraum* and examine the concrete plans and actions of local zealots when attempting to transform Hamburg into National Socialist urbanity. This chapter not only provides the historical background to arguments developed in later chapters. I also suggest here that the incomplete Nazification of urban space explains why the city, the main provider of the much needed mass audience for Nazi cinema, was bound to become one of its primary liabilities.

Radices

When the Nazis took power in 1933, Hamburg counted as one of National Socialism's least enthusiastic converts.¹⁴ Even though the NSDAP (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche*

¹³ On early cinema see Thomas Elsaesser. *Filmgeschichte und frühes Kino: Archäologie eines Medienwandels*. (München: Edition Text + Kritik, 2002); Corinna Müller and Harro Segeberg, eds. *Kinoöffentlichkeit (1895-1920): Entstehung - Etablierung - Differenzierung. Cinema's Public Sphere (1895-1920): Emergence, Settlement, Differentiation*. (Marburg: Schüren, 2008); Sabine Hake. *German National Cinema*. (London: Routledge, 2002).

¹⁴ Ursula Büttner. "Der Aufstieg der NSDAP" and Frank Bahjor "Zustimmungsdiktatur" in *Hamburg Dritten Reich*, '27, 88, 94-5

Arbeiter Partei, or National Socialist German Workers Party) successfully spearheaded the heavily factionalized rightist camps that had flourished in this liberal stronghold after the collapse of the empire and marched into the city parliament with 43 representatives instead of the previous 3 after obtaining 26.3% of vote in 1931, the parties on the political left continued to draw the lion's share of the popular vote. The city's liberals explained the surge in support for the radical right as merely a temporary suspension of Hanseatic rationality.¹⁵ Scholars have revised the view of Hamburg as an exemplary liberal stronghold,¹⁶ just as others have since challenged the view of Hamburg's exemplary model position within Nazi Germany.¹⁷ A liberal city with a politically organized labor force, Hamburg was also the place of the first rightist mass organization in Germany - the *Schutz- und Trutz-Bund*,¹⁸ it turned out substantial support for völkisch-nationalist parties such as the DNVP (*Deutschnationale Volkspartei* or German National People's Party) in national elections; and even its bourgeoisie was an entrenched, patrician and conservative force.¹⁹

Nonetheless, the Nazi party was slow in securing popular support in the city and remained an insignificant political force until Dr. Albert Krebs, a Nazi of the same cut as Gregor Strasser, replaced the utterly incompetent Josef Klant in 1926. Krebs was able to

¹⁵ In the municipal elections of 1928, under the Bruening Government, the SPD obtained 35.94% of the vote and formed a coalition with DDP (German Democratic Party) with 12.76% and DVP (German People's Party) with 12.64. Ursula Büttner. "Der Aufstieg der NSDAP," 27; 48-9

¹⁶ Compare Susanne Rau, "Holsteinische Landesstadt oder Reichsstadt? Hamburgs Erfindung seiner Geschichte als Freie Reichsstadt" in *Nordlichter. Geschichtsbewusstsein und Geschichtsmethoden nördlich der Elbe*. ed. Bea Lundt (Köln, 2004): 159-177

¹⁷ On the notion that Hamburg functioned as a model within Nazi Germany see *Heilen und Vernichten im Mustergau Hamburg: Bevölkerungs- und Gesundheitspolitik im Dritten Reich*. ed. Angelika Ebbinghaus, Heidrun Kaupen-Haas, and Karl-Heinz Roth (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur Verlag, 1984). Ebbinghaus and Linne's *Kein Abgeschlossenes Kapitel* contextualizes the earlier assertions as an attempt to delegitimize the Kaufmann-Legend and the Hanseatic *Sonderweg-Mythos*.

¹⁸ Uwe Lohalm. *Völkischer Radikalismus: Die Geschichte des Deutschvölkischen Schutz-und Trutz-Bundes, 1919-1923* (Hamburg: Leibniz, 1970)

¹⁹ See in particular Richard Evans, *Death in Hamburg*, who illustrates in depth the entrenched positions of the few families producing the suitable members for the Hamburger Senat, the resistance to reforms until after disaster had struck and then a still obstinate attachment to traditions that have become superfluous or even detrimental, see in particular the chapter "Patricians and Politics" in which he shows that Hamburg's Senators were neither active merchants nor active Senators but part of a born ruling elite. Richard J. Evans. *Death in Hamburg: Society and Politics in the Cholera Years*. (New York: Penguin, 2005), 1-27.

increase the party following from an insignificant base of 100 members in 1923 to 600 very active members in 1928.²⁰ As Krebs' socialism proved increasingly irritating to the Nazi leadership, the young and impulsive Karl Kaufmann was placed at the helm of Hamburg's NSDAP in April 1928. Aided by the international economic collapse, the growing rift within the German left, and the local dynamics developing around the 1932 Hamburg beer strike, Kaufmann was able to transform Hamburg's NSDAP from a marginal rabble-rousing faction into the city's strongest political party in a mere four years.²¹ The local branches of DStP (*Deutsche Staatspartei* or German State Party) and SPD (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* or Social Democratic Party) remained unwilling to form political coalitions with the DVP (*Deutsche Volkspartei* or German People's Party), the DNVP and the NSDAP; and the Senate was adamant about not to surrendering the office of first mayor to a novice (which would have meant a member of the NSDAP).²² Accordingly, when Hamburg's citizens elected the new Senate on 8 March 1933, the Nazis, who had gained 38.8 per cent in the *Reichstagswahl* three days earlier, installed Carl Vincent Krogmann,²³ a member of the city's respectable bourgeois merchant class and an outspoken Nazi sympathizer, as the first mayor of the Hanseatic

²⁰ Ursula Büttner remarks that the Nazi party in Hamburg was so insignificant that it was initially overlooked after the party was banned after the Beer Hall Putsch in 1923. See Ursula Büttner, "Der Aufstieg der NSDAP" in *Hamburg im Dritten Reich*, 32

²¹ On the politics of the left during the Weimar Republic see Detlef Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity* (London: Allen Lane, 1991) William Smaldone. *Confronting Hitler: German Social Democrats in Defense of the Weimar Republic* (Lanham, MD, Lexington Books, 2009); Bavaj Riccardo *Von links gegen Weimar. Linkes antiparlamentarisches Denken in der Weimar Republik* (Bonn: Dietz, 2005); Julia Sneeringer. *Winning Women's Votes: Propaganda and Politics in Weimar Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Hans Mommsen. *Aufstieg und Untergang der Republik von Weimar, 1918-1933* (München: Ullstein, 2001). On the beer strike see StAHH 135-1 Staatliche Pressestelle I-IV 7415. Senator Willhelm von Allwörden played a decisive role in obtaining mass support of the economically squeezed Hamburg innkeepers. See "Das Bier soll nur einen Pennig pro halben Liter billiger werden" in *Hamburger Tageblatt* 22 Jan 1932. On 10 February 1932, the *Hamburger Anzeiger* reports that 2441 establishments, more than half of all Hamburg innkeepers, decided to go ahead with an effectively inoperable beer strike upon the urging NSDAP activists. On the development of the Nazi Party see in particular Ursula Büttner, "Aufstieg der NSDAP," *Hamburg im Dritten Reich*, 50

²² Büttner, "Aufstieg der NSDAP," 56-58

²³ Carl Vincent Krogmann, *Es ging um Deutschlands Zukunft: 1932-1939*. Erlebtes täglich diktiert von dem früheren regierenden Bürgermeister von Hamburg. (Leoni am Starnberger See: Druffel-Verlag, 1976). For biographical information on Krogmann see Appendix A.

city.²⁴ A concession to the bourgeois elites, Krogmann became a member of the Nazi party only after his initiation as mayor. Krogmann, however, found himself without a network of alliances within the party – a political weakness even the most ardent fanaticism was unable to counterbalance.²⁵

Membership in the NSDAP rose from less than 2000 in September of 1930 to over 13,000 by January 1933.²⁶ Party membership more than tripled in the months of March and April due to the coordinated efforts of the *Reich* and *Länder*; more than tripled party membership yet again, so that Hamburg could rely on the honorary involvement of enthusiastic party members to fill the enormous demand for political functionaries the restructuring of municipal government produced.²⁷

When the Nazis took over the Senate in March 1933, Hamburg's cityscape mirrored the modernist social and economic politics of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. After a third of the city was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1842, Hamburg was rebuilt as a quintessentially modern city that reflected in its design not just ambitions for economic expansion, worldliness, and cosmopolitanism; but it also addressed the concerns of social reformers regarding the dangers of inner city

²⁴ For the outcome of the 5 March 1933 the Reichstag election see Larry Eugene Jones. *German Liberalism and the Dissolution of the Weimar Party System, 1918-1933* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 470-1. See also Buettner, 63.

²⁵ Bajohr. "Zustimmungsdiktatur," 69.

²⁶ Bajohr, "Zustimmungstiktatur" 78.

²⁷ On the politics of coordination in the Reich see Albrecht Tyrell "Auf dem Weg zur Diktatur: Detuschland 1930-1934" in *Deutschland 1933 - 1945*. eds. Karl Dietrich Bracher and Manfred Funke (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1992) The politics of coordination expanded the Hamburg NSDAP to more than 46,000 members. Compare Bajohr "Zustimmungsdiktatur", 78-80



Figure 5 *Mönckebergstraße*

crowding.²⁸ More important for the transformation of the urban landscape than the Great Fire was a massive cholera epidemic that gripped the city in 1892 and provided the impetus for large scale reform in sanitation and housing that lasted well into the twentieth century.²⁹ Advocates of natural light, decongestion, greenery, modernized living quarters and open spaces shaped the building boom of 1920s and successfully argued for urban modernization while simultaneously facilitating public surveillance.³⁰

Traditionalists and economic liberals found themselves unable to prevent the encroachment of the unpropertied into municipal politics even though the decontamination of inner city districts had cleared the space for a protective wall of modern office buildings around the Alster, from Jungfernstieg and Neuer Wall to the lavishly redesigned Mönckebergstrasse,

²⁸ *Führer durch Hamburg*. Hrsg. Verband Hamburgischer Verkehrsvereine E.V. (Hamburg, 1927), 24 and “Jährlich 30 Mio RM durch Fremdenverkehr: Bürgermeister Krogman ueber Hamburgs Fremdenverkehrswerbung - Jeder Fremde ist unser aller Kunde” in *Hamburger Tageblatt*, 3 Mar 1939.

²⁹ See in particular Richard Evan’s excellent study on the Cholera Epidemic in Hamburg. *Death in Hamburg: Society and Politics in the Cholera Years*. (New York: Penguin, 2005)

³⁰ For Hamburg compare Evans. *Death in Hamburg*, 508ff. However, this trend in urban development was not limited to Hamburg nor was it particularly radical in comparison to interventions in Berlin and Frankfurt. See in for example Günther Schulz, “Von der Mietskaserne zum Neuen Bauen. Wohnungspolitik und Stadtplanung in Berlin während der zwanziger Jahre” in *Im Banne der Metroplenen* ed. Peter Alter (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1993): 43-86.

which shielded the economic elites of the city from the impoverished masses.³¹ Yet it became increasingly clear that municipal policy would have to address the pressing needs and real life concerns of an increasingly diverse and rapidly growing population.³² In contrast to the massive overhaul of the city's facade, the inner districts remained much like they had been in the nineteenth century. Neighbors exchanged gossip and information, children played, couples fought and all sorts of transactions were conducted in the streets. Trash and discarded household effects graced the dusty and still predominantly unpaved streets that continued to preoccupy the perturbed gaze of social reformers after the turn of the century. In contrast, the modern *Wohnkasernen* built in the Barmbek and Hammerbrook districts, which had a predominantly *vorstädtische* (suburban) character until after the turn of the century, mushroomed in response to the population explosion the city experienced since the second half of the 19th century. Mature urban



Figure 6 *Gängeviertel in der Neustadt*

³¹ *Führer durch Hamburg*. Hrsg. Verband Hamburgischer Verkehrsvereine E.V. (Hamburg, 1927), 32 describes the Mönckebergstrasse as Europe's most beautiful shopping mile.

³² Hamburg's population increased from less than 300,000 inhabitants in 1871 to 750,000 at the turn of the century. On the eve of the First World War, Hamburg's population exceeded one million. Compare Jochmann, *Hamburg. Geschichte der Stadt und ihrer Bewohner*, 27

communities and neighborhood networks were destroyed in the name of air, space, and sunlight.³³

In the aftermath of the cholera epidemic and during the first decades of the twentieth century, Hamburg developed into “a densely populated urban sprawl of the first order.”³⁴ Simultaneously it became a center of organized labor.³⁵ While the cramped quarters in St. Georg, St. Pauli, and the *Gängeviertel* (Alley-quarters) in Neu- and Altsadt had fanned the debates around social hygiene since the turn of the century, they also retained the charm that gave Hamburg an expressly urban character.³⁶ During the Weimar years, eugenic social politics underwrote the building boom that relocated the burgeoning new working class into districts of affordable apartment complexes that avoided the overcrowding of inner city district but destroyed the tightly woven networks of neighborhood sociability that were characteristic of the older working class quarters.³⁷ Despite the building boom of the 1920s urban housing projects were unable to keep up

³³ On the uncontrolled building boom in the aftermath of the Cholera epidemic until 1909 when Fritz Schumacher, as the new building director, initiated planing directives to shape control building activities in the city along aesthetic and population-political considerations. See Jochmann, 29.

³⁴ “Aufgaben und Arbeitsergebnisse der Raumforschung an deutschen Hochschulen. Hamburg. Universität Hamburg. Leiter: Prof. Dr. schultz- Kiesow.” in *Volk und Lebensraum: Forschungen im Dienste von Raumordnung und Landesplanung* ed. Konrad Meyer (Heidelberg, Berlin, Magdeburg: Kurt Vowinckel Verlag, 1938): 461-467

³⁵ For a history of Socialism in Hamburg and the city’s labor movement see *Arbeiter in Hamburg. Unterschichten, Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung seit dem ausgehenden 18 Jahrhundert*. ed. Arno Herzig, Dieter Langewiesche, and Arnold Sywottek (Hamburg: Verlag für Erziehung und Wissenschaft, 1983). A specific look at the port’s labor force during the Third Reich see Ludwig Eiber. *Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung in der Hansestadt Hamburg in den Jahren 1929-1939: Westarbeiter, Hafendarbeiter, Seeleute: Konformität, Opposition, Widerstand* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2000). For a the role played by the Social Democrats in Hamburg see Richard Evans “‘Red Wednesday’ in Hamburg: Social Democrats, Police, and *Lumpenproletariat* in the Suffrage Disturbances of 17 January 1906” *Social History* 4:1 (Jan 1979) 1-31; Michael Grüttner *Arbeitswelt an der Wasserkante: Sozialgeschichte der Hamburger Hafendarbeiter, 1886-1914* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 1984); Arno Herzig, Dieter Langewiesche, and Arnold Sywottek, eds. *Arbeiter in Hamburg: Unterschichten, Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung seit dem ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert* (Hamburg: Erziehung und Wissenschaft, 1983)

³⁶ *Heilen und Vernichten im Mustergau Hamburg: Bevölkerungs- und Gesundheitspolitik im Dritten Reich*. ed. Angelika Ebbinghaus, Heidrun Kaupen-Haas, and Karl-Heinz Roth (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur Verlag, 1984).

³⁷ Compare Andreas Walther. *Neue Wege zur Großstadtsanierung* (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1936).



Figure 7 *Garrison City Barmbek*

with the growing population in Hamburg as in other German cities.³⁸ In Hamburg, the *Wohnkasernen* or garrison cities soon replicated the crowded conditions of the inner city districts in an atmosphere of standardized modernity.³⁹

Between the foundation of the German Reich in 1871 and the turn of the century, the city's population more than doubled. By the outbreak of the First World War, Hamburg had become a city with a population of more than one million people, only a fraction of whom had been born in the city.⁴⁰ When the Nazis took power in 1933, Hamburg was a center of merchant capitalism that was struggling with the prolonged effects of the Depression. In the immediate aftermath of the 1929 stock market crash, the

³⁸ Compare Günther Schulz, "Von der Mietskaserne zum Neuen Bauen. Wohnungspolitik und Stadtplanung in Berlin während der zwanziger Jahre," 76. Schulz explains that even though the construction of large settlements (*Großsiedlungsbau*) in German cities eased the pressures on the residential housing market, the Weimar period was characterized by a severe housing shortages.

³⁹ For an overview of residential housing construction and policy see Karl Christian Führer. "Die Machtlosigkeit des 'Maßnahmestaats.' Wohnungsmarkt und öffentliche Wohnraumbewirtschaftung" in *Kein Abgeschlossenes Kapitel: Hamburg im 'Dritten Reich'* (Hamburg: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1997), 367ff. Also see Tilman Harlander. *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine: Wohnungsbau und Wohnungspolitik in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1995).

⁴⁰ Werner Jochmann and Hans Dieter Loose, eds. *Hamburg. Geschichte der Stadt und ihrer Bewohner* Band II: Vom Kaiserreich bis zur Gegenwart (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1986), 27. Evans, 52

city's economy still fared relatively well in comparison with other German urban communities, but it experienced a delayed economic breakdown when world trade collapsed in 1931. A trading metropole rather than an industrial center until 1937, Hamburg's export oriented economy was also less conducive to Nazi economic resuscitation policies, which were focused on agricultural autarky and armaments production.⁴¹ On the one hand, the urban landscape the Nazis inherited in Hamburg held out the promises of a glamorous future – for architectural grandeur and the realization of



Figure 8 *Stadtspark*

the city's identity as Germany's gateway to the world. Countless parks and the surrounding countryside fit perfectly into the Nazi conception of mass leisure. In this

⁴¹ For an excellent analysis of Hamburg's economic development in the 1930s see Klaus Weinbauer. "Handelskrise und Rüstungsboom. Die Wirtschaft." *Hamburg Im 'Dritten Reich'*. Ed. FZH (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2005):191-224.

regard, Hamburg was an inspiring site for Nazi urban planners.⁴² On the other hand, the Nazis in Hamburg had to contend not only with deep social divisions, local particularism and pride as they did in other German cities, but also with a combined history of relative economic autonomy and the dramatic social consequences of the economic collapse in the aftermath of 1929.⁴³ This volatile combination of potential and threat was most clearly visible in the parts of the city in immediate proximity to the harbor.



Figure 9 Reeperbahn St. Pauli

Behind Hamburg's facade of bourgeois respectability, there was an increasingly disgruntled mass of unemployed workers, chronically poor urban dwellers and a sizable population of structurally disadvantaged wage laborers. The district of St. Pauli dramatically embodied the contrasts that

characterized the city at large. Even after the opening of the city gates in 1860, St. Pauli, formerly known as the Hamburger Berg, remained the actual gate from which thousands entered the city and behind which men of all classes went to experience the sensual pleasures, shady bars, glittering vaudevilles and movie theaters.⁴⁴ The characteristic mix

⁴² On Hamburg's parks see "Die Stadt im Grünen" in *Führer durch Hamburg*. Hrsg. Verband Hamburgischer Verkehrsvereine E.V. (Hamburg: 1927), 54ff. For the inspirational aspects of Hamburg's cityscape compare Carl Vincent Krogmann. *Es ging um Deutschlands Zukunft 1932-1939. Erlebtes täglich diktiert von dem früheren Hamburger Bürgermeister*. (Leoni am Starnberger See: Druffel-Verlag, 1977), 22 Hitler suggested that "Hamburg habe so etwas Amerikanisches, und es wäre durchaus falsch nur Häuser im Stile des Braunen Hauses zu bauen."

⁴³ On Hamburg's economy during the Third Reich see Karl Heinz Roth "Ökonomie und politische Macht: die 'Firma Hamburg' 1930 - 1945" *Kein Abgeschlossenes Kapitel: Hamburg im 'Dritten Reich'* (Hamburg: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1997), 15-176.

⁴⁴ Helene Manos. *Sankt Pauli: Soziale Lagen und soziale Fragen im Stadtteil Sankt Pauli*. (Hamburg: Ergebnisse, 1989)

of entertainment, amusement, exploitation and vice had been a stable feature of St. Pauli since the Post-Napoleonic era.⁴⁵ Since 1606, when the city moved a hospital to the Hamburger Berg, the district functioned as an attraction for the respectable bourgeoisie and simultaneously developed into a repository for the urban poor, the socially undesirables and the chronically ill.⁴⁶

The Hamburger Berg was physically isolated from Hamburg and Altona, its two neighboring cities, by massive gates that were closed at dusk and opened at dawn and which effectively cordoned off the human deposits from the urban centers. Outside of the cities gates proper, the Hamburger Berg was subject to constant surveillance. A high military presence served as a buffer in the face of continuous tensions between the independent city of Hamburg and Danish Altona. Since the early 17th century, the Hamburger Berg provided the city with building materials. The famous amusement mile, the Reeperbahn, was originally built in 1626 for the production of ship ropes (*Reep*). Over the course of two centuries manufacturing and businesses that served the shipping industry moved into the Hamburger Berg, drawing an increasingly diverse labor force from both the city and its rural surroundings.

These circumstances explain the growing importance of the constantly increasing number of public entertainments in the district. The free space in front of the Reeperbahn became “the El Dorado of Hamburg’s population.⁴⁷” On Sundays, the citizens of Hamburg visited the colorful Hamburger Berg to enjoy the spectacle of funambulists, animal tamers, circus riders, jugglers and impostors, and to shop at the countless little huts and shacks for food items, books, manufactured goods, toys, and other curiosities.⁴⁸

Even though Napoleonic armies had destroyed the Hamburger Berg almost completely, the huts and shacks were quickly rebuilt and the city itself took a great interested in monitoring the beginnings of what became the world-famous entertainment

⁴⁵ Compare Helene Manos and also consult Ariane Barth, *Die Reeperbahn: Der Kampf um Hamburgs suendige Meile* (Hamburg: Spiegel-Buchverlag, 1999)

⁴⁶ See Manos, 85-86

⁴⁷ Manos, 87.

⁴⁸ Manos, 87.

quarter, St.Pauli-Reeperbahn. In 1833 the Hamburger Berg was renamed after a church built in honor of Apostle Paul, and it was formally incorporated into the city of Hamburg. The gates, however, effectively excluded St. Pauli socially and economically from Hamburg proper. Closed at night and only passable after payment of a hefty sum (which increased as the night progressed), the gates were in essence a customs border that continued to exist as a moral boundary even after the gates were opened in 1860. St. Pauli reputation as a mass entertainment site for locals and foreigners alike only continued to grow. Over the course of the second half of the 19th century, next to the densely populated and paltry quarters for deckhands and dock workers, the city invested in the expansion of the entertainment district by building fancy hotels, tasteful edifices, theaters, music and dance halls, vaudeilles, and restaurants to serve the inclinations and tastes of Hamburg's bourgeoisie and more affluent visitors.

By the early 1900s St. Pauli had become a hotbed of radical working class politics, a place of questionable business and flamboyant entertainment and a cradle for organized and petty crime. It was also one of the poorest and most diverse districts of

Hamburg.⁴⁹ As in the inner city district designated for decontamination and demolition, here the streets were narrower and houses seemed to bend under the weight of poverty and strife.⁵⁰ Prostitution was prevalent in all of the city's working class districts, but the pervasive mix of sex and urban entertainment in St. Pauli was of a more sensational quality. Whereas prostitution in St. Georg and the *Gängeviertel* was a direct function of the abject poverty in these parts of Hamburg, by the turn of the century St. Pauli was a massive relay station for goods and people in transit in which prostitution and entertainment morphed into supplementary service industries of the city's economic motor.

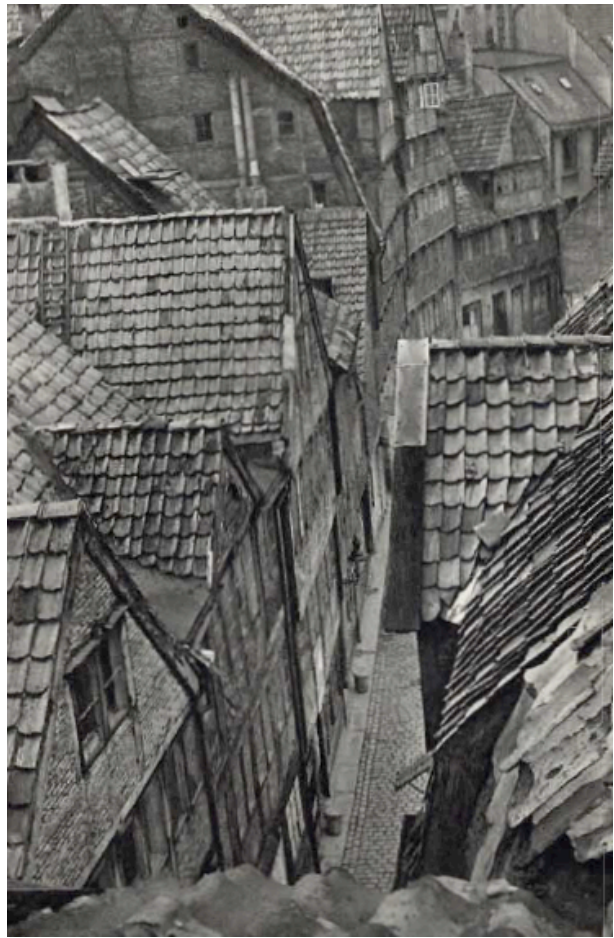


Figure 10 *Gängeviertel in der Neustadt*

The wandering exhibitors of the first movies were drawn to the cramped working class quarters, and it was in St. Pauli where the cinematic history of the city began around

⁴⁹ Weinbauer, 200. Moreover see Ursula Büttner. *Hamburg in der Staats- und Wirtschaftskrise* (Hamburg: Christians, 1982)

⁵⁰ See Werner Jochmann, *Hamburg. Geschichte der Stadt und ihrer Bewohner* (Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 1986). See Karl Christian Führer, "Meister der Ankündigung: Nationalsozialistische Wohnungsbaupolitik" in *Hamburg im Dritten Reich*, 432-444. Further Andreas Walther. *Neue Wege zur Großstadtsanierung* (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1936)



Figure 11 Knopf's Lichtspielhaus



Figure 12 Schauburg Hamm

the turn of the century.⁵¹ In 1901 a dive on Spielbudenplatz in St. Pauli run by Eberhard Knopf was the first establishment to regularly supplement its more customary offerings of ale and beer with living photography (Lebende Bilder) as early as 1901.⁵² A few years later, Knopf officially registered a movie theater in an adjacent building after the city had successfully prohibited the coexistence of alcohol consumption and alternative (if silent) lifeworlds on a makeshift screen.⁵³ By the time Knopf considered the exhibition of movies a lucrative business venture in 1906, the city already regulated a total of five

⁵¹ Gary Stark has made the important point that cinema was a rural phenomenon first as long as films were so few and so expensive that it was easier to exchange audiences than fare. Compare Stark "Cinema, Society, and the State: Policing the Film Industry in Imperial Germany" in *Essays on Culture and Society in Modern Germany*. ed. Gary D. Stark and Bede Karl Lackner (Arlington, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1982), 122-166.

⁵² Michael Töteberg. *Filmstadt Hamburg: Von Hans Albers bis Wim Wenders, vom Abaton zu den Zeise-Kinos: Kino-Geschichte(n) einer Grossstadt* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1997), 12

⁵³ Michael Töteberg und Volker Reissmann. *Mach dir ein paar schöne Stunden: Das Hamburger Kinobuch* (Bremen: Temmen, 2008), 20

movie houses. The the movie theater became a stable feature of the cityscape over the next few decades.⁵⁴

Hamburg's cinemascape was dense and quintessentially urban. Between 1900 and 1926 St. Pauli and St. George led the city in movie houses with, respectively, seven and nine theaters. The building boom of the late 1920s changed the distribution of theaters across Hamburg, reflecting the city's demographic shifts. The cinema had become a daily feature of urban life.⁵⁵ Generally located on a major street in each of the districts the first cinemas all originated in establishments such as bars, taverns, or dance halls on precisely those districts and streets where urban entertainment was densest.⁵⁶ By the late 1920s, the two son-in-laws of former cinema czar James Henschel revived a tradition that had ended when Henschel sold his movie empire to Ufa,



Figure 13 Hamburg's Cinemascape 1926

⁵⁴ Töteberg, *Filmstadt*, 12.

⁵⁵ In the late 19th Century Hammerbrook and Barmbek were faintly settled districts of suburban character, on the eve of World War I, they had grown into massive settlements for the urban poor who lived cramped together under undignified conditions. In 1914 Barmbek alone had a population of 120 000. Compare Jochmann, 28.

⁵⁶ I am analyzing the data contained in the *Kinokatalog* appended to Michael Töteberg and Volker Reissmann, *Mach dir ein paar schöne Stunden*, 175-293. Individual theaters are introduced in these pages and their history traced. See also Töteberg, *Filmstadt Hamburg*, 55

Germany's largest production company, in 1918.⁵⁷ Hugo Streit and Hermann Ulrich-Sass had been Ufa executives before they began building a theater empire that rivaled the predominance of Ufa outlets in the city. Soon after purchasing the original Schauburg Hauptbahnhof, the Henschel Corporation built numerous *Schauburgen* (literally, show-castles) and turned suitable buildings into movie palaces. The competition between Ufa and the Schauburgen manifested itself most visibly in St. Pauli. At the Millerntor, once the official entry gate to the closed-off suburbs of Hamburg proper, both corporations



Figure 14 *Schauburg Barmbek*

built two grand palaces.⁵⁸ In 1929, colossal theaters, each with far more than 1000 seats, were built in the densely populated new working class districts of Hamm, Hammerbrook

and Barmbek.⁵⁹ Building more movie-palaces in Uhlenhorst, Fuhlsbüttel, and Wandsbek, the Henschel Corporation added a good 5,000 seats to Hamburg's cinemascape.⁶⁰ In turn,

⁵⁷ See Töteberg and Reissmann, *Mach dir ein paar schöne Stunden*, 26ff

⁵⁸ Töteberg and Reissmann, *Mach dir ein paar schöne Stunden*, 51

⁵⁹ Schauburg Hamm, the largest of the three had 1520 seats, the Schauburg Hammerbrook was equipped with 1451 seats, and Schauburg Barmbek replacing the Astoria Palast in its new building still provided 1200 seats. Compare *Kino-Katalog in* Michael Töteberg and Volker Reissmann, *Mach dir ein paar schöne Stunden*, 175-293.

⁶⁰ Töteberg. *Filmstadt Hamburg*, 57,

Ufa built the largest movie theater in Europe in downtown Hamburg. The Ufa-Palast, which could accommodate 2667 patrons, opened a few days before Christmas in 1929.⁶¹

By the time the Nazis came to power, every one of the burgeoning working class districts had a mega-theater, and Barmbek led the statistics with twelve movie theaters and more than 7000 seats. In contrast, the ritzy district of Rothenbaum, and to a lesser degree Eppendorf had neither a Schauburg nor a web of smaller theaters and remained entirely underrepresented in the cinemascap of the city. Smaller neighborhood theaters continued to play an important role in day-to-day movie-going but Nazi film policy further strengthened the position of the franchised mega-theaters in the regime's bid to centrally control of film exhibition in the Reich, as I illustrate in the next chapter. In a sense, cinema expanded Hamburg's economy of pleasure in specifically spatial ways. The entertainment district of St. Pauli did not lose any of its lure, nor was its special place in the city's pleasurescape called into question. Rather cinema's expansion throughout the city heightened the connection between urban pleasures and the working classes, pushing through the moral boundary that had separated St. Pauli from Hamburg proper. Seeking to transform popular entertainments into sanitized leisure and extricating cinema from its implication in the urban economy of pleasure, Nazi film politics presupposed a differently ordered city.

Visions

Before we turn our attention to the cultural and film politics of the regime in the next chapter, it is necessary to take a closer look at the place of the city in Nazi ideology and the role culture played in rehabilitating the city as an economic motor and as an icon of national prestige. While the mystics among Nazi ideologues idealized village life and rural simplicity, most Nazi politicians did not envision an actual return to premodern

⁶¹ Michael Töteberg and Volker Reissmann, *Mach dir ein paar schöne Stunden*, 55-57. See also "Das größte Theater Europas" *Hamburger Abendblatt* 20 December 1929; "Der Neue Ufa-Palast" *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 21 December 1929; "Die Eröffnung des Ufa-Palasts" *Hamburger Nachrichten* 22 December 1929 in StAHH 135-1 Staatliche Pressestelle I-IV 5018. A third and much smaller player on Hamburg's film scene was Emelka, the Munich based corporation which operated a total of five sizable movie houses with the concern's flagship, the Emelka Palast, in Eimsbüttel. Compare Reissmann and Töteberg, *Mach dir ein paar schöne Stunden* 53.

roots.⁶² The ‘countryside’ as a particular ‘space’ functioned more as a metaphor for the transposable notion of *Heimat*, rather than the ideological opposite to urbanization. However, it remained difficult to integrate the city in a world view that idealized the countryside. Cities generally dominated their hinterland instead of being contained by it, and the social complexities of the city dwarfed those of the village. It was not the city’s size nor its bustle that focused the efforts of National Socialists to reform the city in the 1930s. The administrative complexities of a city threatened to transform metropolitan areas into “the aberration [*Ungebilde*] of the city-state” and thus did not seem conducive to the realization of a centrally coordinated and administered spatial super-unit, the Reich.⁶³ The concentration of labor in Germany’s urban centers rendered cities both promising and threatening at the same time. Workers were essential to Germany’s economic revival, but the politicized working-classes also presented a real ideological threat to Nazism, at least initially.⁶⁴

Invocations of space in the context of Nazism cannot ignore the racialized conceptualization of space by Nazi ideology. Nazi ideas of *Lebensraum* are guilty of some of the same failures of the spatial imagination Massey attributes to Western thinking more generally. Nazi ideologues of *Lebensraum* imagine space as empty (due to their racism) and as a surface expanse (due to their Western spatial imagination) ready to

⁶² For Alfred Rosenberg’s mysticism see Ernst Piper. *Alfred Rosenberg. Hitlers Chefideologe*. (München: Carl Blessing, 2005), 198,202, 226-231.

⁶³ Dr. Herbert Krüger. “Der Raum als Gestalter der Innen- und Aussenpolitik” in *Reich, Volksordnung, Lebensraum* Band 1 (1941): 77-176, here 110. Lamenting the “increasing despatialization [Enträumlichung] of human life since the beginning of the 19th Century” as a result of urbanization, densification, and speed of travel, Krüger stresses the “natural” qualities of particular “spaces” and their effect on “human feeling and wishing [menschliches Fühlen und Wollen] which can be vividly captured with the concept of ‘rootedness in soil [Bodenständigkeit].” Based on this notion of *Bodenständigkeit*, Krüger insists on a particularly layered ordering of space: Describing the *Erbhof* [ancestral estate] as the smallest spatial unit on which the forces of the soil could be brought to bear, Krüger outlines the subsequent units of space always containing the former as the *Gemeinde* [municipality] in the form of a local congregation (*Ortsgemeinde*), the countryside [Landschaft], the state, and ultimately the *Reich* as the geographical boundary of the autarch race.

⁶⁴ For a careful analysis on the relationship between the Nazi state and the working classes see Timothy Mason. *Social Policy in the Third Reich. The Working Class and the 'National Community'*. (New York: Berg, 1993) and his *Nazism, Fascism, and the Working Class*. Jane Caplan, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Moreover see Alf Lüdtkke. *Eigen-Sinn: Fabrikalltag, Arbeitererfahrungen und Politik. Vom Kaiserreich bis in den Faschismus*. (Hamburg: Ergebnisse Verlag, 1993). For Hamburg in particular see Michael Grüttner. *Arbeitswelt and der Wasserkante: Sozialgeschichte der Hamburger Hafendarbeiter, 1886-1914*. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1984).

walked over and populated (filled).⁶⁵ What is puzzling in Nazi ideology of *Lebensraum* and requires more careful explication is the precise relationship between race and space that rendered Eastern space ‘empty’ and Western space already filled with meaning. While there is a fundamental difference in Nazi understandings of “east” and “west,” that difference was never assumed to be primarily spatial. In contrast, Nazi *Lebensraum* ideologues presupposed a fundamental incompatibility between the race of the peoples living in the European “east” [im Osten] and the qualities of the soil (i.e. assuming spatial coherence from the shores of the Atlantic to the Ural mountains. At the same time, they presupposed an essential compatibility between race and soil characteristics in the European “west.” Therefore the reordering of populations that did not “correspond” to the nature supposedly embodied by the land (space [*Raum*]) attempted to restore the essentialized relationship between ‘race’ and its (natural) space. Racism thus always underwrote Nazi space thinking.

The deconstruction of municipal administration and the formation of administrative units that embodied the notion of the countryside are examples of the regime’s attempt to discipline space within the boundaries of the Reich.⁶⁶ The *Gaue* and later the *Reichsgaue*,⁶⁷ not only provided coherence to a Nazi spatial model that used the party’s stratification as its defining measure, but it also shifted administrative control to the spatial unit of the countryside, thus (at least in principle) reversing the relationship between the city and its hinterland.⁶⁸ In practice, however, cities remained administrative and cultural centers throughout the Reich. The office of the mayor had been stripped of its power and all but supplanted by the centralization of administrative authority around the *Gauleiter*, who with few exception officiated as governor (*Reichsstatthalter*) as

⁶⁵ Massey, 8

⁶⁶ Vorläufiges Gesetz zur Gleichschaltung der Länder mit dem Reich 31 Mar 1933 in Reichsgesetzblatt I 1933, 153 and Zweites Gesetz zur Gleichschaltung der Länder mit dem Reich. 7 Apr 1933 in Reichsgesetzblatt I, 1933, 173.

⁶⁷ Armin Nolzen. “Die Gaue als Verwaltungseinheiten der NSDAP. Jürgen John and Horst Möller. *Die NS-Gaue: Regionale Mittelinstanz im zentralistischen Führerstaat* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2007), 199-217.

⁶⁸ Carl Ch. Lörcher. “Reichsplanung” in *Monatsheft fuer Baukunst und Staedebau* 1 (Januar 1934): 41- 42

well.⁶⁹ The *Gau*, a new and contrived administrative unit, not only restructured the political administration, but it also exemplified the notion that spatial planning needed to be actuated from the vantage point of the countryside to ensure the rootedness of the people (*Volk*) in the soil of the homeland (*im heimatlichen Boden*).⁷⁰ In this light the ideological imperative of ‘racial’ homogeneity, of producing ‘Jew-free’ cities and spaces *within* the Reich cannot be divorced from Nazi politics of space.

The city as a particularly heterogeneous space, occupied a precarious position in the eyes of Nazi spatial planners. While references to unhealthy living conditions and their negative effects on the reproductive capacity of the *Volk* were certainly part of the Nazi views about large cities, it was the immense mobility of the population and the problems this presented to state control that underwrote urban policy. Thus Nazi reservations about the city did not reflect merely an ideological hostility, but addressed very pragmatic questions of social control. The strategies to discipline urban space, enforce public order, curtail the movement of people and increase surveillance had little to do with the mythical affirmation of village life or fantasies of idyllic communities. It had everything to do with supposedly immutable biological characteristics of certain

⁶⁹ The concentration of offices in the person of Karl Kaufmann and the centralization of power in Hamburg since the Greater-Hamburg-Law took effect, effectively reproduced the feared aberration of a city-state. Compare Karl Heinz Roth. “Ökonomie und politische Macht: Die ‘Firma Hamburg’ 1930 - 1945,” 53. “Since in Hamburg unlike elsewhere in the Reich the spatial reach of *Gauleitung*, *Reichstatthalterschaft* and *Landesregierung* was the same, a uniform administration like a city-state developed in which the functions of the level of *Gau* and the municipality were identical. [Da in Hamburg wie nirgends sonst im Reichsgebiet die räumlichen Geltungsbereiche von Gauleitung, Reichstatthalterschaft und Landesregierung deckungsgleich waren, entstand jetzt eine städtestaatliche Einheitsverwaltung, in der die Verwaltungsfunktionen der staatlichen Reichsmittelinstanz mit der kommunalen Selbstverwaltung identisch waren.]” See also Lohalm, “Modell Hamburg,” 131. For the position of the *Gauleiter* in the regime’s power structure compare Caplan, 140-1. Caplan explains that “[a]ppointed by the president of the chancellor’s nomination, the *Reichsstatthalter* fulfilled a double function. They advanced the movement towards executive control by substituting for the *Land* governments, and, with their mandate to ‘ensure compliance with the principles of policy established by the Reich chancellor’, they initiated the constitutional subordination of the *Länder* to the Reich. On top of this, since all but one of them were NSDAP *Gauleiter*, they also represented a significant step towards the integration of the party in the structure of government.”

⁷⁰ Friedrich Hiller. *Deutscher Kampf um Lebensraum* (Leipzig: Armanen Verlag, 1933), 2. Hiller argues that “as long as a people is rooted in the soil of the homeland, it remains healthy; as soon as it disengages therefrom, it will fall sick and die.”

kinds of people and their ability to escape the attempts of the state at establishing absolute control.⁷¹

For local planners, the balance between honoring the historic character of the city and maintaining social control was essential. In 1934, Frankfurt called for the extensive rehabilitation of the old parts of its inner city. In consideration of its architectural heritage, reconstruction was limited to the labyrinthine inner alleyways of the city, where “asocial elements and prostitution had secretly spawned for decades.”⁷² By 1937 the universities in most German provinces had organized their own consortia to deal with the various issues surrounding urban and rural planning policies. These groups addressed questions of rural exodus, utilization and effective exploitation of mineral and agricultural resources, the concentration of people in urban centers, the regulation of traffic between urban centers and the hinterlands, the biological dangers brought on by urbanization, industrial concentration and so forth.⁷³ Urban planners in Cologne observed that “the complicated state of affairs [*Verfilzung*] brought about by traffic and construction advance[d] progressively” since the beginning of the 19th century, leaving the inner cities excessively and unhealthy and overcrowded.⁷⁴ Similarly, the municipal building authorities in Kassel recommended that all back buildings, alleyways and makeshift slum dwellings be torn down to preserve the face of the beautiful old part of

⁷¹ Compare Gottfried Feder. *Die Neue Stadt. Versuch der Begründung einer neuen Stadtplanungskunst aus der sozialen Struktur der Bevölkerung* (Berlin: Julius Springer, 1939) 24. Feder was instituted as Reichskommissar für das Siedlungswesen (Reich commissioner for settlement) in March 1934. For Feder the big city “with its haste, its noise, its often questionable entertainment, its dangers and its squalor” spelled the death of the nation. But already in August, Feder was shirked into retirement. Compare Tilman Harlander. *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine: Wohnungsbau und Wohnungspolitik in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus*. (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1995), 60

⁷² Reinhold Niemeyer. “Wo bleibt das Gesetz ueber die Gesundheit der Altstädte?” in *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 2 (February 1934) 89-94

⁷³ See the reports of individual consortia. “Aufgaben und Arbeitsergebnisse der Raumforschung an deutschen Hochschulen.” in *Volk und Lebensraum: Forschungen im Dienste von Raumordnung und Landesplanung* ed. Konrad Meyer (Heidelberg, Berlin, Magdeburg: Kurt Vowinkel Verlag, 1938): 401-589.

⁷⁴ Eugen Blanck and Wolfgang Bangert. “Köln: Ein städtebaulicher Versuch” in *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 1 (January 1934): 45-48, 45.

town. This would presumably open the city to light and improve living conditions.⁷⁵ Since the turn of the century, debates among urban and social planners always focused on the connection between urban *Verfilzung* and the congenial mix of urban amusements, crime, and prostitution.⁷⁶ In particular, concerns about prostitution offered a political permissible way to point to the limits of social control whereas allusions to the structurally disadvantaged working poor would have called into question the successful implementation of the classless *Volksgemeinschaft*.

Accordingly Nazi urban planners justified the reconstruction of inner cities with arguments about social hygiene, bourgeois morality, and residential housing reform. Discussions among Nazi ideologues on the subject of ‘decontamination’ were greatest immediately after the seizure of power and gradually abated with the consolidation of the regime.⁷⁷ Nazi ideology – and particularly its racial underpinnings – broadened its scope to address the over-industrialization and over-population that had preoccupied urban science since before the turn of the century.⁷⁸ Emboldened by the Nazi rhetoric about the fundamental connection between race and space, urban planners no longer considered their mission to be primarily one of maintenance. They went on the offense, envisioning “a remodeling of the entire living space of the German people.”⁷⁹ They argued:

Until now, urban-industrial space planning was done using urban-industrial premises derived from the city. The new task for the design of the Reich is this: Design derived from the countryside, from the soil, from the living wellspring of the people.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Stadverwaltungs-Oberbauamt Labes, Kassel. “Grundsätzliches zur Altstadtsanierung und Altstadterhaltung” in *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 6 (June 1936) 61-69

⁷⁶ See 351-10 Sozialbehoerde I EF70.15.Band I, in particular the circular from August, 1927. Also compare Julia Roos, “Backlash against Prostitutes Rights: Origins and Dynamics of Nazi Prostitution Policies” in *Sexuality and German Fascism* ed. Dagmar Herzog (New York: Berghahn 2005):67-94.

⁷⁷ Reinhold Niemeyer. “Wo bleibt das Gesetz ueber die Gesundheit der Altstädte?,” 89-94

⁷⁸ For a critical evaluation of anti-urbanism in Imperial Germany see Andrew Lees. *Cities Sin, and Social Reform in Imperial Germany*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002)

⁷⁹ Lörcher. “Reichsplanung,” 41

⁸⁰ *ibid.*

In the relationship between race and space, it is clear that race functioned as the primary organizing principle.⁸¹ If, as Werner Daitz explained, race was “the sole and authoritative source for all life-ordering organizations in the greater spatial order [im echten Grossraum],”⁸² the city’s reorganization along Nazi premises could hardly ignore the racial make-up of its demography. Certainly the methods applied in Germany’s cities did not compare to the genocidal policies imposed on occupied lands in the East during the war. However, the peculiar relationship between race and space laid out in the ideology of *Lebensraum* remains important for understanding the spatial order not only beyond but also *within* the boundaries of the Reich. By pointing to the relevance of an ideology of *Lebensraum* in reimagining German cities, and indeed the Reich more generally, I do not intend to relativize the genocidal underpinnings of this ideology. To the contrary, I attempt to draw attention to the continuity in Nazi spatial thinking that produced dramatically different population policies *within* as opposed to *east* of the Reich as a function of the presumed immutable relationship between ‘race’ and space.⁸³

The sudden decision of Hamburg’s administration to raze the last of the alley-quarters or *Gängeviertel* in 1934 without waiting for the Reich to pass the requisite legislation happened during the nation-wide implementation Nazi policies concerned with racial hygiene, social homogeneity, and *Volksgesundheit* (national health). But the demolition of the densely populated residential quarters sandwiched between Wexstrasse and Kaiser-Wilhelm-Strasse was not simply a response the political problems of severe housing shortages and unhealthy living conditions in inner-city quarters. Rather the obliteration of this particular “site of infection” delivered a decisive blow to Hamburg’s well-organized working-classes and further developed also a first test case for the

⁸¹ See Dr. Herbert Krüger. “Der Raum als Gestalter der Innen-und Aussenpolitik” in *Reich, Volksordnung, Lebensraum* 1 (1941): 77-176.

⁸² Werner Daitz, *Lebensraum und gerechte Weltordnung*, 10.

⁸³ The literature about the development and radicalization of racial policy is very well developed. However, scholars so far tend to view *Lebensraum* only in its most extreme, expansionist, and genocidal context, rather than being prepared to see a similar radicalization in spatial policy in the context of war. The Nazi “utopia” of racial homogeneity provided the rationale for reorganizing space inside the Reich. The motivation for expanding that space was, as Tooze convincingly illustrates, primarily economic. Vastness of territory was associated with an abundance of resources and possibilities. Compare Tooze, xxiii

implementation of racial ideology and biological determinism.⁸⁴ Cloaked as a tribute to racial science, the flattening of the Gängeviertel destroyed one of the most important strongholds of the communist party in Hamburg and broke up a social trouble spot.⁸⁵

In 1936, Andreas Walther published a treatise entitled *New Ways to Decontaminate the City* in which he argued that there was a direct biological connection between communism and asocial criminality. Andreas Walther analysis demonstrates the pervasiveness of racial explanatory approaches to social problems. It also gives indication of what could and could not be said. After the seizure of power, it would have appeared defeatist to invoke the specter of Communism within the city's boundaries. Arguments based on class, social status and political affiliations became increasingly rare over time. Claiming that the "earlier decontamination of the city was primarily justified by structural and hygienic policies," Walther shifted the explanatory approach to social ills in ways consistent with the National Socialist world view.⁸⁶ He no longer "assumed that people's nature [*Wesen*] could be transformed by their being transplanted into a different environment."⁸⁷ Even though Walther acknowledged the importance of environmental factors to National Socialist social policy, he emphasized the limits of education and of a beneficial environment in facilitating social rehabilitation, suggesting that "in the malignant regions [*gemeinschädigende Regionen*] of the big cities, hopeless cases accumulate and proliferate like a tumor on the national body."⁸⁸ In a multi-year study, Walther and his colleagues sought to identify regions of the city for decontamination by cataloguing and mapping asocial elements. They evaluated and interpreted the results of criminal and welfare statistics in order to make detailed recommendations regarding the subsequent treatment of dislocated individuals and families.

⁸⁴ Harlander, 84.

⁸⁵ Führer, "Meister der Ankündigung," 437.

⁸⁶ Walther, 4

⁸⁷ *ibid.*

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

Rather than providing justification for the flattening of Hamburg's *Gängeviertel*, Walther learned from these experiences and labored to prevent their repetition. The members of the *Notegemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft*, Walther's team, known as *Notarbeits 51 der Akademiker Hilfe*, viewed the destruction of the *Gängeviertel* as a starting point for testing claims made during the Weimar period that the relocation of people to a more beneficial milieu would ameliorate not only individual social integration but transform the trouble spots of the big cities.⁸⁹ Since the inhabitants of the *Gängeviertel* were left to their own devices (systematic resettlement of the dispersed population was never envisioned), Walther's study documented their resettlement in areas that were similar in social composition and structure. Moreover, Walther's study asserted they "contributed to the infection of healthy districts, so that nests of asocial people can be found in even architecturally superior new apartment buildings; yes even on the rural fringes of the city."⁹⁰ Accordingly, Walther insisted that every act of decontamination would require careful preparation based on detailed sociological research and observation so that resettlement, incarceration, sterilization and other measures could be effectively enacted to prevent the reproduction of asocial agglomerates elsewhere.⁹¹

Walther's work was informed by the longitudinal studies conducted by E.J. Lidbetter, who published his findings in *Heredity and the Social Problem Group* in 1933.⁹² Lidbetter argued that debased [*minderwertige*] individuals generally marry within their own ranks, and hence "only several thousand clans in each generation account for the mass of those who burden and pollute the general community."⁹³ Walther concluded that the concentration of what he identified as *Minderwertige* [those of lesser value],

⁸⁹ See Walther, 19.

⁹⁰ Walther, 4.

⁹¹ Walther, 29

⁹² Ernest James Lidbetter. *Heredity and The Social Problem Group Vol I*, (London: Edward Arnold & Co, 1933) Lidbetter entered the service of the poor law authority in 1898 and had been intimately involved in poor relief in London until the publication of his book in which he advanced arguments about hereditary inferiority of social problem groups. While not negating negative environmental effects he insists on the heredity of certain defects.

⁹³ Walther, 7

Asoziale [asocials] and *Gemeinschädigende* [those destructive to the common good] was a natural development and that “National Socialism would act rather ineffectively, if it were to disperse these nests of malignant, morally inferior and biologically defect individuals.”⁹⁴ It was precisely their predisposition to concentrate together in certain areas that made controlling them so much easier.⁹⁵

In order to offset the natural concentration of asocial individuals, Nazi urban planners revived the garden city model, proposing the concentration of healthy members of the *Volksgemeinschaft* in urban areas as a proactive response to squalor, overcrowding, prostitution, disease, and social unrest.⁹⁶ The construction of the Gartenstadt [Garden-city] Klein-Borstel is one of the few examples of the creation (rather than the destruction) of *Lebensraum* in National Socialist Hamburg. The garden-cities were also more marketable than the destruction of the infamous *Gängeviertel* a year earlier. In 1935 Hamburg planned the construction of small, affordable apartments to address the housing shortage in the inner city. The plan further involved the transformation of lower class neighborhoods into homogenous and cheap models of single family homes.⁹⁷

Construction began in Klein-Borstel in August 1935. By December the first carefully selected tenants – selected for their human [menschliche] qualities – moved into their new homes.⁹⁸ For 38- 45 RM per month the homes provided a living area of 60 square meters, with kitchen and dining room on the ground floor and two bedrooms on the first. The attic – an additional 18 square meters – could be finished to accommodate

⁹⁴ Much of Walther’s treatise is concerned with defining these terms.

⁹⁵ Walther, 6.

⁹⁶ See A.R.Sennett. *Garden Cities in Theory and Practice. Being an Amplification of a Paper on the Potentialities of Applied Science in a Garden City. Read before Section F of the British Association* Vol. 2 (London: Bemrose and Sons Ltd, 1905), Lidbetter, Ernest James. *Heredity and the Social Problem Group*. (London: Eward Arnold & Co. 1933); Kermit C. Parsons and David Schuyler. Eds. *From Garden City to Green City: The Legacy of Ebenezer Howard* (Baltimore, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), Stanley Buder. *Visionaries and Planners: The Garden City Movement and the Modern Community* (New York/ Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990)

⁹⁷ Compare Joachim Petsch. *Baukunst und Stadtplanung im Dritten Reich*. (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1976), 166 and 171.

⁹⁸ Hermann Frank und Paul Frank “Die Gartenstadt Klein-Borstel in Hamburg” in *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 11 (November 1941) 317-324, 320.

up to five children (or so the Nazis advertised). In addition the homes had small gardens sufficient “for home owners to raise flowers in a relaxed atmosphere.”⁹⁹ The little gardens not only satisfied the Nazi “hunger for light, air, and physical activity,” but they also effectively contained family life in designated spaces.¹⁰⁰ Small gardens provided a justification for omitting the construction of communal green areas and children’s playgrounds, not to mention other urban areas that might have been set aside for specific kinds of recreation and entertainment.¹⁰¹ Settlements like Gartenstadt Klein-Borstel give a sense of the kind of community Nazi planners thought to fix in urban design. Reconstructed in this way, the city would lay bare and make manifest the revolution of the Nazi worldview that deployed community as an ideal (while consistently undermining its actual sustenance).¹⁰² Moreover, the city such reordered would contain easily identifiable spaces for the various aspects of individual and communal life. A square for recreation, a cultural center, a movie theater, and a bus stop collecting passengers for one of the many excursions conducted by Strength through Joy, the official Nazi leisure organization, would bring pleasure to the lives of people living in a city that was legible, healthy, and quintessentially modern.

Plans for urban renewal extended beyond the reorganization of residential housing. To turn Hamburg into an embodiment of a National Socialist city, the city had to be transformed to showcase the regime’s power and exude a worldliness and cosmopolitanism comparable to New York and London. However, between 1933 and 1939 Hamburg had little reason to celebrate itself and saw its national relevance dwindle as its economy failed to respond to the Nazi policies of self-sufficiency. Its sway as an international center of trade continued to decline.¹⁰³ Still, Hamburg was determined to reassert its national and international significance. The grandiose plans for the

⁹⁹ Frank and Frank “Die Gartenstadt Klein-Borstel in Hamburg,” 317-324, 322.

¹⁰⁰ Kurt Fleige. “Staedtebau – Gestern und Heute” in *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 9 (September 1941), 229-230.

¹⁰¹ Frank and Frank “Die Gartenstadt Klein-Borstel in Hamburg,” 317-324, 322.

¹⁰² Fleige. “Staedtebau – Gestern und Heute,” 229

¹⁰³ Büttner, Ursula. “Der Aufstieg Der NSDAP.” *Hamburg Im 'Dritten Reich,'* 27-65

reconstruction of the harbor, river front and the suspension bridge over the Elbe were designed to physically transform the face of Hamburg into Germany's gateway to the world and simultaneously turn that face away from the inner city stock exchange, *Rathaus* and its liberal capitalist tradition. However, the plan also implied that the city was turning its back on the traditions symbolized by the architectural union of the city-hall and the stock-exchange.¹⁰⁴

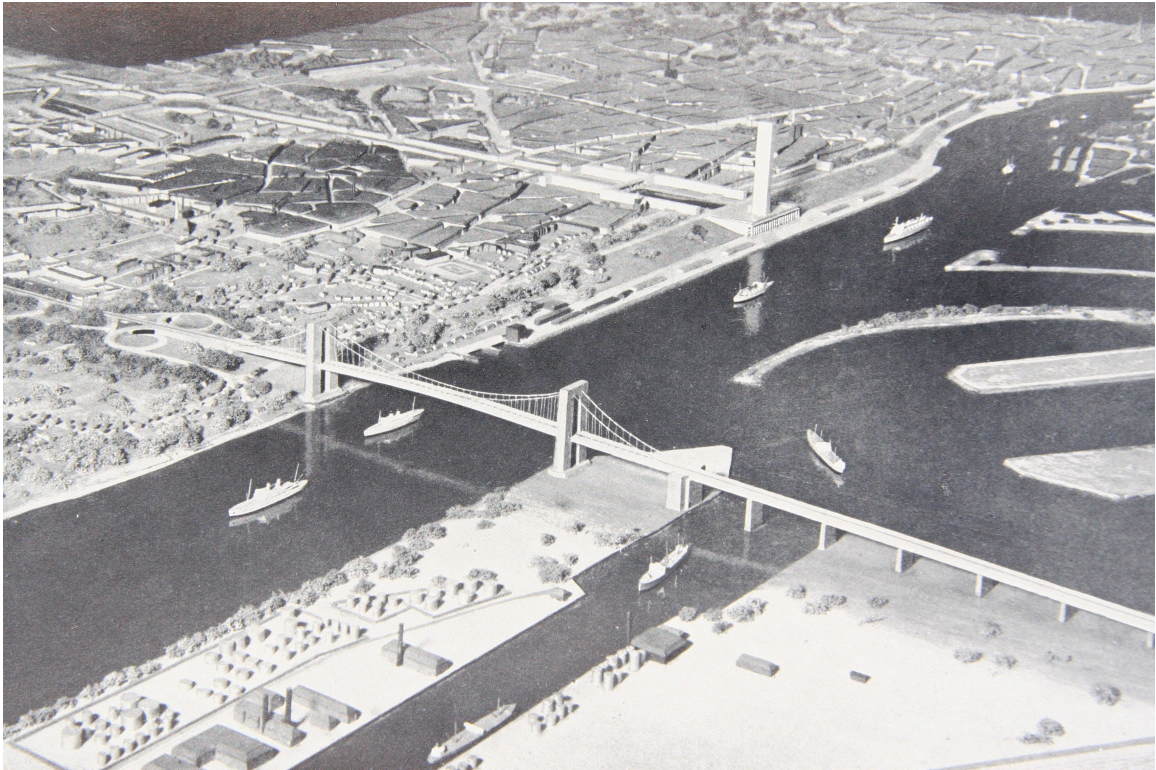


Figure 15 *Model for River Bank Reconstruction*

Hitler's plans built on Hamburg's ambitions for international recognition. The new architectural designs for the city were focused primarily on the harbor as the actual gateway. Hitler cautioned against imitating the architecture of Berlin and Munich. He saw

¹⁰⁴ The competition for transformation of the riverside front along the Elbe was conducted in preliminary forms in August 1937 in order to identify the architect who would be entrusted with the project. In July 1939, Hitler designates Konstanty Gutschow as the architect of the Elbe riverfront. See Michael Bose et al. '... *Ein Neues Hamburg Entsteht*,' 20-29. Yet it is not until the *Generalbebauungspläne* of 1940/41 and 1944 that plans attained concrete forms first in light of the impressive military victories, later in the context of the already cleared spaces. Bose et al, 55-61.

in Hamburg “something American.”¹⁰⁵ His visions for Germany’s gateway to the world constituted a Nazi response to the New York City skyline and San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge.¹⁰⁶ That large parts of the St. Pauli’s residential quarters would be leveled as a consequence was a welcome side effect. It promised to permanently transform the demography of that politically unreliable district.

In 1934, urban planners had justified the first such *Siedlungsbauten* on the basis that they would provide an environment conducive to healthy reproduction and also because settlements on the fringes of the city promised better protection from aerial bombardment.¹⁰⁷ In June 1939, Martin Mächler¹⁰⁸ warned that “the aggregated and sandwiched populations in German cities are nearly defenseless in wartime and can be protected from obliteration only by extraordinary expenditures.”¹⁰⁹ Mächler called for the systematic planning of cities arguing that only such thoughtful organization could lead to cultural refinement.¹¹⁰ After the first effects aerial bombardments became evident and in anticipation of the gloomy prospects of a prolonged war, city planners began to articulate the *Totalitätsgedanke* in urban design. Their plans were an extension of the work they had done constructing the working-class settlements. The answers to questions about the future of German cities were addressed again under the premise of the new Total City,

¹⁰⁵ C.V.Krogmann. *Es ging um Deutschland’s Zukunft*,322

¹⁰⁶ Bose et al, 33-34. See also “Hamburg to Erect 60-Story Building” *The New York Times* 11 Jun 1937.

¹⁰⁷ On March 29, 1934 Hitler’s Erlass zum deutschen Siedlungswesen (RGBl. I, 295), established a Reich commissioner for settlement (Reichskommissar für das Siedlungswesen) who answered to both the Reich Economic Minister (Hjalmar Schacht, 1934-37) and the Reich Labor Minister (Franz Seldte, 1933-45). Compare Harlader, 60. See further Stadtrat A.D. Ludorf. “Luftschutz durch Städtebau” in *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 5 (May 1935) 59-60. To protect the population from demoralization and the productive capacity of the Reich from destruction, Ludorf demands the creation of dispersed and spacious cities. For existing towns and cities he suggests a disaggregation by way of green corridors and open spaces. See also Petsch, 192.

¹⁰⁸ Martin Mächler was an architect and urban planner, fascinated by Berlin and actively involved in its urban development since the 1920s. Even though his monograph *Demodynamik* was burned by the National Socialists in 1934, he remained an active and respected authority on spatial planning throughout the Nazi period and beyond. Compare biographical entry in Munzinger-Archiv <https://www.munzinger.de/search/accept?accept-code=-336828491092602405&netto=12.9> retrieved July 1, 2009.

¹⁰⁹ Martin Mächler. “Die Großstadt als Kultur- und Raumproelm und die Grenzen ihrer Größe” in *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 6 (June 1939) 63.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*

which would reflect the organization of both Party and *Volksgemeinschaft*, and provide its inhabitants ready access to necessities under the aegis of total legibility.¹¹¹

Since the family constituted the smallest unit of the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft*, it also functioned as the nodal point for urban designers. As the smallest community, the family should be able to integrate into the larger community of the *Hausgemeinschaft*. A number of these would aggregate into *Strassengemeinschaften*, which was the equivalent of a party-political block. Several *Strassengemeinschaften* would constitute one of many sub-centers, comparable to the party structure of *Zelle* [cell]. Individual sub-centers would be connected by a ring-like street that functioned as the supply artery to various convenience stores and bakeries. The town center would resemble a collection of several smaller sub-centers.

Schools, Hitler Youth homes, kindergartens, medical services and so forth, would be located in the town center.

Between four and eight town centers together would make up the main city center. The

district party office and administrative

buildings, such as city hall, the post office, fire station, and banks as well as higher level cultural institutions, such as libraries, theaters, and of course movie palaces would be located in the main city center. Moreover, the city-center, the equivalent to the party-political structure of *Kreis*, was to have a plaza with arterial roads collecting traffic from the sub-centers. One or more of which would be a rather short and narrow shopping street that allowed pedestrians to feel comfortable in the throngs of the crowd. All sub, town,



Figure 16 *Model for Total City*

¹¹¹ Heinz Killus. "Der Totalitätsgedanke im Neuen Städtebau" in *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 4 (April 1940): 85-88.

and city centers were to be surrounded by grass borders which would help channel pedestrian traffic in and out of the center and provide space for recreation.¹¹²

It is not surprising that such plans were first introduced during wartime, when the threat of massive spatial clearance across across the city seemed imminent.¹¹³ The utopian aspirations surrounding the conception of the Total City gained traction in light of the obvious necessity for postwar reconstruction. Architects deferred massive representational construction in the interest of defense, but planning continued, “especially for the redesign of German cities.”¹¹⁴ Instead of slowing down the ambitions of urban planners, the war seemed to accelerate them. Plans for the *Führerstadt* Hamburg were taken up again with even more energy as the war progressed, making actual urban reconstruction – aside from the construction of air-raid shelters and anti-aircraft defense stations – impossible. At first, given the lighting victories in the West, urban planners turned toward the future.¹¹⁵ Later, the wartime destruction inspired an even more radical planning. These visions for ‘reconstruction’ or as they were called “*Neugestaltung*” built on the experience of the *Gartenstadt* settlements. However, they went far beyond the original concept when cleared urban space offered them a vast rubble-littered ‘blank slate.’¹¹⁶

¹¹² *ibid.*

¹¹³ Gottfried Feder’s concept of the New City (Neue Stadt) was first published in 1939.

¹¹⁴ *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*. hrsg. Generalbauinspektor für die Reichshauptstadt Albert Speer dargestellt von Rudolf Wolters (Amsterdam, Berlin, Wien: Volk und Reich Verlag Prag, 1943), 14

¹¹⁵ See Bose et al, “Der Generalbebauungsplan 1940/41” 55ff

¹¹⁶ The idea of *Gartenstadt* was by no means particular to National Socialism. In fact the Garden City Association was founded on June 10, 1899 based on concepts developed by Ebenezer Howard, who is credited with the urban utopia of the Garden City in reaction to the 19th century city. The garden city movement originated in Great Britain and found ample support in Germany in the 1920s. Compare Alfred Richard. Sennett. *Garden Cities in Theory and Practice. Being an Amplification of a Paper on the Potentialities of Applied Science in a Garden City. Read before Section F of the British Association* Vol. 2 (London: Bemrose and Sons Ltd, 1905) Further see *From Garden City to Green City: The Legacy of Ebenezer Howard* eds. Kermit C. Parsons and David Schuyler. (Baltimore: John’s Hopkins University Press, 2002). Stanley Buder, *Visionaries and planners: the Garden City Movement and the Modern Community*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Sir Raymond Unwin. *Nothing gained by Overcrowding. How the Garden City Type of development May Benefit both Owner and Occupier* (London: P.S. King & Sons, 1912). For Germany in the 1920 see Berecht Migge. *Deutsche Binnenkolonisation: Sachgrundlagen des Siedlungswesen*. ed. Deutsche Gartenstadt-Gesellschaft (Berlin: Deutscher Kommunal-Verlag, 1926).

Interventions

These grandiose visions notwithstanding, the actual local interventions transform Hamburg into Nazified urbanity were rather petty in comparison and primarily attempted to provide testimony to the city's professed National Socialist conversion in the face of the continued national perception of Hamburg as a prostitute's village and center for urban pleasure. It is paramount, however, to highlight one important exception in this respect: the Aryanization of Jewish property, the exclusion of Jewish citizens from the city's economic, social and cultural life, and ultimately, the brutal deportation and murder of close to 10,000 Hamburger Jews.¹¹⁷ While my analysis in the following pages focuses on those attempts that were connected to the city's ambitions of reinventing itself as a National Socialist metropolis of sanitized leisure, it is important here to recognize the greed, opportunism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and racial hatred that undergirded the systematic expulsion of Jews from Hamburg as the flip side of the city's self-styled cosmopolitanism.

For decades after the war, the myth of Hamburg's liberal *Sonderweg* persisted according to which National Socialism was a superficial phenomenon that never penetrated below the surface in Germany's foremost liberal stronghold, Hamburg. Accordingly, the persecution of Jews supposedly not only happened much later in

¹¹⁷ Frank Bajohr. "Arisierung" In *Hamburg: Die Verdrängung der jüdischen Unternehmen 1933-1945*. (Hamburg: Christians, 1997). For a concise overview of the anti-Jewish policies and their implementation in Hamburg see Frank Bajohr. "Von der Ausgrenzung zum Massenmord: Die Verfolgung der Hamburger Juden 1933-1945" in *Hamburg im 'Dritten Reich'* ed. Forschungstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2005): 471-518. Moreover see Uwe Lohalm. *Die Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung 1933 Bis 1945: Ein Überblick: Hamburg Im Dritten Reich*. (Hamburg: Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1999).

Hamburg then elsewhere in the Reich but also under more humane premises.¹¹⁸ Frank Bajohr has not only demonstrated that the first anti-Jewish measures started in Hamburg as immediately and ruthlessly as elsewhere in the Reich, but he furthermore revealed that Aryanization of Jewish property and the deportation of Jews in Hamburg did not weight for directives from Berlin. Hamburg exercised a certain restrained in communal anti-Jewish actions as to not further exacerbate the already precarious economic situation of the city. Since the harbor city Hamburg, so Karl Kaufmann, attracted the international attention, Kaufmann was careful not to alienate current or potential business partners. However, as Bajohr shows, where Hamburg's economic interest did not demand reticence, Kaufmann ruthlessly pushed anti-Jewish measures and even personally initiated the deportation of Hamburg's Jews in the aftermath of a severe air raid attack in September 1941 under the ridiculous pretense that Jewish occupied apartments needed to be vacated to accommodate Aryan victims of the airwar. In actuality Kaufmann, supported by Baldur von Schirach and Joseph Goebbels hoped to ingratiate himself with Hitler by reporting his *Gau* to be "Jew free" betimes. Even though the initiative was blocked by Hans Frank, the Governor General of German-occupied Poland, who was himself in the process of pushing the Jews residing in the General Government eastward and hence unwilling to accommodate Jews from the Reich. Instead of one massive deportation in early October, the great majority of Hamburg's remaining Jewish population was deported in four major transports organized between the end of October 1941 and the beginning of December. Deportations resumed again in July 1942, but unlike earlier transports which were designated for the Jewish ghettos in Poland these later deportations led directly to the death camps, with the exception of those individuals especially designated for Theresianstadt. By the end of the war, of the 19,643 citizens of

¹¹⁸ Hamburg's first postwar Mayor, Rudolf Petersen, gave a deposition according to which the persecution of Jews in Hamburg took place in a more moderate form. Compare Bajohr, "Von der Ausgrenzung zum Massenmord: Die Verfolgung der Hamburger Juden 1933-1945," 478 see also especially annotation 19. For Hamburg's liberal *Sonderweg* see in particular Frank Bajohr. "Gauleiter in Hamburg. Zur Person und Tätigkeit Karl Kaufmanns (1900-1969)." *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 43 (1995): 267-95, in particular 268 and annotation 4 and 6. Also Axel Schildt "Von der Kaufmann-Legende zur Hamburg-Legende. Heinrich Heffters Vortrag 'Hamburg und der Nationalsozialismus' in der Hamburger Universität am 9. November 1950" in *Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg. Nachrichten aus der Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg 2003* (Hamburg: FZH, 2004): 10-46.

Jewish faith (*Glaubensjuden*) counted in 1933 only 647 survived Nazism in the city. Thousands emigrated after the November Pogroms in 1938 and of the close to eight thousand people classified as “racial Jews” (*Rassejuden*) who had remained by the end of 1940 over five thousands were deported between 1941 and 1945. Scholars estimate that close to 10,000 Jews in Hamburg were exterminated by the Nazi regime.¹¹⁹

The mass exodus of Jews from Hamburg, however, was preceded by stealthy expulsion of Jews from Hamburg’s economy and society that took place with the silent acquiescence of the great majority of the population and in the context of pervasive opportunism by large segments, particularly the middle income groups and small- and medium-sized businesses who either directly benefited from the Aryanization or indirectly from the elimination of competition. Moreover, to many ordinary citizens the regime’s anti-Semitic policies offered daily opportunities to enhance their own status by publicly denigrating Jewish neighbors, competitors, customers and employees.¹²⁰

The *Hamburger Tageblatt* regularly printed anti-Semitic diatribes and took every possible occasion to distinguish itself with racist fervor but the regime’s anti-Jewish legislation and Hamburg’s ardent and diligent compliance did not figure prominently as public advertisements of the city’s successful Nazification. While citizens neither objected to the silent redistribution of property nor protested the exclusion of Jews from social and cultural life in the city, the open brutalization of Jews and vandalization of Jewish property in the November Pogroms met with near unanimous resentment in Hamburg as elsewhere in the Reich.¹²¹ Anti-Semitism was readily accepted as an integral part of Nazi ideology and the eventual expulsion of Jews from Germany found numerous

¹¹⁹ For these numbers and a more in elaborate discussion of the deportations of Jews from Hamburg see Bajohr, “Von der Ausgrenzung zum Massenmord: Die Verfolgung der Hamburger Juden 1933-1945,” 505-509,

¹²⁰ For Hamburg compare again, Bajohr, “Von der Ausgrenzung zum Massenmord: Die Verfolgung der Hamburger Juden 1933-1945,” 479ff. For the importance of such structural violence and exclusion see Michael Wildt. *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung. Gewalt gegen Juden in der deutschen Provinz 1919-1939*. (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2007), Andrew Bergerson. *Ordinary Germans in Extraordinary Times: The Nazi Revolution in Hildesheim*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004) and Marion A. Kaplan. *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany*. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

¹²¹ Bajohr, “Von der Ausgrenzung zum Massenmord: Die Verfolgung der Hamburger Juden 1933-1945,” 499-503.

supporters. But anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish violence was a matter of personal pride only for a small minority and hence did not figure visibly in the local discussions for and the performances of the remaking of urban space. However, this phenomenon cannot be divorced from the social status of most of Hamburg's Jews, who moreover were highly assimilated members of venerable Hamburg families and important members of Hamburg's professional and business circles.¹²²

In contrast, the policies and practices upon which the sanitization of Hamburg's economy of pleasure was predicated did not have to maneuver such delicate ground. Here economic and social-hygienic interests could be addressed in unison. This is most evident in the aggressive fight against prostitution in Hamburg. In recent years, scholars have complicated our understanding of Nazi sexual policies and called into question the heretofore uncritically accepted assumption of Nazism's fundamental hostility to sex and sexual pleasure.¹²³ In the context of Hamburg the Nazi struggle against prostitution was part of the regime's wider attempts to reorder the landscape of pleasure in the city and to rigorously establish the conditions conducive to maintaining social and population control. While it seems indeed problematic to speak of a general hostility to sex and pleasure of the Nazi regime, it seems equally clear that the threats to social control were

¹²² Since the end of the 16th century Jews (sephardic and ashkenazi) lived in Hamburg. With the Revolution of 1848 Hamburg's Jews attained equality under public law as decreed by the National Assembly in Frankfurt. The emancipation of Jews was not reversed in Hamburg after the revolution failed and the new Hamburg constitution of 1860 guaranteed Jews full and equal political rights. In large numbers Hamburg's Jews acquired the very expensive *Großbürgerrecht* (citizenship). The Hamburger upper classes nonetheless preserved a certain cultural and political distance from Jews. Emancipation facilitated assimilation of which not least the comparably high numbers of mixed marriages in Hamburg is indicative. Hamburg's Jews were predominantly secular. According to a 1927 statistic, of the approximately 20,000 Jews in Hamburg only about 2800 belonged to Jewish cultural organizations, only 8000 were part of the German-Israeli community, and only about 1700 belonged to the association of orthodox Jews in Hamburg. Jews in Hamburg were in general better educated, had higher incomes, and lower birthrates than the average population in Hamburg. By the turn of the 20th century, most had left their residences in Alstadt and Neustadt behind and moved into the posh upper class districts of Harvestehude and Rothenbaum. Compare Günter Marwedel. *Geschichte der Juden in Hamburg, Altona und Wandsbek* (Hamburg: Hans Christians Verlag, 1982); Arno Herzig and Saskia Rohde, eds. *Die Juden in Hamburg 1590-1990*. (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 1991); Helga Krohn. *Die Juden in Hamburg: Die politische, soziale und kulturelle Entwicklung einer jüdischen Großstadtgemeinde nach der Emanzipation, 1948-1918*. (Hamburg: Hans Christians Verlag, 1974.)

¹²³ The work of Dagmar Herzog successfully challenged the prevalent conviction among scholars and lay people that Nazism was a sexually repressive regime and fundamentally hostile to pleasure and indulgence. See in particular Dagmar Herzog. "Hubris and Hypocrisy, Incitement and Disavowal: Sexuality and German Fascism." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11 1/2 (Jan/Apr 2002)

perceived the Nazi state as stemming in part at least from the particular amalgamation of urban pleasures, sex, entertainment, and working class politics.

In the 1920s Hamburg had begun to deregulate prostitution by closing state-regulated brothels and permitting registered prostitutes to take up residence in every part of the city. In addition, street soliciting was tolerated in so far as it did not gravely disturb the public order.¹²⁴ Yet over the course of the 1920s, social workers from various districts consistently complained about the intolerable conditions of public decency, dangers to youth and family, and moral decay due to the disgraceful spread of vice. Prostitution had generally been illegal until the 1927 Law for Combating Venereal Diseases abolished state-regulated prostitution in Germany. In Hamburg, however, this process was less abrupt. Following a citizens' referendum on 17 July 1921, the city abolished state-controlled brothels and incrementally enforced deregulation over the next two years. By 1924, prostitutes filled entire streets in the old parts of town and dominated the *Strassenbild* (appearance) of whole districts, most notably in St. Pauli and St. Georg.¹²⁵ Hamburg had gained the reputation as a prostitute's village. It was a city in which a prostitute "could be controlled without difficulty and in which a lenient enforcement of the regulations protected them from punishment and especially from the work house."¹²⁶

It was against this backdrop that Nazi prostitution policies first took shape. As early as March 1933, the police demanded under threat of severe punishment that prostitutes break with their current way of life. The state followed by announcing its resolve to fight public indecency and prostitution with utmost virulence.¹²⁷ On 28 February 1933, the new government in Hamburg effectively outlawed street soliciting and continued to move toward regulation. St. Pauli's Herbert Street (Herbertstrasse), the

¹²⁴ See 351-10 Sozialbehörde I EF70.15.Band I, in particular the circular from August, 1927. Also compare Julia Roos, "Backlash against Prostitutes Rights: Origins and Dynamics of Nazi Prostitution Policies" in *Sexuality and German Fascism* ed. Dagmar Herzog (New York: Berghahn 2005):67-94.

¹²⁵ See 351-10 Sozialbehörde I EF70.15.Band I, Draft of a report on Hamburg's experiences due to the abolition of regulated brothels. June 6, 1925.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹²⁷ See "Der Kampf gegen die Prostitution" in *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, 8 September 1933.

most infamous prostitution street, was fenced off with ‘modesty panels’ and the administration debated the conversion of additional streets into designated prostitution areas in the poorest parts in St. Pauli and St. Georg. However, the removal of families with children invariably interfered with the implementation of these policies.¹²⁸ Between March and June, the police arrested 3,201 women in Hamburg, of which 814 remained in protective custody and 274 underwent compulsory treatments for STD.¹²⁹

As social workers had already noted in 1926, the abolition of state regulation could not be reversed in Hamburg. In the winter of 1924, local officials counted 2,300 prostitutes. It was simply impossible to contain such a large number in compulsory accommodations. National Socialists were certainly aware of this. The chief criminal inspector reported that police were forced to release prostitutes from protective custody back for lack of space, while continuing to sweep them of the streets.¹³⁰

During the Weimar years, Hamburg’s social workers recognized the social and economic pressures that drove many young women into prostitution, and they had lobbied for increased state support and affordable housing for single women. The Nazi administration, in contrast, embarked on a very different course, and began a process of declaring prostitutes legally incompetent (*entmündigen*), which they justified by charging the women with moral turpitude (*Moralischer Schwachsinn*). Women unwilling or unable to return to decent way of life were classified as dangerous to the public and subsequently sterilized, stripped of citizenship and incarcerated. The administration was particularly concerned with women they labeled “asocial.” Instead of blaming the socio-economic circumstances in which many lower class women were trapped, the new state hoped to clean up the streets of socially and politically undesirable individuals. Claiming that the social deterioration is the result of a hereditary condition that caused women to uninhibitedly fornicate, wander the streets in their free time and seek pleasure whatever

¹²⁸ By 1936 in addition to the Herbertstrasse, the Kalkhof and Winckelstrasse had been transformed into designated prostitution streets in which prostitutes were forced to reside and undergo compulsory medical inspection to continue their profession. See Schreiben von Frau Dr. Petersen der Abteilung II des Pflegeamts 3 August 1936 in STAHH 351-10 Sozialbehörde I AF70.03 Gen Akte XH Nr. 3.

¹²⁹ See “Der Kampf gegen die Prostitution” in Hamburger Fremdenblatt, 8 September 1933.

¹³⁰ Letter by chief criminal inspector, October 10, 1933. in 351-10 Sozialbehörde I, EF70.15 BAnd I

the costs, the advocates of mass custodianship for feeble-minded women drew on the rhetoric of the bourgeois morality leagues and infused them with the new racial paradigm.¹³¹

The category of the prostitute was expanded to include all potential sources of infection for STD. As part of this process, the state differentiated between two different kinds of prostitutes. The registered prostitutes who resided in designated streets and who subjected themselves to mandatory medical examinations and treatments were incorporated into the Nazi economy. Access to brothels was routinely used as an incentive for workers. During the mobilization for war the SS considered prostitution an indispensable factor in raising productivity levels and pushed for the establishment of brothels over the opposition of religious authorities.¹³² The other group of women classified as prostitutes were those engaging in secret or occasional prostitution, were promiscuous or unmarried with STD.¹³³ The argument underlying their legal incapacitation hinged on a close cooperation between the state and medical profession and was justified by the concept of mental insufficiency.¹³⁴

Medical authorities who favored placing prostitutes of this second order under the guardianship of the city made rather complex arguments according to which prostitution itself was not a sufficient reason for their declaration as legally incompetent. Senatsrätin Professor Dr. Käthe Petersen argued that *Geistesschwäche* (mental insufficiency), of which prostitution was only one of many negative symptoms, was the reason these women required legal guardians. The defining characteristics of *Geistesschwäche*,

¹³¹ Abschrift aus der Zeitschrift "Deutsche Justiz" Nr. 10 v. 6 Mar 1936 in StAHH 351-10 Sozialbehörde I, EF70.21.

¹³² Compare Annette Timm "Prostitution, Venereal Disease, and Militarized Masculinity" (223-255) in *Sexuality and German Fascism*, 238. See also Roos, 87.

¹³³ Early in 1943, Hamburg finally fixed the definition of a prostitute as part of setting guidelines for the cooperation of various branches of the administration in the struggle against Venereal Disease in Hamburg. Hereafter a prostitute was female person who against payment engages in frequent sexual encounters with varying partners, who entices publicly and who provides for her own life and that of others as a result of this. When these conditions were not given a female person could be classified as a prostitute upon recognition as such by a chief medical professional after careful consideration of her appearance and demeanor. Compare StAHH, 351-10 Sozialbehörde I, GF33.10 Band I.

¹³⁴ *Moralischer Schwachsinn* best translates as moral turpitude, a symptom of a more generally defined mental insufficiency.

however, were met if a woman was diagnosed with no longer being able to manage her own affairs in accordance with the basic principles of the *Volksgemeinschaft*.¹³⁵ In contrast to mental insufficiency, *Geisteskrankheit* (mental illness) had been an uncontested medical reason for declaring people legally incompetent. Thus far, mental insufficiency (*Geistesschwäche*) only gave grounds for legal intervention if a defect in intellect could be medically confirmed.¹³⁶ Petersen, who justified legal incapacitation of prostitutes in the journal for psychological hygiene in 1943, argued that medical authorities were on the verge of agreeing that definitions of feeble-mindedness or mental insufficiency should include degeneracy in the realms of emotion and willpower. She insisted that “even if no intellectual deficits are present but severe lack of willpower and excessive drives” can be established, a hereditary condition must be postulated.¹³⁷

To define the grounds for legal incompetence in these terms freed the state from the burden of proving whether the woman in question was a prostitute in the sense of selling sex. Suspected licentiousness and repeated infection with STD were sufficient grounds upon which a woman could lose her status as a citizen and be incarcerated in a work or concentration camp where her labor power could be harnessed for the Nazi economy. Prostitutes who submitted to the regulatory policies established by the Nazis retained full status as citizens. Monogamous women who were unable to manage their daily affairs because they were overwhelmed by unemployment, poverty and personal hardship and as a result were unable to manage in their daily affairs, did not face legal

¹³⁵ See Letter to the president of the district court by Prof. Petersen and Senator Martini, January 25, 1935 in StAHH, 351-10 Sozialbehörde I, EF70.21 and a later publication by Käthe Petersen, “Entmündigung geisteschwacher Prostitutierter” in *Zeitschrift für psychische Hygiene* Band 15, Heft 4/6 (Januar 1943): 67-76.

¹³⁶ Already in 1910, doctors had been making the argument that “there ought to be the possibility to grant those psychopaths without grave deficiency in intellect, who cause harm to themselves or others as a result of their constitutional instability and boundlessness of physical urges (*Triebhaftigkeit*) the benevolence of protection through legal custody.” Expert reports from 1924 continued this line of argumentation and maintained that “if the character development is negatively influenced due to a genetic predisposition and if urges and passions present themselves as expression of existing degeneration, there will be no legal grounds upon which it the diagnosis of mental insufficiency might be contested.” Compare Medizinalrat Prof. Dr. F. Strassmann in *Juristische Wochenschrift*, 1910, 767 and duplicate of *Juristische Wochenschrift* 1925, 54 1. Halbjahr in StAHH 351-10 Sozialbehörde I, EF70.21.

¹³⁷ See Käthe Petersen, “Entmündigung geisteschwacher Prostitutierter” in *Zeitschrift fuer psychische Hygiene* Band 15, Heft 4/6 (Januar 1943): 68

action even though they displayed symptoms of *Geistesschwäche*.¹³⁸ The cases of Frau M. and Frau R. are illustrative in this particular context. Both women were accused of moral turpitude. Allegedly they had been prostitutes earlier in their lives and according to the court appointed volunteers, they were now unable to manage their own affairs. Frau M. contracted syphilis and an expedited trial to declare her legally incompetent was recommended. In contrast, the state prosecutor retraced his recommendation for to declare Frau R. legally incompetent, since she had picked up a fiancé of sufficient respectability instead.¹³⁹

After 1936 the numbers of reports on the women's lack of restraint, their mental insufficiency and moral turpitude declined. Street soliciting continued in St. Pauli but prostitutes were less obvious in their pursuit of customers. The rhetoric about amusement and pleasure shifted once control rested firmly in the hand of the state. Accordingly, the administrative focus changed as well. Rather than attempting to solve Hamburg's problems of poverty, prostitution or lack of housing, the administration focused on the city's appearance and its reputation in the national arena. The administration tried to redirect public attention to the orderly revival of economic activity in the city and join the celebratory spirit of rejuvenation and achievement that swept the nation, which I will examine in greater detail in the next chapter.

It is not surprising that Hamburg's fight against prostitution concentrated predominantly on improving the *Strassenbild* – the appearance of streets – in St. Pauli where prostitution and urban leisure were not only densest but lay at the heart of the city's economy of pleasure which catered not only to the bourgeois 'slummers' from Hamburg but also to countless of men entering the city after their ships landed in the harbor and increasing numbers of tourists from in and outside the Reich. Thus next to pushing prostitutes underground, the moral and visual rehabilitation of St. Pauli as the center of Hamburg's cosmopolitan leisure economy connected with the Reich's policies

¹³⁸ Compare the various case files in StAHH, 351-10 Sozialbehörde I, EF70.21.

¹³⁹ Schreiben an das Amtsgericht, Abteilung für Entmündigungssachen 25 July 1935 and Schreiben an das Landgericht Zivilkammer 1, Hamburg 26 Sept 1935 in StAHH 351-10 Sozialbehörde I EF 70.21

of placating the work classes and binding them into the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* (racial community).

Throughout the 1930s, the Reich and the city worked together (at least in part) to reinvent Hamburg as the German *Heimat*'s embodiment of *Kraft durch Freude* (Strength through Joy).¹⁴⁰ However, the rhetoric was rarely followed up by action, as is evident by the way the regime handled the acute housing crisis in Hamburg.¹⁴¹ At a time when Hamburg's economy lay in ruins and showed no significant signs of recovery, the image of a *KdF-Stadt* merged seamlessly with the city's self-concept as Germany's gateway to



Figure 17 *Congress for Leisure and Recreation in Hamburg 1936*

¹⁴⁰ See Geleitwort des Regierenden Bürgermeisters, Krogmann anlässlich des Weltkongresses fuer Freizeit und Erholung. "Die Kongreßstadt Hamburg" in *Amtlicher Führer zum Weltkongress für Freizeit und Erholung, Hamburg 23-30. Juli 1936*. Hrsg. Deutscher Organisationsausschuß des Weltkongresses für Freizeit und Erholung

¹⁴¹ For housing shortages in Hamburg and the Reich see Karl Christian Führer. "Die Machtlosigkeit des 'Maßnahmestaats.' Wohnungsmarkt und öffentliche Wohnraumbewirtschaftung." *Kein abgeschlossenes Kapitel: Hamburg im 'Dritten Reich'*. Eds. Ebbinghaus, Angelika and Karsten Linne. (Hamburg: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1997) and Tilman Harlander. *Zwischen Heimstätte Und Wohnmaschine: Wohnungsbau und Wohnpolitik in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus*. (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1995)

world. The Reich carted busloads and trainloads of tourists from all over Germany to experience the scenic beauty of Hamburg's *Stadtlandschaft* [urban landscape].¹⁴² Hamburg reinvented itself as Germany's premiere modern leisure metropolis where "unlimited *socialist* opportunities" manifested themselves more palatably through KdF than they did through military rearmament.¹⁴³ Building on a reputation that had not always served the city's best interests, the Nazis quickly realized the marketability of Hamburg as a center for entertainment, pleasure and Nazi organized leisure.

Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy), the official leisure organization, was founded on 27 November 1933 as part of the German Labor Front (DAF). Presiding over some 20 million workers, the German Labor Front was created both to placate and control the German working class.¹⁴⁴ In November 1933 Robert Ley¹⁴⁵ proclaimed the National Socialist Evening Works through which the DAF in cooperation with the respective factory or company, organized educational and leisure activities to instruct workers in the basics of Nazi ideology and improve their well-being, provide renewal and foster physical as well as spiritual vitality.¹⁴⁶ A couple of days later, the Evening Works were subsumed into *Kraft durch Freude*, founded as an antidote to idleness and inspired

¹⁴² For Hamburg's tourism statistics see report of the office for tourism 8 November 1938 in StAHH 135-1 Staatliche Pressestelle I-IV 2087. NS Institutions such as the official leisure organization *Kraft durch Freude* (Strength through Joy) continuously linked productivity and recreation. For a detailed history of the organization see Shelly Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, c.2004). There exists a sizable literature tourism and leisure in the Third Reich. See Alon Confino and Rudy Koshar "Régimes of Consumer Culture: New Narratives in Twentieth-Century German History" in *German History* 19, 2 (2001), 135-61. Rudy Koshar, "Germans at the Wheel: Cars and Leisure Travel in Interwar Germany" in Rudy Koshar Ed. *Histories of Leisure* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 215-252

¹⁴³ "Ein Volk auf Reisen" in *Amtlicher Führer zum Weltkongress für Freizeit und Erholung, Hamburg 23-30. Juli 1936*. Hrsg. Deutscher Organisationsausschuß des Weltkongresses für Freizeit und Erholung. Supposedly a Swedish journalist identified Germany as the "land of unlimited socialist opportunities," 31. (my emphasis)

¹⁴⁴ Compare Shelly Baranowski. *Strength Through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 46

¹⁴⁵ For an excellent biography of Robert Ley see Ronald Smelser. *Robert Ley: Hitler's Labor Front Leader*. (New York: Berg, 1988)

¹⁴⁶ Spode, 289. See also Baranowski, "Strength through Joy", 220.

by the Italian leisure organization OND (*Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro*).¹⁴⁷ KdF became the official leisure organization of the Third Reich, completing the transformation of the DAF from an organization dedicated to anti-communist agitation to fully fledged ‘*Wirtschaftsbefriedung*.’ It promptly focused its energy on creating the illusion of a higher *Lebensstandard*.¹⁴⁸ KdF’s People’s Theaters for the Performing Arts morphed into an empire in its own right, offering entertainment to over 54 million participants by 1938.¹⁴⁹ Theater trains brought culture out of the cities into the countryside, as part of the strategy to overcome the bourgeois status conceit and infuse everyone with the *Gemeinschaftsgedanke*. Cruising movie theaters (Tonfilmwagen), museum tours for workers, exhibitions in factories, concerts, and *volksmusikalische* events, theater and opera evenings, loosely organized social evenings, variety, cabaret and film showings characterized the catalogue of KdF offerings prior to the war. These events were carried out with the assistance of a national army of 130,000 volunteers in addition to the just 7500 KdF employees.¹⁵⁰

The most popular and best researched functioning unit of KdF was its office for Travel, Hiking and Vacation (RWU). Schlepping countless numbers of Germans across the Reich and less frequently beyond its boundaries for group hikes and sightseeing, KdF’s pan-German travel program drew 1.4 million participants at its pinnacle in 1937.¹⁵¹ It was here that the propagated ideal of *Volksgemeinschaft* could finally be sensually

¹⁴⁸ Dr. Robert Ley. *Ein Volk erobert die Freude*. (1937), 3. Under the direction of Albert Speer “*Schönheit der Arbeit*” orchestrated programs such as ‘Good Light – Good Work’, (which became known as ‘Good light – despite blackouts’), a campaign designed to improve lighting in the factories and reduce the risk of work-related accidents. Similarly the initiative “Clean people in a clean workplace” built sanitary facilities, dining and communal rooms, emphasizing the technical-hygienic nature of the institutions work. The proclaimed goal of ‘Beauty in Work’ was to make sure that the cultural work in German factories would extend its effects into realm of the private and shape it according to the same principles of cleanliness and orderliness.

¹⁴⁹ Baranowski, 58.

¹⁵⁰ Baranowski, 49. See also Karl Wilhelm Tretz, “Zwei Jahre NS-Gemeinschaft ‘Kraft durch Freude’” *Unser Wille und Weg: Monatsblätter der Reichspropagandaleitung der NSDAP*. (Jan. 1936), 23-25.

¹⁵¹ Baranowski, 121.

experienced.¹⁵² It was here that implicit contradictions between *Stadt und Land* could be dissolved in shared explorations of *Heimat*. KdF-travel, as Spode argues, was seen by friend and foe as the showpiece of NS social policy.¹⁵³ As the ultimate reward for the working *Volksgenosse* KdF advertised time away from the everyday, time to relax, time in a different physical surround, in short vacation: “The more work, the more vacation” was the motto,¹⁵⁴ in the hope, “that everyone returns all the happier to his work.”¹⁵⁵ Anchoring the “good times” of postwar memory in journeys across the country and sometimes beyond, KdF travel program was most effective in assuaging “the austerity of the present with assurances of a better life to come” even though by far fewer people than publicly proclaimed had a chance to benefit from the more exciting offerings.¹⁵⁶

In 1936, Hamburg hosted the World Congress for Leisure and Recreation, dressing up the city as a showcase of *Strength through Joy*. A successor to the first such international congress which took place in Los Angeles in 1932, the 1936 congress stood under the star of the summer Olympics held in Berlin that same year. Parading through the city in the name of a new kind of leisure that was compatible with the slogans for air, sun and capaciousness, men dressed in neoclassical tunics led a massive procession down the lavishly decorated boulevards of the inner city, celebrating joy as the wellspring of *Schaffenskraft*.

In the meantime, the St.Pauli-Freiheit Consortium and the local office for tourism attempted to follow a similar line of action on a smaller scale. As the notorious economy of vice under attack by city administrators, the Consortium attempted to reverse St. Pauli’s reputation with an aggressive press campaign to divest Hamburg’s traditional playground of its bad press and lure tourists into a city whose economy had failed to

¹⁵²Spode, 276.

¹⁵³ Spode, 279.

¹⁵⁴ Ley, *Ein Volk erobert die Freude*, 22.

¹⁵⁵ Spode, 279.

¹⁵⁶ Baranowski, “Strength through Joy” 229

respond to the reordering of the national economy laid out in the Four-Year-Plan.¹⁵⁷ The Consortium hoped to market *Hamburger Vergnügen* [Hamburg's delight] beyond the city's boundaries. "St. Slovenly" as St. Pauli was frequently referred to, became Hamburg's "Anchor of Joy" through a carefully managed public relations campaign that stressed both its wholesome entertainment and exotic allure.¹⁵⁸ In the spring of 1935, the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* explained "that some with 'skeletons in their closet' seek cover in an entertainment district that is also [part of] the dockland area," but they assured readers that St. Pauli's working population was honorable.¹⁵⁹ In January 1938, district leader Johannes Häfker drafted a lengthy proposal for the beautification of St. Pauli that envisioned whitewashed facades, improved street lighting, a parking lot, a large open air stage equipped with a loudspeaker system, and the removal of an unsightly public toilet. Häfker moreover dreamed of building an imposing portal at Millerntor that would physically function as a passage way to the hidden pleasures behind.¹⁶⁰ In addition, the district leader called on the press to cease all negative reports on St. Pauli and suggested that the state grants dance licenses to all establishments seeking them, lift the curfew and the tax on alcoholic beverages, decrease prices for utilities to make lighting more affordable, and decrease the tax on public amusements.¹⁶¹ In the end, Häfker argued that the entertainment district's reputation depended on the immaculate appearance of individual establishments and the conscientious and honorable conduct of its owners and patrons. Even though little changed in St. Pauli until the outbreak of the

¹⁵⁷ The consortium's history unfortunately cannot be reconstructed beyond the traces the institution left in the local press, since records regarding its foundations and activities no longer exist. For the plans to beautify St. Pauli see letter from district leader Häfker to Mayor Krogmann, January 17, 1938. in StA HH 135-1 Staatliche Pressestelle I-IV 2077.

¹⁵⁸ See in particular "... auf der Reeperbahn, nachts um halb eins" in *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* July 18, 1939 and an impressive number of press reports on the transformation of what was often derogatorily referred to as 'St. Slovenly' into 'an anchor of pleasure.' Especially "St. Pauli wehrt sich gegen seinen Ruf" in *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* 25 May 1935 in StA HH 135-1 Staatliche Pressestelle I-IV 2077.

¹⁵⁹ "Dass aber in einem Vergnügungsviertel, das zudem noch Hafenviertel ist, mancher für kurze Zeit Unterschlupf sucht, der 'Dreck am Stecken' hat, laesst sich nicht verhindern." See "St. Pauli whert sich gegen seinen Ruf" *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* 25 May 1935.

¹⁶⁰ Proposal for the beautification of St. Pauli. Enclosure to letter by district leader to Mayor Krogmann 17 Jan 1938 in STAHH 135-1 Staatliche Pressestelle I-IV 2077.

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*

war, by the spring of 1939, German newspapers championed St. Pauli as Hamburg's Montmartre.¹⁶² Like the Congress of Leisure, the beautification of St. Pauli and its reinvention as one of the Reich's major tourist attractions was just another attempt to give Hamburg a much needed facelift. A large part of the remaking of Hamburg after the 1933 was confined to rhetoric portraying Hamburg as the healthy, clean, pulsating, modern epicenter of German culture.

¹⁶² See "Das Vergnügungsviertel im neuen Hamburg. Künftiges St. Pauli - schöner als Montmartre" in *Hamburger Anzeiger* March 3, 1939. See also "... Auf der Reeperbahn, nachts um halb eins" in *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* July 18, 1939 which reports that every establishment will be a sensation. The article further assures readers that even though an amusement district is no finishing school, and certainly nobody here is prudish, but certain boundaries of decency and morale will have to be respected.