Selling the Nazi Dream:
The Promotion of Films in the Third Reich

by

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ABSTRACT

In the following thesis I examine the advertising and promotion of films in the Third Reich. By looking at posters, promotional magazines and stills along with the films, I explore how the industry and the regime in general were responding to and creating audience expectations. While National Socialist ideology informed the filmic discourse, its themes and images remained controversial throughout the period. Contradictory messages accompanied themes of fantasy versus reality, race, women and sexuality in the films and their advertisements. These messages suggest that the cultural discourse of the period was marked by instability, rather than the stability normally attached to a regime with such a high level of regulation. Using three different types of films, musical comedies, the anti-Semitic films and the wartime melodramas, as case studies, I examine how the marketing of the genre, plot and stars reveal these contradictory messages.

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CONTENTS

Introduction

Historians and film scholars have both taken an interest in film of the Third Reich. They find the films important to the study of National Socialism since they are expressions of both the party's ideology and practices – "they offer exemplary documentation of Nazism at work" – and of popular culture and, perhaps, even opinion.[1] In the last decade especially there have been numerous studies, ranging from detailed examinations of the film industry to more thematic discussions of the films. Prior to this, scholarship on the films was actually rather slow to develop as political and military histories of the Third Reich reigned supreme. From the late 1960s to the 1980s, historians began to study Nazi-era film, though they were most interested in utilizing a top down model to examine film in the Third Reich. They did not include the discussion of opposing forces such as consumerism, aestheticism or leisure. Instead they focused on one force - the political force. Their studies, therefore, usually consisted of examinations of the nature of Goebbels' control over film policy and his use of film as propaganda.

Gerd Albrecht's, *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik* (1969), was one of the first comprehensive histories of the German film industry during the Third Reich. Albrecht's main line of investigation questions to what extent Goebbels was involved in the daily running of the film industry. Through a detailed study of Goebbels' diary and the Ministry of Propaganda files, he concludes that Goebbels was heavily involved, especially in the big budget propaganda films and the weekly newsreels. When he was not directly involved, however, the German film industry still worked towards Nazi ideals. The National Socialists achieved this level of loyalty by coordinating all the

[1] Linda Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich: Illusions of Wholeness in Nazi Cinema* (London: Duke University Press, 1996), p. 3.

various industries' institutions under Nazi control (*Gleichschaltung*) and infiltrating every level of the bureaucracy with Nazi policies.[2]

Apart from his argument regarding Goebbels, Albrecht provided one of the definitive statistical analyses of the subject. He divides the Nazi-era film into political and non-political varieties and then further divides the non-political films into categories which describe the degree to which they contain Nazi motifs. Using these categories, he compares projected and actual box office sales, determining that in general non-political films met expectations far more than the political films.[3] This preoccupation with dividing the films into political and non-political categories (starting probably with Siegfried Kracauer, but taken to a whole new level with Albrecht) is common with many of the histories of the 1970s and 80s.[4] However, unlike some of his contemporary English-language historians, Albrecht does not see the line between propaganda and entertainment as definite; he suggests that there seems to be more issues at play than a simple conflict between ideologues and independent filmmakers, and audience reactions to both types of film were never consistently negative or positive.

Following Albrecht, two English language works on film in the Third Reich were published: David Stuart Hull's *Film in the Third Reich* (1969) and Erwin Leiser's *Nazi Cinema* (1974). Both tend to focus on questions similar to Albrecht's: how many films were propagandistic in nature, how much direct influence did the party have on the film industry and was this influence imposed upon it or welcomed? They examine virtually

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[2] *Nationalsozialistiche Film Politik: Eine soziologische Untersuchung über die Spielfilme des dritten Reich* (Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1969), p. 58-59.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 223.
[4] Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947): one of the first studies on film in the Third Reich. He argued that the German populace possessed strong fascist leanings even before the rise of the Nazis and that several of Weimar films revealed these leanings. Also, he (followed by Albrecht) divided the films into two groups: those that exuded anti-authoritarian dispositions and those that exuded authoritarian dispositions.

the same sources – Goebbels' diary and speeches, personal memoirs, interviews with directors and correspondence between the party and the industry. However, their answers to these questions are different. Hull argues that the majority of films in the Third Reich were harmless nonpolitical films (many of which survived the negative association of their time period to become classics in the postwar period). In fact, he calculates, using Allied Censorship records, that only twenty-five percent of films per year were political in their leanings.[5] Despite the establishment of the *Reichsfilmkammer* and the passing of controlling legislation, the realities of filmmaking (such as the need to make profits and the audience's demand for non-political films) and the strong independence of filmmakers almost always overruled Nazi ideology. Furthermore, he describes the political films as "anti-intellectual", "bombastic" and generally very low in quality.[6]

Leiser disagrees with Hull's interpretation of the industry and the films. He argues that Goebbels managed to gain very tight control of the film industry, operating as an omnipresent dictator over the majority of film productions.[7] He also believes that almost all films of the Third Reich contained some degree of Nazi ideology. The German audience easily swallowed these political messages because, according to Leiser, "Drunk with sleep, they were easily steered in the required direction, with the truth concealed and any undesirable thought process obstructed."[8]

David Welch's *Propaganda and the German Cinema* (1983) and Hilmar Hoffman's *The Triumph of Propaganda* (1996) are in a similar vein to their 1960s and 1970s predecessors in that they still rely on a top down model, portraying Hitler and

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[5] Hull, *Film in the Third Reich: A Study of German Film 1933-1945* (Berekeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 36.
[6] *Ibid.* p. 61.
[7] Leiser, *Nazi Cinema* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1974), p.15.
[8] *Ibid.* p. 8.

Goebbels as the ultimate puppet masters in the Third Reich. However, they shift the focus slightly by examining the nature of propaganda and, in particular, film as propaganda. Both point to Goebbels' propaganda campaign in the arts and media as being the main reason why the German public acquiesced in Nazi atrocities. Referring to theories of mass psychology by the likes of Theodor Adorno, both offer reasons why film was chosen by the party as one of the main propaganda vehicles, such as its appeal to the emotions rather than the intellect and its immense popularity with several different sectors of society. Welch in particular examines the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst der SS*) and SOPADE (commissioned by the Social Democratic Party in exile) reports on audience reactions to films and concludes that, although it is difficult to know the exact effects of the films on audience members, they seemed to respond enthusiastically to overtly fascist films, like *Jew Süss*. Although they both point to Goebbels as being the perpetrator of propaganda, they do not portray the German public as being entirely passive receptors; "Propaganda, if it is to be effective, must in a sense preach to those who are already partially converted."[9]

In the 1990s studies on film in the Third Reich began to change significantly. In general, there was a renewed interest in the arts and culture of the Nazi period. For the first time, perhaps since Kracauer, historians began to seriously examine the films themselves, instead of using them just as a backdrop for their arguments on Nazi ideology and policy. They began to incorporate discussions of filming techniques and, thus, look not just at major themes, but also camera angles, editing, set designs and

[9] David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema 1933-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 9.

costumes.[10] Historians avoided both demonizing the films and treating them as banal or mere kitsch and this of course justified the films' treatment as historical documents in their own right. They also expressed a renewed interest in the theories of fascist aesthetics and mass consumerism developed several decades earlier by the Frankfurt School.[11] Kracauer's discussion of mass ornament, in which he likens chorus girls lines to factory workers, has been particularly influential. Their existence, he argues, is absorbed within the collective and, thus, they lose any individual importance; "production becomes the work of an anonymous mass whose individual members each perform specialized tasks; but these tasks take on meaning only within the abstract, rationalized totality that transcends the individual."[12]

Two historians who examine Nazi aesthetics are Susan Sontag and Karsten Witte. Both adopt Kracauer's theory of the mass ornament: Sontag in her discussion of Riefenstahl's documentaries and Witte in his discussion of revue films. Sontag describes how the masses in *Triumph of the Will* (1934) and *Olympia* (1936) are portrayed as a part of a Nazi pageantry in which they are grouped in symmetrical patterns (as in the case of the marching storm troopers in *Triumph*) or shown as individuals in geometric shapes (as in the case of the divers in *Olympia*). Particularly in the former film, the masses are grouped around Hitler, their hypnotic leader, or around bold symbols of Nazism, like the swastika. These images, Sontag argues, show "a preoccupation with situations of control,

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[10] For instance, Robert Reimer, in his introduction to the book *Cultural History through a National Socialist Lens* (New York: Camden House, 2000), states, "the formal, structural, aesthetic, and entertainment value of individual films were often just as important as, if not more so than, their thematic and ideological content" (p. 3).

[11] The Frankfurt School was composed of a group of mostly German intellectuals. It began in the 1920s and then moved to the United States during the Nazi regime. Influenced by psychoanalysis and Marxian and Kantian theory, the group criticized many of the new trappings of a modern, technology dependent society. Along with Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno were important members of the School.

[12] Kracauer, *Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947), p. 302.

submissive behavior, extravagant effort and the endurance of pain; they endorse two seemingly opposite states, egomania and servitude."[13] In other words, the viewer is made to feel both the pleasure of utter surrender and enslavement to the group and its leader and the pleasure of empowerment by being apart of such a large group – the "relations of domination and enslavement."[14]

Similarly, Witte compares the synchronized movements of dancers in the revue films to soldiers marching in military parades; both these troops/troopes are "on parade, often garbed in uniforms and usually choreographed in a costumed cadence march."[15] Like Kracauer, he describes how the mass ornament effects an abstraction and, thus, a de-individualization of both the performers and the audience. He explains how the genre of the revue is very much being copied from the Hollywood original in the Nazi period. However, in the German version there is a greater tendency towards abstraction and monotony, movements are more controlled and tight, and performers are treated even more impersonally.[16]

Historians of the 1990s attempted to devise a new approach to the study of film in the Third Reich by challenging some of the main concepts of their predecessors. They challenge the division of entertainment and politics – both in terms of the films and the overall spheres.[17] Both Eric Rentschler and Linda Schulte-Sasse, in their breakthrough works on film in the Third Reich, attack previous historians' disregard for

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[13] "Fascinating Fascism" (1974) in *The Nazification of Art*, eds. Brandon Taylor and Wilifred van der Will (England: Winchester Press, 1990), p. 211.
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] "Visual Pleasure Inhibited: Aspects of the German Revue Film," *New German Critique* 24-5 (1981-2), p. 238.
[16] *Ibid.* p. 250.
[17] Detlev Peukert in his book *Inside Nazi Germany* (London: Batsford, 1987), is especially a proponent of the separate spheres or "split consciousness" thesis, arguing that in public the majority of Germans showed loyalty to Nazism, but in private they carried out apolitical activities that often directly or inadvertently challenged Nazi ideology.

"entertainment" as either harmless fun or as overly kitschy – not worth academic study. Adopting this stance of "moral and aesthetic superiority," they argue, leads historians to ignore many of the films' complexities. For instance, Schulte-Sasse notes that, "Nazi movies, regardless of genre, need to be studied in themselves and anchored in the context of their culture's moral and aesthetic values."[18] She believes that German society somehow informed the context and form of Nazi films and, therefore, studying the films, the "fantasies and anxieties" present within them, will provide insight into German society. For Rentschler, the fact that entertainment films made up the overwhelming majority of films in the Third Reich suggests that, "Entertainment played a crucial role in Nazi culture."[19] The party leaders believed that it was within the entertainment films that propaganda was the most effective, since people came to these films to escape reality and, therefore, would be more willing to accept the 'dreams' offered to them by Nazism.

This notion of films being a site of fantasies or illusions is a popular theme in the recent work. One of the main arguments of Rentschler's book is that the Third Reich was not a Ministry of Fear, but rather a Ministry of Illusion; "Studios were dream factories, not propaganda machines."[20] Nazi films, as well as Nazi culture, put on a "happy face" – presented images that were meant to enthrall and excite the public, rather than intimidate them into accepting Nazism. Rentschler states that the "grandest illusion" of all created in the German studios was "the illusion that within this state certain spaces remained beyond control – especially the space of cinema and fantasy."[21] Both Schulte-Sasse and Sabine Hake agree with Rentschler that the National Socialists were very adept at

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[18] *Entertaining the Third Reich*, p.5.
[19] *The Ministry of Illusion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), p.16.
[20] *Ibid.*
[21] *Ibid.* p. 374.

melding the political and entertainment realms and that film was a prime medium to allow them to do so. Hake states, "In providing a social, perceptual and architectural space, the motion picture theatre functioned as an important mediator between two seemingly separate spheres, the one of mass entertainment and the one of political ideology."[22] Reminiscent of Benjamin, both Hake and Rentschler describe how film operates in illusions that, while not completely overthrowing reality, can alter people's perceptions of reality in subtle ways. However, unlike their predecessor, they do not believe this constitutes a psychological manipulation, but rather that the audience plays some role in shaping the illusions on screen.

Secondly, recent historians challenge the portrayal of film in the Third Reich as an anomaly or discontinuity. Schulte-Sasse makes the point that if one treats Nazism as the "Other," one repeats the fundamental tendency of Nazism to create the "Other" outside the realm of acceptable society (in the form of modern art, the Jew, the gypsy, etc.).[23] Instead, these historians show how film in Nazi Germany was connected both to other time periods and nations. For instance, Schulte-Sasse argues that Nazi-era film and ideology in general are strongly linked to eighteenth-century history and literature. She points to how many of the films are set in this time period and how they often appropriate the popular eighteenth-century literary theme of bourgeois tragedy.[24] Klaus Kreimeier in his comprehensive history of Ufa counteracts the "legend prevalent in film history that the National Socialists succeeded in tainting with their ideological poison every

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[22] *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), p. 69.
[23] *Entertaining the Third Reich* (London: Duke University Press, 1996), p. 11-12.
[24] *Jew Suss* is her prime example of a film that is relevant on both counts.

cinematic genre, every film, and every subject, no matter how remote from politics."[25] Despite their wishes to the contrary, the party leaders never achieved the degree of control over film content for which they hoped and this meant that "the flow of goods from the 'good old days' never dried up."[26] Therefore, he argues, Nazi-era films still referred back to Weimar themes, stylistic devices and filming techniques.

While Schulte-Sasse and Kreimeier emphasize continuity with the past, other historians examine connections with other national cinemas. In particular, they examine American influence on German film. Hollywood by the 1920s had become a force to be reckoned with by any nation trying to develop its own cinema. Thomas Saunders examines how in the Weimar period Hollywood was both admired and despised by the German film industry, which envied its ability to create mass market revenues and high quality and visually stunning film, but disliked the stiff international and domestic competition that it provided. Even though American films were generally very popular in Germany, audiences sometimes reacted against *Amerikanismus* (an American cultural invasion).[27] Historians of the Nazi-era have also examined the industry's reaction to Hollywood films. Rentschler argues that the German industry's awareness of Hollywood only increased after the Nazi takeover and asks, "In what ways did the German dream factory of the 1930s and 1940s appropriate and consciously recycle Hollywood fantasies?"[28] He answers this question in the positive by examining films like *Glückskinder* (1936) (an almost exact replica of *It Happened One Night*, 1934), which borrowed heavily from Hollywood genre conventions. Similarly, Markus Spieker in a

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[25] *The Ufa Story: A History of Germany's Greatest Film Company 1918-1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996), p. 283.
[26] *Ibid.* p. 218.
[27] *Hollywood in Berlin* (University of California Press, 1994), p. 117.
[28] *The Ministry of Illusion*, p. 13-14.

chapter called "Praise through Imitation" describes how the desire to compete with Hollywood was taken to a new level by the Nazis who pushed the industry to match box office sales and develop the first color film.[29]

Discussion of American influence on German film relates to two larger issues that have been brought up by recent historians. The first is the issue of whether Germany was developing an international or national cinema? This question usually arises in discussions of Weimar film, since it was in this era that the coming of sound films (and thus the birth of demand for German language films) challenged filmmakers to develop something uniquely German. However, several historians also see this as an interesting question for film in the Third Reich, especially since the Nazis seemed both to quell the development of a national cinema by putting a stop to a uniquely alternative cinema and to encourage it with their enthusiastic ultra-nationalism in all arts and culture. Hake captures some of this paradox by describing Nazi-era film as using modern means to express anti-modernist fantasies and international styles to promote national mythmaking.[30] Of course, the concept of a national and international cinema is a paradox in itself, since many European and Asian film industries often need both to offer something unique and to conform to international (i.e. Hollywood) conventions to achieve some level of international success.

The second issue related to American influence is the role of mass consumerism. On this front, the film industry (and the Third Reich in general) again presents a paradox in that it was both heavily government regulated and profit-oriented.[31] Both Rentschler and Schulte-Sasse criticize past historians for only focusing on the role of the former,

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[29] *Hollywood unterm Hakenkreuz* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1999), p. 149.
[30] *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, p. 11.
[31] Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich*, p. 4.

while ignoring the role market forces played in both party and industry decision-making. For instance, Rentschler argues that commercial demands took precedence over the advice of ideologues and artistic councils in determining which films received funding and promotion.[32] Lutz Koepnick, in his article "Fascist Aesthetics Revisited," integrates the theories of Adorno and Horkheimer and Benjamin in his discussion of Nazism's relationship to mass consumerism. He argues that the Nazis used marketing strategies to sell its politics as a commodity. For instance, Nazism had a brand name (fascism), a trademark (the swastika) and even slogans ('Heil Hitler'), and packaged itself as offering something to everyone; "If the National Socialism was able to muster mass support, it did so mostly because it responded to real needs and desires, because it understood how to build individual wish fantasies and diffuse utopias into the material architectures of public and private life."[33] The Nazis, therefore, following a model of American mass consumerism, managed to infiltrate every sector of modern life, entering the realms of "normal daily obsession, leisure activities, and commodity consumption," the goal being to change people's perceptions of the real.[34]

Another recent development in the history of film in the Third Reich has been studies of women. Of course, Leni Riefenstahl is one of the most popular subjects of study, but in the last few years there have also been numerous studies on the actresses of the Third Reich.[35] Antje Ascheid, in her book *Hitler's Heroines*, presents case studies of several of the leading actresses and argues that they often embody contradictions to Nazi

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[32] *German Film and Literature* (New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 91.
[33] "Fascist Aesthetics Revisited," *Modernism/Modernity* 6 (1999), p. 56.
[34] *Ibid.* p. 67.
[35] Cinzia Romani, *Tainted Goddesses: Female Film Stars of the Third Reich* (New York: Sarpedon Publishers, 1992), Jo Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich* (New York: Berg, 2000) and Antje Acheid, *Hitler's Heroines: Stardom and Womanhood in Nazi Cinema.* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003).

ideology. For instance, many of the leading actresses, including Kristina Soderbaum, Zarah Leander and Marika Rökk, were foreigners and, in general actresses who exuded an exoticism were more popular than those who epitomized Germanness.[36] Also, androgyny in actresses, which was a favored look in the Weimar period, continued to be popular in the Third Reich (Lilian Harvey, one of the top grossing actress, was noted for her boyish looks and personality). Ascheid argues that these contradictions suggest that there were inconsistencies in National Socialist film culture and that, even in this totalitarian state, ideology did not operate in a stable top down model, but rather input came from many levels; "the National Socialist state needed to embrace its ideological 'enemy' to accommodate its public's fantasies...even a system as totalitarian as Hitler's Germany could neither dictate nor contain public discourse in an ideologically stable way."[37] Similarly, Jo Fox finds that studying womanhood in Nazi-era cinema reveals many contradictions. Looking at female characters in wartime films, she finds that they often did not embody ideal Nazi characteristics, such as devotion to motherhood, but rather presented heroic manly or even adulterous characteristics. She suggests that one of the main reasons why these contradictions appear in wartime films is because women became the main cinemagoers.

Connected to the studies of women in Third Reich cinema are discussions of spectatorship and audience. Film theorists were the first to examine spectatorship in their discussions of the cinema of attractions and cinema of narrative.[38] They argued that the former demanded a passive "glance" spectatorship and the latter an active "gaze"

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[36] *Hitler's Heroines*, p. 39.
[37] *Ibid.* p. 5.
[38] The cinema of attractions covers the period 1895-1917 when the camera was static and the emphasis was on spectacular views and the cinema of narrative covers the period 1917 onward when the camera began to move and the emphasis was on storytelling.

spectatorship, which implied that the spectator now played an important role in the deliverance of the film. Feminist film theorists enthusiastically carried on these discussions of spectatorship. In her famous 1975 article "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema," Laura Mulvey argued that narrative films were characterized by a "male" gaze that objectified women. She identified three main male gazes that filter the image of the woman in a film: first, there are the male producers of the film – the cameraman, director and editor; second, there are the male characters in the film, who through camera shots and angles are always positioned as the main 'lookers'; third, there are the spectators who automatically relate to the male character's dominant look. This spectator has the privilege of being invisible – looking without being looked at. However, there is more to this "gaze" than its essential maleness; the structures of the look in cinema go "far beyond highlighting the woman's to-be-looked-at-ness, cinema builds the way she is to be looked at into a spectacle itself."[39] The male spectator derives a great sense of power and pleasure from this act of voyeurism into the women's private world and he is able to overcome fears of metaphorical castration (brought on by modernism) by objectifying women in such a manner.[40]

Several feminist scholars have challenged Mulvey's theory that film spectatorship reinforces a patriarchal outlook. Miriam Hansen argues that this theory ignores the importance of the female consumer whom especially after World War I was targeted by film industries in their publicity and products.[41] She also believes that cinema often contradicted the prevailing (male) hierarchy – "that the cinema might have

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[39] "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema" *Screen* 16, 1975, p. 17.
[40] *Ibid.* p. 10-13.
[41] *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 18.

functioned as a potentially autonomous, alternative horizon of experience for particular social groups," including women.[42] Patrice Petro similarly, in her article on Weimar film "Perceptions of Difference: Women as Spectators and Spectacle" argues that certainly the male gaze of women was central to cinema; however, films were also encouraging for the first time a female gaze. She states that women experienced "sensory deprivation" in their usual household or factory work and that film allowed them to escape this sensory monotony for the first time.[43] She accuses other historians of Weimar film of focusing too much on contemporary male misogynistic discourse, thereby ignoring the reality of the powerful female gaze; "Indeed it would seem that the women's relationship to modernity and mass culture has all too frequently been confused with male desire and with male perceptions of gender difference."[44] Both Hansen and Petro then see women as playing an equally important role as spectators of films, not just spectacles.

While discussions of gender and spectatorship, such as Petro's have become popular in Weimar film studies, they have not been applied as directly to Third Reich film (aside perhaps from Fox's look at women audiences during wartime). However, that does not mean they have not been influential. In fact, discussions of Nazi-era film frequently examine the relationship between pleasure and spectatorship. Instead of differentiating audiences according to gender (or even other social categories like class or region), they tend to be always examined as a homogenous whole.[45] A large part of the

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[42] *Ibid.* p. 17.
[43] "Perceptions of Difference: Women as Spectator and Spectacle" in *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, ed. Katharina von Ankum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. 61.
[44] *Ibid.* p. 58.
[45] This does not mean that gender plays no role in these discussions, because, as Thomas Elseaser argues, the passive pleasure in being looked at is almost always coded as feminine.

reason for this is the absence of any direct evidence for the audiences' reactions.[46] Nazi-era studies also tend to reverse the dynamics between the audience-film and spectator-spectacle binary. For instance, Schulte-Sasse argues that while the National Socialist party presents itself as the spectacle during its mass rallies and films, the German audiences are certainly the spectator, but they are also made to feel like the spectacle in a return gaze from the party. The public finds Nazism's gaze, the "all-seeing eye," pleasurable and erotic because it replaces modernity's experience of the void or anonymity with a sense of both individuality and collective unity.[47] For instance, she states, "The subject perceives a harmony between his/her look and a benevolent gaze of the Other, which creates a benevolent experience of wholeness."[48]

Some theorists, however, question whether audience pleasure can be studied in such a homogenous fashion. For instance, Janet Staiger argues that normative theories of spectatorship do not take into account perverse spectators or those spectators who react against the norm (although she is careful to point out that this does mean that they are politically rebellious or progressive). She also suggests that the collective experience of the theatre is a factor that needs to be examined more thoroughly in studies of spectatorship. Similarly, Sabine Hake makes the point that the cinema combines both private ritual with a public act and therefore, makes any study of the film watching experience very complicated, but also very interesting. Thomas Elsaesser also asks if spectatorship or "visual pleasure" is something that can be studied in a historical sense; "what in the cinema is historical, in the sense of being subject to change, capable of being

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[46] This is always a problem with studies on films, but particularly so in the Nazi period since film criticism was banned in 1936. There are a few good sources though, including the SD and Sopade Reports and a few contemporary sociological studies done on film audience.
[47] Schulte-Sasse is influenced by Foucault's theory of the panopticon.
[48] *Entertaining the Third Reich*, p. 22-23.

altered or affected by events, liable to mutation and shifts? Is pleasure historical, or only the sites of production that bind them to consumption?"[49] He argues that visual pleasure is historical – "If cinema is historical, so is pleasure."[50] However, similar to Staiger, he feels that examinations of pleasure need to be detached from studies of the film narratives and attached instead to studies of the institution of cinema (the finances, promotional campaigns, architectural structure of theatres, etc.) and studies of other venues of spectatorship (sports, concerts, etc.)

Several studies on film in the Third Reich, from Kracauer to Rentschler, have attempted to examine the German audience. However, due to limited sources or perhaps disregard for spectatorship, they seem either to be reading too much into the plots of the films or treating the audience as a homogeneous group. I would like to take the opposite approach and study the audience and their spectatorship from the side of the contemporary producers of the films since they, like present-day historians, were also trying to satisfy popular opinion. Taking one of Elsaesser's suggested elements of spectatorship that still needs to be studied, I will examine the advertisement and promotion of films during the Nazi-era. I have also decided to study the films and their advertisements in terms of genre, since genre development or the establishment of narrative and filmic paradigms that hold popular appeal also speaks, I believe, to audience expectations and desires of the period. I examine three different genres: the musical comedy, the anti-Semitic film and the wartime melodrama.

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[49] "Film History and Visual Pleasure: Weimar Cinema" in *Cinema Histories, Cinema Practices*, eds., Patricia Mellencamp and Philip Rosen (California: American Film Institute, 1984), p. 51.
[50] *Ibid.*

I have chosen in each of my chapters to examine a particular genre for two reasons: each genre was under a constant state of development in which the film industry attempted to balance political agendas with popular demands for entertainment; and, each reflects important aspects of the milieu in which it was released. For each genre, I provide a case study of two films. On the one hand, I have chosen popular films that were directed by prominent members of the industry, featured popular actors, had big budgets and achieved relatively high box office returns. On the other hand, I have attempted to choose films that have received relatively little attention from historians. I have, therefore, avoided the most famous films of each genre (although I do mention them): *Glückskinder* (1936), *Jud Süss* (1940) and *Kolberg* (1944).

The first chapter on the musical comedy genre reflects the pre-war period in which the films were still very much connected to the Weimar period (the genre, along with several of its actors and directors, had gained popularity during Weimar). In this chapter, I look at two popular operetta films, *Gasparone* (1937) and *Capriccio* (1938), both of which deal with themes and images, including American influence, sexuality and women's empowerment, seemingly more appropriate to the Weimar than the Nazi period. Images and themes more in line with reactionary values do appear in the advertisements for these films; however, they pale in comparison to the sexy, controversial ones used to sell the films and its stars.

In the second chapter, I examine two anti-Semitic films, *Robert und Bertram* (1939) and *Die Rothschilds* (1940). Both these films contain similar anti-Semitic messages, but the messages are presented in two entirely different forms or genres. They, therefore, show that anti-Semitism could adopt very different guises in Third Reich

film; it could appear in a light-hearted humorous farce film, like *Robert und Bertram,* or in a serious historical drama, like *Die Rothschilds.* Just as anti-Semitism took different forms, I argue, so too did the image of the Jew. Advertisers of the films walked a fine line between displaying the Jew as a repulsive, evil figure on the one hand and displaying him as an attractive, saleable figure on the other. As a result, the character of the Jew, and his counterpart, the Aryan, were often portrayed in very contradictory manners.

In the third and final chapter, I examine the wartime melodramas, in particular, the films *Die Grosse Liebe* (1942) and *Romanze in Moll* (1943). These films were released during a military turning point when German efforts in World War II began to falter and civilians began to suffer directly the negative impacts of war. Many of the conflicting themes and images in these films' advertisements, such as collective strength versus individualization and fantasy versus reality, seem to reflect many of the tensions relevant to wartime Germany.

Sexuality and gender are running topics of discussion throughout all my chapters. Cross-dressing, assertive female characters and female star cults were central to the promotion of *Gasparone* and *Capriccio* and, thus, they are major topics of my discussion in chapter one. In chapter two, I examine both the Jewish woman and the Aryan woman's role in the anti-Semitic films. While both women are depreciated in the films and their advertisements, they also at times appear more effective (either at furthering or countering Jewish influence) than their male counterparts. In chapter three, I examine how the two melodrama films (and really the genre as a whole) appealed directly to a female audience. However, whereas in the case of the musical comedy and the anti-Semitic films, themes and images pertaining to women often served as points of contrast

to Nazi regulation and ideology, in the case of the melodrama films, they serve more as a point of conformity.

I examine several types of advertisements for each of the films. I look first at the promotional pamphlets and magazines, specifically *Illustrierter Film-Kurier* and *Das Programm von Heute*: both published by the big industries Ufa and Tobis, and sold or given out free at the theatres. Each issue was devoted to a single film and they contained plot synopses, character descriptions and numerous stills and illustrations of the film. Second, I examine the press booklets (*Presseheft* or *Pressbuch*) sent out to theatres and newspapers, providing them with text and stills for use in their ads and directing them as how best to advertise the films and avoid censorship problems. Third, I examine newspaper ads and articles. Since the Nazis banned film criticism in 1936 (and closely monitored all language used by journalists), these articles may be considered promotional (sometimes a little criticism will appear, although one often has to read between the lines for this). In particular, I use *Film-Kurier*, the leading film trade magazine in Germany in the 1930s and 40s. Finally to gain a perspective on behind-the-scene advertising planning, I look at the Ufa *Vorstandprotokolle* or the meeting minutes of the Ufa board directors in which they recorded discussions on the production, distribution and exhibition of the films.

By examining these sources, I would like to answer the following questions: what elements of the plot are they particularly promoting, how are they promoting certain genres, how are they marketing images and themes within these genres and how does the promotion of the films correspond to contemporary ideas and events? By answering them, I hope to gain a sense of how the industry and the regime in general were

responding to and creating audience expectations. I will assume that the regime considered the German audience as both consumers, who played a role in the market, and national citizens, who were necessary to the political well being of the party and the country. I apply these questions to the Third Reich because within its cinema there were attempts to balance many conflicting forces: from government regulation to mass consumerism and from modernization to the maintenance of tradition. Of course, it may be said that these forces operated in many national cinemas. However, the level of importance placed on film, as a medium of popular imagination in the Nazi regime, was almost unparalleled.

Many methodological traps arise when studying the Nazi period. I want to avoid a top down model where Nazism is seen as always trickling down from the party, never as being informed by other elements of society. Also, there is a tendency when using this model for historians to test every aspect of German culture against a preconceived model of Nazi ideology and find it to be either conformist or contradictory. Instead, I would like to adopt the approach advocated by recent women historians of viewing the Nazi regime as a period of conflicting cultural tendencies. Images and themes within the films and their promotional materials were never straightforward; rather they were often contradictory and conflicting, suggesting that the cultural discourse of the period was marked by instability rather than an inherent stability normally attached to a regime with such a high level of regulation and control. Finally, I side with recent historians, such as Rentschler and Schulte-Sasse, in their move not to treat the Third Reich as existing within a vacuum. I want to show that its cinema was connected to other times and place, in particular, the Weimar time period and Hollywood, and that really it was by

encouraging continuities that life in Germany was able to preserve a high degree of normality during a period of intense violence.

Chapter 1: The Musical Comedies

Gasparone (Ufa, 1937) and *Capriccio* (Ufa, 1938)

Among all the 1097 feature films produced in Germany from 1933 to 1945, historians often consider the musical comedy films to be the most harmless, containing the fewest Nazi related images or ideas. These films never contained reference to contemporary politics or events – one did not see or hear Nazi party members, symbols or jargon. In fact, these films were often set in places outside Germany or in time periods far removed from the modern day. Characters wore fashionable costumes, sang silly songs and were involved in opulent dance numbers. Musical comedy films seemed to fall within the category of innocent diversions – an escape from the highly politicized reality facing Germans in the Nazi era.

Historians have varied in their approach to these films. Some argue that they are not important to the study of film in the Third Reich and, therefore, they largely ignore them.[1] Others claim that the comedy musical films along with other light-hearted entertainment films played a key role in the Nazi regime by offering the German public a distraction from reality.[2] However, these approaches fail to deal with the complexity of these films. Even within this relatively harmless genre, which seems on the surface to lack any serious meaning, there are conflicting cultural tendencies. At the forefront are the conflicting themes of traditional gender relations and women's empowerment. In addition, themes of American influence, commodification and exoticism seem to come

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[1] See, for example, David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema 1933-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 3.

[2] Sabine Hake states, "it might be argued that the politicization of the public sphere could not have taken place without the celebration of the private sphere in film comedies that promised...'freedom and deliverance from the deep worries of the daily life struggle'" (*Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001, p. 2).

into conflict with the highly regulated nature of Nazi-era film industry. Therefore, the messages within the musical comedy films are highly contradictory, suggesting that Nazi-era cultural discourse (in these films and perhaps in society as a whole) was marked by an inherent instability. I will examine the advertising and promotion of two films, *Capriccio* and *Gasparone*, and compare how the genre, the plot and the stars were marketed for each.

Plot Summaries:

Capriccio, directed by Karl Ritter, is set in eighteenth-century France. It stars Lilian Harvey in the main role of Madelone whose grandfather has raised her to fence, ride, shoot and drink like a man. When he dies, however, her fate is left up to her greedy guardian who promises her hand in marriage to the Prefect. After being locked up in a convent and shown a handsome picture of the Prefect she finally acquiesces, but on the night of the wedding she discovers she has been shown the wrong picture and the real Prefect is actually an overweight drunkard. Knocking out a page, she steals his clothes and escapes out the window. Disguised as a man she meets up with Ferdinand, whom she recognizes as the handsome man from the picture, and his friend Henri. They travel around town together, leading Madelone into a series of uncomfortable situations, including having to engage in bar fights, enter brothels and sleep in the same bed as the other two men, all the while hiding her gender and her deep love for Ferdinand. When the daughter of a Countess is discovered in Madelone's bedroom, Ferdinand challenges her to a duel in order to protect the honor of the house. Madelone wounds him and is immediately arrested and taken to court in front of the Prefect. The Prefect, noticing that

the perpetrator has a feminine appearance, makes a deal with Madelone to dress in women's clothing and appear as his wife at the wedding party, since he has been hiding the fact that his bride-to-be has escaped him. Ferdinand recognizes Madelone at the party and she immediately confesses her love to him. When the Prefect discovers them kissing, they are both brought to court. All charges are dropped, however, when during the trial the Prefect notices a "well-rounded" convent friend of Madelone's that he would rather marry.[3]

Gasparone stars Marika Rökk in the main role of Ita, the niece of a shady nightclub owner. The film takes place in the town of Olivia where a mysterious robber named Gasparone, who is both "everywhere and nowhere," wreaks havoc.[4] He is blamed for all the smuggling activity that is taking place within Olivia. He has also become a figure of popular legend and the movie opens with Ita performing a stage show in which she plays Gasparone. Ita is in love with the Governor's son Sindulfo; however, he is being pressured by his father to marry Countess Carlotta who is set to inherit a large fortune from her uncle who has disappeared in Africa. Meanwhile a handsome stranger named Erminio has appeared in Olivia and has managed to attract the amorous attention of Carlotta. Ita and Ermino join forces to secure the attentions of their lovers but by the end of the film their plans have been thwarted. However, just before Sindulfo and the Countess' engagement is announced, the Countess' uncle returns from Africa, ending her chances of inheriting the fortune, and Erminio reveals that he is in fact an undercover government agent who has discovered that Gasparone was only a ruse created by Ita's

[3] *Das Programm von Heute*, Nr. 256 (Berlin: Ufa-Verlags GmbH, 1937).
[4] *Ibid.*

uncle to hide his shady dealings. Now that all obstacles to their love have been removed, the two couples joyously unite in a song and dance finale.

I have to chosen to study these two films for several reasons. First they have not received as much attention by historians as some other musical comedy films have like *Glückskinder* (1936) and *Viktor and Viktoria* (1933). Second they both fall within the early part of the regime, which was the heyday of the musical comedy film. Musical comedy films were very expensive to make: they included large casts and intricate sets, and were often shot in foreign locations. Despite their popularity, therefore, they tended not to make a very large profit and especially when finances became tight during the war, their production numbers dropped.[5] Third they were both big budget films (the *Vorstandprotokolle* list *Capriccio* as costing approximately 894 000 RM and *Gasparone* 780 000 RM), which did very well at the box office, suggesting that their advertising was in a large part effective with the German public.

The Comedy Film:

Before examining how the musical comedy genre was marketed specifically with these two films, it is important to note the overall position of the genre in German society. In general, the genre occupied an uneasy position in 1930s Germany. Of all the genres, it borrowed the most heavily from American Hollywood films, in particular the slapstick and screwball comedies and the revue films. In fact, one of the most prominent musical comedy films in Germany at the time, *Glückskinder*, was a replica of the famous American film *It Happened One Night* (1934). Other films copied scenes from American films. For example, Marika Rökk's opening dance number in *Gasparone* was modeled

[5] Karsten Witte, *Lachende Erben, toller Tag* (Berlin: Vorwek 8, 1995), p. 45-46.

on Eleanor Powell's tap dancing in *Broadway Melody of 1936* (1935). Comedy was perceived as a skill that did not come naturally to Germans; nevertheless, it was something of which Germans were in great need in order to lighten their spirits during harsh times of the 1930s.[6] Thomas Saunders, in his study of *Amerikanismus* in Weimar Germany, describes how the slapstick comedy was from its very first appearance identified as a genre for which Germany had no equivalent. He states, "Although archetypically American, thus un-German in mentality, style and tempo, it earned a place in German theatres and repeatedly compelled critics to qualify damning judgments of Hollywood."[7] Therefore, German audiences demanded comedy films and the industry responded either by importing American films (especially during the silent period when dubbing was not required) or by making copies.

However, as Saunders' statement attests, there was some unease among critics surrounding the comedy film. For instance, the frivolity, the opulence and nonsensical plots of American films were sometimes attacked.[8] Even Goebbels qualified his admiration for *Broadway Melody of 1936* by stating, "Fluid, made with great tempo. The Americans are good at this. The content may be utter nonsense, but the way they do things is really something."[9] Also, some criticized the slavish imitation of American film, arguing that it would hurt the German national identity:

> Nothing is more senseless than to doubt one's own capacities, which after all are solidly grounded in the myriad cultural endeavors of millennia, and instead to imitate slavishly the flashy facades of a handful of foreign successes. The more German film reflects on its Germanness and takes its

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[6] See Rentschler's footnote number 53 for Chapter Four for a list of *Film-Kurier* articles in 1936 and 1937, which proclaim Germany's need for more comedy in their films (*Ministry of Illusion: Nazi Cinema and its Afterlife*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 346).
[7] *Hollywood in Berlin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 172.
[8] *Ibid.* Saunders discusses criticism of the slapstick comedy in the early 1920s on p. 175-176.
[9] As quoted in Rentschler's *Ministry of Illusion*, p. 109.

> power, sources, and effects from the essence of the German folk, the sooner it will free itself from American films.[10]

Of course, these types of criticisms did not seem to prevent the production of American-style musical comedy films, which, as a study of *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* shows, equally relied on frivolity and opulent staging.

The Operetta Film:

An important sub genre within the musical comedy genre was the operetta film. It constituted all those films whose plots were derived from operas or whose characters and style were based on opera archetypes and was very popular in Germany. *Gasparone* and *Capriccio* were among several operetta films produced in the 1930s. *Gasparone* is based on the opera of the same name composed by Karl Millöcker, which was first preformed in 1884 Vienna. The plot and characters of the film and the opera are for the most part very similar.[11] The most apparent distinction between the two is that the original opera is set in the early nineteenth-century while the film is set in the present day (the 1930s). Another important difference is the character Ita (in the film played by Marika Rökk) is given much more prominence in the film than in the opera.[12] *Capriccio* also has a corresponding opera of the same name; however, its release (in 1942) actually came later than the film's (in 1938), although it apparently was being planned as early as 1934. Composed by Richard Strauss, the opera has very little in common with the film, besides the similarity in the names of the main characters (Madeleine in the opera and

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[10] "*Lehrer und Schüler*," *Der SA-Mann*, Oct. 23, 1937 as quoted in Rentschler's *Ministry of Illusion*, p. 108.
[11] For a summary of *Gasparone* the opera see Mark Lubbock's *The Complete Book of Light Opera* (London: Putnam, 1962), p. 223-226.
[12] Also, in the film she frequently adopts the role of Gasparone (the mysterious robber), whereas in the opera this is done more by the character Erminio. This component of her character will become very important in my discussion of the advertising of Marika Rökk.

Madelone in the film) and the fact that they are both set in eighteenth-century France. Otherwise, the plots and characters are completely different.[13]

Although *Capriccio* is not directly based on an opera, the connection to long operatic and theatrical traditions was greatly emphasized. Advertisers claimed that the films were a part of the opera buffa tradition.[14] For instance, a *Film-Kurier* article on *Gasparone* read, "It contains all the elements that are essential for a great operetta – from Millöcker's music, looked after by Peter Kreuder, to the pair of lovers, to the ballet, and from choir to the 'buffo' – pair."[15] Similarly, articles on *Capriccio* repeatedly claimed that it was a film in the "style of an 'Opera Buffa.'"[16] Interestingly, advertisers for *Capriccio* made much more out of its theatrical influences than *Gasparone*. For instance, an entire *Film-Kurier* article was devoted to pointing out *Capriccio*'s connection to the *Commedia del'arte* (*Stehgreifkomödie*).[17]

The main effect of promoting *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* as operatic films was to emphasize their illusory qualities. The world of *Commedia del'arte* and opera buffa is one very far removed from reality: people break out spontaneously in song and dance, characters are archetypes (without much complexity or detailed motives for their actions) and plots are often weak, acting merely as a backdrop for the music. The constraints of the real world do not always apply in these topsy-turvy worlds: characters can act outside

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[13] For a summary of the opera Capriccio's plots see Stanley Sadie's (ed.) *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera* (New York: MacMillan Press, 1992), p. 721-723. *Capriccio* the opera was also first performed in Munich.

[14] Opera buffa refers to the Italian comic operas popular in the eighteenth-century that first appeared in Naples and Rome and then became heavily produced in Vienna. Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786, Vienna), *Don Giovanni* (1787, Prague) and *Cosi fan tutte* (1790, Vienna) are three of the most famous examples.

[15] "*Ein Kuss und seine Folgen*," 27 September 1937, Nr. 225, p. 3.

[16] "*Lilian Harvey in einer Hosenrolle*," 22 January 1938, Nr. 18, p. 3.

[17] *Commedia del'arte* was semi-improvised play popular in Italy from in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century, which always involved a set group of stereotypical characters (Pantaloon, Harlequin, Columbine, etc.).

the normal societal bounds. All these characteristics apply to the operetta films. In particular, in the advertisements for *Capriccio*, they were used to explain Madelone's cross-dressing:

> One has to go back to the costumes of [the eighteenth-century], since the heroine plays her role in pants. *Hosenrolle*, well, they seem real when Shakespeare is performed on stage, then it is easy to believe the confusions that result from them. But the reality of a film set in the present would counter the illusion. For that reason the film went back in time to the costumes of the late eighteenth-century – which are very beautiful. And to remove the plot even further from the real world, different scenes are sung in the slightly satirical style of the playful Italian 'Opera Buffa.'[18]

Therefore, a very conscious effort was made to separate the imaginary realm of *Capriccio* from the real world by associating the film with the world of Shakespeare and opera in order to make the presentation of cross dressing seem justified. Setting *Capriccio* in a time period far removed from the present (which in contrast is not done in *Gasparone* even though its original is actually set in the early nineteenth-century) also achieved this goal.

In addition to emphasizing the illusory nature of these operatic films, the advertisers also put much emphasis on the sensory experience of the film. Primarily music, dance, costumes and elaborate sets were being sold in the advertisements for *Capriccio* and *Gasparone*. For each film, the lyrics and scores of the songs were included in the *Illustrierter Film-Kurier*. In the *Presseheft* for *Gasparone*, Ufa directed the distributors to heavily promote each sensory quality of the film:

> It is advisable to offer plenty of advertising material to music and record stores, to fill shop windows and store rooms with the images of the "*Gasparone* – Millöcker – Ufa –Operetta" posters. The possibility of dressing the ushers in Dalmatian costumes or other colorful fantasy dress of a similar kind should also be considered. Please also think about the

[18] "*Lilian Harvey in einer Hosenrolle*," *Film-Kurier*, 22 January 1938, Nr. 18, p. 3

> effectiveness of music advertisements in concert cafes and dancing halls! Propose that these places have special concerts or a special dance event under the motto "from Millöcker's realm of operettas" or "a merry evening with *Gasparone*" or similar events, where at the same time the songs from the film are played and special announcements provide information about the showings of the movie.[19]

The effect of all this advertising was to emphasize that these films were foremost an experience of the senses. Other considerations, namely the plot, took second place. A *Film-Kurier* article discussed how *Gasparone* broke all the "theoretical" or "dramaturgical" guidelines for films. The guidelines stated that plot and character development – what makes the audience think rationally about the film narrative – should always come before any musical elements. However, the operetta film ignored these guidelines: "If one wanted to strictly evaluate the dramatic qualities of the operettas' plot, then the results concerning this artistic genre would be quite negative. When watching these works, however, the audience does not think of logic, but allows the enjoyable music to carry them across the light illusions of the plot."[20] Indeed, the plot of each film defies rational thought; each is very convoluted and difficult to follow.

The emphasis on sensory and emotional appeal over intellectual appeal seems to coincide with German fascist values. Anti-intellectualism was to a large degree behind the banning of art criticism in 1936, as the Nazis attempted to disassociate art from what they saw as the overly critical, intellectual realm of the Weimar period.[21] However, there is also something very contradictory in how the sensory is conceived in the musical

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[19] Berlin: Franke Co., 1937.
[20] "*Das ewig Junge bricht sich Bahn*," 21 December 1937, Nr. 296, p. 3.
[21] For instance, Goebbels reasoned that, "Artistic criticism no longer exists for its own sake. In future one ought not to degrade or criticize a well-meaning or quite respectable artistic achievement for the sake of a witty turn of phrase." As quoted in Welch's *Propaganda and the German Cinema*, p. 45.

comedy film. These films and their sensory images promote a level of material and even sexual fantasy strongly tabooed in Nazi Germany.

The Exotic:

Although the plot is overshadowed in *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* by the music, dance and costumes, elements of it were central to the advertising of each. One such element was exoticism. As previously mentioned, both *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* are set in worlds quite apart from their contemporary Germany; *Gasparone* is set on the Adriatic Sea and *Capriccio* is set in eighteenth-century France.[22] In *Gasparone*, the exotic setting is particularly important to the plot and, thus, the advertising. The original opera is set on the coast of Sicily, but the film was shot in Ragusa on the Dalmatian coast (the medieval name for Dubrovnik in what is now Croatia).[23] Actually the town in which it is set, Olivia, is fictional as promotional magazines strongly emphasized. For instance, *Gasparone*'s *Das Programm von Heute* began by describing the setting as "A beautiful, sunny country somewhere on the shore of a southerly sea, somewhere in magnificent mountains and forests, a merry, joyful people inhabiting it. Let's call it with a nice name that fits its citizens, Olivia."[24]

The imaginary nature of the setting was immediately emphasized, so that the reader knew that he or she was dealing with a realm where the constraints of the real world did not apply. It was also an excuse that allowed for the representation of

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[22] Schulte-Sasse discusses in her book, *Entertaining the Third Reich*, how many Nazi-era films are set in the eighteenth-century. She argues that the Nazis had a fascination with the Enlightenment period, since "If eighteenth-century culture 'gave birth' to modernity National Socialism so reviles, it also generated the first sentiments of anti-modernism, their logical extreme in National Socialism," p. 9.

[23] "*Berliner Weihnachtspremieren*," *Bremen Nachrichten*, (Bremen: Schünemann, 1934-44), 23 December 1937.

[24] Nr. 169, Berlin: Ufa-Verlags GmbH, 1937.

disruptive behavior. Indeed, Olivia is a sinful world inhabited by smugglers and nightclub singers and ruled by a robber: "Only a robber? Happily hand him the crown – He is duke in the land of operettas, gives us laughter as the pledge of fortune! And laughingly shout: 'Long live Gasparone!'"[25] However, the deviant, primitive nature of the setting is not completely removed from reality. A *Film-Kurier* article pointed to a historical basis for the pirate infested setting: "In ancient times, Ragusa was the most renowned hiding place of a pirate fleet that posed great problems to the then mighty lord of the seas."[26] The article then went on to describe how when the film crew arrived on the Dalmatian coast the director of photography went out on a search for "realistic smuggler and pirate characters" and that the tourist town of Dubrovnik was easily transformed into the pirate-inhabited town of its past. Therefore, the advertisers suggested that, whereas this was a realm far removed from Germany, it was not so far removed from the wild and dark energy supposedly present along the Dalmatian Coast.

Racial stereotyping was also evident in the portrayal of the fictional Balkan characters in the film. All of those who are in the employ of Massacio, the shady nightclub owner, have darker skin and wear traditional Balkan costume. In the film, these characters are portrayed as more devious and simple-minded – basically as thugs for hire. The two main Balkan characters, a couple that runs Massaccio's bar, cannot seem to control their sexuality as they are constantly shown in each other's arm, kissing even at the most inappropriate times. The *Film-Kurier* article stated that many of these characters were played by local Bosnians, whom the film crew had a difficult time controlling:

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[25] *Presseheft* (Berlin: Franke and Co., 1937).
[26] "*Aufnahmen im Seeräuberparadies*," 12 October 1937, Nr. 237, p.3.

> A great number of young men from the surrounding villages had been hired to play the prosecutors who staged the wild hunt of *Gasparone* on horseback. During this hunt, they were supposed to become increasingly exhausted. That was the most difficult part because the wild hunt of *Gasparone* made the good Bosnians more and more fiery and excited as time passed. Of exhaustion, as it was prescribed by the script, nothing could be seen until the early afternoon.[27]

The article further observed that it was not until this group of men was allowed to play wildly for a couple of hours that they were able to portray exhaustion. With its patronizing tone, the article seemed to liken the local actors to animals. However, this article and the film displayed great confusion when portraying racial or cultural elements. *Gasparone* the opera was set in Italy, but the film was set in Dubrovnik and was supposed to capture all the ambience of this "pirate's paradise." Another reviewer described the film's setting as "Spanish-Moorish."[28] Therefore, the film drew from many Southern European cultural and environmental influences, without being specific or sensitive in its portrayal in any one of them. In fact, this confusion led to a bit of controversy with the Italian ambassador in Germany when he demanded to see the script in order to censor any insensitive portrayals of Italians. In the end, Ufa refused his request, claiming that the film's narrative had nothing to do with Italy.[29] Although certainly not unique to Nazi-era films, racial stereotyping (which was taken to the extreme in the anti-Semitic films, as I will discuss the next chapter) was often a distinguishing feature of Third Reich film.[30] Even when it threatened diplomatic tension, the members of the film board would not curb the insensitive or inaccurate portrayal of other cultures.

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[27] *Ibid.*
[28] "*Eine Kuss und seine Folgen*," 27 September 1937, Nr. 225, p.3.
[29] *Vorstandprotokolle* 12.10.1937
[30] *La Habanera* (1937) is another example of a popular film where a 'non-Aryan' (in this case Puerto Rican) culture is treated as wild and dark.

There is one other form of exoticism that is important to both *Gasparone* and *Capriccio*: the nightclub. Both films have important scenes within the nightclub; *Gasparone* opens with a long scene of Ita's performance in her uncle's nightclub and then has several scenes in the backrooms and cellars of the club. *Capriccio* has scenes in several bars and in a bordello in which Madelone must prove her manliness by seducing the prostitutes dressed in belly dancer costumes. Advertisers used expressive language to describe the nightclub scenes. For instance, an article on *Capriccio* promised viewers that, "There is no lack of pompousness, of the grotesque, of enchanting costumes, of daredevil confrontations of short-tempered cavaliers and seductive cheeky dancers, but also of the 'intoxicating fogs' of drinking comrades of very different social standing."[31] In ads for *Gasparone*, the nightclub was referred to as one of those "Taverns of the world" and colorful phrases promised "never-ending youth," and "racy entertainment."[32] Suggestions of promiscuous sex were thus used to sell both these films. Therefore, the exotic was used in a racist manner, typical of the Nazi era rhetoric, but also it was used to entice the viewer into a world more in line with Weimar era cabarets.

Gender and Sexuality:

Another element of the plot that was at the forefront of the advertising was gender. Both *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* have very strong female lead characters and it is really they who dominate the films and the advertisements. In particular, *Capriccio* presents an interesting study of gender, since the main character, Madelone, disguises herself as a man in order to escape marriage to the ugly Prefect. Harvey's cross-dressing

[31] *Rezensionen Film-Bühne.*
[32] *Programm von Heute*, Nr. 162 (Berlin: Ufa-Verlags GmbH, 1937) and *Presseheft* (Berlin: Franke Co., 1937).

for this role was an issue in every newspaper ad, promotional magazine and review article. In fact, the titles for these usually ran as "Lilian Harvey in a *Hosenrolle*" or "Lilian Harvey: A girl becomes a man." Also, the main promotional picture for this film featured Harvey dressed in her cavalier outfit, aggressively swiping her sword (see Fig. 1). The advertisements maintained that her cross-dressing both represented maintenance and breaking of traditions. For instance, as has already been discussed, several articles pointed to the long cross-dressing tradition in theatre and opera dating back to when young men played the female roles. Other advertisements, however, used bold statements like "She burst the ties of sanctified tradition and slashes with a drawn sword in her fist as a knight and cavalier through amorous and joyous adventures," to emphasize a break with traditional gender relations.

Madelone's manly disguise leads to sexual tension in several scenes in the film. Promotional stills and discussions of these scenes were included in the advertisements in order to capture the viewer's attention. For instance, in one scene, Madelone is forced to sleep in a cramped bed with two men, one of which (Ferdinand) she secretly loves. The potential viewer could both catch glimpses of this scene in promotional stills (see Fig. 2) and read about it in newspaper ads: "she pretends to be [a man] and sees herself urged to spend her nights together with two more or less suspicious cavaliers and comrades."[33] Along with heterosexual tension, there are several homosexually suggestive scenes. In the scene described above, although the viewer knows that Madelone is really a woman, on the surface the scene depicts three men snuggling closely together, wearing only their nightshirts. Also, Madelone and Ferdinand are much more physical with each other when she is disguised as a man than when she comes to him as a woman at the end (see

[33] Ufa newspaper ad (journal and date unknown). Found in *Filmmusuem* collection on *Capriccio*.

Figs.3 and 4). When Madelone, aptly named Casanova in her male disguise, accompanies the two men to a bordello, they challenge her to prove her machismo and so she performs a seductive dance with the scantily clad prostitutes and sings the following song, the words of which were published in the *Illustrated Film-Kurier* for the public:

> With bravado, I want to conquer the world,
> With bravado, no girl will be spared,
> With bravado, all women will be won.
> Yesterday brown, today black, tomorrow blonde![34]

National Socialism banned homosexuality in Germany; homosexuals lost their lives in concentration camps. In contrast, homosexual themes and tensions were not exterminated from Nazi-era film. In fact, as the case of *Capriccio* shows, advertisers used sex, both heterosexual and homosexual, to entice Germans to buy tickets.

In both *Capriccio* and *Gasparone*, women are the romantic and sexual aggressors. They hold the phallic weapons and use them to steal and penetrate the hearts of men. In *Capriccio*, this weapon is the sword; as we have seen, almost every advertisement depicted Lilian Harvey holding it and describes how she "fences" and "slashes" with it. In one scene, she actually has a fencing duel with Ferdinand (over the honor of the Countess' daughter whom Madelone has supposedly enticed to her bedroom), which she wins when she lightly stabs him in the chest. One article described her use of the sword: "She knows well how to use the weapon and uses it to conquer her husband (Victor Staal), since she has set her mind to choose herself, instead of having a marriage arranged for her. This, she does masked as a man so that the other cannot deceive her, but shows himself as he really is."[35] Being disguised and armed as a man gives Madelone the upper

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[34] Nr. 2814 (Berlin: Franke Co, 1938).
[35] "*Lilian Harvey in einer Hosenrolle*," *Film-Kurier*, 22 January 1938, Nr. 18, p. 3. The remark here that Madelone must disguise herself as a man in order to learn Ferdinand's true nature is interesting. Klaus

hand in the relationship, allowing the right to freedom of choice and to avoid the deception of men in romantic affairs.

In *Gasparone*, the weapon is a knife which Marika Rökk carries when she twice dresses up as Gasparone: once at the start of the film when she plays Gasparone on the nightclub stage and then again when she disguises herself as Gasaprone, kidnaps her love interest, Sindulfo, ties him to a tree and then throws daggers at him (in order to scare some sense into him to propose to her). In both films, therefore, the women are the ones who figuratively penetrate the men and they are the ones fighting to secure the relationship. The men are only really the passive objects of attention and when they do make sexual advances they are often punished. For instance, when Ferdinand finally kisses Madelone they are both dragged into court on charges of deceit and adultery and when Sindulfo kisses Ita she slaps him ("Heinz Schorlemmer [playing Sindulfo] receives a light, but audible slap in the face – plainly the right response for a 'robbed' kiss!").[36] In this manner, the women are also the ones strongly associated with violence and sexuality. For example, advertisers clearly made this association by publishing the lyrics to the song "Ja, die Frauen sind gefährlich" (see Fig. 5):

> Yes, women are dangerous,
> Because they are stealing your heart!
> But they don't only do it in passion,
> They often also do it for fun...
> Even the evil Gasparone is not as dangerous,
> Because you can shoot at the robber –
> But try to shoot when you kiss!
> Therefore, be careful with your heart,

Theweleit in *Male Fantasies* (vol. 1, Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 1987) describes how fascism involves a turning away from women towards male companionship – that men were only truly comfortable when around other men (the military then becomes the ideal social homosocial atmosphere). Perhaps this statement, while providing evidence for Theweleit's argument, also expresses a sense of women's frustration with the homosocial nature of fascist society.

[36] "Ein Kuss und seine Folgen," *Film-Kurier*, Sept. 27, 1937, Nr. 225, p.3

When a red mouth laughs at you.
False love is very hurtful
For the soul and in your wallet!
Yes, women are dangerous,
Because they are stealing your heart!
What to you is deep love,
For them is only fun![37]

In the advertisements for both films, women were the predators in courtship; they wielded the weapons, broke the hearts and emotionally and sexually manipulated the men.

The role of women in Nazi society has been debated in numerous historical studies. However, in general historians perceive Nazi ideology to be reactionary in its approach to women. Women were encouraged to take up their traditional roles as wives and mothers (although during the war, this idea lost much of its feasibility) and to disregard many of the sexual liberties promoted during the Weimar period.[38] Do advertisements that promote female lead characters as sexual aggressors then present a contradiction to this ideology? In a sense they do not, since at the end of both films traditional gender relations are restored when the couples marry. At the end of *Capriccio*, Madelone puts down her sword, returns to feminine dresses and is soon seen swooning in the arms of Ferdinand. A promotional pamphlet reads "But nature cannot be forced...And when then cupid approaches with his trickery, / She gave into her happy fate, quite quickly."[39]

Yet despite their marriages at the end, it is really the assertiveness, rebellious and energetic nature of Harvey and Rökk's characters that sticks with a viewer. Besides, the

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[37] *Das Programm von Heute*, Nr. 162 (Berlin: Ufa-Verlags GmbH, 1937).
[38] See, for example, Anke Gleber, "Female as Void in Nazi Film," *Gender and German Cinema* (Providence: Berg, 1993).
[39] *Ufa* pamphlet (found in *Filmmuseum* collection on *Capriccio*).

resolutions at the end are over far too quickly to make much of an impression. There is no taming of the shrew at the end of the films, but rather it is the men who are brought into line. In addition, some of the most right-wing groups in Germany complained about the morals presented by these films. For example, the National Socialist *Frauenwarte*, a party-sponsored women's publication, vehemently complained that revue films continued to present the "Jewish imagery" prevalent in Weimar films, namely the portrayal of women as overly sexualized and hostile to traditional roles of marriage.[40] Therefore, the messages presented in these films with regards to women and sexuality were controversial. They were not by any measure wholly conformist or defiant, but rather suggested that ideological conflict was still very much present in films.

Star Cult:

An essential factor in the promotion of *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* was the star cult surrounding performers in each film. The star cult in 1930s Germany occupied a somewhat uneasy position in Nazi society for several reasons. First the celebrity status afforded to actors in a star cult was something that was supposed to be associated only with Adolf Hitler and his leading politicians in the Nazi regime; film stars, whose behavior was often questionable, threatened to outshine the political stars.[41] Second all the make-up, wild parties, fashion and conspicuous consumption normally associated with a stars' lifestyle was associated with a Jewish and deviant lifestyle by the Nazis. Third although male actors could become very popular celebrities, it was really female actresses and a feminine lifestyle (fashion, makeup, hairstyles) that played a greater role

[40] As quoted in Ascheid, "Nazi Stardom and the 'Modern Girl,'" *New German Critique* 74 (1998), p. 58-59.
[41] *Ibid*, p. 32.

in the star system. A star cult in a sense celebrated career women, a phenomenon at odds with National Socialism ideal womanhood.[42]

Despite all these factors resisting a star cult in Nazi Germany, one did continue to thrive and even grow. Female actors were at the forefront of the Nazi-era star cult; they were generally paid more than male actors (Zarah Leander was by far the highest paid actor of the period) and their appeal far outweighed that of their male counterparts who, as many historians have pointed out, generally lacked youth and sex appeal.[43] These actresses far more often denoted an international rather than a national style; many were foreigners and their personas were often modeled on American actresses. Also, many of these actresses displayed a lifestyle of luxury and overindulgence that rivaled their American counterparts; "If fashion and make-up were considered outmoded signifiers of 'empty' modernity, Ufa actresses for the most part looked just as artificial as Hollywood divas and never outgrew the stamp of Weimar stardom."[44] As a study of Lilian Harvey and Marika Rökk will suggest, the star was another component of Nazi-era film culture that existed neither in conformity nor defiance, but rather was an arena of controversy essential to this culture.

Lilian Harvey in many ways embodied the contradictions of the Nazi-era star cult. She was one of the most popular actors of 1920s and 1930s Germany. Her star power is evident in the advertising for *Capriccio*; her name is in bold letters on all the posters and ads, along with repeated promise of seeing her wear pants. In the *Vorstandprotokolle*, *Capriccio* is constantly referred to as the "Harvey-Film" and in discussions of salary we

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[42] *Ibid.* p. 39.
[43] Information on Leander in Jo Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich* (New York: Berg, 2000), p. 102.
[44] Antje Ascheid, *Hitler Heroines*, p. 39.

see that Harvey is earning the "high amount" of 138, 750 RM whereas the director, Karl Ritter, earns 100, 000 RM.[45]

To a large degree Harvey seemed to stand outside the bounds of Nazi culture. Her persona was linked strongly to the Weimar regime and to Hollywood. Her first film in Germany was in 1925 and by the late 1930s her career was starting to dwindle, as she was getting too old to play her typecast role of "*das süsseste Mädel der Welt.*"[46] Therefore, she was already a well-established star in Weimar before she made Nazi-era films. Also, her androgynous body was more in line with a Weimar style than the curvaceous body type one sees more frequently in Nazi-era actresses. Harvey also went to Hollywood to try to break into the American market. During her visit from 1933 to 1935, she made four films, but none of them was very successful. Although the regime frowned upon this type of expatriation, when she returned home to Germany she was welcomed as a star reborn (for example, an ad for Capriccio announces "A newly discovered Lilian Harvey"). Her lifestyle rivaled that of the Hollywood diva in wealth and luxury. Although at the beginning of her career her persona reflected her roles as an innocent girl, this persona gradually transformed into one of "fur-clad power player," who drove a Mercedes, draped herself in diamond jewelry and hobnobbed with both Ufa and Hollywood elite.[47] Also, in both her onscreen character and personal life she projected a self-confident assertiveness that seemed more in line with a Hollywood than Nazi-era actress.

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[45] Harvey's salary is listed in the 21.12.1937 entry and Ritter's in the 7.12.1937 entry.
[46] In *Liebeswalzer* (1930), Willy Fritsch's character serenades her with the song "*Du bist die süsseste Mädel der Welt,*" a nickname that stuck with Harvey thereafter.
[47] Antje Ascheid, "Nazi Stardom and the 'Modern Girl,'" p. 74 and 78-79.

Historians debate whether Harvey's star image corresponds at all to Nazi culture. In general, most historians see her as a glaring exception to the times. For example, Kreimeier argues that her "films showed that the 'American' star cult, which continued in some form in Ufa under National Socialism, was difficult to shape into an instrument of the regime, the two had nothing in common."[48] However, Witte disagrees; he sees a mechanical artificialness to Harvey, which he associates with fascist aesthetics:

> The Ufa direction did not want her to be a vamp or a lady; what they had in mind was 'the sweetest girl in the world.' They allowed this face to assume only one expression: mechanical good cheer. Harvey sought to glide over the floor like a fairy, but the pitter patter of her gait had more in common with a wind-up doll...Lilian Harvey, the eternal blond dream and lucky kid, was the perfect synthetic, whose human features mimicked the mechanical ones of cartoons.[49]

For Witte then, Harvey had everything in common with a regime that promoted a mechanized militaristic aesthetics in both their political and artistic spectacles. Ascheid disagrees that these characteristics automatically link Harvey with Nazism. She believes that her "artificiality and antirealism seemed to sidestep politics – functioning neither as an affirmation nor a condemnation – simply existing alongside it."[50] She argues that Harvey's assertiveness along with her association with conspicuous consumption puts her more in line with a female modernity opposed by the National Socialists. At the same time, Harvey's persona seems to coincide with Nazi principles; her eternal childishness that alternates both between a "boyish masculinity" and a "girlish femininity" made her perpetually dependent on men and erases any sexual threat she may pose to men.[51] However, her role in *Capriccio* seems to challenge the latter argument. Harvey's

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[48] Klaus Kremeier, *The Ufa Story* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996), p.291.
[49] "Too Beautiful to Be True: Lilian Harvey," *New German Critique* 74 (1998), p. 37.
[50] "Nazi Stardom and the 'Modern Girl,'" p. 61.
[51] *Ibid.*

alternating sexuality – feminine, masculine and asexual – (wonderfully illustrated by three stills depicting her in her disguise as Casanova, in her real clothes as Madelone and in her convent uniform as seen in Figs. 6, 7 and 8) may also be interpreted as sexually threatening in that it allows her to cross boundaries, dabbling in all kinds of sexuality: heterosexual, homosexual and lesbian. Asheid's main argument that Lilian Harvey was both a contradiction and an affirmation of Nazi culture still pertains; she is an excellent example of how conflicting ideas could be embodied in one person, who was able to achieve celebrity status in a reactionary regime.

Marika Rökk, although she was certainly one of the top actresses of the period, never achieved quite the same status or the salary as Lilian Harvey. Her career started considerably later than Harvey's; at the time of *Gasparone*'s release she was still a relatively new actress. Rökk's star image seemed to coincide more closely with Nazi ideals than Harvey's. For instance, one of Rökk's main draws was her athleticism, particularly her ability to perform very difficult and complex dance moves. Posters for *Gasparone* certainly broadcasted this point, featuring Rökk in the midst of high leaps (see Fig. 9). In contrast to Harvey's lithe, androgynous figure, Rökk's was curvaceous and feminine, but still very strong and sturdy – a body perfect for fulfilling the Nazi ideal of motherhood. She was also portrayed as being very hardworking. For example, a photo on the cover of the *Programm von Heute* shows her diligently at work, memorizing the script. Nazi rhetoric liked to emphasize the hard work and years of struggle necessary to becoming an actress in order to counterbalance the frivolity and overindulgence associated with the lifestyle.[52]

[52] Ascheid points out that Nazi rhetoric frequently emphasized years of struggle necessary to becoming an actress in *Hitler's Heroines*, p. 53. Also, one can see this rhetoric in a *Film-Kurier* article on *Capriccio*,

However, there were also components of her image that contradicted Nazi ideals. For instance, she had a reputation for having a fiery temper and being very ambitious. Romani states that her nickname was *Kollegenfresser* – partner eater – because she was quite willing to use and then dispose of partners, both on screen and off, in order to further her career. One can see her real life personalities reflected in her fictional character of Ita, who is certainly a woman who gets what she wants by any means. Advertisements for *Gasparone* even describe Ita as "ill-tempered" or "the most temperamental little person that ever stood on the stage of a revue."[53] Therefore, she shares with Harvey a willfulness that puts her more on par with modern femininity than Nazi ideals of traditional womanhood.

Conclusion:

The advertisements for *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* suggested that even within the relatively harmless genre of the musical comedy, there were conflicting cultural tendencies. Messages were never straightforward, rather they pointed to an inherent instability in cultural discourse. The advertisers made a very conscious effort to separate the imaginary realm of the films from the real world by associating the genre and plot with operatic and theatrical traditions and emphasizing the experience of the senses over the experience of the intellect. Defining the film realm as illusory – far removed from their contemporary Germany and social reality – allowed them to portray behavior that

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which interviews the actresses that play the convent pupils; it reads, "Now to show that even this first opportunity [that is their role in *Capriccio*] demanded a hard struggle, we will now report some details from the lives and the work of the young *Capriccio* monastic pupils." It then goes on to describe their modest beginning and the intensive training that went into getting their first role ("*Filmstart junger Sängerinnen in Capriccio*," 21 February 1938, Nr. 43, p.5).

[53] "*Gasparone*," *Film-Kurier*, 22 December 1937, Nr. 297, p. 2 and *Presseheft* (Berlin: Franke Co, 1938).

transgressed the strict limits of Nazi society. The advertisements for *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* enticed the viewer with images of exotic locals where thieves and nightclub dancers rule, of cross dressers whose actions play on heterosexual and homosexual tensions, and aggressive women who physically and mentally dominate their male counterparts. Some historians argue that these images in the medium of film offered a safe catharsis for disruptive and lascivious thoughts and behavior so that Germans, purged of them, could return to the regulated conformity of Nazi society. However, the presentation of these images was not so clear-cut. First these images were made to appear extremely attractive, with the full force of beautiful actors, big budgets and talented directors behind them. Second any counterbalancing images that were meant to suggest a redeeming order, such the image of the Aryan male characters or the image of marriage at the end of the films, paled in comparison to the sexy, controversial images. Third the controversial images did not just exist within the filmic realm they also existed in reality with the star cults surrounding the two main characters of *Capriccio* and *Gasparone*. Lilian Harvey and Marika Rökk, like the films in which they starred, stood neither in conformity nor in defiance to Nazi ideals, rather their existence suggests that disparate cultural forms still continued to thrive in the Nazi regime.

Chapter 2:The Anti-Semitic Film

Robert und Bertram (Tobis, 1939) and *Die Rothchilds* (Ufa, 1940)

Among all the films of the Nazi era, the anti-Semitic film stands out as an expression of Nazi ideology. These films serve as a vivid reminder of the strength of genocidal feelings in the Nazi regime. Historians have extensively studied two such films: *Jud Süss* (1940), advertised as a "true" account of the life of the Jewish finance minister, Suss Oppenheimer, in the eighteenth-century; and *Der ewige Jude* (1939), advertised as a "documentary" film, which depicted Jews in the ghetto – what the Nazis claimed was their natural habitat. I will, however, examine the promotion of two less well-known anti-Semitic films: *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds*.

These two films show that anti-Semitism could adopt very different guises in Third Reich film; it could appear in a light-hearted humorous farce film, like *Robert und Bertram* or in a serious historical drama, like *Die Rothschilds*. The films were written, directed and acted by very different sets of artists who had strong links to various genres and, as I will discuss, they were often advertised in very different manners. These differences raise the question: to what extent can historians group these films within an anti-Semitic genre? I will argue that while these films certainly contain significant anti-Semitic themes, which can be compared, it is important not to disregard the differences between them. Differences reveal how the National Socialist party and the film industry attempted to balance the political need to indoctrinate with the need to entertain the public.

Even the anti-Semitic themes in *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds* were not straightforward. Commercial pressures, competing ideological agendas, a reliance on

old narrative paradigms, and the need to entertain a paying audience all had an impact on the portrayal of Jews in these films. Also, as many historians have pointed out, the image of the Jew in Nazi society was fraught with contradictions and confusions.[1] The films were certainly not immune to this confusion; the National Socialist party and the film industry struggled with how best to construct their image of the Jew so that it both repelled and attracted the German public. They also struggled with how best to portray the Jew's nemesis, the Aryan. Through a case study of *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothchilds*, I will examine two very different presentations of the Jews. I will address how advertisers marketed the genre, the plot and the characters for each in order to show how conflicting cultural tendencies dominated even this cornerstone of Nazi ideology.

Plot Summaries:

Robert und Bertram is set in the 1820s and details the adventures of two good-natured vagabonds. When the audience first meets Robert (played by Rudi Godden) and Bertram (played by Kurt Seifert), they are behind bars on charges of vagrancy. Jail has reunited these two mischievous friends who soon escape together into the surrounding *Spreewald.* Robert and Bertram encounter Lenchen, the pretty, blond daughter of a local restaurant owner, who promises them lunch in return for their dishwashing services. She tells them of her father's debts to a Jew named Mr. Biedermeier who threatens to foreclose the family business unless Lenchen marries him. However, Lenchen is in love

[1] See for example, Albert Lindemann, *Esau's Tears: Modern Anti-Semitism and the Rise of the Jews* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997) or Philippe Burrin, *Hitler and the Jews: The Genesis of the Holocaust* (London: Edward Arnold, 1989). Also, for a theoretical discussion of the nature of racial stereotyping (although this discussion is based on a study of colonialism) and how stereotypes are inherently ambivalent and contradictory see Homi Bhabha, "The Other Question: Stereotype, discrimination and the discourse of colonialism," in *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

with Michel, a local simpleton who cannot build up the courage to ask her to marry him. In an attempt to aid Lenchen, Robert and Bertram steal Biedermeier's wallet, but instead of money, they discover inside it a letter that details Beidermeier's debts to a powerful Jewish banker in Berlin named Nathan Ipelmeyer. Robert and Bertram set off to Berlin. Disguised as the Count of Monte Christo and the distinguished music professor Müller, they gain access to a party at Ipelmeyer's house. With the skill of well-practiced pickpockets they relieve the house and all its guests of jewels, which they promptly send to Lenchen's family in the mail. Lenchen is now free to marry Michel, who, on an army training vacation, has been transformed into a real man. He boldly takes her into his arms and asks her to marry him. Meanwhile, the law has caught up with Robert and Bertram, who, in order to avoid returning to prison, escape in a hot air balloon that takes them up to heaven.

Die Rothschilds professes to give a true account of the rise in wealth of Nathan Rothschild, one of the first Rothschilds to internationalize the family business by becoming a broker on the London stock exchange.[2] The film opens with Nathan receiving his big break in the London business scene in 1806. The elector of Hesse gives Nathan 600,000 pounds, which he invests successfully, buying gold from the East Indian Company for a reduced price and then lending it at high interest rates to the Exchequer. Nathan tries to ingratiate himself into high society in London through Sylvia, the beautiful wife of a competing banker. However, this plan fails, since although London businessmen and politicians are willing to conduct business with him, they are not willing

[2] The film does follow the major events of the life of Nathan Rothschild when he first went to London. See Richard Davis' *The English Rothschilds* (London: Collins, 1983) for an account of Nathan's life. Davies notes that there has always been much speculation surrounding Nathan's buying up of stock after Waterloo, but that the amount of these stocks he made off with has often been exaggerated (see pages 35-36).

to break bread with a Jew. The film skips forward in time to 1815; Napoleon has escaped from exile and has gathered an army to challenge the English and Prussians at Waterloo. Financial speculators eagerly await the outcome of Waterloo, and Nathan plans to be the first to know the outcome by posting a secret military courier at the battlefront. When he receives the news that Napoleon has been defeated, he instead sends out the rumor that England, not France, has lost, triggering international stock market panic in which brokers sell all their bonds at the low prices. Nathan buys up these bonds and makes millions, while many English syndicates go under. The film concludes with Nathan peering over a map, showing the branches of his business spreading out all over Europe. The Star of David lights up over the map indicating, in no uncertain terms, that the victory of Britain, through Nathan's underhanded actions, has become a victory of Jewry over Europe.

Background:

Jews in Germany in the late 1930s constituted only approximately one percent of the total population. Their backgrounds were diverse; they were employed in various sectors of the economy and represented very different levels of wealth. Most had resided in Germany for several generations and had assimilated into their communities. Only approximately twenty percent were 'Eastern Jews' or those who had since World War I immigrated to Germany from impoverished parts of Eastern Europe. This group was generally the most visible, wearing typical Jewish clothing and living together in quarters

of large cities.[3] The Nazis associated all Jews with this latter group and use them as a basis to form their image of the stereotypical Jew, which was meant to apply to all Jews.

Robert und Bertram and *Die Rothschilds* were released in Germany only a year apart (in 1939 and 1940). Their timing coincided with the intensification of anti-Semitic laws and policies. Historians debate when the National Socialists actually conceived the organized mass extermination of the Jews, known as the Final Solution. However, most agree that the years 1938-39 (coinciding with the outbreak of World War II) represented a turning point in the government's policy towards the Jews.[4] Prior to 1938 there had been important anti-Semitic legislation, including, in 1935, the Nuremberg Laws, which forbade marriage between Jews and Aryans and denied Jews their full citizenship rights. In 1938, however, the government began to officially sanction violence towards Jews, and anti-Semitic legislation intensified. *Robert und Bertram* was in production in 1938 when the events of the "Night of Broken Glass" unfolded; on November 9-10, party activists murdered ninety-one Jews, burnt down synagogues and vandalized numerous shops.[5] In 1939, when *Robert und Bertram* was released and *Die Rothschilds* was in production, Germany invaded Poland, exposing the eastern Jewish populations to Nazi persecution. In 1940-41, when *Die Rothschilds* was in cinemas, the movements of Jews were severely restricted and they were forced to wear a yellow star. By early 1942 construction began on the gas chambers and crematoria in Poland, sites where millions of Jews were murdered. Therefore, *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds* were part of a wave of state-sanctioned moves against the Jews by the National Socialist party.

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[3] Information in this paragraph derived from William Carr, "Nazi Policy Against the Jews" in *Life in the Third Reich,* ed. Richard Bessel (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).
[4] See, for example, Albert Lindemann, *Esau's Tears*, William Carr "Nazi Policy Against the Jews" or Jackson Spielvogel, *Hitler and Nazi Germany A History* by (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2001).
[5] William Carr, "Nazi Policy Against the Jews," p. 72-3.

A Difference in Genre:

Besides the significance of their production and release dates, *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds* also contain several similarities in plot. Both are set in the early nineteenth-century. They contain similar portrayals of the Jew as an evil financier, and they both contain a subplot of a young Aryan couple that must overcome obstacles presented by the Jew in order to marry. Otherwise, *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds* are very different films. The most obvious distinction is that the former is a fantastical, light-hearted musical comedy, whereas the latter is a serious historical drama.

In fact, advertisers for *Robert und Bertram* strongly emphasized the light-mindedness of the film. For example, a reviewer in 1939 wrote that the film "play[s] with a lightness that knows how to cast away the bad mood from the minds of even the most depressed visitors...general cheerfulness is guaranteed."[6] The main goal of the film was to provide release to its audience from their everyday responsibilities. *Robert und Bertram*'s genre is the farce.[7] It is actually based on a farcical play of the same name composed in 1856 by Gustav Raeder.[8] Although advertisers said that anti-Semitism existed in the original play, they also promoted the portrayal of the Jew in *Robert und Bertram* as something new. For instance, one reviewer wrote, "for the first time in a movie, Judaism is made the target of superior mockery that is certain of its impact. When Herbert Hübner [who plays the Jew Mr. Ipelmeyer] strides, like a Jew, pompously and

[6] *Tobis Werbedienst* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1939).
[7] A farce is quite a broad category, which can include any sort of comedic literature, theatre or film. Albert Bermel, in a study on the farce genre, lists the following identifying characteristics: it is usually a very physical, "knockabout humor"; it is by nature popular, always meant to appeal to a wide spectrum of the public; it promises a release from everyday behavior (including an emphasis on the trance, spell or dream world); and it often includes scenes with men in drag (*Farce: A History from Aristophanes to Woody Allen*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982, p. 21).
[8] Linda Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich* (London: Duke University Press, 1996), p. 235.

desirously through his palace...the audience roars with laughter."[9] The film farce, therefore, presents the Jew as a comical figure.

In contrast, the Jews in the *Die Rothschilds* were certainly not meant to invoke laughter. The film was advertised as educational, meant to enlighten its viewers about the serious Jewish and British threat. For instance, Joseph Goebbels, under the penname Dr. G., wrote an article about the film that appeared in *Der Stürmer*, the most infamous Nazi anti-Semitic journal: "Based on historical documents, the film shows the Jew as he really lived and haggled, exploited and enslaved peoples, plotted wars and gained millions from blood and misery."[10] Goebbels' direct endorsement of this film pointed directly to its ideological significance as an anti-Semitic film.

In contemporary discourse, *Die Rothschilds* was most frequently classified as a 'historical truth 'film. Articles and press booklets repeatedly pointed out that it was "based on historical documents" and that "history co-authored this movie."[11] However, at the same time that the advertisers were praising history as the path to truth about Jews, they also argued that historians did not always tell the truth: "A movie about the criminal 'rise' of the financial dictatorship over Europe! What was treated by the far too considerate historiography as unimportant and marginal becomes overwhelmingly telling and enlightening in the plot of this film created with historical accuracy."[12] In such cases, films could be trusted to give a more accurate picture. For instance, Goebbels complained that historians downplayed or ignored "the criminal 'rise' of the [Jewish] financial dictatorship over Europe" but that *Die Rothschilds* would set the historical

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[9] "*Robert und Bertram,*" *Film-Kurier*, July 15, 1939, Nr. 162, p. 3.
[10] Dr. G, "*Die Rothschilds,*" *Der Stürmer*, 1940, Nr. 35, p. 7.
[11] *Ibid.* and *Ufa Werbedienst* (Berlin: Ufa-Filmverleih GmbH, 1940).
[12] *Ufa Presseheft.* Berlin: Klang-Film Gerät, 1940.

record straight.[13] The word most commonly used for the act of showing people the truth was *Volksaufklärung* (the people's enlightenment), a word that the Nazis considered almost synonymous with the word propaganda.[14] *Volksaufklärung*, as a concept, was utilized repeatedly throughout the advertisements with promises that the film would trigger a collective German consciousness by exposing one of the major atrocities committed by Jews in history.

The stark differences between *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds* in terms of how they were marketed illustrate the extent to which anti-Semitism could take very different guises in Third Reich film. Whereas in the former film, the Jew is meant to provoke laughter; in the latter, he is meant to provoke shock and to enlighten Germans about the "true" nature of Jewish "domination." Despite these differences, the image of the Jew in both films serves to invoke derision and hatred. In both films, he is the antagonist or villain, but his villainy does not negate all his attractive qualities, nor did the film advertisers believe it should do so. For instance, one reviewer of *Die Rothschilds* wrote that, "all psychological experience shows that sinners are more interesting than pillar saints."[15] Therefore, advertisers sought to portray the Jew as a filmic villain that was repellent enough to fit the Nazi's anti-Semitic mould, but also attractive enough to intrigue the German public.

The Jew as Antagonist:

[13] Dr. G., "*Die Rothschilds*," *Der Stürmer*, 1940, Nr. 35, p. 7.
[14] For instance, the Ministry of Propaganda was named the *Reichministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda*.
[15] Richard Biedryzynski, "*Israels Waterloo*."

There are several components to the image of the Jew in the advertisements for *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds*. One component is the portrayal of the ghetto as being the Jew's natural environment. This point is made repeatedly in *Die Rothschilds*, since the real Nathan Rothschild and his family did in fact come from the Jewish Lane in Frankfurt. Advertisers also frequently depicted the ghetto as being overcrowded, unsanitary and the place of shady business dealings. For instance, a reviewer wrote, "After they were spit out by some Galician ghetto, they were sitting in another small grimy ghetto, the Jewish Lane in Frankfurt am Main."[16] The historian Baruch Gitlis points out that prior to the Third Reich the ghetto was normally associated only with the east Jewish immigrants to Western Europe; however, during the Nazi regime this association spread to all Jews and the National Socialists were particularly eager to tie prominent Jews to origins in the ghetto.[17]

From the ghetto, the advertisements asserted, Jews would attempt to move into and infiltrate high society in the Western nations. In Nazi ideology, the Jew would try to "blend into German society and erase his Otherness."[18] In both *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds*, while the Jew may succeed in entering the business world, he does not do as well in the social world. This is because although his special, and allegedly inherent, Jewish talent with finances will always appeal to greedy Aryans (like the English in *Die Rothschilds*), even these Aryans will not be able to sufficiently overcome their natural repugnance towards Jews in order to socialize with them. The Jew, therefore, while attractive in the business world, is repulsive in the social world and his attempts to enter the latter are thwarted by his inability to hide his "innate Jewishness."

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[16] "*Die Rothschilds: Zur Berliner Uraufführung.*"
[17] *"Redemption" of Ahasuerus: The Eternal Jew in Nazi Film* (New York: Holmfirth Books, 1991), p. 97.
[18] Linda Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich*, p. 238.

A scene from *Robert und Bertram* emphasizes this point by comparing the Jew to a fat man who can never hide his belly: the banker Ipelmeyer, "I have a secret...I am an Israelite" to which the robust Bertram responds "I also have a secret...I have a belly." Several scenes in both films mock the Jew's imitation of a high society lifestyle; these scenes were prominent in the advertisements. For instance, an article on *Robert und Bertram* described how when the two vagabonds first approach Ipelmeyer he is sitting in the Café Kranzler, an actual café on the elegant *Unter den Linden* street, attempting to look the part of a member of Berlin high society.[19] Robert and Bertram similarly try to disguise themselves in the café by adopting the personas of the Count of Monte Christo and Müller. In their ridiculous disguises, they mock the Jew's obvious attempt to disguise himself as a member of German high society.

Another image of the Jew that is connected with him being an infiltrator of Aryan society is that of him being a racial defiler. The Jew's main goal was supposedly to contaminate Aryan blood through interracial sex. In Nazi propaganda this image of the Jew as a racial polluter was offered as the most threatening aspect of the Jew. For instance, Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*, "For hours the black haired Jewish youth lurks in wait for the unsuspecting girl whom he defiles with his blood, thus stealing her from her people. With every means he tries to destroy the racial foundations of the people he has set out to subjugate."[20] In 1935, the National Socialists passed the Law for Protection of German Blood and German Honor, which forbade the marriage of Jews and German citizens and sexual relations between the two outside marriage. *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds* portray the Jew as racial defiler. In the former, the Jew Mr. Biedermeier

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[19] "*Unter'n Linden, unter'n Linden...Die historische Kranzler-Ecke im Film*," *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: *Tobis Filmkunst G.m.b.H*, 1939).
[20] As quoted in Gitlis Baruch's *"Redemption" of Ahasuerus*, p. 91.

attempts to coerce the Aryan beauty Lenchen into marrying him and in the latter Nathan pursues Sylvia, the pure bred Irish wife of the banker Turner. In both cases, these men do not even come close to succeeding. However, in *Jud Süss*, the image of the Jew as racial defiler becomes more threatening. During the climax of the film Süss rapes the Aryan beauty Dorothea and at the end of the film is hung for having sexual relations with a Christian.

In the description of the scenes where the Jew imitates the upper class, the advertisements asserted that the Jew could not hide his true nature behind such an appearance. However, advertisements also professed that the ability of the Jew to successfully hide his identity behind an attractive or benign appearance was his most dangerous talent. As already discussed, the Jew was often presented as disguised or masked. The purpose of the film was then to expose the Jew; *Die Rothschilds* was touted as "a great German film about the unmasking of Judas."[21] The Jew was also portrayed as a formless or invisible entity – a metaphysical threat. For instance, a *Die Rothschilds* press booklet threatened, "on the sky over Europe a pale, ghostly gleam flashes, radiating from the new alliance, the star of the English-Jewish plutocracy."[22] The Jew had no boundaries: the Rothschilds were supposedly a "pernicious super-national power" who easily spread their influence from one country to the next.[23] Coinciding with this lack of boundaries was the frequent portrayal of the Jew as a traveler without real roots or a real home.[24]

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[21] *Ufa Presseheft* (Berlin: *Klang-Film Gerät*, 1940).
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ufa Webedienst* (Berlin:Ufa-Filmverleih, 1940).
[24] *Ibid.*

Characterizing the Jew as a formless and masked being who could blend into any foreign surrounding obviously presented difficulties for portraying his or her physical appearance. Using cartoon caricatures, the Nazis developed a stereotypical appearance for Jews; the Jew was portrayed as short and stocky, with dark, curly hair, an elongated nose and dark shifty eyes. In advertising photographs, the Rothschilds and the Ipelmeyers epitomized this look. In *Robert und Bertram*'s case, caricatures showed stereotypical "Jewish" features (see Fig.10). However, some of the Jewish characters in this film do not possess the stereotypical look. In particular, the young Jews in *Robert und Bertram,* namely Lenchen's suitor, Mr. Biedermeier, and Ipelmeyer's daughter, Isadora, are more attractive, Aryan-looking characters (with lighter skin and fitter bodies), suggesting perhaps that the younger generation of Jews is increasingly able to blend into German society.

Several historians discuss the attractive nature of the Jew in Nazi-era films (most often in relation to *Jud Süss*). In *Jud Süss*, the Jew is transformed into an attractive character, able to erase almost all of his Jewishness when he enters German high society. The popular actor Ferdinand Marian was cast in the role of Süss and apparently after appearing in the film, he received numerous letters from love struck fans (see Fig. 11).[25] Schulte-Sasse compares the Jew in anti-Semitic films to another attractive villain: the vampire in horror films. She argues that both exude incredible erotic energy that allows them to lure in the unsuspecting: "One might say that precisely what makes *Jud Süss* work as a film, with its codified organization of desire, undermines it as anti-Semitism."[26] In *Robert und Bertram*, one can see the attractive nature of the Jew starting to appear in

[25] Linda Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich*, p. 120.
[26] *Ibid.* p. 81.

the younger Jewish characters, and even old Mr. and Mrs. Ipelmeyer are attractive in terms of their comical appeal. The Jewish characters in *Die Rothschilds* do not really hold a similar appeal. In fact, Régine Friedman argues that the film did not succeed at the box office "precisely because it systematically avoided implementing the process of visual pleasure and identification."[27] The Jew in *Die Rothschilds*, therefore, was not attractive enough for audiences. However, advertisers worried that putting images of the Jew and Jewish symbols on screen and on advertising posters could give the images an unintended significance. For instance, in the press booklet, the industry directed advertisers to use the Star of David on posters for the film, but they instructed them to be careful to clearly delineate this image as a negative one:

> It is essential to operate very carefully and skillfully with it; this symbol should only be used according to its strict meaning in the decoration of the theatre, so that it does not give the impression of having a purpose separate from the film! Let our respective designs be your sole example and guideline and only bring the symbol into context with typically Jewish picture presentations – meaning for instance with the heads of the Rothschilds – or with texts that describe the typical Jew negatively.[28]

Therefore, National Socialism and the industry walked a fine line between displaying the Jew as a repulsive, evil figure on the one hand and displaying him or her as an attractive, saleable figure on the other.

Associates of the Jew:

In National Socialist propaganda the Jew does not stand alone. Instead, he appears alongside other perceived social evils, such as liberalism, communism and modernism. In the advertising for *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds* the Jew has

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[27] "Male Gaze and Female Reaction: Veit Harlan's *Jew Süss* (1940)," *Gender and German Cinema: Feminist Interventions*, eds. Sandra Frieden, et al. (Providence: Berg Publishers, 1993), p. 121.
[28] *Ufa Presseheft* (Berlin: Klang-Film Gerät, 1940).

three main associates: capitalism, aristocracy and the British. In both films the Jewish characters are highly successful businessmen and it is through their entrepreneurial talents that they are able to penetrate Western high society.[29] However, the advertisements emphasize that, unlike Aryan businessmen, the Jew does not earn his wealth through honorable means. In *Der Stürmer* Goebbels asserted that Jews will sacrifice anything in the name of business, even their own principles: "the Jew justifies his own laws [*Schabbesgesetze*] to himself and yet transgresses them because of business reasons."[30] Other articles argued that Jewish money is blood money ("He earned millions through the blood of brave soldiers") and that through their money dealings real people often become the commodity.[31] Also, Jews were portrayed as operating within an invisible capitalism, one that did not deal with concrete money and goods, but rather one that dealt with credit, investments and the stock market. Schulte-Sasse discusses this point in her study of *Robert und Bertram.* She notes how in the transition from a feudal to a capitalist economy, money systems became more complicated and the 'middle man' came to play a greater role than those involved in production. Starting in the nineteenth-century, the Jew became associated more and more with this process of abstraction: "Hence, Jews do not merely represent capital; they come to personify its intangible, pernicious power."[32] The films reflect these beliefs in that they show money in the hands of the Jew as an "abstracting force, one which strips individuals, particularly of their

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[29] Albert Lindemann in *Esau's Tears* describes how Jews have been associated with money lending throughout history. Their association with capitalism continued in the modern period – an association which has often been a main component of anti-Semitism (p. 114-15, 199-221, 177).
[30] Dr. G, "*Die Rothschilds*," *Der Stürmer*, 1940, Nr. 35, p. 7.
[31] *Ufa Presseheft* (Berlin: Klang-Film Gerät, 1940). This statement refers to the allegations that Nathan Rothschild makes investments with money earned, first, from the sale of German soldiers to Spain (Count Hesse supposedly earned his fortune this way) and, second, from speculating on the stock market the outcome of the Battle of Waterloo. In both cases the lives of soldiers becomes the commodity.
[32] *Entertaining the Third Reich*, p. 69-72.

value and renders them commodities."[33] Nathan Rothschild and the Ipelmeyers operate behind the scenes manipulating the capitalist economy in which no money actually changes hands. Rather credit and debts are their invisible weapons, which they use to strike at the heart of the Aryan.

The Jew is also associated with the aristocracy. As already discussed, the Jew attempts to enter Western high society by imitating its aristocracy, mimicking their speech, fashions and home décor, but always in an garish and pompous manner. In *Jud Süss,* the Jew allies himself with an old blue-blooded aristocracy (specifically the Duke of Wurttemberg) and those who oppose him are members of the bourgeoisie.[34] In *Die Rothschilds* and *Robert und Bertram*, the upper class with which the Jew attaches himself are more the newly moneyed leaders of industry, although at one point during *Robert und Bertram* Mr. and Mrs. Ipelmeyer do dress up as Louis XIV and Madame Pompadour for their costume ball. In fact, in the latter film the name of one of the Jewish characters, Mr. Biedermeier, denotes the Jews' connection to the Biedermeier period in German history (the early nineteenth-century – the same period in which the film takes place).[35] The period was characterized by a petty bourgeoisie who, reacting to the revolutionary atmosphere of the early nineteenth-century Europe, retreated into the private, domestic sphere, wanting to live a quiet, peaceful life.[36] In the film this period is interpreted in

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[33] *Ibid.* p. 73.

[34] Schulte-Sasse discusses how the film transformed themes present in the original historical accounts and nineteenth-century literature so that what had previously been viewed as a struggle between a Protestant bourgeois class and a Catholic aristocratic class in the film becomes primarily a struggle between Jews and Aryans .(*Entertaining the Third Reich*, p. 50-53).

[35] Schulte-Sasse also discusses another reason for the name Biedermeier: "As implied by the homophonic quality in the names '-meier' and '-meyer,' Biedermeier and Ipelmeyer are gentile-Jewish counterparts in their representation of exploitation. Not only is 'meyer' the more common spelling for Jewish names, but 'Ipel' is a south-German variation of übel, meaning 'evil'" (*Ibid.* p. 237).

[36] John Breuilly, ed., *Nineteenth-century Germany: politics, culture, and society, 1780-1918* (London: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.108. The name Biedermeier is actually from a cartoon in the humorous

negative terms; the tendency of the bourgeoisie to turn their backs on a tumultuous political sphere which they helped to created is seen as cowardly and duplicitous and their strict moral uprightness is seen as hypocritical. According to one promotional article: "One has to turn back to the time between 1820 and 1830 to understand properly how liberating this new style of theatre must have been in an era that was put together by hypocrisy. Everywhere, the worst coexistence of flat indolence and exaggerated festiveness ruled."[37] Of course, these characteristics, the hypocrisy, indolence and "exaggerated festiveness," are all those which are directly attributed to the Ipelmeyer family in the film.

The final associate of the Jew is the English. This association is only established in *Die Rothschilds,* whose release in 1940 (and then again in 1941) coincided with the war against Britain. Not only is *Die Rothschilds* an anti-Semitic film, it is also an anti-British film. The film's advertisements made repeated claims that the English are the allies of the Jews. Their greed and lust for world domination above any moral principles supposedly made them vulnerable to Jewish designs. For instance, advertisers proclaimed the existence of an "English-Jewish alliance" and describe how "England became friend and protector of the Jewish element: Judas and England became wedded to a common cause. They were winking augurs that agreed in the unscrupulous exploitation of the peoples."[38] The advertisements targeted particular Englishman as the cohorts of the Jews: the officer of the Exchequer, who cannot seem to finance any English ventures without major loans from the Jew, and Duke of Wellington "who has more debts and love

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Munich journal "*Fliegende Blätter*" whose main character Herr Biedermeier was an "archetypal petty-bourgeois, respectable, lover of the quiet life, the embodiment of Gemütlichkeit" (Ronald Taylor, *Berlin and its Culture: A Historical Portrait*, 1997, p. 120).

[37] "*Das Lokalstück: Die menschliche Komödie.*"

[38] *Ufa Presseheft* (Berlin: Klang-Film Gerät, 1940) and Richard Biedryznski, "*Israels Waterloo.*"

affairs than military merits."[39] In fact the whole British army is portrayed as being cowardly and disorganized and it is only with the help of the Prussian army that they are able to defeat Napoleon at Waterloo. However, not all of the English characters in the film are as devious as the Jew: Turner, a competing banker, and his wife Sylvia are portrayed as honorable people who see through most of Nathan's machinations. Also, between the two – the Jews and the English – the Jews are certainly the greater evil, since "It would be an exaggeration to claim that the lords of the City of London greeted the sudden appearance of this Nathan Rothschilds in their business with enthusiasm. On the contrary. Didn't this wily fellow just snatch the gold auctioned by the East-Indian Company from under their noses?"[40] Unlike the antagonism towards Jew, therefore, the antagonism towards the British is qualified.

The Aryan as Protagonist:

In *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds,* the Jewish antagonists are made very obvious to the potential viewer; the Jews have distinguishing names, physical features and personality traits. However, the same cannot be said of the protagonists; they are not as clearly drawn as the Jews. In fact, the advertisers seemed to have made a conscious effort to point out the heroes of the film, suggesting that they were not otherwise readily apparent. The Aryan characters in the two films are actually more anti-heroes than heroes; in *Robert und Bertram* they are two delinquent vagabonds and in *Die Rothschilds* they are the greedy and power-mongering British. In fact, the lack of true heroes may be

[39] Dr. G, "*Die Rothschilds*," *Der Stürmer*, 1940, Nr. 35, p. 7.
[40] *Ufa Presseheft* (Berlin: Klang-Film Gerät, 1940)

said to have plagued all the anti-Semitic films; many historians discuss how the Aryan male often appeared insipid and uninteresting compared to his Jewish counterpart.[41]

In both *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds*, the Aryan couple represents the ideal. In the former film, Lenchen and Michel are the ideal couple, while in the latter film, Phyllis, the daughter of an English banker, and George Crayton, an officer in the English army, make up the Aryan couple (see Figs. 12 and 13). In both films, the couples are stereotypically blond and bright-eyed and their love is portrayed as very innocent and natural. The Jewish characters and their evil plans threaten to come between the Aryan couple. The underlying message inherent in this portrayal is that the Jew threatens procreation and thus the continuation of a pure Aryan generation.

In both films, the ideal Aryan male is a soldier; Crayton is an officer in the English army and Michel becomes a corporal in the Prussian army. It is only as a soldier that the Aryan is truly able to become a man and defy the Jew. For instance, in *Die Rothschilds*, when George Crayton, in his duties as a military courier, discovers Nathan Rothschild's plan to manipulate the stock market by lying about the outcome of the Battle of Waterloo, he rushes back to London to expose this plan to the English businessmen. In *Robert und Bertram*, prior to entering the army, Michel is portrayed as indecisive, shy and simple-minded. Most importantly, he is unable to build up the courage to ask Lenchen to marry him even though Biedermeier, the Jew, is competing for her attentions. In fact, the press booklet described Michel's character as a *Hampelmann*, a 'Jumping Jack' puppet, who has no mind of his own: "A real woman doesn't want a puppet for a husband. That is as much a fact as water is wet. But then, some men pretend to be real

[41] See, for example, Karsten Witte, "The Invisible Legacy of Nazi Cinema," *New German Critique* 24-25 (1981-1982), p. 252, Antje Acheid, *Hitler's Heroines* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003), p. 37, or Linda Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich*, p. 81-2.

men and then turn out to be true puppets during the marriage, as weaklings that suffer being hit by their angry wives with a cleaning rag."[42] The article then stated that the army can transform puppets like Michel into real men. It reads, "he joins the army and when he returns he is a true man without the psychological and cowardly restraints. Then he doesn't hesitate long, he takes Lenchen into his arms and kisses her. Then, finally, she knows he is not a puppet." At this point in the film, Michel finally stands up to Mr. Biedermeier, telling him to leave Lenchen alone. Through the military drill machine Michel is defeminized and reborn a man. Of course it is ironic that the Aryan male needs to undergo such a rigorous transformation process in order to become a true man.[43]

Another protagonist in *Die Rothschilds* and *Robert und Bertram* is the worker. As already discussed, in Nazi ideology the Jew was the evil moneylender and was associated with all the negative dehumanizing aspects of capitalism: "the race to money is the only driving force of the English and the Jew."[44] The antithesis to the Jew then was his victim the worker, particularly the pre-industrial worker: the artisan or journeyman. Robert und Bertram represent these traditional workers; they are the journeymen of old now left to wander unemployed as vagabonds because they have no role in a modern capitalist system. Many articles described how the film captured the spirit of the wandering artisan, a spirit that supposedly lied dormant in every German:

> The romanticism that is slumbering in every German soul saw in the journeymen [*wandernde Gesellen*] a piece of eternal longing, which is peculiar to German peoples. The journeymen and students traveled for centuries. Most of them found their way back into bourgeois lawfulness,

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[42] "*Männer und Hampelmänner*," *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1939).
[43] George Mosse, *The Image of Man* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 158 and Linda Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich*, p. 242 mention this irony. Also, Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, vol. 2, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) argues, "As a rule, it was in the military academy – the German officer school – that the German acquired his finished form," p. 143.
[44] Richard Biedrynzski, "*Isreals Waterloo*."

> but some remained travelers forever – a crook, somebody who was not a criminal, but who liked it far better to tramp across the world.[45]

Everything about the characters Robert and Bertram supposedly embodied the journeyman spirit and rejected capitalism. For instance, the songs they sing were supposedly based on the *Wanderlieder* – the journeyman travel songs of the past. Their outlook on life seems utopian: "Everywhere the colorful abundance of reality is caught; life is not seen as an enemy, but as a friend that is always willing to give with full hands."[46] *Die Rothschilds* advertisements also contained leftist leanings. One promotional article quoted from Karl Marx's "On the Jewish Question": "Money is the most eager god of Isreal next to which no other god is allowed to exist. Money degrades all gods of men and turns them into a commodity."[47] Therefore, for both films, advertisers utilized socialist and even communist rhetoric to support their portrayal of the evil capitalist Jew and the ideal pre-industrial worker.[48]

In addition to idealizing the worker, the advertisements for both films also targeted the worker as one of the main viewers. For instance, promoters in the *Presseheft* for *Die Rothchilds* directed exhibitors to hang posters "in the office spaces...at the blackboards, in changing rooms, and canteens" in the German Workers Front (*Deutsche Arbeiterfront*) building.[49] In the case of *Robert und Bertram*, promoters advertised the film as a release from the tensions of work life: "Quite a few people who become tired in the repetition of their daily work, who are bogged down by the monotony of their duty,

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[45] *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1939).
[46] " *Das Lokalstück: Die menschliche Komödie*" – this article even mentions that these "two heroes may even turn out to be socialist one day."
[47] Richard Biedryznski, "*Isreals Waterloo.*"
[48] It is important to note that this rhetoric was used prior to the breaking of the non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union with the German invasion of the latter in 1941. Therefore, when the film was released (in July 1940) censors may have been more comfortable or lenient with the use of socialist-leaning rhetoric.
[49] *Ufa Presseheft* (Berlin: Klang-Film Gerät, 1940).

who only see their work without being able to look beyond, will discover in the crooks the imperfection of all human things."[50] The modern day worker would find it refreshing to delve into the lives of two vagabonds who reject the workaday world – the tyranny of the paycheck and the dependence on material goods. Laughter would bring the worker refreshment: "the specks of dissatisfaction with the monotony of work are washed away by this laughter."[51] However, the advertisements also stressed that there was a heavy price to pay for living outside the capitalist system; Robert and Bertram are always hungry and are always being thrown in jail. By the end of the film, the viewer was meant to see the working lifestyle as far more comfortable: "the crook in the farce becomes a warning; he is the raised index finger, which there expresses: see, you too can leave your work, but for what price?"[52] The film's advertisements, therefore, offered an escape from the tensions of work life, but they also emphasized the negative consequences if this escape became more than temporary.

The Jew and the Aryan Mirrored:

As a soldier and as the natural lover of the Aryan woman, the Aryan male is the complete antithesis of the Jewish male. However, the Jew and the Aryan do not always counter each other, in fact sometimes they mirror one another. Several historians have discussed this phenomenon. Eric Rentschler, in a discussion of *Jud Süss,* argues that by creating the Jew as a necessary counterpart to the Aryan, the Nazis connected the images so closely that they became co-dependent. Rentschler states: "In fabricating this counter

[50] *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1939).
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] *Ibid.*

identity, the Nazis constituted a double, a self that they could acknowledge only in the form of a reverse image...under his mask: the Semite is an Aryan."[53]

There are certainly parallels between the Aryan and the Jew in *Robert und Bertram* as the two main characters exhibit many stereotypically Jewish character traits. Like the Jew, Robert and Bertram are travelers, without any home or roots to one particular place. As vagabonds, they are societal outsiders and their escape to heaven in a hot air balloon at the end of the film reinforces the fact that they cannot be rewarded for their good deeds within any society on earth. Also, like the Jew, Robert and Bertram often don disguises and do so to invade the spaces of others; they disguise themselves as the Count of Monte Christo and the music professor Müller in order to gain access to the Ipelmeyer house. Their similarities to the Jew allow them to trick him – they are able to beat him at his own game of disguise. While Robert and Bertram may be similar to the Jew, there is one crucial difference: Robert and Bertram lie outside the capitalist system; they represent pre-industrial artisans or journeymen who are left to wander unemployed as vagabonds because they have no role in a new modern capitalist system. This makes them immune to Jewish seduction since the Nazi regime claimed that the Jew operated by appealing to material greed within a capitalist system. However, this distinction was not sharp enough for some Nazis; Hitler apparently protested against Robert and Bertram's characters, claiming that they were not sufficiently virtuous to represent German Aryans.[54]

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[53] Rentschler discusses how the films' cuts and dissolves often create parallels between the Aryan and the Jew: "The repetition of gestures and words by different characters establishes links and dissolves borders between the Jew and his Aryan counterparts." *The Ministry of Illusion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 163.

[54] Dorothea Hollstein, *Jud Süss und die Deutschen* (Berlin: Ullstein Materialien, 1971), p.52.

Another area of discomfort for advertisers was the Aryan actor who played the Jew on screen. The actor, in general, exhibited some uncomfortable parallels with the Jew. Like the Jew, the actor was a dissembler; both had a talent for adopting the appearance and personality of others. However, the Aryan actor playing the Jew was an obvious area of unease for the National Socialists. Uneasiness was evident in the advertisements for *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds*, which repeatedly mentioned that the 'real' personality of the actor was not Jewish in the least. The advertisements emphasized that it was difficult for the Aryan to play a Jew on screen, involving self-denial on the part of the Aryan actor. These articles stressed that the actors needed to undergo a transformation or a masking in order to hide their natural Aryan traits and adopt those of the Jew. In an interview, Hans Zerlett, director of *Robert und Bertram*, claimed that this transformation was so complete that on the set no one would recognize his actors as Aryans: "It is obvious that the six Jewish roles in the film had to be played by non-Jews, but the masks – a least to judge after the screen tests – are so real that nobody will doubt the reality of my Semites."[55] Some of Zerlett's actors expressed concern with being associated with a Jewish persona. For example, Tatjana Sais, who played Ipelmeyer's daughter Isadora, stated in an interview, "You know, it is a somewhat strange feeling to be identified in the consciousness of the public as a Jewish girl. I noticed that in the horrified gazes with which many visitors sized us up during the filming period."[56] The advertisers made a conscious effort to distinguish the actor and the Jew. What supposedly lay at the heart of the Jew's evil nature was the purposeful manipulation of his surface appearance, while inside he remained unchanged. The

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[55] "*Das Lokalstück: Die menschliche Komödie.*"
[56] "*Ein beinah genormtes Interview,*" *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1939).

advertisers therefore argued that while the Jew's act of disguising himself involved craftiness and a conscious effort, the actor supposedly just drew on pure spontaneous emotions:

> Oftentimes, the development of the opponent's personality demands from the author a specific knowledge of the soul and psychological depth, and from the actor the gift of showing a real human face, that, in the moment of creation does not only derive its expressiveness from the brain, but from the re-feeling of emotions.[57]

In this way, the Aryan actor's ability to become fully immersed in the character was actually seen as far more sincere and honest. Nevertheless, the fact that the advertisers needed to point out this difference suggests that the distinctions were not immediately clear – there was an uncomfortable similarity between the Aryan actor and the Jew.

Women and the Jew:

One final theme that appeared in the advertising for *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothschilds* involves gender identities. This theme may be split into two categories: the Jewish woman and the relationship of the Jewish male to the Aryan woman. In anti-Semitic film and in Nazi ideology as a whole, the Jewish woman was a much less prominent figure than the Jewish man. In Nazi ideology, the Jewish male, after all, was seen to be the larger threat; he was more likely to enter positions of power in business and politics and he posed a dangerous sexual threat because he sought to actively contaminate the Aryan blood chain. In *Die Rothschilds* and *Jud Süss*, there are no major female Jewish characters. In *Robert und Bertram*, in contrast, there are two: Mrs. Ipelmeyer and Isadora Ipelmeyer (see Figs. 14 and 15). Like their men, they are portrayed as conniving, pretentious and garish. Advertisers especially attributed this last

[57] "*Das grosse Erlebnis des Schauspielers,*" *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1939).

trait to the women, since they, like the Jewish male's house, represented a physical manifestation of the Jew's attempt to mimic an upper class lifestyle. Another important aspect of the female Jew is her lasciviousness, as clearly depicted in the two Ipelmeyer women: Mrs. Ipelmeyer makes sexual gestures towards Bertram even when sitting right next to her husband, while Isadora shamelessly flirts with several suitors at a time. The character of Isadora, however, possessed more threatening qualities than her mother. A review of the film stated:

> Very skillfully, the generation-problem is treated: Ipelmeyer's daughter was not born in Lodz, but was raised in Berlin and received an expensive education. She speaks French, is embarrassed by her parents, and is not comical any more, but she is a self-assured and intelligent person that only rarely loses her composure. Therefore, she is the type that contributed directly to the success of the Jews before 1933.[58]

Isadora represented a new generation of Jews who were supposedly better able to hide their innate Jewishness because they had achieved a degree of acculturation into Aryan society. As the article points out, Isadora was the most dangerous type of Jew because her outer appearance and personality allowed her to more easily infiltrate and spread her influence in Aryan society. Of course, her danger was attributed mostly to her youth by reference to the generation gap between her and her parents, rather than her gender. However, the filmmakers chose to represent a daughter rather than a son. Her gender – her beautiful, exotic appearance as seen in the actress' press photo – was used to enhance her dangerous seductive qualities.

Unlike the Jewish woman, the Aryan woman is an essential character in anti-Semitic film (see Figs. 16 and 17). As the object of the Jew's greedy gaze, she is portrayed as the ultimate victim of the Jew's machinations. Because of this, the Aryan

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[58] "*Robert und Bertram*" *Film- Kurier*, July 15, 1939, Nr. 162, p.3.

woman, above all else, needs to be protected by the Aryan male because she is the key to racial purity in future generations. Dorothea, in *Jud Süss*, is the ultimate Aryan female: passive, emotionally and physically pure and naïve in her innocence. Her naivety leads her to inadvertently help Süss; he actually enters the town of Württemberg on her carriage after his breaks down. In fact, this scene directly parallels a scene in *Die Rothschilds* when Nathan gives Sylvia a ride in his carriage after her carriage breaks down, an offer that is part of his plan to seduce Sylvia and to gain a footing in London high society. Therefore, she, like Dorothea, is the gateway for the male Jew into the Aryan world. However, the similarities between Sylvia and Dorothea end here. Sylvia is portrayed as a very intelligent and assertive woman. Unlike Dorothea, who is completely ignorant of the Jew's evil plans, Sylvia is portrayed as one of the only Londoners who sees through Nathan Rothschild's wealthy facade.[59] Similarly, in *Robert und Bertram*, Lenchen is the one who stands up to Mr. Biedermeier, until Michel becomes a soldier at the end of the film. The image of the Aryan woman was not constant in all the anti-Semitic films; filmmakers wavered between depicting her as naïve and innocent, and depicting her as strong and assertive – sometimes the only one fighting off the advances of the Jew.

Conclusion:

Several historians have argued that the National Socialists were trying to perfect their image of the Jew on screen throughout the years 1938 to 1941.[60] They point to

[59] *Ufa Presseheft* (Berlin: Klang-Film Gerät, 1940).
[60] While these historians often fail to mention that the production of these films often overlapped and thus there was little time in between them for one to have an effect on the other, they do capture a sense of how the image of the Jew is constantly transforming on the screen during this period.

Robert und Bertram as being among the first attempts at this endeavor; the film is lighter and less serious than earlier films in its approach, but nevertheless succeeds in "transforming the image of the Jew from comical and grotesque to dangerous and sinister."[61] *Die Rothschilds* swings to the other side of the pendulum, providing a very heavy-handed approach, detailing every insidious characteristic of the Jew. *Jud Süss* supposedly balances these two approaches, providing political enlightenment by portraying the Jew as a serious economic and racial menace to Aryan society, and entertainment by providing a compelling plot and a seductive Jewish character. In Nazi anti-Semitic ideology there was a great deal of uncertainty, contradiction and confusion over the representation of the Jew. However, the medium of film presented a unique challenge. Its popular appeal and the emotional and physical involvement of the audience offered to intensify anti-Semitism by making the Jew appear as a very real and present danger. However, by placing the Jew on screen and in film advertisements, Nazi-era filmmakers established him as a commodity to be consumed by the German public. His image needed to attract ticket buyers and captivate audiences during the screening, while still repulsing them with its anti-Semitic messages. The image of Jew, therefore, occupied an unstable position in the Third Reich film since it had both to disgust and appeal to the German public.

[61] Baruch Gitlis, *"Redemption" of Ahasuerus*, p. 109.

Chapter 3: The Wartime Melodramas

Die grosse Liebe (Ufa, 1942) and *Romanze in Moll* (Tobis,1943)

Despite increasingly limited resources, the production of feature films never waned in 1940s Germany. The National Socialists considered entertainment crucial to maintaining the war effort right up until German defeat in 1945.[1] Among the wartime films, the melodrama occupied a special position. Several historians point out that the melodrama appealed especially to female spectators; not only was the melodrama typically labelled a "woman's film," but, also, since women made up the majority of home front film audience, they were the industry's most important customer in the 1940s.[2] Two of the most prominent melodrama films of the period were *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll.* In this chapter, I will use these two films to show how conflicting messages were still very much present in the films of this period.[3] War plays a major role in both these films and many of their conflicting themes centre around its effects on the German home front. Themes of spectatorship, fantasy and gender relations point to many tensions prevalent in wartime Germany, including the desire for collective strength countered by individualization, the desire to escape countered by the desire to

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[1] The most telling example of the importance of film to the Nazis (brought up in almost every history on film in the Third Reich) was the diversion of 187,000 German troops from the front lines to act as extras in the mass battle scenes in the film *Kolberg* (1945).

[2] For a discussion of how the melodrama was a women's film see Mary Anne Doane's *Desire to Desire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 3 and for a discussion of how women were the primary audience during wartime in Germany see Jo Fox's *Filming Women in the Third Reich* (New York: Berg, 2000), p. 10-11.

[3] In fact, the conflicting messages in *Romanze in Moll* have led to a debate among historians and film study scholars about whether the film was actually subversive to the Nazi Regime. Several post-war revisionists including David Stuart Hull (*Film in the Third Reich*, University of California Press, 1969) and Curt Riess (*Das gab's nur einmal*, Munich: Molden, 1977) have defended its director Helmut Käutner as producing films that fall outside Nazi ideology. However, more recent scholars, including Régine Mihal Friedman ("Die Ausnahme ist die Regel," *Frauen und Film* 43, 1987), Marc Silberman (*German Cinema*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995) and Robert Reimer (*Cultural History through a National Socialist Lens*, New York: Camden House, 1996) argue that his films still contain a strong fascist subtext.

face reality, and the changing role of women in a period in which the responsibility of maintaining the home front was increasingly placed on their shoulders.

Since war was such an important character in both *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll*, it important to begin with an examination of the position of Germany in World War II in 1942 and 1943. The year 1942 represented a turning point in the war for Germany. Its efforts on all fronts began to falter: to bolster Italian moves in the Balkans it had been necessary to divert crucial resources away from the eastern front; in North Africa German forces failed to break through the British defensive lines; and in the Soviet Union the German advance halted at Stalingrad and the Red Army began to encircle German troops. Life on the home front also became increasingly more difficult; in the spring of 1942 the British implemented a new strategy of bombing civilian targets in the hopes of destroying morale. Incendiary bombs fell on many of the major cities, including Cologne, Hamburg and Berlin, killing thousands and leaving many more homeless. Shortages of resources, such as clothing and food, became critical. Germany's position continued to disintegrate in 1943. German troops on the eastern front began a full-scale retreat following defeat at the Battle of Stalingrad. The shipping war in the Atlantic shifted to the Allies' advantage and on the western front, Allied forces began to retake parts of continental Europe.

Plot Summaries:

Die grosse Liebe, directed by Rolf Hansen, was released (June 12, 1942) only two weeks after the firebombing of Cologne by the Royal Air Force. It was among the most popular films of the period, earning 8 million RM within the first ten months of its

release.[4] It contained original music, a star-studded cast, including Zarah Leander and Viktor Staal (also in *Gasparone*) in the lead roles, and a timely plot line set within contemporary Germany. The film opens with Leander's character, Hanna Holberg, giving a musical performance for a group of soldiers in Berlin. Within the audience is Staal's character, Paul Wendlandt, a fighter pilot, who is immediately captivated by her beauty. After the concert he follows her home where they are caught in a bombing raid. The two spend the night together. In the morning Paul leaves before Hanna awakens, providing her with no explanation of why he has left. Three weeks pass before the two meet again in Paris. Paul proposes marriage and Hanna accepts, but a day before the wedding Paul is recalled to the front lines. The couple meet next in Rome and the wedding is rescheduled, but again Paul is called away to fight in the east, rejecting Hanna's pleas to ignore the military telegram. By this time Hanna is fed up and she vows to forget all about Paul, but when she receives the message that Paul has been wounded in battle and is laid up in a military hospital she rushes to be with him. At this point, Hanna agrees to be devoted to Paul and support his career. The film closes with the two looking up to the sky with admiration as a *Luftwaffe* squadron flies overhead.

Firebombs continued to rain down on Germany's major cities and Axis troops retreated in both the east and the south when *Romanze in Moll*, directed by Helmut Käutner, was released on June 1, 1943. Although it did not achieve quite the same popularity as *Die grosse Liebe* (it earned a profit of just over two million RM), it was still the ninth most viewed film of the year 1943.[5] Like *Die grosse Liebe*, it contained original music and prominent stars in the leading roles, including Marian Hoppe and

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[4] Mary-Elizabeth O'Brien, "The Spectacle of War in *Die grosse Liebe*," *Cultural History through a National Socialist Lens*, ed. Robert Reimer (New York: Camden House, 2000), p. 197.
[5] Jo Fox, *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, p. 199-200.

Ferdinand Marian (who is most famous for playing Süss Oppenheimer in *Jud Süss*). Unlike *Die grosse Liebe*, *Romanze in Moll* is not set in wartime Germany; instead it takes place in nineteenth-century France.[6] A bank clerk returns home after a night of playing cards and brags about his winnings to his beautiful young wife who lies on the bed with her eyes closed. When she does not respond he notices an empty bottle of poison by her side and quickly rushes her to the hospital. To raise money for her medical bills he takes all her jewellery to the pawnbroker. Thinking it will not be worth much money, since he could only afford to buy her fake costume jewellery, he is surprised to find out that her collection includes a very expensive real pearl necklace. The film then flashes back in time; his wife Madeleine, played by Hoppe, is still alive and well. She is shown to be quietly unhappy in her marriage to her dull, dispassionate husband who is rarely at home. One day while admiring the pearls in the window of a jewellery shop she encounters Michael, played by Marianne, a symphony composer. Captivated by her smile, which inspires him to finish his "Romantic Symphony," he buys her the pearl necklace. At first she refuses his persistent advances, telling him she is married, but eventually she surrenders and becomes his lover. On a weekend tryst to the country estate of Michael's brother, they run into a hunting party, which includes Victor, the president of her husband's bank. He is also attracted to Madeleine and uses his knowledge of the affair to blackmail her into compromising herself with him. She is so distraught at giving into Victor that she commits suicide. The film's plot, therefore, has come full circle back to its opening scenes. The viewer soon learns that Madeleine has died, leaving the two men

[6] The film script is actually adapted from the short story "Les Bijoux" written by the nineteenth-century French writer Guy de Maupassant (see Marc Silberman, *German Cinema*, p. 82.) Apparently Käutner transformed the original story to make Madeleine more sympathetic (see Robert Reimer, "Turning Inward," *Cultural History through a National Socialist Lens*, p. 224).

in her life distraught with grief. Madeleine's husband, dishevelled and drunk, finds Michael who reveals the true nature of his relationship with Madeleine. Michael in turn challenges Victor to a duel and kills him in revenge. His hand is irreparably injured in the duel and he will no longer be able to play music.

Music:

As in the musical comedy films, music was often at the centre of the melodramas. In *Die grosse Liebe*, Leander's character gives several musical performances during the course of the film. These songs are always performed in front of an audience of soldiers. As their titles suggest – "It's Not the End of the World" and "I Know, Once Upon a Time a Miracle Will Happen" – they are clearly meant to boost spirits (of both the soldiers on screen and the home front civilians in the theatre audience) during a particularly bleak period of war. There is only one song, "Romantic Symphony," in *Romanze in Moll* and it is not performed until the very end of the film (by Michael as the conductor and his orchestra). However, it is heard throughout the film. Various versions of it, since it is a work in progress until the end, are played in the background throughout all Michael and Madeleine's love scenes. As with the musical comedy films, music was very much a part of the advertising of these films. Similar techniques, such as publishing the musical scores along with the press booklets were used. Also, musical emblems were often placed in the film posters (see Figs. 18 and 19).

In a sense, music was even more important to these films than the revue films, since it drove the plot forward more than for *Gasparone* and *Capriccio*. In both *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll*, music is attached to the lead female characters and its

mood is often said to express their moods. A *Film-Kurier* article on *Romanze in Moll* observed that,

> Lothar Brühne's [the real composer] "Romanze in Moll" initially starts in major, but is led by Madeleine to become a different tune – a farewell melody...the dead Madeleine is overshadowed by a bitter melody, the shadows of people running through the rain are accompanied by chamber music. The monotonous sound of a barrel organ accompanies the middle scenes [the ones which show Madeleine with her husband]. Madeleine and Michael's happiness in the park is at first interrupted by fiddlers, but then with the help of harps it turns into a sweet intimate melody.[7]

The article suggested that music, along with the visual images, reveals psychology: "When Madeleine is standing in front of her lover's door, this is accentuated by music with a dramatic rhythm. In this way what we have often demanded is achieved: the musical animation of the psychology of a film as an intimate element of expression." It is not apparent to what the "psychology of a film" actually refers, but it is clear that the reviewer felt greater intimacy with the characters and perhaps with his fellow audience members as a result of the music. Furthermore, the advertisements for this film repeatedly made mention of both the "chords" of music in the song and the "cords" of pearls which Michael gives to Madeleine, suggesting a symbolic connection between the two. Both are what Michael offers to Madeleine in order to seduce her – both are things that her husband cannot offer her (he is not musically inclined and is unable to afford real jewellery for his wife). The fact that they are cords/chords suggests her entanglement in a predicament or plot over which she has no control (a point to which I will return later in the chapter) (see Fig. 20).

In both *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll*, music is the initiator of romance – it is what brings people together. For instance, in the former film, Hanna and Paul first

[7] Dr. H. Wanderscheck, "*Musikbeseelte Kamera*," July 1, 1943, Nr. 103, p. 2.

meet after one of her concerts and they keeping meeting at her musical performances staged at various European locations. In the latter film, when Michael first sees Madeleine her smile inspires him to finish his symphony and he uses this point as an excuse to initiate a relationship with her, further asking her advice on the song. Besides bringing the central characters of the film together, it also brings people in general together, particularly front line soldiers and home-front civilians. In *Die grosse Liebe*, during Hanna's performances, the camera repeatedly pans the soldiers in the audience who sway in unison and smile in appreciation at the opportunity to see a popular home front singer perform. *Wunschkonzert* (1940), another popular melodramatic film of the period, also strongly emphasized the ability of music to bring people together. Its plot also centred on the war-torn romance between a civilian woman and a pilot during World War II. The main characters, Inge and Herbert, are able to reunite at the end after Inge hears Herbert request the Olympic anthem (the song playing when they first met) on the radio program "*Wunschkonzert*" – "Request Concert" (an actual program during the Third Reich that received a lot of state funding and was incredibly popular). The historian David Bathrick argues that both the radio program and the film served to reinforce *Volksgemeinschaft*; the program was meant to "bring together war front and home front, old and young, children and parents, working people and the educated bourgeoisie; bring them together in a feel-good version of the Reich as national family."[8] Music and the mediums of mass media over which it is broadcasted became a point of connection necessary during a period of increasing disintegration. The melodrama films with their use of music were meant to both portray and create this connection.

[8] "Making a National Family with the Radio," *Modernism/Modernity* 4.1 (1997), p. 2.

Spectatorship:

Like the musical comedy films, *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll* contained musical performances.[9] Despite more limited resources during the war years, these stage performances were still very elaborate.[10] For instance, a *Film-Kurier* article on *Die grosse Liebe* describes the set for Leander's first musical performance in the film:

> The entire width of the Froehlich-Studio in Tempelhof was needed to build the huge Scala stage. The centre is reserved for the star that rises up in the middle of all the men without the audience being able to guess how. The background shows painted flames that flicker in the light of more than 700 bulbs. The appearance of Zarah Leander is flanked by three broad galleries on each side that are built on top of one another, with ten dancers on each. These six galleries are to be moved in a swinging motion.[11] (See Fig. 21).

Besides describing the sets, advertisements also featured stills of Leander made up in wigs, make-up and elegant dresses ready for her grand stage appearances (see Fig. 22).

Performances within a film presented an interesting paradigm of a stage within a stage and an audience within an audience. The musical stage paralleled the film stage. Advertisements frequently made this point by linking music to film, describing how both had a very immediate, emotional and, thus, lasting impact on an audience: "Film and music speak with special vigour the language of emotion and, therefore, they will always preserve their life beyond the day, the play period."[12] The audience in the theatre also saw their experience mirrored on the screen and, thus, were drawn into a relationship with the on-screen audience.[13] There were several, sometimes conflicting effects of having the theatre audience relate to the on-screen audience. In *Die grosse Liebe* it

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[9] They are all diegetic musicals – that is the musical numbers are all contained on a stage as opposed to films in which the characters burst out in song at any point.
[10] For a discussion on how the war limited film production see Jo Fox's *Women in the Third Reich*, p. 73-76.
[11] G.H., "*Grosse Dekoration für Zarah Leander*," Feb. 6, 1942, Nr. 31, p. 2.
[12] Felix Henseleit, "*Romanze in Moll*," *Film-Kurier*, June 28, 1943, Nr. 102, p. 2.
[13] Mary-Elizabeth O'Brien, "The Spectacle of War in *Die grosse Liebe*," p. 198.

enhanced collective or community feeling very necessary during wartime. Schulte-Sasse comments on this phenomenon, stating that the musical stage scenes "enhance community feeling through the interaction of shots and counter shots allowing the film audience to watch its surrogate, the fictional audience, watching the unifying spectacle."[14] The fact that the on-screen audience in this film is composed of soldiers also links the home front civilian audience in the theatre with the front line (see Fig. 23).

Another method of enhancing the collective nature of the film was to publish box office numbers. The advertisements for *Die grosse Liebe* repeatedly mentioned that the film set new attendance records; "*Die grosse Liebe* with Zarah Leander in the main role was seen by 367,770 people in 70 days when it was shown at the Ufa-Palast am Zoo...Today, on August 25, the film has its 75th day and the number of visitors moved close to the 400,000 mark."[15] Germans who went to see the film, therefore, could feel as if they were a part of a mass movement; they were sure to be sitting in a crowded theatre experiencing the film in a collective atmosphere.

In *Romanze in Moll*, on the other hand, the experience of being in an audience was shown to be much more personal and even lonely.[16] It is not until the end of the film that the performance of the *Romantic Symphony* is staged. Madeleine arrives at the theatre after having surrendered to Victor. As the music begins, the camera freezes on her face and then shows a series of flashbacks of Madeleine and Michael when they were together. Her husband is supposed to be joining her in the theatre, but he does not arrive until late and then promptly falls asleep during the performance. Therefore, Madeleine is

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[14] *Entertaining the Third Reich* (London: Duke University Press, 1996), p. 294.
[15] G.H., "*Lehrreiche Zahlen*", *Film-Kurier*, Aug. 25, 1942, Nr. 198, p.1.
[16] This dichotomy of film viewing being both a collective and a personal experience is mentioned by Sabine Hake in *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), p. 68: "Going to the movies is both a private ritual and a public act."

very much alone during the performance, the music triggering personal memories of her affair that is now over. Madeleine is the only onscreen audience member to whom the audience was made to relate. Her feelings of personal tragedy are in stark contrast to the feelings of communal patriotism portrayed in *Die grosse Liebe.*

The difference between these two films may be due to a gender split; the fact that the audience in the first film is all male and the audience in the latter film is a single female. Schulte-Sasse states that in Third Reich films, the collective need was coded male while personal desire was coded female.[17] This concept may apply to the two films since the male audience is shown only as collective being while the female audience is shown alone, her desire (for passion, music, jewellery, high society) having driven her to her present situation.

In addition to being at times a collective experience and at other times a personal experience, spectatorship in the two films was also alternatively shown as being both a passive and an active experience. For instance, a *Film-Kurier* article for *Romanze in Moll* described the audience as being "completely under the spell of the events" on the screen or as turning off their rational mind and opening themselves up to the emotions in the film, suggesting a kind of passive spectatorship.[18] On the other hand, an article in the *Tobis Pressbuch* on the same film described the viewer's role in the film as being participatory:

> The invaluable advantage a film has over the theatre is the possibility to get the audience close to it. The stage remains a showcase, so to say. Inexorably the curtain divides it from the audience and it never belies its communalities with the puppet play, the figures of which are far removed from the spectators. Film, in contrast, plays from the audience towards the stage. It lives from the illusion it creates among the viewers that they are

[17] *Entertaining the Third Reich*, p. 293.
[18] Felix Henseleit, "*Romanze in Moll*," *Film-Kurier*, June 28, 1943, Nr. 102, p. 2.

> acting themselves...It makes the viewer a kind of invisible co-actor and its whole magic derives from the ability to not have the audience feel that there is a deep abyss of time and space between them and the events on screen.[19]

The indecision over whether spectatorship involved active or passive participation continues today as many scholars debate the experience of film viewing.[20] The argument presented in the *Tobis Pressbuch* that film involves the viewer more actively than live theatre – that the time and space boundaries are less firm in the film world – seem to contradict contemporary notions of film and stage theatre spectatorship. Some scholars argue that spectatorship of Third Reich melodrama was both a mixture of the passive and active; the films may have actively involved the spectator in the film in order to achieve some degree of passive acceptance. For instance, Mary O'Brien argues that the film *Die grosse Liebe* led spectators to "imagine their own participation in the nation's real life drama. By drawing structural parallels between musical and military spectacles, the film presents theatre as a metaphor for the participatory role war demands of soldier and civilian."[21]

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[19] Dr. Herman, "*Film als Kammerspiel*," (Berlin: Erich Zander, 1942), p. 25.

[20] Feminist film scholars, such as Laura Mulvey "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema." *Screen* 16, 1975: 6-18, Mary Ann Doane *The Desire to Desire*, Miriam Hansen *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991) and Patrice Petro "Perceptions of Difference: Women as Spectator and Spectacle." *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, ed. Katharina von Ankum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997) often debate whether women's spectatorship is passive or active.

[21] Mary-Elizabeth O'Brien, "The Spectacle of war in *Die grosse Liebe*," p. 198. O'Brien's argument refers directly to Karsten Witte's earlier work "Visual Pleasure Inhibited" in which he also compares military to musical spectacle in Third Reich films. He describes how both the dancing troop and the military troop are "on parade often garbed in uniforms and usually choreographed in a costumed cadence march" (*New German Critique* 24-5, 1981-2, p. 238).

A final element of spectatorship that was important to the melodrama films is women's spectatorship.[22] As mentioned in the introduction, the melodrama as a genre was developed as a "woman's film." Also, with a large percentage of the German male population away at the front lines, women came to make up the majority of film viewers (and in general popular culture consumers) in the 1940s.[23] Several new works on popular culture in the Third Reich have explored this phenomenon, including Kate Lacey who has examined how women became the key target of radio programs during the war.[24] Jo Fox focuses on women's film spectatorship during the wartime. Using RMVP and RPL (*Reichspropagandaleiter*) reports she shows that the propaganda committees recognized women as the predominant audience and actively catered to their needs, one of which was the production of romantic melodramatic films.[25]

In the films themselves and their advertisements, one can see signs that the producers are targeting women. For instance, both *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll* have women as their central characters who are fashionable, intelligent and highly sympathetic, and the plot revolves around their romantic and sexual escapades. The films are mostly set within the private sphere of the home (traditionally the women's sphere) and most advertisement stills capture these scenes (see Fig. 24). Furthermore, the actors who play the romantic leads, Ferdinand Marian and Viktor Staal, were two of the most attractive actors of the Third Reich, known to be popular to female audiences. In fact, the

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[22] Several film theorists have looked at women's spectatorship. Many of them, such as Mariam Hansen and Patrice Petro challenge the older theories of Laura Mulvey and Mary Anne Doane that men always acted as the subject and women as the object of the gaze in classical spectatorship.

[23] Patrice Petro in *Joyless Streets* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) examines how the film industry was already beginning to recognize the importance of female spectatorship on the Weimar period (p. xx). Of course this is not to suggest only women were spectators during wartime; Jo Fox discusses how films were shown to front line soldiers and how their opinions on them were often noted by top party official (see for example p. 100).

[24] *Feminine Frequencies* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1996).

[25] *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, p. 10-11 and 220.

Tobis Presesheft mentioned that the actor who plays Victor (Madeleine's blackmailer), "Siegfroed Breuer is – as you know – very popular with a good part of the female audience."[26] Jo Fox argues that since women were the primary audience during wartime, one sees very different messages in them than in the prewar films.[27] Sometimes these messages coincided with National Socialist propaganda, such as in *Die grosse Liebe*, when Hanna reconciles herself to the idea that the greater German cause must always come before her love. However, at other times the messages were bound to conflict with Nazi ideals, especially since the party's leadership was composed entirely of men. One, therefore, sees themes of adultery and the choice of the heart over duty emerging from these films, clashing with wartime ideals.

Fantasy Versus Reality:

In chapter one, I examined how fantasy or illusions played a very large role in the musical comedy films. Their advertisements emphasized that both *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* were derived from fictional operatic storylines (opera being perhaps one of the most fantastical types of fiction), that they took place in imaginary settings and that they contained fantastical characters, including cross-dressing women and mythical robbers. Similarly, in the melodramas fantasy played a very large role. In fact, Steve Neal, in a general study on the genre, argues that fantasy was central to melodrama. He equates fantasy with desire: "the characteristic form of desire in melodrama is adult, heterosexual desire, and that the aim of fantasy is the union of an adult, heterosexual

[26] Berlin: *Tobis Filmkunst*, 1943.
[27] *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, p. 11-12.

couple."[28] Certainly, this desire was central to the plot lines of *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll*; both female characters live a romantic fantasy, engaging in love and sex with a handsome man. Madeleine's relationship with Michael is perhaps even more in the realm of fantasy since it is an adulterous affair, an escape from life with her dull, dispassionate husband. In addition to escaping her husband, Madeleine is escaping the constraints of a bourgeois existence: "the life of a young woman that is caught in the petit-bourgeois [*kleinbürgerlich*] confinement of a marriage with a senior clerk, set in the strict moral regulations of the second half of the last century."[29]

Central to both films was the fantasy world of star performances and music; they similarly provided an escape from the monotony of reality and allowed the characters to enter a more glamorous and ideal world. In *Romanze in Moll*, the composer/conductor Michael and his music are the temptations that lead the normally upright Madeleine to betray her husband. Hanna in *Die grosse Liebe* epitomizes the glamorous performer whose musical numbers provide escape from the harsh realities of wartime both for the soldiers in her audience and for herself, since she seems to live in fantasy world in which she cannot understand the necessities of war. It is not until the end of the film that she faces reality – surrendering her unrealistic expectations that Paul should always be with her.

In the advertisements for both films there were also repeated reference made to the act of fantasizing, dreaming or wishing. For instance, the title of Hanna's final song in the movie, "I Know, Once Upon a Time a Miracle Will Happen," indicates her primary

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[28] "Melodrama and Tears," *Screen* 27.6 (1996), p. 13.
[29] "*Marianne Hoppe in Romanze in Moll*," *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, Sept. 24, 1942. Similar negative sentiments towards nineteenth-century bourgeoisie were found in *Robert and Bertram* (as discussed in the previous chapter).

desire that a miracle will occur to end the war and bring her and Paul together. The advertisements for *Romanze in Moll* repeatedly mentioned the dreamy quality of the film: a *Film-Kurier* article described how soft background music created an "atmospheric dreaminess." The *Tobis Presseheft* observed in reference to Madeleine, "As in a dream, she walks into the great darkness, where alone she hopes to find salvation from the torture of her heart."[30] Marianne Hoppe, the actress, was further described in review articles as bringing "quiet magic" and "dreamy calmness" to the role.[31] Heavy shadows and soft filtered lighting gave the film a "twilight atmosphere."[32] Finally, the sleepy, dreamy quality of the film was captured in the song which accompanies Michael's "Romantic Symphony" the title for which is "The Hour Between Day and Dreaming" ("*Stunde zwischen Tag und Träumen*").

Despite the importance of fantasy in *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll*, there was also a strong emphasis on reality. The advertisers claimed that both films dealt with real life events and choices. Although *Romanze in Moll* was set in nineteenth-century France and thus was removed from the reality of present day Germany, the advertisers asserted that much of Madeleine's story was universal – that it was a timeless story of love and tragedy. For instance, the *Tobis Pressbuch* claimed that "[Käutner] provides a romance in pictures and shows us, in parable, life as it really is...As diverse as the main characters are, a beam of fate grows in the film's context that illuminates all people set in these limiting conditions. In the veins of everybody – even though every person is an

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[30] Dr. H. Wanderscheck, "*Musikbeseelte Kamera*," July 1, 1943, Nr. 103, p. 2 and *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Filmkunst, 1943).
[31] "*Marianne Hoppe in Romanze in Moll*," *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, Sept. 24, 1942 and "*Romanze in Moll*," June 28, 1943, Nr. 102, p.2.
[32] Dr. H. Wanderscheck, "*Musikbeseelte Kamera*," July 1, 1943, Nr. 103, p. 2 and *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Filmkunst, 1943).

individual – pulses a common reality."[33] Also, the advertisers often presented Madeleine as a universal woman; instead of referring to her directly by name the advertisements frequently referred to her as "woman": "It is the life of a young woman," "the story focuses on a woman's fate," and "the love story of married woman."[34] At other times, instead of just representing a universal concept of womanhood, Madeleine was said to represent all humans; she possesses tragic flaws that inevitably lead her to fall.[35]

Die grosse Liebe, by contrast, was not supposed to reflect an archetypal tale or universal human characteristics, but was supposed to reflect present day events directly. Advertisements repeatedly mentioned how the film was an excerpt from daily life. In an interview, its director Rolf Hansen stated, "I believe that a film which takes responsibility to play 'today' should be far more conscientious and respectful of the demands of reality. It is not important that the most unlikely, but that the most likely things happen."[36] It was not just any mundane reality which the film attempted to capture, but rather the reality of wartime for Germans: "The plot was adapted from the war events of our time."[37]

Die grosse Liebe, therefore, presented the interesting question of how it constructed the reality of war. In the words of the historian Mary-Elizabeth O'Brien, "[w]hat kind of realism did the film offer the masses especially in the weeks and months following the premiere and massive persistent bombing raids?"[38] In a sense, *Die grosse*

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[33] Fred Ritter, "*Ein hohes Lied der Liebe*," (Berlin: Erich Zander, 1943), p. 23.
[34] "*Marianne Hoppe in Romanze in Moll*," *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, Sept. 24, 1942 and "*Romanze in Moll*," June 28, 1943, Nr. 102, p.2 and *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1943).
[35] *Das Programm von Heute*, Nr. 1862 (Berlin: Deutche Zentraldruckerei, 1942).
[36] U.P., "*Ein Film soll die wahrscheinlichsten, nicht die unwahrscheinlichsten Erlebnisse spiegeln...*," *Film-Kurier*, May 19, 1942, Nr. 115, p. 3.
[37] Georg Herzberg, "*Stärkster Erfolg des Films Die grosse Liebe*," *Film-Kurier*, Sept. 11, 1942, Nr. 213, p.1.
[38] "The Spectacle of War in *Die grosse Liebe*," p. 197.

Liebe differed from the typical war film in that it did not contain any front line scenes.[39] Although the film in a sense follows the war to its various European locations, including Berlin, Paris, Rome and a hospital in the east, it always remains in the realm of civilians (although the war certainly comes to them in the form of bombing raids). Hansen, in his interview, was adamant on this point: "It was not the task of our film to show the big events of the front experience. That we are allowed to and have to leave to documentaries. But to show the impact of war events on private fates – that is what we thought was worthwhile."[40] Besides being set on the home front and in the private sphere, the film also depicted a very private story – a love affair between two people. Hansen argued that by depicting a love story on the home front, he could show the full impact of that war – that its impact could even be felt in these areas of private life: "[The film] deals with the fact that one has no time any more for a lot of things. Even for tender feelings – you know that our movie's title is *Die grosse Liebe* – there is not much space any more in the big events that are nowadays also invading our private sphere."[41] Therefore, there was a sense in such articles that the destructive chaos of war was reaching down to all levels, "invading" private spaces, cutting back personal time and hindering (at least for most of the film) personal relationships. However, on the other hand, war was making the lives of ordinary people more exciting and intense and testing the strength of their relationships: "One comes to the realization that three weeks have to be sufficient to find real happiness today and that these three weeks make this happiness

[39] In contrast to war 'documentaries,' like *Feldzug in Polen* (1939), or even the other war dramas, like *Kolberg* (1945) and *Wunschkonzert*.
[40] U.P., "*Ein Film soll die wahrscheinlichsten, nicht die unwahrscheinlichsten Erlebnisse spiegeln...*," *Film-Kurier*, May 19, 1942, Nr. 115, p. 3.
[41] *Ibid.*

even stronger and more intense because of the temporal limitation."[42] Regardless of whether or not war was shown to have a wholly negative impact on love, it was significant that the two were linked. O'Brien remarks that the "[t]he film links the wish for a miraculous victory to an equally strong wish for a romantic happy ending, so that the former seems to be the only guarantee for the latter."[43] The film, O'Brien argues, was impressed upon the viewers that victory in war was not simply a diplomatic gain, but rather was a victory for all sectors of German life, including love affairs. The film romanticized war by cloaking it in the veil of a fairy tale love story; war in *Die grosse Liebe* may be harsh and destructive, but it is also romantic.

Romanze in Moll was not set in wartime; however, war still seemed to resonate strongly in aspects of its advertisements. There were repeated references to destiny, confusing times and death that all seemed relevant to contemporary life in wartime Germany. Phrases like "dramatic strokes of fate," "bowing to the hopelessness of her fate," and "she chose the sacrifice of death when experiencing a similarly hopeless situation" all suggest a state of being overwhelmed and out of control of one's life.[44] Not only were these feelings probably relevant to many home front Germans who were increasingly feeling the stark effects of the war.[45] The general outlook of the film was far more pessimistic in *Romanze in Moll* than in *Die grosse Liebe*, perhaps reflecting the

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[42] *Ibid.* O'Brien makes this point in her article "The Spectacle of War in *Die grosse Liebe*": "The dangers inherent in war give the everyday a dynamic quality that is both new and exciting. In this highly charged atmosphere of life and death, intense passion and true love can evolve" (p. 198).
[43] *Ibid.* p. 199.
[44] Felix Henseleit, "*Romanze in Moll*," *Film-Kurier*, June 28, 1943, Nr. 102, p.2 and *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1943). Steve Neale, however, mentions that an emphasis on destiny, fate is common to all melodramas ("Melodrama and Tears," *Screen* 27, 1986, p. 7).
[45] Also, remarks like "Who should be blamed for the tragic events?...Who would want to judge" seem to take on a wider relevance considering contemporary events. Of course, it becomes a question of the extent to which these statements actually reflect contemporary feelings and how much hindsight plays into present day reading of them.

downturn in German war efforts, a situation that was increasingly having a negative impact on the home front.

Another difference between the two films was that whereas in *Die grosse Liebe* the main character Hanna seems to long for normality and the monotony of married life, which wartime events will not allow her, in *Romanze in Moll* Madeleine longs to escape from "the monotony of her small, bourgeois existence."[46] In the finales of the films, Hanna accepts that she cannot have a quiet, stable life until the war is over and Madeleine accepts death as an outcome of escaping her quiet stable life. In a sense, both their desires are attached to death – Hanna's to war and Madeleine's to suicide. Otherwise, their desires are diametric opposites, an opposition which recurs when the characters must choose between duty and heart. As in *Die grosse Liebe,* a strong sense of duty was an attribute more closely associated with men. Women, on the other hand, were more apt to follow their hearts and had to learn or have imposed upon them a sense of duty. In the film, Hanna constantly follows her heart, requesting that Paul remain home from war to be with her, despite the fact that his duty is on the battleground, and it is not until the end of the film that she accepts that duty to the fatherland must come first in her and Paul's life. In contrast, in the beginning of *Romanze in Moll*, Madeleine is a dutiful wife, but because "her heart cannot be betrayed" she becomes an adulteress. According to one reviewer, "so often there is a discrepancy between the sense of duty and the heart. In *Romanze in Moll* the heart succeeds, even more, it is proved right!"[47] It is interesting that the two films, whose release only fell a year apart, could contain such contrasting messages – a longing for a quiet, stable life in the former and a longing to escape such a

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[46] S.C.H., "*Variationen über das Thema des Films*," *Tobis Pressbuch* (Berlin: Erich Zander, 1943).
[47] *Das Programm von Heute*, Nr. 1862 (Berlin: Deutsche Zentraldruckerei, 1942).

life in the latter, a victory of duty over heart in the former and the victory of heart over duty in the latter – messages which both contained a strong relevance to the contemporary atmosphere of war.

Gender Relations:

Women's position in Third Reich Germany changed over the course of the war. Official National Socialist policy dictated that women were to focus on their roles as wives and mothers, but during the war it was necessary for many women to join the workforce even in employment sectors normally reserved for men. In the early 1940s women were actively recruited to the join the workforce and by 1943 all women between the ages of seventeen and forty-five were required to register for compulsory labour. Eventually women workers outnumbered men, although employed women never comprised more than fifty percent of the female population during the war years.[48] One might expect that the relaxation of official party policy and the entry of large numbers of women into the workforce would have translated into a change in the image of women on screen. Indeed, the historian Jo Fox argues that one can see a blurring of gender distinctions brought on by the war in the images and messages presented on screen.[49]

Fox's argument, however, does not seem to apply to *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll*. While the images and messages surrounding women remain very complex and conflicting, I would argue that gender boundaries are perhaps more firmly entrenched in these films than they are in the earlier films (such as the musical comedy films examined in chapter two). Women were still at the forefront of the melodrama

[48] Jackson Spielvogel, *Hitler and Nazi Germany* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2001), p. 247.
[49] *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, p. 6.

films; the central female characters and the popular actresses who played them still figured most prominently in all the advertisements. However, they are not as assertive and self-reliant as in the musical comedy films. For instance, whereas in *Capriccio* and *Gasparone*, Ita and Madelone are surrounded by and derive support from a community of women (her dance troop in the case of Ita and her fellow convent girls in the case of Madelone), in *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll,* Hanna and Madeleine are surrounded by men. Advertisers make this point clear in the case of the latter film by posting the following by line at theatres: "Three men around Madeleine. The main actors of the *Tobis*-film: *Romanze in Moll.*"[50] Neither of the two characters seems to possess any female companions (except for Hanna, her maid) and in Hanna's case her career as a wartime performer dictates that she is constantly surrounded by male soldiers.

The finales of the two films, in which Hanna promises to be completely devoted to Paul and Madeleine's adultery leads her to commit suicide, in a sense strongly reinforce women's subjugation by a traditional patriarchal order.[51] Also, in *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll* the female characters are associated metaphorically with the minor key.[52] In regards to *Romanze in Moll,* Robert Reimer argues that "Madeleine's entire subjectivity is invested in music, and when she insists that the *Romance* must be in a minor key, she is communicating her central dilemma as a woman."[53] This argument also applies to Hanna in *Die grosse Liebe,* since her life is also dictated by the actions and decisions of men throughout the film – in her relationship with Paul she too becomes the

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[50] *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1943).
[51] Robert Reimer in his essay on Romanze in Moll questions the suicide at the end, stating, "is Madeleine's suicide punishment for her adulterous affair or merely a reflection of the film's literary antecedents? [i.e. the bourgeoisie tragedy]" (p. 223).
[52] S.C.H., "*Variationen über das Thema des Films,*" *Tobis Pressbuch* (Berlin: Erich Zander, 1943).
[53] "Turning Inward," *Cultural History through a National Socialist Lens* (New York: Camden House, 2000), p. 92.

minor key. Furthermore, in the advertisements for *Romanze in Moll* there was a tendency to treat Madeleine as a commodity (a tendency which occurs frequently, as I discussed in the last chapter, with female characters in the anti-Semitic films). For instance, there is repeated discussion of how Madeleine trades herself (both her love, body and eventually her life) for the string of pearls: "This necklace becomes the traitor of a forbidden love for which the wife had to pay with her life."[54] An article in the *Pressbuch* connects all women to pearls, arguing that through pearls women became an emblem of their husband's wealth: "The greater the number of rows in which the pearl strings lay around the neck of a woman, the higher the esteem her husband had in the business world."[55] Still yet another article, when describing how Madeleine is rushed to hospital after her suicide attempt, exclaims, "Gracious God, what all of that will cost!"[56] Of course, associating women with commodification also has modernist liberal tones, as it often did in the case of the musical comedy films – women's participation in consumerism was also seen as a source of power.[57] However, in the case of *Romanze in Moll* (as with the anti-Semitic films), women and commodification took on much more negative, anti-liberalist connotations since women themselves were often presented as the commodity.

An area in which *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll* seem to strongly contradict traditional gender relations was in their portrayal of sex outside of marriage. The topic was not actually unique to these films; premarital sex and adultery appeared quite frequently in the wartime films.[58] In *Die grosse Liebe*, Hanna and Paul engage in

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[54] *Das Programm von Heute*, Nr. 1862 (Berlin: Deutsche Zentraldruckerei, 1942).
[55] Günther Dietrich, "*Die Perlen der Madeleine*," *Tobis Pressbuch* (Berlin: Erich Zander, 1943).
[56] S.C.H., "*Variationen über das Thema des Films*," *Tobis Pressbuch* (Berlin: Erich Zander, 1943).
[57] See, for example, Patrice Petro, *Joyless Streets*, p. 63.
[58] Sex outside of marriage appears in several other dramas of the period, such as *Urlaub auf Ehrenwort* (1937), *Auf Wiedersehen Franziska* (1941) and *Die goldene Stadt* (1942).

sex the very first night they meet.[59] The advertisements make virtually no mention of this scene, but the fact that it was an issue appears in other sources. For instance, Goebbels reported in his diary that the High Command of the Armed Forces complained of the portrayal of an aviator sleeping with a famous singer; "The *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* considers itself insulted morally and insists that a *Luftwaffe* lieutenant wouldn't act in this way."[60]

In contrast, in the advertisements for *Romanze in Moll*, the adulterous affair was the central issue. The advertisers treated the affair in a relatively positive manner, arguing that Madeleine could not deny her heart and that her love for Michael was genuine. They repeatedly made it clear that no one was to blame and there should be no judgement – "The film does not take sides, does neither excuse or accuse" – the characters are simply caught in a "web of fate" over which they have no control.[61] However, they also claimed that there had to be sacrifice at the end: "To spare her husband from dishonour and for the love of Michael, there is only one way out for her: a double sacrifice!"[62] In a sense, it is Madeleine's suicide that seems to redeem her; however, she does not commit suicide until after she surrenders to Viktor, suggesting that her shame does not derive from the original affair.[63] At some point in the film's production there was actually an alternate ending, evidence for which appears in the *Pressbuch*: "one day, this Viktor, who knew about her marriage as well as her love for

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[59] Although no actual sex scene appears in the film, Paul is shown following Hanna into her bedroom at night and then leaving in the morning.
[60] As quoted in Jo Fox's *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, p. 100.
[61] *Tobis Presseheft* (Berlin: Tobis Filmkunst, 1943).
[62] "*Marianne Hoppe in Romanze in Moll*," *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* (Berlin: A. Scherl, 1942).
[63] Some reviewers felt that Madeleine should have committed suicide prior to giving into Vicktor. For instance one reviewer from the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* wrote that this ending would have been "more meaningful, dramatically more necessary, and would have had greater ethical justification (as quoted in Robert Reimer's "Turning Inward," p. 225).

Michael, demanded the one thing from Madeleine that she could only give to Michael. Now only death was left to her! But the will to life that was born from love was stronger and she recovered and found her happiness with Michael."[64] The alternate ending did not pass censorship and was changed so that Madeleine did conform to a moral code in which her behaviour could not go unpunished. Despite this change the film still received criticism from official sectors. For instance, a Lance Corporal in the army wrote into the RFK, "Would it not be possible to create a film in which the woman is victorious over herself. Whilst maintaining the necessary strength? In this time of greatness, why must woman be shown for her weakness?"[65] Therefore, as in *Die grosse Liebe* there was discomfort, particularly from military sectors, over the portrayal of sex outside marriage in the film and this discomfort occurred even though the topic was downplayed. In the case of *Die grosse Liebe*'s it went unmentioned in the promotional material and in *Romanze in Moll* the ending was altered so that the adulterous act was punished.

Conclusion:

The years 1942 and 1943 were incredibly tense for Germany. The tides of war shifted in the Allies' favour during these years, as the German advance was halted and retreat began on all major fronts. The cost of war on German civilians also became increasingly steep due to shrinking resources and constant Allied bombing of the major cities. On the one hand, control over popular images and messages became increasingly rigid during wartime, but, on the other hand, the tensions of war also started having a

[64] *Tobis Pressbuch* (Berlin: Erich Zander, 1943).
[65] As quoted in Jo Fox's *Filming Women in the Third Reich*, p. 201.

major effect on the films of the period. Conflicting themes certainly existed in one of the most prominent genres of the period: the melodrama.

One such theme was collective strength versus individualization. The melodramas, like *Die grosse Liebe*, utilized music and musical performances to promote the collective by linking theatre audiences with onscreen audiences, and front line soldiers with home front civilians. However, the experience of being in an audience was also portrayed as being individualizing and lonely in the case of the film, *Romanze in Moll*. Images and themes of fantasy also strongly countered those of reality. For instance, in both *Die grosse Liebe* and *Romanze in Moll*, the fantastical world of stage performance was idealized, while at the same time advertisers promoted the films as excerpts from real life and/or real human dilemmas. Finally and perhaps most importantly, the two films dealt with the changing role of women during wartime. The melodrama and its increasing popularity during the wartime attested to an increasingly prominent female film culture. The advertisements targeted a female audience and the existence of controversial subjects in the films and their ads, like sex outside of marriage, seemed to suggest that the industry was more concerned with appealing to their female audiences than conforming to Nazi ideology. However, the portrayal of women in the films was also very traditional, especially compared with the earlier musical comedy films. Strangely enough, considering these films were released when women were left increasingly alone to hold up the home front, the female characters in the melodrama lack an existence separate from the men in their lives. This contradiction, along with all the others, suggests that images and messages within the films and perhaps the popular

imagination of Third Reich Germany as a whole, never aligned completely with the political reality of the times. They always remained unstable and conflicting.

Conclusion

The Nazis took measures to control and manipulate popular culture immediately upon their consolidation of power. In 1933, after Hitler was appointed chancellor and the National Socialists took complete control of the political arena in Germany, they quickly established the State Chamber of Culture *(Reichskulturkammer)* in order to regulate "all forms of artistic creation or activity which are made public."[1] Goebbels headed the Chamber and its seven branches, including film. Strict measures were emplaced in order to regulate the production, distribution and exhibition of films. In 1934, under the Cinema Law, Goebbels established a Censorship Office which had to approve all films before they could be produced and released for exhibition. In 1936, he issued a proclamation that banned art criticism, reasoning that, "Artistic criticism no longer exists for its own sake. In future one ought not to degrade or criticize a well-meaning or quite respectable artistic achievement for the sake of a witty turn of phrase."[2] Finally, in 1937, Goebbels set out to nationalize the film industry beginning with the purchase of two of the most important companies: Ufa and Tobis.

Despite all these stringent control measures, the discourse in and surrounding the films of the Nazi-era was not homogenous. The German film industry still operated within a capitalistic system in which box office sales largely dictated to film production. Stephen Greenblatt has argued that capitalist systems (of which Nazi Germany was one) create "regimes in which the drive towards differentiation and the drive towards

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[1] As quoted in Ernst Bramsted, *Goebbels and the National Socialist Propaganda 1925-45* (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1965), p. 77.
[2] As quoted in David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 45.

monological organization operate simultaneously."[3] I have argued in a similar vein that while National Socialist ideology played a large part in informing the filmic discourse, controversial themes and images frequently appeared. These conflicting cultural tendencies suggest that instability, rather than an inherent stability normally attached to a regime with such a high level of regulation, marked the filmic discourse of the period. Also, as recent historians have argued, ideas from the Weimar period and from other national cinemas (namely Hollywood) continued to have a large impact on Nazi cinema. The existence of contradictory or outside ideas, however, does not suggest that the entertainment films were subversive or somehow separate from the political aims of the National Socialist regime, as some older studies have suggested. Rather embracing "cultural enemies" was in a sense at the core of the National Socialist's maintenance of power.[4]

In the preceding chapters, I have examined three main types or genres of films, the musical comedies, the anti-Semitic films and the wartime melodramas. Conflicting cultural tendencies, I have argued, operated even at the level of the genre. The musical comedy genre was somewhat of an aberration in the Nazi regime; not only did its popularity originate within the Weimar period, but it also borrowed heavily from Hollywood slapstick and review films. Party officials and film critics alternatively expressed unease with the genre's connections and an eagerness to satisfy audience demands with more musical comedy films that paralleled the American varieties. In regards to the anti-Semitic films, it is difficult to discuss them in terms of an anti-Semitic genre (although many historians seem to do just that). As my examination of the *Robert*

[3] As quoted in Antje Ascheid, *Hitler's Heroines: Stardom and Womanhood in Nazi Cinema.* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003), p. 5.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 220.

und Bertram and *Die Rothschilds* shows, anti-Semitism could appear in very different guises – as a light-hearted farce in the former case and a heavy-handed historical drama in the latter case. These two very different approaches suggest that the National Socialist party and the film industry struggled with balancing the need to educate the public as to the threatening nature of the Jew and to entertain the public with attractive, compelling characters.

Aside from the nature of the genres, another point of contention that I have discussed throughout the chapters is fantasy versus reality. Setting the films in the past or in fictional realms emphasized the fantastical or imaginary realms of the films. Also, the films of all these genres often contained musical performances. Performances within the films similarly emphasized a world of entertainment separate from reality. Fantasy worlds provided escape for both the characters in the films and audience members watching the films. In *Die grosse Liebe*, for instance, Zarah Leander's musical performances provided both the onscreen and off screen audiences escape from the harsh realities of war. Escape from reality also meant escape from the rule and regulations of reality, and, as many of the promotional materials emphasizes, the imaginary nature of the films' narratives allowed for the representation of disruptive behavior. Cross-dressing, racial exoticism, sex outside marriage and thievery were just a few examples of the disruptive behavior portrayed in these films.

Of course, reality or a redeeming order steps in at the end of all these films. For example, in *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* the promise of marriage puts an end to the cross-dressing, in *Romanze in Moll* suicide puts an end to Madeleine's adulterous affair, and in *Robert und Bertram*, the two mischievous, yet well intentioned, main characters leave

earth by flying up to heaven. Several historians have argued that the German viewers were meant to undergo a similar process as the characters in the films: watching disruptive or subversive images on screen provided a catharsis, so that the viewer purged of any such inclinations could return refreshed to the regulating conformity of Nazi society. Certainly this phenomenon might have been a part of the intention and effect of showing disruptive images and themes; however, as Ascheid argues, any such argument does not detract from the importance of these images and themes, nor does it answer the question of why they appeared with such frequency in the films of the period.[5]

Also, there was a danger in countering fantasy with reality in that the former became too seductive while the latter was found to be lacking. Party officials and affiliates sometimes criticized the portrayal of characters whose disruptive behavior was a little too appealing. For instance, the *Frauenwarte* criticized the musical comedy films for portraying women as overly sexualized and hostile to marriage, Hitler complained that Robert and Bertram were not sufficiently virtuous to represent German Aryans and army officials writing to the *Reichsfilmkammer* disliked the portrayal of a *Luftwaffe* lieutenant engaging in premarital sex in *Die grosse Liebe.* In the case of the anti-Semitic films, even placing Jewish characters and insignia on screen and in film advertisements threatened to cross the line between using film to portray the Jew as an insidious danger and giving him or her unintended desirability. Promoters of Die *Rothschilds*, for example, directed exhibitors to strongly delineate symbols of Judaism as negative on posters. In the wartime melodramas, it seemed fantasy was much preferable to reality, perhaps because reality for home front Germans at the time of the release of these films was becoming increasingly harsh. In particular, in *Romanze in Moll*, advertisers

[5] *Ibid.* p. 214.

portrayed the real world or the redeeming order which countered the fantasy world of Madeleine's affair as monotonous and loveless. According to the advertisements, reality in this film was so unbearable that it drove a woman to engage in adultery against her will.

Women and sexuality are topics of focus at the end of each of my chapters. Recent studies suggest that messages within the films are far more complex and contradictory than previously thought. That women emerge at the forefront of many of the films of the period is itself a sign that films and the film cult posed a contradiction to German fascist values (which generally relegated women in real life to a supporting role in relation to men). In the musical comedies and the melodramas, female characters and the actress who played them were at the forefront of the films and their advertisements. All four films I examine contain willful and charismatic female characters that really outshine their male counterparts. In particular, both *Capriccio* and *Gasparone* contain spirited, assertive female characters that act as the initiators (and often even physical aggressors) in their relationship with men. These women even cross gender boundaries by dressing up as men when they wish to depart from their roles as women. The importance of women even extended beyond the film narrative into movie-going and fan cultures that surrounded films. In the case of the musical comedies, I examine how the female star, characterized as affluent and savvy, was central to the promotion and popularity of the films. The melodramas also catered to a female film cult, especially since in wartime women became the primary film-going audience.

On the other hand, women do not appear at the forefront of the anti-Semitic films. The characters are almost all men. Women in anti-Semitic films, when they do appear,

are generally presented as that which must be protected against the sexual advances of the Jewish male. While *Robert und Bertram* and *Die Rothchilds* do possess these general attributes, there are instances when the women in the two films seem to contradict the norm. Next to Aryan males, the main Aryan female characters in the films are often stronger and more decisive; until the ends of the films they are often the only ones fighting off the advances of the Jew. Also, the Jewish women in *Robert und Bertram,* are portrayed as more dangerous than the Jewish males – more physically attractive and intelligent.

Certainly the National Socialists achieved an unprecedented amount of control, spreading their influence to all sectors of German life: across gender boundaries, into the private sphere and into the realm of popular culture. However, their level of control or totalitarianism never matched ambitions. As a study of the films shows, divergent ideas appeared throughout the period. Films could not be made immune from the tensions inherent to their times and perhaps they did not need to be. Incorporating, rather than censoring, complex and conflicting ideas was perhaps a key to how the Nazis maintained power.

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BA: *Bundesarchiv*
FM: *Filmmuseum, Berlin*

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Appendix. Figures

Figure 1 - Promotional image for *Capriccio*. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 2 - Film still for *Capriccio* from *Das Programm von Heute*. Courtesy of the *Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv* Berlin.

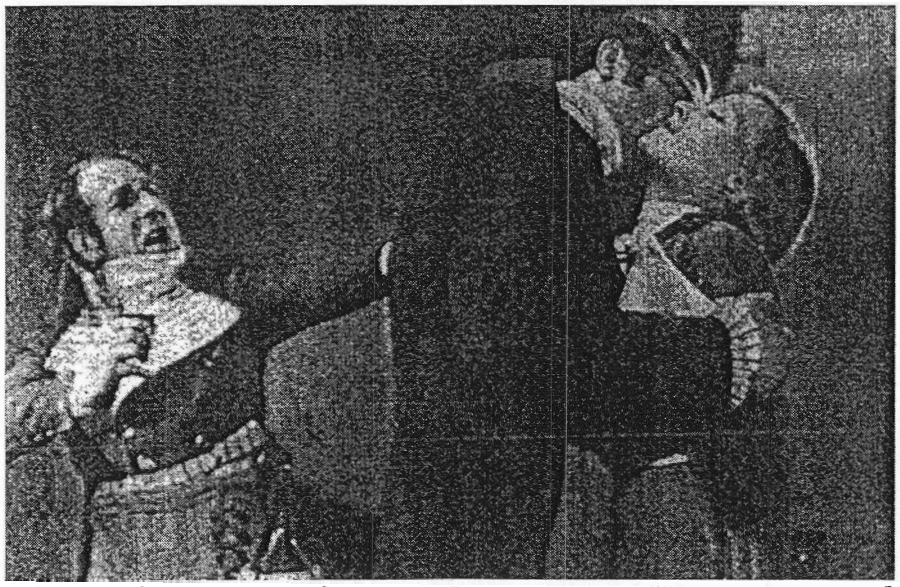


Figure 3 - Film still for *Capriccio* from *Das Programm von Heute*. Courtesy of the *Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv* Berlin.

Figure 4 - Film still for Capriccio from Illustrierter Film-Kurier. Courtesy of the Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv Berlin.

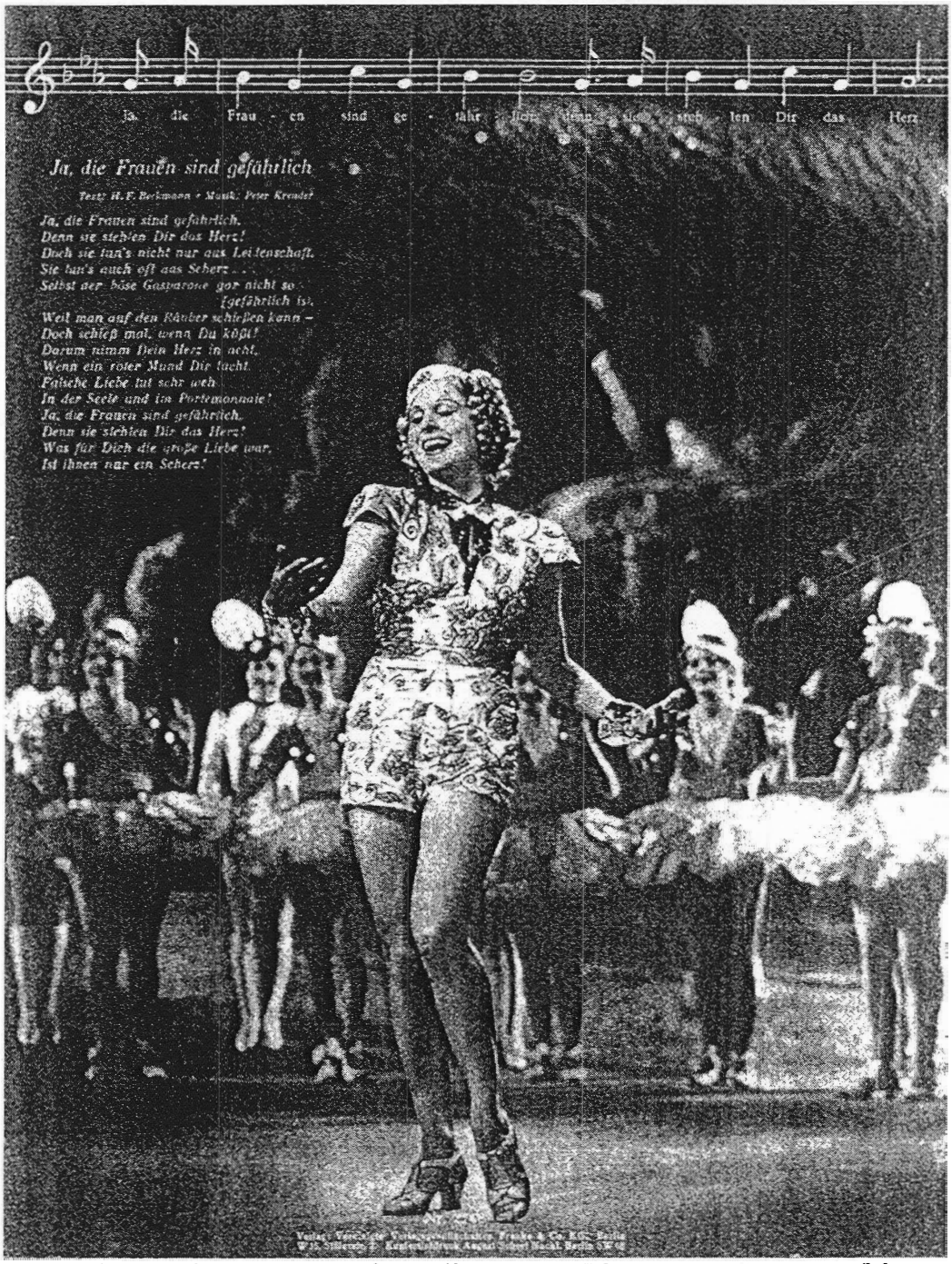


Figure 5 - Film still for *Gasparone* from *Illustrierter Film-Kurier*. Courtesy of the *Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv* Berlin.

Figure 6 - Press photo for *Capriccio*. Courtesy of the *Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv* Berlin.

Figure 7 - Press photo for *Capriccio*. Courtesy of the *Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv* Berlin.

Figure 8 - Press photo for *Capriccio*. Courtesy of the *Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv* Berlin.

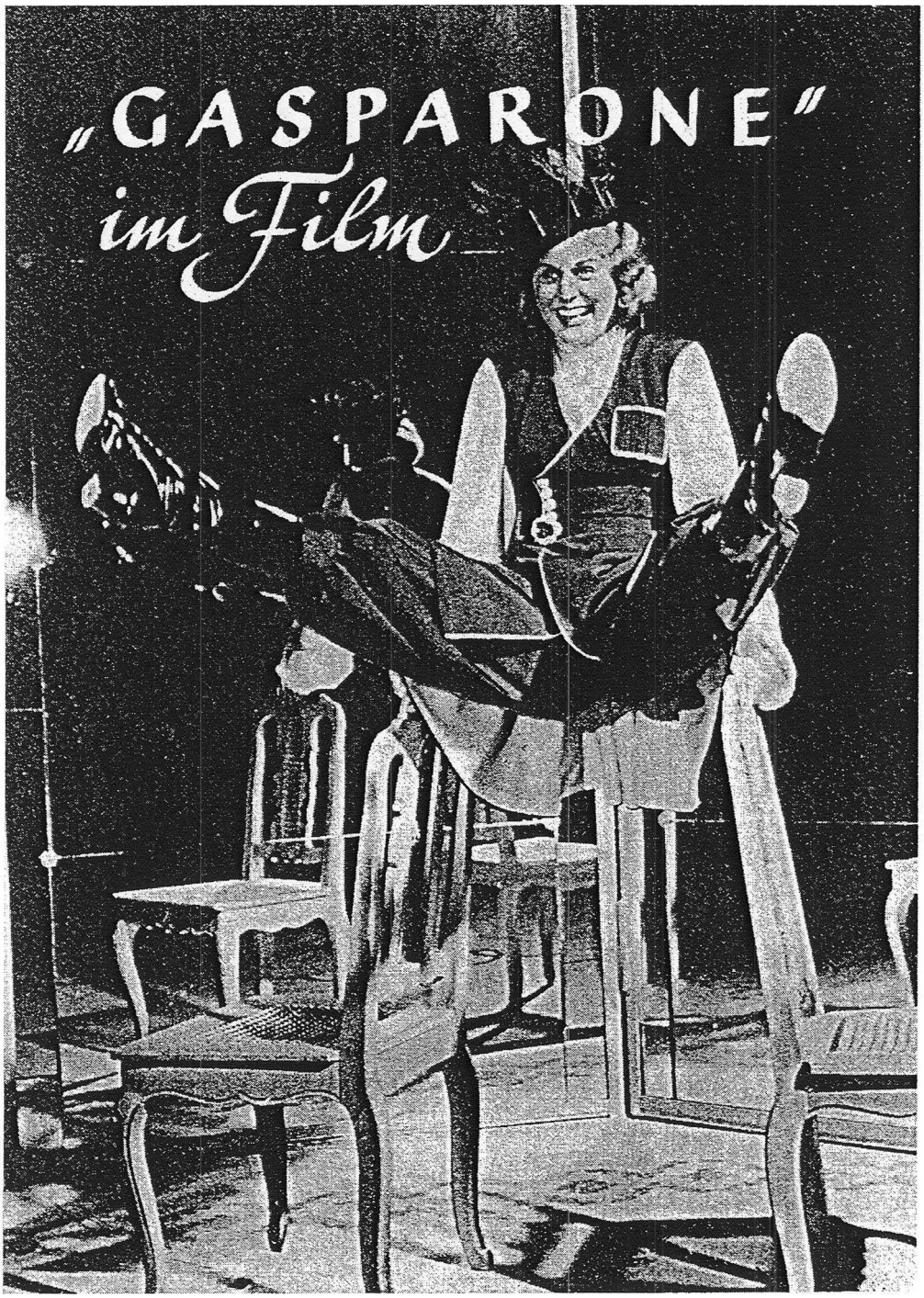


Figure 9 - Film poster for *Gasparone*. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

P 15 M. Zeichnung: Trautschold — Tobis

Inge von der Straaten

in der Maske der jüdischen Bankiersfrau Ipelmeyer — einer Hauptfigur der Hans H. Zerlett-Produktion der Tobis „Robert und Bertram"

(Mater auch 25 mm breit)

P 9 M. Zeichnung: Trautschold — Tobis

Herbert Hübner

in der Maske des jüdischen Bankiers Ipelmeyer, einer Hauptfigur der Hans H. Zerlett-Produktion der Tobis „Robert und Bertram"

(Mater auch 25 mm breit)

P 40 M. Zeichnung: Trautschold-Tobis

Tatjana Sais

spielt eine Hauptrolle in der Hans H. Zerlett-Produktion der Tobis „Robert und Bertram"

(Mater auch 25 mm breit)

Figure 10 - Caricatures of the characters Mr. and Mrs. Ipelmeyer and Isadora Ipelmeyer from the *Robert und Bertram Tobis Presseheft*. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 11 - Film still from *Jud Süss* depicting Dorothea Sturm and Süss Oppenheimer. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 12 - Film still of Lenchen and Michel from *Robert und Bertram* from the *Tobis Presseheft.* Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 13 - Film still of George and Phyllis from *Die Rothschilds* from the *Ufa Presseheft.* Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

P 41 M. Zeichnung: Trautschold-Tobis

Ursula Deinert

spielt die Rolle einer Tänzerin in der Hans H. Zerlett-Produktion der Tobis „Robert und Bertram"

(Mater auch 25 mm breit)

Figure 14 - Film still and caricatures of Isadora Ipelmeyer from *Robert und Bertram* from the *Tobis Presseheft.* Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

P 15 M. Zeichnung: Trautschold — Tobis

Inge von der Straaten

in der Maske der jüdischen Bankiersfrau Ipelmeyer — einer Hauptfigur der Hans H. Zerlett-Produktion der Tobis „Robert und Bertram"

(Mater auch 25 mm breit)

Figure 15 - Film still and caricature of Mrs. Ipelmeyer from *Robert und Bertram* from the *Tobis Presseheft.* Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 16 - Film still of Lenchen from *Robert und Bertram* from the *Tobis Presseheft.* Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 17 - Film still of Sylvia from *Die Rothschilds* from the *Ufa Presseheft.* Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

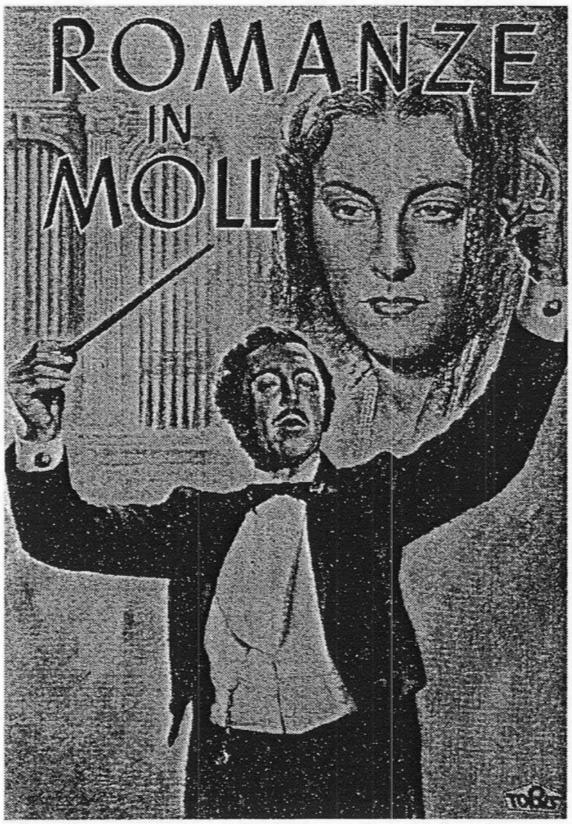
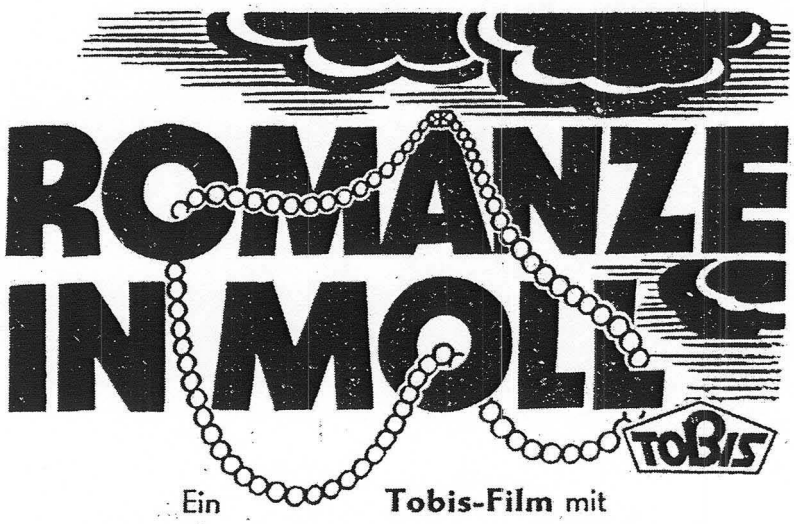


Figure 18 - Film poster for *Romanze in Moll* from the *Tobis Presseheft*. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 19 - Film poster for *Romanze in Moll* from the *Tobis Presseheft*. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

MATER 106

Größe: 3 spaltig / 69 mm breit



Ein **Tobis-Film** mit

Marianne Hoppe • Ferdinand Marian • Paul Dahlke • Siegfried Breuer • Anja Elkoff • Elisabeth Flickenschildt • Eric Helgar

Drehbuch: Willy Clever und Helmut Käutner
nach einem Entwurf von Willy Clever

Musik und musikalische Bearbeitung:
Lothar Brühne, Werner Eisbrenner

Regie: Helmut Käutner

Ein kammerspielartiger, stark dramatischer Film, von Spielleiter und Darstellern mit künstlerischem Feingefühl packend gestaltet.

Kulturfilm · Wochenschau

TÄGLICH 4, 6, 8 UHR

KRISTALL-PALAST

MUSTERINSERAT, 100 mm hoch

Figure 20 - Promotional image showing the pearls wrapping around the title just as they literally and metaphorically wrap around Madeleine. *Romanze in Moll Tobis Presseheft.* Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

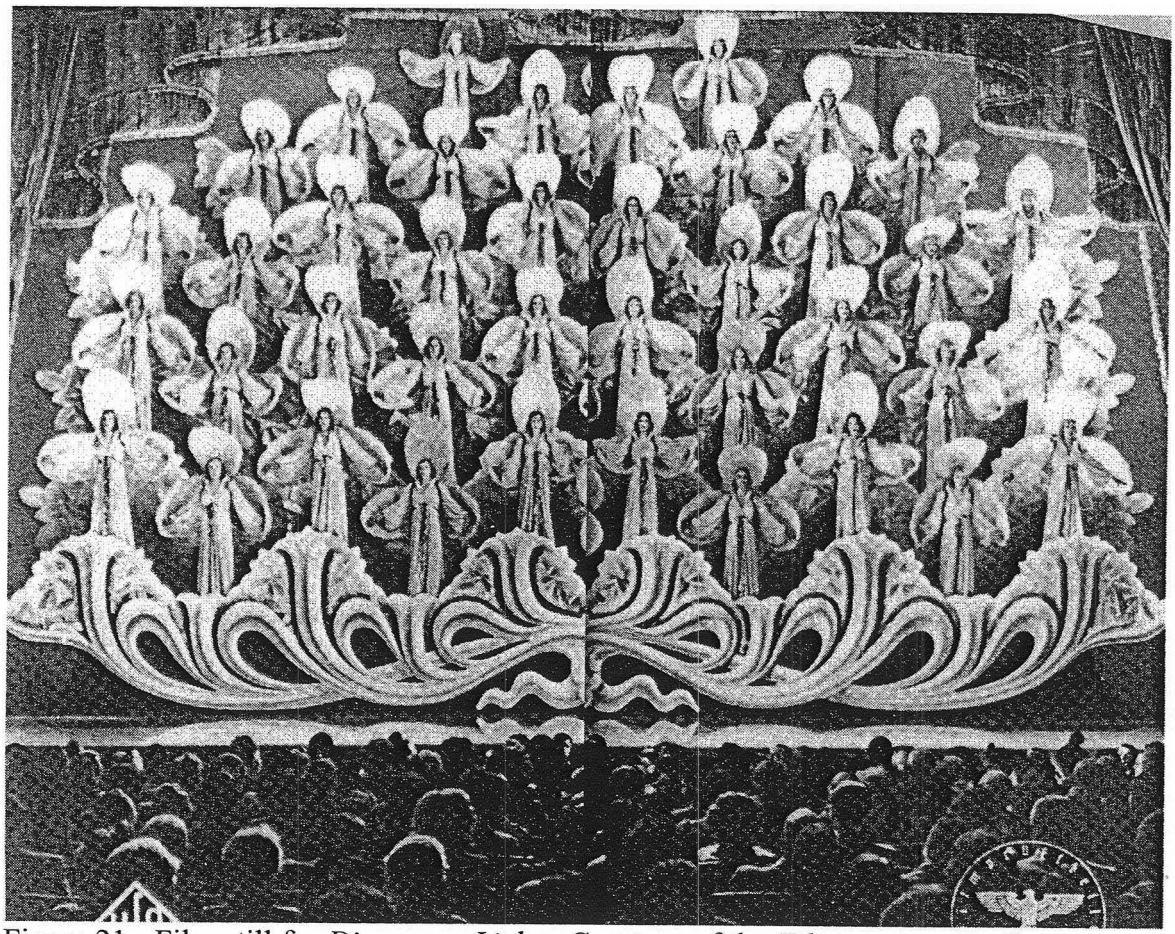


Figure 21 - Film still for *Die grosse Liebe*. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 22 - Film still for *Die grosse Liebe*. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 23 - Film still for *Die grosse Liebe*. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.

Figure 24 - Film still for *Die grosse Liebe*. Courtesy of the *Filmmuseum*, Berlin.