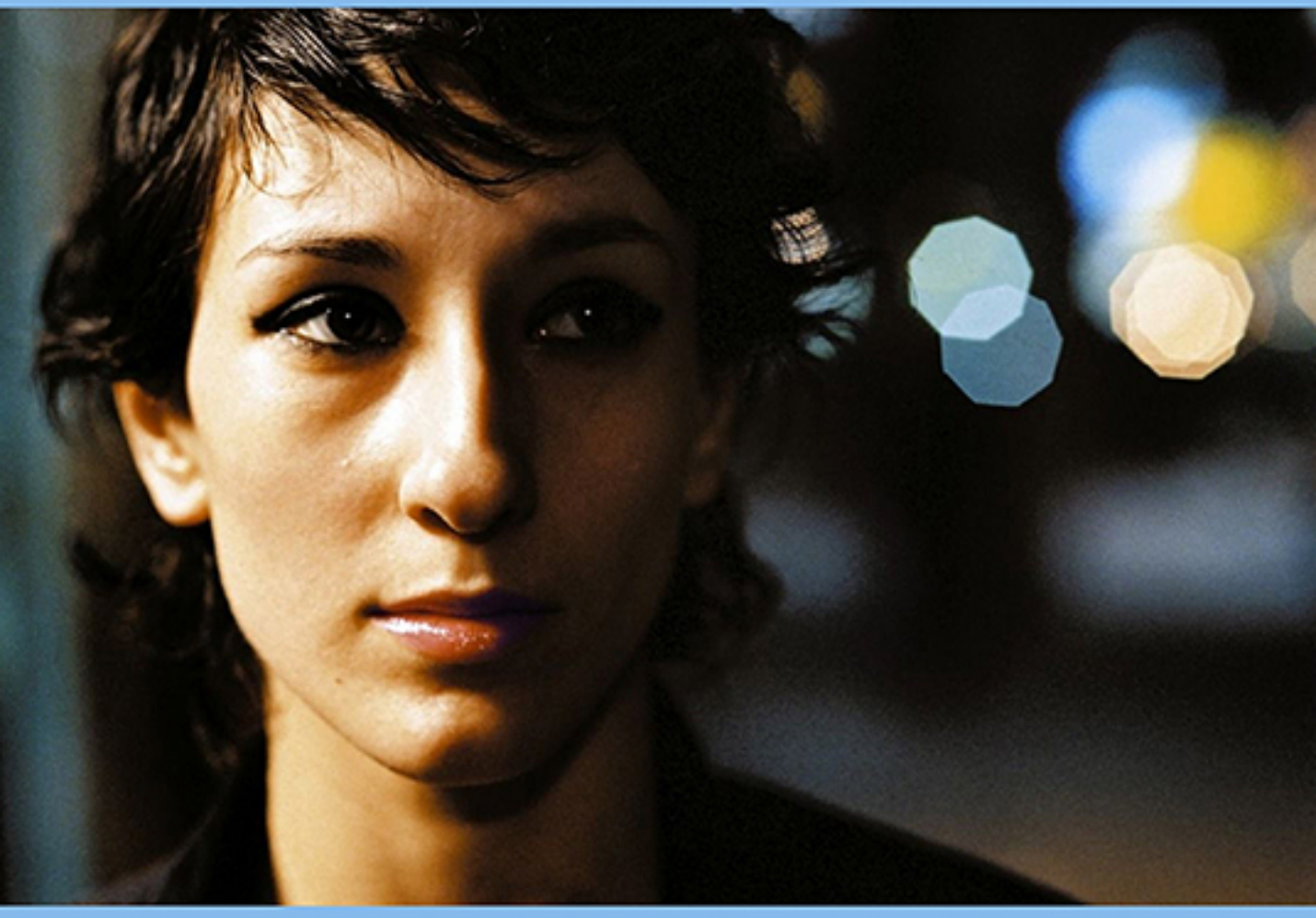
THE GERMAN CINEMA BOOK



Edited by Tim Bergfelder, Erica Carter, Deniz Göktürk & Claudia Sandberg

second edition

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EDITED BY TIM BERGFELDER, ERICA CARTER,
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The Editors

INTRODUCTION

> Germany can look back on as long a film history as any other country, and yet, more often than not, its cinema has seemed ambivalent even in its achievements. The disasters of German history this century have left their mark on the cinema, and even more so on the image and idea we have of it.
>
> Thomas Elsaesser[1]

CLASSICAL HISTORIES

Thomas Elsaesser's quote above succinctly summarizes the difficulties, both methodological and ideological, of writing a history of German cinema. German film has often been assigned a distinct place in the canon of world cinemas, accompanied by a set of critical parameters and modes of evaluation that have aimed to explain the excesses (rather than the norms) of German history through the image of a national film culture. Studies written prior to the 1950s, such as Oskar Kalbus's *Vom Werden deutscher Filmkunst* (1935) or H. H. Wollenberg's *Fifty Years of German Film* (1948), provided inevitably partial and often anecdotal narratives from a contemporary point of view (though Kalbus's book provides a fascinating insight into how national film history was retrospectively constructed during the Nazi period).[2] From the 1950s to the 1980s, selected moments in German film history, most notably Weimar, Nazi, and the New German Cinema of the 1970s, received considerable scholarly attention, both in Germany and elsewhere. The commonly held perception that German cinema could be understood through an isolated engagement with these three historical periods was supported by a selectively condensed and teleologically ideal narrative, which charted German cinema from mostly undistinguished beginnings to its first peak of artistic excellence in the Weimar period, producing outstanding masterpieces and individual auteurs such as Fritz Lang and F. W. Murnau. For the Third Reich, the narrative's emphasis shifted from a discussion of artistic merit to an analysis of filmic effects, and of the institutional underpinnings of a politically compromised culture industry. The story jumped then to the Young and the New German of the 1960s and 1970s: movements seen as the index of a post-fascist redemption under the sign of the movements of 1968, but rarely analyzed either in their relation to German popular cinemas of the same period, or to the cinema of a socialist East Germany whose notions of engaged cinema diverged radically from Western understandings of a post- or anti-fascist film art.

Alongside these studies of a cinema seen as aligned with political history through relationships of homology and synchrony ran a second—cinephile—tradition in German film scholarship. Key works devoted to the establishment of a pantheon of canonical "masterpieces" and auteurs included Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel's *The German Cinema*; the three-volume encyclopedia *Klassiker des deutschen Stummfilms* (Classics of the German Silent Film), *Klassiker des deutschen Tonfilms* (Classics of the German Sound Film), and *Der neue deutsche Film* (The New German Film); and Frederick Ott's *The Great German Films: From before World War One to the Present*.[3] The canonical emphasis of these studies was certainly questioned from the 1980s, when the emergence of film studies as a newly institutionalized discipline drawing on the methodological tools of critical and cultural theory, allowed more nuanced explorations of the relationship between German history and its

sonic and visual articulation in film. Landmark studies included Eric Rentschler's *German Film and Literature*, Marc Silberman's *German Cinema: Texts in Context*, and Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, and Hans Helmut Prinzler's *Geschichte des deutschen Films* (History of German Film), a volume that attempted a comprehensive history covering the previous nine decades of German cinema, while adopting a multi-perspectival approach that included such neglected areas as exile and feminist histories of German film.[4]

But despite these interventions, persistent blind spots haunted German film scholarship. Both East and West German cinematic developments from the immediate postwar era to the mid-1960s tended to be ignored, with studies fast-forwarding to the Oberhausen manifesto, the 1962 initiative that kick-started the Young and the New German Cinema, and was regularly identified as the culmination of Germany's struggle for cultural legitimacy. The popular cinema of genres and stars that emerged after the First World War and remained the mainstay of the German industry also disappeared from view, producing an apparently seamless history whose surface coherence derived from an occlusion of many of its defining elements. The need for a labor of historical reconstruction that restored to visibility the lost elements of German film history, while eschewing attempts to erase that history's fractures and breaks, did however begin to be acknowledged in the latter decades of the twentieth century, when for instance the editors of *Geschichte des deutschen Films* compared German film historiography with "working on a building site."[5] In a similar vein, Sabine Hake cautioned in the introduction to her *German National Cinema* against attempts to homogenize a "national cinema striving for an internal coherence and unity that, in fact, can and will never be achieved."[6]

Published contemporaneously with *German National Cinema*, the first edition of *The German Cinema Book* (2002) was conceived in the multi-perspectival spirit invoked by Hake. In an effort to open up space for neglected, dismissed, or more violently repressed histories, we championed "popular" forms and institutions; stars and industries; subcultural forms such as queer and women's cinema; forgotten periods, movements and practices; and crucially, German cinema's transnational encounters, dialogues, and flows. The volume was further inspired by conferences and publications such as Richard Dyer and Ginette Vincendeau's *Popular European Cinema*, which had inaugurated since the 1990s a renewed interest in popular forms and histories, grounded in the Anglophone tradition of cultural studies. This turn to the popular had led in particular to a revitalization of genre methodologies that continued into the 2000s, and was soon adopted by German cinema scholars. A far from exhaustive list illustrating this trend include Randall Halle and Margaret McCarthy's 2003 edited volume *Light Motives: German Popular Film in Perspective*, followed by in-depth studies of specific genres such as the Heimat film in Johannes von Moltke's *No Place Like Home: Locations of Heimat in German Cinema* (2005), the 1960s genre cycles in Tim Bergfelder's *International Adventures: German Cinema and Coproductions in the 1960s* (2005), the horror film in Steffen Hantke's collection *Caligari's Heirs: The German Cinema of Fear after 1945* (2007), *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* in Sabine Hake's eponymous monograph (2010), a more nuanced look at the generic dimensions of 1920s cinema in Christian Rogowski's *The Many Faces of Weimar Cinema: Rediscovering Germany's Filmic Legacy* (2010), and a plethora of case studies across all periods of German film history in Jaimey Fisher's *Generic Histories of German Cinema* (2013).[7]

A further shift since the first edition of *The German Cinema Book* in perceptions of German cinema and its academic analysis has been the move into the foreground of postwar film history of DEFA and East German films (see Claudia Sandberg's contribution in Part 4). As we noted in 2002, this rebalancing process had already begun in the 1990s, first with the opening of the archives in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall, then with publications such as John Sandford and Seán Allan's *DEFA: East German Cinema, 1946–1992* (1999).[8] However, it was in the 2000s that the historical study of DEFA blossomed as a truly prolific field, triggered by the circulation of many hitherto unknown films at festivals, retrospectives and in DVD format, and by the enthusiastic promotion of institutions and sites dedicated to DEFA film. Of particular importance in the latter case was the productive collaboration between the DEFA-Stiftung in Berlin, the DEFA Library at the University of Massachusetts Amherst,

and the DVD distributor IceStorm. Cooperation amongst these institutions allowed for a thoughtfully curated circulation of important films, which has become a model for a sensitive process of promoting and making accessible older films that few other German periods of filmmaking have been able to benefit from in such a systematic fashion.

Many analyses of East German cinema significantly revise previously held assumptions about German cinema, using studies of popular genres to shift the emphasis from accounts of GDR film as the mirror of a largely successful state dictatorship, to histories that foreground that cinema's role in observing, negotiating, and reworking what were in fact the profound contradictions and tensions in GDR state socialism. Recent studies have explored DEFA's position in German cinema historiography, the legacy of East German filmmaking for subsequent generations, East German cinema's dialogue with international trends and traditions, and its correspondences with sociopolitical issues in and beyond Cold War Europe. The current DEFA scholarship, showcased in edited collections including Brigitta B. Wagner's *DEFA after East Germany* (2014) and Marc Silberman and Henning Wrage's volume *DEFA at the Crossroads of East German and International Film Culture* (2014), also offers a model for this second edition of *The German Cinema Book*.[9] While the aim of the first edition was to suggest new avenues, research areas and themes, this present volume on the one hand acknowledges the longevity of traditional approaches and discourses—or more accurately, the need for their adaptation and repurposing for a new generation. On the other hand, this edition borrows an approach from the current DEFA scholarship that refines, or in some cases substantially reshapes, perspectives adopted in the 2002 volume. Thus, we return to and engage below with questions of the "canon," exploring in a new section on authorship that includes contributions on the canonical authors of Weimar and New German Cinema how conceptions of the author have been revived and reformulated in the new millennium. Nicholas Baer revisits the oeuvre of F. W. Murnau; Todd Herzog and Sabine Hake explore the transnational trajectories and national legacies of Fritz Lang and Ernst Lubitsch; Michael Cowan examines films by documentarist and avant-gardist Walter Ruttmann; Brad Prager and Gerd Gemünden consider the transatlantic practice of Werner Herzog and Wim Wenders; and Paul Cooke looks at Rainer Werner Fassbinder as a seminal figure whose films remain a touchstone of auteurist practice in twenty-first century German (and international) arthouse film.

This volume's "auteurist (re-)turn," however, not only includes a reevaluation of canonical directors but also the rediscovery of authors and other industry figures "forgotten" or underestimated in scholarship. This means in the first instance acknowledging the achievements by female filmmakers such as Ulrike Ottinger and Angela Schanelec (discussed by Ulrike Sieglohr), Helke Sander (discussed by Erica Carter), and Helke Misselwitz (discussed by Martin Brady), spearheading a long and distinguished list of female as well as feminist contributions to German cinema that is mapped in Part 4 by Erica Carter and Claudia Sandberg (see also Annette Brauerhoch's piece on the journal *frauen und film*). Meanwhile other figures discussed by Barton Byg (Heiner Carow), Christian Rogowski (Reinhold Schünzel), Joseph Garncarz (Ilse Kubaschewski), and Chris Wahl (Kurt Hoffmann) share a common rooting in popular genre filmmaking: Schünzel and his one-time assistant Hoffmann in comedy among other genres, Carow in children's film, Kubaschewski, in her role as producer-distributor, in the range of genres that shaped popular taste in postwar West Germany. There are in this sense significant overlaps between Part 3 of this volume, on authorship, and other sections more centrally concerned with the popular cinema of genres and stars. Whereas, however, a strong focus in the first edition was on the notion of the "popular," we have expanded this into the more encompassing and pluralistic category of "genre," acknowledging that generic conventions apply not just to popular forms (as in chapters on the crime film, comedy, and the war film by Tim Bergfelder, Jan-Christopher Horak, and Jennifer Kapczynski, respectively) but also to practices such as documentary (see Brady on Misselwitz), or the avant-garde (see Michael Cowan's portrait of Walter Ruttmann).

The section on "stars", which formed another significant focus in the first edition of *The German Cinema Book*, retains its title in this second edition, but has been significantly expanded. New case studies on Wilhelmine

and Weimar performers (Schlüpmann and Jesson on Asta Nielsen, Ottmann on Ossi Oswalda) now accompany Kaes's text on Fritz Lang's Siegfried, while the coverage of the Nazi and postwar eras is augmented by Ascheid's study of exotic stars in the 1930s and 1940s, and Carter's comparison between Marlene Dietrich and Hildegard Knef. To take account of more recent developments, Malte Hagener has updated and revised his original survey of the star system in contemporary Germany, while new case studies of stars from the 1970s through to the present include Sieglohr on Hanna Schygulla, Abel on Nina Hoss, Bergfelder on Michael "Bully" Herbig, and Göktürk on Sibel Kekilli.

These revisions and additions are prompted by a drive toward pluralism that also motivates our new structural concept of complementing longer chapters with medium-length texts and even briefer "spotlights." These offer localized and detailed impressions of significant films, institutions, and people, and thus contribute hopefully to a richer and varied picture overall. In this latter aspect we take our cue in part from the structural organization of one of the key Film Studies texts, the original *Cinema Book* edited by Pam Cook in 1985; but we also echo the approach of Jennifer Kapczynski and Michael D. Richardson's mammoth 2012 volume *A New History of German Cinema*, which aims to tell the fractured history of German cinema through chronological analyses of singular events.[10]

Three, perhaps deceptively simple questions demand further attention, however, if the conceptual underpinnings of this volume's revision of the original *German Cinema Book* are to become clear. Why, it might first be asked, should we return now to a volume on national cinema, at a point when our own first edition of this work so fundamentally questioned existing national cinema approaches? Second, why, indeed, cinema at all, in an era when the advent of digital screens and online platforms has raised key questions over the ontology of the film medium and its location in an institution definable as "cinema"? And thirdly and relatedly, why a book, or less bluntly perhaps, to what purpose do we engage here with a medium that seems to elude dialogue in conventional media forms including the printed book, and in a situation where scholars are turning increasingly to multimedia approaches (audiovisual essays, blogs, and the like) as more viable vehicles of cultural critique and critical historiography in the digital age? We address these questions in turn below, beginning with that of the status of the national in this new *German Cinema Book*.

GERMAN CINEMA: CONSTELLATIONS OF NATION

Germany's fractured political history throughout the twentieth century makes it next to impossible to trace a national film history in straightforward linear terms. The very definition of Germanness has to negotiate not only continuities but also a plethora of cultural, ideological, and geographical ruptures across multiple periods. A film history that acknowledges such differences has to take account, for example, of the fertile influence of German-speaking cultures from Eastern Europe, or from areas that have always had a distinct or separate national identity (i.e., Austria, Switzerland), not to mention wider transnational and transcultural connections. It needs to counterpoint the nationalism of the 1930s and 1940s with the cosmopolitan legacies of Jewish diaspora and exile, of European colonialism, of labor migration, refugees and asylum, and of global trade and cultural traffic. It needs to chart the ideological divisions and boundaries of the Cold War, as well as the re-emergence of a more diverse conception of Germanness in the twenty-first century, however contested and fragile that multiculturalism may remain. It needs to acknowledge competing claims as to what "German" means across not always overlapping cultural, historical, national, and linguistic definitions, and explore how these meanings have left their mark on a perpetual indeterminacy of German film history. And it needs to explore, through an engagement with the wider field of screen studies, how the instability of the borders and boundaries that seek to confine German cinema within the heuristic frame of nation derives not only from specifically German politico-cultural histories but also from a general tendency in cinema toward transnational and global interactions that destabilize the category of national cinema *tout court*.

The first edition of *The German Cinema Book* was arguably ahead of the game in terms of our questioning of cinematic historiographies of nation, and in our championing of German cinema's transnational dimensions and histories. The volume's overall emphasis on past and present "transnational connections" in cinematic production and reception aimed to expand horizons beyond the container logic of national culture to include traveling polyglot filmmakers, international co-productions, and the reception of moving images across borders. We hoped to increase awareness of histories of cross-border movements, performative interactions across multiple languages, and cosmopolitan horizons beyond "the limiting imagination of national cinema."[11] Crucial to this project were the changing politics of representation and participation in heterogeneous societies diversified by migration, where shared memory and vision cannot be assumed as given and need to be continuously negotiated.

Fifteen years on, transnational connections have become a central field of investigation in global cinema studies: a means of challenging nativist narratives of national cinema, and articulating and mapping histories of transfers, translations, travel, and exchange in an increasingly interconnected world. German film studies has witnessed in this context numerous instances of excavating transnational histories, from tracing the influences of Danish and other European companies in the early years of cinema, via the cosmopolitan endeavors of European industries during the 1920s and 1930s, the exoticism and foreign stars from the Third Reich into postwar East and West German popular entertainment, to contributions by both incoming and outgoing exile, diasporic, or migrant filmmakers. The latter are explored centrally in this volume in chapters on exile, migration, and transnational traffic by Sabine Hake, Christian Cargnelli, Eleanor Halsall, Peter Krämer, and Deniz Göktürk. They figure also—necessarily—in numerous other chapters exploring the territorially dispersed histories of German cinema.

Our embrace of German cinema in its transnational dimensions does not, however, signal a repudiation of the national as a category of analysis. To do so would be to vacate important critical terrain. State-funding regimes, as numerous contributions in this volume attest, continue to be mediated through discourses of nation that frame and enable larger shifts in film culture, from the nativist visions of National Socialism to neoliberal understandings of nation as corporate production site or consumer brand. Critical perspectives on national cinema remain crucial too in a context where questions of the preservation, restoration, and remediation of a vulnerable global film heritage are settled with primary reference to national histories and cultures; thus international heritage policies created by bodies such as UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the European Council, and the European Commission remain formally channeled through nation state, with policies shaped around national jurisdictions and access funneled in the first instance through national archives and museums. In a context where the nation continues to be mobilized as a powerful administrative figure for social experiences of collectivity and belonging, critical engagement with semiotics and aesthetics, but also the politics of textual figurations of nation remains, equally, an important task.

In this revised and expanded volume, we have addressed that task through an approach that conceptualizes German cinema not as a determinate entity with fixed borders and a linear historical trajectory but a mobile formation that is perpetually made and remade in a network of relations across national, local, regional, transnational, and global spaces and entanglements. German cinema thus features in the contributions as the complex product of what we term (with Michael Wedel) "historical constellations" of nation: entities discernible through a critical and historiographical practice that understands national cinema cultures as the unstable products of multiple processes of historical production, and that places "multidimensionality, multi-directionality and complexity" at its heuristic core.[12] The volume's six parts propose, accordingly, what we term six "constellations of nation": genre, the star system, authorship, state and industry institutions, theoretical and political discourse, and finally, intersecting domains of transnational circulation and connectivity. Each of these, we suggest, represents a distinct arena of cinematic practice and form; a site of intersection of cinema with larger technological, economic, political, and social forces; and a field of constitution of historically specific, complex, and perpetually shifting formations of German national cinema.

GERMAN CINEMA AFTER THE DIGITAL TURN: TEMPORALITY AND LOCATION

Our emphasis on national cinema as the product of processes of circulation and constellation derives not only from a recognition of the place of German film spatially within shifting and always already mediated relationships across national and transnational domains. It relates also to changing models of temporality in German film history. Since the publication of this volume's first edition in 2002, the accelerated development of digital film, with its extended capacity for simulation, has raised questions over the homological relation assumed in many classical accounts between film and larger histories of nation. The advent of digital media may not in itself have produced a crisis in seeing moving images in temporal synchrony with broader histories; despite popular assumptions about cinema as reflective of national character, the medium has always been more than a simple mirror of nation. But the digital turn has sharpened awareness of the status of film as a medium productive of simulacra of history; and it has problematized in so doing conceptions of German cinema as temporally coincident with specific phases in the history of the German nation. Numerous contributions in this volume reflect therefore on film's capacity both before and after the digital divide to remake history as memory, nostalgia, and experience in and for the present moment. Contributors reflecting on the return of history as film include Heide Schlüpmann, Anton Kaes, and Stephen Lowry on the gestural cues that locate star bodies as vehicles for an experience of history; Thomas Elsaesser on the return of Holocaust memory as the New German Cinema's Freudian *Fehlleistung*; and Victoria Rizo Lenshyn and Barton Byg on the archive as a site of contestation of DEFA history and GDR memory. In chapters on the Heimatfilm genre and on Berlin School filmmakers, Johannes von Moltke and Marco Abel explore the presence of future time in filmic figurations of the postwar present; conversely, chapters on exile (Hake, Cargnelli), migration (Fellmer and Raundalen, Göktürk, Halsall) or epochal transition (Ring on DEFA during the Wende) reflect on film's recapturing of times lost or submerged within a German national history of political rupture and territorial dispersal.

A historiographical and critical practice that understands its object—German cinema—as spatially dispersed and temporally disjunctive needs, moreover, to consider its own location in the time and space of cinema history. Digital communication has not only challenged understandings of film as a trace or index of its historical object; it has also significantly changed the conditions within which cinema is circulated and watched. The movie theater is now only one of numerous sites at which film is consumed; the cinema auditorium vies today for position as exhibition site with domestic television sets, mobile phones or laptops, DVD and Blu-Ray players, or video platforms including YouTube and Vimeo. The recycling of older film texts and forms through DVD, online platforms, and social media, as well as the remediation of archive films within a contemporary experience culture centering on retrospectives, pop-up screenings, anniversary events, and festivals, has multiplied locations for the experience of film as an historical or critical object. The proliferation, meanwhile, of blogs, film portals, and online databases, open access journals, and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) has diversified the forms in which cinema studies and film criticism circulate, shifting their sites of operation beyond the academy, and demanding new modes of critical address to filmic objects and cinema history.

REVIEWING THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF GERMAN CINEMA STUDIES

The new edition of *The German Cinema Book* tackles the issue of shifting "locations of film knowledge" with an approach that displaces older traditions of a film scholarship dedicated to mastery of its object, working instead on a principle of methodologically multivocal and "epistemologically decentred" engagement with German film history.[13] Put differently: this volume assumes that there are many knowledges of German cinema; that those knowledges are generated through an engagement from multiple perspectives and in multiple voices. However, the cultural relativism that might ensue from a simple embrace of critical diversity needs tempering with a

recognition of the need for an ethical and political dimension to all forms of cultural critique, including those relating to cinema and film. That relation is perhaps most evident in the expanded section of this volume on theory, memory, and counter-cinema (Part 5). That section includes a new chapter by Tobias Nagl on German traditions in film theory that questions a tendency long evident in German cinema studies toward theoretical paradigms favoring a mastery of film as object. When, in the 1970s, film studies began to be institutionalized in university curricula, film theory in both the Anglophone and German-speaking worlds often exhibited a curious antipathy to, or at the very least a tendency toward the subjugation of film to supposedly higher orders of knowledge including cultural philosophy, social and psychological theory, or structural linguistics as a putative science of signs. While in the Anglophone world, apparatus theory under the sign of semiotics and cine-structuralism demanded what Christian Metz termed a necessarily "sadistic" (and thus distanced and analytically deconstructive) relation to film analysis, German cinema studies was often dominated by theories that pitted the film scholar in opposition to a cinema (particularly popular genre cinema) conceived similarly as something akin to a Kleinian bad object.[14]

Crucially influential here was the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School, the loose grouping of cultural critics and social scientists who came together in the 1920s, comprising Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Leo Löwenthal, and the more distinctly independent Walter Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer. As both Marxists and Jews, the founding members of the Frankfurt School fled Germany in the 1930s, but continued to write trenchant critiques of capitalist ideology in their (mostly North American) exile. Adorno's notion of the culture industry as an all-pervasive expression of capitalist ideology, and his notion of high culture as a possible (though not necessarily guaranteed) site of resistance, had a profound impact on critical discourses on German cinema as well as on the ethos and practice of many German filmmakers in the 1970s. Adorno's stance crucially also dictated the terms by which popular German film was discussed. For Adorno, capitalist production was all-encompassing and irredeemable, and its specific political contexts and cultural manifestations to some extent were interchangeable or merely incidental. His disdain for mass culture extended from American jazz music, radio, advertising, and Hollywood films to postwar German commercial cinema. On the latter he opined that "what is repulsive about Daddy's cinema is its infantility, its industrially activated regression."[15] Thus "popular" culture in the sense of a relatively autonomous domain of sociopolitical practice was not only no longer possible in the age of the culture industry, but the very claim for its existence became an act of critical collusion: "the culture industry is not the art of the consumer, but rather the projection of the will of those in control onto their victims."[16]

While Frankfurt School writings focused necessary attention on the intersection of capitalist domination with film's aesthetic and representational modes, uncritical readings of Adorno and Horkheimer's "Culture Industry" essay in particular produced overly simple accounts of the German film industry, market, and audience as a unified and coherent system of capitalist domination. This resulted in a contradictory evaluation of the German film industry, which was condemned both for its capitalist "essence," and for its failure or inefficiency as a capitalist industry; hence the often-cited derisory term "Bavarian cottage industry" for postwar West German film production.[17] But as Nagl's essay demonstrates (and his chapter has as its backdrop comprehensive overviews of the history of German film theory by scholars including Anton Kaes, Sabine Hake, Gertrud Koch, Helmut Diederichs, Michael Cowan, Malte Hagener, and Nicholas Baer), there is within twentieth-century German film theory a parallel critical tradition—one that is formative for this present book.[18] Historical overviews of the "emergence of film culture" (Hagener) have unveiled a German history of theoretical engagement that operates from a position not of critical distance, but of intimate entanglement within film culture. Recent studies of the writings of Siegfried Kracauer offer one exemplary case.[19] Kracauer's 1947 study of Weimar cinema, *From Caligari to Hitler,* provided for many years the theoretical and historical framework by which film in the Weimar period was understood to intersect with authoritarian tendencies.

While Adorno and Horkheimer had seen authoritarian proclivities as built into capitalist culture industries, Kracauer's model saw Weimar cinema as inflected by the specific sociopsychological characteristics of German nationhood.

Kracauer's much-quoted thesis was that the German cinema of the 1920s and early 1930s textually prefigured and anticipated the Nazi dictatorship, and that it projected an innately German psychological proclivity toward authoritarian social and political structures.[20] But in 1963, the publication of selected works from the Weimar period under the heading of one key essay, *Das Ornament der Masse* (The Mass Ornament),[21] initiated a slow process of editorial retrieval that in turn prompted revised understandings of Kracauer's significance. As the full extent of his activities as essayist, reviewer, cultural sociologist, newspaper editor, novelist, film theorist, and historian emerged into view, Kracauer's 1947 volume was revealed as indebted to thoroughly diverse influences from early twentieth-century social philosophy on the one hand, and psychological and cultural theory on the other. It was also acknowledged as the product of an exile experience in a time of personal and historical crisis (or as one unkind reviewer put it, "a refugee's revenge").[22] Kracauer's writing on film, it became clear, was shaped by and spoke to historical contingencies including the political crises of late Weimar, the experience of double exile in Paris and New York, later engagements with US cultural debates, and a concomitant shift from the proto-Marxism of his late Weimar essays, to the "historiographical humanism" that Johannes von Moltke finds represented in Kracauer's final book, *History: The Last Things before the Last* (1969).[23]

Kracauer is in this sense emblematic of a Jewish exile generation who began their careers in Weimar Germany as jobbing writers engaging with film from beyond the margins of an intellectually insular and racially and sexually exclusive academy. Kracauer worked as a journalist, novelist, and newspaper editor; Lotte Eisner as a film and theatre critic stalking the Ufa studios on behalf of the trade paper *Film-Kurier*; Béla Balázs as a Viennese film critic, screenwriter, and fabulist, and later as a translator and Marxist film activist in Weimar Berlin; Rudolf Arnheim as a journalist and reviewer; and Walter Benjamin as a translator, journalist, and private scholar. The entity known (in misleadingly monolithic terms) as "Weimar film theory" is thus revealed by historical studies as a body of work dispersed across multiple sites within an emergent film culture, and engaged in dialogue both with contemporary film practice, and with the larger cultural, political, and intellectual currents of its time. The new historiography of film theory has thus performed two kinds of service for contemporary German film studies. The recovery of early cinema criticism and theory through new editions, translations, edited compendia, and critical studies has fostered, firstly, new engagements with German-language critical traditions from within the larger field of contemporary film theory and criticism. Attention focuses here in particular on early German film phenomenologies, and on their insights into film viewing as sensory experience (as in recent writings by Thomas Elsaesser and Malte Hagener), as social experience (Miriam Hansen), as a play of physiognomies (Noa Steimatsky), as embodied performance (Erin Brannigan), or as sonic and visual experiment with space, time, and scale (Mary Ann Doane).[24]

Historical insights into the location of early German writing on cinema in relations of proximity, contiguity, and dialogic exchange with an emergent film medium have, furthermore, provoked reflection on the similar relationship of participatory scholarship potentially enabled by new media and the internet.[25] In their 2011 volume *Orte filmischen Wissens* (Locations of Film Knowledge), Gudrun Sommer, Vinzenz Hediger, and Oliver Fahle call for a "cartography of filmic knowledge" that traces historical relations between technological, aesthetic, and industrial transformations in cinema and film, and the knowledge of, in, and through film to which those transformations give rise. In an epoch of media immersion, what the authors call *Bildung,* in the Enlightenment sense of educated citizenship, is, they claim, no longer thinkable without critical knowledge of the "genesis and functional logics of contemporary media culture," including among others the culture of film.[26] Under contemporary social conditions of life experienced in and through digital networks, Sommer et al. thus advocate practices of critical engagement

that intervene in digital knowledge circuits to foster a democratic and critically self-reflexive culture of moving image production and circulation.

Responding to this and similar calls for engaged media and film critique may, indeed it arguably should, in part mean film and cinema scholars moving beyond academic writing into audio-visual essays, DVD commentaries, film talks, festival events, gallery walks, or documentary filmmaking on the history and aesthetics of film. But as editors of this volume, we share with Sommer et al. the perception that such engagements are one element only in a circulatory process in which film knowledge moves across and between domains of critical cultural practice, emerging and reshaping itself in relations of generative exchange between academic scholars, students, filmmakers, artists, librarians and archivists, curators, programmers, film fans, bloggers, and other citizen critics. Across forty chapters and thirty spotlights, the volume takes multiple snapshots from this circulatory network, exploring the culturally and critically diverse scholarship that populates the field of German cinema studies and shapes its engagements with media cultures as well as its contribution to contemporary media literacy and public history. The volume takes stock of the steady flow of books that have expanded the field of German cinema studies since *The German Cinema Book*'s first edition: a publication surge sustained in part by the commitment of publishers (in the Anglophone context exemplified by Berghahn's "Film Europa: German Cinema in an International Context" series, and Camden House's "Screen Cultures: German Film and the Visual" series), but even more by the consolidation, growth, and coming of age of film studies as an academic discipline during the seventeen years since the volume's first edition. This *German Cinema Book* also offers itself as a toolbox for the range of new institutions, undergraduate and postgraduate courses, research initiatives, and academic subject associations that have sprung up across Germany, other parts of Europe, the United States, and the wider world, facilitating the exchanges and collaborations that are the lifeblood of film studies in an era of the medium's dispersal across multiple formats and sites.

Three guiding principles have shaped our selection of contributions to debates within this complexly networked scholarly field. Our commitment to a scholarship embedded in expanded networks demands an approach, first, that combines interior perspectives on national cinema with extrinsic standpoints. Such an inner/outer view is enabled in this volume in part by a methodological pluralism that combines aesthetic analysis with industry history, auteurist approaches with genre and star studies, national cinema studies with transnational perspectives. It is facilitated also by contributions from scholars across three continents (Europe, North America, and Australasia), as well as by a thematic focus on transnational and intercontinental exchanges that extends beyond the volume section devoted explicitly to transnational connections (Part 6), and includes foci on cultural exchanges with Hollywood (in chapters by Peter Krämer, Jan-Christopher Horak, Christian Cargnelli, and Sabine Hake), Turkey (in contributions from Barbara Mennel and Deniz Göktürk), India (Eleanor Halsall), Africa (Wolfgang Fuhrmann), and, through co-productions, migrations, and cultural exchanges, with other European nations and the European Union (Tim Bergfelder, Randall Halle).

Secondly, alongside our commitment to an understanding of German cinema formed at the borders between geographical territories as well as between diverse conceptual and cultural fields stands the notion of circulation as a shared conceptual frame shaping this volume's critical approach. The sociologist of mobility Mimi Sheller provides a cue here when she calls for a historiography that captures both the mobile histories of "people, things and ideas moving across hemispheric … pathways," and the "immobilities or moorings" associated with those movements, their relation to "questions of power, uneven access, and social justice."[27] Chapters by Joseph Garncarz, Frank Kessler, and Eva Warth; Hans-Michael Bock and Michael Töteberg; and Martin Loiperdinger, as well as shorter chapters on institutions and sites including journals (Annette Brauerhoch), television stations (Claudia Sandberg), film festivals (Caroline Moine), and archives (David Kleingers), show accordingly how the mobile flows of film culture through diverse distribution channels and across multiple audience groups and readerships

have been fostered at various moments in German cinema history, but often also "immobilised" in Sheller's sense by censorship and other forms of industrial and state institutionalization and regulation (what Sheller calls "mooring"). Adopting a retrospective lens through a festival commemorating Turkish migration, Deniz Göktürk proposes a focus on "situated transit" that takes into account possibilities, barriers, and imbalances in processes of translation and circulation in the context of debates on citizenship and participation.

If these contributions show how cinema has become embroiled historically in larger struggles over cultural agency, access, representation, and power, then this volume's third guiding principle—which is that of dialogic engagement—shapes its potential contribution to the social and political contestations that surround German cinema. Several chapters explore cinema as a field of political intervention and conflict, both in contexts that use film as oppositional practice (as in Marc Silberman's chapter on Weimar leftist cinema, Carter and Sandberg's on women's filmmaking, or Dagmar Brunow's on queer film), and in historical moments where filmmaking and film policy feed authoritarian regimes (as in Eric Rentschler, Julian Petley, and Antje Ascheid's chapters on cinema in the Third Reich). Politics does not appear in this volume solely, however, as a thematic focus. We understand this book, if not as political in a conventionally agitatory sense, then certainly as interventionist in its effort to promote a conversation on German cinema and film. Contributors to the first edition of *The German Cinema Book* have been exceptionally generous in their willingness to update their previous work in ways that resonate with current debates. New contributors have shown equal generosity in meeting our demands as editors for writing that opens out the field of German cinema studies to address larger contemporary concerns with cinema history, aesthetics, ethics, and politics. The book's new section on auteurs reveals the complexity of that demand. The year of publication of this volume's first edition—2002—marked the tail end of what Eric Rentschler described as the period of the "cinema of consensus," the resolutely commercial German cinema from the mid-1980s through to the 1990s that had superseded the New German Cinema, and displaced the latter's commitments to independent authorship, as well as to sociopolitical pertinence, if not active engagement of political concerns. As we noted above, the auteur has since returned to German cinema; but this notion is no longer exclusively anchored, as in the 1970s and 1980s, in terms of political commitment, or national representation. Being an auteur in contemporary German cinema can encompass very different positions and practices, from the austere "slow cinema" of the Berlin School, to the maverick practice of figures such as Oskar Roehler or Ulrike Ottinger, the inter- and transnational art cinema of Fatih Akın, or the evolving contributions of veterans of the New German Cinema such as Werner Herzog, whose renaissance in the new millennium has been remarkable.

There is, in sum (as was ever the case) no single program or ethos that unites the disparate artistic practice of German filmmakers. And yet there is arguably a shared address evident in the political dimensions of German film. For Marco Abel, the question animating the films of Berlin School directors is one of the possible social contours of a national community that has not yet come into existence but may yet emerge. For Barbara Mennel, the question posed by Fatih Akın's films relates similarly to issues of community, albeit within a multiethnic collectivity that crosses social boundaries within and beyond the limits of German nation. We learn from the practice of these and other contemporary auteurs, then, an openness with respect to questions of national cinema in its relation to history, aesthetics, and politics. The chapters and spotlight case studies that this book contains are offered to our readers in the same spirit of openness, as launch-pads for their own journeys around the cultural, critical, and historical circuits that shape both the history of German cinema, and its contemporary remediation and reinvention. We hope you enjoy the ride.

NOTES

1. Thomas Elsaesser, "The German Cinema as Image and Idea," in *Encyclopedia of European Cinema*, ed. Ginette Vincendeau (London: Cassell/British Film Institute, 1995), 172.
2. Oskar Kalbus, *Vom Werden deutscher Filmkunst*, 2 vols. (Altona-Bahrenfeld: Cigaretten-Bilderdienst, 1935); H. H. Wollenberg, *Fifty Years of German Film* (London: Falcon, 1948).

3. Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel, *The German Cinema* (London: J. M. Dent, 1971); Ilona Brennicke and Joe Hembus, *Klassiker des deutschen Stummfilms 1910–1930* (Munich: Goldmann, 1983); Christa Bandmann and Joe Hembus, *Klassiker des deutschen Tonfilms 1930–1960* (Munich: Goldmann, 1980); Robert Fischer and Joe Hembus, *Der neue deutsche Film, 1960–1980* (Munich: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 1981); Frederick W. Ott, *The Great German Films: From before World War One to the Present* (Secaucus, NJ: Citadel, 1986).
4. Eric Rentschler (ed.), *German Film and Literature: Adaptations and Transformations* (London: Methuen, 1986); Marc Silberman, *German Cinema–Texts in Context* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1995); Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, and Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.), *Geschichte des deutschen Films* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1993).
5. Jacobsen, Kaes, and Prinzler, *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, 7.
6. Sabine Hake, *German National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2002), 3.
7. Richard Dyer and Ginette Vincendeau, *Popular European Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1992); Randall Halle and Margaret McCarthy (eds.), *Light Motives: German Popular Film in Perspective* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2003); Johannes von Moltke, *No Place Like Home: Locations of Heimat in German Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Tim Bergfelder, *International Adventures: German Cinema and Coproductions in the 1960s* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), Steffen Hantke *Caligari's Heirs: The German Cinema of Fear after 1945* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), Sabine Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010); Christian Rogowski *The Many Faces of Weimar Cinema: Rediscovering Germany's Filmic Legacy* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010); Jaimey Fisher (ed.), *Generic Histories of German Cinema* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2013).
8. Seán Allan and John Sandford (eds.), *DEFA: East German Cinema, 1946–1992* (New York: Berghahn, 1999).
9. Brigitta B. Wagner, *DEFA after East Germany* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2014); Marc Silberman and Henning Wrage (eds.), *DEFA at the Crossroads of East German and International Film Culture* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014).
10. Pam Cook (ed.), *The Cinema Book* (London: British Film Institute, 1985); Jennifer Kapczynski and Michael Richardson (eds.), *A New History of German Cinema* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012).
11. Andrew Higson, "The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema," in *Cinema and Nation*, Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie (eds), (London: Routledge, 2000): 63–74. See also: Andrew Higson, "The Concept of National Cinema," *Screen* 30, no. 4 (1989): 36–47.
12. Michael Wedel, *Filmgeschichte als Krisengeschichte. Schnitte und Spuren durch den deutschen Film* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2011), 17.
13. For insightful discussion of the discursive location of film scholarship in the digital era, see Gudrun Sommer, Vinzenz Hediger, and Oliver Fahle (eds.), *Orte filmischen Wissens. Filmkultur und Filmvermittlung im Zeitalter digitaler Netzwerke* (Marburg: Schüren, 2011). Equally helpful is the work of the anthropologist Michel Agier, who writes on "epistemological decentring" as a practice of knowledge-production that situates the researching subject on the borders between domains of knowledge and cultural practice. That border location is used to sharpen awareness of the fluidity of relations between self and other (or research subject and research object); to heighten understandings of cultural knowledge as unstable and historically contingent; and to develop systems of thought that "mak(e) borders places of observation and understanding of increasingly more cosmopolitan social and cultural lives." Michel Agier, "Epistemological Decentring: At the Root of a Contemporary and Situational Anthropology," *Anthropological Theory* 16, no. 1 (2016): 1.
14. Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*, trans. Celia Britton and Annwyl Williams (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), esp. 4–14.
15. Theodor W. Adorno, *The Cultural Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (London: Routledge, 1991), 154.
16. Ibid., 160.
17. Thomas Elsaesser, *New German Cinema: A History* (London: British Film Institute and Macmillan, 1989), 17.

18. Anton Kaes, *Kino-Debatte. Texte zum Verhältnis von Literatur und Film* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1984); Sabine Hake, *The Cinema's Third Machine: Writing on Film in Germany 1907–1933* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993); Helmut H. Diederichs, "Frühgeschichte deutscher Filmtheorie Ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg." Diss., J. W. Goethe Universität, Frankfurt am Main, 1996); Malte Hagener, *Moving Forward, Looking Back: The European Avant-garde and the Invention of Film Culture, 1919–1939* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007); Malte Hagener (ed.), *The Emergence of Film Culture. Knowledge Production, Institution Building, and the Fate of the Avant-Garde in Europe, 1919–1945* (New York: Berghahn, 2014); Anton Kaes, Nicholas Baer, and Michael Cowan (eds.), *The Promise of Cinema: German Film Theory, 1907–1933* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016).
19. Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, trans. and ed. Thomas Levin (Cambridge, MA: University of Harvard Press, 1995); Gertrud Koch, *Siegfried Kracauer: An Introduction*, trans. Jeremy Gaines (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Gerd Gemünden and Johannes von Moltke, *Culture in the Anteroom: The Legacies of Siegfried Kracauer* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012); Johannes von Moltke, *The Curious Humanist: Siegfried Kracauer in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016).
20. See Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947).
21. Siegfried Kracauer, *Das Ornament der Masse* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1963).
22. Eric Bentley, "The Cinema: Its Art and Techniques," *New York Times Book Review*, May 19, 1947; quoted in Moltke, *The Curious Humanist*, 93.
23. Ibid., 186.
24. Thomas Elsaesser and Malte Hagener, *Film Theory: An Introduction through the Senses* (London: Routledge, 2010); Miriam Bratu Hansen, *Cinema and Experience: Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin and Theodor W. Adorno* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Noa Steimatsky, *The Face on Film* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Erin Brannigan, *Dancefilm: Choreography and the Moving Image* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, The Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002) and "The Close-Up: Scale and Detail in the Cinema," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 14, no. 3 (2003): 89–111.
25. See, for one of many instances of this dialogue between new media scholarship and Weimar theory, Catherine Russell, "New Media and Film History: Walter Benjamin and the Awakening of Cinema," *Cinema Journal* 43, no. 3 (2004): 81–85.
26. Hediger, Sommer, and Fahle, *Orte filmischen Wissens*, 9.
27. Mimi Sheller, "Aluminium across the Americas: Caribbean Mobilities and Transnational American Studies," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 5, no. 1 (2013): 1–19.

PART 1

GENRE

INTRODUCTION

Tim Bergfelder

In the first edition of *The German Cinema Book*, this opening section was called "Popular Cinema." The purpose of placing this term so prominently at the forefront of the volume was to draw attention to an area of study we felt was neglected and/or unjustly maligned. Nearly two decades later, and in the wake of substantial publications on numerous aspects of popular forms,[1] an explicit championing of the "popular" seems no longer as necessary or urgent. Crucially, as many (new and old) contributions in this section, but also a number of other recent publications, recognize, a clear-cut division between popular and art cinema is often difficult to justify, given their frequent overlaps and interdependencies.[2] Thus Johannes von Moltke discusses the New German anti-*Heimat* film of the 1970s as simultaneously rejecting and still drawing on the genre's conventions; Jan-Christopher Horak describes how modernism and popular traditions in regional culture coalesce in the work of comedians such as Karl Valentin and Herbert Achternbusch; and Tim Bergfelder equally charts the adoption of generic conventions and iconography of lowbrow sources into the work of modernist playwrights, painters, and film directors. Indeed one should not forget that many of the most esteemed auteurs of the Weimar period worked with explicitly lowbrow sources: witness the productive and only superficially incongruous collaboration of Fritz Lang and the pulp novelist and screenwriter Thea von Harbou, resulting in films that straddle generic and artistic boundaries, as in the case of Lang's *M* (1931, discussed here by Todd Herzog).[3]

Throughout the twentieth century and beyond, German cinema has shared with most other film cultures a tradition of diverse genres, whose continuous as well as prolific production dates back to the earliest days of cinema. However, unlike in the contexts of British or Hollywood cinema, where homegrown genres have frequently been celebrated both by critics and audiences at large as a legitimate and fondly cherished expression of national culture, in German cinema there have often been sharp boundaries between a critical orthodoxy for which the very term "popular" is suspect (hence what Jan-Christopher Horak terms in his chapter the "bias against genre"), and a national audience that shows a remarkable enthusiasm for, and loyalty to, German genre traditions.

At the same time, certain forms of popular German cinema have often been ill-equipped to meet expectations from outside Germany, partly because of established perceptions of what German cinema should and should not be, and partly owing to national differences in popular traditions (buttressed by specific cultural contexts and references) that do make some genres less amenable to travel abroad. Hence the often limited distribution and success of popular German films beyond the domestic market; witness in particular, as Horak's contribution in this section documents, the long-standing hostility toward, and incomprehension of, German comedy among foreign critics and audiences. Nevertheless, other genres and films have conformed better to established expectations about Germany from the outside. In the new millennium war-themed films such as *Der Untergang* (Downfall, 2004), or historical dramas depicting life in the shadow of totalitarianism such as *Das Leben der Anderen* (The Lives of Others, 2006) have proved extraordinarily successful both as cultural exports and in their appeal to domestic audiences. Jennifer Kapczynski's chapter demonstrates how this success builds on decades of generic precedents and continuities from the Wilhelmine period to the unified Germany of the present, and in more recent decades has expanded into television, exemplified by the phenomenally successful wartime family TV drama series *Unsere Mütter, unsere Väter* (Generation War, 2013).

Looking at the output of the German film industry over the last century, one finds many genres familiar from Hollywood and elsewhere: alongside war films and comedies, there are musicals, melodramas, crime thrillers, historical epics, westerns, horror films, and science fiction, to name but a few. There are also a number of often temporary genres for which one cannot determine an exact foreign equivalent, such as the post-First World War *Aufklärungsfilm* (sex education melodramas, providing often lurid, yet sometimes progressive exposés on issues such homosexuality and prostitution); the "mountain film" (*Bergfilm*) of the 1920s and early 1930s; "Doctors' films" (a melodrama subgenre particularly popular in the 1940s and 1950s), or the post-Second World War "rubble" cycle that comprised existentialist and highly stylized dramas set against urban ruins (for an interesting hybrid between the rubble film and a children's film, see Horst Claus's study of *Irgendwo in Berlin*).[4] Finally, there is one genre that appears in its iconography to be exclusively defined, indeed overdetermined, by its Germanness, the Heimatfilm, a genre that spans the entire history of German cinema in many permutations, which transcend not only different historical periods but also the boundaries between the "popular" and auteurist art cinema, as the Heimat or anti-Heimat productions by filmmakers such as Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Herbert Achternbusch, or Edgar Reitz attest to (see von Moltke's discussion of Reitz's *Heimat*).

One could be tempted to divide this plethora of different genres according to their perceived national specificity, which might locate the Heimatfilm with its iconic German locations and themes at one end of the spectrum, and the West and East German variants of the western in the 1960s (with their obvious reference to, but "faked" representation of, the American Wild West) at the other. On closer inspection though, such rigid classifications are difficult to maintain. For example, while exploring the Heimatfilm in his chapter in this part of the volume, von Moltke argues that this genre is at its core as concerned with wider, and often supranational, constructions of modernity as other spatial genres elsewhere, such as the Hollywood western, film noir, or the British "heritage" film. This argument not only allows von Moltke to establish illuminating connections and similarities beyond national specificity but also to draw productively on an Anglophone critical tradition of genre analysis that eschews the ideology critique traditionally associated with evaluations of the Heimatfilm.

Conversely, a closer study of the German western reveals a genre inflected both by national discourses and international influences that is far from being just an inauthentic version of the superior Hollywood original. As Deniz Göktürk has shown, the earliest German westerns in the 1910s evolved in parallel to the development of their US counterpart.[5] They drew in equal part on Hollywood iconography, and on German literary and filmic narratives about America that predate the conventionalization of the Hollywood western as a genre, and which reflected on the social and psychological repercussions of German mass emigration to America during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Thus, the focus in the early German western is frequently to explore the dichotomies of "home" and "abroad," mapped onto the transatlantic division between European/German traditions and national roots and American modernity, cosmopolitanism, and uprootedness. The later German westerns in both West and East Germany in the 1960s, too, articulate their very specific takes on the genre, in the former case in a negotiation of an increasingly global and consumer-oriented society of spectacle and tourism, in the latter in an anti-imperialist revision of the American frontier myth (see Jon Raundalen's spotlight).[6]

What this suggests is that rather than being, as has often been claimed, exclusively parochial and introspective, German genres and their audiences have frequently engaged in an active dialogue with other cultures and global concerns. This is perhaps not surprising given the international diversity of, and particularly the presence of Hollywood in, the German film market. In any event, a critical exploration of German cinema's dialogic dimension emerges as a far more productive approach to German genres than the presumption of stable national characteristics. Indeed a number of contributors to this section analyze their generic case studies through an investigation of both their cultural and historical specificity (which includes an acknowledgment of both dominant and marginal cultural groups and discourses), and their relationship to international contexts.

Jan-Christopher Horak points out that while German comedy may not have been successful with foreign audiences, the imprint that German-Jewish exiles such as Ernst Lubitsch, Billy Wilder, and Henry Koster have left on Hollywood, and on international conventions of film comedy, has been immense. Horak locates the American

success of such directors (and the renaissance of their work in Germany since the late 1960s) in a shared legacy of German-Jewish comedy, which demonstrates that the cultural exchange between German and international cinema can be reciprocal. Tim Bergfelder's contribution on the developments of the German crime film also charts a cross-cultural discourse that allowed German audiences to negotiate conceptions of national belonging through an engagement and identification with an imagined cultural other, at a time when the very idea of national identity was in question. However, while transnational perspectives expand our understanding of generic flows and adaptations, it is still important to recognize that popular genres and their circulation sometimes also follow more unique pathways in particular national contexts, as the trajectories of figures such as Reinhold Schünzel, Kurt Hoffmann, and Michael "Bully" Herbig, or industrial stalwarts such as Gloria's Ilse Kubaschewski illustrate.

Another emphasis that runs through many of the contributions in Part 1 is the importance accorded to popular cinema's intertextual connections with, and indebtedness to, other media. Thus, von Moltke traces the Heimat genre from its late nineteenth-century origins in novels by bestselling authors such as Ludwig Ganghofer and Ludwig Anzengruber, to its subsequent incarnation on television. Horak's contribution determines the dual influence of working-class Jewish stage farces and regional, especially Bavarian, folk theatre as crucial for the conventionalization of German film comedy. Bergfelder sees the development of the German crime film as inseparably intertwined with the industrial and promotional strategies of mass publishing, which fostered a cross-fertilization of different art forms and media, but also, especially in recent decades, with the interdependence between film and television. Kapczynski's chapter and her study of *Unsere Mütter, unsere Väter* also charts a trajectory from film to television.

Reframing Part 1 under the broader umbrella of "genre," finally, allows to reflect on generic codes and hierarchies that lie beyond the parameters of the commercial film industry, such as the diverse intersections of social realism and melodrama in the films produced by DEFA in the company's forty years of existence, or the unique achievements of GDR documentary, illustrated in Part 4 by a spotlight on Helke Misselwitz. The DEFA films from the late 1980s discussed in Annie Ring's chapter in Part 5 and the case study of *Jahrgang '45* in Part 4 can also be read as poignant examples of genres precisely because of their untimeliness and their failure as "popular" or "successful" films. They provide a necessary corrective to the assumption that history only proceeds in smooth continuities and generic repetitions, and instead they draw attention to ruptures, discontinuities, and dead ends.

NOTES

1. See, for example, Randall Halle and Margaret McCarthy (eds.), *Light Motives: German Popular Films in Perspective* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003); Jaimey Fisher (ed.), *Generic Histories of German Cinema: Genre and Its Deviations* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2013).
2. See, for example, John Davidson and Sabine Hake (eds.), *Framing The Fifties: Cinema in a Divided Germany* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2007); Hester Baer, *Dismantling The Dream Factory: Gender, German Cinema and the Postwar Quest for a New Film Language* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2009).
3. Reinhold Keiner, *Thea von Harbou und der deutsche Film bis 1933* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1991).
4. See, for example, Robert Shandley, *Rubble Films: German Cinema in the Shadows of the Third Reich* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001).
5. Deniz Göktürk, *Künstler, Cowboys, Ingenieure: Kultur- und mediengeschichtliche Studien zu deutschen Amerika-Texten 1912–1920* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1998). See also her "Moving Images of America in Early German Cinema," in *A Second Life: German Cinema's First Decades*, eds. Thomas Elsaesser and Michael Wedel (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996), 93–100.
6. On the West German westerns, see Tassilo Schneider, "Finding a New Heimat in the Wild West: Karl May and the German Western of the 1960s," in *Back in the Saddle Again: New Essays on the Western*, eds. Edward Buscombe and Roberta E. Pearson (London: British Film Institute, 1998). On DEFA's westerns, see Gerd Gemünden, "Between Karl May and Karl Marx: The Defa Indianerfilme (1965–1985)," *Film History* 10, no. 3 (1998): 399–407.

1

EVERGREENS: THE *HEIMAT* GENRE

Johannes von Moltke

In Anglo-American criticism, the *Heimatfilm* of the 1950s enjoys the curious status of a genre that is "at the same time famous and virtually unknown."[1] As if further proof were needed for the parochialism of 1950s German film production, the films remain external to the experience of the critics, let alone a broader public beyond the German borders.[2] Only the most intrepid German film scholars will have had any exposure to the run of films whose very titles appealed to a peculiarly German sense of the local during the 1950s, in particular: *Heimatglocken* (Bells of the *Heimat*, Hermann Kugelstadt, 1952), *Heimatland* (Homeland, Franz Antel, 1955), *Sohn ohne Heimat* (Son without a Heimat, Hans Deppe, 1955), *… und ewig ruft die Heimat* (… and the Heimat Calls Forever, Franz Schnyder, 1956), *Lied der Heimat* (Song of Heimat, Wilhelm Tiedemann, 1957), *Heimweh* (Homesick, Franz Antel, 1957), *Heimatlos* (Homeless, Herbert B. Fredersdorf, 1958), and *Einmal noch die Heimat sehn* (To See the Heimat Once More, Otto Meyer, 1958)—these are just some of the Heimat-compounds that appeared on theatre marquees during the decade. As such, they were symptomatic of a much broader obsession with the notion of Heimat, a term usually translated as "home" or "homeland," but with considerably more connotative baggage than any available translation.

For German film and (especially) television audiences, even today mention of the *Heimatfilm* will still conjure up a fairly stable set of plots and images, consisting of picturesque alpine landscapes or herds of sheep roaming the northern plains, of morally upstanding men and girlish women clad in traditional dress (*Trachten*) trying to track down the sinister poacher whose self-serving obsession threatens the fabric of the local community. Additional associations might include the repeated integration of (pseudo-) traditional *Volksmusik*, whether as part of the plot or on the non-diegetic soundtrack; lengthy inserts of alpine flora and fauna, often on the whimsiest motivation; the appeal to forms of humor and values allegedly held by the country folk who people these films; and perhaps even individual stars, or starring couples such as Sonja Ziemann and Rudolf Prack, or Anita Gutwell and Rudolf Lenz.

The persistence of these images in the German media landscape is telling—both for what it says about the function of Heimat during the 1950s and what it reveals about the lasting, if irritating, cultural relevance of the first postwar decade in the new millennium. As a focal point for a wide range of discourses, the notion of Heimat functioned as one of the decade's most prominent "keywords." The production and reception of the *Heimatfilm* as arguably the decade's "key genre" is both a symptom of this cultural constellation and one of its constitutive elements.[1] Scholarship on the *Heimatfilm* long focused mainly on the former issue, arguing that the *Heimatfilm* provided its historical audiences with a series of remote and archaic places where they could heal the wounds of war and take a "holiday from history."[3] Drawing on the work of Siegfried Kracauer in particular, a number of early critics advanced a psychological history of the genre that emphasized its nostalgic, escapist, and anti-modern tropes. Kracauer's influential book *From Caligari to Hitler* not only provided a useful model for correlating film and society but also appeared to offer the appropriate categories for naming the dominant "psychological dispositions" to be gleaned from the (Heimat) films of the "Adenauer era." As in the years

leading "from Caligari to Hitler," these dispositions comprised a willingness to retreat into a shell, to submit to authority, and to glorify petite bourgeoisie existence.[4] The corresponding ideology critique of the *Heimatfilm* saw the genre as the epitome of the culture industry, arguing that it served to obfuscate political realities by offering its "consumers" false escapes into nonexistent, premodern idylls, thus aligning them with the reactionary ideology of the decade.[5]

While such approaches yielded crucial insights into the ideological functions of mass culture, their totalizing claims left little room for historical or textual detail. Where the latter was addressed, in turn, questions of history and ideology tended to disappear altogether. Thus, one key study that looked at a broad sample of films in detail suffered from a largely quantitative and strikingly ahistorical approach, designed to define the "trivial" character of the *Heimatfilm*.[6] Only gradually did scholars begin to re-evaluate such totalizing approaches to the cinema of the 1950s in general, and to the *Heimatfilm* in particular, focusing on the potential for "subversion" contained in the landscapes of these films.[7] Accordingly, they started arguing for the need to interrogate the "gaps, ellipses and silences" that riddle the films of the Heimat genre, and which call for detailed attention to the workings of film form, reception, and the institutional contexts in which the *Heimatfilm* was able to thrive.[8] As Erica Carter rightly suggests, we should view the cinema of the 1950s "as a vehicle not for blind manipulation but for the airing of ambiguities, tensions, and contradictions."[9]

In keeping with the spirit of these revisions, this chapter reconsiders the production of Heimat in German cinema—a project I took up more fully in my book, *No Place Like Home: Locations of* Heimat *in German Cinema*.[10] Given the fact that the notion of Heimat, for all its proliferating meanings, always connotes a sense of place, I argue that the *Heimatfilm* needs to be understood as a "spatial genre" in the sense in which this notion has been applied to the western with its emphasis on landscape and the frontier, or to the explorations of the urban landscape in film noir. With its persistent foregrounding of regional and provincial spaces, of recurrent types of landscapes, and of an ideologically loaded notion of the local, the *Heimatfilm* has mobilized particular images of "place" that, upon closer inspection, become legible as responses to the ongoing transformation of space in modernity. In order to study the ideological function of those responses, I draw on work in cultural geography on the transformation of space, which, in the words of David Morley, "insists on the necessity of rethinking our sense of place in the context of the transformations and destabilisations wrought both by the forces of economic globalisation and by the global media industries."[11] Such an approach allows us to see how the *Heimatfilm* has served to imagine, if not facilitate, various processes of social, technological, and spatial modernization within the ostensibly bounded realm of the local. Even as the remote settings of the Heimat genre, like the term Heimat itself, seem custom-made for a retreat to a much earlier moment in the history of modernization, the genre continually produces ideological compromise formations aimed at "harmonizing" the contradictions between the local and its variously defined "others." A closer look reveals that the spaces of Heimat remain profoundly ambivalent, bearing traces of both the pastoral and the industrial, the local and the global, the traditional and the modern.[12]

These ambiguities are particularly evident in the historical context of the 1950s, when the *Heimatfilm* provided an ideological space that would contain competing claims on the reconstruction of German national identity—from an unmastered but ever-present Nazi past, through the integration of entire populations expelled from the East, to the momentous transformations that lurked underneath everyday talk of "normalization" and an "economic miracle." However, the habitual conflation of the *Heimatfilm* with the Federal Republic of the 1950s obscures some important film-historical continuities, as well as the fact that concern with the increasingly permeable boundaries of the local is by no means limited to this particular national and historical context. In a broader perspective, neither the *Heimatfilm* nor the decade's cinema as such are bookended neatly by the Nazi—and/or "rubble"—years on the one hand, and by the dawn of the New German Cinema on the other. Rather, the *Heimatfilm* functions in a longer film-historical durée,

as it constantly rearticulates cinematic as well as social and cultural obsessions that exceed the narrow scope of the 1950s. To treat the *Heimatfilm* merely as a brief "holiday from history" for the first postwar decade is to reify the genre at the expense of a more detailed look at historical continuities, internal contradictions, and different "uses" of the *Heimatfilm*.[13] Given the generic hybridity even of those films that have long served as the prototypes of the genre—the first fifteen minutes of *Schwarzwaldmädel* (Black Forest Girl, Hans Deppe, 1950), for example, come straight out of an Ufa *Revuefilm*—it would thus be misleading to impose an essentialized, ahistorical generic unity on the *Heimatfilm*. Its coherence is better grasped in pragmatic and discursive terms, much in the way Andrew Higson has defined the British "heritage film." Like notions of "heritage" in Britain, Heimat discourses "have always informed particular currents within the national film culture, surfacing more visibly at some times than at others."[14] We must therefore begin by expanding the historical focus of our inquiry and take a long shot of the developments before and after the 1950s; only then can we cut in to a close-up on the productions of that era, which continue to inform the overall "image" of the *Heimatfilm* for most viewers.

CONTINUITIES

As Eric Rentschler has rightly suggested, "the *Heimatfilm*, by dint of its persistence throughout the entire span of German film history, acts as a seismograph," one that allows us to "gauge enduring presences" as they have evolved since the earliest days of cinema.[15] Even a cursory glance at the genre's history reveals a set of striking personal, narrative, stylistic, and "pragmatic" continuities dating back at least to the period between 1910 and 1920. Thus, given the flourish of discursive activity around the question of Heimat in various political, cultural, and literary movements from the turn of the twentieth century,[16] it was only a matter of time before the nascent medium of cinema tapped this discourse. By 1912, we find at least one writer explicitly demanding that the "cinematograph" be impressed to the "service of *Heimatkunst,*"[17] and it has been suggested that the label "*Heimatfilm*" was already common currency during the First World War.[18] Even where the films have not survived, titles such as *Heimatliche Scholle* (Homestead, 1910), *Heimkehr* (Homecoming, 1911), *Heimat und Fremde* (Home and Away, Joe May, 1913), or *Wenn die Heimat ruft* (When the Heimat Calls, 1915) testify to one aspect of early cinema's affinity with Heimat discourse.[19] In addition, literary texts that had already been produced and received within the generic framework of *Heimatliteratur* soon served as source material for repeated adaptations, among them the work of Ludwig Ganghofer and Ludwig Anzengruber, or Wilhelmine von Hillern's bestselling *Die Geier-Wally* (Vulture-Wally, 1875).

Indeed, reviewing the first adaptation of *Die Geier-Wally*, a critic already complained in 1921 that "one can't bear to see any more Tyrolean farms, peasants' huts, open air dance floors and village inns." The exasperation with which the reviewer lists the film's "overused motifs" (if only to applaud their artful treatment by director E. A. Dupont and set designer Paul Leni) testifies to the familiarity of a quasi-generic iconography. By the early 1920s, in other words, the *Heimatfilm* had already begun to enter cinematic discourses and practices, with trade papers reporting the founding of a production company named "*Ostmärkischer Heimatfilm*" in 1926, or the premiere of a "great German *Heimatfilm*" in 1927.[20] This is not to say, however, that the cinema's imbrication with Heimat discourses had already yielded institutionalized definitions of a Heimat genre. Indeed, while it is tempting to assume that the latter would soon flourish in the blood-and-soil climate of Nazi ideology, the attribution of generic labels even during the 1930s and 1940s was not as consistent as retrospective filmographies suggest.[21] However, the term *Heimatfilm* was clearly available to reviewers and the industry alike.[22]

While such considerations of labeling and terminology are important in a historical or "pragmatic" conception of the genre, particular qualities that we tend to associate exclusively with the *Heimatfilm* of the Adenauer era already appear in different guises before that decade. Upon closer inspection, three aspects of Heimat discourse in particular share a long tradition prior to the "classical" period of the *Heimatfilm* in the 1950s, providing some of

Figure 1.1 *Die Geier-Wally* (1921) (top left); *Die Geier-Wally* (1940) (top right); *Die Geier-Wally* (1956) (bottom left); and *Die Geier-Wally* (1988) (bottom right). © Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek.

the historical coordinates along which to plot otherwise latent generic continuities. These include, first, the repeated involvement of the same personnel, such as the director Hans Deppe, the composer Giuseppe Becce, or the producer Peter Ostermayr, who literally personified one variant of the *Heimatfilm* for half a century.[23] Second, as Ostermayr's career plainly suggests, there is an astonishing continuity of basic texts to be adapted over and over again: Ostermayr acquired the rights to the bestselling novels of Ludwig Ganghofer in 1920 and managed to exploit most of these wildly popular alpine texts at least three times—producing his first "Ganghofer series" in the early 1920s, then remaking the same films as an independent producer for Ufa between 1934 and 1940, and finally producing another set based on the same novels during the 1950s, now in widescreen and color. With further adaptations by Harald Reinl and Hans W. Geissendörfer in the 1970s, the Ganghofer novels provide a textual backbone for the Heimat genre that spans virtually the entire twentieth century (see Figure 1.1). In a similar vein, Uta Berg-Ganschow has rightly identified *Die Geier-Wally* as an "evergreen" of the Heimat genre[24]: a 1988 film of that title by Walter Bockmayer is a queer send-up of the version produced by Ostermayr in 1956, which, in turn, was already a remake of a 1940 remake by Hans Steinhoff of E. A. Dupont's original 1921 adaptation of Wilhelmine von Hillern's novel from 1875.

Ostermayr liked to refer to his productions as "landscape-bound films" that performed "cultural work for the Bavarian *Heimat*." This link between location and Heimat represents a third vector along which to map articulations of the *Heimatfilm* throughout German film history. Thus, the emphasis on alpine and rural landscapes that has been taken to characterize the

Heimatfilm clearly has antecedents, particularly in the cycle of films known as *Bergfilme* (mountain films). Usually attributed to the pioneering efforts of their "inventor" Arnold Fanck, the cinematic fascination with alpine landscapes already forms a staple of early cinema; the scholarship on the early nonfiction film in particular has revealed a veritable obsession with landscapes and travel.[25] In this respect, Fanck's career is also exemplary in that it leads directly from the early "view" aesthetic through its gradual dynamization by way of technical innovations and heroic stunts, to its more or less successful (in)fusion with fictional narration in *Der heilige Berg* (The Holy Mountain, 1925/6), *Der Kampf ums Matterhorn* (Battle for the Matterhorn, 1928), or *Stürme über dem Montblanc* (Avalanche, 1930). Fanck's fetishization of camera technique throughout his work evokes the formal "exhibitionism" of an early "cinema of attraction."[26] Like the explicit acknowledgment of the camera's presence in that earlier mode, Fanck's virtual personification of the camera-as-mountaineer serves to mediate the ostensibly unmediated experience of the Alps: drawing on a romantic rhetoric of the Alps as a space of the sublime, uncontaminated by traces of modernity, the *Bergfilm* simultaneously populates and popularizes that space.[27]

While it is true that the narrative function of nature shifts from the *Bergfilm* to the *Heimatfilm* proper (where it is generally "pacified," but remains an "excessive" backdrop to the melodramatic plot), the staging of natural landscapes for spectacle and at the expense of narrative remains a staple of both the Berg- and the *Heimatfilm* alike.[28] Both, in turn, also tie in with the earlier, nonfictional forms mentioned above by virtue of a shared overlap with the emerging culture of tourism. The history of the "tourist view" in (German) cinema, in other words, would lead from the proto-travelogues of the first two decades, through the *Bergfilm* and the increases in Alpinism during the 1920s and 1930s,[29] to the rediscovery of alpine landscapes in both the *Heimatfilm* and the *Wirtschaftswunder* of the 1950s, when average citizens were again spending up to a month's income on vacations every year.

If these examples begin to suggest the continuity of cinematic uses of Heimat well before the 1950s, it is equally important to bear in mind the "genre redefinitions" and "genre repurposings" (Altman) that prolong the history of the *Heimatfilm* into the present. Just as Thomas Elsaesser, Eric Rentschler, and others have interrogated the sometimes disconcerting contemporaneity of cinematic legacies that date back to Weimar and the Nazi era,[30] we ought to dwell on the "afterlife" of the 1950s after the turn of the century as well. Thus, reincarnations of the *Heimatfilm* have included continued remakes and re-releases from the 1970s onward,[31] joined by the unbroken series of rebroadcasts on television since the early 1980s. If these developments principally index a logic of repetition and pastiche, others have worked to sustain the genre through renewal and critique, as in the case of the so-called "new" or *Anti-Heimatfilm*.[32] Peter Fleischmann's *Jagdszenen aus Niederbayern* (Hunting Scenes from Lower Bavaria, 1969) stands as the first example of a wholesale "repurposing" of the genre, and a number of notable Young German filmmakers from Rainer Werner Fassbinder to Volker Schlöndorff followed suit. In the eyes of the young *Autoren* who imaginatively inherited the genre from the Ostermayrs and Deppes of "Papa's Kino," the Anti-*Heimatfilm*—while aesthetically and ideologically distinct from the "classical" 1950s *Heimatfilm*—explicitly worked within the tradition that the Autoren were keen to subvert. This return to the genre in the context of the social movements of the late 1960s, in other words, had as much to do with a nascent "new regionalism" and a "renaissance of the *Heimat* feeling"[33] as it did with the established popularity of the *Heimatfilm* itself—a potential that the young filmmakers felt the need to tap, given the poor home box office of their internationally successful productions.

While few, if any, of these productions actually managed to cash in on the genre's popular appeal, Edgar Reitz apparently found the right mixture of nostalgia and critique in his successful TV mini-series *Heimat* (1984). As a film that self-consciously signaled its generic (and national) lineage with its choice of title,[34] Reitz's *Heimat* crystallized aspects of the genre's development from the 1950s through the 1980s. Both the overwhelming popularity of this series with a domestic television audience (garnering ratings of up to 26 percent) and the scandalized reactions by critics and scholars that followed, owed much to Reitz's

decision to face head-on the problem and the genre of Heimat as a compromised but stubborn popular cultural formation. As one of the major cultural events of the decade, Reitz's film successfully fused the popular but allegedly "uncritical" *Heimatfilm* of the 1950s with the vehemently critical but unpopular Anti-*Heimatfilm* of the 1960s and 1970s, thus maximizing the audience appeal of his series.[35]

Meanwhile, there seems to be no shortage of Heimat productions elsewhere. Wherever we look, German audio-visual culture is saturated with images that in the past would have been attributed to the *Heimatfilm* proper. On the one hand, the genre continued to provide the template for the production and reception of films made for theatrical release, such as *Die Siebtelbauern* (The Inheritors, Stefan Ruzowitzky, 1998) or *Viehjud Levi* (Jew-Boy Levi, Didi Danquart, 1999), as well as for the continuation of Reitz's family saga up through *Die andere Heimat* (2013), a "prequel" of sorts to the first three installments from *Heimat* (1984) to *Die zweite Heimat* (1992) to *Heimat 3* (2004).[36] Perhaps more to the point in a "pragmatic" view of genre history, though, the *Heimatfilm* appears to have found a new home and new "users" on television. Gerhard Bliersbach dates this return to the 1950s to the evening of September 9, 1980 when the public station ARD launched a series entitled *Heimatfilme* by broadcasting the 1951 version of *Grün ist die Heide* at prime time.[37] A random sampling of public and commercial programming would confirm the continued massive presence of 1950s cinema in German televisual "memory"—whether in the form of semi-annual reruns of the *Sissi* trilogy (1955–1957) starring Romy Schneider, or *Die Trapp-Familie* (The Trapp Family, Wolfgang Liebeneiner, 1956); Heimat-bound soaps such as *Schwarzwaldklinik* (Black Forest Hospital); almost nightly prime-time broadcasts of *Volksmusik* shows, which have inherited the iconography of the Heimat genre (such as *Musikantenstadl* [Musicians' Village], or *Kein schöner Land* [No Country More Beautiful])[38]; regular installments of *Zauberhafte Heimat* (Magical Heimat) and Heimatgeschichten (Tales from the Heimat) from varying German-speaking regions on public television. The longevity of the genre was indexed around the turn of the millennium in the commercial viability of the *Heimatkanal* marketed by the late Leo Kirch's Pay-TV *Premiere World*, which offers a continuous mix of 1950s *Heimatfilme*, television series such as *Der Bergdoktor* (The Mountain Doctor) and the occasional *Volksmusik* show on a 24-hour basis.

Today, extensive collections of full-length *Heimatfilme* are only a keyword search and a click away, freely available on YouTube and other platforms. The continuing presence of Heimat-programming on all channels as well as digital platforms begs the question of the reasons for the genre's continuity. In other words, what functions have this genre and its attendant discourses served that have distinguished them from other genres and discourses, thereby ensuring their continued viability? To study the *Heimatfilm* as a popular genre in this sense is to investigate the history and the social concerns to which it responds, which it reworks in terms of its formal construction, and to which it has been able to provide very flexible imaginary solutions. As I suggested above, those social concerns are to be sought particularly in the transformations of space brought about by processes of modernization. In order to trace some of the ways in which the *Heimatfilm* has responded to these issues, I want to return from the pragmatic historical continuities of the genre to the question of its historical functions during the 1950s.

NOSTALGIC MODERNIZATION: *HEIMAT* IN THE REAR-VIEW MIRROR

At the end of *Wenn die Heide blüht* (When the Heath is in Blossom, Hans Deppe, 1960), a *Heimatfilm* so overburdened with generic stereotypes as to border on the self-reflexive, we witness the establishment of two couples in the genre-typical countryside. The preceding plot has revolved around Rolf, an aging peasant's prodigal son, who originally fled his native village for America, but who comes to realize that his rightful place is back home, as the heir to his father's estate. This realization is reinforced by the romantic subplot, in which Rolf is torn between Sonja, the daughter of the local game warden, and Vera, an itinerant singer whom Rolf meets on the ocean liner that carries him back to Germany. The distinction between these two women condenses the film's governing dichotomies of

local versus foreign, traditional versus modern, rooted versus mobile, rural versus urban; as variations on the theme of Heimat versus *Fremde*, they predetermine Rolf's choice and the film's outcome. Along with a series of misunderstandings, the happy ending thus apparently settles these dichotomies as well, and the prodigal son is united with Sonja, who has just been chosen as *Heidekönigin* (queen of the heath) at the local pageant. Vera on the other hand is forced to realize that Rolf has learned his Heimat lesson and has decided to stay for ever in the provincial idyll he once scorned; she leaves for Hamburg in her car, accompanied by her persistent but innocuous suitor, Dr. Erdmann. As the two of them drive away, Vera's convertible is brought to a temporary halt by the inevitable herd of sheep roaming the heath. They pause before this idyllic scene, and Vera adjusts the rear-view mirror to touch up her lipstick (see Figure 1.2). In a tight close-up, the camera aligns us with her gaze into the mirror where we see the kiss between Rolf and Sonja that seals the narrative.

The shot that frames the "legitimate" couple in the rear-view mirror of the convertible is brief, but odd enough in its composition to stand out in the otherwise conventional closing sequence of *Wenn die Heide blüht*. Without making any claims on directorial intention, I would suggest that this closing is emblematic of some central generic concerns of the *Heimatfilm*. For this particular shot doubly refracts the viewer's gaze: on the one hand, we see Rolf and Sonja, ostensibly the very incarnation of Heimat, belonging, and continuity at the film's end, precisely through the desiring eyes of the woman who moves outside the space of Heimat, partaking in its spectacle as a tourist at best. In this regard, Vera's gaze doubles that of the predominantly urban audience to whom the *Heimatfilm* was addressed, and whom the genre undoubtedly helped to recruit as clients for the newly revived German tourist economy—for like the Heimat movement before the turn of the twentieth century, the *Heimatfilm* of the 1950s conveys an "essentially urban attitude toward the out-of-doors."[39] In addition, the fact that Vera's gaze is relayed through the mirror of a parked car evokes the spectator's situation in front of a screen. As the couple leaves in the convertible, the film comes to a close, and the viewer, too, leaves the cinema with a backward glance. Inasmuch as it explicitly, if almost imperceptibly, references the discursive framework of its exhibition, the *Heimatfilm* offers a highly mediated and distinctly modern experience of an ostensibly archaic idyll. In the experience of the urban moviegoer, but also of West German society at large, caught in the momentous transformations of the Wirtschaftswunder, Heimat exists only as a myth. That myth, incarnated in *Wenn die Heide blüht* by the union of Rolf and Sonja at the film's end, promises its own perpetual regeneration precisely when it is about to recede into the distance, superseded by the trappings of modernity. As Eric Rentschler remarks, "it is only after *Heimat* ceases to be taken for granted that the notion is articulated."[40] In their obsession with the logics of Heimat, the films of the genre function similarly to ritualize the passing of a moment when Heimat was still taken for granted.

Figure 1.2 *Wenn die Heide blüht* (When the Heath is in Blossom, dir. Hans Deppe, Germany: Kurt Ulrich Filmproduktion, 1960). © Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek.

Significantly, the films perform this function not simply by imagining Heimat as "an uncontaminated space, a realm of innocence and immediacy."[41] To suggest, as many have, that the *Heimatfilm* is quintessentially an escapist genre, is to overlook the fact that the escape routinely contains elements of the world from which viewers were allegedly escaping. In particular, if Heimat in the *Heimatfilm* is simply conceived as an escape from modernity, this does not account for the fact that the modern is not "outside" of Heimat, it is part of it. With remarkable consistency, various modern "contaminations" reach well into the plots of the films;

and while the narration is ostensibly structured to exorcise the tropes of the foreign, "American," urban, hypermodern, mobile and/or disembedded "other" from the space of Heimat, the films' manifest message is often complicated on the more formal level by a more dialectical logic of tradition and change: rather than holding modernity at bay, the *Heimatfilm* ultimately helps to naturalize its effects.[42]

This is precisely why the genre was so successful during the period of the Wirtschaftswunder, whose effects it made available within the space of Heimat. As in the *Bergfilm*, which had showcased the alpine sublime as an object of technological (including cinematographic) mastery, the spaces we encounter in the *Heimatfilm* of the 1950s are "remote" only in a superficial sense; upon closer inspection they are regularly suffused with traces of technological and social modernization, yielding a sort of "industrialised provincialism."[43] Hence, films like those of the Immenhof series (e.g., *Die Mädels vom Immenhof* [The Immenhof Girls, Wolfgang Schleif, 1955], *Ferien auf Immenhof* [Vacation at Immenhof, Hermann Leitner, 1957]), *Gruß und Kuß vom Tegernsee* (Greetings from Tegernsee, Rudolf Schündler, 1957), or *Ferien vom Ich* (Holiday from the Self, Hans Deppe, 1952), which all explicitly negotiate a tourist plot, offer vistas of a new service economy. Austrian productions such as *Das Lied von Kaprun* (The Song of Kaprun, Anton Kutter, 1955) sing the praises of one of the country's biggest engineering projects of the time, the Hohentauern dam. The comings and goings in films such as *Schwarzwaldmädel, Die Landärztin* (Lady Country Doctor, Paul May, 1958), or *Wenn die Heide blüht* showcase the most up-to-date and stylish modes of transportation; indeed, the films' obsession with mobility in the allegedly static, enclosed boundaries of Heimat suggests a far more complicated dialectic of inside and outside than the standard readings of the term (and the genre) would allow. Thus, when the female doctor Petra Jensen arrives in the Bavarian village of Kürzlingen on a motor scooter in *Die Landärztin*, Paul May's film significantly does not use this constellation to prove the superiority of traditional ways of life over the lifestyle and professionalism of the urban intruder. Nor, of course, does it engage in a full-scale attack on Kürzlingen's patriarchal provincialism. Rather, in chronicling Petra's gradual integration into the community as well as the latter's grudging acceptance of her professional skill, the film asks its audience to entertain the idea of Heimat as a compromise formation, a space in which the urban reaches the local and modernity meets tradition. The undeniable political conservatism of such films, then, consists not in an anti-modern stance, but in the selective embrace of the modern and in the mythologization of modernization as a process that ultimately does not threaten the underlying sense of continuity and *Gemeinschaft*. This ideological paradox, which we might describe as a project of nostalgic modernization, lies at the heart of the Heimat genre in German cinema.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME: TOPOGRAPHIES OF HEIMAT

Needless to say, these negotiations of tradition and modernity serve to hide the erosion, or absence, of precisely the premodern, "safe," "uncontaminated," or otherwise mythologized sense of place that the term Heimat is often taken to convey. In advancing an ideology of nostalgic modernization custom-made for the Wirtschaftswunder, the *Heimatfilm* elaborates a generic topography of the local onto which we may map not only a retrograde provincialism, but the effects of modernization as well. Traditionally, it would seem, Heimat is by definition a limited terrain, if not "necessarily small" as one of the many sociologists concerned with the question of Heimat in the 1950s saw it.[44] Whether we approach the issue with nostalgic sentimentality or with scorn, Heimat appears at first as a bounded space, onto which one cathects either warm feelings of *Gemütlichkeit* or a claustrophobic sense of being trapped. Correspondingly, Willi Höfig singles out the "closed system of the Heimat-world" as one of the defining characteristics of the genre, stressing the ways in which these films police the boundaries that separate this system from the transitory world "outside."[45] This definition of Heimat as a "closed" space, fenced off against the Fremde as its irreconcilable "other," was long prevalent in most readings of the genre and its films. It attributes to the *Heimatfilm* the production of place along the lines criticized by Doreen Massey when she glosses common formulations of the concept of geographical place in

human geography. Like Heimat, these notions of place are designed to evoke stasis and nostalgia, and an "enclosed security." Like the *Heimatfilm*, such formulations represent an attempt to "fix the meaning of places, to enclose and defend them: they construct singular, fixed and static identities for places, and they interpret places as bounded enclosed spaces defined through counterposition against the Other who is outside."[46]

Such definitions of place are both conceptually simplistic and politically reactionary—both of which has been said more than once of the *Heimatfilm* as a genre, too. As Massey has repeatedly pointed out, a more circumspect view of our sense of the local would need to account for the fact that "it is precisely … the presence of the outside within which helps to construct the specificity of the local place."[47] While such a view resonates especially with the reconfiguration of spatial regimes under current conditions of globalization and the transnational flow of culture, goods, and people, it holds true as well for the history of modernization throughout the twentieth century, which saw the increasing "disembedding" of local place.[48] One of the "consequences of modernity," as Anthony Giddens defines them, consists in the fact that "the very tissue of spatial experience alters, conjoining proximity and distance in ways that have few close parallels in prior ages."[49] The advent of modernity, Giddens argues, "increasingly tears space away from place by fostering relations between 'absent' others whose locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them."[50]

Such a view of modernization as a profound transformation of our sense of place can begin to explain some of the recurrent ambiguities of the *Heimatfilm*. It allows us to see the fetishization of camera technique and of (communications) technology in some of Fanck's films not as a contradiction to the director's quasi-religious veneration of nature; rather, the isolation of the protagonist on the mountain top and his connection to the world below via radio, airplane, and telegraph are two aspects of the same process by which nature and the sublime are (re-)produced under conditions of modernity. Similarly, the retreat to the provinces in the *Heimatfilm* of the 1950s is no longer simply a flight from postwar urban rubble, let alone from social and economic reconstruction; to the degree that the ostensibly remote spaces of the *Heimatfilm* are suffused with tropes of mobility—whether in terms of expulsion and displacement or motorization and tourism—the place of Heimat itself is transformed, its promise of stability a mere compensation for a series of more profound destabilizations that have long since occurred. For all its nostalgic, if not reactionary politics, the study of the *Heimatfilm* thus requires conceptually nuanced terms that can account for the films' often phantasmagoric constructions of place, for their manifest obsession with questions of displacement and mobility, and for the "distanciated relations" that structure the local.

Not only does such a framework allow us to re-view some of the Heimat-"evergreens" in a new light and thereby to elucidate the reasons for their longevity; in addition, relocating the *Heimatfilm* in a cultural geography of modernization permits us to draw connections between the "local" case of West Germany in the 1950s and its distant others. Only if we open up such larger perspectives can we avoid matching the ostensible parochialism of that era's cinema on the methodological level. For in such a perspective, the *Heimatfilm* is hardly the only response to the spatial consequences of modernity. While the British heritage film might be seen as a similar—if later—reaction, as I have already suggested, other traditions and genres open up alternative vistas on the same underlying issues. A comparative look to the eastern half of Germany during the 1950s, for example, reveals a striking renegotiation of Heimat as DEFA grapples with the transformation of the local, of rural communities, and of agricultural production under socialism.[51] Likewise, the negotiation of the frontier myth and of national space in the American western provides an intriguing point of comparison with respect to the question of how the cinema has mediated and responded to changing spatial configurations. Even transnational perspectives on the *Heimatfilm* are coming into view.[52] Finally, a broader perspective on the media themselves as agents of spatial transformation can help to explain why, since the 1980s, the Heimat genre has flourished not so much in the cinema but, rather, on television, a medium which Raymond Williams famously described as one of "mobile privatisation."[53] If television can supply us with the experience of "simultaneously staying home and imaginatively going

places,"[54] what better medium, then, to host a genre that gives us the experience of imaginatively staying home and simultaneously going places?

NOTES

1. Tassilo Schneider, "Genre and Ideology in the Popular German Cinema: 1950–1972" (PhD diss. University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1994), 144.
2. This is not to say that they are unavailable. Though subtitling remains an issue, scores of *Heimatfilme* are now readily accessible on the internet, as well as via national and international DVD distribution.
3. Schmieding takes this term from the historian Hermann Heimpel to describe the function of the *Heimatfilm* and other popular films from the 1950s in *Kunst oder Kasse: Der Ärger mit dem deutschen Film* (Hamburg: Rütten und Loening, 1961).
4. Cf. Barbara Bongartz, *Von Caligari zu Hitler—von Hitler zu Dr. Mabuse? Eine "psychologische" Geschichte des Films von 1946–1960* (Münster: MakS, 1992); Bärbel Westermann, *Nationale Identität im Spielfilm der 50er Jahre* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990); Gertraud Steiner, *Die Heimat-Macher: Kino in Österreich 1946–1966* (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1987); and Gerhard Bliersbach, *So grün war die Heide: der deutsche Nachkriegsfilm in neuer Sicht* (Weinheim: Beltz, 1985).
5. Indeed, when Adorno reconsiders the chapter on the culture industry in *Dialectics of Enlightenment* from the point of view of the 1950s, he exemplifies the workings of the culture industry by referring to the *Heimatfilm* in particular: cf. Theodor W. Adorno, "The Culture Industry Reconsidered," in *Critical Theory and Society: A Reader*, eds. Stephen Bronner and Douglas Kellner (New York: Routledge, 1989), 132; cf. also Klaus Kreimeier, *Kino und Filmindustrie in der BRD: Ideologieproduktion und Klassenwirklichkeit nach 1945* (Kronberg: Scriptor, 1973).
6. Cf. Willi Höfig, *Der deutsche Heimatfilm, 1947–1960* (Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1973). As a counterpart to Höfig's resolutely synchronic approach, a project at the University of Tübingen yielded what was arguably the first attempt at tracing the genre's historical development, even at the risk of forfeiting a coherent theoretical framework. Cf. Ludwig-Uhland-Institut, Projektgruppe deutscher Heimatfilm (project directed by Wolfgang Kaschuba), *Der deutsche Heimatfilm: Bildwelten und Weltbilder* (Tübingen: Tübinger Vereinigung für Volkskunde e.V., 1989).
7. Fritz Göttler, "Westdeutscher Nachkriegsfilm: Land der Väter," in *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, eds. Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, and Hans Helmut Prinzler (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1993), 197.
8. Heide Fehrenbach, *Cinema in Democratizing Germany: Reconstructing National Identity after Hitler* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 152.
9. Erica Carter, *How German is She? Postwar West German Reconstruction and the Consuming Woman* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 179.
10. Johannes von Moltke, *No Place Like Home: Locations of* Heimat *in German Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
11. David Morley, *Home Territories* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 5.
12. In stressing the ambivalence of the *Heimatfilm*, my goal is not to exculpate, let alone "celebrate," the 1950s as a misunderstood decade of subversion; nor do I intend to suggest that we re-evaluate the decade by reading it "against the grain" in the manner of certain strands of French auteur criticism that began to rehabilitate "conservative" Hollywood directors during the 1950s. Given the political climate of restoration coupled with the progressivist economic ethos of the Wirtschaftswunder, the ambivalence of the *Heimatfilm* is hardly subversive; as I argue below, that ambivalence serves instead to define its selective embrace of modernization and thus its specific form of cultural and political conservatism.
13. In arguing against the ahistorical treatment of genre, I am drawing on Rick Altman's proposal for a "pragmatic" approach to genre that synthesizes theoretical and historical concerns. Cf. Rick Altman, *Film/Genre* (London: British Film Institute, 1999).
14. Andrew Higson, "The Heritage Film and British Cinema," in *Dissolving Views: Key Writings on British Cinema*, ed. Andrew Higson (New York: Cassell, 1997), 237.
15. Eric Rentschler, *West German Film in the Course of Time* (New York: Redgrave, 1984), 104.

16. For two excellent studies of the *Heimatbewegung*, cf. Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) and Alon Confino, *The Nation as Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory 1871–1918* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); on the *Heimatkunst* movement and the *Heimatroman*, cf. Karlheinz Rossbacher, *Heimatkunstbewegung und Heimatroman: Zu einer Literatur-Soziologie der Jahrhundertwende* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1975).
17. Wilhelm Spickernagel, "Der Kinematograph im Dienste der Heimatkunst," *Hannoverland. Parteilose Zeitschrift für die Pflege der Heimatkunde und des Heimatschutzes unserer niedersächsischen Heimat* 6 (1912): 234.
18. Walter Freisburger, *Theater im Film: eine Untersuchung über die Grundzüge und Wandlungen in den Beziehungen zwischen Theater und Film* (Emsdetten: Lechte, 1936); although Freisburger's claim has yet to be substantiated, the proliferation of Heimat-titles during the war years in particular does suggest at least some proto-generic patterns of repetition and recognizability.
19. The synopsis for *Heimatliche Scholle* telegraphs the genre's syntax and semantics: "Drama. Son of a peasant turns to crime in the city. Returns home." For this and other titles see Herbert Birett's invaluable website "*Quellen zur Filmgeschichte*" at http://www.kinematographie.de/ (accessed March 23, 2019).
20. Cf. "Wer kennt den 'Ostmärkischen Heimatfilm'?" *Film-Kurier* 8, no. 246 (October 20, 1926), and "Die heutige Berliner Uraufführung," *Film-Kurier* 9, no. 180 (August 2, 1927).
21. Karl L. Kraatz's *Deutscher Film Katalog: Ufa, Tobis, Bavaria 1930–1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Transit-Film, n.d.), for instance, lists thirty-nine "*Heimatfilme*" for the period from 1930 to 1945. However, the filmography is incomplete and the classificatory scheme somewhat arbitrary, and one is tempted to surmise that the generic rubrics are determined far more by the present of the 1950s than by the pragmatic contexts of their production and reception in the 1930s and 1940s.
22. Thus, in 1932, critics identified the first version of *Grün ist die Heide* as an "explicit *Heimatfilm,*" and Hans Deppe's *Heideschulmeister Uwe Karsten* (1933) was reviewed as a wholesome "*Heimatfilm*" that would exemplify the German sound film's "mission" to achieve the "trinity" of "German Man [and] German song in the German landscape" (quoted in Oskar Kalbus, *Vom Werden deutscher Filmkunst* 2 [Altona-Bahrenfeld: Cigaretten-Bilderdienst, 1935], 58). Peter Ostermayr's productions of Ganghofer adaptations were also marketed by Ufa as "*Heimatfilme.*"
23. Giuseppe Becce supplied the music for Fanck and Trenker, and continued to orchestrate majestic images of nature in the films of the 1940s and 1950s. Harald Reinl, who also set out working with Fanck, advanced to become one of the most prolific directors of the *Heimatfilm* from the 1950s well into the 1970s. Other significant personal continuities would necessarily include Hans Deppe, the "King of the *Heimatfilm,*" who, after a career as an actor, debuted as a director in 1934 with the first version of *Ferien vom Ich* (*Holiday from the Self*); he tops Höfig's list of "*Heimatfilm*-Directors," having contributed ten films to the genre between 1947 and 1960, and fourteen more during his career before 1947.
24. Uta Berg-Ganschow, "Der Widerspenstigen Zähmung," *Frauen und Film*, no. 35 (1983): 24–28.
25. Cf. Tom Gunning, "Before Documentary: Early Nonfiction Film and the 'View' Aesthetic," in *Uncharted Territory: Essays on Early Nonfiction Film*, eds. Daan Hertogs and Nico de Klerk (Amsterdam: Nederlands Film Museum, 1997), 15.
26. Cf. Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attraction: Early Film, its Spectator, and the Avant-Garde," *Wide Angle* 8, nos. 3/4 (1986): 63–70.
27. Cf. Eric Rentschler, "Mountains and Modernity: Relocating the Bergfilm," *New German Critique*, no. 51 (Fall 1990): 137–161.
28. For arguments concerning the distinction between the treatment of nature in the *Bergfilm* and the *Heimatfilm*, cf. Jan-Christopher Horak, "Dr. Arnold Fanck: Träume vom Wolkenmeer und einer guten Stube," in *Berge, Licht und Traum: Dr. Arnold Fanck und der deutsche Bergfilm* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1997), 30; also Thomas Jacobs, "Der Bergfilm als Heimatfilm. Überlegungen zu einem Filmgenre," *Augen-Blick*, no. 5 (1988): 19–30.

29. Cf. Christian Rapp, *Höhenrausch: Der deutsche Bergfilm* (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1997).
30. Cf. Eric Rentschler, *The Ministry of Illusion: Nazi Cinema and Its Afterlife* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996) and Thomas Elsaesser, *Weimar Cinema and After: Germany's Historical Imaginary* (London: Routledge, 2000).
31. Cf. "Die Heimatfilm-Welle rollt wieder," *Konkret*, no. 42 (November 15, 1973): 18 and 19; and Kai Krüger, "Im Kino darf wieder geweint werden," *Die Zeit*, February 16, 1973. Available online: https://www.zeit.de/1973/08/im-kino-darf-wieder-geweint-werden (accessed March 23, 2019).
32. Cf. Eric Rentschler's chapter "Calamity Prevails over the Country: Young German Filmmakers Revisit the Homeland," in Rentschler, *West German Film in the Course of Time*, 103–128; and Daniel Alexander Schacht, *Fluchtpunkt Provinz: der neue Heimatfilm zwischen 1968 und 1972* (Münster: MakS, 1991).
33. Cf. Wilfried von Bredow and Hans-Friedrich Foltin, *Zwiespältige Zufluchten: Zur Renaissance des Heimatgefühls* (Bonn: Dietz, 1981). Also Jürgen Bolten, "Heimat im Aufwind. Anmerkungen zur Sozialgeschichte eines Bedeutungswandels," in *Literatur und Provinz: Das Konzept "Heimat" in der neueren Literatur*, ed. Hans-Georg Pott (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1989), 23–38.
34. The series' title was originally to be "Made in Germany."
35. On Reitz's Heimat cf. most recently Rachel Palfreyman, *Edgar Reitz's Heimat: Histories, Traditions, Fictions* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2000).
36. On *Die andere Heimat*, see Johannes von Moltke, "Bingeing on Heimat: Notes from the Berlinale," *Germanic Review* 89, no. 1 (2014): 121–130.
37. Cf. Bliersbach, *So grün war die Heide*, 33.
38. On these shows, see Georg Seeßlen's acerbic remarks in "Reichsparteigag und Bauernstube: Eine Volksmusikendung im Jahr 1985," in *VolksTümlichkeit: über die Gnadenlose Gemütlichkeit im neuen Deutschland* (Greiz: Weisser Stein, 1993), 19–45.
39. Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials,* 71. Rural audiences predictably had much greater qualms about the *Heimatfilm*'s lack of authenticity and were clearly not the genre's intended audience. Willi Höfig quotes a 1951 survey in which *Schwarzwaldmädel*, one of the prototypes of the *Heimatfilm* of the 1950s, topped the audience ranking of then current films; the only dip in the film's popularity was in the Schwarzwald itself. Höfig, *Der deutsche Heimatfilm*, 74, n. 414.
40. Rentschler, *West German Film in the Course of Time*, 105.
41. Rentschler, *The Ministry of Illusion*, 74.
42. Cf. Georg Seeßlen, "Der Heimatfilm. Zur Mythologie eines Genres," in *Sprung im Spiegel: Filmisches Wahrnehmen zwischen Fiktion und Wirklichkeit*, ed. Christa Blümlinger (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1990), 343–362.
43. Cf. ibid., 349.
44. Oskar Köhler, "Heimat," in *Staatslexikon*, vol. 4 (Freiburg: Herder, 1959); quoted in Bredow and Foltin, *Zwiespältige Zufluchten*, 26.
45. Höfig, *Der deutsche Heimatfilm*, 388.
46. Doreen Massey, "A Place Called Home?" *New Formations*, no. 17 (1991): 12.
47. Ibid., 13.
48. Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991), 18. Giddens defines "disembedding" as the "'lifting out' of social relations from local contexts of interaction and their restructuring across indefinite spans of time-space" (21).
49. Ibid., 140.
50. Ibid., 18f.
51. Relevant films for such a comparison include, among others, such diverse productions as Konrad Wolf's often disavowed debut, the musical *Einmal ist keinmal* (Once is Never, 1955), Cold War propaganda such as *Das verurteilte Dorf* (The Condemned Village, Martin Hellberg, 1952), Kurt Maetzig's epic chronicle of postwar reconstruction in the provinces, *Schlösser und Katen* (Castles and Huts, 1957), or Artur Pohl's drama about the integration of "resettlers" ("Umsiedler") from the East, *Die Brücke* (The Bridge, 1949).
52. See Jürgen Heizmann (ed.), *Heimatfilm International* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2016).
53. Cf. Raymond Williams, *Television, Technology, and Cultural Form* (London: Fontana, 1974).
54. Sean Moores, quoted in David Morley, "Bounded Realms: Household, Family, Community, and Nation," in *Home, Exile, Homeland: Film, Media, and the Politics of Place*, ed. Hamid Naficy (New York: Routledge, 1999), 159.

SPOTLIGHT: GLORIA-FILMVERLEIH GMBH

Joseph Garncarz

Gloria-Filmverleih GmbH was a successful German film distributor of the post-Second World War period. Founded in 1949, the company was owned and run by Ilse Kubaschewski (1907–2001) who had previously worked for a film distributor in Berlin, and had managed cinemas in Berlin and Oberstdorf, Bavaria. Gloria initially distributed films from the Third Reich such as *La Habanera* (Detlef Sierck, 1937) and *Hallo Janine* (1939) and older productions by Hollywood B-film studio Republic Pictures.

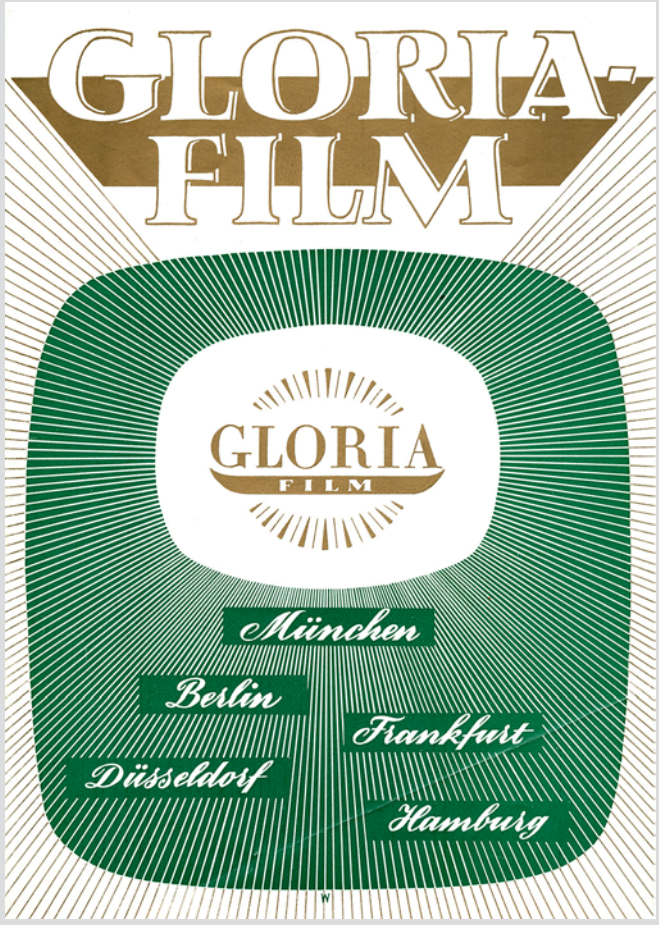

Figure 1.3 Advertisement for *Gloria* (1955). © Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek.

Figure 1.4 Ilse Kubaschewski (1955). © Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek.

Kubaschewski's prime objective was to entertain her audience. She was not interested in the approval by critics, but solely in good box office. Until the late 1950s, alongside its main competitor Herzog-Filmverleih, Gloria earned the highest returns at the box office among all distributors in the German market including the American majors. Gloria attained its leading position in the market by primarily distributing German and Austrian films that were most compatible with the preferences of the German audience. In 1956, Kubaschewski opened the Gloria-Filmpalast, a luxurious first-run cinema in Munich.

Gloria's most successful film genres were deeply rooted in the German language, landscapes, rural traditions, postwar problems, folk songs, and pop music—and intended to make its audience cry and laugh. *Heimatfilme* such as *Grün ist die Heide* (Hans Deppe, 1951), *Wenn am Sonntagabend die Dorfmusik spielt* (Rudolf Schündler, 1953), and *Weißer Holunder* (Paul May, 1957) depict a world in which traditional values prevail, while *Schlagerfilme* (pop music films) such as *Große Starparade* (Paul Martin, 1954), *Liebe, Tanz und 1000 Schlager* (Paul Martin, 1955), and *O sole mio* (Paul Martin, 1960) were vehicles to showcase current hit songs.

In the 1950s, Gloria also ventured into film production. Kubaschewski observed carefully which film genres were popular with German audiences and then financed or produced these films. The company provided capital for German production firms such as Berolina, Apollo, H. D., Roxy, CCC, and Alfa, therefore determining to a large extent the kind of films which were produced in West Germany. In addition, Gloria founded its own production company, Diana-Film (later renamed Divina-Film) in 1953, which produced many of the most successful films with German audiences of the 1950s and early 1960s such as *08/15* (Paul May, released in three parts from 1954 to 1955), *Die Trapp-Familie* (Wolfgang Liebeneiner, 1956), *Weißer Holunder* (1957), *Der Arzt von Stalingrad* (Géza von Radványi, 1958), and *Weit ist der Weg* (Wolfgang Schleif, 1960). The company was liquidated in 1962.

Gloria's economic decline began in the late 1950s when film attendance throughout Germany dropped and a younger audience demanded different films. Kubaschewski did not adequately react to this structural change of audience demographics. Gloria was less successful adapting to the new audience than its new main rival Constantin. The latter initiated and produced very successful film series for younger audiences such as the Karl May adaptations, as well as films about high-school students. Gloria attempted to imitate Constantin's enormous success in producing similar films, with varying results.

During the 1960s, Gloria also distributed French and Italian films such as *Plein soleil* (René Clément, 1959), *Don Camillo Monsignore … Ma non troppa* (Carmine Gallone, 1961), and *Agente 3 S 3 massacro al sole* (Agent 3S3: Hunter from the Unknown, Sergio Sollima, 1965) with modest success, while

Constantin had better box-office results with British, Italian, Spanish, and Japanese films such as *The Brides of Fu Man Chu* (Don Sharp, 1966), *Texas addio* (Ferdinando Baldi, 1966), and *Nankai no daikettol* (Ebirah, Horror of the Deep, Jun Fukuda, 1966).

From the 1970s on, Hollywood films became increasingly popular in Germany, alongside an increasing dominance of US-American distributors. Gloria became a casualty of these changing audience preferences. In 1973 Kubaschewski sold Gloria to the American Barney Bernhard, but the company only survived for a few years under the new owner.

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SPOTLIGHT: *HEIMAT* (1984–2013)

Johannes von Moltke

Few directors' names are as firmly inscribed in the long history of German cinema's engagement with *Heimat* as that of Edgar Reitz. Over close to four decades, Reitz has devoted his work almost entirely to crafting an epic saga that filters historical events through the lens of the local, the provincial, the familial. After the success of the original series, entitled *Heimat—Eine deutsche Chronik* (A German Chronicle, 1984), Reitz followed up with *Die zweite Heimat—Chronik einer Jugend* (Leaving Home, 1992), *Heimat 3—Chronik einer Zeitenwende* (A Chronicle of Endings and Beginnings, 2004), and *Die andere Heimat—Chronik einer Sehnsucht* (Chronicle of a Vision, 2013). Located in the western region of the Hunsrück in the fictional town of Schabbach, Reitz's story now spans two centuries, and although it remains rooted firmly in the local, imaginatively it spans continents. Together, the four parts of the series now comprise thirty-one feature-length episodes that clock in at a cumulative running time of almost sixty hours. Reitz has justifiably compared his work to that of a novelist working in the medium of cinema; at the same time, the serial nature of *Heimat*, its sequels and its most recent "prequel" was clearly also shaped by the medium of television, which it helped shape in turn.

The original series, simply entitled *Heimat*, aired on television in eleven installments in 1984. Coinciding with a new regionalism and the turn of historians to *Alltagsgeschichte, Heimat* also became caught up in the *Historikerstreit* of the mid-1980s, with critics taking Reitz to task for the blind spots of his provincial narrative—particularly concerning Nazism and anti-Semitism. However, broadcasts and theatrical screenings of the series captured the imagination of audiences both at home and abroad as they came to know the characters and engage with the historical sweep of the story from the First World War to the present (*Heimat* ends with the death of Maria, a key character born in 1900; as old as the century the series chronicles, she dies in 1980). In 1992 Reitz followed up with *Die zweite Heimat*. Entitled *Leaving Home* in its English-language release, the second series doubles back on the first and widens its geographical scope by following Hermann, the semi-autobiographical protagonist, from Schabbach to Munich in the 1960s. If this series amounts to the "chronicle of youth," as its subtitle would have it, the following installment, *Heimat 3*, maps a "Zeitenwende"—the historical turn of German unification after 1989 and up to the beginning of the new millennium (*Heimat 3* concludes on New Year's eve, 1999). The most recent installment, finally, takes us back to the nineteenth century in a "prequel" of sorts, tracing the pressures of famine and unemployment in the Hunsrück during the tumultuous years around 1848; though its main character, Jakob, pines to join the treks silhouetted against the Hunsrück horizon as they seek a better future in South America, circumstances conspire to keep him back home, only able to dream of an "other Heimat."

In this regard and others, *Die andere Heimat* circles back quite explicitly to the origins of the series, whose black-and-white aesthetics it inherits along with the characteristic tensions of home and away, *Heimat* and *Fremde*, that define the genre. And like all the earlier parts of the series, *Die andere Heimat* probes both the lure of the local and its stifling constraints. In this sense, and despite some critiques to the contrary, Reitz refuses simply to glorify the Heimat idyll but infuses the series' consistently gentle gaze at the goings-on of provincial life with a critical edge. Rather than inherit wholesale the mantle of the 1950s *Heimatfilm*, in other

Figure 1.5 Dieter Schaad (right) in *Heimat—Eine deutsche Chronik* (A German Chronicle, dir. Edgar Reitz, Germany: Edgar Reitz Filmproduktion, 1981–1984), Part 8 "Der Amerikaner." © Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek.

words, Reitz deliberately amalgamates his profuse generic borrowings with equally apparent nods to the strain of *Anti-Heimatfilme* produced during the 1960s and early 1970s. In these films, some of them by key figures of the Young (later New) German Cinema, the idylls of Heimat are unmasked as uncanny sites of social oppression, even violence. Reconciling the traditions of the *Heimatfilm* and the Anti-*Heimatfilm*, Reitz's series opts for an underlying melancholia, a wistful tinge that affects everything from individual characters to the deliberate pacing of the narration to the soundtrack. Not coincidentally, the first episode of the first series is titled *Fernweh*—the longing, not for home, but for far-away places.

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SPOTLIGHT: *IRGENDWO IN BERLIN* (SOMEWHERE IN BERLIN, 1946)

Horst Claus

The "rubble film" (Trümmerfilm) was a short-lived genre that flourished for a few years between Nazi Germany's defeat in 1945 through the Allied occupation until the foundation of the two postwar German states in 1949. The rubbles implied by the genre's name were material, referring to destroyed cities and urban ruins which provided the haunting backdrops for many of the films. But rubbles also hinted at ideological and psychological damage relating to Germany's need to rebuild itself and address the guilt and trauma of the war. However, once the physical rubbles had been cleared, German audiences tired quickly of the uncomfortable questions the genre raised, and it fell out of favor.

One of DEFA's earliest productions, *Irgendwo in Berlin* (Somewhere in Berlin, Gerhard Lamprecht, Germany: DEFA, 1946) addresses and focuses on twelve-to-fourteen-year-old children, a generation raised under the influence of the Hitler Youth who had experienced but not fought in the Second World War. It was directed by Gerhard Lamprecht, who had previously been responsible for Ufa's film adaptation of Erich Kästner's *Emil und die Detektive* (Emil and the Detectives, 1931), and is one of the rare prewar films aimed specifically at child audiences but approaching their subject from an adult perspective. Like its predecessor, *Irgendwo in Berlin* is set in the present of postwar Berlin and evolves around the issue of money having been stolen (with the thief being played in both films by Fritz Rasp). However, while in *Emil und die Detektive* the theft is central to the plot, here it is mainly a narrational device to add action to a film that aims to highlight how the war has corrupted children, and emphasizes the energy and optimism with which the younger generation is supposed to resist them. The young protagonist (and counterpart to Emil) is Gustav, who has a similarly idealized, trusting relationship with his mother as Emil. When his father, a disillusioned prisoner of war, returns home without hope or perspectives for the future, Gustav and his friends actively encourage him to make a new start by rebuilding the bombed-out garages that, before the war, provided for the family's livelihood. In one scene the father, in a burst of anger, destroys his son's favorite toy tank, in another the boy's closest friend Willi tries to demonstrate his courage by climbing up the last remaining wall of a bombed-out building while a demented ex-soldier suffering from shell-shock salutes and hails him as a hero.

The negative effects of false hero worship become apparent when Willi is killed by falling off the wall. His final utterance "Why?" underlines the senselessness of his death. The film's message is loud and clear: this is a generation of new Germans who are learning from the mistakes of and deliberately turn their backs on the past. Though it is never spelt out, these children reject Nazi teaching and Nazi ideology, and simultaneously rediscover human and humanist values. Uncritical obedience to a military-style youth organization and leadership, as reflected in a sequence in which they imitate war games and shoot at each other with firework rockets, is replaced by an optimistic, forward-looking attitude demonstrating initiative and a voluntarily commitment to build a new Germany.

However, for viewers familiar with Ufa film practices, Lamprecht's ideals and good intentions are undermined by his adherence to pre-1945 filmic conventions. The carefully composed shots of the dying boy's face in a diffuse bright light, accompanied by soft, ethereal music, do not relate the gruesome, bloody consequences of a senseless act of "heroism." Instead,

Figure 1.6 Iller with children in *Irgendwo in Berlin* (Somewhere in Berlin, dir. Gerhard Lamprecht, Germany: DEFA, 1946). BFI Stills.

they signal a peaceful, semi-religious transition into a supposedly better world. Though DEFA deliberately pursued a policy of breaking with the past and offering a genuine alternative to pre-1945 productions, *Irgendwo in Berlin* suggests that, in the Russian-controlled zone as elsewhere, there was no "Stunde Null" (zero hour).

Lamprecht's indebtedness to Ufa traditions become clearer when *Irgendwo in Berlin* is compared with Roberto Rossellini's neorealist classic *Deutschland im Jahre Null* (Germany Year Zero, 1948). Shot on location a year later with the support of DEFA, the Italian director's film also relates the life and experiences of a boy in postwar Berlin. Having chosen a child as protagonist to accentuate the contrast between the mentality of a generation born and brought up in a certain political climate, and that of the older generation, Rossellini almost imperceptibly conveys his humanist-Christian position (the film ends on an image evoking a mater dolorosa). But he does not bombard the spectator with the message. Instead, he expects it to emerge from what he presents on the screen. As he is not interested in the story, Rossellini—in contrast to Lamprecht—disregards the conventional shooting and editing techniques of mainstream narrative cinema, avoids aesthetically "perfectly balanced" images, and observes his main character rather than intrudes on his life. His film has an episodic structure and does not attempt to capture or "tie in" the spectator. Later DEFA productions in the 1950s, for example the so-called Berlin trilogy of director Gerhard Klein and writer Wolfgang Kohlhaase, would be more directly inspired by Italian neorealism, but the rubble films of the late 1940s remained trapped in an aesthetic as well as political limbo, encapsulated in the title of one of the period's best-known films, *Zwischen gestern und morgen* (Between Yesterday and Tomorrow, Harald Braun, 1947).

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SPOTLIGHT: *INDIANERFILME*

Jon Raundalen

Between 1966 and 1985, a total of fifteen Wild West movies were made in the GDR. For several years, a new western premiered to cheering crowds at open-air screenings every summer. If the leading man from these films, the hunky Yugoslav athlete and actor Gojko Mitic, showed up at a premiere, chaotic scenes with stampeding fans broke out. The East German western films were hugely successful. According to official statistics the first GDR western, *Die Söhne der großen Bärin* (The Sons of Great Bear, Josef Mach, 1966) was seen by over eight million people in a country with seventeen million inhabitants. But why did DEFA, the state-owned film company, in a strict communist regime invest millions on making films in the most American of genres?

Contrary to popular belief, the GDR was not hermetically sealed off from the capitalist world and its culture. East Germans were not allowed to travel to the West, but nothing could stop radio and television signals reaching them. A significant proportion of East Germans tuned into West German television channels on a regular basis, which was a huge challenge for the Communist Party in their propaganda war with the West. Since the state was not able to control what people watched on television, cinema became an important channel for influencing young people's minds. The cultural authorities urged DEFA to make entertaining genre films that could compete with popular American and Western European products. In 1965, DEFA producer Hans Malich came up with the idea to make "a historical adventure film in an Indian setting" (consciously avoiding the term "western"), something that could especially attract young viewers. The project received the green light because its script suggested a Marxist version of American history, with an emphasis on the injustice done to the indigenous population by greedy white capitalists. This was the beginning of a genre cycle with a socialist twist.

Among the most prolific makers of so-called *Indianerfilme* in the GDR was scriptwriter and dramaturg Günter Karl. In an interview in 1970 he articulated what the nature of the East German western should be: "to represent the inhumane, capitalist order of society in all its brutality—that is our main task." Karl wrote the three screenplays for what he called "the development trilogy," in which he aimed to offer a historical assessment of the settlement of America's Wild West from a Marxist perspective. The trilogy starts out at a time when the West was being colonized by a few white trappers and gold diggers, continues through the period of industrialization of mining and oil drilling, and illustrates how capitalism got an increasingly strong foothold in the West, protected by the government and army, until financial power reigned supreme and not even a righteous sheriff could touch the capitalists.

In the first film of the trilogy, *Spur des Falken* (Trace of the Falcon, Gottfried Kolditz, 1968) made in 1968, the hero is Indian chief Weitspähender Falke (Wide-scouting Falcon) who is fighting the bloodthirsty property speculator Snaky Joe Bludgeon (Hannjo Hasse). To make divisions crystal clear, the proud and handsome Falke (Gojko Mitić) rides a white horse while Bludgeon wears black from hat to toe, sporting a constant murderous sneer. Bludgeon and his men employ all sorts of dirty tricks to dispel the Indians but Falke and his tribe refuse to back down and fight Bludgeon with guerrilla tactics. Eventually, Falke kills Bludgeon. The stories of the two subsequent films of the trilogy, *Weisse Wölfe* (White Wolves, Konrad

Figure 1.7 Gojko Mitić as Falke, *Spur des Falken* (Trace of the Falcon, dir. Gottfried Kolditz, Germany: DEFA, 1968). DEFA Foundation Berlin.

Petzold, 1969) and *Tödlicher Irrtum* (Fatal Error, Konrad Petzold, 1970) are slightly more nuanced, but the allegory with Marxist materialism is kept clear and unambiguous.

In GDR film, and Eastern European film in general, it is not uncommon to see filmmakers trying to sneak in subversive messages to criticize the government or Marxist ideals, but this is not the case with the Indianerfilme. The period in which these films were produced was a time of cultural freeze in the GDR, and many filmmakers were fined or sacked from the film industry for making "ideological mistakes" in their films. The filmmakers who were so lucky as to be working on the most popular and spectacular films ever made in the GDR would avoid controversy at all costs.

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2

GERMAN FILM COMEDY

Jan-Christopher Horak

THE BIAS AGAINST GENRE

In narratives of German film history the very term German comedy seemed for many years an oxymoron. Germans were known for their love affair with death, not with comedy. In early overviews of German cinema, historians outside Germany, including Robert Brasillach and Maurice Bardèche, René Jeanne and Charles Ford, or Jerzy Toeplitz, and Roger Manvell, ignored German comedy altogether. While George Sadoul did devote space to early comedy, complimenting popular comedians such as Oscar Sabo, Anna Müller-Lincke, Guido Herzfeld, and Ernst Lubitsch, even he couldn't suppress an ironic sneer when he stated that German film comedies have their own particular character, and that non-Germans consider them to be heavy and boring.[1] Like others outside Germany, Sadoul attributed German humorlessness to a perceived national characteristic. Germans themselves, meanwhile, seemed to have an inferiority complex vis à vis comedy. As early as 1912, a Berlin film journalist stated plainly that the Germans were short of comical ideas.[2] A few years later Ludwig Thoma, the German playwright and editor of the satirical magazine *Simplicissimus* noted that tears, not laughter, might be the best response to the "grotesque" comedy productions of Berlin film companies.[3] By the mid-1920s, one critic in the trade paper *Der Kinematograph* was complaining that "German cinema has had to do without comedies for quite a while, making do with foreign humour which does not always match German tastes."[4] Later classical film historians damned silent German comedy for supposedly being nothing more than faint reproductions of superior French and American films. For Siegfried Kracauer, writing from his exile in New York, the Germans "were incapable of producing a popular comedian."[5]

Thus, while the foreign view turns a national stereotype into the explanation for comedy's invisibility in the narrative of German film history, film comedy has occasioned fits of self-loathing in German critics. The German bias against film comedy runs deep, its roots buried in an intellectual disdain for genre cinema in general. As Thomas Elsaesser has pointed out, this attitude is based in part on the German intelligentsia's overwhelming preference for art cinema.[6] Thomas Brandlmeier hypothesizes that there may be an un-German fear and loathing of physical comedy (having to do with shame of the body), as well as deep suspicion of an affirmative laughter that supports normative behavior and brands outsiders as foreign and other.[7] Yet this critical edifice has been crumbling. The rise of genre studies within film history has allowed a reclaiming of German comedy; and German film history itself has come to be viewed more holistically, as a series of personal continuities and political discontinuities, aesthetic ruptures but also persistent generic conventions that are amenable to integration into academic film history.[8] Genre in German cinema has thus become a contested but not entirely repudiated site of film-historical discourse; genre, and with it comedy, is now perceived not only as an ideological control mechanism for the ruling class but also as a discourse potentially capable of subverting the institutional status quo. Thomas Elsaesser and Michael Wedel, for example, postulate "strong elements of subversive, grotesque, an surrealist humour" in German film comedy.[9] Examples abound to support Elsaesser and Wedel's claim, as will be demonstrated below. Furthermore, and *pace* the

early critics cited above, German cinema has not been devoid of physical comedy, as the examples of Ernst Lubitsch, Karl Valentin, Arnold Fanck, Felix Bressart, or Heinz Erhardt demonstrate. It may be debatable whether physical comedy is inherently subversive, given conservative examples of physical comedy, whether Arnold Fanck and Heinz Erhardt, or Harold Lloyd and Leo McCarey. But it remains a fact that the German film industry has produced thousands of comedies, many of which have yet to be preserved, let alone historically evaluated.

As Elsaesser and Wedel further note, German comedies are the bread and butter of the German film industry, regardless of period.[10] The particular circumstances of German history in the twentieth century make of this linchpin genre, moreover, an especially sensitive barometer for the winds of political change. Embedded within the history of a society that spent much of the twentieth century under the shadow of a fascist episode, German comedy is qualitatively different from American, French, or Italian comedy. While these national cinemas functioned under more or less persistently democratic, albeit capitalist ideological systems, German comedy was subject at different moments in history to the shifting political pressures of liberal capitalist regimes and authoritarian dictatorships. During the *Kaiserzeit* and Weimar period, comedies could be liberating, risking transgressions of social and sexual taboos, and allowing audiences to experience moments of subversive pleasure. This chapter will argue that German comedy's early potential for subversion was deeply influenced by the German-Jewish cultural symbiosis: not just by internationally acclaimed directors of the likes of Ernst Lubitsch but also by numerous other comedians working in the same German-Jewish tradition. Championed by such critics as Elsaesser and Brandlmeier, Lubitsch may indeed provide the key to a critical view that explores the discourse surrounding sexuality as an indicator of ideological content, giving us a more complex understanding of the sociopolitical history of German film comedy. But the tradition Lubitsch represents was also obliterated by the Holocaust. More than 1,500 Jewish film personnel were excluded from the film industry in 1933, and driven into exile, or imprisoned and murdered between 1933 and 1945. National Socialism also brought with it the codification of norms devised to maintain the political, social, and moral status quo, including through the rigorous suppression of those forms of sexual desire and physical pleasure that German-Jewish comedy had foregrounded. Unlike capitalism in other countries, which allowed genre cinema in the interest of box office to construct ambiguous ideological narratives, the racialized monopoly capitalism of German fascism displayed zero tolerance for subversive discourses, especially after the industry's consolidation in 1936. It took a generation for Germany's film industry to recover, discovering gender relations as a motor for comedy only following the rediscovery of the traditions of Weimar in the West German reception of exile directors including Lubitsch and Billy Wilder in the late 1960s.

EARLY CINEMA AND WEIMAR

According to Gerhard Lamprecht's catalog, *Deutsche Stummfilme 1903–1912* (German Silent Films 1903–1912)[11]—itself by no means a complete record of German film production in the 1910s—the Berlin and Munich film industries released over fifty feature-length comedies in 1914, and over forty in 1915; in 1928 the industry released over forty comedy features, approximately 25 percent of the total output. Taking into consideration the countless comedy shorts also produced, it becomes clear that comedies were big business in the silent era. Ernst Lubitsch alone starred in or directed thirty-one comedies from 1914 to 1918.[12] The producer-director Heinrich Bolten-Baeckers turned out over twenty comedies in the period 1913–1915 and would continue comedy production into the mid-1920s. His so-called "BB Films" were popular not only in Germany but supposedly throughout Europe[13]; they featured key stars including Anna Müller-Lincke, the scourge of Prussian manhood, who specialized in straitlaced wives, and difficult silly mothers. Another BB Film star, the rotund Leo Peukert, seems to have been one of the most popular silent film comedians of the pre-First World War and war period, although virtually none of his films survive.[14] Appearing in such films as *Leo, der Aushilfskellner* (Leo, the Substitute

Waiter, 1913), *General von Berning* (1914), and *Das Patenschnappschloss* (The Patented Lock, 1915), Peukert, like Ernst Lubitsch, Guido Herzfeld, Ernst Matray, and Anna Müller-Lincke, developed a style of comedy that had its origins in the working-class Jewish garment districts of East Berlin.

A completely different kind of comedy was practiced by *Volkskomiker*, the Bavarian comedians whom Lubitsch successfully parodied in *Mayer auf der Alm* (Mayer in the Alps, 1913), *Mayer aus Berlin* (Mayer from Berlin, 1919), and *Kohlhiesels Töchter* (Kohlhiesel's Daughters, 1920). They included Konrad Dreher, who starred in films such as *Der Tyrann von Mückendorf* (The Tyrant of Mückendorf, 1915), and Arnold Rieck, whose boorish professors and small-town teachers, figures of authority unmasked, were extremely popular. Dr. Arnold Fanck, a director more commonly known for his melodramatic *Bergfilme* (mountain films), also directed Bavarian comedies. In *Der grosse Sprung* (The Big Leap, 1927), Leni Riefenstahl (a shepherdess) and Luis Trenker (as the village idiot) romp in the Alps as happy peasants, with Hans Schneeberger staging a confrontation between city and country in his role as a millionaire from Berlin. Unlike the Lubitsch parodies, this conflict is seen from the perspective of nature-wise peasants. Filled with ironic references to Fanck's previously deadly serious work, as well as moments of genuine grotesque humor and physical comedy, *The Big Leap* was both a commercial and critical success for Ufa.[15] Fanck would capitalize on that success after the introduction of sound by remaking one of his silent films as a mountain film comedy, *Der weisse Rausch* (The White Ecstasy, 1931), again starring Riefenstahl, this time as a city girl come to the country. Sans narrative, psychology, or meaningful dialogue, the film is pure physical comedy, with forty skiers participating Keystone Cop-like in a race through the mountains, while two carpenters from the flatlands of Hamburg (one extremely tall, the other short) learn to ski in incongruous traditional North German garb.

Der weisse Rausch was a huge commercial success, despite the disdain of at least one Berlin critic, who disparaged it as an advertisement for ski tourism.[16] Interestingly, both Fanck's films sublimate sexuality into the physicality of the ski race. In *Der grosse Sprung,* Riefenstahl is also shown as a surrogate mother, presaging the Nazi's mother fixation. Even though Fanck's comedies can claim a refreshing sense of the physical, they are thus never anti-authoritarian in the manner of American slapstick. The same cannot be said of Germany's most radical comedian, Karl Valentin: a Bavarian comic to be sure, but also a modernist. Valentin's characters make extreme attempts to be normal in an authoritarian society, obsessively pursuing a normalcy that cannot be attained, and pointing in so doing to the dehumanizing character of socially defined conformity. Valentin's social deformity is expressed in the physical, specifically in the comedian's awkward relationship to his own body. In the company of his visual foil, Liesl Karlstadt—whose well-fed, dumpy quality emphasizes Valentin's lack of bulk—Valentin confronts challenges in the physical world that he willingly and repeatedly engages, but which ultimately bring him to his knees.

Valentin's visual humor draws much of its power from his inability to come to terms with his own physicality. His body is awkwardness incarnate: tall and extremely thin, all skin and bones, his arms and legs and feet extended much too far in every direction. His extremities are accentuated by pencil-like fingers and an elongated nose which extends conspicuously from the sharp features of his face. His undernourished visage and hollow eyes are framed by hair that is cropped and plastered to follow the contours of his head, and by ears that are protruding and excessively large.[17] His comedy similarly emphasizes the grotesque, the abnormal in the everyday, the continual struggle of little people in an unjust world. In the comic universe of Valentin and Karlstadt, order is only a chimera, an illusion upheld for the comfort of the ruling classes. The discrepancy between illusion and reality, and the frustration of the disenfranchised in attempting to cope with that difference leads more often than not to the infliction of pain. Indeed, Valentin's comedies are filled with violence against himself and others. In both cases, the comedy is based on the audience's pleasure in watching physical pain, an experience encapsulated by the German word *Schadenfreude*, which is untranslatable in all its sociopsychological repercussions, but loosely connotes the joy in seeing

another's misfortunes; a scopic regime connected to the sadistic rather than the erotic.

Ernst Lubitsch also has his sadistic moments (often directed at the hapless Margarete Kupfer, a regular in his early films). But that tendency is mitigated by the joy of sex. Lubitsch's work in Germany has in the past been described as inferior to his "sophisticated" American films. The celebrated critic Lotte Eisner's condescending tone is audible when she places Lubitsch's German comedies in the tradition of the "nonchalant, rather cynical humour of the Konfektion, the Jewish lower middle class engaged in the ready-made clothing trade."[18] Could it be that Eisner, herself a product of a assimilated German-Jewish haute bourgeoisie, was embarrassed by the ethnicity of Lubitsch's humor?[19] Certainly, Ernst Lubitsch's comedy is not only specifically German-Jewish, but has its origins in a wholly different tradition than the classical theatre on which Eisner had also written, namely the Jewish farces and low comedy staged by the Berlin Herrnfeld Theater and touring companies from the *stetl*.[20] Lubitsch's Jewish petit bourgeois heroes in such films as *Der Stolz der Firma* (Pride of the Firm, 1914) and *Schuhpalast Pinkus* (Shoe Palace Pinkus, 1916) are unabashed social climbers, con-men who start as apprentices and end up succeeding in business by marrying the boss's daughter. Short-circuiting the ideologically prescribed path to riches via the sweat of labor and diligence, they embrace sexual desire, turning social norms upside down in the process. Similarly, Lubitsch's comedies with the anarchic comedy star Ossi Oswalda, *Die Puppe* (The Doll, 1919), *Die Austernprizessin* (The Oyster Princess 1919), and *Ich möchte kein Mann sein* (I Don't Want to Be a Man, 1919), reveal him giving free rein to the id beyond all socially defined propriety. The expression of sexual desire thus becomes itself an act of subversion, breaking down class barriers and the social order (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Hermann Thimig and Ossi Oswalda in *Die Puppe* (The Doll, dir. Ernst Lubitsch, Germany: Projektions Union, 1919). BFI Stills.

Jewish humor also informed the early comedies of Max Mack (*The Tango Queen,* 1913), and, in the 1920s, the work of Richard Eichberg, Wilhelm Thiele, and (later) Billy Wilder. Eichberg, who had specialized in detective melodramas earlier in his career, began a successful series of light sex comedies in the mid-1920s, including *Die keusche Susanne* (Innocent Susanne, 1926) and *Das Girl von der Revue* (The Girl from the Revue, 1928). Situated in Lubitsch's East Berlin fashion district, Eichberg's *Der Fürst von Pappenheim* (The Earl of Pappenheim, 1927) featured Curt Bois cross-dressing in a comedy as wild as Berlin's Kurfürstendamm in the 1920s. Thiele's knack for light comedy (*Hurra!, ich lebe!* [Hurrah, I'm Alive], 1927) took him into the sound period as the Ufa's most successful musical comedy specialist with films such as *Drei von der Tankstelle* (Three from the Filling Station, 1930) and *Die Privatsekretärin* (The Private Secretary, 1931). Wilder's career also blossomed, with scripts for *Ihre Hoheit befiehlt* (Her Highness Commands, Hanns Schwarz, 1931) and *Madame wünscht keine Kinder* (Madame Wants No Children, Hans Steinhoff, 1933). Wilder's scripts for Curt Wilhelm's *Man braucht kein Geld* (You don't Need Money, 1931), Alexis Granowsky's *Die Koffer des Herrn O.F.* (The Suitcases of Mr. O.F., 1931), and Fritz Kortner's *Der brave Sünder* (The Well-Behaved Sinner, 1931) all have an anarchic streak to them; both cynical and sentimental, they are typically Wilder, his detractors would assert decades later, but also characteristically Jewish.

The Thiele-Wilder spate of Germany Depression comedies—a response to the bottom falling out of the capitalist world order—brought an element of *Angst* to German comedy that was not dissimilar to Jewish fears of the next pogrom. Suddenly, German middle-class values concerning order were called into question. In German cinema, honorable citizens become grifters, willing to do anything to get their personal economies back into shape, even if it meant lying, stealing, and cheating.[21] In both *Man braucht kein Geld* and *Die Koffern des Herrn O.F.* the rumor that an American millionaire has come to town is enough of a promise to get people working again. In *Der brave Sünder* it is every man for himself, as two lowly white-collar workers travel to Vienna with a packet of money, only to lose it time and again, while sinking into infantile and regressive states that reveal the storm beneath the calm orderly surfaces of their souls.

Significantly, as in Lubitsch, erotic desire and monetary exchange are interchangeable. But the comedy tradition established by Lubitsch was by now evanescent. The highest paid film actor in these last years of Weimar Germany was the German-Jewish comedian, Felix Bressart, whom Hitler forced into exile in 1933. Starring in no less than eighteen comedy vehicles between 1930 and 1933, Bressart had played the clerk who unwittingly sows chaos wherever he goes. In *Der Herr Bürovorsteher* (Mr. Office Manager, Hans Behrendt, 1931), Bressart uses his seemingly awkward body like a square peg in a round hole. Others may storm ahead, but Bressart twists and turns with uncertainty, simultaneously turning semantics and syntax inside out. In *Drei Tage Militärarrest* (Three Days Arrest, Carl Boese, 1931), a film belonging to the popular (right-wing) subgenre of army recruit comedies (*Kasernenhofkomödien*), Bressart's anarchic hero similarly subverts the films conservative propaganda intentions.[22]

When Bressart fled into exile, alongside countless other German Jews, a process began that would transform Jewish comedy into an émigré genre. Bressart became a favorite of Ernst Lubitsch in his American films (*Ninotchka, The Shop Around the Corner, To Be or*

Figure 2.2 Felix Bressart (left) in *Der Herr Bürovorsteher* (Mr Office Manager, dir. Hans Behrendt, Germany: Elite Tonfilm Produktion, 1931). BFI Stills.

Not to Be), playing essentially his established character, albeit in supporting roles. Film comedies, indeed, were German exile cinema's most popular genre, just as they had been in Weimar. In some host countries, including the Netherlands and Hungary, German émigrés only made comedies, unlike in France and England, where comedies were a distinct minority. As in the Weimar period, the tendency was toward light comedy, even if the genre now catered to different national tastes, and thematized the experience of exile. Cases in point are: Robert Siodmak's *La crise est fini* (The Crisis is Over, 1934), in which a group of actors are suddenly homeless when their theater closes, Henry Koster's *Peter* (1934), in which a homeless girl must dress as a boy to get a job, Koster's *100 Men and a Girl* (1937), in which out-of-work musicians band together, and Richard Oswald's *The Captain of Kopenick* (1941), about a "stateless" ex-con with the perfect flim-flam. A further instance is Max Ophüls's *Komodie om Geld* (Comedy About Money, 1936), a film made in the middle of the worldwide depression, which satirizes the prevailing obsessive quest for money. Although identified as a so-called "Jordaan film," a typical Dutch comedy from the working-class district of Amsterdam, the film's "rags to riches to rags" narrative not only closely resembled the fate of many émigrés but owed an equally strong debt to German-Jewish comedy. In particular, the hero, a bank messenger who bungles his way to financial success, seems more *Schlemihl* than *Staatsmann*.

Similar continuities with a German-Jewish past marked the careers of Lubitsch, Wilder, and Henry Koster. All three worked with exiled German scriptwriters in America. All three maintained large circles of German-speaking friends, despite public statements that they no longer spoke German. Koster's team included exiles Joe Pasternak (producer) and Felix Jackson (writer), who saved Universal by importing the German *Backfisch* (teenage girl) character with which they had created successful comedies in Germany and Hungary, morphing her into the all-American girl, Deanna Durbin.[23] Encapsulated in the slightly kinky relations Durbin's prepubescent characters entertain with elderly men and father figures, her films recall the German-Jewish tradition in the glimpse they afford into a subversive force that is recognized in the other.

FASCISM AND ITS AFTERMATH

With the forced emigration of German Jewry, including countless actors, writers, and directors, Joseph Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry was happy to have a "racially purified German" comedy be the only game in town. The actor-director Reinhold Schünzel would be among the last to leave (see Spotlight in this chapter). Schünzel had carried Lubitsch's torch since the latter had gone to Hollywood in the mid-1920s. Elsaesser provides a catalog of narrative and character preferences for Schünzel's comic persona that is equally applicable to both Lubitsch and Jewish humor: they include "impersonations, mistaken identities, role reversals, harmless con-tricks and deceptions … erotic desire [organized] around exchange and substitution."[24] Schünzel's *Hallo Caesar* (1926), reverberates with associations of American slapstick comedy and the cinema of attractions, as well as early German cinema "numbers" programs, while creating a self-conscious parody of the film industry and a comedy of erotic exchange values. Klaus Kreimeier, on the other hand, highlights Schünzel's sound era comedies, which subversively undercut gender definitions in *Viktor und Viktoria* (1933) and *Amphitryon* (1935), and fascist pomp and circumstance in *Land der Liebe* (Land of Love, 1933).[25]

German film historian Karsten Witte argues that film comedy in Nazi Germany's now racially purged film industry, far from being harmless entertainment, actively propagandized fascist ideology. Indeed, comedy functioned to make German film audiences emotionally pliable for a propagandistic consensus constructed across all media discourses. Through a double aesthetic strategy of separation and integration, politically and morally unacceptable characters are separated from the social fabric, while characters who represent the rigorous institutionalization of fascism's class and gender norms are integrated into the community.[26] Witte also notes that visual comedy, as utilized in American films, morphs in Third Reich film into verbal humor, thus subjecting it to tighter ideological control. Comedy's mission is to distract audiences from the reality of war, allowing Germans a moment of respite from the bombings and mounting casualties. Furthermore, film comedy under fascism

uses faux transgressions as safety valves for pent-up aggression against the state, thus better harnessing support for the war effort.

To test this hypothesis, one need look no further than the career of Heinz Rühmann, arguably the most popular German film comedian from the 1930s through the 1950s. Rühmann's star persona (see Stephen Lowry in this volume) defined the prototypical German "everyman," surviving three political systems from Weimar to Bonn, through an ambiguous mixture of constancy and opportunism, mediocrity and insolence. As Lowry notes, Rühmann, while seemingly subverting established order, is always simultaneously looking for loopholes in the system in order to grab power for himself, thus reintegrating him into the status quo.[27]

Rühmann demonstrates a streak of infantilism that seemingly runs through much German comedy after 1933, yet without the subversive potential such infantilism brings to the American comedy of such figures as Harry Langdon or Stan Laurel. Lowry writes that Rühmann's "physical gestures give the impression of asexuality; he is without any erotic aura."[28] Infantilism here is a signifier for the repression of sexuality in favor of faecal humor. A further case in point is the postwar star Heinz Erhardt. The most popular West German comedian of the 1950s, Erhardt was an overweight, older actor who specialized in downtrodden and infantile husbands or fathers. Invariably lower middle-class, Erhardt's characters, whether in *Witwer mit fünf Töchtern* (Widower with Five Daughters, Erich Engels, 1957) or *Der Haustyrann* (The Domestic Tyrant, Hans Deppe, 1959), are losers rather than social climbers, conformist rather than subversive, and completely unerotic. He struggles against children and wives, vainly attempting to establish authority and control through law.

How is it that Ernst Lubitsch or Fatty Arbuckle could exude an erotic aura, though neither of them were conventionally attractive, while German comedians from Rühmann to Hans Moser to Heinz Erhardt are emasculated, as well as infantile? One answer may be the shadow cast by the sexual politics of the Third Reich. Nazi culture not only allowed German women one role, that of mother but also channeled sexual discourses into images of otherness; heterosexual desire itself was repressed, since it invariably weakened men in their resolve to sacrifice themselves for the *Fatherland*.[29] The Nazi sexual legacy reaches deep into the German post-Second World War era, even beyond Erhardt and the commercial cinema of the 1950s. In the hugely successful *Otto—Der Film* (Otto Waalkes and Xaver Schwarzenberger, 1985) and *Otto- Der neue Film* (Otto Waalkes and Xaver Schwarzenberger, 1987), Otto Waalkes plays a character from East Frisia, a region whose inhabitants are widely stereotyped as dumb and dumber. Tall and skinny with long blond hair, Otto's comic persona is that of an adult with the mind of an eight-year-old, who prances like a bunny and is obsessed by faecal humor. His ideas about sex are strictly prepubescent. In *Otto—Der neue Film*, Otto chases after an empty-headed sexpot, but realizes in the film's final frames that the ugly duckling in his midst not only loves him but will bring him domestic bliss, and thus return metaphorically to him the absent mother.

An abnormal attachment to the mother, precluding any form of sexuality, whether homoerotic or heterosexual, is also the subject of one of the most popular West German films of the 1980s, Loriot's *Oedipussi* (1988). Directed by and starring Vicco von Bülow, better known as the cartoonist and humorist Loriot, *Oedipussi* concerns a furniture salesman well into his fifties, who seemingly cannot separate himself from his overbearing mother, even after he finally meets a woman who interests him erotically. She, too, still lives at home, so that both are trapped in an endless childhood, leading to repeated failed attempts at sexual contact. While the film takes much of its comedic energy from an exact observation of German petit bourgeois mores and morality, it also fits into established patterns of German conformist comedy: the film's happy end has the couple on holiday in Italy with mother (literally and figuratively) in the driver's seat.

REDISCOVERING LOST TRADITIONS

In West German cinema, there was, admittedly, a moment in the late 1960s when sex and comedy were rediscovered in semi-pornographic films and sex comedies by Peter and Ulrich Schamoni, May

Spils, Maran Gosov, Franz-Josef Spieker, and Klaus Lemke, among others. Box office hits including Ulrich Schamoni's *Alle Jahre wieder* (Next Year, Same Time, 1967), Spieker's *Wilde Reiter GmbH.* (Wild Rider Co., 1967), and Maran Gosov's *Engelchen* (Angel Baby, 1968), were often derided by "serious" critics who objected to the fact that these films openly referenced American genre formulas, were unabashedly vulgar, and supposedly lacked a clear authorial signature.[30] May Spils's *Zur Sache Schätzchen* (Go For It, Baby, 1968), however, not only received positive reviews but was also credited with "a precise sense of wordplay, as one only finds in Yiddish."[31] Similar echoes of a parodic wit rooted, among other sources, in Jewish comedy were discerned in sex comedies that rode the contemporary wave of *Aufklärungsungsfilme* (sex education films), while simultaneously creating intelligent parodies. Gosov's *Engelchen*, which spawned several sequels, including *Bengelchen liebt kreuz und quer* (Sex Adventures of a Single Man, 1968) and Michael Verhoeven's *Engelchen macht weiter—hoppe, hoppe reiter* (Up the Establishment!, 1968), captured not only the *Zeitgeist* of Munich's free-wheeling Schwabing district but also exploded German bourgeois notions of morality.

While such sex comedies were few and far between, they did indicate a sea change both in terms of a less repressed attitude toward a discussion of sexual relations and the development of narratives that eschewed conformist paradigms. Herbert Achternbusch, meanwhile, took on the mantle of Karl Valentin, even if many of Achternbusch's films seem more depressing than comic. Lionized by German critics, Achternbusch has failed to make an impression abroad. Perhaps his comedy, like that of Valentin, is one of stasis rather than movement, passivity and powerlessness in the face of crushing social norms rather than manic activity. Achternbusch's characters are certainly passive-aggressive, whether the last Indian in a sanatorium in *Der Kommantsche* (The Comanche, 1979), Christ returned to Bavaria in *Das Gespenst* (The Ghost, 1982) or a soldier returning from the Second World War forty years late in *Heilt Hitler!* (Cure Hitler!, 1986). Faced with the deadening ordinariness of contemporary West Germany, they flee into madness or drink, occasionally striking out wildly in desperate acts of violence.

Achternbusch's lukewarm reception abroad is compounded by his eschewing of classical narrative address or logic, as well as a translation difficulty deriving from narratives that hinge on a pun or a metaphor.[32] There was, by contrast, a significant shift in the late 1960s in the transnational reception of exile comedy. Toward the end of the decade, Ernst Lubitsch and Billy Wilder began to be rediscovered by young German audiences with no memory of fascism or the plight of the exiles. The Berlin Film Festival in 1968 presented a first serious Lubitsch retrospective, followed in subsequent years by West German television reruns of much of Lubitsch's American work, in particular *The Shop Around the Corner* (1940). The reception of Wilder's American films began slightly earlier with regular commercial screenings and reviews in the film studies journal *Filmkritik*, and continued with the huge commercial success of the re-release of *One, Two, Three* (1961) in the early 1980s. At the same time, other German exiles, including Max Ophüls, received regular screenings at the Munich Filmmuseum, in whose audience Doris Dörrie and Herbert Achternbusch were regulars, while the Saarbrücken Film Festival named its comedy prize after Ophüls, a native son.

The cinematic return of the exile, alongside the Young German sex comedies, was one factor that prepared the ground for a *Beziehungskomödie* (relationship comedy) boom in the 1990s, including Frank Ripploh's *Taxi zum Klo* (Taxi to the Toilet, 1980) and Doris Dörrie's *Männer* (Men, 1986). Ripploh's happily homosexual hero, who hops from bed to bed (just before AIDS put a stop to the party), and the heroine in Dörrie's communal flat who seeks her pleasure where she finds it, opened the field in turn for a new generation of post-New German cinema comedy directors, such as Sönke Wortmann, Rainer Kaufmann, and Detlev Buck. Bernhard Moeller has recently argued that the viewing habits of Germans in the last quarter of the twentieth century were heavily influenced not only by the comedies of Billy Wilder, but by American comedies in general.[33] This may be one reason for what commentators have noted as a turn in the 1990s away from New German Cinema aesthetics