

**Framing the Führer:
The Construction, Demolition, Mediation, & Memory of the New Reich Chancellery**

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation constructs an intermedial genealogy of the New Reich Chancellery, a key architectural symbol and frame of Führertum, Nazism's political order, centered on Hitler's ideological position in the regime. Constructed over 1935-9, as the Third Reich mobilized for war, incessantly reproduced in propaganda until 1945, occupied by the Allied forces, demolished by the Soviets over 1949-51 and buried beneath the Wall in 1961, this notorious destroyed building remains marginal within Berlin's contemporary memorial landscape and Nazism's historical representation. However, as I show, the New Chancellery's mediation in representation was crucial to the construction of the Hitler-Mythos during the NS regime and offers a point of orientation for analyzing the development of Germany's memory discourse, the continued confrontation with and critical reception of National Socialism over the lengthy process of 'coming to terms' with the past. Critically engaging with the NS architectural archive—the NS building industry's material history and the propaganda in which its planned, constructed, and destroyed buildings circulated and were preserved following Hitler's defeat—I investigate how modern aesthetic strategies and technologies were repeatedly deployed to transform the New Chancellery's physical spaces into a visual narrative and *topos*, imbued with often contradictory, politicized and historical meanings, intertwined with the mythology and memory of Führertum.

The introduction and first chapter analyze the New Chancellery's construction and use as the Hitler-State's administrative and symbolic center and its reproduction in exhibitions, models, *Kulturfilm*, newsreels, and photographs. My analysis shows how the building's mediation

metaphorically framed Hitler as the ‘embodiment’ of state, people, and future, and the state’s transformation of Germany’s socio-political order and urban landscape, while obscuring significant information about the physical architecture, its function, the violence intrinsic to NS building, and the improvisational, self-destructive nature of NS policy. The second chapter retraces the appropriation of its ruin as an emblem of Allied victory after 1945, its representation within Berlin’s rubble landscape, the documentation of its demolition, and the suppression of its images. The site of Hitler’s death, captured in photographs, newsreels, and reportage, the New Chancellery’s ruin and attached Führerbunker initially served as a hegemonic assertion the victors’ power and a site of reflection on national history. As I show, its destruction marked a turning point facilitating the temporary repression of its image—but the building did not disappear.

Beginning with its ruin’s posthumous appearance in Rossellini’s *Germany, Year Zero*, the final three chapters analyze the remediation and reception of this building’s archival images in representations of NS history produced by the New German Cinema and mainstream filmmakers. I interrogate its use in Alexander Kluge’s *Brutalität in Stein*, Joachim Fest’s *Hitler - eine Karriere*, and Hans Jürgen Syberberg’s *Hitler - ein Film aus Deutschland* as a site for confronting and criticizing Nazism’s legacy and mythology, historicized in relation to the NS trials, West Germany’s memory discourse, and NS iconography’s popular revival amid the political turmoil of the 1960s and 1970s. Each film reconstructs and deconstructs this architectural frame of Hitler’s power and redefines its meaning, using intermedial-architectural strategies of radical montage, populist critical documentary, the symbolic narrative of divestiture, and psychoanalytic concepts of ‘mourning.’ None, however, fully dismantles or neutralizes its fascination. Thus, my conclusion explores the New Chancellery’s present absence in Berlin, considering it in relation to Germany’s multi-layered histories and their architectural mediation in the reunified capital.

CHAPTER I

Introduction: The New Reich Chancellery: Hitler's Space of Power & Myth

“You would hardly believe what power a small mind acquires over the people around him when he is able to show himself in such imposing dimensions. Such rooms, with a great historical past, raise even a petty successor to historical rank. You see, that is why we must complete this construction in my lifetime—so that I shall have lived there and my spirit will have invested the building with tradition. If I live in it only for a few years, that will be good enough.”

Adolf Hitler, quoted in Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*¹

In an unidentified room of the New Reich Chancellery in Berlin, in early 1945, Adolf Hitler gazes through a model of the Triumphal Arch on the southern end of the North-South-Axis—the city's future architectural center, transformed into the imperial capital (*Reichshauptstadt*) ‘Germania.’ “Well now, Speer,” Hitler says, “the bombing attacks on our city have a positive side too.” With these words, the viewer of Oliver Hirschbiegel's 2004 film *Downfall (Der Untergang)* comes face to face with the Führer, played by Bruno Ganz.² (Fig. I-1) Hitler's animated features are the inescapable object of the camera's gaze, eyes dancing with excitement, tightly framed by the model's blurry silhouette. The Triumphal Arch's illuminated arcade encircles his face from eyebrows to mustache—the Führer reduced to his ‘demonic’ gaze, iconic facial hair, and unmistakable, accented voice, superimposed with the image (and pronouncement) of his architectural ideology. Hitler's face hovers momentarily behind the model, strangely disembodied.

¹ Albert Speer, Richard Winston (Trans.), and Clara Winston (Trans.), *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs* (1970), 157. Translation modified. “Es ist kaum zu glauben, welche Macht es einem kleinen Geist über seine Mitwelt verleiht, wenn er in so großen Verhältnissen auftreten kann. Solche Räume mit einer großen geschichtlichen Vergangenheit erheben auch einen kleinen Nachfolger zu geschichtlichem Rang. Sehen Sie, deswegen müssen wir das noch zu meinen Lebzeiten bauen: damit ich darin noch gelebt habe und mein Geist diesem Bau Tradition verleiht. Wenn ich nur ein paar Jahre darin lebe, dann reicht das schon aus.” Albert Speer, *Erinnerungen* (Berlin: Ullstein, 2005), 172.

² Oliver Hirschbiegel, *Der Untergang* (München: Constantin Film, 2004).

Rising from behind it, his body appears shrunken, drawn inward, faintly afflicted with palsy (Ganz was lauded for attention to detail in his performance). Muffled explosions, sounds of the Red Army siege, fail to dampen the Führer's belief in the final victory. He thus continues,

“It's much easier to remove the debris than tear everything down ourselves. Once we win the war, reconstruction will be completed very quickly...This Third Reich will be a treasure trove of art and culture that will survive millennia. We see before us the ancient cities, the acropolis, we see medieval cities and their cathedrals, and we know that the people need something like this: a center.”



Figure I-1 - Hitler (Bruno Ganz) gazing through the arcade of the model Triumphal Arch in Hirschbiegel's Downfall



Figure I-2 - Speer (Heino Ferch) & Hitler contemplating the model of the Great Hall in the New Reich Chancellery in Downfall
History, as the film's viewer already knows, would not pan out according to Hitler's vision. Construction on the Third Reich's future, laid out in the plans for Berlin displayed in the New Reich Chancellery, was about to come to an abrupt, destructive conclusion.

An inkling of impending doom seems to hang over Hitler, too, in this scene. Expounding on the urgency of realizing his architectural vision, the Führer sounds like a man trying to convince himself, more than anyone else in the room, of the silver lining to Germany's urban devastation.³ Unpersuaded, the assembled members of his inner circle urge him to leave Berlin, already surrounded by the Soviet Army. The sounds of war, increasing in volume over the scene, portend the reality of their pessimistic outlook. Alone, Hitler's mistress, Eva Braun—"He is the Führer, he knows what's right!"—and Albert Speer, the nominal addressee of his monologue, affirm his decision to remain in Berlin—"You should be onstage when the curtain falls."

As Armaments Minister and former General Director of Building (*Generalbauinspektor*), Speer was intimately familiar with Hitler's preferences for *mise-en-scène*. In addition to giving shape to his ideology of *Ruinenwert* at the Nürnberg Party Rally Grounds and in the plans for 'Germania,' Speer had also designed the New Reich Chancellery.⁴ That is, the reputed representational and administrative heart of Hitler's power in Berlin; the spectacular, architectural stage framing the assertion of his embodiment of State, Party, and People; the site of his fortified last refuge in the so-called Führerbunker; and thus the setting for Hirschbiegel's chamber drama and scene of this fictionalized exchange.⁵ Built to launch the 'Thousand Year Reich,' rapidly

³ As Jean-Louis Cohen writes, the Nazis, as well as leaders of the other nations embroiled in World War II, "began designing the postwar world well before the war was over...Urban planners throughout Europe experienced a certain *schadenfreude* at the destruction of neighborhoods they considered 'insalubrious' and saw the war as providing an ideal opportunity to replace them with modern urban forms." *The Future of Architecture, since 1889 : A Worldwide History* (2017), 292-3. The Third Reich took this logic to its extremes, as we shall see in chapters ii and iii, designing plans that could only be constructed with material resources and labor acquired in expansionist war, and looking on allied bombing as unwitting assistance in demolition. See also: fn11.

⁴ *Ruinenwert* or 'ruin value' is the notion that a building should be constructed to retain its representational and symbolic stature even in decay, such that it might awaken nationalist pride and sustain communities through eras of decline. The concept references antiquity, but Speer had the idea upon seeing the Nürnberg train depot's demolition; deciding that steel and glass construction, characteristic of 'Bolshevik' (read: Jewish) modernism was ill suited for such purposes. Speer, 68-9. For a critique of 'ruin value,' as a response to Spengler's "uncompromising embrace of modernity's ruination," see: Julia Hell, "Imperial Ruin Gazers, or Why Did Scipio Weep?," in *Ruins of Modernity*, ed. Andreas Schönle and Julia Hell (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 184-8.

⁵ German historian Joachim C. Fest's popular book, *Downfall*, served as the basis for the film's screenplay. Joachim Fest, Bernd Eichinger, and Michael Töteberg, *Der Untergang: Eine Historische Skizze* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2004). The text revised Fest's magnum opus Hitler biography, turning the regime's collapse into a seamless, almost cinematic narrative—in part by omitting all historical citations. The film takes this strategy a number of steps further, collating together disparate historical events and figures into single scenes and significantly altering key details for maximum emotional and aesthetic impact, e.g. Hitler's eleventh hour reveries with his representational models took place in the New Chancellery's underground bunker complex, usually

completed over 1938/9 to accommodate the advancing timeline for imperial expansion and initiate Berlin's concomitant reconstruction, the New Chancellery was only a provisional representation of Hitler's radically new form of sovereignty: Führertum. The building survived the war, but outlived the NS experiment by only four years. In 1949, Soviet authorities demolished its above-ground structures, subsuming its empty lot under the Berlin Wall's Dead Zone (*Todesstreifen*) in 1961. Yet the images of the New Reich Chancellery and the myths surrounding its historical existence, like those of the Führer, have not disappeared, but survived the building's destruction in the massive archive of representations it left behind.⁶

This dissertation explores and interrogates the New Reich Chancellery's mediated representation, tracing the construction, destruction, and afterlife of this powerful architectural symbol through its visual archive. The New Chancellery's persistence, in spite of its destruction, resulted in part from its original function as an integral component of National Socialism's representational politics—the primary frame of Hitler's appearance as Leader of the Total State.⁷ Center-stage for his ritualistic performance of rule, the architecture was endlessly reproduced in propaganda: a space metonymic for the Third Reich's centralized political order and personalized style of statecraft. A relatively late accomplishment of the NS building program, characterized by the monumental, modified-neoclassical style typical of its prestige buildings, the New Chancellery

in isolation. See: Hans Georg Hiller von Gaertringen, Katrin Blum, and Walter Frenz, *Das Auge Des Dritten Reiches : Walter Frenz - Hitlers Kameramann Und Fotograf* (Augsburg: Weltbild, 2010), 86-7. Likewise, Speer's response to Hitler about fleeing Berlin, as noted in his memoir, advises him not to risk the indignity of dying in his weekend house at Berchtesgaden. Speer, 482.

⁶ The New Chancellery's continued, international notoriety is evinced by its presence in popular culture and historical representation. Fragments and artifacts from the building are displayed in the permanent exhibitions of Berlin's German Historical Museum and London's Imperial War Museum; it also commonly appears in films and television, albeit usually unnamed and only vaguely represented, as in Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009) and the Amazon series adaptation of Philip K. Dick's 1962 novel *The Man in the High Castle* (2015-Present). Whereas the former employs sets reminiscent of Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* (1940), the latter includes a doctored (and inaccurately scaled) photograph of the Mosaic Room's interior, with a central character depicted shaking hands with Hitler.

⁷ As described by Claude Lefort, the embodiment of sovereignty in the ancien regime, summed up by the phrase from Louis XIV, "L'État c'est moi," is revised in totalitarianism, as exemplified in a text by Leon Trotsky on Stalin, as, "la Société c'est moi." Claude Lefort, "The Logic of Totalitarianism," in *The Political Forms of Modern Society: Bureaucracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism*, ed. John B. Thompson (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2010), 275.

marked a point of transition. Its construction in the lead up to war asserted Hitler's radical, modernizing transformation of the state—a contemporaneity reflected in the visual strategies and technologies employed in its mediated reproduction. Owing to its inescapable image and historic significance in the Third Reich from 1939 to 1945, the New Chancellery likewise became a central site in Berlin's immediate postwar landscape, during the transitional phase of occupation through the establishment of the two German states in 1949. Following the Allied victory, occupying forces strategically employed architecture to assert their hegemony over political representation; the New Chancellery's ruin framed their appearance as representatives of a new (if again provisional) sovereign order. Their representation of the building also revealed and publicized the subterranean extension of the Führerbunker, the site of Hitler's suicide, nearby the location of his burned remains, which likewise became emblem of the Führer's death and Third Reich's defeat. Swept away during the earliest phase of Berlin's Soviet reconstruction, these structures disappeared from the heart of Germany's divided topography, but not from its cultural memory.

Over the following decades, the dense archive of the New Chancellery's ideologically charged representations continually resurfaced in the Federal Republic, and was appropriated and refunctionalized, particularly in documentary and experimental films. Hence, this dissertation also tracks the New Chancellery's re-appearance throughout the history of West Germany's 'coming to terms with the past' (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*), examining the aesthetic strategies and politicized frameworks through which the building was reconstructed and re-imagined as a contested site of myth and memory (*Gedächtnisort*).⁸ Opposite the mediation and mythologization that preceded and accompanied its construction, the New Chancellery's destruction, and the

⁸ See: Aleida Assmann's theory of *Gedächtnisorte* in *Der Lange Schatten Der Vergangenheit : Erinnerungskultur Und Geschichtspolitik* (2018). For *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, see, especially: Norbert Frei, *Vergangenheitspolitik : Die Anfänge Der Bundesrepublik Und Die Ns-Vergangenheit* (München: Beck, 2012).

suppression of images and information regarding this process, temporarily relegated the building and its memory to the margins. Its reemergence in cultural discourse originated in the first wave of efforts to cinematically ‘work through’ the NS past in the Federal Republic. Gaining in visibility over the decades, its archival images from NS propaganda were deployed as a frame, used to reconstruct and deconstruct the Hitler-Mythos, to turn his space of power into one of defeat and death. Yet, as this dissertation argues, these very same strategies employed to belatedly ‘demolish’ its ideological meaning and dismantle its ‘auratic’ power served, primarily, to revive and amplify the visibility of and public fascination with this notorious (and notoriously absent) building.

I begin with this scene from Hirschbiegel’s film to illustrate this point, and because it offers a useful example of the media analyzed in the following chapters. It partially reconstructs the New Chancellery, identifies it as a significant historical site, and maps Hitler’s body and his destructive architectural ideology onto its interior. In addition, the scene collates and indexes the intermedial archive of NS architecture, condensing and refracting its multiple, historical layers within one of the few buildings planned for Berlin’s NS governmental center that was actually constructed. Stated less abstractly, framed by the New Reich Chancellery, the scene cites heavily from the NS architectural archive, reproducing its material in a kind of highlights reel. Hitler’s speech echoes his pronouncements regarding representational architecture’s political utility and enduring symbolic function, well known from *Mein Kampf* and his many speeches on the subject.⁹ A reconstruction of the famous model of Speer’s designs for the North-South-Axis forms the centerpiece of the *mise-en-scène*.¹⁰ His account of the regime’s optimistic disposition toward Allied bombing—as unwitting assistance in the demolition of Germany’s cities—detailed in

⁹ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, Frz. Eher Nachf., 1939), especially 288-93.

¹⁰ None of these models, centrally important to NS architectural production, survived the war. The reconstructed model used in this scene is displayed in Berlin at the permanent exhibition ‘Mythos Germania’ from the private historical society Berliner Unterwelten. A reconstructed model of the Great Hall from an Austrian theater production, is likewise displayed in the German Historical Museum, across from Hitler’s desk from the New Reich Chancellery.

Speer's memoirs, underscores the dramatic irony (the fact that an entirely different political regime and architectural vision would ultimately shape future reconstruction).¹¹ Visually speaking, the scene's framing echoes the many photographs of Hitler and Speer posing with NS architectural models and plans. Further, the camera's voyeuristic proximity to the model, mirroring the Führer's gaze as it oscillates from 'bird's-eye' to 'street-level' views, seeming to inhabit the miniature, replicates the dream-like imagery of NS architectural *Kulturfilm*—especially *The Word in Stone* (1939), which showcased the New Chancellery's representational interior at its dramatic climax.¹²

Moreover, the scene evokes memories of Berlin's postwar rubble landscape, and the subsequent re-circulation and re-mediation of its archival material in West German film amid and following reconstruction and the *Wirtschaftswunder*. For example, in the montage's superimposition of the bombing war's historical sounds onto the past-future architectural images of 'Germania.' Alexander Kluge employed the same intermedial strategy in his 1961 experimental short *Brutality in Stone*—New German Cinema's inaugural protest against the 'silence' of the NS generation and the first West German film to resurrect the archival imagery of NS architecture in general and the New Chancellery in particular.¹³ In short, I begin with this scene because it remediates the very archival terrain that will be explored and unfolded throughout this dissertation. While imagery of NS architecture is popular and recognizable, the critical value of material pertaining to the New Chancellery has largely been taken for granted and under-theorized, even as it has been explored and utilized in historical scholarship.

¹¹ See: Speer, 327-8.

¹² Kurt Rupli, "Das Wort Aus Stein," (Berlin: Universum-Film AG (UFA), 1939). Citations of the New Chancellery's representation from the NS archive appear elsewhere in the film: in shots closely approximating photographs of its portals along Voßstraße and footage from its use as the ruinous backdrop for Hitler's final newsreel appearance, decorating a Hitler-Youth anti-tank battalion in March 1945. Following this scene, we also view Speer exiting the New Chancellery through the ceremonial Honor Court, already in ruins—its appearance distinctly references postwar newsreels, made by the Allied forces in 1945/6. It bears mentioning that this scene is fictional in another sense, as this entrance was almost exclusively used for symbolic state events. During wartime, NS officials came and went through tunnels connecting the New Chancellery's bunkers to other parts of the governmental quarter.

¹³ Alexander Kluge and Peter Schamoni, "Brutalität in Stein," (neue filmform heiner braun, 1960/1).

My analysis of the New Reich Chancellery and its mediated representations in this dissertation concurs with the position of architectural historian Despina Stratigakos, outlined in the introduction of her fabulous *Hitler at Home*.¹⁴ Namely, that the “vast production of images” of the Führer’s buildings (and of the Führer in his buildings), which accompanied NS construction, “proved to be enormously seductive and continues to exert its power even today.”¹⁵ As Stratigakos notes, the appeal of these spaces’ aestheticized reproduction “has largely gone unchecked by historians, who have insufficiently exposed and deconstructed” NS architectural propaganda and its representational strategies.¹⁶ Much like Hitler’s domestic spaces, the significance of his personalized state architecture in “the visual imagination of National Socialism has remained underexplored terrain.”¹⁷ The following study will therefore interrogate the New Chancellery’s

¹⁴ Despina Stratigakos, *Hitler at Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017). Stratigakos’s impressive study reconstructs and analyzes the renovation and construction of Hitler’s private residence in Munich and the Berghof in Obersalzberg. Her primary focus is to interrogate the Führer’s self-stylization as the ideal embodiment of a cultured statesman—assisted by Gerdy Troost’s interior designs, the NS propaganda media arsenal, and the eager consumption of images and narratives of Hitler’s domestic life by German- and English-language audiences. This dissertation is indebted to her insights, but redirects focus from the mediated reproduction of and public interest in Hitler’s home-life to the mythologization of and sustained fascination with his ‘official’ space of state power, the New Chancellery.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 2-3. The continued vitality of Nazism’s architectural mythology, in particular, is palpable in its treatment in exhibitions. State-funded and commercial exhibitions of NS architecture, increasingly popular in Germany since the 1980s, have expressly concerned themselves with criticizing and dismantling myths about the NS building industry in favor of highlighting its brutal reality and links to state-sponsored violence. For examples, see the exhibition catalogs: Hans Joachim Reichhardt and Wolfgang Schäche, *Von Berlin Nach Germania: Über Die Zerstörungen Der "Reichshauptstadt" Durch Albert Speers Neugestaltungspanungen*, 11 ed. (Berlin: Transit, 2008); Dagmar Thorau and Gernot Schaulinski, *Mythos Germania Vision Und Verbrechen* (Berlin: Berliner Unterwelten, 2014). For a critical analysis of affective strategies used in contemporary site-responsive exhibitions of NS architecture, see: Elke Heckner, "Fascism and Its Afterlife in Architecture: Towards a Reevaluation of Affect," *Museum & Society* 14, no. 3 (2016).

¹⁶ Stratigakos, 2. Critical studies of NS architecture since the 1960s, especially in Germany, have tended to separate the material reality and development of the NS building industry from its mediation in propaganda—with good reason, since the latter is often radically misleading regarding overall structure, style, and implementation. Nevertheless, propaganda remains indispensable for purposes of illustration, as it forms the primary repository of NS architectural production, particularly since of the relatively few representational buildings actually constructed by the regime, many were destroyed. Despite pointing out manipulative strategies employed in NS architectural representation, few authors closely analyze the mediating strategies of their archival objects. In addition to Stratigakos’s careful analysis of NS propaganda, notable exceptions include: Rolf Sachsse, "Architektur Und Fotografie Im Ns-Staat," in *Die Erziehung Zum Wegsehen* (Dresden: Philo Fine Arts, 2003); Eduard Heinrich Führ, "Identitätspolitik : "Architect Professor Cesar Pinnau" Als Entwurf Und Entwerfer," (2016). Yet, since architecture primarily circulates through visual reproductions (as buildings themselves are immobile), and precisely *because* architectural images contain additional (often misleading) messages about buildings, their purported use and material construction, this archive is worth another look. This dissertation thus also draws on recent scholarship regarding (especially photographic) strategies of architectural mediation, as they developed in Germany through the late 19th and 20th century. See, in particular: Miriam Paeslack, *Constructing Imperial Berlin : Photography and the Metropolis* (2019); and Claire Zimmerman, *Photographic Architecture in the Twentieth Century* (Minneapolis: London: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

¹⁷ Stratigakos, 2-3.

visual, intermedial archive, identifying the building as a site of central importance both during the Third Reich and throughout the ongoing negotiation of Germany's relationship to and representation of NS history since its collapse.

As I will argue, since its very inception, the New Reich Chancellery has been stylized and continued to operate as a site of myth: the representational space of Hitler's power.¹⁸ This assertion warrants some explanation, for it is obvious that the New Chancellery was indeed a real place, both built representation and key structural site of NS sovereignty. Constructed as an extension of Berlin's central state architecture, the New Chancellery's design program was specifically geared toward and largely motivated by its strategic value reproduced in and as propaganda. The mediation of its symbolic function both diminished and obscured the visibility of its primary, practical use: housing the bureaucratic apparatus. As a result of its destruction, this highly ideologically charged, multi-media archive forms the primary repository of its physical existence and structure. Offering only a fragmented and problematic impression of its spaces, these artifacts, and their subsequent resurrections after 1945, provide evidence of the persistent and often contradictory critical interest in and popular fascination with the history of National Socialism, its representational politics, and the mythology surrounding Hitler. While the New Chancellery's representational design, historical use, and strong association with the Führer are part of its significance, the fate of its *images* in the postwar era, its continued reproduction as a site of cultural memory has generated a continual evolution of its meaning, remediating its legibility and producing associations that often have little to do with the building itself or the events it framed.

¹⁸ That is to say, the New Chancellery was an integral component of the 'Führer- or Hitler-Mythos,' his self-stylization as artist/politician, and a central, symbolic site and object of Nazi mythology more broadly, as it was reproduced in propaganda. While crucial to maintaining public support during the regime, the media archiving the NS mythos has likewise shaped the historical reception and critical engagement with the Third Reich since 1945. For the Führer-Myth and the political value of myth to the NS regime, more generally see: Ian Kershaw, *The "Hitler Myth": Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press ; Oxford University Press, 1987); Éric Michaud, *The Cult of Art in Nazi Germany* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2004).

To foreground at the outset one of the central conclusions of this dissertation, I should note that the New Reich Chancellery has no fixed, singular meaning. Rather, owing to its dual status, as both building and image (broadly defined), and due to the tectonic shifts in the socio-cultural and political context of its reception over the second half of the 20th century, its identity and legibility have always been both *plural* and *contested*.¹⁹ The New Reich Chancellery was and remains a symbol constantly in flux—and, I contend, an important one for understanding Nazism’s representational ideology, architecture of Führertum, and cultural legacy in Germany.

Outlining in broad strokes the historical phases contextualizing the New Chancellery’s construction, destruction, and resurrection(s) in representation will help to illuminate this dissertation’s temporal coordinates, spanning the Third Reich to reunification. It will also foreground the questions pursued in this project, regarding the array of perspectives on the New Chancellery and its meaning—captured in its mediation analyzed in the following chapters—and situate them within the discourses and debates surrounding National Socialism’s aesthetics, politics, and afterlife in the Federal Republic. In the following pages, I thus lay out the socio-cultural-historical media landscape in which the New Chancellery was repeatedly reproduced from 1939 to the early 1980s. I then return to the building and its construction history, which provide this study’s foundation, define my key theoretical analytics, concerning the use of the body (Hitler’s and other’s; imaginary and real) and (architectural) space in political representation, and explain my methodology.

¹⁹ Throughout, this dissertation implicitly considers “the political nature of history,” identified by Hannah Arendt, as “a story of action and deeds” which are “recorded in documents and monuments...visible in use objects or art works.” Hannah Arendt, Danielle Allen, and Margaret Canovan, *The Human Condition* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 184-5. The inception of this ‘story,’ Arendt points out “is so indissolubly tied to the living flux of acting and speaking that it can be represented and ‘reified’ only through a kind of repetition...imitation or *mimesis*.” Ibid., 187. Not only does this mean that actions can only ever be meaningful retrospectively, moreover, rather than having a single historical author, the plural and social nature of the human condition, “the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world,” dictates that the development of events and the exercise of power (action in concert) remains unpredictable, its significance unknowable in advance and thus subject to later reinterpretation. Ibid., 7, 190-2.

The New Reich Chancellery in Representation: From the Third Reich to Reunification

Completed in 1939, the New Reich Chancellery was touted as the inaugural success of Berlin's NS redevelopment, as Hitler consolidated power and the Third Reich geared up for war, and remained the center of NS government throughout its duration. As will be explained in detail below, written into the building's design program and promoted by its ritualistic use and reproduction in propaganda were grandiose (and highly misleading) claims regarding the ruthlessly efficient bureaucratic organization of the NS state, the absolute power of the Führer, the racial and historical identity of the German people, and the Third Reich's future imperial aspirations.²⁰ But considering the broader network of NS self-representation—its overwhelming reliance on modern “mass communication technologies and marketing techniques” to effect what Walter Benjamin famously identified as ‘the aestheticization of politics’ and Siegfried Kracauer called “The Conquest of Europe on the Screen”—where did the New Chancellery fit within this framework?²¹ The architecture was a highly charged symbol of the NS state, center-stage for its most beloved political figure and celebrity, and celebrated success-story of its building program, but how did the New Reich Chancellery appear to the public, and in which media? NS architectural propaganda was not confined to building sites or the cinema but, rather, circulated in exhibitions, publications, news stories, postcards and other consumable products—though film was the favored medium of its most iconic and seductive imagery.²² How did the New Chancellery appear in each

²⁰ The political messaging campaign associated with the New Chancellery's architecture is relatively well-known, discussed in literature on NS architecture and on architecture and state power more broadly. See: Angela Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur* (Berlin: Mann, 1981); Dietmar Arnold and Reiner Janick, *Neue Reichskanzlei Und "Führerbunker": Legenden Und Wirklichkeit* (Berlin: Links, 2005); Alex Scobie, *Hitler's State Architecture the Impact of Classical Antiquity* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990); Kim Dovey, "Framing Places : Mediating Power in Built Form," (2014): 55-67; and comments in Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power, and National Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 22-6. The radical effect of the building's representational function on its physical design program will be analyzed in the second half of this introduction.

²¹ Stratigakos, 6; Walter Benjamin et al., *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 241-2; Siegfried Kracauer, "The Conquest of Europe on the Screen - the Nazi Newsreel, 1939-40," *Social Research* 10, no. 1 (1943).

²² Invoked here are of course Leni Riefenstahl's classic depictions of the Nürnberg Party Rally Grounds and Werner March's Olympic stadium in Berlin, and the architectural features of the *Deutsche Wochenschau* and NS *Kulturfilm*, most notably the above-mentioned *Das Wort aus Stein* and Walter Hege's "Die Bauten Adolf Hitlers," (Berlin Universum-Film AG (UFA) 1938). In

of these formats? How did its fragmented, intermedial representation offer an impression of a space thoroughly inaccessible to the public?²³ Further, how did its image—as the provisional architecture anticipating Hitler’s racialized, imperial vision of Germany’s future *and* concealing the bureaucratic machinery translating this vision into reality—compensate for the fact that the NS state produced an entirely different political reality from the one trumpeted in propaganda? And did the architecture continue to buttress the image of the future promised by Hitler as the latter failed to materialize and then disintegrated in the face of Germany’s cataclysmic destruction?

Unsurprisingly, 1945 heralded the New Reich Chancellery’s first significant symbolic transformation. In the final months of the war, the building was re-dubbed in propaganda as the Führer’s *Hauptquartier*, central command for the last stand against the Red Army in Berlin.²⁴ Commonly (and incorrectly) claimed to have been destroyed in the air war, Allied bombs caused minimal structural damage but did dramatically change the New Chancellery’s appearance—turning the fortress of Hitler’s power into a ruinous emblem of his defeat. But how did its function and visibility in representation change in light of the Allied victory and occupation? Where did it appear in Germany’s postwar rubble landscape, which came to dominate the *Stunde Null*’s visual imaginary, continuing well into reconstruction? Who documented its altered state in rubble photographs and films?²⁵ And how did the building’s legibility change depending on whether these

addition to its frequent appearance in newsreels, the New Reich Chancellery was also the subject of at least two unfinished films: an aestheticized documentary of its construction and a color film showcasing its interior architecture, produced by the Riefenstahl-GmbH. See: Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, "Erweiterungsbau Der Reichskanzlei," (M 608, 1936/9); Sandro Scarrocchia, "Die Untermauerung Der Achse Piacentini Und Speer 1937-1942" (Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, 1999), 137-9.

²³ See: Berthold Hinz, *Die Dekoration Der Gewalt : Kunst Und Medien Im Faschismus* (Giessen: Anabas-Verlag Kämpf), 6.

²⁴ Throughout the war, while Hitler remained on the front, the New Chancellery’s primary appearance in the media was as the site of state funerals—highly ritualistic and cinematically stylized affairs—most prominently, Fritz Todt’s, which was released as its own feature. See: Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, "Zur Erinnerung an Dr. Todt," (M - 3256, 1942).

²⁵ On ruin photography and rubble films, see, for example: David F. Crew, *Bodies and Ruins : Imagining the Bombing of Germany, 1945 to the Present* (2017); Anne Fuchs, *After the Dresden Bombing Pathways of Memory, 1945 to the Present* (2014); Wolfgang Kil, "Mondlandschaften, Baugrundstücke," in *So Weit Kein Auge Reicht. Berliner Panoramafotografien Aus Den Jahren 1949-1952. Aufgenommen Von Fritz Tiedemann. Rekonstruiert Und Interpretiert Von Arwed Messmer*. (Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, 2009); Wilfried Wilms and William Rasch, *German Postwar Films : Life and Love in the Ruins* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Eric Rentschler, "The Place of Rubble in the "Trümmerfilm"," *New German Critique*, no. 110 (2010).

producers and their intended audiences were foreigners or German citizens? While the New Chancellery's international celebrity was sustained through its popularity as a destination for Allied heads of state, soldiers, and journalists on their victory tour through the conquered nation, its visibility as a trophy of war in the occupied media did not accord with its domestic reproduction in images and narrative, or its new, practically-defined public use.²⁶ Over the occupation, the New Reich Chancellery, derelict, stripped, and abandoned, became another of Berlin's panoramic *Ruinenkulisse*; another plot in the subsistence gardens spilling out from the Tiergarten; another black market for trading NS artifacts with Allied soldiers for rationed necessities. But how and where did this diminished significance appear against the backdrop of German reconstruction?

1949 constituted another moment of transition for both the New Reich Chancellery and Germany at large, as Berlin and the nation were officially divided into two sovereign territories. The New Chancellery, at the epicenter of this event but within the border of the Soviet zone, marked a point of divergence—a site of rupture with the past and departure for competing views of Germany's political and architectural future, as they took shape in East and West.²⁷ Cold War opposition notwithstanding, the German Democratic and Federal Republics were unified on one thing: Berlin's reconstruction would not include the New Chancellery, at least not intact. As the complex disappeared over 1947-1951, beginning with the Führerbunker, its demolition surfaced in the East Berlin *Tagespresse* as the prelude to the transformation of Wilhelm- into

²⁶ The Berghof was also a popular destination for the international Allied corps. Stratigakos devotes a chapter to this fascination and accompanying souvenir market. Stratigakos, 258-83. "Secrets in the Cellar: Bombing, Looting, and the Reinvention of Hitler's Domesticity. The looting and gathering of souvenirs from the New Chancellery's ruin is documented in Hugh Trevor-Roper, *The Last Days of Hitler* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), 52; and Stephen Spender, *European Witness* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1946), 241-2. It remained a magnet for especially American tourism following its destruction, as visitors would gaze over the empty site from the Western side of the Wall. Sven Felix Kellerhoff, *Mythos Führerbunker : Hitlers Letzter Unterschlupf* (Berlin: Berlin-Story-Verl., 2013), 86, fn20.

²⁷ For the architectural history of reconstruction, see: Klaus von Beyme, *Der Wiederaufbau : Architektur Und Städtebaupolitik in Beiden Deutschen Staaten* (München; Zürich: Piper, 1987); Jeffrey M. Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War : The Reconstruction of German Cities after World War 2* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Paul Stangl, *Risen from Ruins : The Cultural Politics of Rebuilding East Berlin* (2018).

Thälmannplatz, the short-lived center of the DDR before its move East onto the Schloß- *cum* Marx-Engels-Platz on the Spree Island.²⁸ But what became of the New Chancellery's requisitioned materials? How was this process documented, explained, and justified in the media? What can unpublished demolition photographs tell us about the historical implementation and symbolic, political purpose of this often overlooked act of erasure? And what was its effect on the building's subsequent representation? One answer is clear: following its destruction, the New Chancellery's mediation was no longer intrinsically tied to the architecture's material substance or its site in Berlin but, rather, to the preservation and/or interrogation of its historical memory.

Since, however, following the truncated work of denazification, the Third Reich was a memory most Germans seemed keen on forgetting, how long was the interval between the New Chancellery's physical disappearance and its reappearance in the West German media?²⁹ This question, in fact, should be asked of NS architecture and NS archival media in general—against the purported silence of the NS generation, when did memories of the Third Reich, architectural and otherwise, become visible and sayable in public, and why?³⁰

Undeniably, the generational and political upheaval of the 1960s, advancing in the late Adenauer era, occasioned a significant transformation in the representational visibility of the NS past in the Federal Republic. With the rise in what has come to be known as 'memory discourse'—the product of highly publicized psychoanalytic and ideological critiques and scholarly

²⁸ See, especially: Laurenz Demps, *Berlin-Wilhelmstraße Eine Topographie Preußisch-Deutscher Macht* (CH. Links Verlag (Sachbuch)2010), 199-214.

²⁹ See: Norbert Frei and Joel Golb, "Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past : The Politics of Amnesty and Integration," (2010): 56-62, 265-77; Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005).

³⁰ This point, explored in the second half of this dissertation, complicates a central claim of W.G. Sebald, famously articulated in his *On the Natural History of Destruction* (New York: Random House, 2003). Namely, that the NS past was rendered functionally invisible in representation following the war. As argued by Crew and others, the destructive effects of the NS past were a central theme in photographic and architectural representation in Germany since at least 1945. Moreover, the public confrontation with Nazism in the Federal Republic, commonly associated with the release of the US television miniseries *Holocaust* (1978, dir. Marvin Chomsky), in fact began almost two decades earlier. As we shall see in the last two chapters, by the time of its release, West Germany was already immersed in this discourse.

interrogations by the intellectual left, aligned with the agitation of the student movements, culminating in the *68er-Bewegung*—came enhanced attention to the problematic cultural inheritance of the Third Reich.³¹ The public confrontation with Nazism, beginning in the late 1950s and lasting through the 1970s, coincided with West Germany's reluctant juridical and bureaucratic investigation of Nazi criminality, in the form of the NS trials and equally limited state-internal reviews and reforms, addressing structural and personnel continuities with the previous regime.³² But the central arena for interrogating the NS past was the nebulous space of the public sphere—a phenomenon at once widespread throughout the media and especially concentrated on film.³³

Through the 1960s and 1970s, the voices and images of Young (later re-dubbed New) German Cinema turned away from the politically dominant, unwavering attention to the future and back to the past.³⁴ Unearthing the family archive, they sought to 'work through' its material; to illuminate (and project) repressed memories of fascism, its violence, and its victims; and to expose

³¹ The most iconic and influential publications on the subject issued from the Frankfurt School and the Sigmund Freud Institute. The associated figureheads are Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich. See: Theodor W. Adorno, "The Meaning of Working through the Past," in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); Alexander Mitscherlich and Margarete Mitscherlich, *The Inability to Mourn: Principles of Collective Behavior*, trans. Beverley R. Placzek (New York: Grove Press: distributed by Random House, 1975).

³² See: Nathan Stoltzfus and Henry Friedlander, *Nazi Crimes and the Law* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Jörg Osterloh and Clemens Vollnhals, *Ns-Prozesse Und Deutsche Öffentlichkeit Besatzungszeit, Frühe Bundesrepublik Und Ddr* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011); Irmtrud Wojak and Institut Fritz Bauer, *Auschwitz-Prozess 4 Ks 2/63 Frankfurt Am Main* (Köln: Snoeck, 2004); Jürgen Wilke et al., *Holocaust Und Ns-Prozesse: Die Presseberichterstattung in Israel Und Deutschland Zwischen Aneignung Und Abwehr* (Köln: Böhlau, 1995). In the realm of architecture, much like other areas of civil service, this process was complicated by the general lack of personnel 'untainted' by the Nazi regime. Despite some initial controversy regarding the employment of former NS architects during reconstruction, necessity and the intervention of a number of modernist architects, motivated the relatively swift and painless rehabilitation of the vast majority of NS building personnel. See: von Beyme; Norbert Frei and Tobias Freimüller, *Karrieren Im Zwielficht Hitlers Eliten Nach 1945* (Frankfurt [u.a.: Campus-Verl., 2002); André Deschan, *Im Schatten Von Albert Speer : Der Architekt Rudolf Wolters* (2016); and the introduction to Anna Teut, *Architektur Im Dritten Reich, 1933-1945* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1967).

³³ In terms of other art forms, which took up the topic of the Third Reich and its legacy in the Federal Republic, the early works of Gerhard Richter and Anselm Kiefer are especially notable, as are the plays and novels by Peter Weiß. See: Paul B. Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right* (2012); Marcel Atze, "Peter Weiss Und Sein Theaterstück *Die Ermittlung* - »Die Angeklagten Lachen«, in *Auschwitz-Prozess 4 Ks 2/63 Frankfurt Am Main*, ed. Irmtrud Wojak and Fritz Bauer Institut (Köln: Snoeck, 2004).

³⁴ On Young/New German Cinema and its development through the 1970s, see: Thomas Elsaesser, *New German Cinema a History* (London: British Film Institute : Palgrave Macmillan, 1989); Miriam Hansen, "Alexander Kluge, Cinema and the Public Sphere: The Construction Site of Counter-History," *Discourse* 6 (1983); Eric Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone," *New German Critique*, no. 49 (1990); Sabine Hake, *German National Cinema* (London; New York: Routledge, 2008); Claudia Lenssen, "Film Der Siebziger Jahre," in *Geschichte Des Deutschen Films*, ed. Wolfgang Jacobsen, et al. (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2004).

its detrimental effects on the present, in particular, on the media of the culture industry and on personal, political, and artistic subjectivity.³⁵ Within this cinematic appropriation and weaponization of the NS past and its archival material, how was the New Reich Chancellery remembered?³⁶ Was it remembered at all? I claim that it was—so how, particularly in light of its destroyed status, were its archival representations deployed as evidence of fascism's *persistence* in the present, as a rebuke of the NS generation's blindness to its artifacts? Conversely, how did the *avant garde*'s cinematic-architectural mediation of the past differ from its mainstream version? For New German Cinema's often publicly funded, experimental polemics did not exist in a cultural vacuum—nor were they primarily consumed by or visible to everyday German audiences.³⁷

Rather, their work appeared opposite far more accessible and affirmative narratives of national history, sympathetic to the suffering of Germans during wartime, produced by the mainstream mass media. For example, in the technicolor amnesia of *Heimatfilm*, or in still-ruin-obsessed popular, made-for-tv documentary productions.³⁸ As they competed for viewers and airtime, which memories of the Third Reich counted? Which version of the past won over audiences? And where did images of the New Chancellery appear, intact or as a ruin, in the visual

³⁵ While the self-reflexive focus on film was the clear emphasis of the movement, architectural themes are undeniably present, especially in their early documentary films. In addition to Kluge, Edgar Reiz's 1958 short "Schicksal Einer Oper," (Munich: Studio für Dokumentarfilm; Film-Studio Walter Leckebusch), for example, constructs a multilayered history of the destroyed National Theater in Munich; other films focused attention on the construction of new modern architectural landscape—often tied to a revisionist relationship to the past. Rentschler describes another contemporaneous short, *Machorka-Muff* (1962), which dramatizes the building of an Academy for Military Memories in Bonn. Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone," 34-5.

³⁶ For the motif of violence in the postwar *avant garde*, see: Richard Langston, *Visions of Violence: German Avant-Gardes after Fascism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2008).

³⁷ For New German Cinema's export-status and dependence on government subsidies, see: Elsaesser, 20-24, 279-308.

³⁸ On *Heimatfilm* see: Johannes von Moltke, *No Place Like Home : Locations of Heimat in German Cinema*, Weimar and Now (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). There is relatively little scholarship on mainstream and/or conservative artistic production during this period. A notable exception is Jaskot's *The Nazi Perpetrator*, which contextualizes *avant garde* artworks with the waning and waxing power of the CDU/CSU, from the late Adenauer era leading into the Kohl administration and reunification. Likewise, Crew's *Bodies in the Ruins* traces the sustained popularity of rubble imagery—and its use to critique the Allied air war and new international style construction—in publications like Wolf Jobst Siedler, Elisabeth Niggemeyer, and Gina Angress, *Die Gemordete Stadt : Abgesang Auf Putte Und Straße, Platz Und Baum* (Berlin: Herbig, 1964). Crew's study is limited to photography, but Siedler's book, it bears noting, was also produced as a documentary film: Manfred Durniok, "Die Gemordete Stadt. Abgesang Auf Putte, Und Straße, Platz Und Baum," (Berlin: Sender Freies Berlin (SFB)/Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NRD, 1965). Chapter iv analyzes a more historically focused Ufa documentary television production from the same year:

and testimonial narratives of German victimhood and/or German culpability? Further, how did its meaning change against the backdrop of the NS trials and the shift in attention away from Berlin and the Third Reich's *Haupttäter* (including Hitler) and toward the everyday perpetrator, the 'murderers among us'?³⁹ The New Chancellery initially appeared at the margins of this cinematic discourse—in its earliest articulation by Kluge et al, mentioned above—and then moved, along with Hitler, increasingly to its center.⁴⁰

In the 1970s, as the debates over the NS past, its memories, and their significance for the Federal Republic and its future turned rancorous, erupting in factionalism and terrorism perpetrated by the right and left, the decade was simultaneously witness to the popularization and commercialization of Nazi history, its artifacts, iconography, narratives, and central figures.⁴¹ The fascination with fascism, spread throughout the Western media and famously identified by Susan Sontag, was likewise evident in West Germany.⁴² The burgeoning consumer market for Nazi history ran the gamut of style and format. From high-art postmodern appropriation, to reserved, intellectual self-conscious (and self-exculpatory) critique—exemplified by Speer's return to the public eye after his release from prison, as celebrity historian of the Hitler-Mythos, thanks to his memoirs and penchant for interviews—to kitschification in tourist memorabilia, commercial pulp-photo-editions, tongue-in-cheek novelizations, and *Cabaret*-style sensationalism.⁴³ The booming

³⁹ The title of Wolfgang Staudte's film "Die Mörder Sind Unter Uns," (Berlin: DEFA, 1946), also invoked by Arendt in her famous *Eichmann in Jerusalem : A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), and by the West German press throughout the NS trials. For the cultural shift toward the everyday perpetrator, see: Jaskot.

⁴⁰ The Mitscherlichs' 1967 study, interrogating Germany's repressed, emotional attachment to Hitler, was one of a number of psychological investigations concerning the Führer from this period. Also widely influential (and deeply problematic) was Walter C. Langer, *The Mind of Adolph Hitler* (1972). Debates over Nazism as a 'functionalist' or 'intentionalist' dictatorship and fascism's contested status as a totalitarian system of government, bound up with scholarly debates on communism inflected by the Cold War, also took shape during this period. See: Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship : Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (London: Arnold, 2015), 81-108.

⁴¹ For the history of the RAF crisis, its polarization of the West German media, and cinematic reproduction and legacy, see: Christina Gerhardt, *Screening the Red Army Faction : Historical and Cultural Memory* (2020).

⁴² Susan Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism," *New York Review of Books*, February 6, 1975. The international market for NS media during this period was concentrated in the United States, United Kingdom, Italy, and West Germany.

⁴³ For an overview of this phenomenon, see: Saul Friedländer, *Reflections of Nazism : An Essay on Kitsch and Death* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984); Alvin Hirsch Rosenfeld, *Imagining Hitler* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985). In addition to

market for NS media and the capitalization of German media companies on public demand drew criticism from the progressive side of the *Feuilleton*, which, however, failed to stem the tide. Critics insisted that the rampant and suspect interest in the Third Reich was particularly perverse (and potentially dangerous), considering the dearth of public education on the subject; this phenomenon's appearance alongside headlines relaying brutal details of witness testimony from the still-ongoing NS trials; the rise in neo-Nazism and far right parties; reports of RAF terrorism and the state's increasingly authoritarian crackdown on political discourse and its visibility in the media. As the West German public focused its morbidly fascinated and, at times, critically detached gaze on Nazism, as the most spectacular (and still reverberating) catastrophe of the 20th century, where did the New Chancellery appear? Among other places—e.g. in the slew of media mentioned above and new monographs, exhibitions, and critical studies of NS architecture—it again re-surfaced in films, which attempted, at once, to reproduce and deconstruct the public's undying fascination with the Third Reich's media and star politician/performer.

That is, to answer this question we should turn to the two most well-known and enduringly influential films on the subject of Hitler and Nazism, both produced in West Germany in 1977—which, again, pit mainstream, populist documentary aesthetics against the radical *avant garde*—Joachim C. Fest's *Hitler – Eine Karriere*, and Hans Jürgen Syberberg's *Hitler – Ein Film aus Deutschland*.⁴⁴ Amid the kitschification and mythologization of the Third Reich's intermedial archive, Fest and Syberberg's films effected a kind of canonization of its central narratives, characters, and iconography. Each concerned with dismantling the NS Mythos and interrogating the continued attachment to its symbolic objects, Fest and Syberberg went about this project in

Cabaret (1972), the kitschy eroticization of the Third Reich was also to be found in Luchino Visconti's *Die Verdamnten* (1969). Likewise, 1973 was witness to the first films concerning Hitler's downfall in the Führerbunker: i.e. Ennio De Concini's *Hitler – Die letzten zehn Tage*, starring Alec Guinness.

⁴⁴ Joachim Fest, "Hitler - Eine Karriere," (Munich: Interart-Filmbeteiligungs-und Produktions-GmbH, 1977); Hans-Jürgen Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland* (Chicago, IL: Facets Video, 1977; 2007).

opposed fashion. Through a resurrection and reassembly of the NS film archive, Fest, famous for his critically acclaimed Hitler biography and a central producer in the West German mainstream media, attempted to expose Hitler the celebrity—the true nature, he posited, of the Führer’s political career. Syberberg, on the other hand, problem child of New German Film, enemy of the *Feuilleton*, and self-styled heir to Wagner and Brecht, concentrated his efforts on reproducing and deconstructing something deeper and more mystical—the cinematically produced identification with Hitler. His film thus seeks to remediate not only the NS archive but also the entirety of Germany’s post-Romantic cultural inheritance, amassing and exploring the fragments of its submerged myths of national identity and purging them of their corruption by Nazism and the modern media of the culture industry.⁴⁵ Both of these self-reflexive, well-known films aimed at public ‘re-education’ (albeit of radically different kinds). Highly concerned with NS film and architecture’s representational function, as the seductive scenery of Hitler’s Wagnerian-styled mythos, both attempted to direct the audience’s gaze back-stage, into the guts of the machine, to expose the man behind the curtain or, in Syberberg’s case, more cryptically, the “Hitler in uns.”

Furthermore, in each film, archival images of the destroyed New Reich Chancellery occupy a (narratively and symbolically) central position: the scene of the big reveal, exposing the void behind the spectacle. And, most crucially, each produced what have become the most enduring, iconic, and fragmented images of the building, which continue to dominate its representation into the present. As they go about deconstructing the Hitler-Myth, its accompanying fantasies and mediated artifacts, these last cinematic representations form the top layer, so to speak, of the New Reich Chancellery’s palimpsestic visibility—in part because their strategy is to assemble and

⁴⁵ Two central and excellent analyses of Syberberg’s film are: Thomas Elsaesser, "Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation," *New German Critique* 24/25, no. Autumn - Winter (1981-1982); Eric L. Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," in *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

remediate the entire archive of National Socialism, i.e. its original propaganda, the record of its historical destruction, and the vicissitudes of its postwar representation.

In other words, by the beginning of the *Historikerstreit* in 1986, the most rigorous and seemingly effective public examination of the symbolic, social significance and appropriate representation of the Third Reich in the Federal Republic to date, the New Reich Chancellery's architecture had been overtaken in cultural memory by its mythology, concealed by the substance of its visual imaginary and the multiple temporal layers of its intermedial archive.⁴⁶ What's more, as the New Chancellery resurfaced in artistic and popular representations since its destruction in 1949, the ongoing process of its re-inscription radically abstracted and dislocated its memory from its physical site and material remnants in Berlin. Unearthed by the fall of the Wall, in 1992, its buried remains were denied UNESCO heritage status and *Denkmalschutz* alike, left to languish in the ground and disappear under the construction of 'New Berlin.'⁴⁷ Officially *unmarked* until 2006, the site remains marginal within the central district of the city's famous memorial landscape.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ An article from Andreas Huyssen on the paintings of Anselm Kiefer, written at the close of the *Historikerstreit* and the eve of reunification, bears the subtitle: "The Terror of History, the Temptation of Myth." It includes a lengthy analysis of *Innenraum* (1981), one of Kiefer's most famous works, which depicts the New Chancellery's Mosaic Room as a ruin, lit by a solitary eternal flame. Huyssen seeks to situate Kiefer's aesthetic project within "the context of German culture after Auschwitz," attending, in particular, to the way the ambiguities of his paintings respond to a culture, "haunted by the past." "Anselm Kiefer: The Terror of History, the Temptation of Myth," *October* 48 (1989): 26, 28. Unmentioned in the article, *Innenraum* includes and thematizes its multiple layers of representation. The building, itself a constructed image of power, is further multiply remediated: iconographically represented in the painting, recreating a recognizable view from NS propaganda, simultaneously reminiscent of its postwar rubble images, which is photographically reproduced in an enlarged print, concealed by Kiefer's characteristic thick facture, but visible at the fringes of the canvas in its exposed, peeling edges. This palimpsestic work, which will not be analyzed in detail in the following, and its ambiguous oscillation between "complicity or...critique...melancholy, fascination, and repression," nevertheless provides an emblematic visual metaphor for this dissertation's project. *Ibid.*, 39.

⁴⁷ For an analysis of Berlin's centralized memorial district, see: Karen E. Till, *The New Berlin : Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis, Minn. [u.a.: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2005)., who, however, does not mention the New Chancellery or its site. For the New Chancellery's absence in Berlin's contemporary landscape, see: Jennifer A. Jordan, *Structures of Memory : Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond*, Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006); Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* *ibid.* (2003), 55-8; Henryk M. Broder, "Über Dem Führerbunker: Berlin," in *Böse Orte: Stätten Nationalsozialistischer Selbstdarstellung-Heute*, ed. Stephan; Schmundt Porombka, Hilmar (Berlin: Claassen, 2005).

⁴⁸ In 2006, the historical society Berliner Unterwelten won approval from the city to install a sign marking the Führerbunker's site. Berliner Unterwelten e.V., "Informationstafel »Mythos Und Geschichtszeugnis Führerbunker«, " <https://www.berliner-unterwelten.de/verein/projekte/informations-gedenktafeln/informationstafeln.html>.

Thus, the New Reich Chancellery's undeniable persistence as a *Gedächtnisort* throughout the second half of the 20th century has been complicated by its progressive deterritorialization since 1949: a space of memory that seems to reside almost exclusively in *images* and *fragments*, disarticulated from a real existing place. As an exemplary case, to detour back to *Downfall*, the assemblage of material from the NS architectural archive and its after-images in the scene above allows the film to dispense with the New Chancellery's visual representation altogether. Even in a meticulously realist production like this one—which is, not coincidentally, indispensable to the New Chancellery and Führerbunker's popular representation in contemporary Berlin—the architecture disappears behind multiple layers of mediation.⁴⁹ Stated plainly: the scenery *evokes* but does not offer an accurate reproduction the building's interior. The backdrop only gesturally approximates the space, the identity of which is produced through a string of visual associations—e.g. high-ceilings, refined wood-paneling, the large dining hall in the background bustling with staff.⁵⁰ And only a gestural depiction is necessary, as the viewer's recognition is assisted by the dense archive of the architecture's intermedial reproduction and decades of international film history.⁵¹ The New Chancellery, therefore, divorced from its physical existence and historical use, primarily operates as a stage or framing device for collecting, refracting, and quilting together a chain of historical, aesthetic, and ideological meanings: a privileged site/sight of the Hitler Myth.⁵²

⁴⁹ *Downfall* forms the last installment on the timeline on the sign from Berliner Unterwelten, the model from this scene is also the central display of their permanent exhibition 'Mythos Germania'; a diorama mock-up of the set of Hitler's office in the Bunker is also the central attraction of the 'Dokumentation Führerbunker,' from the private publishing house Berlin Story Verlag, housed in the former NS Reichsbahn bunker down the street from the Anhalter Bahnhof.

⁵⁰ Another scene, reprising the 11th hour bacchanalia preceding Hitler's suicide, employs the same strategy, displacing the event, which took place within the Bunker, into a space that could be either the Garden Salon or reception hall—the ambiguity results from the fact that the scenery includes no identifiable architectural elements of either space.

⁵¹ In addition to the films mentioned above, the architectural elements that together suggest the space they in fact obscure, are clearly reminiscent of the famous globe ballet scene of Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* (1939), to name only the most obvious example. Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *Lili Marleen* (1981) employs a similar strategy, using an imposing marble staircase to visually signify the entrance to Hitler's office in the New Chancellery, while actually visually reproducing a space with little in common, structurally or in terms of its layout, with the real building.

⁵² Kim Dovey describes Roland Barthes's conceptualization of myth as "concern[ed] with they way society produces self-effacing signs that do not look like signs, linked together in 'codes of domination' which sustain authority and which he calls 'mythologies.'" Due to the slippage between denotative and connotative meaning, the later produces "a chain of meta-signifiers such that the

It will be the work of this dissertation to untangle this network of representation; to trace the inherited images of the New Reich Chancellery back to their origins, to historicize and peel away the accumulated layers of meaning and associations projected onto its spaces; and to differentiate between the building and its mythology, as both have been constructed, preserved, and inscribed in its mediated, visual archive. My main concern throughout will be to analyze how the New Chancellery's fragmented reproduction in images has been deployed in service of interwoven, often radically conflicting political and aesthetic ideologies—at first in relation to and then increasingly adrift from the actual architecture and its urban context in Berlin. Dispensing with the physical building early in the dissertation, my analysis will focus on its mediated representation, questioning how the New Chancellery's circulated imagery served as a positive symbol of Führertum until 1945 and an increasingly negative one thereafter. The messages and meanings communicated in and through its mediated images, its construction history, design program, and original function provide foundational information—if only to show how little the building, as a situated material *object*, resembled its later reappearance. The chapters build on this history, developing a genealogy of the architecture as a symbol, tracing its shifting meaning through the transformation of its images during and in the long aftermath of National Socialism.

But I propose that we start with the New Chancellery's creation story: the myth of its nine-month construction, initiating Hitler's architectural conquest of Germany's political center in Berlin. Closer attention to this event will help us see what was so 'new' about the New Reich Chancellery to begin with, as functional extension and symbolic replacement of the Wilhelmine and Weimar Chancelleries on Wilhelmplatz. The following account thus retraces the development

meaning becomes 'a fragment of ideology.'" Myths "evoke a way of seeing or making sense of the world and tell us a story...enabl[ing] arbitrary meanings to appear natural." Dovey, 30. See also: Roland Barthes, *The Eiffel Tower, and Other Mythologies*, 1st American ed. ed., 151 p. ; vols., vol. New York : (New York :: Hill and Wang, 1979).

of the Chancellery complex as a central, architectural locus of sovereignty in Berlin, from its initial use as a modest, modern center of governance during the *Gründerzeit* through its transformation into the spectacular scenography and bureaucratic fortress of Hitler's power in 1939.

From Bismarck's to Hitler's Chancellery: Renovating the Architectural Center of Power⁵³

Following Germany's belated unification in 1871, in 1875, the new nation state purchased the Schulenburg-Radziwill Palace on Wilhelmstraße, designed by Carl Friedrich Ritter and constructed in 1738/9, to be outfitted as Otto von Bismarck's offices and residence in his newly minted position of chancellor. (Fig. I-3) Originally constructed in 1738-9, the building was part of an ensemble of baroque palaces, adjacent the Brandenburg Gate; the western end of Berlin's original Prussian axis, Unter den Linden, terminating to the east in the Hohenzollern City Palace (*Schloß*) on the Spree Island, across from the Berlin Cathedral. (Fig. I-4) The nation's new bureaucratic center of governance coalesced around Wilhelmplatz in the late 19th century, as nearby palaces were occupied by the Foreign Embassy, Treasury and other state institutions.⁵⁴ The government district's historic style, characteristic of Berlin's imperial urban image at the turn of the century, lent the administrative bodies an air of tradition.⁵⁵ Yet despite architecture's utility in underwriting and projecting stability and durability for Germany's nascent state institutions, the buildings around Wilhelmplatz, including the Chancellery, were of limited symbolic value.⁵⁶

⁵³ The best accounts of the New Chancellery's construction and history of use, from which this section draws, are to be found in: Schönberger, 15-36; Arnold and Janick, 13-39; Demps, 107-80. See also: Alan Balfour, *Berlin : The Politics of Order, 1737-1989* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990).

⁵⁴ e.g. the Reich President's offices and residence and Ministry of Agriculture. Wilhelmplatz was conveniently located nearby to the international embassies around the Tiergarten and home to the historic Hotels Adlon and Kaiserhof.

⁵⁵ For Berlin's architectural development in the late 19th century under Wilhelm II and the role of photographers and photographic technology in constructing and promoting the city's new 'urban image' of national identity, and facilitating demolition of historical districts and efforts of historical preservationists alike, see: Paeslack.

⁵⁶ Schönberger, 13; Arnold and Janick, 21-7. Two notable exceptions were the Chancellery's use for the Congress of Berlin in 1878, regarding Bismarck's (temporary) stabilization of the Balkans, represented in an 1881 painting from Anton von Werner, and for the 'Kongo Konferenz' in 1884, which was captured in an illustration by Adalbert von Rößler. Typical for the style of state paintings, the events are more the focus than the backdrop, which is flattened to scenery by the perspective and pastel washes. Photographs of events in the Chancellery in the Weimar Republic support this reading: images show heads of state and cabinet members lunching in the garden, or interior renovations, but rarely feature the building in use. See: *ibid.*, 36; Demps, 116-7, 32.



Figure I-3 - Picture Postcard of Palace Radziwill, viewed from the northeast corner of its forecourt on Wilhelmplatz, ca. 1936.
 Source: www.bilderbuch-berlin.net



Figure I-4 – Detail view of Pharus map of Berlin, ca. 1928. Reichstag and Victory Column at upper left, Berlin Cathedral and Palace at right, location of Palace Radziwill marked with a blue arrow, across from Wilhelmplatz. Source: [wikimedia commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/)

Paul Wallot’s Reichstag building (constructed over 1884-94) to the northwest, fronted by the *Platz der Republik* centered on the Victory Column, remained the representational center of popular sovereignty—a monument ‘*Dem Deutschen Volk,*’ however practically limited by the

defanged parliamentary powers.⁵⁷ In the Wilhelmine era, the institutional bureaucracy on Wilhelmplatz largely maintained an elite hold over state policy, an autonomy tempered following Bismarck's forced resignation in 1890.⁵⁸ But inner travails notwithstanding, the state's renovations to the Chancellery and the other buildings in the governmental quarter left intact the *appearance* of order, maintaining the inherited historicism of the building's exterior.⁵⁹

With the national crises during and after World War I, a series of transformations to the Chancellery's meaning and use swiftly followed—the first symbolic, thereafter both physical and representational. On November 9, 1918, SPD leader Philipp Scheidemann (later elected president) pronounced the birth of the Weimar Republic from an upper window of the old Chancellery to the crowd assembled on Wilhelmplatz, before rushing to the Reichstag to repeat his declaration.⁶⁰ (Fig. I-5) In spite of the revolution's failure, the state's successful reformation as a modern democracy required renovation of its central buildings. The lot between the old Chancellery and Borsig Palace, on the corner of Wilhelm- and Voßstraße, had already been purchased by the state in 1914 for the purpose of expansion, though building plans were halted by the outbreak of war.⁶¹ But by early 1927, the altered role of the chancellor necessitated institutional and architectural expansion, specifically: offices and meeting rooms to accommodate the growing bureaucracy and reorganized administration.⁶² In line with the state's newly acquired democratic identity, a public

⁵⁷ For the Reichstag's history, including the addition of Sir Norman Foster's glass dome in 1995-9, see: Lutz Koepnick, "Redeeming History? Foster's Dome and the Political Aesthetic of the Berlin Republic," *German Studies Review* 24, no. 2 (2001).

⁵⁸ Arnold and Janick, 26.

⁵⁹ As it underlines the Chancellery's marginal representational significance, it bears mentioning that renovations undertaken during this time were not documented in photographs and only retroactively outlined in comprehensive building plans, in each case, produced decades later. Demps, 115.

⁶⁰ Arnold and Janick, 28-9. The Reichstag and Reich Chancellery's function as the two symbolic centers of governance, popular and executive, are mirrored in their use as sites of representational regime-overthrow—first preceding and during the Weimar Republic, and later by both the Nazis and Soviets. In March 1920, two months after the Versailles laws took effect, the Chancellery was again occupied during an attempted coup, the so-called Kapp Putsch, supported by the Reichswehr and nationalist and monarchist factions. Notably, this event occasioned Hitler's first visit to the building. *Ibid.*, 32-33.

⁶¹ Schönberger, 17; Demps, 147. The former Pleß Palace was demolished in preparation for construction in 1913-4.

⁶² While the old Chancellery maintained its function housing residential and representational rooms for diplomatic meetings, the new building was to accommodate four attendants, a garage, 25 offices, a meeting room for the leaders of the German states, large enough for 80 people, and a smaller cabinet meeting room. *Ibid.*, 150.

competition for a new building was announced later that year.⁶³ The winning design by Eduard Jobst Siedler evinced the regime's shifted representational priorities, even as it integrated the ensemble with the old Chancellery and Borsig Palace.⁶⁴ (Figs. I-6 & I-7)



Figure I-5 - Philipp Scheidemann proclaiming the birth of the Weimar Republic on November 9, 1918 from a window in the old Chancellery. Source: Bundesarchiv-Bildarchiv



Figure I-6 & I-7 -Siedler Building under construction, published in December 1929 issue of *Neubauten der Stadt Berlin*, eds. Martin Wagner & Adolf Behne. Horse-drawn carriage at bottom right, visible beneath old Chancellery roofline. Photographer: Krajewsky. (left); Siedler's 'Dienstgebäude,' seen from the north down Wilhelmstraße, with the old Chancellery in the foreground and the Borsig Palace at rear (right). Source: Ulstein Bild.

⁶³ Months before the Stuttgart exhibition by the *Neues Bauen*. The call limited applicants to Berlin residents. Ibid.

⁶⁴ At the groundbreaking ceremony in May 1928, then Chancellor Wilhelm Marx explained, "Dieses neue Haus muß der Würde der Reichsregierung, der Reichshauptstadt und unserer Ministerstraße, der in der ganzen Welt bekannten Wilhelmstraße, gerecht werden. Aber wir können und wollen andererseits nicht daran denken, hier einen Prunkbau zu errichten. [Das neue Haus] soll auch den auf uns folgenden Generationen deutlich vor Augen führen, daß es der heutigen Lage unseres Reiches und Volkes entspricht. Es soll künden, daß wir in schlichter Einfachheit, aber in tapferer Zuversicht für den Wiederaufbau unseres großen deutschen Hauses, des Deutschen Reiches tätig sind. So möge dieses Gebäude ein Symbol sein für den Wiederaufstieg unseres Reiches und Volkes, und [ein Symbol für] eine ständige tatkräftige Arbeit und strenge Pflichterfüllung." Quoted in Arnold and Janick, 34.

The structure, tellingly nicknamed the *‘Dienstgebäude’* (service building), spoke to the functionalist style of modern architecture, with its unadorned facade and deep-set travertine window grid, dominated by a heavy cornice, broken up by a tower, recessed from the main building mass, facilitating the transition between the rooflines of the neighboring buildings. Completed in December 1930, as the state continued to reel from the stock market crash, it opened without a dedication ceremony—an anti-representational gesture characteristic of its initial use.⁶⁵ Only three years later, however, the Chancellery’s heretofore relatively impersonal character and mundane function would undergo a series of dramatic and irreversible transformations.

Like the burning of the Reichstag in 1933, Hitler’s renovations to the Chancellery, begun the same year, were integral to his representational re-inscription of Berlin’s political, architectural landscape—his attempt to leave his mark on the erstwhile communist metropolis and reinvigorate or, rather, re-invent the urban designs of those he viewed as his political forefathers.⁶⁶ The NSDAP’s architectural incursion into the city began in 1932, with the establishment of its local party headquarters on Voßstraße 10, with interior renovations designed by Speer.⁶⁷ (Ironically, or perhaps fittingly, the building would be demolished a few years later to make way for the New Chancellery.) With Hitler’s ascent to the chancellorship, his representational state-building program relocated to the center of power proper on Wilhelmplatz and expanded exponentially from there. Berlin’s architectural conquest by the Nazis would come to encompass the city’s entire

⁶⁵ “Bei den häufig wechselnden Regierungen ... mußte dieser Erweiterungsbau als funktionaler Bürobau mit optimalen Arbeitsbedingungen konzipiert sein. Diese Funktion schloß eine individuelle auf die Persönlichkeit einzelner Kanzler bezogene, repräsentative Gestaltung des Gebäudes und seiner Räume aus.” Schönberger, 21.

⁶⁶ For Hitler’s relationship to communist Berlin, see: Sven Felix Kellerhoff, “Hitler Und Berlin. Die Entwicklung Einer Ambivalenten Beziehung,” in *Mythos Germania : Vision Und Verbrechen*, ed. Dagmar Thorau and Gernot Schaulinski (Berlin: Edition Berliner Unterwelten, 2014). For Hitler’s building in the tradition of Bismarck and Wilhelm II. See: Scobie; Teut. Dovey claims that the Reichstag had previously operated as a “repository of substantial popular emotional investment,” such that its burning “unleashed a reservoir of power which Hitler harnessed.” “[T]he emotional investment in architecture was cashed in the form of legitimization for tyranny,” through the progressively expanding plans for Berlin’s reconstruction, including the New Reich Chancellery. Dovey, 55-6.

⁶⁷ Speer, 38-9..

topography—in temporary installations, designed by Speer, occupying its boulevards, transforming whole districts into parade grounds; and in this representational program’s monumental outgrowth and solidification in the destructive plans for ‘Germania.’

But Hitler’s plans for Berlin’s redevelopment began with the personalization of his residence.⁶⁸ In March of 1933, Hitler tasked architect Paul Ludwig Troost with redoing the interiors of the old Chancellery and the Siedler building.⁶⁹ As Troost was based in Munich, unfamiliar with Berlin’s building industries and agencies, implementation was overseen by Speer and, following Troost’s death in 1934, also directed by his widow, the interior designer Gerdy Troost, and architect Leonard Gall.⁷⁰ The Chancelleries’ reception halls, in particular, were refurnished and subdivided into additional office space.⁷¹ Notably, the chancellor’s office, previously located in the Siedler building at the front, was moved to the rear of the old Chancellery, occupying the former ‘Red Salon’ overlooking the garden—not least to spare Hitler the noise of the daily assembled crowds cheering on Wilhelmplatz.⁷²

⁶⁸ Already on the evening of his election, Hitler is reported to have declared his intent to renovate the Chancellery complex, which he viewed as “a pure cigar-box.” Schönberger, 22.

⁶⁹ Troost was Hitler’s first favored architect, renowned for his ‘Dampferstil’ classicism, developed for the steamliner Europa. Troost also designed the Haus der Kunst, ‘Ewige Wache’, the ‘Brown House,’ Party- and Führer-chancelleries in Munich. See: Timo Nüßlein, *Paul Ludwig Troost (1878-1934)* (Wien: Böhlau Wien, 2012).

⁷⁰ Leonard Gall had also overseen the construction of the Führerbau in Munich, following Troost’s death, and collaborated with his widow on renovations to Hitler’s residence on Prince Regent Square and the Berghof. Stratigakos, 29-30, 45-48. A chapter of Stratigakos’s book is devoted to the often overlooked, deeply influential Gerdy Troost, interior designer of Hitler’s private apartments in the old Chancellery and Berghof—and, more broadly, a key architectural player within the regime, comparable to Leni Riefenstahl in importance, though without Riefenstahl’s ambition for star power. A close member of Hitler’s inner circle, Troost was prominent in the architectural press, best known for her series: *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*.

⁷¹ While the justification for these renovations would later be revised to claim that the building was in atrocious physical condition, the recent construction suggests otherwise. Further, internal documentation of orders from State Secretary Hans Heinrich Lammers, interestingly, complain of “übergröÙe Räume” impeding the building’s functional use. The conflict between representational and functional space was an ongoing issue, but by the New Chancellery’s construction in 1938, their proportional significance within the building program was utterly inverted. See: Schönberger, esp. “An- und Umbauten der bestehenden Reichskanzleigebäude ab 1933”; Arnold and Janick, 54-59.

⁷² Schönberger, 23-4. Further renovations significantly altered the layouts of and re-articulated the floors connecting the two buildings. They likewise replaced the polished but restrained modern interior furnishings with an eclectic mix of Wilhelmine, masculine domesticity and stripped, muscular-modernism, typical of Hitler’s other residences and Troost’s earlier work. Hitler’s relatively unremarkable office in the converted ‘Red Salon,’ compared to its slickly-polished predecessor in the Siedler building is a key example. Its style is airy and sparse, decorated with classical artworks and tapestries, the furnishings conveying both stately dignity and *Gemütlichkeit*. Arnold and Janick, 53-5.

Hitler's progressive consolidation of power drove further structural and stylistic revisions to the Chancellery. With Hindenburg's death and the Röhm-Putsch in 1934, Hitler assumed the presidency and neutralized the S.A., eliminating any possibility of intra-party opposition. These events reverberated in the acquisition and renovation of the Borsig Palace as new seat of the S.A. under Hitler's close oversight and in the construction of an enlarged reception hall, the 'Garden Salon' projecting from the old Chancellery's rear. This new structure, proportionate to the expanded role of 'Führer und Reichskanzler,' was followed in 1935 by the construction of his famed balcony on the Siedler building, overlooking Wilhelmplatz.⁷³ The renovations symbolically (retroactively) legitimized Hitler's power grab and enhanced his visibility as unrivaled head of state and supreme administrator of 'justice.' They were also intertwined with the state's internal re-organization, promoting the advancement of Hitler's policy initiatives, above all: industrial mobilization, in violation of the Treaty of Versailles, in preparation for expansionist war.⁷⁴ These conflicting and mutually reinforcing architectural and ideological imperatives cascaded into one another, ramping up in intensity over the next few years.

Although the New Reich Chancellery's construction history would be revised as lasting only nine months, from early 1938 through January 1939, like Hitler's designs for imperial war, the project began much earlier. Plans for a new building were under discussion as early as 1934.⁷⁵

In 1935, as the renovations outlined above were still ongoing, Hitler sketched plans for an

⁷³ The new Garden Salon's reception room accommodated up to 200 people. *ibid.*, 58-9. Hitler demanded the balcony's construction, as he felt undignified leaning out the window to address the assembled crowds. Like the New Chancellery's construction history, the balcony's addition would be revised in official accounts as having taken place in 1933. *Ibid.* A balcony was also installed on Bismarck's chancellery, though it seems to have been less frequently used. For balconies as architectural icons of state power, see: Rem Koolhaas, James Westcott, and H. Taschen Gmb, *Elements of Architecture* (2018).

⁷⁴ Notably, the Garden Salon's construction also offered the opportunity to add a bunker beneath the structure—a forward-looking undertaking linked to the Luftwaffe's simultaneous rearmament, portending the air-war. Arnold and Janick, 126. The entirety of the New Chancellery complex was likewise outfitted with a network of subterranean bunkers. In 1943, Hitler ordered the extension of this original private bunker: the Führerbunker. *Ibid.*, 127.

⁷⁵ Schönberger, 38. The myth of its nine month construction was initially presented in Hitler's speeches at the topping out ceremony in August 1938 and the opening with the diplomatic welcome in January 1939, cited below. The narrative was later immortalized in the architectural monograph published in 1939, analyzed in chapter ii, and repeated in Speer's own memoirs. Speer, 116-29.

extension, appended onto the previous ensemble on Wilhelmplatz.⁷⁶ The design's provisional nature notwithstanding, acquisition and demolition of the buildings on Voßstraße, across from the Wertheimer department store, began immediately in 1935/6, continuing through 1937.⁷⁷ By July of that year, Speer had drawn up more polished blueprints, which show the New Chancellery's future layout in detail: an articulated, tripartite structure on a trapezoidal lot stretching from Wilhelm- to Hermann-Göring-Straße (now Ebert-Straße), integrating the Borsig Palace with three main blocks, and terminating in wrapping barracks on its western end. (Fig. I-8) Since the New Reich Chancellery's construction occasioned no ground-breaking ceremony, kept secret until 1938—an anomaly among NS building projects, explained below—building began with the barracks, the least representational element, completed over 1937.⁷⁸ Late that year, the pace of building rapidly increased. Shell construction on the main structure wrapped in January 1938, followed by a topping out ceremony in August, the building's first introduction to the public.⁷⁹ The New Chancellery's accelerated completion over 1938 marked a turning point in the regime—a transformative shift in the architectural organization and representation of state power in Berlin.

⁷⁶ In this rough sketch, the New Chancellery's iconic features are already visible: the extended facade, reprising the old Chancellery's recessed forecourt, but reorienting the structure to face Voßstraße and multiplying its dimensions by several orders of magnitude. Also in evidence are the dual portals on Voßstraße and main entrance through the Dienstgebäude, opening into a courtyard, followed by a lengthy enfilade, leading to an over-sized reception hall, with a large terrace projecting into the rear garden. Schönberger, 40, Appendix Plan 24.

⁷⁷ The undertaking was concealed as the relaying of Voßstraße to rationalize traffic. Arnold suggests that the design's position places it syntactically in competition with the Wertheimer Kaufhaus, an icon of Berlin's 'debased' capitalist development during the preceding decades. Arnold and Janick, 62.

⁷⁸ Schönberger, 53-4. During this time, 1:1 models of the articulation with the Borsig Palace were tested in situ to evaluate visual impact. The creation and testing of 1:1 models of NS building facades was common practice for Speer's office, employed for a number of the Germania designs; these, however, were usually staged in Neukölln. Schönberger notes that the use of 1:1 models was not Speer's invention, but had been employed for the construction of the Pantheon in Paris, and also by *Neues Bauen* architects Mies van der Rohe and Peter Behrens for the Haus Kröller at the Hague; further, Speer's mentor Heinrich Tessenow had also wanted to exhibit his designs for the renovation of Schinkel's "Neue Wache" in the Pergamon Museum, though it does not appear he succeeded in doing so. *Ibid.*, 55-6fn53. The Nazis' appropriation of modernist strategies of architectural representation will be analyzed in detail in chapter ii.

⁷⁹ Vaguely announced in the press in April 1938, as part of Berlin's reconstruction, the topping out ceremony occasioned the first published photographs of the structure. Schönberger points to the secrecy of its construction as evidence of its importance to and inextricability from plans for military expansion. *Ibid.*, 46-51. For the various phases of the NS building economy, emphasizing war-time see: Jost Dülffer, "Ns- Herrschaftssystem Und Stadtgestaltung: Das Gesetz Zur Neugestaltung Deutscher Städte Vom 4. Oktober 1937," *German Studies Review* 12, no. 1 (1989).

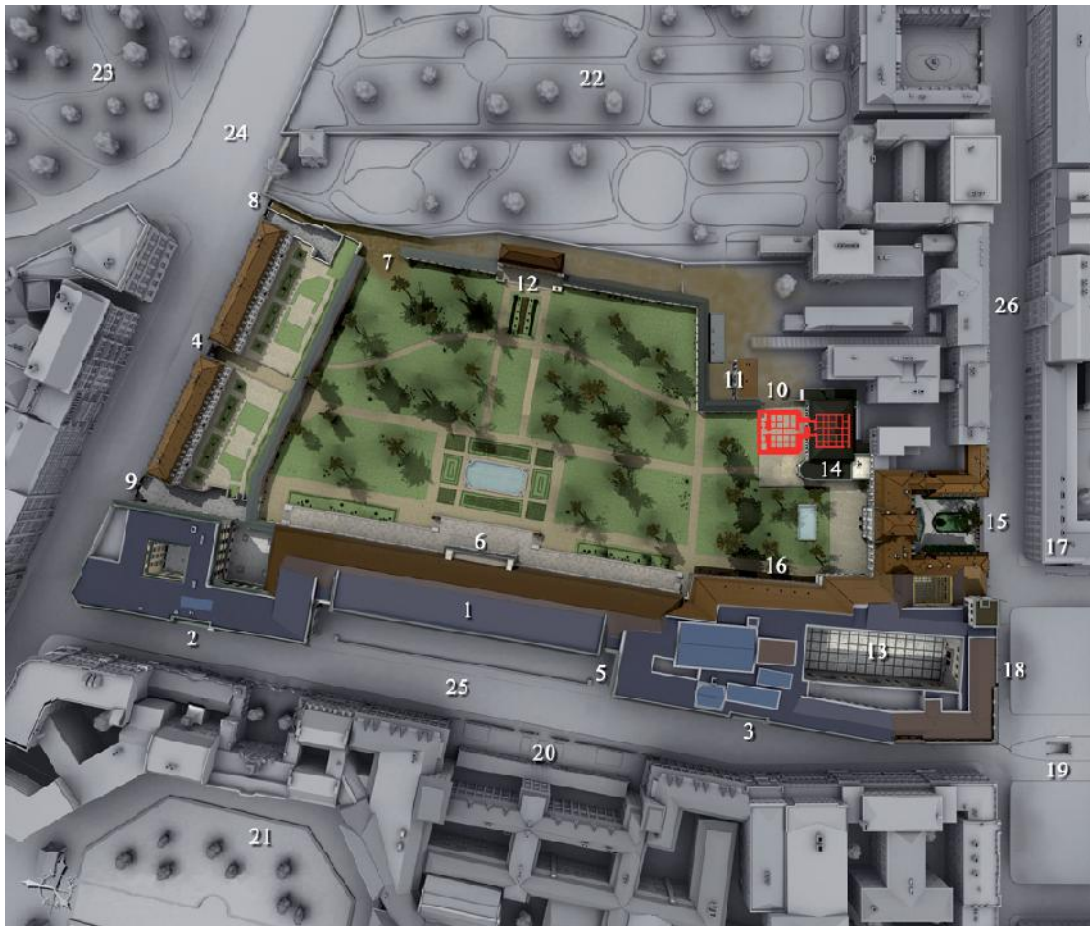


Figure I-8 - New Reich Chancellery site-plan, digitally reconstructed by Christoph Neubauer. The old Chancellery is numbered 15, at right, above the Siedler building, numbered 18, Wilhelmplatz, numbered 19, is visible at right edge of the frame at bottom, Leipziger Platz, numbered 21, at bottom left. The site of the 'Vor-' and 'Führerbunker' outlined in red, numbered 10 & 14..
 Source: Albert Speer's Berlin: The Reich's Chancellery A Virtual Tour (2006)⁸⁰

The Architecture of Führertum in the New Reich Chancellery

To understand the motivations behind the New Chancellery's accelerated construction, we first need to address the concomitant, radical transformation of Germany's state apparatus, as Hitler consolidated power and the Third Reich geared up for war. Famed historian of Nazism Ian Kershaw provides the authoritative account. His well-known article, "'Working Towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship," outlines its dynamic, destructive

⁸⁰ Christoph Neubauer, *Albert Speer's Neue Reichskanzlei* (Frankfurt an der Oder, Germany: 25 FPS Filmproduction, 2006).

operations.⁸¹ As he argues, the state's exponential radicalization under Hitler after 1938 resulted from his unique position within the regime.⁸² The Führer functioned as political unifier, activator, and enabler—the Volk's 'embodiment,' the Hitler-Myth was the basis for public support. The personified state, head of all government agencies, he was sole driver of the NS political program, "linchpin of the entire system, the only common link between its various component parts."⁸³ However, disinterested in the bureaucratic details of rule, Hitler was likewise barred from directly initiating policy by the "inbuilt need to protect his deified leadership position."⁸⁴ Instead, the "voluntary 'push'" to turn his racist, expansionist ideology into action was driven on by his valorization of personal loyalty and encouragement of competition between heads of the proliferating, polycratic state and party agencies.⁸⁵ 'Working towards the Führer' offered Nazi elites "endless scope for barbarous initiatives...institutional expansion, power, prestige and enrichment."⁸⁶ His lack of oversight did more than leave these actions unobstructed; his symbolic authority implicitly legitimized them, since the state was merely the articulated extension of his and, thus by proxy (and in name only), the Volk's will.⁸⁷ The result was a total dissolution of

⁸¹ Kershaw's essay defines the Third Reich in opposition to other totalitarian and fascist governments, especially Stalinism and Mussolini's dictatorship. Common to all is the dynamic role played by the state in modernizing and mobilizing industrial policy through its bureaucratic arm to cover all aspects of civil society. Yet this does not explain Nazism's unique radicalization, "the gathering momentum...[and] dynamic of destruction," which allowed it to rapidly expand and wreak havoc across the continent, and pursue its racial, genocidal policy initiatives with relative impunity and overwhelming public support. Kershaw suggests, "Much of the answer to this question has...to do with the undermining and collapse of what one might call 'rational' structures of rule, a system of 'ordered' government and administration," which he explains as originating with Hitler's unique ideological and representational role within the government. Ian Kershaw, "'Working Towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship," *Contemporary European History* 2, no. 2 (1993): 104.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 103.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 114. He notes in a later article that, as the fount of all Nazi ideology, "Nazism was Hitlerism, plain and simple." "Hitler and the Uniqueness of Nazism," *Journal of Contemporary History* 39, no. 2 (2004): 242.

⁸⁴ "'Working Towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship," 107. Hitler's disinterest for policy is well documented, reflected in his daily routine, which consisted primarily in sleeping late, eating, pontificating, photo-ops, and watching films till all hours. See: Speer, 102-7. Operationally speaking, this meant that orders were rarely given directly, instead communicated 'delphically,' and/or, as in the order for the New Chancellery's construction, retroactively decreed following their initiation. Most orders were issued on the Führer's behalf by the regime's legal mouthpiece in the Reich Chancellery, headed by Hans Heinrich Lammers. For a thorough account of the operational organization of the chancellery offices see Carl Schmitt's testimony delivered to the Nürnberg interrogators in 1945. "Stellungnahme Iii: Stellung Des Reichsministers Und Chefs Der Reichskanzlei," in *Antworten in Nürnberg*, ed. Helmut Quaritsch (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2000).

⁸⁵ Kershaw, "'Working Towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship," 114.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

rational systems of government; a non-state, in the traditional sense, with Hitler as the empty but indispensable center of sovereignty.⁸⁸ In short, according to Kershaw, the Third Reich's political order was characterized by a "classic 'charismatic leadership movement,'" superimposed onto the modern machinery of "bureaucratic domination."⁸⁹ Sustaining and amplifying Hitler's representational visibility was therefore both paramount to maintaining the NS state's legitimacy and inimical to its operational stability over time.⁹⁰

But before we return to the New Chancellery's construction, let's examine the implications of the radical fixation on Hitler as the embodied, representational center of political power. As Albrecht Koschorke writes in *Der fiktive Staat: Konstruktion des politischen Körpers in der Geschichte Europas*, the state, at least as it has existed in western society from the *ancien regime* through the present, is sustained through its visibility in representation.⁹¹ "Der Staat existiert – und ist dennoch eine Fiktion, ja mehr noch: Er muss gleichsam jederzeit von seinen Angehörigen (und auch von den anderen) fungiert werden, um in seiner Existenz Bestand zu haben."⁹² The state's appearance is thus concentrated and manifested in symbolic forms, insignias, and performances of rule, historically (in the pre-modern era) focused on the ruler's body, which promote the

⁸⁸ This description is also supported by the readings of Nazism's political order by Franz L. Neumann, *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism* (Toronto; New York: Oxford University Press, 1942). and Raul Hillberg in "The Relevance of Behemoth Today," *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical & Democratic Theory* 10, no. 2 (2003). and Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews. Volume Iii* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2003). Its implications in the realm of urban policy will be analyzed in chapter ii.

⁸⁹ Kershaw, "'Working Towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship," 111-2.

⁹⁰ Hence the strategic importance of architecture to the regime and its irrational, contradictory, and often uncoordinated building initiatives. According to architectural historian Anna Teut, the Nazis' "Aktion der Tradition" won "usurpatorische Gewalt" within the regime precisely because it was not countered by oppositional voices either from within or external to the influential state building program. Teut, 13. Teut also points to this as the explanation for the undeniable fact that the German building industry, under Nazi leadership, led to the destruction of its national building culture. For the strategic and economic importance of architecture to the NS regime, see also: Wolfgang Schäche, "Die Bedeutung Der 'Berliner Neugestaltungsmaßnahmen' Für Die Ns-Architekturproduktion. Dargestellt an Der Funktion Des 'Generabauinspektors Für Die Reichshauptstadt Berlin' ('Gbi)," in *Die Dekoration Der Gewalt : Kunst Und Medien Im Faschismus*, ed. Berthold Hinz (Giessen: Anabas, 1979).

⁹¹ Albrecht Koschorke, *Der Fiktive Staat : Konstruktionen Des Politischen Körpers in Der Geschichte Europas* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2007). See also the chapter "Macht und Fiktion" in the edited volume Thomas Frank, Albrecht Koschorke, and Susanne Lüdemann, *Des Kaisers Neue Kleider : Über Das Imaginäre Politischer Herrschaft : Texte, Bilder, Lektüren* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2002), 73-84.

⁹² Koschorke, 10.

recognition of and belief in leaders and institutions as legitimate bearers of authority. This field of representation structures society's contours, justifies its distribution of power, and defines its legal and juridical norms.⁹³ The Third Reich, as we shall see below, fundamentally altered the symbolic and institutional dimensions of state power, in part through the New Chancellery's construction, unleashing a maelstrom of destructive, material and political effects.

As political philosopher Claude Lefort claims in his writing on totalitarianism, the systems of government in Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia instituted an entirely new political category and image of the social body.⁹⁴ Namely, totalitarianism yoked the symbolically disincorporated and decentralized modern democratic state, articulated in the bureaucratic apparatus, to an absolutist model of rule, in which "the force of the mechanism of identification [implies] that nothing, from now on, escapes state power."⁹⁵ The state appears, as in democracy, as an empty space, the "power of nobody," yet its reach into civil society becomes limitless, encompassing the entirety of its private, economic, and cultural realms.⁹⁶ Paradoxically, although the "point of view of the state," as the absolute center of power and knowledge, remains depersonalized in principle, its image, as the organizational extension of popular political power, may be actualized on the level of representation. In a "mutation" of the symbolic order,

"power merges with the position of the individual or individuals who possess authority...In other words, by a reversal of the democratic logic...power ceases to designate an empty

⁹³ "Allein damit sich eine Ansammlung von Individuen als kollektiver Agent begreifen kann, um sich überhaupt institutionsfähig zu machen, ist eine Reihe von schöpferischen ästhetischen Prozeduren erforderlich. Es müssen Vorstellungen von Einheit und Ganzheit geschaffen werden, über deren Vermittlung die Beteiligten erst rückwirkend zu einem Selbstverhältnis, zu einem Eigenbild finden." Ibid., 11. Since the democratic revolutions, as Koschorke traces over the text, modern state representation has undergone a fundamental *disincorporation*: instituted through the symbolic execution of the deposed ruler, who is replaced by the collective representation of the ruling body politic, a regime of the gaze, manifested in political, juridical, bureaucratic, and mass *medial* representation, coalesced around an 'empty' space of power. For the original theoretical text identifying the symbolic relation between the physical, mortal body of the ruler and its 'sublime,' invisible double, manifesting the immortal body of the state, see: Ernst Kantorowicz and Conrad Leyser, *The King's Two Bodies : A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (2016).

⁹⁴ Lefort, 274; "The Image of the Body and Totalitarianism," 298.

⁹⁵ "The Logic of Totalitarianism," 276.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 279.

place: it is materialized in an organ (or, in extreme cases, an individual) which is supposed to be capable of concentrating in itself all the forces of society.”⁹⁷

As I show below, the New Chancellery’s architecture was integral to this phenomenon in Nazism—concentrating the forces of society in a materialized space of power, identified with Führertum—at least on a symbolic level, if not exactly an operational one.

Let’s return to 1938, as Hitler’s consolidation of power precipitated an “inexorable disintegration into systemlessness,” unleashing the mobilized, modernizing power of the state apparatus.⁹⁸ With the Blomberg-Fritsch affair in January and February, the Führer took control of the military, accelerating the timeline for imperial war and neutralizing any meaningful opposition within the regime.⁹⁹ As Schönberger describes, enabled by “gravierend[e] Änderungen im Staatsapparat...wurden die organisatorischen und praktischen Vorarbeiten...vorrangig betrieben.”¹⁰⁰ First on the docket: the New Chancellery’s construction. Its implementation was, characteristically, largely uncoordinated, improvisational, radically wasteful, exorbitantly expensive, and personally enriching; i.e. standard operating procedure for the NS representational building program at large.¹⁰¹ The breakneck speed of its accomplishment was facilitated by Speer’s position as *Generalbauinspektor*, decreed in October 1937, granted complete authority over Berlin’s building industries, subject solely to Hitler’s oversight.¹⁰² Naturally, the GBI office

⁹⁷ Ibid., 280, 86-7.

⁹⁸ Kershaw, “‘Working Towards the Führer.’ Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship,” 112.

⁹⁹ In January, Hitler fired Minister of Defense Werner von Blomberg, followed by the dismissal of Foreign Minister Konstantin von Neurath and Military Commander Werner von Fritsch in early February—the political fallout of the Hoßbach Protokoll of November 1937. Kershaw identifies this as the turning-point in the regime’s transformation into a “modernising dictatorship.” The “key development,” symbiotically linking the NS state’s structural disorder to the radicalization of policy, “was unquestionably the growth in autonomy of the authority of the Führer to a position where it was unrestrained in practice as well as theory by any governmental institutions or alternative organs of power...After the Blomberg-Fritsch affair in February 1938 it is difficult to see where the structures or the individuals capable of applying the brakes to Hitler remained. By this date, the pressures unleashed in part by the dictator’s own actions, but even more so by diplomatic and economic developments beyond his control, encouraged and even conditioned the high-risk approach which was in any case Hitler’s second nature.” Ibid., 113.

¹⁰⁰ Schönberger, 47, 50.

¹⁰¹ Criticized at length and exhaustively in: Arnold and Janick; Jost Dülffer, Jochen Thies, and Josef Henke, *Hitlers Städte: Baupolitik Im Dritten Reich : Eine Dokumentation* (Köln; Wien: Böhlau, 1978); Paul B. Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The Ss, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy*, Architext Series (London ; New York: Routledge, 2000); Schäche; Schönberger; Reichhardt and Schäche.

¹⁰² For an analysis of the impact of this law, see: Dülffer.

competed and collaborated with other agencies for primacy and resources in fulfilling their overlapping goals.¹⁰³ For the New Chancellery, this entailed demolishing a block of historic apartment buildings in the midst of a housing crisis; diverting materials intended for the Four Year Plan, especially steel, for construction; and recommissioning forced Czech laborers from the Westwall during the final stages of building.¹⁰⁴ To make the imposed deadline of completion in January 1939, two 12 hour shifts worked round the clock, including holidays.

Most shockingly, motivating this overwhelming expenditure of resources was the intent to only *temporarily* stabilize Hitler's centralized position of authority.¹⁰⁵ Amid the radicalization of governance and a mounting crisis of labor and resources, the New Chancellery was deployed as a provisional, symbolic legitimization of Hitler's new imperial order of Führertum. This was not some implicit, architectural subtext, but the explicit framing of its presentation to the public.¹⁰⁶ Following the its topping out ceremony on August 2, 1938, Hitler delivered a speech to its builders in Berlin's Deutschlandhalle.¹⁰⁷ (Fig. I-9) In it, he identifies the rapid construction as interwoven with his transformation of Germany's political order—the nation's resurrection as a modern, industrialized state and redefinition as a racial empire.¹⁰⁸ That is, he specifically links the myth of

¹⁰³ For collaboration between the GBI and the S.S., especially concerning practices of forced labor in the acquisition of building materials at the concentration camps Flossenbürg and Mauthausen, and for building construction on Germania's buildings and the Nazis' other representational architecture, including the New Reich Chancellery, see: Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The Ss, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy*.

¹⁰⁴ Schönberger, 61-3.

¹⁰⁵ "Die Gleichzeitigkeit dieser beiden Planungen," of the New Reich Chancellery and the broader plans for Germania, "entlarvt die Phrase vom »Bauen für die Ewigkeit« als ideologischen Werbeslogan, der vom berechnenden Einsatz der Architektur ablenken sollte." Ibid., 50-1.

¹⁰⁶ Such a justification was necessary, as this was a public expense, paid for with taxpayer money. While this also applied to previous renovations, Hitler falsely claimed these were all enacted at his own, private expense. Arnold and Janick, 55-6, 172fn36; Stratigakos, 26-8.

¹⁰⁷ The Deutschlandhalle, designed by Franz Ohrtmann and Fritz Wiemer, was constructed for the 1936 Olympic games, in a record nine months; one of the largest steel-construction multipurpose halls of its time. The building time suggests it may have been the basis of the myth of the New Chancellery's nine month construction, but it is likely coincidence. Hitler's speech was re-circulated in the press the following day. See: Robert Scholz, "Feierliches Richtfest Für Den Monumentalbau Der Reichskanzlei," *Völkischer Beobachter*, August 3 1938.

¹⁰⁸ For the questionable imperial nature of the Third Reich, see: Birthe Kundrus, "Colonialism, Imperialism, National Socialism. How Imperial Was the Third Reich?," in *German Colonialism in a Global Age*, ed. Bradley Naranch and Geoff Eley (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

its nine-month-building time to the annexation of Austria in April. As Hitler recounts, the official order for construction was received by Speer on January 27, 1938.¹⁰⁹ It dictated the accelerated tempo, demanding completion in time for the annual diplomatic welcome and elided all mention of previous planning, rendering the building's sudden appearance, like the expansion of territory, a practical *fait accompli*.¹¹⁰ The New Chancellery, Hitler stresses, offered unassailable evidence of Germany's industrial prowess and renewed international stature, resulting from his leadership.



Figure I-9 - New Reich Chancellery topping out ceremony, viewed from the southwest across Vofstraße. Source: getty images.

Typical for Hitler's speeches, this one, too, points to architecture as a desideratum on the roster of nationalist self-representation and modernization—a gap to be filled by the Four Year Plan and Berlin's reconstruction, initiated with the New Chancellery.¹¹¹ The representational

¹⁰⁹ The date is significant, as Hitler had fired von Blomberg on the same day.

¹¹⁰ The strategic dating of official orders to revise the narrative of policy implementation was standard practice in the NS regime—a strategy also employed by the DDR government, especially with regard to building policy. We shall see the effects of this practice with regards to the New Chancellery's demolition in chapter iii.

¹¹¹ Compared with the goals of previous regimes, NS urban planning looked radically different—modernization of infrastructure was rhetorically present but not a priority; little attention was paid to housing, aside from sparing *Heimatsstil* showpiece settlements;

capitol architecture was to elevate Germany's political profile, out-scaling other European centers and asserting its status as a modern empire: the *Großdeutsches Volksreich*.

“[D]iesem neuen Reich, das wir geschaffen haben und das ein Reich des deutschen Volkes ist und sein soll, — dem will ich auch die Bauten geben, die notwendig sind zu seiner Repräsentation vom anderen Bild...will ich, daß Deutschland so repräsentiert werden kann wie jeder andere Staat auch, ja, im Gegenteil, besser als andere.”¹¹²

Berlin's renovation, Hitler claimed, was particularly urgent as it now had to compete with Vienna's imperial urban image for primacy on the national landscape.¹¹³ The New Chancellery's miraculous (and fictional) building timeline thus evinced a new pace of industrial development, “kein amerikanisches Tempo...das ist jetzt schon das deutsche Tempo.” One, furthermore, explicitly tied to imperial expansion: “wenn es möglich ist, einen Staat in 3 oder 4 Tagen dem Reich einzugliedern, dann muß es eben auch möglich sein, ein Gebäude in 1 oder 2 Jahren aufzurichten.”¹¹⁴ As the speech makes clear, the New Chancellery marked only the beginning. Christening the architecture as a future monument, Hitler simultaneously acknowledges its provisional status. Expressly stating that the building would serve its current function for at most 10 to 12 years (while remaining silent on its replacement), he implies that coming industrial, imperial developments—which is to say, militarized expansion—would quickly outstrip the representational capacity of this inaugural architectural achievement.¹¹⁵

In the meantime, the New Chancellery was to accommodate Hitler's expanded authority and consolidated command over the bureaucratic apparatus, and project the Volk's imperial stature

industrial architecture was a major initiative, but its buildings hewed to modernist forms and vernacular styles. For the most comprehensive account of the NS building program, its development out of the debates surrounding the Neues Bauen, its symbiotic relationship with modern building methods, and its decentralized, bureaucratic production and eclectic styles of building, see Barbara Miller Lane's seminal *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918-1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968). Discussed in chapter ii.

¹¹² Hitler quoted in Schönberger, 178.

¹¹³ In Hitler's estimation, Prussian palaces were unfit to house the new symbolic heart of power; a modern image was needed to project Germany's future imperial magnitude and the breakneck speed of its implementation. *Ibid.*, 179.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 180.

¹¹⁵ The Germania plans, projected for completion by 1950, thus included a *new* Reich Chancellery on Adolf-Hitler-Platz, kitty corner from the Reichstag in the ensemble capped by the Great Hall. See: Reichardt and Schäche.

to the world. “Und deshalb freue ich mich auch,” he proclaimed in August, “wenn gerade für dieses erste glückliche deutsche Volksreich nun in der neuen Reichskanzlei eine zentrale Arbeitsstätte geschaffen wird, die nicht nur Platz hat, sondern mit der sich das deutsche Volk auch sehen lassen kann.”¹¹⁶ Namely, in the form of their symbolic representative, the Führer. As for the world’s diplomatic representatives, “auf dem langen Weg vom Eingang bis zum Empfangssaal werden sie schon etwas abbekommen von der Größe des Deutschen Reiches.”¹¹⁷ By the time they entered the building in January, the Reich’s territory had again expanded to encompass the ‘Volksdeutsche’ of the Sudetenland, annexed from Czechoslovakia in October of 1938.¹¹⁸ Hence, the New Reich Chancellery seemingly fulfilled the architectural promise of empire building articulated by Hitler in advance of its completion. It, furthermore, framed the Führer as he wanted himself to be seen.¹¹⁹ That is, as an embodied, absolute ruler, framed by the splendor of his classically-styled capitol, which was simultaneously the institutional center of a modern industrial state and its latest symbolic achievement—the monumental machinery articulating, amplifying, and actualizing his power throughout the Reich, transforming ‘will’ into law and order.

The New Chancellery’s dual symbolic and administrative function (with a strong emphasis on the former) was its expressly stated (if temporary) purpose: to provide an appropriately bombastic stage for Hitler’s appearance as Führer, while, behind the scenes, providing a setting for the provisional restructuring of the state in its new form. In a second speech on January 9, 1939, the day before the diplomatic welcome, Hitler doubled down on his explanation, to ensure there

¹¹⁶ Schönberger, 182.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 181.

¹¹⁸ British diplomat, Neville Chamberlain had negotiated the Munich Accord, which “sealed Czechoslovakia’s dismemberment” in Hitler’s newly renovated apartments in the city, designed by Atelier Troost—a visit that occasioned Hitler’s only approval of photographs to be taken of his personal residence. Stratigakos, 65-6.

¹¹⁹ In Alex Scobie’s analysis of Hitler’s imperial self-styling in the fashion of Augustus, he specifically identifies the *Domus Augustana* as a model for the New Reich Chancellery’s representational layout. Scobie, 98.

was no mistaking the intended meaning.¹²⁰ Reprising the fiction of its nine-month construction and reminding the audience that it was merely a “Steinchen am Wiederaufbau,” he goes on to insist that, through the New Chancellery, he had successfully restored national(ist) self-confidence (*Selbstbewusstsein*).¹²¹ He frames the building as a mediator of his power, transforming ‘Bürger’ Adolf Hitler into the Führer, the medium and transformer of the Volk’s will.¹²²

“Hier bin ich der Repräsentant des deutschen Volkes! Und wenn ich hier jemanden in der Reichskanzlei empfangen, dann empfängt den Betreffenden nicht der Privatmann Adolf Hitler, sondern der Führer der deutschen Nation! Und damit empfangen nicht ich ihn, sondern durch mich empfängt ihn Deutschland.”¹²³

A monument to *transition*, the New Chancellery heralded the end of an era (perhaps that of the nation-state) and the beginning of a new, imperial epoch.¹²⁴ Hitler thus concludes, pronouncing, that “mit dem Bau dieser neuen Reichskanzlei ist ja erst eigentlich das Jahr 1938 abgeschlossen...daher ist dieser Bau die Bekrönung des Großdeutschen politischen Reiches.”¹²⁵ The New Chancellery’s construction, then, was simultaneously the crowning achievement (final) and, paradoxically, ground-breaking ceremony of the Third Reich’s project of imperial state building—a monument to the future, which already belonged to the past.

In a sense, this endowed the architecture with stately historicity—seemingly fulfilling the aims laid out in the epigraph, elevating its inhabitant to historical rank, investing the building with his spirit and an aura of tradition. To support this claim, the New Reich Chancellery’s

¹²⁰ Representational film strategies employed in newsreels of the diplomatic welcome are analyzed in chapter ii.

¹²¹ Schönberger, 183-4.

¹²² Lefort describes a key feature of the “discordance within the totalitarian representation,” as exemplified by “the image of the body...combined with that of the machine...However, the two images do not fully merge; the image of the body is altered when it comes into contact with that of the machine. The latter contradicts the logic of identification [the political agent dissolved in a political body, of which he is the head]...The notion of the organization, even though it gives rise to that of the organizer, poses a threat to the substance of the body politic, making the social appear at the boundaries of the inorganic.” Lefort, “The Image of the Body and Totalitarianism,” 300-1.

¹²³ Schönberger, 185.

¹²⁴ Žižek writes of the totalitarian leader: “By conceiving of himself as an agency through which the People gives birth to itself, the Leader assumes the role of a *deputy from (of) the future*; he acts as a medium through which the future, not yet existing People organizes its own conception.” Slavoj Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor* (London; New York: Verso, 1991), 262, original emphasis.

¹²⁵ Schönberger, 186.

representational program was saturated in invented tradition, apparent in Speer's iconic, modified-neoclassical style.¹²⁶ Although the Third Reich styled itself as mythical 'Aryan' inheritor of Greek antiquity, the primary history it chose to display and foreground was the recent past: the preceding six years of Hitler's reign.¹²⁷ The design thus drew from classical styles, but reframed them in the modern-monumental vernacular of NS historicity. Marshalling iconographic associations to frame Hitler as 'embodiment' of state and people, its architectural program was intended to generate a 'sense of the past' and 'place,' and a clear message about Hitler's authority—one targeted to assert his claims to empire building. The structure was characterized by Speer's muscular, modern-monumental style: stone construction, accentuating enclosure and mass, largely stripped of adornment, where included, symmetrical in its details, featuring iconic classical and NS motifs.¹²⁸

The exterior thus departed from the Prussian imperialism of Berlin's older government buildings. In fact, the facade on Voßstraße had more in common with the Siedler building, though it was alleged to renounce the Weimar Republic's modern, modest functionalism (while retaining its remnants on the building front).¹²⁹ Stretching 441m, the facade was articulated into three

¹²⁶ Dovey writes, neoclassicism's popularity in state architecture results from its metaphorical associations with classical, imperial power: "the past underwriting the present." Dovey, 69. Speer and Hitler had collaborated to add to this temporal constellation a limitless durability in their "theory" of ruin value. See: fn4. The symbolic associations with Classical and Gothic antiquity, privileged in the stylization of NS building designs, was most evident in their self-descriptions and cinematic representation, rather than borne out by actual construction, e.g. in *Olympia* and *Die Bauten Adolf Hitlers*, analyzed in chapter ii. For a critique of the association between neoclassicism and authoritarianism in German building, see: Winfried Nerdinger, "»Ein Deutlicher Strich Durch Die Achse Der Herrscher«. Diskussionen Um Symmetrie, Achse Und Monumentalität Zwischen Kaiserreich Und Bundesrepublik " in *Moderne Architektur in Deutschland 1900 Bis 2000. Macht Und Monument.*, ed. Romana Schneider (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje, 1998).

¹²⁷ We see this likewise in the locations chosen for Hitler's speeches: the Deutschlandhalle and the Sportpalast: new buildings were charged with symbolic, historical meaning through their use as the site of ritualistic state events.

¹²⁸ It echoed and developed forms employed in Berlin's other representational NS buildings; e.g. Ernst Sagebiel's Aviation Ministry, constructed 1935-6, a block away down Wilhelmstraße, and Werner March's Olympic Stadium, constructed 1934-6—two of the only remaining NS buildings in Berlin—and also bore similarities to Troost's *Haus der Kunst* and other Munich buildings. For the eclectic design principles of NS architecture, see: Miller Lane; Dieter Bartetzko, *Zwischen Zucht Und Ekstase: Zur Theatralik Von Ns-Architektur* (Berlin: Mann, 1985).

¹²⁹ While employing all the industrial developments of modernist building, Speer dispatched all of its norms, dictating a coherent relationship between building form and function. Thus, while the New Reich Chancellery's exterior suggested its stone construction, it was built around a skeleton of steel reinforced concrete. Likewise, the classical interior cladding and furnishings concealed all manner of technological innovation—complex ventilation and heating systems, elevators and communication networks, and media installations for film projection. See: Arnold and Janick, 102-7. The Berghof's design employed similar strategies of concealment, especially in the Great Hall. Stratigakos, 89.

masses: two nearly identical blocks housing the Party and Reich Chancelleries flank the elevated, central Führer-tract.¹³⁰ The tripartite structure reflected Nazism's institutional pillars: Party, State, and Führer, foregrounding Hitler's centrality within the regime.¹³¹ Their hierarchy was suggested in contrasting use of materials: the physically isolated office tracts, visually linked by yellow stucco cladding, deep-set window-grids, wrapping cornice and plinth, and mirroring portals, topped with inward-gazing Reich-Eagles; the central structure, clad in massive limestone blocks, without an entrance, fronted by a recessed forecourt and balustrade. The facade suggests a fortress of bureaucracy, radiating awe and order.

But the functionality and institutional unity highlighted externally disappeared once inside. Throughout the New Chancellery's design, there is considerable slippage and lack of integration between aspects of the architecture's representational program, and between its symbolic and administrative functions. Speer's plan is indifferent to the relation between the shell construction and the interior; the architecture and its historic urban context around Wilhelmplatz; and between the patterns of use, structured by the layout, and the bureaucracy housed in the building. Concerns regarding the latter were ancillary to the representational interior, made up of an enfilade of five rooms—the 'diplomatic route.' (Fig. I-10)

Showcased at its ritualistic opening, the scenographic promenade was central to the building's identity, virtually synonymous with the structure itself.¹³² Each of its rooms offered a unique spectacle, ramping up in intensity as they approach the center of power, walking the visitor 'towards the Führer.' Entering a large double-portal in the Siedler building to the Honor Court by

¹³⁰ The facades are near mirror images of each other, but the Reich Chancellery's window grid, on the eastern half of the front, is reduced from three to two rows, to facilitate the articulation with the Borsig Palace. Hence the necessity for the 1:1 models, described in fn78. The asymmetry was presumably less perceptible from a pedestrian view, owing to the exaggerated length of the facade, which did not allow for capture in a single, even panoramic photograph.

¹³¹ See: Carl Schmitt, *Staat, Bewegung, Volk: Die Dreigliederung Der Politischen Einheit* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1933).

¹³² For example, this is the only part of the building analyzed by Scobie and Dovey

car, the visitor ascends the recessed Doric-columned portico at its far end, flanked by Arno Breker’s bronze nudes, the Party and Wehrmacht.¹³³ From there, a marble paneled foyer followed, with doorways articulating the new structure with the old Chancellery and S.A. and Reich Chancellery offices.¹³⁴ This modestly scaled space amplified, by contrast, the effect of the Mosaic Room: a windowless chamber, larger than the Sistine Chapel, lit from a ceiling grid in the style of the Pergamon Museum, paneled with red marble, inlaid with giant Teutonic motifs. Next, the

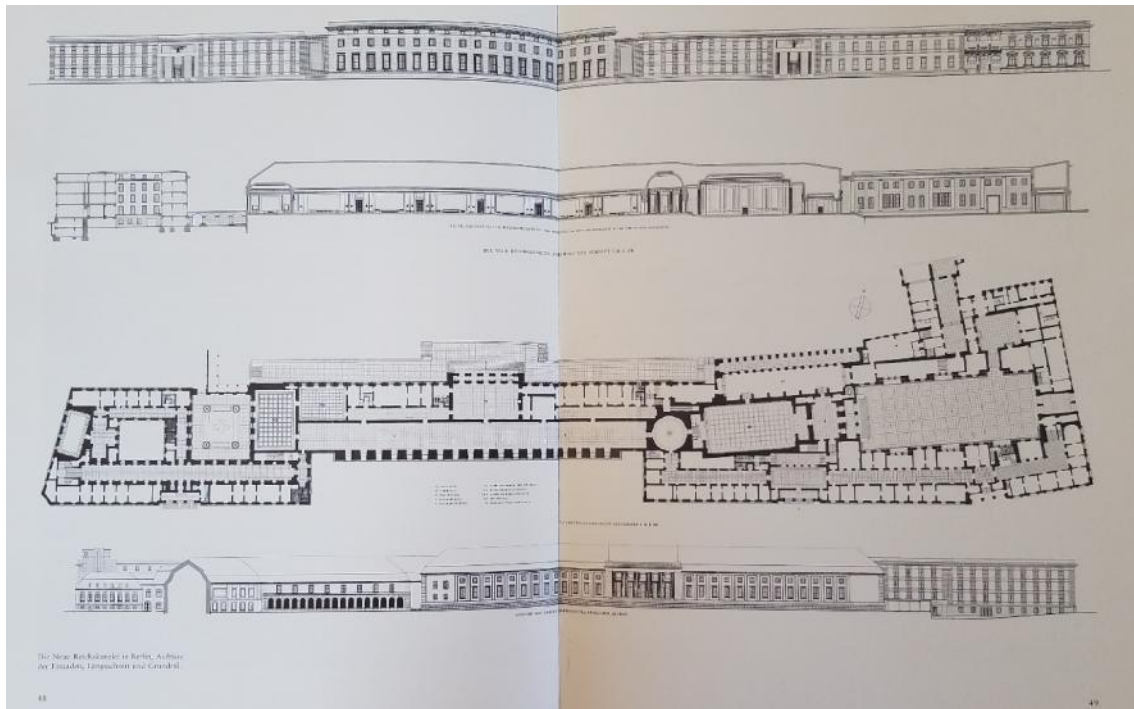


Figure I-10 - New Reich Chancellery elevation and layout. Source: Albert Speer Architektur (1978), pp 48-9

¹³³ The Siedler building’s facade was left intact—not least because it played backdrop to the Führer’s balcony—but its function within the representational layout was reduced to that of a portal. Guttled by the preceding revisions, it was almost as if the visitor drove through the tombstone of the Weimar Republic to enter the temple of the new NS state. Nevertheless, Wilhelmplatz remained the dynamic outdoor stage for mass events—while the Voßstraße facade’s lateral emphasis was conducive for its use as a cinematic backdrop for a motorcade or military parade, tradition dictated that these events follow the original route through the city center, entering at the Brandenburg Gate and then proceeding south along Wilhelmstraße. As a result, despite the addition of Hitler’s balcony, the Third Reich never fully rid itself of the symbolic (if somewhat anti-representational), architectural face of its predecessor state.

¹³⁴ These functioned thus as stage doors to the ‘true’ interior of power, similar to those employed in Versailles—a hierarchy of power is thereby written into the depth the visitor is permitted to penetrate the structure, as the doors permit entry without traversing narrative enfilade. Dovey, 21-3. As Dovey notes, “all formal access to the inner realm was through the controlling segment of the Hall of Marble.” *Ibid.*, 61. It bears mentioning that this inner realm, specifically, Hitler’s office, the cabinet meeting room, reception hall, were also part of the representational layout—the actual inner realm of Hitler’s office and domestic rooms located in the old Chancellery. However, Dovey is correct in identifying the complex of bunkers as the deepest point of access, which formed, “both literally and figuratively...[a] structurally congruent but shrunken version of the Chancellery above.” *Ibid.*, 65. The exploration and exposure of the hidden bunker spaces articulated to the New Chancellery in Allied newsreels will be explored in chapter iii.

‘Round Room’s’ airy rotunda: a museal space, outfitted with more nudes by Josef Thorak.¹³⁵ Then, the Marble Gallery, styled after the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles but almost twice as long, hung with tapestries, and lined with repeating seating ensembles, for which Speer had designed the furniture.¹³⁶ At its far end lay the Führer’s reception hall (which Hitler immediately deemed too small); its central doorway, at the building’s axial center, topped with Hitler’s crest, led to his representational office.¹³⁷ Like all of the preceding rooms, it was decorative, as Hitler preferred to work in his private office, when present in the building at all.¹³⁸

Invisible from the outside—and thus relayed to the public only through the camera lens—the processional through the diplomatic route asserted a classical narrative of authoritarian sovereignty, centralized in a heart of power. The appearance of bureaucratic order without dissolved into a carefully choreographed spatial narrative within of imperial splendor.¹³⁹ In its classical style and imposing form, the diplomatic route seemed to enforce awe through a progressive, visual and spatial assault of “the sublime tempered by the beautiful. The subject is made aware of the implied force and yet seduced into admiration, belittled yet charmed.”¹⁴⁰ In its earliest uses in 1939—e.g. celebrating the regime’s territorial expansion, subjecting Czech Prime

¹³⁵ The circular space concealed the kink in the layout, resulting from the integration with the Borsig Palace.

¹³⁶ While the comparison with the Sistine Chapel is my own invention, the comparison with the Hall of Mirrors was explicitly touted in propaganda as one of the building’s crowning achievements—an implicit rebuke of Paris’s status as the pinnacle of Europe’s historic, metropolitan centers of sovereignty. For the competition between Paris and Berlin as it developed around the turn of the century, see especially: Paeslack.

¹³⁷ The room was elevated on the building rear by a massive portico of Corinthian columns and terrace, opposite a reflecting pool and greenhouse, set into the garden’s far wall

¹³⁸ Likewise, the cabinet meeting room, sandwiched between the office and reception hall, was functionally useless, as the cabinet had been dissolved in 1938.

¹³⁹ The syntactically arranged sequence brought the visitor, “from the old to the new, along a carefully orchestrated narrative enfilade...A form of symbolic choreography where the spatial structure operates to control the framing of a series of representational themes.” Dovey, 59. Namely: the mythical progression of history, culminating in Germany’s unification as a one-party state and its controlled force, sustained through the legitimacy of the Party and embodied by its Führer. The building projected the implied coercive violence of the army, “signif[ying] the force necessary to produce it as the frozen armed guards signified discipline and order to which this force was subject.” Ibid., 61. Perhaps most interesting about the design was the way the ceremonial spaces performed the axiality and symmetrical form of neoclassical architecture, while abandoning its basic norms. That is, the enfilade moves parallel to the street, rather than symmetrically through the building, thus the processional had nothing to do with the building’s overall structure, its situation within the urban landscape, or the building exterior. Not only, as a result, is there no transparency between interior and exterior, as one might expect from modern planning, but further, the overall design, taken as a whole, is strikingly inorganic. I thank Claire Zimmerman for this observation.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. For the New Chancellery’s ‘sublime’ room-images, as described by NS architectural critic Wilhelm Lotz, see chapter ii.

Minister Hácha to a cardiac event after hours of waiting to discuss his nation's future as protectorate, and the signing of the Stahlpakt—the belittling and bellicose geopolitical intentions represented in the New Chancellery were starkly apparent. These events' mass reproduction in propaganda reified these claims, explicitly imputing Hitler's political force to the architecture.¹⁴¹

But we should remind ourselves, as Lawrence Vales puts it, that the Nazi regime “mask[ed] substantial changes in national policy with a rhetorical” and *architectural* “emphasis on stability and continuity.”¹⁴² The New Chancellery's representational surfaces concealed much about the Third Reich's interior, institutional order. For example, they undermined recognition of the building's primary purpose: to promote an image of supra-historical order while the Hitler-State pursued a dynamic, self-destructive policy of expansionist war and genocide, requiring the dissolution and reaggregation of the state apparatus. As the New Chancellery projected Hitler's unlimited power and the Third Reich's political order, it concealed the modern, bureaucratic machinery through which his power was articulated behind stage doors, hidden in corridors behind the walls, and buried underground.¹⁴³ Indeed, a closer look at the architecture's comprehensive design plan points back to the Führer's disruptive position within and effect on the state's internal political and institutional organization, subjected to the representational demands of his office.

The provisional and instrumental nature of the New Chancellery's construction, in combination with the absolute primacy of its representational function, resulted in a design that was highly intentional in certain aspects of its scenography (and highly contradictory in others)

¹⁴¹ The international press was strongly implicated in the promotion of the public-facing image of Hitler's spaces of Führertum and the perpetuation of their fascinating mythology. For an analysis of such press in relation to the Bergof, see: Stratigakos, "The Squire of Berchtesgaden: The Making of a Myth in the Foreign Press," 194-220.

¹⁴² Vale, 25.

¹⁴³ Dovey quotes Robert Hughes's observation regarding Speer's designs, that “Authoritarian architecture must be clear and regular on the outside, and let the passing eye deduce nothing of what goes on inside, it must be poker faced to the point of immobility, the mask must not slip.” Dovey, 69. Again, however, rather than a feature to be lauded or identified with a coherent style, the bifurcation of interior and exterior realms, as noted in fn138, was in part responsible for the overall irrational nature of the design.

but thoroughly inattentive to the overall integration of symbolic and practical use. There was a radical disjuncture between the order(s) baked into the New Chancellery's public-facing design and structured by its interior layout. The building was, in essence, a dual-sided representational wrapper. Like the stone cladding on the facade, concealing reinforced concrete and steel, the window grid bore no correspondence to the interior arrangement of floors. Their almost arbitrary situation in the building necessitated skylights, part of the 'acrobatic' roof construction, as windows of upper offices were often situated at floor level.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, owing to the inorganic relation between exterior and interior, the portals on Voßstraße immediately branch off laterally to accommodate the diplomatic route.¹⁴⁵ Its dimensions produced incredible inefficiencies in the layout, as administrative spaces were crammed wherever they could fit.¹⁴⁶ Hence, while it visually asserted the Third Reich's ideological order of Führertum, the New Chancellery materialized and concealed the NS state's endemic *disorder* resulting from the Führer's leadership position—a monumental bottleneck, limiting access to Hitler and amplifying his power outward, while intensifying his isolation from and entropic effect on state organization.

Crucially, however, NS internal state operations after 1938 were entirely aligned with these architectural affordances. The independent functioning of the legal and bureaucratic apparatus sustained Hitler's absence from the building, 'working towards his will' by issuing decrees, which

¹⁴⁴ Schönberger, 158-9.

¹⁴⁵ Schönberger writes, "In der Neuen Reichskanzlei mußten Arbeitsräume und Repräsentationsräume in ein und demselben Gebäude unterbracht werden. Die Grundrisse zeigen, daß dort, wo diese beiden Bereiche kollidierten, eindeutig die Repräsentationsräume Vorrang hatten. Praktische Erwägungen, wie und wo Büroräume arbeitstechnisch und zweckmäßig benutzt in Bezug auf Größe, Lichtverhältnisse und Zusammenarbeit optimal in der Neuen Reichskanzlei unterzubringen gewesen wären, scheinen keine Rolle gespielt zu haben. Auf organisatorische Nutzbarkeit und Wirtschaftlichkeit wurde Verzichtet." Ibid., 160.

¹⁴⁶ Massive light-wells rendered connections between upper floors and wings nonexistent, especially in the Führer-tract, where offices were wedged into corners to make space for the "Luftraum" above Hitler's office, which reached into the attic. Ibid., 159. You could easily argue that this spatial incoherence reinforced the sense of primacy of the symbolic order of the building, making users other than Hitler constantly aware of their lack of importance in the building's organization. I am also indebted to Claire Zimmerman for pointing this out. It is, further, borne out by the far more lavish offices for the higher-ups among the NS officer class, which were located in the previous buildings, and had been renovated during construction, with designs from Cesar Pinnäu.

created no organized paper trail, eliminating the need for a robust staff to handle documentation.¹⁴⁷ Only around 70 persons involved in official business occupied the more than 300 rooms. Aside from a handful of higher ups, guards, secretaries, a fleet of cleaning staff, cooks, and technicians kept the lights on. When not providing the backdrop for ritualistic state events, the representational rooms sat empty. The hierarchy of the NS chain of command was thus written into the building's structure and limited use. Its relative functionality (or lack thereof) indicated the intended beneficiaries of the design, in descending order of importance: Hitler, the NS elite, diplomats and visiting functionaries, low level bureaucrats, and domestic staff.¹⁴⁸ Yet, identifying the New Reich Chancellery's architectural dysfunction is not the same as claiming it was *without* function, for it fulfilled all of the representational aims motivating its construction. Though Hitler was almost never in residence, the building's image became synonymous with his centrality within and absolute power over the regime. While dissolving the rational operations of state governance, it suggested and sustained belief in an efficiently integrated bureaucratic order, never in evidence.

The New Chancellery's construction, moreover, fulfilled a number of practical aims, as it was not only constructed for the celebration (and celebritization) of its most important occupant but, further—in the concomitant creation of its subterranean bunker complex—for his *protection*. A safety extended secondarily to the central functionaries of the Nazi elite, as they went about the destructive, experimental work of constructing an 'imperial' regime through militarized expansion (and as this violence returned full-force to Germany in the catastrophic loss of the war). Because

¹⁴⁷ In his analysis of the organization of the Hitler-State, delivered to the Nürnberg interrogators, Schmitt writes, "die Berufung auf einen Führerbefehl," delivered by the mouthpiece of the Reich Chancellery, "[konnte] im Grunde von niemand kontrolliert werden." A gap thus arose between the "Spitze der politischen Macht" and the apparatus of its implementation. Occupying this vacuum and channeling the Führer's will through the state, party, and military agencies, the chancellery acted as a "grosse Transformatoren zu dieser Spitze und von ihr Weg." Schmitt, 94-8.

¹⁴⁸ The dining hall was perhaps the most broadly functional space for the NS elite, fittingly; a frequent site of lunch meetings with the Führer, detailed especially in Speer's memoirs. Hitler's domestic rooms and his personal receiving halls in the old Chancellery saw far greater use—their appearance, however, in archival documentation is strikingly absent. The one space of Hitler's life, along with the Führerbunker, truly withdrawn forever from public view.

it was consciously constructed for its temporary and near-exclusive use by Hitler, the design needed only please one customer. Constrained by its position in the present city topography and by designs for Berlin's future NS urban development, the New Chancellery's functional infelicities were essentially irrelevant, and could be dealt with in the future (like the rest of the improvisational renovations, its creation was a stop-gap measure)—provided, that is, that the Führer survived to see his vision of the future through to completion.

For the diplomatic route's ceremonial sequence was only a preview of the 'Germania' plan, embedded in a provisional setting. It therefore functioned, primarily, as an architectural *metaphor*. Narratively leading toward the 'center of power,' the building's identifying architectural feature is an act of misdirection—Hitler was to be found, on a day-to-day basis, both elsewhere in the building (his office in the old Chancellery or, later, the Führerbunker), and Berlin's future center lay elsewhere as well. The New Chancellery was importantly *not* part of the North-South-Axis but the seed of its outgrowth, planted at the foot of the Tiergarten; a fulcrum redirecting the trajectory of the former Prussian East-West Axis toward its future intersection at Adolf-Hitler-Platz on the Spree-Bogen. It was likewise a preview of the combination of monumental grandeur disguising military fortifications, which would reach its zenith in the designs for the Führer-Palace, planned adjacent to the cyclopean globe of the Great Hall, which turned the entire above-ground building into a windowless bunker and reduced access to a single, central, guarded entrance. Criticism of Speer's designs (also self-directed) often turn on the fact that not even Hitler could have fulfilled the interdiction of supremacy written into his megalomaniacal future architecture. Isolated in his bunker-burg (the *Man in the High Castle*) or center-stage in the Great Hall—large enough to produce its own weather—the Führer would have been reduced to a visual nullity.¹⁴⁹ (Indeed, as

¹⁴⁹ Speer, 168. Kershaw writes that the tension between the NS state's simultaneous reliance on Hitler's charismatic authority and the regulations of modern bureaucracy, "could neither subside nor turn into a stable and permanent form of state. Allied to the

we'll see in chapter ii, even in certain newsreels of the New Chancellery, the mismatch in scale between building and body is unmistakably awkward.) In a sense, however, focusing on the efficacy of NS scenographic state architecture is pushing against an open door.

For Speer's buildings were expressly envisioned for their use as a backdrops (*Kulisse*) under specific, heavily mediated, and often provisional conditions, constructed only secondarily as enduring functional spaces—the New Reich Chancellery least of all, as noted above. Rather, the building found its optimal and enduring political use as advertisement for the Hitler State.¹⁵⁰ Its institutional function, though a crucial aspect of its mythology, was hardly the basis of its significance and figurative durability. Nor, it turns out, were its physical spaces or even the unique character of its design. The New Chancellery became and remained a powerful architectural symbol—metonymic for Hitler in his role as Führer and the idealized operation of NS governance—only by virtue of its mediation and deployment in propaganda *and* the subsequent *reuse* of this archive in later confrontations with Nazism, its artifacts, and its cultural memory.

Mediating NS Power & the NS Past through Images of the New Chancellery

Let's take a moment to widen our lens and situate these conclusions in the context of NS architecture and its historical reception more generally before turning to the analyses of the New Chancellery's representation that will follow. The radical disjuncture between the representational appearance of the NS building program and its material, economic, and constructed reality has

underlying ideological thrust and the varied social forces which Hitler represented, this created a dynamism – intrinsically self-destructive since the charismatic regime was unable to reproduce itself." Kershaw, "Hitler and the Uniqueness of Nazism," 246-7. On an institutional level, this meant that the Third Reich could not sustain a transfer of power—something Hitler also acknowledged. On an architectural one, it rendered every project merely preliminary and ultimately unsatisfactory, unable to live up to the demand of adequately representing the allegedly infinite power of the Führer, and thus requiring a continual, dynamic process of one-up-man-ship within its building program.

¹⁵⁰ Schönberger goes so far as to speculate that the colors of marble chosen in the New Chancellery's interior were selected to their favorable appearance in color photography. It is fairly well documented that Speer meticulously stipulated camera positions for films and photographs of the New Chancellery. Angela Schönberger, "Die Neue Reichskanzlei in Berlin Von Albert Speer," in *Die Dekoration Der Gewalt : Kunst Und Medien Im Faschismus*, ed. Berthold Hinz (Giessen: Anabas-Verlag Kämpf, 1979), 171-2fn14. This, along with the strict choreography of the layout, is perhaps the explanation for the deeply repetitive and uniform representation of the building interior which we will encounter in chapter ii.

resulted in what we might call (by way of understatement) an ‘image problem.’ On the one hand, NS architecture was an undeniably effective and important medium of propaganda.¹⁵¹ Its imagery supported the mythology of the regime’s industrial prowess and the Führer’s totalizing control over the (visual re)production of culture and society.¹⁵² On the other hand, this projected image had little to do with the NS building program’s material reality, the output of which diverged significantly from its purported stylistic unity and employed all manner of modernist-developed technologies, while jettisoning norms linking function to representational appearance.¹⁵³ As a result, scholarship on NS architecture since the late 1960s has interrogated the historical implementation of its building practices, as they were ideologically interwoven with other economic, military, and industrial aims—e.g. the weaponization of construction and urban planning initiatives as a means of deportation, expropriation, and labor exploitation of marginalized populations, especially Jews.¹⁵⁴ With good reason, this scholarship has regarded the NS architectural image regime as a distraction from and obfuscation of this history.

Yet NS architecture’s strategic potential, as the authors of the 1979 collection of essays *Die Dekoration der Gewalt* contend, did not obtain in its physical production. Rather, “Gegenüber dieser scheinbar originalen Leistung...sollte ihre erst durch *Vervielfältigung hergestellte Bildmächtigkeit* als das eigentliche *Ziel* und *Resultat* der Kulturpolitik begriffen werden.”¹⁵⁵ The New Reich Chancellery offers a compelling example of this logic,

¹⁵¹ Miller Lane, 216.

¹⁵² See comments from: Teut, 12-3.

¹⁵³ Miller Lane, 215. Miller Lane provides an exhaustive history of the connections between the architectural ideology of Neues Bauen and its appropriation and redeployment by the Nazis. Her account will be integral to my analysis of the regime’s use of representational image technologies in chapter ii.

¹⁵⁴ See especially: Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The Ss, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy*; Reichhardt and Schäche; Thorau and Schaulinski. This work will be particularly relevant in the following chapter.

¹⁵⁵ Hinz, 6, my emphasis. Barbara Miller Lane’s original, influential study from 1968 was among the first to argue for a reevaluation of the NS building program, comparing its politicized rhetoric to the actual output of its industries. A few years earlier, German architectural historian Anna Teut had asserted the need for such a study and framed the broad points of intersection between state architecture’s political utility in the Wilhelmine and Weimar Republics and National Socialism’s appropriation of these established strategies for their own political ends. The ensuing output of the younger generation of scholars focused insistently on the material conditions of building as paramount to understanding Nazism’s architectural politics as founded in economic and social initiatives

“die...vor allem als massenhaft reproduziertes Testat auf ‚neues‘ Bauen und ‚neues‘ Regieren gedient hat. Die anti-elitär herausgestellte Öffentlichkeit — es herrschte ja „Volksgemeinschaft“ — war nicht gewissermaßen eigenes Charakteristikum der Kunst, sondern das Werk der dafür eingesetzten Kamera...Nur im Bilde ließ sich zusammenbringen und speichern, was die Empirie nie an Anschauung geboten hätte.”¹⁵⁶

The New Chancellery was supposedly constructed for the people, but was utterly inaccessible to them; signifying state order, it totally upended its functional organization; meant to institutionalize Hitler’s symbolic embodiment of Führertum, it facilitated his absence from central command; a provisional center of imperial power, its monumental replacement (like the empire) never materialized, except in preliminary demolition and destruction. As Schönberger concludes, the New Chancellery’s *image* reduced society’s participation in the exercise of political power to an act of passive observation: “Partizipationswünsche der Bevölkerung an Macht und politischen Entscheidungen wurden auf das Betrachten von fotografierten Räumen, in denen scheinbar relevante Entscheidungen gefällt wurden, reduziert.”¹⁵⁷ Her study’s truly valuable contribution is to unearth the structural mechanisms, hidden behind the representational surfaces, which enabled this reduction of political engagement to its symbolic image.¹⁵⁸ And this is precisely where the New Reich Chancellery’s significance lies: on its representational surface. Hence, this study thus takes Schönberger’s as a point of departure, turning from the building to its media archive.

The potential for public architecture and its images to mobilize popular support for the state and assert its legitimacy was precisely what justified the Third Reich’s massive devotion of resources toward the fulfillment of goals directly inimical to rational government operations.

within the realm of urban planning, the impact of which stretched far beyond its traditional scope. This scholarship will be of considerable importance in the following chapters, both bibliographically and in establishing the historical context of the New Chancellery’s reappearance in the West German public sphere during the 1970s.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*, 171.

¹⁵⁸ “Die Gestaltung der Straßenfassade als real erfahrbare Architektur und die Auswahl der für die Öffentlichkeit bestimmten Raumaufnahmen, die über die Distanz von Fotos wirkten, sind Teil einer umfassenden Manipulation, eines bewußt eingesetzten Propagandainstrumentes der Massenbeeinflussung.” Ibid., 172-3.

While reproductions of the New Chancellery's exterior circulated in the media, symbolizing stasis, order, durability, and the integration of the new regime with its predecessor's architecture, its representational interior turned the building into an imaginary, spatialized, visual experience of Führertum; a ritualistic procession toward Hitler's heart of power and (implicitly) toward Germany's imperial future. In other words, with the New Chancellery, the NS state constructed a semi-permanent shooting location for depicting the Führer's 'embodiment' in a surrogate, architectural image, reproducing statecraft as a series of encounters with the Führer, framed by his mythological space of power.¹⁵⁹ Mediated reproduction (i.e. propaganda) was therefore not epiphenomenal to NS architectural production, particularly in this case, but instrumental to its conceptualization, implementation, and the subsequent use of buildings by the regime. This fact is, moreover, exceptionally relevant in the cases of the New Reich Chancellery and the plans for Germania, for it is the *images* and not the buildings which survive and shape our historical understanding of their forms and meanings in the present.

As I will explore throughout this dissertation, images of buildings do something radically different from physical architecture—they simultaneously say too little and too much. Too little, in the sense that they provide only a fragmented impression of spatial experience, flattening three dimensions into two and disarticulating the continuity of space and time into sequential frames and isolated points of view.¹⁶⁰ Too much because images speak their own language, and impart their own values and (ideological) perspectives onto spaces (often assisted by text in the form of captioning or framing rhetoric, in our case, by politicians, urban planners, and cinematic

¹⁵⁹ As is well established in scholarship, the NS state's aestheticized reproduction of politics was at heart cinematic and photographic affair

¹⁶⁰ The 'already past-ness' of photographs is addressed by both Kracauer and Barthes: Siegfried Kracauer and Thomas Y. Levin, *The Mass Ornament : Weimar Essays* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), "Photography," 47-64; Roland Barthes and Stephen Heath, *Image, Music, Text : Essays* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1997), "The Photographic Message," 15-31.

voiceovers).¹⁶¹ In other words, building images mediate power by pervading spaces and places with ideology, history, politics, the imaginary, invisible presence of past people, events, and ideas—memories and media which persist long after the architecture itself.¹⁶²

The following chapter will be devoted to examining how the NS media arsenal harnessed modern(ist) technologies and aesthetic strategies of architectural representation to their own ideological ends. Namely, chapter ii shows how the New Chancellery was deployed within an onslaught of architectural propaganda to promote radical plans for Berlin's redevelopment (justifying and legitimizing rampant demolition, racist deportation, and expansionist war), and to produce an interpretive heuristic of Hitler and his new architecture. In representation, the New Chancellery framed the NS state's (Führer's) synoptic, future-oriented gaze and its transformative power, unleashed throughout society by the (hidden) bureaucratic apparatus (working towards his will). My analyses thus interrogate the symbolic logic of the media that reified myths intrinsic to NS architectural ideology—one of Hitler's most powerful tools for generating public support—and connect this image regime to the NS building program and its brutal effects in the capital city. As experimental test case for urban planning and propaganda strategies alike, the New Reich Chancellery lies at the center of the development of both. The subsequent chapters address repeated attempts to appropriate and critique this field of ideological, architectural representation (and its former, central site), which appeared at key moments in Germany's post-45 confrontation with the Third Reich, its images and narratives—that is, the lengthy process of 'working through'

¹⁶¹ This theme, explored in detail in chapter ii, is theorized specifically in relation to the mutual development of modern photographic and building technologies, exemplified by the work of the *Neues Bauen* in the early 20th century by Zimmerman.

¹⁶² Dovey addresses Michel Foucault's classical theorization of the gaze and surveillance, symbolized in the architecture of the panopticon, which promotes the internalization of bodily discipline, in part by tightly structuring spatial and temporal organization, and concealing the site from which authority peers outward, the center of knowledge and power. "As Foucault argues, 'power is tolerable only on condition that it masks a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms.'...The metaphoric content of built form enables it to simultaneously represent and yet mask its associations with power." Dovey, 13.

the NS past. I consider a series of attempted ‘demolitions’ of NS ideology—produced by the Allied and occupying powers, the West German mainstream media, and New German Cinema—that, to a greater and lesser extent, centered on the New Reich Chancellery and deployed its (real and imaginary) fragments in efforts to deconstruct and dismantle the Führer-Mythos. For representational power structures, their iconography and fragments, outlive the regimes they help institute, legitimize, and stabilize (that is, until they don’t).

This dissertation thus retraces the circulation of NS propaganda through images of the New Reich Chancellery, their heightened importance and recirculation after its disappearance, and the resulting efforts to locate it within the history of National Socialism and neutralize its ideological meaning and aura of fascination. I interrogate the effects of the technological reproduction of an absent original—the creation of an imaginary space with little to do with its physical counterpart—and the relationship of that notional original to the figure it once framed, Hitler, taking account of its passage into mythology following its destruction. Chapter iii illustrates how the New Chancellery’s ruin functioned as an epicenter of the NS state’s implosion and disappearance in postwar Berlin. It analyzes its use by the Allies in the visual reproduction of their victory narrative, and unearths both the suppressed documentation of its destruction by the East German authorities and West Germany’s repressive response to the first cinematic resurrection and remediation of its posthumous images. Thereafter, this study’s second half explores how the New Chancellery became a site of memory, preserved and projected primarily in cinematic representation. Chapter iv historicizes its marginal reappearance in *avant garde* and mainstream films with the resurgence in critical attention to the NS past and its archival media, which accompanied the belated initiation of the NS trials, the burgeoning generational conflict of the 1960s, and the popularization of rubble and ruin imagery in the representation of the Third Reich’s destruction on film. Chapters v and vi

explore the mounting visibility of and fascination with the New Chancellery and NS media in the 1970s, as political debates over ‘working through the past’ turned rancorous (and profitable), raising further artifacts of the destroyed NS topography and, in particular, the specter of the Führer in critical discourse and the commercial market. I identify the key producers within this media landscape of historical representation of Nazism via Hitler—the Mitscherlichs, Speer, Fest, and Syberberg—and analyze the development of the aesthetic strategies, iconic images and narratives used to reconstruct and ‘deconstruct’ the New Chancellery, which have since become canonical in the cultural discourse and visual repertoire memorializing this notorious, destroyed building.

As I show, once a signifier of Germany’s ‘imperial’ NS future, the New Chancellery ultimately became a signified—a frame assembled from disarticulated fragments, barely visible in the background, housing the lost dreams (or nightmares) of Hitler’s architectural fantasies. And, as this introduction suggests, although the building physically disintegrated, its artifacts scattered throughout the media, Berlin’s museal landscape, and the western world, another space has risen in its place. Namely, its successor, the next architectural addition and outgrowth of the Hitler-State: not the Führerpalast but the Führerbunker. This subterranean space, unearthed by the fall of the Wall, has recently resurfaced in representation, multiplying across and mediated through the cultural, and memorial imaginary of ‘New Berlin.’

Returning to the New Chancellery, re-examining and interrogating its intermedial archive, its function as architectural and symbolic space of Führertum, not only deepens our understanding of National Socialism and its representational politics, but also provides a key point of reference for investigating the Third Reich’s legacy and meaning as it has been negotiated and reinvented in Germany’s public sphere since 1945. As I argue, bringing the New Reich Chancellery into the foreground reveals shared modern aesthetics and technologies of architectural representation

utilized by radically opposed voices and (artistic and political) subjects across history: modernists and fascists, everyday postwar Germans and Western and Soviet Allied powers, the Federal Republic's leftist *avant garde* and mainstream mass media. Indeed, the repeated confrontation with National Socialism, its collapse, and its 'difficult history' has been negotiated to a remarkable degree over the common ground of architecture—or, more specifically, its mediated archive—especially though not exclusively on film. While the tension between an ethical representation of NS history and its artifacts and the undying popular fascination with its key sites and figures cannot be resolved, exploring the schism between them reveals architecture as a crucial, indeed indispensable mirror that reflects struggles over the social and cultural narratives that, together, form something like a heterogeneous national tradition and historical understanding of the democratic body politic. Is the New Chancellery's mythology and media—rather than its destruction—responsible for its disarticulation from Berlin's and the Federal Republic's architectural heritage in general? What important information about its original function, and the continuity and/or ruptures between Germany's architectural, political, and cultural regimes over the 20th century is obscured by this building's symbolic association and posited mythological equivalence with the image of Hitler as the Führer? What new things can we see, learn, and remember (about the past and the present) by taking a closer look at the New Chancellery, interrogating its function as the space, stage, and frame of Hitler's power? To begin answering these questions, I suggest we turn back to the moment of its construction in 1938.

CHAPTER II

The Führer's Body & the Empty Space of Power

Mediating NS Architectural Ideology, Sovereignty, & Futurity in the New Chancellery

On January 22, 1938, Hitler addressed a crowd of NS elite assembled in the central hall of P.L. Troost's *Haus der Kunst* at the ceremonial opening of the first annual German Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibition.¹⁶³ The content of his speech, reprinted the next day in the *Völkischer Beobachter* (hereafter, *VB*), treads familiar ground, echoing Hitler's pronouncements regarding architecture from years prior: "Jede große Zeit findet ihren abschließenden Wertausdruck in ihren Bauwerken. Wenn Völker großer Zeiten innerlich erleben, so gestalten sich diese Zeiten auch äußerlich. Ihr Wort ist dann überzeugender als das gesprochene: *Es ist das Wort aus Stein!*"¹⁶⁴ But this particular exhibition, Hitler suggested, offered something new: "Diese Ausstellung steht an der *Wende einer Zeit*. In ihr dokumentiert sich der Beginn eines neuen Zeitalters." Its opening heralded, in his estimation, not only the resurrection of Germany's national building program, but also its new direction: an architectural vision of the future, unconstrained by everyday concerns

¹⁶³ The exhibition was announced at the Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung in July 1937, the inaugural event held at the *Haus der Kunst*, running from January 22, 1938 through the end of March; a second followed in December 10, 1939, closing April 10, 1939; a third, planned to open December 1939, was cancelled due to the suspension of building after the outbreak of war. These two exhibitions, analyzed in detail in this chapter, remain woefully under-investigated in scholarship, with the notable exception of Sabine Brantl's excellent chapter "Kunst Und Propaganda: Die »Deutsche Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerk-Ausstellung«, in *Haus Der Kunst, München: Ein Ort Und Seine Geschichte Im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. München Haus der Kunst (München: Allitera Verlag, 2007). I would also like to thank Dr. Brantl for her welcoming accommodation of me and assistance with the *Haus der Kunst* archives when I visited in February 2016.

¹⁶⁴ "Die Große Rede Des Führers," *Völkischer Beobachter*, January 23 1938. All emphasis in original, unless noted. "According to the logic" of Hitler's ideological pronouncements on art delivered at Nürnberg, "the political restoration of the German people's organic unity and vital power included a cultural policy bent on helping find its natural aesthetic expression." O. K. Werckmeister, "Hitler the Artist," *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 2 (1997): 273.

and necessity, showcasing the creation of a new monumental architecture, which would withstand criticism for millennia and endure as the pride of the people who created it. On view, therefore, were not projects, conceptual designs, or some architectural utopia, but fully realized plans, either already underway or soon to be: “*Alles aber ist für die Verwirklichung bestimmt und wird verwirklicht werden!*” The VB’s full front-page announcement of “Die größte Architekturschau aller Zeiten” included images of displays, large-scale architectural models and photographs, accordingly captioned, “Heute Modell...morgen Wirklichkeit.” (Fig. II-1)



Figure II-1 – Cropped images of pages 1 & 2 of the Völkischer Beobachter (Norddeutsche Ausgabe) from January 23, 1938

If a number of buildings on display were unfamiliar to the public, despite the undeniable visibility of NS architecture in propaganda since at least 1936, Hitler cautioned against the assumption that these designs had only recently taken shape. They were, he insisted, products of years-long efforts, conducted in secret and closely guarded from prying eyes.¹⁶⁵ The plans, apparently now ‘ripe’ for public view, ready to have ‘the curtain lifted on the birth of a new era,’ were accordingly not comprehensive. As Hitler explained, the future architecture of the Third Reich’s two symbolic, urban centers—the *Reichshauptstadt*, Berlin, and *Hauptstadt der Bewegung*, Munich—was not quite ready to debut. “Sie sollen erst dann vor der Öffentlichkeit

¹⁶⁵ “Die großen Künstler und Baumeister haben ein Anrecht, der kritischen Betrachtung kleiner Zeitgenossen entzogen zu werden. Ihre Werke werden endgültig beurteilt und bewertet von Jahrhunderten und nicht von der Einsicht kleiner Tageserscheinungen.”

enthüllt werden, wenn ihre Planung im großen als abgeschlossen gelten kann”—hopefully, he added, the following year. For the moment, displays of new construction at the Nürnberg Party Rally Grounds, selected recently erected bridges, Ordensburg, and Kraft-durch-Freude resorts scattered throughout the Reich would have to suffice.¹⁶⁶

Only a week later, the announcement of Berlin’s redevelopment flooded the national media, again dominating the front page of the *VB*. An article written by Speer gave some indication of the magnitude of Hitler’s designs for the city’s future.¹⁶⁷ Encompassing the entire urban area, sweeping changes would lay two central North-South- and East-West-Axes, reorganize traffic in concentric ring-roads encircled by the Autobahn, integrated with two new train stations and airports, and, above all, include a number of monumental buildings, surrounded by massive viewing axes, to evince “diese große Epoche der Wiederauferstehung unseres Volkes.” Throughout, Speer acknowledges the necessity of widespread demolition to realize such plans, but claims that initial work would be concentrated in the governmental quarter: “Denn es steht seit langem im Regierungsviertel Berlins *kein Büroraum mehr zur Verfügung*.” The rest of the plan, including 20,000 new housing units per year, would follow thereafter, to be completed by 1950.¹⁶⁸

Yet nowhere in the press coverage, which continued for several days, did any of Berlin’s future buildings appear. Nor was the first project in the governmental quarter, the New Reich Chancellery, mentioned anywhere at all—though preparatory demolition along Voßstraße had been underway for two years and Speer received the official order for construction the day before publication.¹⁶⁹ Hence, in early 1938, the architectural imagery that would come to occupy public

¹⁶⁶ Many of the buildings displayed at this first exhibition were also featured in the first major architectural *Kulturfilm* produced by the regime, *Die Bauten Adolf Hitlers*, Hege. The second, which accompanied and featured models from the second exhibition, *Das Wort aus Stein*, Rupli., will be analyzed in detail later in this chapter.

¹⁶⁷ Albert Speer, “Das Künftige Gesicht Der Reichshauptstadt,” *Völkischer Beobachter*, January 28 1938.

¹⁶⁸ No such thing was ever accomplished; the regime demolished thousands more apartments than they ever constructed, as described below.

¹⁶⁹ See introduction to this dissertation for construction history.

imagination for decades (if not millennia) in Germany and abroad—and in lieu of actual NS buildings, since of the few ever constructed, many, like the New Chancellery, were destroyed—remained largely invisible. Hitler’s architectural vision of the future stayed hidden; under construction in plain sight, but nevertheless concealed from public view.¹⁷⁰

This chapter investigates the intermedial representation of NS architectural ideology and the New Reich Chancellery’s place within it.¹⁷¹ In 1938 and 1939, Hitler’s representational building program exploded across Germany’s media landscape, paving the way for the Third Reich’s ‘millennia-long,’ ‘imperial’ future, beginning with the New Chancellery’s frenzied construction and the rampant demolition of Germany’s cities. Slavoj Žižek provides a pithy definition of ideology: “the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves in order to account for what we are doing.”¹⁷² What did the ‘Volk’ tell themselves they were building? Or, rather, what did the NS state tell them it was building on their behalf? What did it actually build? And what did it destroy in the process? By 1943, when construction (except on bunkers) was finally halted by the war—while demolition continued, *de facto* delegated to Allied bombers—it was clear that the architectural future promised by Hitler would not arrive. Yet its imagery has to this day not lost its seductive power. As part of the Führer-Mythos, the ‘word in stone’ lives on, even if it existed mostly in models and drawings, films and photographs.¹⁷³ That one of the most destructive eras of

¹⁷⁰ This description fittingly applies to the New Reich Chancellery’s construction, which appeared sparingly in the NS media before the topping out ceremony in August 1938. In a 1937 issue of *Deutsche Bauhütte*, an article celebrated Speer’s use of a 1:1 model of the facade articulated with the Borsig Palace, which had been constructed utilizing building techniques for film sets to test the design’s visual impact. While the construction was acknowledged as a fiction; its stated intent in the article, was explicitly to stifle and preclude criticism. The author explains: “the public insecurity of opinions today regarding all questions of building, led recently by the accomplices of the ‘Bauhaus-Breadwinners,’ has necessitated that the dear public be persuaded as manifestly and swiftly as possible.” “Das Städtebauliche Straßen-Frontmodell. Erweiterung Der Reichskanzlei,” *Deutsche Bauhütte: Zentralblatt für deutsche Bauwirtschaft* 41, no. 14 (1937). This theme, the necessity of providing a persuasive, totalizing, if misleading image of the future in advance of its completion will return continuously throughout this chapter.

¹⁷¹ By ‘intermedial representation,’ I refer to the reproduction, transmission, and translation of the spaces and elements of representational buildings in other mediated formats; in this case, photographs, films, and miniature models, used individually and in concert, collated and framed in print publications, reportage, and newsreels.

¹⁷² Slavoj Žižek, *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce* (London: Verso, 2009), 40. Žižek continues, in reference to Jonathan Littell’s 2006 novel, *Les bienveillantes*, explaining that “the truth lies rather outside, in what we do.” Ibid.

¹⁷³ On the afterlife of NS architectural media, see introduction to this dissertation and chapters ii-vii.

building in German history has come to be known primarily through its propaganda testifies to the success of the incredibly productive and innovative marketing campaign launched by the NS regime to accompany and anticipate their architectural ‘resurrection’ and ‘redevelopment’ of the nation. As the NS state reached its most extreme stage of development and strategically exploited architecture as a destructive medium of industrial, economic, social, and spatial control, interwoven with designs for militarized expansion, it simultaneously deployed a highly effective, technologically diversified media arsenal to promote and obfuscate its building program and political project at large. As I argue in this chapter, the New Chancellery was central and indispensable to this project.

As shown in the introduction, the best studies of the New Reich Chancellery identify it as the symbolic center of Hitler’s power and convincingly assert its construction as entwined with the shifting timeline for imperial expansion. Yet two unavoidable questions remain unanswered. (1) How did a relatively conventional, classically-styled representational building help to institute and visualize Führertum, a radically *new* form of sovereignty, implemented by an undeniably *modern* state? (2) How did the *provisional* architecture of Führertum symbolically stand in for “an already known future, a reality that in principle [was] already mastered,” while both concealing the image of this future and obscuring the destructive process of its creation in the present?¹⁷⁴ Answering these questions requires critically engaging the New Chancellery’s mediated representation as the architecture framing the Führer’s ‘embodiment’ of the NS state and society, and the imperial future of both. This chapter therefore examines the New Reich Chancellery’s appearance across media—in architectural models, exhibitions, films, and photographs—the

¹⁷⁴ Lefort, "The Logic of Totalitarianism," 288.

propaganda that transformed Speer's architecture into an icon and placed it at the center of a new, symbolic, political order of power, centered on Hitler's body.

Inextricable from the Führer's ideologically central leadership position—literally and figuratively built into its architecture—the New Chancellery was the primary representational space used to frame Hitler as the personification of Volk and State, the center of the NS social and political order, articulated through and produced by the bureaucratic state apparatus. Representations of the New Chancellery thus symbolically channeled the idealized visibility of the Third Reich's future and the hidden state machinery at work on its production through Hitler as 'embodied' Führer. That is, the building's mediated representation was used to visualize the Führer's dynamic role within the regime, framing the future construction of an imperial society as legible in the present *exclusively* through his symbolic body, in particular, his 'sovereign' gaze. Concealed behind and contradicted by a classical architectural representation, and reified by its reproduction in modern mass-media, the progressive dissolution of rational systems of government and the intensifying, destructive effects of 'cumulative radicalization' were re-inscribed and legitimized as the extension and implementation of the Führer's will.

Hence, in what follows, I analyze aestheticized reproductions of the New Chancellery, which supplement, overlay, and complicate the meaning of its classically-styled representational architecture, by affixing Hitler's imaginary (and often invisible) body as a screen over the modern, state machinery housed in the building, rendering the promised, idealized effects of this combination symbolically visible in representational space. The analyses identify the New Chancellery's paradigmatic role in the construction and mediation of the Nazis' Führer-centric, architectural ideology, and expose its dysfunctional and destructive impact on Germany's political order and urban landscape, often visibly reproduced *within* its propaganda.

As the first completed project of Berlin's redevelopment, the New Reich Chancellery, with Hitler at its center, heralded and stood in for the soon-to-be reunified body of the *Volksreich* and its future architectural order—in 1939, both were under construction, highly classified, and thus primarily visible in the form of the provisional building and its intermedial representation. I thus begin with the New Chancellery's symbolic function as model, introduced at the second German Architecture and Handicrafts exhibition at the *Haus der Kunst*. As I show, NS architectural exhibitions appropriated modernist rhetoric, visual technologies, and exhibition strategies, which envisioned city planning as a means of constructing a new society. Specifically, these exhibitions employed the selective representation of Berlin's redevelopment in architectural models to suggest a 'synoptic view' of the future, aligned with the Führer's gaze, which was further localized in the New Chancellery, and undergirded by its metonymic function as the center of the state's perspective. The fantasy of NS urban planning promoted through intermedial representation and supported by the myth of the New Chancellery's nine-month-construction, as I claim, re-framed the rampant demolition of Germany's cities and the deportation of Berlin's Jewish population as an irrelevant interval of construction, directed toward an unseen but predetermined future.

Further, to established practices of modern architectural representation, the NS state added film, its most dynamic medium of propaganda. My analysis of the New Chancellery's cinematic representation in NS newsreels and *Kulturfilm* illustrates how these productions employ movement to show the Führer's space of power as producing a gravitational affective and temporal force. Visualized in the camera's subjective navigation and articulated reproduction of space in montage, the provisional center of Führertum is posited as anchoring historical progress. Particularly in the film *Das Wort aus Stein*, the New Chancellery is presented as the horizon of the future, drawing the Volk toward the *tabula rasa* on which they will construct the fixed architectural image of the

reunified, monumental empire, determined by the Führer's retrospective gaze on the present—revealing voids in Berlin caused by demolition and the circular logic of NS futurity in the process.

Finally, in an analysis of the cinematically inflected photographic reproduction of the New Chancellery in the monograph *Die neue Reichskanzlei*, I show how the articulated bureaucratic organs of state power implementing the Führer's will were visualized in the very same representational spaces of the interior diplomatic route that concealed them from view. Translating optical, architectural effects of Speer's design into two dimensions, the photographic narrative constructed in the book suggests Hitler's integrating, central position within the bureaucratic machinery of the NS state as the origin of its omnipresent, radiating organization of society. Specifically, it produces two contrasting, imaginary bodily experiences of the New Chancellery's architecture: the Führer's command over space (condensed in the sovereign and the camera's gaze) and the space's disciplinary effects on (and implied surveillance of) other bodies. As they reproduce the building, these iconic images also incidentally reveal the tortuous, bottlenecking isolation of the Führer and his disruptive effect on the rational organization of state power.

In closing, I turn to newsreels produced from 1940 through the regime's collapse. These reveal the New Chancellery's paradoxically expanded and limited utility as a symbol in intermedial representation: at once incorporating the violence of the present (that is, the war) into the regime's ideological narrative of immortality, attained through the ritualized celebration of death and self-sacrifice in service of the Führer; and revealing its practical use as the refuge of the NS elite during wartime, as the Third Reich's imperial experiment failed and rebounded back on the capital in the Allied bombing war. In sum, I claim that the New Chancellery's distinctly modern visual mediation asserted its ability to guide the production of its replacement: an imaginary, fixed,

monumental image of the *Volksreich*, which remained hidden from view and then disintegrated in demolition and the violence of war.

I. The New Architecture of Führertum & NS Society: The New Reich Chancellery as Model

Following the New Chancellery's opening in January 1939, its images became virtually inescapable in propaganda. The building provided the literal and metaphorical architecture of Hitler's newly defined Führertum, acting as both "symbol" and "midwife" of Germany's rebirth as a racially defined empire.¹⁷⁵ Yet despite the touted singularity of its accomplishment, the New Reich Chancellery's construction was not an isolated event but the provisional and inaugural success story of Berlin's NS redevelopment. It was the first arrival in a massive wave of building, directed by Speer as *Generalbauinspektor* (hereafter, GBI), which ideologically anticipated Hitler's imminent but as-yet-unspoken designs for territorial expansion. Unbeknownst to the general public, throughout 1938 the NS state mapped out vague plans for the violent acquisition of territory and resettlement of 'ethnic Germans' in Eastern Europe.¹⁷⁶ In the public eye, this project was implicitly visible in urban planning: the symbolic redevelopment of Berlin and other *Führerstädte* throughout the Reich.¹⁷⁷ Since the New Reich Chancellery appeared within the framework of this strategically important, public project of 'state building,' the latter requires more

¹⁷⁵ Miller Lane, 68. The quotation refers, in fact, to the writings of leaders of the *Neues Bauen* movement from the 1920s, who "sought above all to discover a new principle of structure and order in German society with which to oppose the chaos of war and revolution....a process of reintegration in all spheres of life." Ibid. As Miller Lane writes, "a new, socially conscious architecture," was to act as "symbol" and "midwife" of these ideas. While relatively unpolitical in itself and according to the positions of its leading proponents, this concept would be politicized throughout the architectural debates between progressives and conservatives in the 1920s, and was thus leveraged by the National Socialists following Hitler's ascent to the chancellorship in 1933. This history is outlined in detail below.

¹⁷⁶ i.e. Hitler's attempt to establish "a new system of 'foreign rule' that broke with the core elements of [traditional] imperial hegemony." Kundrus, 331. For the general disposition of the German public regarding Hitler's international dealings during this period, see: Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship : Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, especially Chapter 6, "Nazi Foreign Policy: Hitler's 'Programme' or 'Expansion Without Object.'" 157-86.

¹⁷⁷ The ideological connection between NS militarized expansion, institutionalized racial policies, and its representational building program was more than simply metaphorical. Paul Jaskot's groundbreaking *Architecture of Oppression* exposes the mutually reinforcing and beneficial relationship between Speer's office and the S.S.'s policies of political imprisonment, forced labor, and expropriation of resources. See: *The Architecture of Oppression: The Ss, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy*.

attention to understand how the mediation of its architecture functioned within this network of representation.

Representational building was an important component of NS ideology since its inception, owing to Hitler's personal interest in architecture.¹⁷⁸ But in late 1937, architectural development overseen by the state underwent a fundamental shift in terms of organization and implementation, accompanied, in 1938, by a radical transformation of its visibility in propaganda.¹⁷⁹ While Berlin's redevelopment was underway by 1936, Hitler's decree of the "Gesetz zur Neugestaltung deutscher Städte" in October of 1937 gave the GBI a free hand in planning, the right to recommission privately held property, and precedence in acquiring industrial materials and labor for construction, subject solely to the Führer's oversight.¹⁸⁰ Thereafter, the redevelopment of Germany's cities, especially the capital, was staged as an ongoing, highly publicized media event.

In addition to newsreel footage of ostentatious *Grundsteinlegungen*, new construction projects, and citations of articles lifted from trade publications circulating in the state-run media, the two architectural exhibitions held at the *Haus der Kunst* in January and December of 1938 were of paramount importance. These exhibitions were coordinated with and inseparable from the marketing of Berlin's transformation and the completion of the New Chancellery's construction—in fact, the opening of each immediately preceded their respective announcements, as shown with regard to the former above. In their keenly orchestrated strategies of display and reproduction in other visual media, the German Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibitions (hereafter, 1.AA and

¹⁷⁸ For Hitler's artistic identity and its invented inheritance from Bismarck as soldier cum artist-politician in Germany's idealist tradition, see: Werckmeister. For a more recent and thoroughgoing analysis of the mythology of Hitler as artist-dictator, see: Michaud.

¹⁷⁹ For the shifted governmental framework of urban planning and architectural development in 1937 see: Dülffer, and his overview of NS building in Dülffer, Thies, and Henke.

¹⁸⁰ Anna Teut describes the total silencing of internal and external opposition as the most destructive, determinant feature of NS building policy. Teut, 13. As shown in the introduction, only this law enabled the New Chancellery's rapid construction amid competition with rearmament and the Westwall's construction. See: Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*, 60-63.

2.AA) purported to collect the evidence of the Führer's widespread mobilization of building into a single space of representation—providing a symbolic view of Germany's resurrection as a modern, industrial and imperial state. They also illustrate how important modern(ist) strategies and technologies of architectural mediation were to the publicization of NS urban planning initiatives. And finally, they offer an opportunity for investigating how the Third Reich harnessed and tailored these representational strategies to suit their own ideological ends, identifying the New Chancellery as a symbolic space, mediating the Führer's embodiment of state power.

Before turning to the exhibitions and the surrounding media blitz in 1938/9, the tradition of politicized, representational urban planning bears further examination. For the deployment of what James C. Scott calls 'authoritarian, high modernist urban planning,' to symbolically assert political power and practically exert control over cities and their inhabitants was in no way a Nazi invention.¹⁸¹ Just as Hitler's construction of the New Chancellery explicitly adopted as a model Louis XIV's decision "to lavish his planning on a 'new space,' Versailles," so too can Paris's Haussmannization in the 19th century be read as a kind of ur-model for NS urban planning.¹⁸² The NS redevelopment of Germany's cities and its marketing to the public originated in a long tradition of representational building movements, which had come to a head in Germany in the 1920s.

In *Seeing Like a State*, Scott outlines how modern European authorities came to see and practice city planning as a means of rationalizing and enhancing control over cities' 'unintelligible'

¹⁸¹ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). Scott defines authoritarian high modernist planning as: centralized control by the state or a cadre of elites over redevelopment and management of populations and resources, emphasizing the transcendence of the past and creation of a better future. "[P]rogress is objectified by a series of preconceived goals—largely material and quantifiable—which are to be achieved through savings, labor, and investments in the interim," in a manner that justifies short-term sacrifices on the part of the public. *Ibid.*, 95. The bureaucratic and formal representation of such projects is heavily reliant on visual imagery and often highly abstract and aestheticized. "The carriers of high modernism tended to see rational order in remarkably visual aesthetic terms. For them, an efficient, rationally organized city, village, or farm was a city that *looked* regimented and orderly in a geometrical sense...once their plans miscarried or were thwarted, [they] tended to retreat to what I call miniaturization: the creation of a more easily controlled micro-order in model cities, model villages, and model farms." *Ibid.*, 4, original emphasis. Scott thus points out these plans' schematic nature, their parasitic relationship to informal processes, which we might call social practice or tactics and which a "formal scheme...alone, could not create or maintain." *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 370fn17. For the connection to Versailles, see the analysis of the diplomatic route in the introduction.

organic geography and local populations.¹⁸³ Aimed at maintaining social order and improving hygiene and infrastructure, such projects were often more interested in manufacturing *metaphorical* legibility. That is, spatial ‘transparency,’ produced not only through mapping, plans emphasizing grids, straight lines, and central management—allowing unfettered access by military and police to all parts of a city—but also in the built representation of an overarching, symbolic order. As Scott takes care to emphasize, this representational order primarily obtains in aesthetic translations of space, e.g. miniature and graphic forms and aerial views, simplifications that lend themselves to an immediate, “synoptic grasp,” of the concept and its intended effect.¹⁸⁴ In this sense, they bear an only abstract relation to the lived experience of a city’s social structure and mundane, practical function. The ‘intense visualization,’ characteristic of the administrator’s or state’s perspective reveals ‘politico-aesthetic tastes’ of elite forces driving development, but says little about the material effects of building policy.¹⁸⁵ Especially in cases like Haussmann’s Paris, the “visual power of the baroque city” was a utopian vision, often irrationally implemented, in part through draconian policies of displacement, demolition, and uneven development.¹⁸⁶ As Scott writes, “Uniform modern buildings along the new boulevards may have represented healthier dwellings, but they were often no more than facades.”¹⁸⁷ The distant view of state authorities thus shapes social and material conditions of urban planning on the ground, but fails to illuminate or

¹⁸³ The pejorative description of Berlin’s organic, irrational development and the need for the ‘corrective’ of NS building initiatives is a constant theme throughout Speer’s announcement in the *VB*, cited above.

¹⁸⁴ Scott, 59. Aerial views of urban space, Scott points out, were transformed with 20th century industrialization and flight, becoming intimately linked to the plane and helicopter and, thereby, military technology. *Ibid.*, 57-8. This linkage is reflected in the cinematic representation of NS architecture and Speer’s use of anti-aircraft spotlights to produce spectacular lighting effects, epitomized in his ‘Lichtdom’ on the Nürnberg Party Rally Grounds. See: Albert Speer and Karl Arndt, *Albert Speer : Architektur ; Arbeiten 1933-1942* (Frankfurt/M: Propyläen Verl., 1978), 79-92.

¹⁸⁵ Scott, 62.

¹⁸⁶ “As happens in many authoritarian modernizing schemes, the political tastes of the ruler occasionally trumped purely military and functional concerns. Rectilinear streets may have admirably assisted the mobilization of troops against insurgents, but they were also to be flanked by elegant facades and to terminate in imposing buildings that would impress visitors....zoning regulations were almost exclusively concerned with the visible surfaces of buildings, but behind the facades, builders could build crowded, airless tenements, and many of them did.” *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

indicate such conditions, once they are reified in the *visualization* of urban space, wherein intelligibility and order operate as surface-level spectacle.

In the early decades of the 20th century, Germany's *Neues Bauen* movement had sought to correct precisely this disjuncture between form and function; between the utopian, architectural vision of society and the often dystopic reality of urban development as it was experienced on the ground by those not among the elites.¹⁸⁸ Barbara Miller Lane's study *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918-1945* provides the now-classical overview of this politicized view of architecture—as a representational medium of social revolution—which was appropriated by the Nazis, but which first took shape during the Weimar Republic.¹⁸⁹ Debates over the new architecture in Germany rose to prominence around the turn of the century, concerning the practical application of new industrial building materials and techniques, and questions of whether radically modern and/or historicist styles of building offered a more appropriate mode of expression for Germany's socio-cultural identity. Especially following the 1914 *Deutscher Werkbund* exhibition in Cologne, modern architects like Bruno Taut and Walter Gropius began employing material and technological innovations to experiment with form, adding aesthetic value to structures often (but not always) in alignment with building function.¹⁹⁰ The 'architectural vision of a new society,' as articulated in Taut's and Gropius's writings, argued for the need to sweep away older traditions that had led into the war, respond to the current moment of social and urban flux, and articulate a new social order.¹⁹¹ Their vision, however, was largely confined to

¹⁸⁸ This desire, however, was not necessarily borne out by the relationship between architectural representation and function in modernist designs, which likewise employed visual mediation to project an image of order, often related to material building techniques but also loaded with excess ideological and symbolic meanings. The modernists' intermedial strategies of architectural representation will be discussed in detail below. For a critique of modernist planning of urban spaces, viewed in terms of their inhabitability, see: *ibid.*, Chapter 4 "The High-Modernist City: An Experiment and a Critique," 103-46..

¹⁸⁹ See also: Teut on the NS appropriation and assimilation of both modernist and Wilhelmine architectural styles, building fundamentals, and architects. Teut, 9-13.

¹⁹⁰ Miller Lane, 21-25. See fn199 for other significant modernist architectural exhibitions.

¹⁹¹ Taut focused on the construction of monumental public buildings, exemplified by his designs for the *Stadtkrone*; Gropius emphasized spiritual unity modeled on the symbolic function of Gothic cathedrals and the artisan guilds that constructed them.

publications and exhibitions until the end of the inflation crisis in 1924.¹⁹² Thereafter, it materialized in a decentralized construction boom of mostly public buildings, especially housing units, but extending to complete city planning initiatives.¹⁹³

Despite the new architecture's relative minority status in practice—accounting for very few of Germany's building projects, seen as a whole—its public visibility and mounting politicization erupted in controversy. Conservative critics waged a counter-attack against the new style; initially framed as a critique of building techniques, the backlash became increasingly racially inflected following the publication of Oswald Spengler's second volume of *Decline of the West* in 1922.¹⁹⁴ Conservative invective was premised along three lines of attack. First, that Germany's cultural degeneration was increasingly visible in the arts, especially the iconoclastic, modernist rejection of traditional forms (flat roofs were a notable flashpoint). Second, the advocates of new architecture were guilty of fomenting political unrest as they garnered support from the left, aligned with the communists. And third, Germany's racial degeneration, especially visible in 'Bolshevik,' Jewish, and other foreign influence, represented a "return to the primitive art forms of inferior races."¹⁹⁵ Originating in trade publications like the *Deutsche Bauzeitung*,

Both privileged sculptural form, asymmetrically arranged and unadorned cubic masses, the use of facades as representational surfaces in relation to structural design. The privileging of mass production, housing development, and improvements to industrial architecture evince the movement's socially progressive concerns.

Miller Lane writes, "from 1918 on, these men publicized the idea that the new society created by war and revolution required an entirely new architecture, devoid of all association with the past. They called for a 'new community,' spiritual and social, in which architecture, supported by the revolutionary government, would act as a powerful educational force among citizens of the new state. Thus, several years before the new style actually appeared, its prophets had identified it as not merely a new development in 'style' but also as a movement with broad social and cultural purposes, closely linked to the left-wing republican government." Ibid., 51. Throughout her study, however, Miller Lane is careful to point out the political heterogeneity of new building movements. While Gropius and Taut, whose writing she identifies as the primary influence on theories of new architecture, shared a mistrust of militarism and saw in the 1918 defeat the collapse of "an outworn system of values, and of an entire era in German culture," their writings adhere to no specific political program or advocate for a particular party. See: the chapter "The New Architecture and the Vision of a New Society." Ibid., 41-68.

¹⁹² Ibid., 52. This *theoretical* basis of new architecture also began to change with the founding of the Bauhaus in 1922.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 87-9; 125-30. The Siedler building extension of the Chancellery was constructed during this period. On the significance of regional leaders, mostly mayors, on the development of individual cities see: Teut, 10.

¹⁹⁴ "[A]lthough earlier writings...remained influential, it was probably Spengler's work which did most to color the thinking of those who opposed the new architecture with 'cultural' arguments." Miller Lane, 77.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 73-8.

Zentrallblatt der Bauverwaltung, and *Deutsche Bauhütte*, by the late 1920s, conservative arguments had reached a much broader audience in the mainstream right-wing press.

Hitler's personal interest in architecture notwithstanding, the NSDAP only officially took up his mantle and publicly entered the debates over art in the late 1920s. In 1930, the party trained its gaze on the controversy over new architecture. The *VB*, in particular, "launched a virulent campaign against the new style." By 1933, architecture took "the most prominent place" in its cultural criticism; the emphasis justified "by explicitly adopting the old argument of the radical architects that architectural style 'reflects' much broader developments in culture and society: 'In building as in no other area [of life] the cultural, economic, and racial powers of the Volk are bound together.'"¹⁹⁶ The Nazis thus opportunistically grafted their own political ideology onto popular debates identifying architecture as a means of social renewal and aesthetic, (racialized) cultural expression.

But while NS architectural ideology invoked the integrating logic of the modernist building economy and its representational possibilities, it lacked any unifying principle, theory, or plan—tolerating a multiplicity of styles and, as shown in the introduction, a largely uncoordinated manner of implementation with regard to building practices, techniques, and materials.¹⁹⁷ NS architecture's primary value lay in its *symbolic* visibility.¹⁹⁸ Thus, to summarize, by appropriating the rhetoric of new architecture and modernist technologies and strategies of visual mediation, the

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 161.

¹⁹⁷ "This opportunism was further displayed in Nazi propaganda after 1933, for neither the lack of a consistent architectural theory nor the variety of style apparent in new building prevented the party propagandists from waging ideological warfare with the aid of architecture." *Ibid.*, 187.

¹⁹⁸ "A mammoth propaganda campaign [that] ceaselessly publicized all the diverse architectural accomplishments of the regime and surrounded them with elaborate ceremonies and celebrations [wherein, t]he most blatantly ideological styles [and projects] were publicized most energetically." Miller Lane 187 "The Nazi architectural program thus had three components: an ideology, torn by internal contradictions, which the party leaders sought to embody in architecture; a propaganda campaign which was itself lacking in consistent ideological direction; and a building program which sometimes followed the prescriptions of ideology, more often ignored them, and occasionally stood in considerable contradiction to them." Miller Lane 187 She thus concludes, "The chief element of continuity between the controversy of the twenties and Nazi architectural propaganda after 1933 was thus a belief in the symbolic meaning of architecture. The Nazi regime was content to exploit this belief in its propaganda without attempting to resolve the conflicts implied in its building program or to dictate questions of architectural style." Miller Lane 215

NS building program co-opted and deployed a set of symbolically charged representational discourses of enormous political utility. These were used to promote an idealized image of a racialized, rational, architectural order, representative of Germany's future society, which had little in common with the buildings the Nazis actually produced or the material processes of construction and urban planning employed on the ground.

Zeroing in on Berlin, NS redevelopment not only meant redefining the symbolic architecture of Germany's political center—it also afforded the opportunity to purge a stronghold of leftist political autonomy (and German-Jewish identity). As I argue below, within this framework, the New Chancellery was employed as visible 'proof' and a distinctly versatile and *misleading* symbol of the NS building program's efficacy and the NS state's organization writ large. Shown to the public for the first time in detail at the 2.AA, the New Chancellery was deployed in representation as a symbolic model of the state's synoptic view of Germany's future—an imaginary perspective aligned with the Führer's gaze. The two NS architectural exhibitions held at the *Haus der Kunst* in 1938 appropriated modern representational strategies and technologies to construct and disseminate the image of a unified building movement, envisioned as the catalyst of societal renewal, in advance of its actual arrival. Only by capitalizing on practices of architectural mediation developed by the *Neues Bauen* was the NS image of the built future legible as more than merely a utopian vision.

Exhibitions in the early 20th century had experimented with different media to reformat and re-contextualize architectural representation in service of promoting and advancing new building styles.¹⁹⁹ As Claire Zimmerman argues in her book *Photographic Architecture*, the

¹⁹⁹ Beginning around the turn of the century, architectural exhibitions transformed, shifting what had been primarily a technical and specialized display culture into one more suited to a general audience. See Wallis Miller, "Cultures of Display: Exhibiting Architecture in Berlin, 1880-1931," in *Architecture and Authorship*, ed. Tim Anstey, Katja Grillner, and Rolf Gullström-Hughes (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 98, and especially 104-7., and "Popularity Contexts: Exhibitions in Berlin before World War I," in *Place and Displacement: Exhibiting Architecture*, ed. Thordis Arrhenius, et al. (Zürich: Lars Müller, 2014), 159. This

comparative framework generated through architecture's intermedial representation employed visual similarity—"doubly" produced through similarity in building style and uniformity of photographic techniques and display—to create an image of a unified building movement.²⁰⁰ Using photographs to assert "external form as the chief visible indicator of architectural identity...visible correspondence between buildings...could be corralled in systematic collections," whereby "Single buildings became part of larger networks and advanced a campaign for building through visible similarity and shared location in space (whether within an exhibition gallery or a book)."²⁰¹ Exploiting the perceived objectivity of the camera, photographs of architecture, collated in a circumscribed, representational space, helped to persuade the public of the existence of a particular building style—be it modern or traditionally 'German'—and of its widespread implementation.²⁰²

As noted above, the I.AA opened on January 22, 1938, running until the end of March.²⁰³ Despite the double billing, architecture was the star of the show, taking up the entire ground floor. The most illustrious displays were shown in the first two galleries, extending from either side of the *Haus der Kunst's* central hall. (Fig. II-2) The comparatively lackluster displays of handicrafts occupied the first floor. In addition to large-format photographs, finely wrought presentation models were the main media of display and the focus of most press coverage, accompanied by a

movement gained further momentum after 1920, when the number of architectural exhibitions increased sharply, culminating in the Stuttgart exhibition 'The Dwelling' (*Die Wohnung*) in 1927 sponsored by the *Werkbund* and 'The Dwelling of our Time' (*Die Wohnung unserer Zeit*) in Berlin in 1931, directed by Mies van der Rohe. For a thorough account of the shifting history of architectural exhibition practices, with particular attention to the *Neues Bauen*, see, in addition to the above, Zimmerman, 185-98.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 194.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 196. Photography was and remains by far the dominant media, not only of architectural exhibitions, but of architectural representation in general. Indeed, photography was so dominant as a medium in the early 20th century that, as argued by Beatrice Colomina, "[it] displaced the locus of architectural production from the building site to various spaces of representation such as exhibitions and publications, so much so that modern architecture itself 'only becomes modern with its engagement with the media.'" As cited in David Deriu, "Transforming Ideas into Pictures: Model Photography and Modern Architecture," in *Camera Constructs: Photography, Architecture, and the Modern City*, ed. Andrew Higgott and Timothy Wray (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 164.

²⁰² As shown above, arguments for such a style were contemporaneous and in competition with the *Neues Bauen*, but had yet to take advantage of exhibition as a representational arena for asserting their claims. See Miller Lane.

²⁰³ The I.AA attracted approximately 260,000 visitors; the second improved on these numbers slightly, with around 295,000. Brantl, 99-100.

few plans, drawings, marble specimens, and full-scale plaster mock-ups of sculptures and ornamental details; technical information and explanatory text were largely absent.²⁰⁴ Each show was accompanied by a high-quality, commercial catalog, which contained a floorplan, a complete listing of all objects, prices for the handicrafts (all of which were for sale), and concluded with a series of glossy printed photographs of selected displays.²⁰⁵ (Figs. II-3 & II-4) Omitted from the catalogs, commentary on the architecture and an expanded set of photographs of models from both exhibitions were published on opening day of the second exhibition in Gerdy Troost's *Das Bauen Im Neuen Reich*.²⁰⁶

In a review of the 1.AA, published in the *VB*, Nazi critic and art historian Robert Scholz praised its displays, claiming they visualized, “in einer sehr eindrucksvollen Geschlossenheit,” a “synoptic overview” of architectural achievement, the “most visible testimony of [the state’s] creative power,” premised on a “Einheit des völkischen Willens [und] eine Gemeinschaft der Weltanschauung.”²⁰⁷ The eclectic range of building types “documentier[t]” Hitler’s broad efficacy as Führer: the figure “capable of concentrating in [himself] all the forces of society” and redirecting and unleashing this power “auch auf anderen Lebensgebieten,” beyond the traditional political sphere.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ The 1.AA displayed 127 large format photographs and 109 models, the 2.AA, 123 and 148, respectively. Reports from the NS media tend to inflate and/or round these numbers.

²⁰⁵ München Haus der Deutschen Kunst, "1. Deutsche Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerkausstellung Im Haus Der Deutschen Kunst Zu München: 22. Januar Bis 18. April 1938," (München: Knorr & Hirth, 1938). "2. Deutsche Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerksausstellung Im Haus Der Deutschen Kunst Zu München: 10. Dezember 1938 Bis 10. April 1939," (München: Knorr & Hirth, 1938). In the first catalog, the images are strictly organized by the order of the rooms in which the objects were displayed. The images obviously depict models, rather than actual buildings: taken from an elevated angle, highlighting the three-dimensionality of the models and their autonomy as isolated objects, often including the edges of the display surface within the frame but blacking out the exhibition context. The second catalog, by way of contrast, pays no heed to the order of the exhibition, instead arranging objects based on visual or thematic similarity. If the first appears more like a commercial catalog, the second has much more in common with the books of architectural photography published in the Third Reich. The photographs of the models in the second catalog, with only two exceptions, capture the models in their display context and are taken from a decidedly lower perspective, approximating the angle of viewing in the galleries.

²⁰⁶ Gerdy Troost, *Das Bauen Im Neuen Reich* (Bayreuth: Gauverlag Bayerische Ostmark GmbH, 1938).

²⁰⁷ "Zur Heutigen Eröffnung Der Ersten Großen Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerks-Ausstellung Im Haus Der Deutschen Kunst," *Völkischer Beobachter*, January 22 1938.

²⁰⁸ Lefort, "The Logic of Totalitarianism," 285.; . In addition to sites of mass demonstration Ordensburg, Jugendherbergen, the Autobahn and its bridges, Kraft-durch-Freude resorts, train stations, airports, isolated government buildings like the Reichsbank

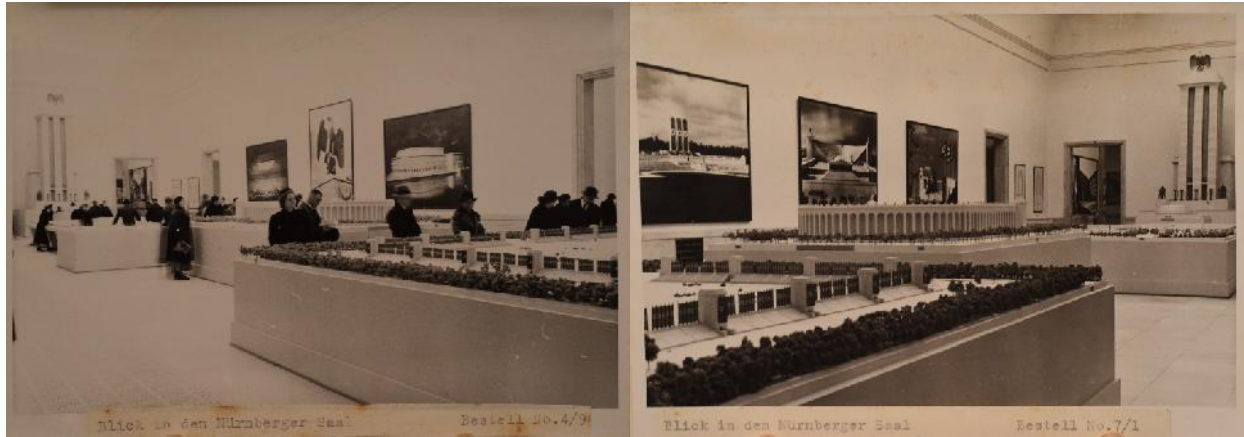
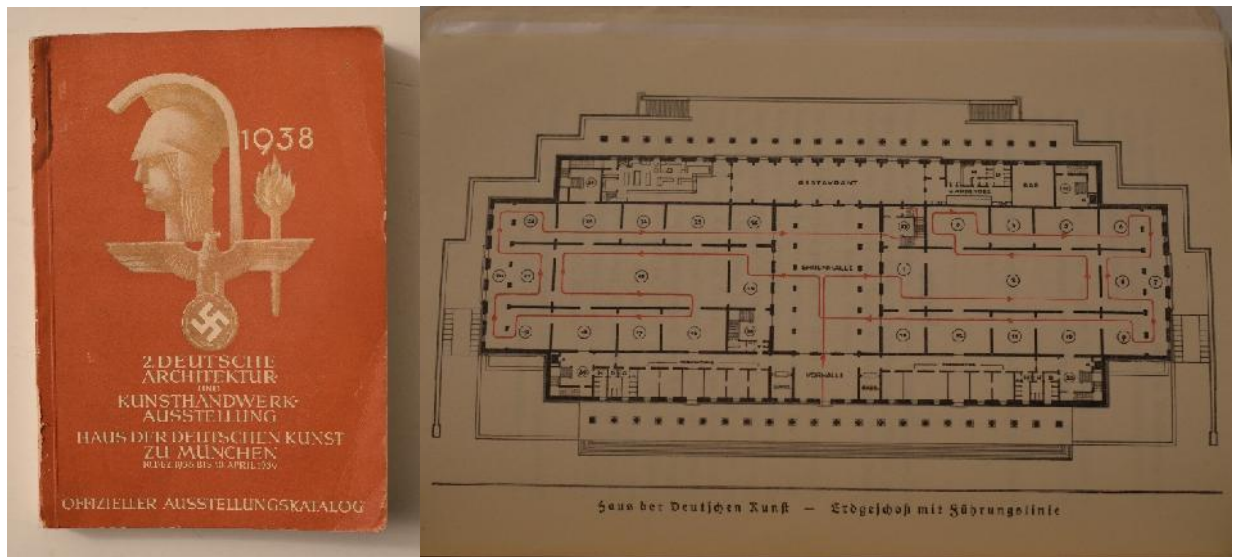


Figure II-2 - Views of the 'Nürnberg Hall' at the 1.AA from the Haus der Kunst archives



Figures II-3 & II-4 - Catalog of the 2.AA (left) and map of the ground-floor plan (right), photographed at the Haus der Kunst

There is no question that NS architecture encompassed an enormous number of styles—without any clear coordination or integration between them. But the 1. and 2.AAs worked to promote a symbolic impression of unity nonetheless, though not by emphasizing a standardization

and Luftfahrtministerium were displayed at both exhibitions. Housing was a noted absence. On the one hand, it had been featured separately at a number of Bauausstellungen the previous year. On the other hand and more to the point, it was not a priority for the NS state, despite the ongoing housing crisis. The Nazi building program actively worsened this crisis through demolition of housing for its prestige projects. Several key studies, led by Hans Joachim Reichhardt and Wolfgang Schäche and recently continued by members of Berliner Unterwelten provide insight regarding the clear link between the exacerbation of the housing crisis through property acquisition and demolition for Germania and the calculated deportation and theft of Jewish property orchestrated by the GBI. See Reichhardt and Schäche. And Susanne Willems, "Hauptstadtbau Und Judenverfolgung. Die Vertreibung Der Berliner Juden Aus Ihren Wohnungen.," in *Mythos Germania Vision Und Verbrechen*, ed. Dagmar Thorau and Gernot Schaulinski (Berlin: Berliner Unterwelten, 2014). This history will be discussed below.

of style, as with the *Neues Bauen*—this was dismissed by Scholz as the “problematisch[es] Produkt eines intellektuellen erflügelten Formalismus.”²⁰⁹ Instead, Nazi critics suggested that even the most functionally and visually diverse buildings shared a racially coded (but only vaguely described) “Klarheit” and “Haltung.”²¹⁰ The dismissal of the modern architecture’s ‘formalism’ conveniently negated standardized building practices as a barometer of social and political unity and downplayed the fact that the exhibitions employed similar display strategies and media to reproduce their assertion of architectural unity.

That is, the ‘unity’ touted in NS propaganda was only visible because of its assembled presentation in the exhibition, limited in format to almost exclusively models and photographs, and recirculated in equally standardized photographic and narrative representations. It was essentially irrelevant whether the National Socialists built in a coordinated or stylistically unified way if building projects could be collected and reproduced under the auspices of a unified *visual regime*. In service of promoting a new, racialized architecture, the displays thus collated a plurality of projects, in various states of completion, in a communal space of representation, annihilating geographical, stylistic, and temporal distance. Furthermore, while the *Neues Bauen* utilized collective representation to prematurely assert the establishment of their movement, the Nazis did them one better: seamlessly blending together representations of built and unbuilt architecture. The 1.AA, for example, highlighted Munich’s renovated *Königlichen Platz* and *Prinzregentenstraße*, the latter project still underway and including the *Haus der Kunst* itself, and the new stadium and congress hall at the *Nürnberg Parteitagsgelände*, on which construction had barely just begun.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Scholz.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ For a history of Munich’s reconstruction see Hans-Peter Rasp, *Eine Stadt Für Tausend Jahre: München, Bauten Und Projekte Für Die Hauptstadt Der Bewegung* (München: Süddeutscher Verlag, 1981). The projects on the Nürnberg Party Rally Grounds would never be completed at all, though this did not stop the regime from continuing to promote them in propaganda well into the war, for example in an episode of the *Deutsche Wochenschau* from 1941, which would be acoustically cited by Kluge in his *Brutalität in Stein*. BAFA, DDWS 538/1/1941 (B 124978/1-1)

The “evidence” of the Führer’s efficacy as *Bauherr* thus placed present and future architecture on equal footing. Unfinished building projects or those yet to be begun were by no means clearly marked as such or displayed separately—unbuilt architecture was shown alongside and without differentiation from completed structures, represented in the same media. The NS exhibitions, therefore, made a few key alterations to the strategies they appropriated from the modernists, as they deployed intermedial representation to visually reproduce and enhance the realism of future architectural plans, in particular through the use of both models and model photography.²¹²

Scale models, as opposed to technical drawings or plans, were recognized in the early 20th century as a favorable medium, geared toward non-specialists due to their exceptional, intuitive legibility.²¹³ With their easily digestible, aesthetically pleasing compositions, architectural models provide a “visual density of information.”²¹⁴ In the model, scopic pleasure meets architectural

²¹² Since the exhibitions relied on architecture’s visual mediation, the meanings of representations of both built and unbuilt spaces were inherently slippery. Photography may have helped to unify stylistically, materially, and/or geographically separate buildings and to persuasively suggest the existence of a building movement which had not yet arrived; but it also eliminated the possibility of positing any *fixed* meaning. Photographs may faithfully reproduce an existing material object, but their interpretation is decidedly flexible. This posed a problem for architectural representation intended to offer a self-evident, “zwingende[s] Erlebnis” of the “Einheit von Führer und Volksgemeinschaft.” Scholz. It is in their efforts to fiercely limit the interpretive possibilities of architectural representation that the Nazi exhibitions’ display strategies most pointedly contrast with the *Neues Bauen*’s. While the proponents of the *Neues Bauen* employed photographs as propaganda, the Nazis’ absolute control over the production and circulation of building images eliminated the possibility that an unfavorable photograph of a building might surface and disrupt their claims. For example, conservative criticism of ‘The Dwelling’ had used alternate images of Corbusier’s houses in the *Weissenhofsiedlung* to illustrate shoddy workmanship and the aesthetic and practical failure of new building methods. Such strategies showed that conservatives “were equally adept as modernists at using carefully selected photographs to advance a campaign attacking their enemies and advancing the cause of Heimatstil building.” Zimmerman, 197-98. Speer’s absolute control over the media’s representation of building, exerted through the GBI, limited the possibility for critical views to surface. For model photographs, there was no chance whatsoever.

Still, the deluge of images of the same few objects belies the certainty of the Nazis’ representational control. In my research, the media coverage of the exhibitions proved extremely uniform. The *VB* thus offers the most efficient collection of soundbites produced by the regime and cited in other media. My selective use in the analysis of the exhibition is thus conscious with an eye to these redundancies. And not only did a set of nearly identical photos of present and future buildings circulate in newsreels, newspapers, trade publications, and monographs, the exhibitions in the *Haus der Kunst* were themselves awash in duplicate images; photos of the same buildings represented in models hung on the walls above their three-dimensional counterparts. In addition to implying a photographic, material referent for the models—even of those depicting unbuilt structures—the size of the prints affirm a sense of monumentality perhaps diminished by their miniature reproduction.

²¹³ See: Miller, “Cultures of Display: Exhibiting Architecture in Berlin, 1880-1931,” 98.; David Deriu, “The Architectural Model in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility,” in *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference of the European Architectural History Network*, ed. Hilde Heynen and Janina Gosseye (Brussels: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten, 2012), 169.

²¹⁴ Mark Morris, *Models: Architecture and the Miniature* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Academy, 2006), 11. Representing building projects as graspable—and thereby masterable—wholes, models offer “an instant totality...[their] reception as an object requires almost no effort at all...spring-loaded comprehension, the intellectual ‘buzz’ which cashes out as an immediate aesthetic experience.” *Ibid.*, 12.

abstraction, as its totalizing image downplays the process of building; the model “stands in for the outcome of only one path of the project idea,” despite the fact that much often changes between design concept and construction.²¹⁵ Placing models of future buildings alongside completed ones, the Nazi exhibitions implied a direct, uninterrupted link between architecture as an idea and its realization, and ensured this image appeared as realistic and accessible as possible. Model photography deepened this effect.²¹⁶ Intermedial representation inscribed model photographs as signs pointing to and dependent on a completed, external reality—even one that had not yet arrived. The displays at the *Haus der Kunst* thus blurred the line between representation and object, present and future, real and imaginary. Moreover, they employed models—independently and in photographs—to visualize Hitler’s power as Führer in an allegorical, architectural representation of scopic mastery.

Goebbels had made this connection explicit in his speech at the opening of the 1.AA. His remarks recount two events: (1) after his speech at the Sportpalast before the 1932 elections, Hitler sketches the designs for Berlin’s future redevelopment (the premonition of the plans released the week after the 1.AA), and (2) the relocation of NSDAP headquarters to Voßstraße that same year, with renovations by Speer.²¹⁷ In other words, the origin stories of the Führer as ‘*Bauherr*’ and his

²¹⁵Ibid., 70. This makes the model a more favorable representational object than full scale Bauausstellungen, where new building practices are displayed through the construction of full scale models, at times before their use has been fully figured out. For example, photographic representation of *The Dwelling* on the one hand made incomplete and provisional structures appear as finished accomplishments. Yet, open to the public, conservative photos, on the other hand, revealed the problematic nature of provisional construction just as convincingly. It bears noting that Speer’s 1:1 models of the New Chancellery and the other buildings planned for Berlin were never publicly exhibited and were photographed exclusively by the regime.

²¹⁶ Technical literature from both sides of the Atlantic in the 1920s on “hyper-realist” and composite model images “sanctioned the primacy of photography in visualising the shape of things to come.” Photography mediated unbuilt architecture, “exploiting - and amplifying - the verisimilitude of the model...mobiliz[ing the camera]...to lure the viewer into an imaginary world,” in which the hyper-visible future seemed just as real as the present, if not moreso. Deriu, “The Architectural Model in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility,” 167-9.

²¹⁷ The history recounted in the introduction of Hitler’s first architectural project in the governmental quarter. Having worked closely together over the previous week, rewriting versions of and comparing their speeches, Hitler and Goebbels had divvied up emphasis on the future and the past. See Joseph Goebbels, Elke Fröhlich, and Angela Hermann, *Die Tagebücher Von Joseph Goebbels*, vol. 5 (München: Saur, 2000). In his speech, Hitler insisted on architecture as justifying the Volk’s very existence and projecting its legacy thousands of years into the future. Goebbels discussed a past future, narrating the Party’s rise to power, concomitant with the development of Hitler’s nascent plans for Germany’s architectural reconstruction, centered on Berlin.

chief architect.²¹⁸ The first anecdote posits Hitler's gaze as a generative force that determines and shapes the future in architectural representation; the second celebrates the realization of his 'vision' in the institutionalization of NS power in Berlin's government district. In the first, late at night, Hitler's inner circle gazes on:

“um einen Tisch versammelt, auf dem eine große Karte der Reichshauptstadt liegt. Mitten unter ihnen ein Mann, der mit breiten Bleistiftzügen diese Riesenstadt neu gestaltet...In der Phantasie erscheint plötzlich *ganz klar und deutlich sichtbar die Vision einer neuen Weltstadt.*”²¹⁹

Having unified the masses hours before with his demand for a “new Germany,” the collective will of the “Heeressäulen” is now embodied in Hitler, channeled into his vision, projected in the capital's future, architectural transformation. To underline the progressive realization of this vision, Goebbels turns to the “freche Provokation” of the move into the governmental quarter. Telescoping Speer's supposedly “*hell, klar, einfach und stilvoll*” renovations—while both gesturing to and justifying their excessive cost—the anecdote alludes to Berlin's future redevelopment and the ‘new’ NS architectural movement in general.

The speech collapses past, present, and future architectural construction and political progress into a single, symbolic image: the map of Berlin onto which the Führer's premonition of Germany's future is visualized in architectural representation.²²⁰ In Goebbels's account, representation equals architecture. Quoting from *Mein Kampf*, he draws a linear progression from 1924, Hitler's earliest designs for Berlin's architectural future; through the “große dramatische Umwälzungen” of the early struggle for power; to the present. “Aus Phantasien sind Pläne, aus

²¹⁸ Descriptions of Hitler as “Bauherr” diminished the role of individual architects—aside from Troost and Speer—as it was used interchangeably to describe Speer, Hitler, and the State itself. This description of Hitler also hearkened back to the archetypal “artist statesman” identity, alluding to Augustus as the classical figure of the “builder of empire,” and Bismarck. See: Scobie.

²¹⁹ “Die Architektur Wieder Zur Königin Der Künste Erhoben.’ Rede Dr. Goebbels Bei Der Eröffnung Der Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerks-Ausstellung.” *Völkischer Beobachter*, January 23 1938.

²²⁰ As Michaud writes, faith in the Nazi myth “could be shored up only by a double manipulation of historical time: by recalling past successes and anticipating successes yet to come. The object of this ‘art of eternity’ was to fuse the three dimensions of time in a religion of success and Aryan performance.” Michaud, xiv.

Plänen Projekte, und aus Projekten Wirklichkeiten geworden,” projecting this evolution into an ever more distant future. ‘Progress’ *and* continuity can be seen in the increasing scale of Hitler’s designs: “Die Maße haben sich geändert, aber die Baugesinnung ist dieselbe geblieben.”²²¹ Thus the supposedly uninterrupted progress of Germany’s political and architectural transformation, begun in 1932, Goebbels suggests, is now on display in the exhibition. The narrative simply excludes any possibility that things might have turned out otherwise—or that they might deviate from this course in the future.

In other words, architectural representation allows the future to be seen in advance, but only by the Führer or those with immediate access to him. The limited circulation of the designs is necessary, as noted above by Hitler, because it is supposedly threatened by those who would disrupt their realization.²²² The direct line from vision to reality is therefore dependent on confining accessibility to those whose will is “sufficient” to ensure realization.²²³ Watching Hitler sketch gives the initiated few access to his “vision” on the level of the imaginary—“in der Phantasie.” In other words, it allows them to *see like the Führer*, a skill which transforms viewing into an act of creation, giving them insight enough to “work toward” the Führer’s will.

Opening the first exhibition, in which the actual plans for Berlin’s reconstruction remained entirely unseen, with this narrative of absolute, synoptic vision positions the Führer as the sole

²²¹ “Die Architektur Wieder Zur Königin Der Künste Erhoben.’ Rede Dr. Goebbels Bei Der Eröffnung Der Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerks-Ausstellung.” For an incisive critique of Nazi futurity and the use of prospective, monumental architecture as an acceleration of time, see Eric Michaud and Christopher Fox, “National Socialist Architecture as an Acceleration of Time,” *Critical Inquiry* 19, no. 2 (1993).

²²² e.g. Hitler’s “Gegner...[ein] Konventikel von Verschwörern... beschäftigt mit finsternen Umsturzplänen.” “Die Architektur Wieder Zur Königin Der Künste Erhoben.’ Rede Dr. Goebbels Bei Der Eröffnung Der Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerks-Ausstellung.” And of course the Nazis would know the danger of criticism best of all: they had employed the Neues Bauen’s own photographs against them as evidence of their incompetence and poor building methods. And the result of this reverse propaganda campaign? The ousting of the Bauhaus from Weimar to Dessau and its eventual closure and exile of modernist architects.

²²³ Thus, Goebbels praises Hitler: “So fest glaubt dieser Mann an seine und an die Zukunft seiner Idee, daß er ganz darauf eingestellt ist, sie nicht nur im politischen, sondern auch auf allen anderen Gebieten des öffentlichen Lebens zu verwirklichen, dann, wenn seine Stunde gekommen ist.” Ibid. The narrative thus displays what Lefort describes as “the phantasmagoria of the Plan,” which turns society’s collective labor into a spectacle of self-transparency—for example, in architectural production; “the aim of transparency,” however, “turns out to be in contradiction with that of opacity...The ‘whole’ must remain outside its articulations and therefore a secret.” Lefort, “The Logic of Totalitarianism,” 288-89.

repository of a master plan, concealed but simultaneously visible *through him*. Only the leader possesses the synoptic vision to guide the production of the future and only he can ensure its eventual realization, enabled by his absolute, centralized command over the state.²²⁴ In their ability to offer the experience of a totalizing view, the models at the 1938 exhibitions, further, played on an established association between architectural miniatures and the sovereign's gaze.

Architectural models turn the social order into an image of spatialized perception—this empowering, synoptic view transforms the reality it represents into a homogeneous space, visualizing the rationalization of society in sculptural form. (Figs. II-5 & II-6) Models and especially model photographs at the NS architectural exhibitions made this single, absolute vantage point *symbolically* available to the public.²²⁵ Models visually approximated Hitler's position of power as the personification of the state's perspective—the organizing center and mastermind, producing and visualizing an articulated social and political order in architectural representation. Doing so, they linked the legibility of architectural representation to the body of the Führer and imposed this imaginary, interpretive image as the heuristic for visualizing the future

²²⁴ Hitler's speech at the second exhibition doubles down on this claim, making clear the danger posed to artistic production when it is revealed to the public. "*Früher* fühlten sich viele einzelne mehr oder weniger berechtigt, eine, ich darf wohl sagen, leichtfertige und oberflächliche Kritik an solchen Werken zu üben. Von dieser Kritik sind viele große und bedeutende Baukünstler verbittert, manches Mal geradezu in den Tod getrieben worden. Das hängt damit zusammen, daß der breiten Masse sehr wenig *Einblick* in die unermeßliche Arbeit zu eigen ist, die in solch einem Bauwerk verborgen liegt, daß sie nur zu leicht angeeifert durch berufsmäßige Kritiker, ebenfalls in den Fehler verfällt, Kritik zu üben, ohne zu erkennen, wie unendlich schwer die Arbeit, die Mühen und Sorgen derjenigen waren, denen diese Werke zu verdanken sind." "Führerrede Zur Eröffnung Der Architektur-Ausstellung. Adolf Hitler Über Die Baukunst Des Dritten Reiches.," *Völkischer Beobachter*, December 11 1938. The solution offered by the NS regime, of course, isn't to reveal the difficult work of preparation and planning, but rather to conduct this work away from the petty and uninitiated, presenting only finalized work to the public. The work to achieve this vision—the construction of the last five years—is claimed to be entirely oriented by the concealed image of Hitler's vision. Goebbels's speech thus illustrates the paradox arising from the NS appropriation of the democratic ideal of building a new society on a tabula rasa: "the image of a history which is being made at every moment proves to be absolutely contradicted by the image of a fixed history." "The Logic of Totalitarianism," 288.

²²⁵ As Helmut Puff writes, regarding the well-known frontispiece of Hobbes's *Leviathan*, images depicting "political figures towering over three-dimensional renderings of buildings yet-unbuilt seem to communicate...messages about a ruler's mastery of the social world via his mastery of scaled-down spaces...surveying the terrain is the sovereign's privilege." Helmut Puff, *Miniature Monuments: Modeling German History, Media and Cultural Memory* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 121. The sense of absolute legibility afforded by the model thus refers back to the sovereign's power, "[implying] a viewer whose place is central and whose vision is synoptic." Scott, 79. But this image is misleading, since models obscure the fact that this formal order "has no necessary relationship to the order of life as it is experienced by its residents." *Ibid.*, 4; 58. The abstraction from the social reality represented by the model is underscored by its lack of human forms, except where they are incorporated to show scale, thus appearing as part of the rationalized formal order on display.



Figures II-5 & II-6 - Hobbes Leviathan frontispiece (left), with a miniature city in the foreground; Hitler discussing architectural models (right) with Speer (at left) and a number of NS elite. Source: ullstein Bild

work of reconstructing Berlin and Germany's other *Führerstädte*, even as it remained ongoing in the present. Hence NS model photographs pointed simultaneously to two imaginary referents: the architecture they depicted, which remained largely unbuilt *and* the Führer's totalizing gaze that could see and thereby shape the future.

Yet the image of NS building produced at the 1.AA in January was still mostly retrospective—a fact brought into sharper relief by the media blitz the week after its opening announcing the “Neugestaltung deutscher Städte.” In December, on the other hand, at the 2.AA, the ratio of present to future buildings on display was dramatically inverted. The vast majority of the exhibition showed projects yet-unbuilt, again undifferentiated in representation—and yet, again, the ‘overview’ of NS building provided by the exhibition was radically incomplete. Elaborate displays of Berlin's and Munich's redevelopment were shown in the main galleries to either side of the central hall, surrounded by rooms of planned Ordensburgs, HJ-Jugendherbergen, and so on. But these exhibits showed the Berlin plans exclusively in the form of symbolic, individual projects. The displays featured just 16 buildings, only ten of which were drawn from highly truncated and decontextualized versions of the North-South and East-West-Axes—a fraction of the actual area of interest which covered well over half Berlin's metropolitan

area.²²⁶ Amid the partial, symbolic image of Berlin's architectural future was a single, crucial representative of its present: the New Reich Chancellery.

That is, over 1938, first announced with its topping out ceremony in August, the concealed, omniscient center of Führertum was revealed to be a real, existing place, localized in Berlin. The imaginary nature of the Führer's gaze notwithstanding, his centralization of power had indeed made possible Germany's very real, architectural transformation. Between the prelude in January and the exhibition in December, the expansion of German territory and the massive wave of building (or, rather, demolition) in Berlin, beginning with the New Chancellery's construction, seemingly fulfilled the claim that the Third Reich had entered a new phase of history, guided by and preemptively glimpsed in Hitler's architectural vision of the future. The New Reich Chancellery therefore offered the central evidence supporting the certainty of the accomplishment of all future building projects at the 2.AA. In representation, the intervening construction dividing actually existing from unbuilt architecture was neutralized, an insignificant detail—after all, the New Chancellery had appeared virtually overnight! Leaning on this central symbol of success, the 2.AA asserted the architectural representation of Führertum as the emblem (*Sinnbild*) and catalyst of the *Volk's* spiritual renewal and unification, and as evidence that its imperial transformation was already, irreversibly underway.

Hence, at the 2.AA, the New Chancellery was quite obviously the key symbolic object on display. As the first and only completed building of Berlin's redevelopment, it was the project's anchoring core on the ground *and* in the galleries of the *Haus der Kunst*, where its representation was inescapable. Displays of the New Chancellery physically bookended the prescribed trajectory

²²⁶ On display were: the New Chancellery, the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, Runder Platz, the Haus des Fremdenverkehrs, Thüringenhaus, Kameradschaftshaus des OKHs, the Allianz Versicherung headquarters, a Ufa movie theater, the Kameradschaftshaus der deutschen Künstler, the Agfa headquarters, Italian embassy, IG Farben headquarters, Deutscher Gemeindegtag, Moabiter Block, the Ost-West Durchbruch across the Museum Island, and the Wehrtechnische Fakultät.

through the halls, occupying the five galleries adjoining the central hall (Rooms 14-16 & 25-26, see Fig. II-4), making it impossible to miss.²²⁷ 58 objects, far more than any other building on display, depicted the structure.²²⁸ (Fig. II-7) The only building featured more than once in the

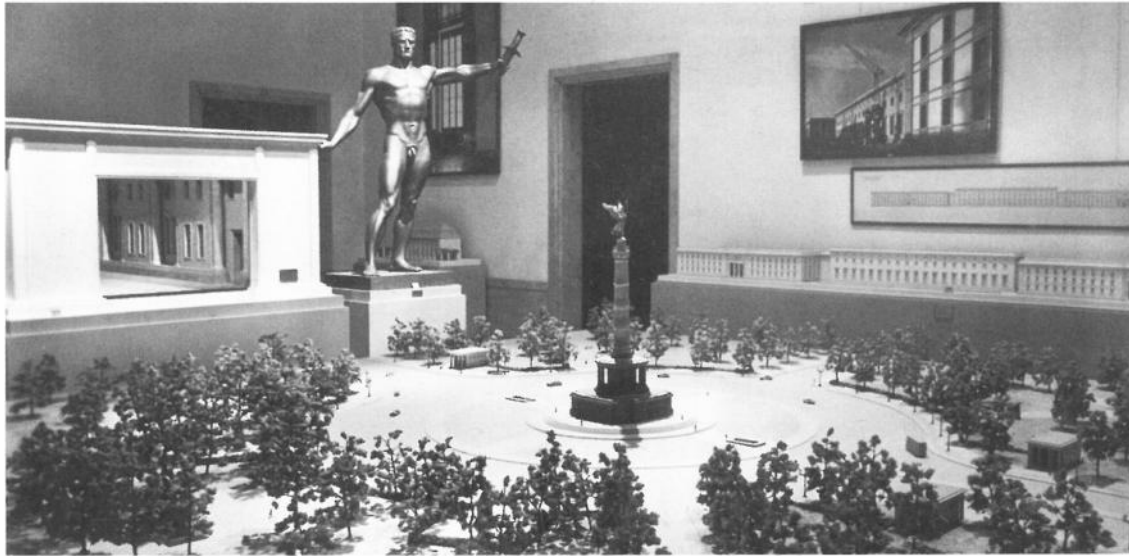


Figure II-7 – Postcard of the New Chancellery and Großer Stern displays at the 2.AA, from left: model of Honor Court, replica of Breker’s statue ‘Die Wehrmacht,’ the relocated Victory Column, the facade of the New Chancellery on Voßstraße, with enlarged photograph of the building under construction and elevation view of facade displayed above. Source: Mythos Germania, 82.

images of the catalog, appearing five times, its contractor (*Bauherr*) was simply listed as “Das Deutsche Reich.”²²⁹ The New Chancellery’s hyper-visibility unmistakably pointed back to Hitler’s central position in the regime and framed architectural production through the new symbolic center of Führertum. Not coincidentally the sole subject of the Berlin exhibit’s first room (Room 14), the New Chancellery was introduced by models of the interior and rear facade of Hitler’s office, alongside one of the portals on Voßstraße and the Round Room. (Figs. II-8 & II-9)

Gesturing to its dual function as symbol and bureaucratic organ of the Führer’s power, in

²²⁷ A rubber strip, “die den Besuchern...keine individuelle Entscheidung zuließ,” led visitors through the museum spaces, its route duplicated in the catalog. If the strip itself didn’t suffice, the museum also offered tours of the exhibition, which proved so popular they added an evening program for the second exhibition. Brantl, 55.

²²⁸ 19 models, 19 large-format photos, 16 marble samples and plaster mock-ups of details, and four plans and technical drawings, out of 366 total objects, in other words, nearly 16% of all items. For comparison, the Parteitagsgelände, the most prominently displayed architectural *ensemble* at the first exhibition in January, was shown in only 34 objects.

²²⁹ A designation shared only by the foreign embassies in Washington and Italy.

its spatial arrangement, the display asserted the New Chancellery's efficacy as vanguard of Berlin's reconstruction and administrative center of NS power. Passing through this first room, the visitor entered the grandest chamber (Room 15), filled with extravagant, two- and three-dimensional images of Berlin's redevelopment. (Fig. II-10) Framed by its present, provisional symbol and headquarters, this was not a utopia but, according to the Nazis, an inevitability.

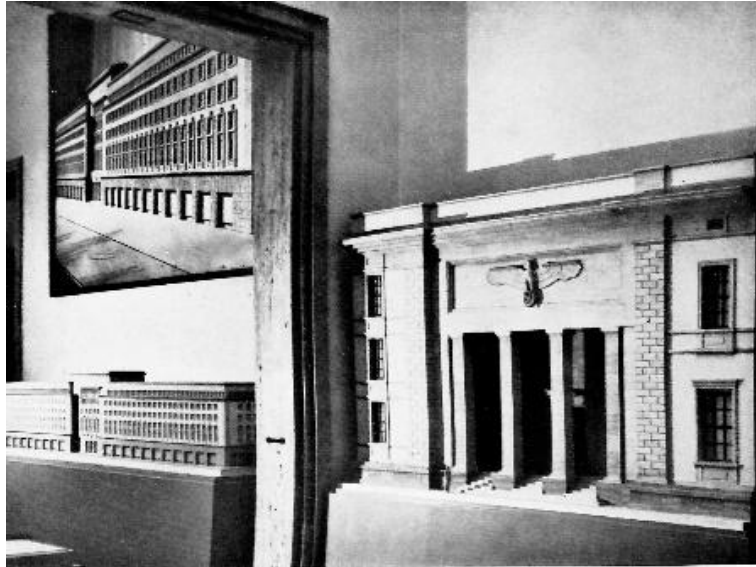


Figure II-8 – Photograph of the model of the portal to the Party Chancellery on Voßstraße in its display context from the exhibition catalog, pg. 10



Figure II-9 – Model of the portico and terrace outside Hitler's office on the New Chancellery's rear facade show own display in the exhibition catalog, pg. 8.



Figure II-10 – Room 15, photographed in the 2.AA catalog with the model of the New Reich Chancellery in the foreground, model photographs of Runder Platz, the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht and the breakthrough of the East-West-Axis on the Spree-Island visible on the walls in the background.

The New Chancellery’s mediation translated the symbolic and administrative center of Führertum, the operational link between architectural representation and realization, into an aestheticized experience of scopic mastery.²³⁰ The imaginary experience of visual mastery afforded by the scale models and enhanced by their photographic reproduction, the Nazis claimed, focalized the viewer’s gaze through a symbolic approximation of Hitler’s supreme, creative gaze. Both exhibitions but particularly the second, therefore, had a pedagogical function: “Das Volk soll an der Entwicklung dieser Werke *selber sehen*...Dann wird es...geschult werden im Sinne der

²³⁰ In his commentary on the model photographs of the New Chancellery in *Deutsche Bauhütte*, Nazi art historian A.E. Brinckmann argues that, in light of the miniatures’ precision, “Man muß...an den Willen zur *unbedingten Anschaulichkeit* denken.” A. E. Brinckmann, “Modellräume Vom Neubau Der Reichskanzlei,” *Deutsche Bauhütte Zentralblatt für deutsche Bauwirtschaft* (1939): 53 original emphasis. Brinckmann claims, first, “In der beherrschten Form [der neuen Reichskanzlei] erkennen wir die wiedergesammelte und nun ganz unermessliche Kraft eines Volkes...vom Willen des Führers bestimmt, vom Geist der Künstler gestaltet, monumentalisiert der [Bau] die Gesinnung eines großen tapferen Volkes.” Importantly, its representational mediation in miniature, which Brinckmann indicates as a “Formidee” inherited from antiquity, *adds to* rather than subtracting from this image. Through their graspable nature and photographic reproduction, the models convey, “in *erregender Wirklichkeit*,” the key symbolic features of the architecture’s representation of the Volk and, through their mobility, make this vision available to the wider domestic and international public. *Ibid.*

Erziehung zu unseren eigenen künstlerischen Auffassungen,” Hitler promised in his opening speech in December.²³¹ The exhibitions would teach the *Volk* to see like the Führer. Through his eyes, the embodied center of the omniscient state, visual mastery over architectural space appeared equally as mastery over time, erasing the interval of construction as a foregone conclusion—and, as we shall see, ensuring and legitimizing Berlin’s uninterrupted demolition.

For 1938 was in fact a revolutionary turning point for Germany, as the 1. & 2.AA intimated. The transformation of Germany’s government institutions and capital, however, in no way resembled the idealized NS fantasy of controlled, unidirectional architectural development. Hitler’s consolidation of power in late 1937 through 1938, as described in the introduction, amounted to the creation of a political *tabula rasa*, clearing away obstacles for the creation of a new form of state power. This transformation was, further, concomitant with the violent production of a *physical tabula rasa*. Freed from any remaining internal opposition, the increasingly radicalized and tortuous structures of NS government were unleashed to destructive effect in the realms of military, racial, and *architectural* policy. Punctuated by the annexations of Austria in March and the Sudetenland in October—and the New Chancellery’s public announcement in August—the ceaseless, mediated spectacle of construction gave shape to the idealized outcomes of the Führer’s experimental, “high-risk approach” to rule.²³² The race to finish the New Chancellery was driven by the necessity of providing a concrete image of order, some symbolic illustration of Hitler’s as-yet-unrevealed vision of the future, as the NS state went about unbuilding Germany’s symbolic-spatial-political topography, beginning with its representational center.

Berlin’s redevelopment was purported to offer the *Volk* guiding vision of the Third Reich’s new imperial, monumental order—purging it of “Die Schandfleckle aus der Gründer- und

²³¹ "Führerrede Zur Eröffnung Der Architektur-Ausstellung. Adolf Hitler Über Die Baukunst Des Dritten Reiches.."

²³² Kershaw, "'Working Towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship."

Systemzeit.”²³³ But in 1938, the “ganze Stadtbild beherrschenden Denkmäler” promised by Hitler had yet to appear.²³⁴ Instead, as the capital’s “tiefgreifende Veränderungen” and “ungeheure Wandlung” began in earnest, “so verblaßt sich allmählich das uns vertraute Bild Berlins.”²³⁵ But Berlin didn’t appear so much to ‘fade’ as to be ripped apart piece by piece, by the rhizomatic outgrowth of demolition and construction sites.²³⁶ As Speer’s crews tore into what they described as an “unbebautes Gebiet,” a more accurate description would have read: ‘ein *abzubauendes* Gebiet.’²³⁷ Goebbels acknowledged, at the 2.AA, “Man hat...den Eindruck, als sei Deutschland insgesamt ein großer neuer Bauplatz geworden.”²³⁸ Goebbels thus implored the Volk to look to the *models* displayed at the architecture exhibitions as symbols of Hitler’s guiding vision and, above all, to the architectural surrogate of Führertum: the New Chancellery.

²³³ Carl M. Ring, "Die Neugestaltung Der Reichshauptstadt," *Deutsche Bauhütte Zentralblatt für deutsche Bauwirtschaft* 14 (1938): 187. Speer’s reconstruction would, the Nazis claimed, rationalize the “architektonische Instinktlosigkeit” of the “unendlich[es] Häusermeer” of contemporary Berlin. Robert Scholz, "Das Neue Berlin - Die Größte Aufgabe Der Architektur," *Völkischer Beobachter. Norddeutsche Ausgabe*, January 29, 1938.

²³⁴ Hitler, 290.

²³⁵ "Berlins Neues Gesicht Wird Geformt," *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, April 12 1938.

²³⁶ Newsreels of the Grundsteinlegung of the Haus des Fremdenverkehrs, for example, showed the Brandenburg Gate almost completely hidden behind debris and construction equipment. *Baubeginn in Berlin, Bavaria Tonwoche* (Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, Berlin 1938), 385. Hitler would caricature the fears those disoriented by the surrounding upheaval at the New Chancellery’s topping out and dedication ceremonies as well as the opening of the 2.AA, indicting their lack of historical consciousness. Those who would ask “Müssen wir gerade jetzt soviel bauen?” or complain “man weiß gar nicht, wenn man irgendwo 3 oder 4 Monate nicht gewesen ist, ob das noch da ist, wenn man dann wieder kommt,” reveal themselves as someone “der nicht von heute auf morgen denken kann.” Hitler as cited in "Die Baukunst Im Dritten Reich," *Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro.*, December 10 1938, 177-8; Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*. Thus, those who cannot understand the necessity of building either lack the historical vision—and thereby necessitate the guidance of an absolute leader—or reveal allegiance to forces seeking to disrupt the Volk’s reunification. As Claude Lefort asserts, under totalitarian rule “the principle of a division internal to society is denied...All the signs of such a division, which have in no sense disappeared, are attributed to the existence of social strata (kulaks, bourgeois) deriving from the old order or to elements accused of working for foreign imperialism.” Lefort, "The Logic of Totalitarianism," 285.

Simply because the topic at hand is architecture does not eliminate the threat of violent expulsion to “protect” the “integrity” of the Volksgemeinschaft. Those same political detractors supplied the vast majority of the slave labor at the concentration camp stoneworks, quarries, and brickyards in Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, and Oranienburg. See: Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The Ss, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy*; and essays by Winfried Meyer, ">>Rom in den Schatten stellen<< - NS-Monumentalbauten, Antikenrezeption und Sklavenarbeit," and Christel Trouvé, "Strafkommando Klinkerwerk - KZ-Zwangsarbeit für >>Germania<<," in Thorau and Schaulinski, 130-41; 52-9. As Michaud writes, “...the monuments erected or projected by the National Socialists to incarnate the community of the people, which were therefore planned as common graves for a heroic race of soldier-artists—cannot be separated from the refusal to provide some people with any grave at all...The gigantic mausoleums imitated from the past and destined for the eternally heroic Volksgemeinschaft correspond to the anonymity of mass graves, of gas chambers, and of crematory ovens, to a radical anonymity that was to erase from history even the very name of the Jewish people.” Michaud and Fox, 232.

²³⁷ Albert Speer, "Das Künftige Gesicht Der Reichshauptstadt," *Völkischer Beobachter. Norddeutsche Ausgabe*, January 28, 1938.

²³⁸ But, not to worry, according to Goebbels, this work was guided by the Führer, personification of the “Einheitlichkeit, die Konzentration der Mittel und die durchschlagende Kraft der Projekte.” Robert Scholz, "Architektur Und Staatsführung," *ibid.*, December 11 1938.

If this was the “Gründung” of the “Erneuerungsepoche,” as Hitler would call it at his speech at the 2.AA, the Nazis’ had already built a monument to it—albeit a provisional one.²³⁹ The New Chancellery was thus the crucial link between the fragmented representation of the future and the fragmenting process of its realization. Its framing function at the 2.AA, according to the VB, pointed to its “ganz außerordentliche und im Umkreis des ringsherum entstehenden und geplanten ebenso führende Stellung.”²⁴⁰ Since it was (nearly) finished, it was “Auftakt” and “Beispiel” of Berlin’s redevelopment on the ground and metonymic, material guarantor of *all other objects on display*.²⁴¹ The architectural models illustrated Hitler’s synoptic gaze, which could see the world not as it was but as it *would be*; they stood in for the *absence* of a unified image of the future from representation. The New Chancellery likewise stood in for, promising even as it did not reveal, the realization of an “already known future, a reality that in principle [was] already mastered,” as it materialized and localized the Führer’s gaze, the “point of view of the state.”²⁴² The 2.AA’s marginally expanded image of the architectural future therefore asserted Berlin’s very demolition as evidence of the Führer’s and the New Chancellery’s efficacy. But, hardly the originating point of Berlin’s redevelopment, the New Chancellery had in fact *followed* demolition underway since

²³⁹ “In der Nachwelt werden einmal die Jahre 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938 schon als etwas mehr gelten als für manche zurückgebliebene Zeitgenossen. Man wird damit die Epoche der größten Auferstehung des deutschen Volkes, der Gründung eines gewaltigen, großen, starken Reiches verbinden!” “Die Baukunst Im Dritten Reich.”

²⁴⁰ Wilhelm Rüdiger, “Schau Nationalsozialistischen Bauwillens. Erster Gang Durch Die Architektur- Und Kunsthandwerk-Ausstellung,” *Völkischer Beobachter*, December 10 1938.

²⁴¹ Schönberger and Arnold point to the unfinished floors, mosaics, and interior decor, on which construction continued well into 1939, and plans for renovations to the Reception Room. Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*, 66-68.; Arnold and Janick, 78-79.

²⁴² Lefort, “The Logic of Totalitarianism,” 288; 80. As Lefort reminds us, this is an inherited image from democratic society. Without the hierarchy of social order produced by the King, in a society “which no longer has recourse to a transcendent guarantee of its order...the state alone appears to all and represents itself to itself as the sole instituting principle, as the great actor that possesses the means of social transformation and the knowledge of all things. It is the emergence of this ‘point of view of the state’ - of a state potentially at the centre of power and knowledge - that makes possible the formidable expansion of bureaucracies...on the alleged basis of their sovereign distance from those who are administrated.” *Ibid.*, 280. Onto this point of view of the state, in Nazism, the Führer, with his mythical powers of transformative vision resulting from his concentration of the Volk’s will, is reasserted as the embodiment of the apparatus itself and all of the spiritual and institutional forces it wields. The dual representational-administrative function of the New Chancellery likewise positions it as enabling the attachment of embodied sovereign and omnipotent, rationalized state.

1936.²⁴³ And its appearance did not magically reverberate in the sudden emergence of the other monumental buildings; rather, it simply authorized Berlin's increasingly destructive erasure.

As 'prelude' und 'paradigm,' its construction bought the regime time to complete its initial planning and simultaneous demolition of the city.²⁴⁴ As Hitler not only acknowledges but highlights in his speeches, the Berlin plans were concealed because they were *not finished* and thus required protection from criticism—demolition therefore cleared the way for a design that would continue to be revised well into the war. (Fig. II-11) And while this work began as careful deconstruction, salvaging and repurposing building materials, by May 1940 it progressed, at Speer's order, to explosive demolition, for which allied bombing raids later provided convenient, incidental assistance.²⁴⁵ (Figs. II-12 & II-13) By 1942 there *still* was nothing resembling a comprehensive, unified plan guiding action, in terms of Berlin's representational architecture.

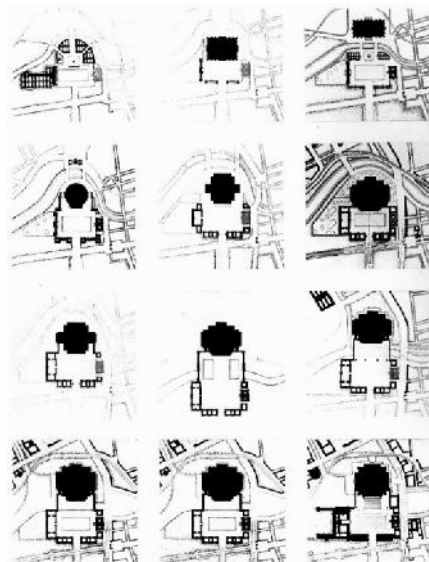


Figure II-11– Revisions to plans for the Great Hall on Adolf-Hitler-Platz between 1936 and 1942. Source: Reichhardt and Schäche, pg 110.

²⁴³ Reichhardt and Schäche, 119.; Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 171. Speer's office had been allocated 70 million Reichsmarks annually "to buy and demolish property to make way for Speer's new buildings." Martin Kitchen, "Germania," in *Speer: Hitler's Architect* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 58.

²⁴⁴ As Raul Hilberg notes, the dissolution of rationality in NS state operations was partially the result of the "virtually unfathomable" fact that "planning [did] not precede action," instead "measures were instituted without a goal identified or even in sight." Hilberg, "The Relevance of Behemoth Today," 261.

²⁴⁵ Reichhardt and Schäche, 155, 46-8.



Figures II-12 & II-13 – Demolition for the re-laying of the Spree for the Great Hall's construction on Roonstraße ca. 1939.
 Source: Reichhardt and Schüche, pp. 154, 155.

Indeed, the plans could not have been completed because they were directed toward and dependent on resources and labor acquired through militarized imperial expansion, the goals of which remained undefined even *within* the administration. For that very reason, the New Chancellery was an absolute necessity: it stood alone in Berlin's eroding urban landscape, holding the place of the future monumental image of Volk and Reich, as its construction ground to a halt.

The New Chancellery's construction functioned as an experimental test-run and symbolic success story of the mobilization of the GBI, affording primacy to representational building over both housing and other concerns of re-armament; and operating as a model for similar projects in other cities. In each case, however, the image of architectural production advertised in propaganda had little to nothing to do with the reality of urban planning on the ground. Indeed, internally, the New Chancellery's construction had in fact made evident the fiction of the state's 'streamlined' take-over of the building industry.²⁴⁶ Most importantly: its experimental construction had

²⁴⁶ It was the prime example of the chaotic, overlapping, and disordered operation of NS state: following a series of costly and evidently purposeless renovations of the old Chancellery, Hitler ordered its extravagant replacement, which would be obsolete in less than 10 years. Nevermind the future: the New Chancellery was *already* of limited use, due to the problematic design of its administrative spaces and primacy of its representational function.

confirmed that Berlin's redevelopment was inconceivable without military expansion. Despite round-the-clock, 12 hour shifts, faced with the growing labor crisis in 1938, its realization necessitated the import of foreign workers, and was *still* not complete by January 1939.²⁴⁷

But, outfitted with this single 'success,' at least in terms of its public image, throughout 1939, the GBI continued its work throughout the city. That is, the lack of a plan in no way translated to the suspension or slowing of NS building activities at large. Beginning in 1938, the GBI pursued two main goals: acquiring and demolishing privately held property to make way for (the unfinished plans for) Berlin's NS architecture; and rehousing displaced 'Aryans,' facilitated by the "Schachtung" of Jews in specified areas of the city (i.e. ghettos) and, later, deportation to concentration and death camps.²⁴⁸ Both aims were complicated by the war, which altered material conditions for building and further exacerbated the housing crisis, already worsened by the GBI. As carefully implemented demolition turned explosive, the 'Räumung' of Berlin's Jewish population was likewise euphemistically recoded as 'Evakuierung.'²⁴⁹ Berlin had been home to the second largest urban population of Jews in the Reich, after Vienna, with around 82,788 as of 1939. By the end of the war, its Jewish population had dwindled to less than 6,000.²⁵⁰ As with the construction of the New Reich Chancellery—though notably without the publicity—the eviction

²⁴⁷ Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*, 62. This problem only worsened throughout 1939: "Bei Bauprojekten, die gleichzeitig mit der Reichskanzlei durchgeführt wurden...und die ebenfalls an feste Termine gebunden waren, führte der Arbeitermangel zu erheblichen Schwierigkeiten." Ibid., 63. Efforts to fill the gaps by shuffling workers around from various other national projects resulted in the slogan "Jeder Bauarbeiter einmal in Berlin." Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Reichhardt and Schäche, 169. In their groundbreaking analysis of the GBI's involvement in the persecution, expropriation, and deportation of Berlin's Jewish population, Schäche and Reichhardt identify Speer's office's creation of 'Judenreine Gebiete' around the city, especially in Charlottenburg and Wilmersdorf. These areas of the city were both partially slated for demolition themselves and offered housing for 'Aryan' citizens, displaced by building and bombing alike. While the regime promised construction of 20,000 new residences per year, in 1938, only around 12,000 were actually built, as industries were squeezed by both re-armament and representational construction. Meanwhile, around 45,000 housing units were to be sacrificed for the North-South-Axis, compared to a relatively modest figure of only 7,000 for the East-West-Axis. At least 23,765 of these residences belonged to Berlin's Jewish population. Though this number accounted in total for only around 4% of the city's available apartments, the figure obscures the fact that, since many of the residences owned by Jews in the southern areas of the city were Großwohnungen, accommodating four or more people, the number of displaced persons translates to ca. 150-200,000 residents. Ibid., 153-8, 77.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 171.

²⁵⁰ Around 50,000 Jewish persons were deported to Theresienstadt or Vernichtungslager. Ibid., 178.

and deportation of Berlin's Jews, in service of both the NS representational building program and the "Endlösung," worked as a test-case for similar actions, implemented in other cities.²⁵¹

Thus, in spite of all their material failings, intermedial representations of the New Chancellery and other, isolated, incomplete NS building projects successfully drew attention away from and, further, legitimized state-sponsored violence, by channeling their legibility through symbolic space framed by the Führer's gaze and model image of Berlin's imperial future. As the representational screen covering the administrative center of power, the New Chancellery superimposed a symbol of the unseen, unbuilt future over the unbuilding of the present. As the Führer progressively withdrew from direct involvement in state operations, this veneer covering the vacuum of his authority served as the inverse index—and, the Nazis claimed, the only real measure—of the dissolution of the state apparatus *and* its destructive effects, visible in Berlin's rampant demolition and the deportation of its Jewish population.²⁵²

But behind the New Chancellery's abundant visibility in representation lurked its utter emptiness: the provisional instrumentalization of architecture to conceal not even the next instantiation of Führertum but the production of an ever-larger empty space to be filled by its eventual invention. Set against the landscape of Berlin's architectural transformation, the New Chancellery's image directed the public's gaze dangerously close to the city's destruction. And as the war began, it remained the only symbolic mediator connecting the very real *tabula rasa* of Germany's capital to its imaginary monumental future. Epitomized by the gaping hole in front of the burned-out Reichstag, the voids in Berlin's historic urban landscape would not only continue

²⁵¹ Ibid., 172.

²⁵² In the common parlance, we would understand that here, "the Emperor has no clothes;" in this version, "the totalitarian, too...knows very well that the Emperor is naked...yet in contrast to traditional authority, what he adds is not 'but nevertheless' but 'just because': just because the Emperor is naked we must hold together the more, work for the Good, our Cause is all the more necessary." Zizek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 252. Just because the plans for Berlin aren't finished, work must begin before it is disrupted by the corruption of non-believers. Just because there is nothing to see yet, the future's realization must be ensured through demolition, compensated for by the symbolic image of the world yet-to-come.

to grow exponentially, but also remain decidedly empty for the Third Reich's duration.

II. *The New Reich Chancellery's Gravitational Force on Film: Horizon of NS Futurity*

But the New Chancellery's utility did not end with the exhibitions at the *Haus der Kunst*—rather, it also proved an extremely productive ideological symbol in cinematic representation. In the following analysis of the New Chancellery's mediation in newsreels and the *Kulturfilm Das Wort aus Stein*, I claim that the provisional architecture framing Hitler as the embodied Führer is shown to exert an affective and temporal gravitational force, symbolizing Germany's political trajectory in centripetal movement. As this movement approaches the provisional center of power, it is both accelerated and redirected toward the future architectural center of imperial Berlin—which, as in the preceding analysis, is visualized only in the empty space of its possibility.

The New Reich Chancellery's first appearance on film asserted its symbolic function framing the Führer's body as the absolute center of power in the Third Reich—visualizing this power in movement in and through architectural space. The building's opening ceremony at the diplomatic welcome on January 13, 1939 was showcased in NS newsreels.²⁵³ An episode from the *Deutsche Tonwoche*, released on January 18 highlights the opulent interior, and illustrates the Führer's political power, his gravitational pull, in the movement of bodies, structured by the architecture or, rather, by its cinematic mediation.²⁵⁴ Opening with shots from a moving vehicle and pans along the facade from Wilhelmplatz to Voßstraße, a voiceover announces the “neues Repräsentationshaus für die Staatsführung des Dritten Reiches.” That “Staatsführung” is concentrated solely in the person of Hitler is immediately apparent. The camera adopts a subjective

²⁵³ *Neujahrsempfang Für Das Diplomatische Korps in Berlin, Deutsche Tonwoche* (Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, Berlin1939), 368. See also: BAFA *Ufa Tonwoche* 437/1939 18.1.1939; and 910.1 *Deutsche Monatsschau* 11.2.1939.

²⁵⁴ The reportage accompanying the event also imputed a temporal dimension to the building's representational power, localized in Hitler's office. Robert Scholz's account in the *VB*, gushes: “Man weiß, wenn man in diesem Raum steht, daß er neu geschaffen wurde; aber es ist das Wunderbare, daß man bereits diesen Raum als historische Stätte empfindet, als den Ort, zu dem sich künftighin die Gedanken und die Liebe aller Deutschen hinwenden werden.” Robert Scholz, “Sinnbild Des Reiches,” *Völkischer Beobachter. Norddeutsche Ausgabe*, January 13 1939.

perspective, entering through one of the portals in a forward tracking shot, which fades directly to the entrance to “Das Arbeitszimmer des Führers.” As the doors swing open, the camera tracks forward, entering in a continuous take. The heart of Führertum’s purported administrative function is telegraphed by an exaggerated pile of books and papers on Hitler’s desk.²⁵⁵ But the voiceover reminds us, “Der gewaltige Bau der neuen Reichskanzlei dient auch den großen repräsentativen Empfangen der Regierung”—again, the internal bureaucratic processes of rule are concealed behind and subordinate to their symbolic mediation in representational architecture.

In light of Hitler’s new status as imperial Führer, the newsreel positions the New Chancellery as the orienting, gravitational center of international politics. It does so by structuring camera movement and spatial articulation in montage. Following the diplomatic corps’ arrival and progress through the representational interior, the camera and narrative drive toward Hitler in the center power. We view the motorcade entering through the Siedler building in a crane-shot, followed by a forward tracking shot, assuming the diplomats’ point of view as they approach the Honor Court’s portico. The camera then maintains this continuously mobile, subjective perspective in a series of tracking shots. Each space seems to propel the camera into the next: in the Mosaic Room, the massive doors to the Round Room swing open, revealing the entrance to the Marble Gallery; passing through this portal the camera gazes toward the hall’s darkened, distant terminus. Only in the Reception Hall—that is, only in the presence of the Führer—is this procession brought to a halt. Here, the architecture’s ‘disciplinary’ effect is visualized in a static shot of the uniformed corps, stiffly aligned at attention along the edge of the rug. The Führer, on the other hand, moves freely, shaking the hands of each in turn before leading the procession back to the Honor Court

²⁵⁵ Notably, in light of the New Chancellery’s unfinished state, the desk, like the rest of the furniture, is a provisional stand in, which would later be replaced by furnishings of Speer’s own design.

and their waiting cars.²⁵⁶ The movement of the camera and the bodies thus appear oriented and directed by their attraction to the Führer's body and his command over space.

Outside his gravitational pull, amplified and anchored in the New Reich Chancellery, is visualized in an extreme, bodily image. An elevated shot of Wilhelmplatz captures a sea of ecstatic bodies rushing toward and surrounding the Siedler building (with ten cameramen submerged in their midst). The montage then shifts between perspectives, contrasting the serene center of power on the Führer's balcony with the chaotic crush of bodies closing in underneath it: frenetic cuts and pans in the crowd alternate with wide, static shots of Hitler.²⁵⁷ Cameras on the roof of the Siedler building approximate the Führer's elevated perspective as he greets the crowd, their upturned faces fixed on him from every angle.²⁵⁸ The montage of the mass, surging toward the center of power, identifies the architecture and, within it, the Führer as the unequivocal, originating point of their orientation and unification.²⁵⁹ Framing Hitler in the fortress of Führertum, the New Chancellery structures a symbolic-spatial hierarchy, creating order from the movement of the mass, though only as it is mediated through the cameras and montage. Cuts construct visual, spatial coherence out of the chaotic, roiling space. The architectural space, as *Kulisse*, the newsreel suggests, both draws the *Volksgemeinschaft* and the representatives of other world powers into itself, and

²⁵⁶ In another newsreel, a wider shot shows the figures aligned along the border of the rug pitifully shrunken by the oversized and empty space. The gaping, empty center of the room seems ridiculous and Hitler's slow progress from handshake to handshake is stilted and tedious. As if to confirm this overarching sense of discomfort, at the end of the line, Hitler gazes uncomfortably upwards, directly into the camera. *Ufa Tonwoche* 437/1939 18.1.1939

²⁵⁷ As Siegfried Kracauer describes in his analysis of Nazi newsreels, "Hitler," therefore, "alone appears as an individual...an end in himself...no sooner do the incessantly moving cameras light upon Hitler than they come to a standstill. By stopping momentarily their ceaseless motion they feature him as the true source and goal of the mass below." Siegfried Kracauer, "The Conquest of Europe on the Screen: The Nazi Newsreel, 1939-40," *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 82, no. 1 (2015): 172-73.

²⁵⁸ As Kracauer notes, the multiple cameras, cutting between partial close ups of individuals and wide shots of their seething mass produce "a [visual] movement leading from the mass to the individual and back to the mass dimension. The movement's meaning is obvious: it isolates individuals for the sole purpose of drowning them in the crowd...Whereas these close shots blend anarchy and ecstasy, the long shots reveal a crowd which, in contrast to its elements, affects the audience as an entity...Cameras set far above show the compactness of the mass, and disclose the strange beauty of this enormous and eternally surging body." *Ibid.*, 169. We will return to these cinematic strategies again in terms of Hitler's eroticized fascination in chapter v, when they are revived by Joachim Fest in 1977.

²⁵⁹ In a sense, it is less that the building provides the *Kulisse* for the event, so much as that the event provides the opportunity to showcase the new building through modern, cinematic strategies of representation.

establishes a hierarchical order of power subordinate to the Führer.

In addition to illustrating the symbolic-spatial organization of Hitler's power, the New Reich Chancellery's cinematic mediation was also employed to symbolically map *temporal* movement onto the architecture in the *Kulturfilm Das Wort aus Stein*. Released on May 11, 1939, *Das Wort aus Stein* transforms the models from the 2.AA into imaginary, full-size landscapes, exploring the future urban images of Munich, Augsburg, Berlin, and Chiemsee.²⁶⁰ Even its genre was self-reflexively modern and futuristic: the technologically cutting edge *Kulturfilm*.²⁶¹ The 18-minute-long film features three sequences, following a prologue, which journey through each city in the above-listed order. In each, aerial and crane shots first orient the viewer in the contemporary landscape; the camera then cuts to street views of building sites, often already under construction. NS architecture then appears out of thin air, as dissolves superimpose footage of the models onto building sites or on top of current buildings, splicing the images with real footage, including automobile and foot traffic. The models' appearance illustrates the acceleration of time through

²⁶⁰ *Das Wort aus Stein* was included by UFA-Head Nicholas Kaufmann among a list of recent Kulturfilme featuring artistic and cultural works received "mit besonderem Erfolg." Peter Zimmermann, *Geschichte Des Dokumentarischen Films in Deutschland: Band 3 Drittes Reich 1933-1945* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 2005), 136. In addition to its inclusion in general programming, it was the Vorfilm at the "ostentatious" premier of Karl Ritter's *Im Kampf gegen den Weltfeind* in the Berliner Lustgarten in June, 1939. *Ibid.*, 614. Clips of the film are displayed in the permanent exhibitions of 'Mythos Germania,' from Berliner Unterwelten, and the Berlinische Galerie.

²⁶¹ *Kulturfilme* are chiefly defined by their ideological content and technical specifications: short films, non-narrative (in a traditional sense) and distinct from reportage, although they usually include documentary footage. The didactic book *Filmspiegel. Ein Brevier aus der Welt des Films* from Rudolf Oertel "definiert den Kulturfilm somit vor allem als Einsatz- und Experimentierfeld für technische Innovationen aller Art, wie Zeitlupen- und Zeitrafferkameras, Unterwasserkameras, Teleobjektive und Farbfilm." Reiner Ziegler, *Kunst Und Architektur Im Kulturfilm 1919-1945* (Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2003), 34. As will become evident below, these technical innovations and experimentations were crucial in the making of *Das Wort aus Stein*; the film uses cutting edge special effects to fulfill its role as "der große Zauberer, der uns Geheimnisse schauen läßt, die selbst die kühnste Phantasie nicht großartiger und bunter ersinnen könnte." Oertel as cited in Jeanpaul Goergen, "Der Giftige, Giftige Apfel. Kulturfilm Im Nationalsozialismus," in *Kulturfilm Im "Dritten Reich"*, ed. Ramón Reichert (Wien: Synema, 2006), 24. Though their use predated the Third Reich, as of 1934, *Kulturfilme* were a required accompaniment for every feature-length film. and filmmakers were encouraged to use the medium to its full capacity, developing innovative aesthetic strategies to communicate their ideological messages. Their function, as articulated by guidelines from the propaganda ministry, was "[den Kinobesucher] 'seelisch, sinnlich oder geistig [zu] emporheben oder bereichern'. Das 'innere Erleben' solle aufgebaut, das 'Schönheitsempfinden entwickelt' und die 'Heimatliebe' gestärkt werden." *Ibid.*, 31. Circulating widely, even in rural areas, these films disseminated ideological values to the general public, through subjects as diverse as x-rays, aborigines, factory cleanliness, and architecture. In its use in Kulturfilme, as Reiner Ziegler writes, "Architektur wird...gleichzeitig die Aufgabe zugewiesen, einer idealen Regierungsform bzw. dem vorbildlichen Staatsgefüge den für jeden sichtbaren und erlebbaren Rahmen zu liefern." Ziegler, 201. See Ramón Reichert, *Kulturfilm Im "Dritten Reich"* (Wien: Synema, 2006).

the transformation of space; then, using footage shot with a reflex camera at slow speeds on a specially designed stabilizing track, the film brings the viewer *into* the space of the future, replicating mobile street-views in tracking shots and pans across the models' illuminated facades. A dramatic Wagnerian score accompanies the film throughout.

The moments of accelerated architectural transformation are furthermore embedded in a broader geographic narrative, which travels from the original urban center of NS power in Munich to its new imperial center in Berlin, and, eventually, into the provisional center of this center: Hitler's office in the New Reich Chancellery.²⁶² Another film had already set the precedent for this spatio-temporal architectural narration. The opening of Leni Riefenstahl's 1936 *Olympia* cinematically organizes time and space, mediating temporal acceleration in architectural transformation, constructing a linear narrative of progress, oriented by its destination: the representational center of NS Berlin. In the film's opening, the camera constructs order out of the ruins of the Acropolis—an architectural space without a center.²⁶³ The montage navigates and increasingly organizes the space, transforming an inscrutable mass of stones and fog into increasingly identifiable ruins, fragmented statues, and finally living bodies. (Fig. II-14) This process is then repeated on a larger scale, following the Olympic torch—the camera accompanies the runner on foot and then zooms out to an aerial map of Europe, tracking his progress from Athens to Belgrade, Sofia, Budapest, Prague, and Vienna, each city visualized in silhouettes of its

²⁶² The movement toward the center of power thus allows the viewer to see and experience (on the level of the imaginary) the Führer's *dynamic* transformative gaze. The cinematically mediated transformation of space, paired with center-oriented movement illustrates the Führer's role as "passion accelerator." Michaud and Fox, 226. As Michaud writes "National Socialism forces each...individual[] to cast onto his own present the same gaze that Hitler casts onto 'his' people. Hitler's gaze is a retrospective one set on the past and the present from the future of the Volksgemeinschaft. It is the gaze of an artist...[outliving] himself by outliving the body politic, bodies that have been turned to stone by his artistic gaze." Ibid., 228. This metaphorical logic is illustrated in the prologue, analyzed below.

²⁶³ Eisenstein, Le Corbusier, and Choisy all write about the Acropolis's sequential, spatial narrative. Rather than being organized around a single point, navigation of the space produces different visual tableaux as the visitor moves progressively around the space. At each visual interval, a different structure is centrally positioned, framed by the surrounding buildings. See: Sergei M. Eisenstein, Yve-Alain Bois, and Michael Glenny, "Montage and Architecture," *Assemblage*, no. 10 (1989).

iconic buildings. Eventually, we arrive at Werner March's Olympic stadium in Berlin in 1936, where the mythical past overtakes the present, passing on the eternal 'Völkisch' spirit in the flame ignited above the field. Whereas *Olympia* tours through the imperial, urban centers of the mythical past, *Das Wort aus Stein* limits its movement to highlight only the development of the modern NS empire. And instead of steadily moving from past to present, here we watch the present dissolve into the future, over and over.



Figure II-14 – Screen-captures of the opening sequence of Riefenstahl's *Olympia*.

The representational logic of the repetitive, circular narrative is introduced in the prologue: opening on a quarry in a peaceful mountainside, a cliff face is blasted apart by an explosion. The revolutionary violence required to create a *tabula rasa* on which the people's new body will rise is thus shown in the production of raw material through physical destruction. (A different kind of productive violence is also incidentally present in the barely-visible bodies laboring among the stones, likely inmates at one of the concentration camp stone-quarries) The boulder rolls down the hill, undergoing another, more seamless transformation, as a dissolve superimposes Josef Thorak's

sculpture *Denkmal der Arbeit* onto it. (Fig. II-15) In each of the following sequences, the violent, preemptive work of demolition has already taken place or is only implicitly visible, as the images of the models erase and supplant the present urban landscape. The *process* of construction is thus elided as an ultimately inconsequential interval, at once symbolically visualized and concealed by its cinematic acceleration in the dissolve. The multiple repetitions that follow hammer home, in dulling detail, both the wide reach of Hitler’s plans for the Reich, and the ‘unified’ architectural image of the monumental future—which is purely the product of its cinematic mediation.



Figure II-15 – Screen-captures from the prologue of *Das Wort aus Stein*

As in *Olympia*, *Das Wort aus Stein*’s trajectory is directed toward Berlin. After the prologue and tours of Munich, and Augsburg, the Berlin sequence is announced with a dramatic swell in the music.²⁶⁴ An aerial shot from a plane brings the viewer along the *Landwehrkanal* to

²⁶⁴ The Munich sequence showcases Troost’s buildings on *Königlichenplatz*, notably, the *Ewige Wache* and *Führerbau*, followed by the planned reconstruction of *Odeonsplatz* and the *Neuer Opernplatz*. The inclusion of Augsburg as one of the lesser-known *Führerstädte* is somewhat puzzling, but was likely determined by the availability of the models at the 2.AA.

Potsdamer Platz, southwest of which a large swath of demolition is visible.²⁶⁵ The camera hangs, fixated on and rotating slightly around the empty site, until the model of *Runder Platz* appears, covering the lot and still-standing buildings, with text identifying Potsdamer Straße and the North-South-Axis projected onto it, and the camera descends into the space.²⁶⁶ (Figs. II-16a-d)



Figure II-16a – Opening titles of Runder Platz sequence



Figure II-16b – Aerial shot of demolition on Potsdamer Straße, Landwehrkanal visible across the right-hand side of the frame

²⁶⁵ The use of footage shot from a plane clearly invoking Riefenstahl's opening of *Triumph of the Will*. The demolition is the site of the *Haus des Fremdenverkehrs*, currently home to the *Kulturforum* across from the *Staatsbibliothek*.

²⁶⁶ Limited by the models on display at the architecture exhibition, Berlin's reconstruction consists of *Runder Platz*, the *Oberkommando des Heeres*, and the New Chancellery. The latter sequences, as noted below, are a combination of footage of the models and the actual building, which was nearing completion at the time of filming.



Figure II-16c – Superimposition of the Runder Platz model over the city-scape through a dissolve



Figure II-16d – Projected text onto Runder Platz model, identifying Potsdamer Straße and the North-South-Axis

At street level, the camera is never at a standstill, moving in a continual circuit around the rotunda (while the tiny cars remain stationary on the model). The monumental scale is obvious, the identity of the buildings far less so: a blur of anonymous, neoclassical facades, scarcely distinguishable, despite scrolling text, identifying each as they breeze past. (Figs. II-17a-b) Instead,



Figure II-17a - Screen captures of the circular pans across the buildings on Runder Platz



Figures II-17b – Same as above.

the camera fixates on Breker’s hyper-masculine bronze Apollo on the central rotunda, framed by sprawling arterials radiating from the intersection. (Fig. II-18) Thus, our gaze is continually drawn toward the ensemble’s center and, over Apollo’s shoulder, down endless prestige boulevards, lined by monumental buildings, terminating in the near-invisible horizon in the distance.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁷ As in Speer’s description in the *VB*, “Es gibt jetzt also...für diese Bauten, denen viele andere folgen werden, nach Möglichkeit etwas räumlich Zusammenfassendes zu planen, dh. einen Straßenzug bereitzustellen, der die notwendige *Aufnahmefähigkeit* besitzt.” Speer, my emphasis.



Figure II-18 – Screen capture of Breker’s Apollo sculpture, looking south down the North-South-Axis

Similar to the displays at the exhibitions (as the film of course employs their models), the overview of Berlin’s redevelopment is radically incomplete: not just blurred from the dissolves but *partially empty*. Looking north along the North-South Axis, facing Apollo, although the *Soldatenhalle* towers behind the buildings to the left, the center of the horizon is starkly bare—an empty field of clouds framed by a massive gate. Not only does the camera *not* glide quickly past the empty space (the future site of Adolf-Hitler-Platz, centered on the Great Hall), it hesitates and pans back to frame Apollo against the void; the music slows and the camera ceases its circular movement, zooms in and then tracks backwards as fountains of water spring from the rotunda’s base, again framing the void to the north, which is then suddenly shrouded in darkness, as the shot cuts to a dramatically lit close-up of Apollo, simulating night-time footage. (Figs. II-19a-c)

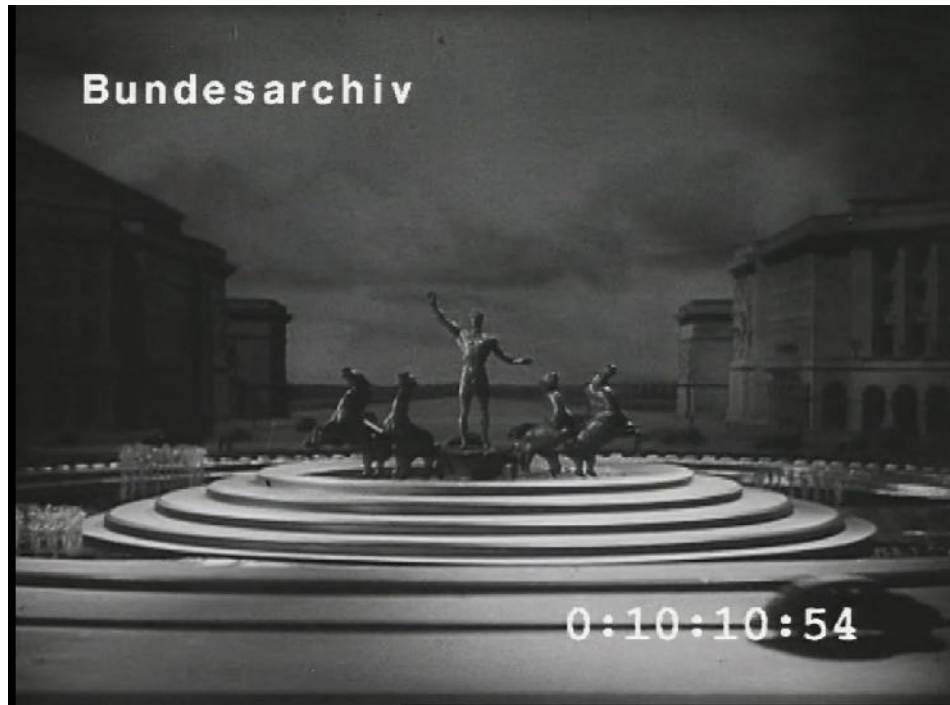


Figure II-19a – Apollo, framed against the empty space at the northern intersection of the North-South and East-West-Axes



Figure II-19b – Continuation of previous shot, with fountain special-effect.

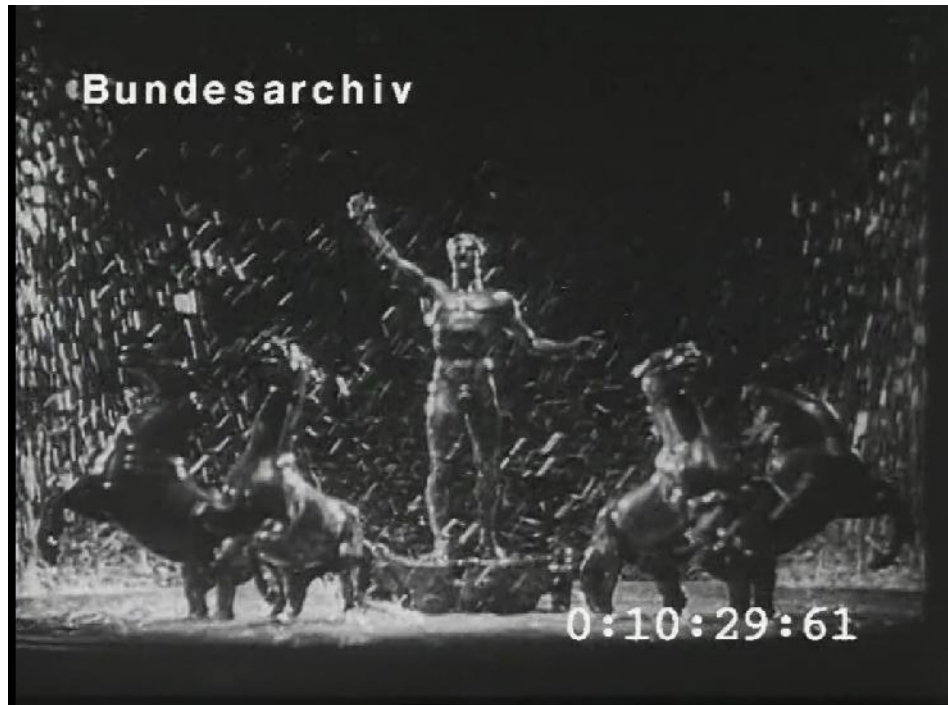
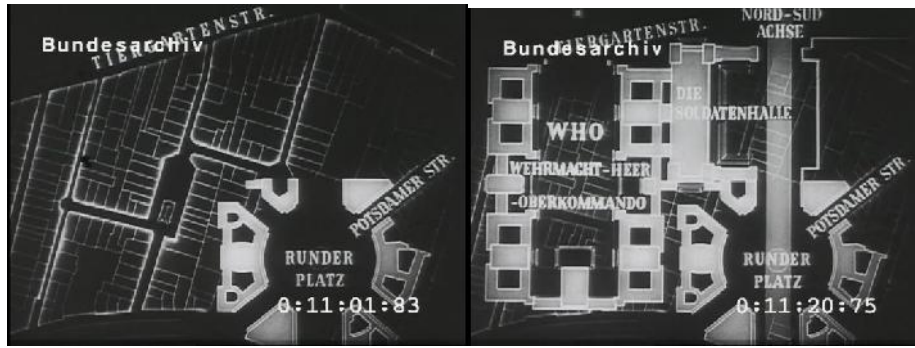


Figure II-19c – Close-up ‘night-time’ footage of Breker’s Apollo

The map of *Runder Platz* then fills the screen—onto which the present urban landscape, visible in the aerial shot but erased on the model’s backdrop, reappears and then disappears under animations superimposing the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* and the North-South-Axis, which clearly extends into the empty space to the north.²⁶⁸ (Figs. II-20a & b) Berlin’s landscape appears caught in transition, halfway between the *tabula rasa* behind Apollo and the built future, with its crowded, monumental order, into which his gaze leads.²⁶⁹ The viewer, therefore, partially occupies

²⁶⁸ The future terminus of the North-South-Axis was known to anyone who had paid attention to the announcements from the GBI despite its invisibility in representation. The “Grosse Versammlungshalle” and renovated Königsplatz in front of the Reichstag at the intersection of the two axes had been indicated from the very beginning in the massively simplified plans which circulated in the press.

²⁶⁹ The absence of buildings on the painted backdrop behind Apollo can be no coincidence. Painstaking work had gone into the Runder Platz sequence, with particular attention to the model’s imaginary context. Ziegler writes, the cameramen were confronted with the problem “das Modell in die städtebauliche Umgebung des späteren Platzes einpassen zu müssen. Durch Fotomontagen oder Zeichnungen, die höchste Präzision erforderten, musste die Illusion des künftigen Gesamteindrucks geschaffen werden.” Ziegler, 212. This commitment to “precision” with regard to the future design seems, rather, a claim uncritically adopted from propaganda. Ziegler quotes the review from the *VB* in his footnotes, which explains “Der »Runde Platz« in Berlin verlangte ebenfalls Sonderanfertigungen, bevor mit den Aufnahmen begonnen werden konnte. In diesem Falle war es auch nötig, die Straßenfluchten, die aus dem Platz herausführen, durch entsprechend verkleinerte Photomontagen zu ersetzen oder, wo die Häuserfronten in ihrer endgültigen Form noch nicht gebaut sind, sie haargenau zu zeichnen und an die Bruchstellen des Modells anzusetzen.” Axtmann quoted in *ibid.*, footnote 224. That this space was left empty can hardly be seen as an oversight, considering this backdrop has far and away the most screen time in the sequence.



Figures II-20a & 20b – Animations showing the superimposition of Runder Platz, the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, and the North-South-Axis onto the present city landscape

the Führer’s position of scopic mastery, but the center from which this gaze shall issue remains a void, hidden just out of frame, beyond the range of the *Kulturfilm*’s futuristic vision.

Hence, although *Das Wort aus Stein*’s narrative moves toward Berlin’s future center of NS power, next showcasing the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*, it then makes a detour to the provisional center of Hitler’s power: the New Reich Chancellery.²⁷⁰ Again: a crane shot north up Hermann-Göring-Straße, oriented by the Reichstag and the Brandenburg Gate, which then pans to the right over a construction site. In fact, however, only the northernmost barracks of the New Chancellery remain under construction—the rest of the finished structure extends to the rear of the frame. The panoramic shot shows the rear facade, centered on Hitler’s terrace, with the old Chancellery, hardly visible, enclosing the lot in the distance. The model building is then superimposed over the real architecture, casting a ghostly and kitschy pallor over the facade. (Figs. II-21a-d) The previous temporal acceleration thus, in a manner of speaking, reverses course here. Movement toward the future center of power, the forum at the intersection of NS Berlin’s representational axes, leads, instead, back to the present, provisional architecture of Führertum on Wilhelmplatz, and then skips back again to its introductory representation from the 2.AA.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ No interior images of Wilhelm Kreis’s designs for the *Soldatenhalle* are included in the film or at the 2.AA. The famous design sketches for its crypt were first widely publicized in the postwar, in Kluge’s *Brutalität in Stein*.

²⁷¹ One of the only buildings whose construction was actually documented by the regime and shown in propaganda, the New Reich Chancellery’s topping out ceremony was reproduced in a newsreel by the *Deutsche Tonwoche*. See: BAFA DTW 345 (B 129699/1-



Figure II-21a – Crane shot looking north up Hermann-Göring-Straße, with the Reichstag visible in the upper left-hand corner.



Figure II-21b – Continuation of previous shot, following a pan to the New Chancellery's construction site. Shown is the northernmost barrack building on Hermann-Göring-Straße.

1). Another longer propaganda film showed the end-stage of its construction in detail, though it is unclear if it was ever released. See: BAFA *Erweiterungsbau der Reichskanzlei*. (1936/9) M 608.

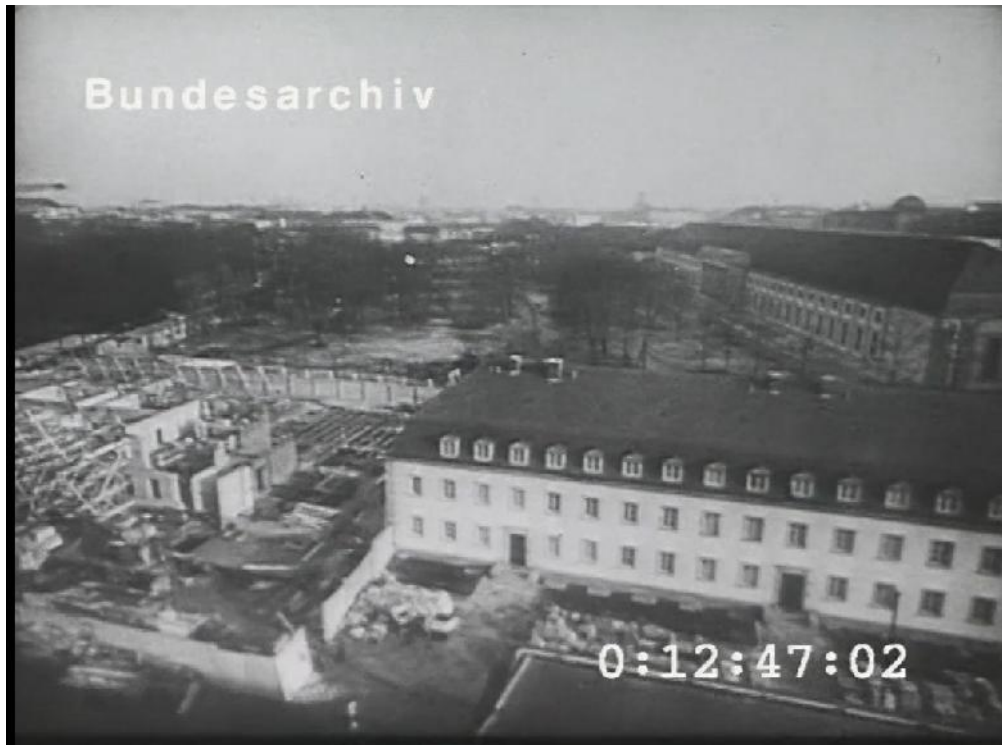


Figure II-21c – Continuation of previous shot following zoom out, showing the New Chancellery from the rear and Ministerial Gardens. The rear facade of the central Führerbau with Hitler's terrace visible at right.

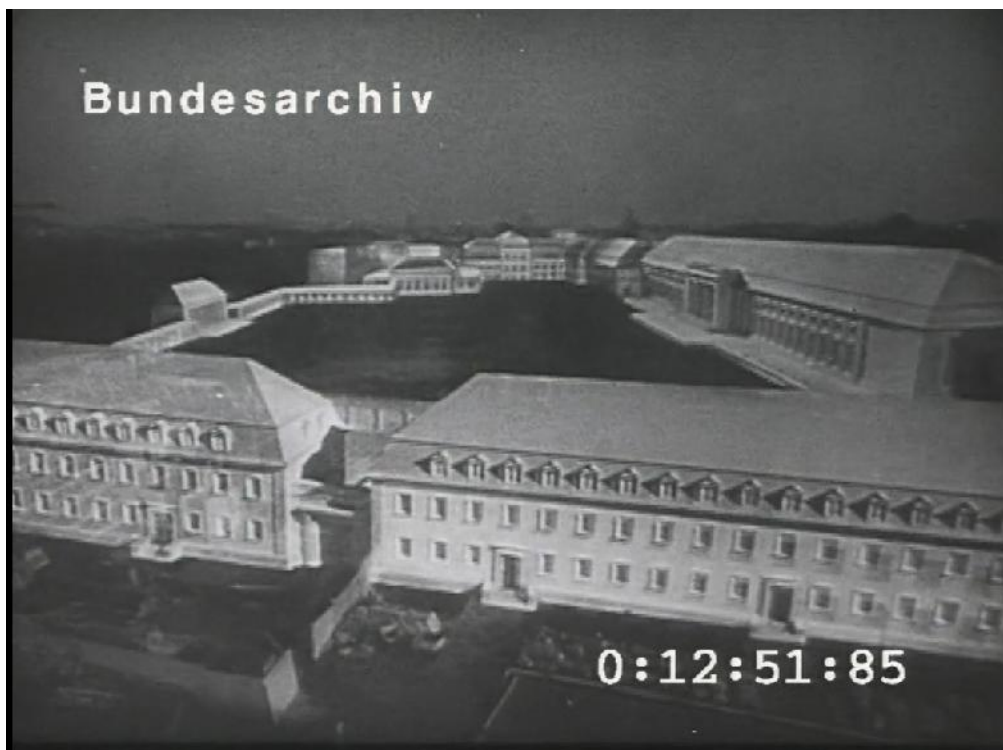


Figure II-21d – Continuation of previous shot, following superimposition of the New Chancellery model over the structure. Rear facade of old Chancellery building with Garden Salon extension visible at the rear.

The New Chancellery sequence then rehearses the familiar tour of the façade and diplomatic route. This scene, however, layers multiple mediations of architectural representation on top of one another throughout. Unlike in the newsreel discussed above, the camera never tracks forward but employs almost exclusively static shots or pans. Movement through the building is instead mediated by cuts and zooms between room-images and the animated map of the ground-floor plan, alternating between footage of the actual architecture and shots of the interior models from the 2.AA.²⁷² (Figs. II-22a-f). Transitioning repeatedly (and obviously) from real building to model and back again, the New Chancellery sequence asserts the “truth” of *Das Wort aus Stein*’s fantasy—suddenly the notion of buildings appearing instantly before the viewer takes on a decidedly *less* imaginary shine. In this narrative stutter, no longer showing the present as it fades into the future, but a past-future now realized in the present, the New Chancellery acts as guarantor of the symbolic promise of the previous sequences, showing the interchangeability of models with their real, architectural replacements.

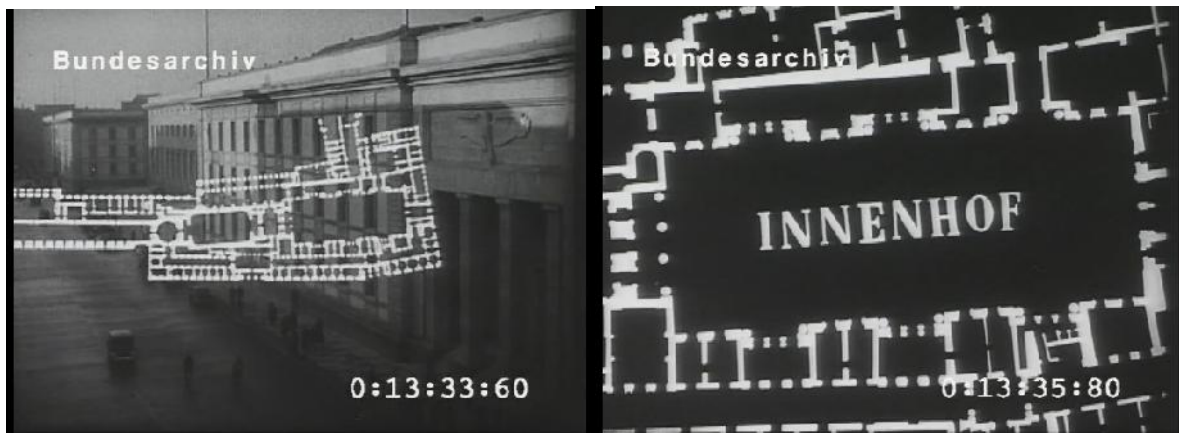


Figure II-22a & II-22b – Superimposition of ground plan onto facade along Voßstraße and animated zoom into Honor Court.

²⁷² Supposedly to maintain “Stilgleichheit.” with the other sequences Ziegler, 215. Not a secret about the film, the combined use of models and actual footage was reported in the *Filmische Illustrierte*’s review of the film. Carl Brunner, “Das Wort Aus Stein,” *Filmwoche: die illustrierte Filmzeitschrift mit Photo-Teil*. 17, no. 21 (1939). Moreover, no such stylistic unity is achieved through the technique—only shots of the Mosaic Room and Honor Court employ the models and they do so quite obviously.

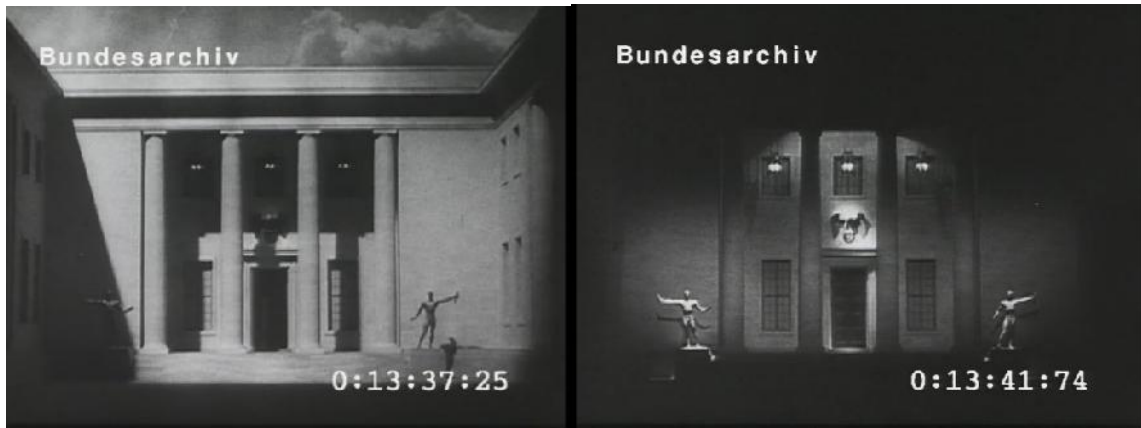


Figure II-22c & II-22d – Model footage of Honor Court with special effect transition of ‘night’-footage.

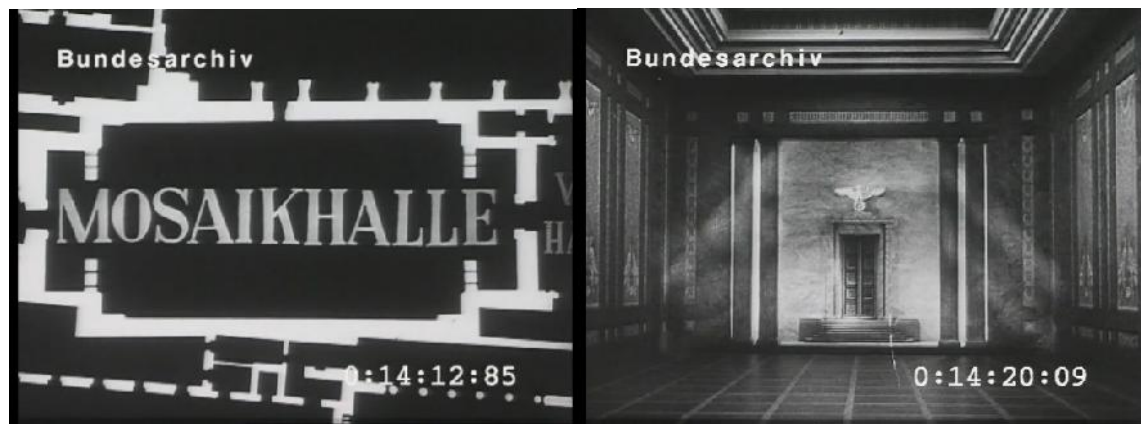
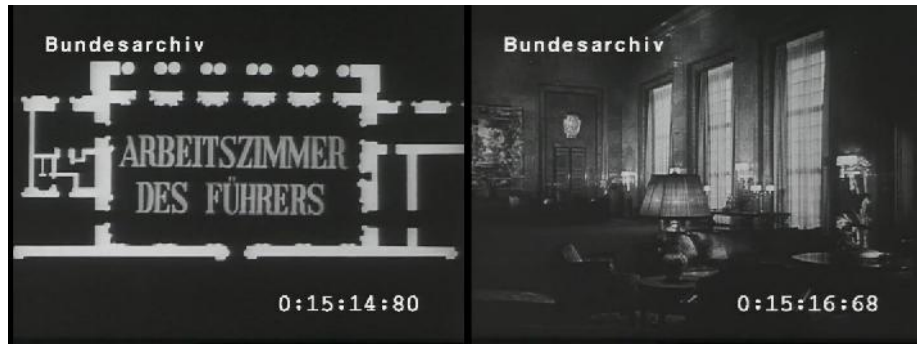
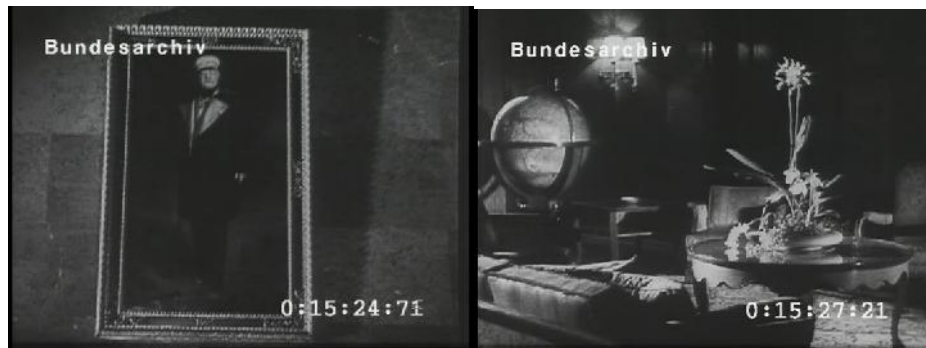


Figure II-22e & II-22f – Animated zoom to Mosaic Room followed by model footage of interior.

The Führer’s mastery over time and space, ensuring the inevitable, uninterrupted movement into the future, is however only possible with recourse to a narrative interruption, a detour through the provisional center of power, the representational screen covering the internal state machinery’s implementation of the future’s construction in the present. As we finally enter Hitler’s office at the film’s climax, there is no question that we inhabit the New Chancellery’s actual interior. (Figs. II-23a-d) As the stilted movement through the rest of the building is finally alleviated, the strings on the soundtrack reach a fever pitch and crescendo. After cuts between detail views of the decor (e.g. the oversized globe, the ensemble of furniture at the hearth, and Lembach’s portrait of Bismarck), a lateral tracking shot strafes the windows facing the garden, turning to zoom in on the cluttered surface of Hitler’s desk. (Fig. II-24)



Figures II-23a & II-23b – Animated zoom toward Hitler’s office on the groundfloor plan (left) and view towards his desk from the seating ensemble by the hearth, with windows to the Ministerial gardens (right)



Figures II-23c & II-23d – Detail shots of Lembach’s portrait of Bismarck above the hearth (left) and adjacent seating ensemble, featuring Hitler’s oversized globe at the left-hand side of the image (right)



Figure II-24 – Final shot of New Chancellery sequence, a close-up of Hitler’s empty chair behind his desk. Almost indistinguishable are a telephone, writing block, and books arranged on its surface. (Image lightened for clarity by author)

But what are we to make of the fact that at the center of this symbolic space, the location Hitler's embodiment of the NS state and its future, orienting and providing the spatio-temporal motor of the film's narrative, we are faced with an empty space? And, furthermore, an empty space that is barely visible as it, too, remains shrouded in darkness? Hitler's absence is, however, perhaps not so confusing. *Das Wort aus Stein*'s narrative is based around the power of *representations* to mediate the future's visibility and determine the course of its construction in the present. The film is therefore emphatically *not* about creating the illusion of an already-existing reality, as it is commonly claimed to be.²⁷³ Rather, it dramatizes through repetition a symbolic process of transformation that, through its partial concealment, shows construction to be entirely subordinate to and determined by the preemptive mediation of its future outcome.

Since the New Chancellery stands at the center of *Das Wort aus Stein*'s narrative, the provisional architecture of NS sovereignty functions as a symbolic *gateway* and temporal hinge—it marks the epicenter of Germany's *transition*, where the movement of history overtakes the present and plunges toward the future, which remains for the moment concealed by its symbolic representation. *Das Wort aus Stein* identifies this as the place where, through the Führer's embodiment of the Volk's will and command over the state, representation and reality, past, present, and future, collide and merge. The plane of Hitler's desk, as is made clear in the film's epilogue, can be therefore read as the symbolic *horizon* of the Third Reich's imperial future: the literal, bureaucratic center and motor of its production by the NS state.

²⁷³ See: Karl Arndt and Hartmut Döhl, *Das Wort Aus Stein* (Göttingen: Inst. für den Wiss. Film, 1992).; Bartetzko.; Scarrocchia.; Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*, 58-60. The *Filmische Illustrierte* claims that "man ist bei diesem Film *verpflichtet*, darauf hinzuweisen, daß man mit Hilfe der Tricktechnik Modelle in fertige Bauten umwandelte. Es könnte sonst leicht passieren, daß jemand auf den Gedanken kommt, die Bauten sein schon vollendet." Ziegler, footnote 226, my emphasis. Such praise for *Das Wort aus Stein* should be read for what it is: propaganda. Ziegler, for example, describes it as "ein verblüffendes Ergebnis, das die Zuschauer Ende der 30er-Jahre sicher in Erstaunen versetzte." *Ibid.*, 217. Yet his description overlooks the film's undeniable context of production: the architectural exhibitions analyzed above, in which it was obvious and explicitly acknowledged that the buildings on display had yet to be constructed.

The empty space of the Führer's chair, awaiting the return of the embodied leader, stands in for the future possibility of Germany's imperial 'resurrection'—the symbolically empty center of which has already been shown to us in the *Runder Platz* sequence. The Third Reich's exponential, monumental outgrowth from this provisional center is furthermore indicated by the epilogue. From Hitler's desk a dissolve brings us back to Bavaria; text appearing onscreen reads: "Am Chiemsee entsteht in gewaltigen Ausmaßen die Hohe Schule der NSDAP." As the soundtrack riffs off of Wagner's Walhalla Leitmotif from the Ring cycle, its model appears, towering over the lake, filling the screen. (Fig. II-25) The sequence's primary emphasis is on the size of the compound—the tower's height appears in line with the surrounding mountains painted on the backdrop, dwarfing the tiny sailboats drifting on the artificial lake in front of it. After the building appears, the camera ascends in an approximated crane shot, revealing the vast landscape surrounding the structure. As in the preceding sequences (save for the New Chancellery), we do not enter the building but are offered an overview of the complex, as the camera cuts between mostly elevated shots of the model. Thus, while previous scenes communicate magnitude in the approximation of street-views, gazing up at the architecture and down endless boulevards, we are now firmly situated in the synoptic perspective of the Führer.

While not revealing a comprehensive image of the future, this imaginary perspective of Führertum still provides a symbolic image of the transition between past, present and future in the cinematic transformation of space. That is, at the close of the sequence, we return to a raking, static shot of the Hohe Schule's front facade, onto which models of Munich's Frauenkirche and the Brandenburg Gate are superimposed. (Figs. II-26a-c) The models appear embedded in the facade, while the scrolling captions list their size to indicate that the dimensions of the past and present will be unequivocally surpassed by the future.



Figure II-25 – Frontal view of the Hohe Schule der NSDAP am Chiemsee, following the superimposition of the model in a dissolve. This shot serves as the opening sequence of Kluge’s *Brutalität in Stein*.



Figure II-26a-c – Superimposition of Frauenkirche and Brandenburg Gate onto the model facade of the Hohe Schule.

Ending with the Frauenkirche and one of Berlin’s most iconic imperial, architectural landmarks, *Das Wort aus Stein* suggests two conclusions. First, through the invisible body of the Führer, positioned at the hub of the centralized state apparatus and assisted by modern technologies of architectural mediation, the Third Reich’s entire territory *and temporality* can be grasped in a single, synoptic, composite image. Second, despite its opulent interior, monumental size, and current use as the administrative and symbolic center of Führertum, the New Chancellery’s remains defined by the dimensions of the present. As the provisional representation of Führertum, the architecture thus functions as the curtain drawn shut over the destructive work of present

construction and its future trajectory, which, on the other hand, may nevertheless be glimpsed through the magic of special effects and its mediation in architectural images.

Yet it should not escape our notice that *Das Wort aus Stein* fails to deliver on the promise it stages throughout. While this final sequence illustrates the future's *magnitude*, it does so only by moving away from the center of power, displacing its representation onto the periphery. The empty spaces that appear throughout the film—the void at the intersection of the North-South and East-West Axes, the Führer's unoccupied desk—the *tabula rasa* on which the monument to the reconstituted Volk's body *will have been constructed* are thus occupied by the fixed image of the future, which can only be mediated through its symbolic representation. At the end of *Das Wort aus Stein*'s circular narrative, we have not glimpsed the collective, unified body of the future Volk, only the space of its possibility, held open by the absent body of the Führer and the provisional stand-ins for his future architecture of power.²⁷⁴

The New Chancellery operates as a metonymic space of the Führer's embodiment of the state—the activator and leader of the centralized bureaucratic apparatus, constructing the future on behalf of the future Volk. Through him and his architectural surrogate and frame of embodiment, the future's trajectory may appear fixed, even when it remains invisible. Since the future cannot be revealed, its image, deferred whilst under construction, can only be visualized on the level of the imaginary, through the incessant production of compensatory representations. The accumulated layers of representation, each insisting on the Führer's omnipotence, coalesce around the center of a future symbolic order, which remains, however, radically empty. The anchor for the Volk's gaze and trajectory into the future, the New Reich Chancellery thus operates, equally,

²⁷⁴ As Žižek writes, "How can somebody who does not yet exist," the reunified Volk, "deputize the mission to create himself? How can somebody who still waits to be created precede his own conception...The structure of this time-paradox allows us to articulate the logic of the Leader's sublime body. By conceiving of himself as an agency through which the People gives birth to itself, the Leader assumes the role of a *deputy from (of) the future*; he acts as a medium through which the future, not yet existing People organizes its own conception." Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 262.

as both symbolic horizon and *vanishing point* of the NS state and its future visibility.

III. The New Chancellery's Photographic Architecture: Vanishing Point of the NS State

As we have already seen, the New Chancellery's intermedial reproduction made the architecture's symbolic visibility expressly mobile and labile, allowing for its recontextualization and reinscription with ideological meaning. As I argue below, its now-canonical reproduction in architectural photographs was uniquely employed to render the invisible, modern, bureaucratic apparatus articulating Hitler's power legible in the very classical representational architecture, which concealed it from public view. It did so, specifically, by again exploiting established modernist strategies of architectural representation, using them to project and mediate the Führer's embodiment of Volk and State, and the latter's bureaucratic machinery of surveillance and control, in a cinematically-inflected, visual-spatial narrative traversing the architecture's iconic interior.

Like any representational building in the early 20th century, the New Chancellery existed for the public above all as a set of images, which translated the architecture into two dimensions. Photographs of the New Chancellery, in wide circulation, thus offered a surrogate, imaginary experience of its spaces—which were expressly inaccessible to the public—and infused the already representational building with additional ideological values and meanings.²⁷⁵ As an architectural representation of power that was simultaneously the *subject* of photographic representation, the New Chancellery offers an example of what Claire Zimmerman terms “photographic architecture.”²⁷⁶ As Zimmerman argues, the symbiotic development of modernist building practices, transforming facades into independent, representational surfaces, and the advancement of technological and aesthetic techniques for visually reproducing built space in

²⁷⁵ In addition to the photo monograph analyzed below, the images it contained were reproduced in propaganda, trade publications like *Das Bauen im neuen Reich*, and reprinted as a set of collectable, color postcards.

²⁷⁶ Zimmerman, 8.

photographs resulted in a complex relationship of intermedial exchange. The term thus refers to the network of strategies developed in the early 20th century, through which architecture was translated into and identified with photographic images and, conversely, in which photographic effects and optical strategies were integrated into the design of representational buildings.

This dynamic drove innovation in both media, posing challenges but also offering new opportunities for both reading meaning into and representing meaning in built space.²⁷⁷ Even as they transmit an impression of space, photographs layer their own interpretive aesthetics onto material representations. Different photographs thus have the potential to suggest “significantly different meanings for the same object.”²⁷⁸ In the other direction, as principles of photographic abstraction were imported into building practices, remediating built representations, “experiments in the possible interplay between space and image [enriched] modes of architectural experience.”²⁷⁹ As architecture became increasingly legible in photographic images, optical experience presented new ways of designing and inhabiting buildings. New visual strategies employed in building designs and the new interpretive possibilities stemming from the mediated manipulation of built space therefore radically expanded architecture’s representational potential and plasticity.

In light of the representational primacy evident in the New Chancellery’s design and its

²⁷⁷ Architectural photographs, Zimmerman writes, “engender meanings that are hinged to the original construction but float free from that construction precisely because they emerge from a two-dimensional picture surface.” Ibid., 143.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 144. This was not some dark secret of architectural photography, but rather a clearly acknowledged strategy of representation: “camera recording of buildings is an approximate and correlative subjective practice, not a matter of objective documentation. Distortions produced by the camera appear permissible if they produce an intensified visual document relating a notion of ‘truth’ about the building portrayed. But this intensification is imprecisely defined, suggesting that intensified optical experience might be correlated to bodily experience without offering any clear anchors or relays between these two affects.” Ibid., 227-28.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 18. Not only did the New Chancellery appear on the scene in the midst of these debates which lasted through the postwar, its photographic reproduction involved many of the same individuals whose work and theory had informed the discourse on buildings and images. Most notably among them: Rudolf de Salando, the primary photographer of Mies van der Rohe’s Tugendhat house, who contributed an iconic image of the portal on Voßstraße to *Die neue Reichskanzlei* and Wilhelm Lotz, whose essay in *Die Form* prescribed possible modes of photography approximating filmic representation, and who wrote the second essay in *Die neue Reichskanzlei*. These works by Lotz are discussed in detail below

inaccessible interior, the importance of its photographic reproduction (and manipulation) to its symbolic function in NS propaganda cannot be overstated. Moreover, since the state bureaucracy housed in the building was expressly off limits—literally and in terms of its visual representation—to all but the highest echelons of NS leadership, images of the purely representational space of the Führer’s embodiment were tasked with standing in for the hidden organs articulating his power. The diplomatic route’s classical appearance was thus not as straightforward as it appeared.

The New Chancellery’s representational interior was in fact saturated by optical design elements, self-reflexively responsive to the building’s visual reproduction. While the sprawling bureaucratic apparatus indicated on the representational facade along Voßstraße seemed to disappear inside the palatial interior, its photographic architecture, in both senses of the term, parlayed this space into an ideological image of Hitler’s centrality within the regime. Namely, Nazism’s Führer-centric sovereignty was symbolically visualized in images, which approximated and imputed to the architecture physical, disciplinary effects on bodies inhabiting it—even as or, rather, expressly enabled by the fact that these bodies remained largely invisible in photographic representation. This imaginary bodily, visual-spatial narrative produced a highly misleading impression of both the building’s physical structure and the organization of the NS state apparatus.

The most comprehensive and iconic set of photographs of Speer’s building are to be found in the monograph *Die neue Reichskanzlei*, published to commemorate its construction.²⁸⁰ Edited by Rudolf Wolters and Heinrich Wolff and released by the *Zentralverlag der NSDAP* in 1939, and reprinted in four subsequent editions, the monograph is a lavish, quarto-sized hardcover, 132 pages

²⁸⁰ Rudolf Wolters and Heinrich Wolff, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei: Architekt Albert Speer* (München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, Franz Eher Nachf., 1940). The monograph resembles, in significant ways, the photo-books published by the *Neues Bauen*. e.g. and Bruno Taut, *Die Neue Wohnung* (Leipzig: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1928); Erich Mendelsohn, *Neues Haus -- Neue Welt* (Berlin: R. Mosse, 1932). The resonance in titles is perhaps no coincidence. The significance of the images published in this book with regard to the New Chancellery’s iconic status is evident in their persistence—they still remain the standard archive of images used to depict the building, including in scholarly work, and, since the building’s demolition, they form virtually the only repository of this architectural space.

long, containing 108 photographs, 18 of which are printed in color, along with two 2 watercolor prints of the site under construction, concluding with an appendix of 15 stylized technical drawings.²⁸¹ Full page plate photographs of isolated exterior and interior views are interspersed with seven essays, illustrated throughout with additional, smaller images set within the text.²⁸² Together, text and images reconstruct the New Chancellery in two, sequential spatial narratives, reproducing an ostensibly comprehensive impression of the architecture as a walking tour, journeying first around the exterior and then into the heart of Hitler's power.

Thus, adhering to standard practices of architectural photography, *Reichskanzlei* presents the building in a series of multiple, partial views.²⁸³ Aside from the use of color, the exterior images are relatively conventional: the building appears excised from its urban context; shots are largely raking three-quarter views with bright lighting and deep shadows, emphasizing its spatial mass and volumetric form, supplemented by detail images and a few straight-on views of the facade. The camera mostly maintains a subjective perspective of around one meter, interpolating a human perspective while largely eschewing human subjects.²⁸⁴ In an article written in 1929 for *Die Form*, Wilhelm Lotz had argued for an aesthetic "approaching filmic representation," presenting images in sequence which either approached the building from a distance or circled it, "preferably indexed

²⁸¹ The plans exclusively feature the representational rooms on the ground floor, mostly in elevations with enlarged detail drawings of ornamentation. The only floor plan shows the ground floor on an enlarged pull-out page, below and aligned with an elevation of the entire facade along Voßstraße, including the Borsig Palace.

²⁸² The essays include an introduction written by Hitler immortalizing the myth of the New Chancellery's nine-month-construction and his renovations to the old Chancellery, a piece from architect Hermann Giesler on the building's symbolic value, two from Wilhelm Lotz describing the exterior and interior design, one from architect Rudolf Wolters on the craftsmanship of the furnishings, and texts from Arno Breker and Hermann Kaspar on their contributions of sculptures and mosaics, respectively.

²⁸³ Limited in their capacity to serve as its replacement, collections of photographs were nonetheless seen as effective in communicating spatial experience: "the aggregation of many parts [adding] up to a single, if imperfect, whole." Zimmerman, 171.

²⁸⁴ Andrew Higgott and Timothy Wray, "Camera Constructs: Photography, Architecture and the Modern City," (2016): 5-8. To provide the bright lighting and dramatic shadows, the exterior photographs were primarily taken in early Spring 1939 by Max Baur. See Sachsse, 88. As is typical, human figures are almost entirely absent. Only two images of the facade on Voßstraße include staffage—a small group of pedestrians and a row of cars—highlighting the architecture's monumental size, since the heads of the people on the street barely reach the top of the building's plinth and the cars appear level with the balustrade. The only other human figures are SS guards posted at the portals on Voßstraße, in the Honor Court, and outside Hitler's office, their symmetrical positioning, uniforms, and posture echoing the architectural form and providing scale.

to solar orientation.”²⁸⁵ The exterior photographs in *Reichskanzlei* largely adhere to Lotz’s method.

Moving counterclockwise around the building, beginning with the south-facing facade on Voßstraße and terminating at its western facade on Hermann-Göring-Straße, we begin with a decontextualized, single-point perspective view of the central Führerbau, followed by a series of raking images of the portals and facade; three, single-point-perspective images of the Honor Court, with detail shots of its ornamentation, portico, and Breker’s bronze nudes, ‘Die Wehrmacht’ and ‘Die Partei,’ seen from varying angles.²⁸⁶ (Figs. II-27 – 29) Then an interruption of the continuous narrative of the exterior: an aerial shot of the model of Berlin’s governmental quarter following its imminent NS redevelopment;²⁸⁷ two raking images of the Siedler building, without and then with the Führer-balcony; and two watercolors of the site under construction. (Figs. II-30 & II-31) This brief detour frames and illustrates the text of Lotz’s essay “Die Errichtung der Neuen Reichskanzlei,” marking it as part of the truncated historical record of the Chancellery’s reconstruction. The total exclusion of the old Chancellery from the images is somewhat puzzling, but it is elided; we move, instead to a series of shots of the portico fronting Hitler’s office in the rear gardens with its grand terrace, flanked by Thorak’s bronze horses; the rear facade and colonnade outside the dining hall; and the greenhouse enclosing the lot opposite Hitler’s office at

²⁸⁵ As cited in Zimmerman, 171-72. This would produce “die Vorstellung der Raumtiefe” and further a “klare Darstellung des Baues als räumliches Gebilde.” Wilhelm Lotz, “Architekturfotos,” *Die Form. Zeitschrift für gestaltende Arbeit* 4, no. 3 (1929): 69-70. Lotz’s instructions are informed by the reaction of conservative critics in the 1920s to stylized modernist architectural photographs which, they claimed failed to give a distinct impression of their objects. Accordingly, Lotz illustrates his principles with two modernist buildings: Bruno Taut’s *Wohnhaus* and the *Haus des Bürgermeisters* in Wurzen by Albrecht Jaeger.

²⁸⁶ Michaud claims that Breker’s statues visualize Hitler’s two bodies: “The twofold nature of the power, both spiritual and temporal, of the master of the chancellery was expressed by symbols that were the only differences between the two nude figures...The torch that one of them grasped kept alive the flame of the national spirit by which the party was animated, while the sword of the other defended the frontiers of the empire. As soon as he crossed the threshold of the chancellery, a visitor thus knew that the man who reigned here combined within his person these two bodies: the spiritual sovereign and the temporal sovereign.” Michaud, 15.

²⁸⁷ Though its location is described in text, no images contextualize the building in the space of Berlin, save for an elevated view of a model, showing the lot from the garden-side, positioned between the Gendarmenmarkt, Brandenburg Gate, Runder Platz, and the Oberkommando des Heeres. The East-West Axis is aligned along the right edge, the North-South extending across the top third of the frame—which means that just to the right of the visible field is the location of Adolf-Hitler-Platz. The New Chancellery is thus abstracted from the space of present Berlin, sutured into a larger narrative of the city’s redevelopment, which, as usual, omits the future center of this topography.

the building's axial center. (Fig. II-32) The tour of the exterior and Lotz's essay conclude with a single, three quarter view of the barracks for Hitler's personal S.S. guards. (Fig. II-33) Circumnavigating the structure, the tour gives an impression of the building as a whole but maintains focus on its representational center.

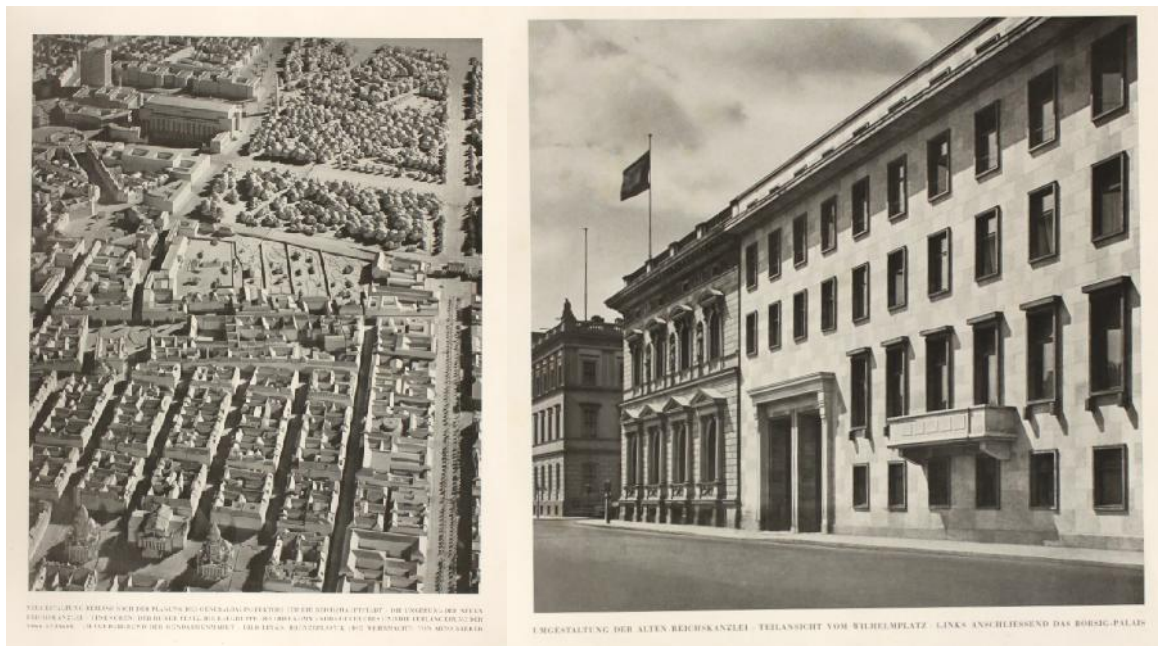
That is, the central Führerbau is, predictably, the most photographed part of the building, accounting for 13 of 37 images—its representational primacy is thus echoed in its photographic over-representation. Speer's modified neo-classical design emphasizes Hitler's centrality in the overall layout and through the Führerbau's elevation and material and ornamental distinction from the office wings. But, despite the photographs' relative stylistic uniformity, viewed in isolation, they in fact reveal the design program's fragmented nature.



Figures II-27 & II-28 – Introductory image of the Führerbau's facade (left); raking color image of the portal to the Party Chancellery on Voßstraße (left) with the Führerbau and Reich Chancellery tract visible at far right.



Figure II-29 – Frontal view of the Honor Court, looking west, with the portico flanked by Thorak's bronze nudes



Figures II-30 & II-31 – Aerial view of model showing Berlin's governmental quarter with partial inclusion of NS renovations. New Chancellery at the center of the image, Runder Platz at upper righthand corner, with Gendarmenmarkt at bottom (left). Raking view of Siedler building with the Führer's balcony, with adjacent Borsig Palace (right).

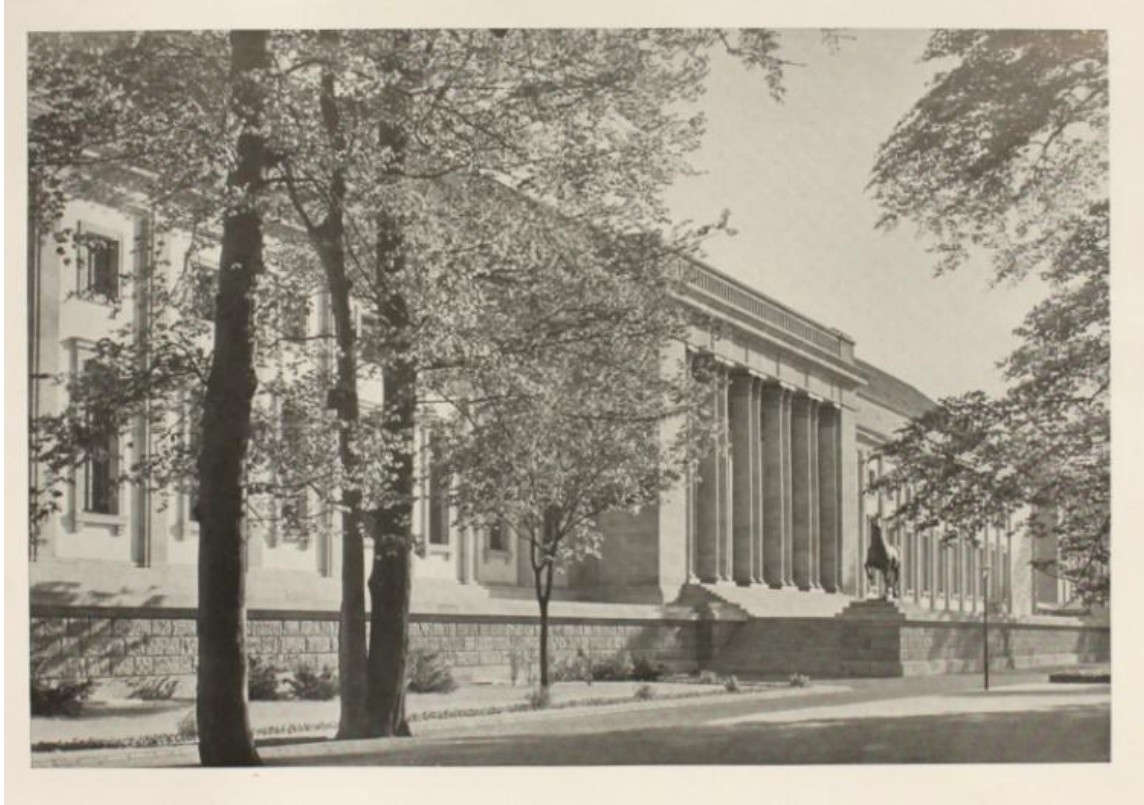


Figure II-32 – Raking shot of portico and terrace outside Hitler’s office on the building rear, viewed from northeast.



Figure II-33 – Barracks for Hitler’s personal guard, viewed southwest from across Hermann-Göring-Straße

The New Chancellery's exterior is sectioned off into discrete structural ensembles, favoring a strategy of reconstructing the building in a series of fragmented views. Each grouping is best grasped from isolated, staged points of view that, furthermore, dovetail with specific photographic (and cinematic) strategies of representation.²⁸⁸ The portals and individual design elements on the exterior thus function metonymically, gesturing to the symbolic order of Hitler's power, represented in the overall structure—which, however, is visible only as it is reconstructed in partial images. Only in their collective, sequential presentation, and as they place visual emphasis on related stylistic features, do the images suggest an impression of the architecture as a stylistically unified whole. Viewed with greater scrutiny, it is apparent that the exterior is characterized by alternating emphasis on its representational and/or functional use.

The photographic narrative sutures together Speer's modified, muscular modern-monumentalism on the facade along Voßstraße with a more traditional image of imperial Berlin (with sparing reference to the interlude of the Weimar Republic). The articulation of the facade along Voßstraße, with the Borsig Palace at its eastern end, for example, visually integrated the modern image of the NS bureaucracy with the architecture of the Wilhelmine regime. (Though this symbolic transition was exclusively visible in the elevation in the appendix.) Likewise, the barracks offer a stylistically stripped-down version of the office wings' facade, though smaller in scale and outfitted with sloped, shingled roofs, reminiscent of both Berlin's Prussian state buildings and traditional *Heimatstil* architecture.²⁸⁹ On the rear, the building's bureaucratic

²⁸⁸ For example, the lateral emphasis of the front facade prevents a full view of the building from street level, even assisted by a wide angle lens. As is evident from its reproduction in newsreels, the length of the facade is best captured cinematically, from a moving vehicle; or, as in the appendix of plans, in a large-scale pull out page. The cinematic trajectory, strafing along Voßstraße, hints at its use as a backdrop for parades and motorcades, but this is a false impression. The standard route to the building came from the north: traveling along the East-West-Axis past the Victory Column in the Tiergarten, through the Brandenburg Gate, turning right onto Wilhelmstraße at Pariser Platz.

²⁸⁹ The perspectival framing of these exterior photos is also reminiscent of the constrained views of early 19th-century German cityscape painting, similar to images of imperial Berlin under Wilhelmine II. I thank Stephanie Tripplett for this astute observation. For the connection and competition between painterly and photographic practices for capturing Berlin's urban image, as it took shape in the late-19th and early 20th-centuries, see: Paeslack.

function is decisively downplayed: the temple-like portico, with heavy plinth and fluted columns, is flanked by truncated blocks, echoing the front; but the structures enclosing the garden primarily give the impression of a residential palace, Hitler's private idyll in the governmental quarter.²⁹⁰

In other words, despite the seemingly comprehensive reproduction of the building, the privileging and downplaying of certain elements through selection and omission results in a radically different object than the one available in person. Whereas more than half of the 378m long facade on Voßstraße—the main part of the structure visible to the average Berliner—projected the sprawling the bureaucratic apparatus housed in the Party and Reich Chancelleries, the photographs marginalize this aspect, rendering it barely visible.²⁹¹ The modern state institutions housed in the building are thereby diminished in photographs in favor of emphasizing the Führer's symbolic visibility.

In the interior, the selective mediation of the Führer's visibility is obviously privileged. The diplomatic route offered a traditional spatialized representation of imperial power and sovereign embodiment.²⁹² According to the Nazis, the diplomatic route unequivocally communicated the Führer's imperial prestige and embodiment of the Volk's collective will, through a visually and bodily overwhelming experience, isolated in space and time, approaching the center of

²⁹⁰ These spaces, it's worth noting, were and largely excluded from the dramatic staging and reproduction of Hitler's performance as embodied Führer, with the exception of a single newsreel from 1945 showing the decoration of a battalion of H-J Panzerfäuste, discussed in chapter iii. Ritualistic state events, as evinced by the newsreel of the diplomatic welcome, were held on Wilhelmplatz or in the representational interior.

²⁹¹ Aside from the photographs of the portals on Voßstraße, the central block is included, if not the sole subject, of all of the images of the facade. In the section depicting the rear facade, facing the ministerial gardens, five images of the portico and terrace in front of Hitler's office precede three additional shots, which do not include it. Only one photograph shows a section of the facade representing the building's administrative function, the other two feature the colonnade outside the dining hall.

²⁹² As Schönberger writes, "Das Arbeitszimmer Hitlers...muß...in seiner Bedeutung durch seine Lage und auf Grund der Raumfolge wie ein "Thronsaal" gewertet werden." Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*, 110. Alex Scobie's analysis of the building suggests a comparison with the *Domus Augustana*, where "the emperor received diplomats and other functionaries" as a possible model, since the articulated spaces of the *aula* forced the visitor to walk its longitudinal axis "in full view of the emperor enthroned at the south end. The arrangement was calculated to awe and intimidate visitors." Scobie, 98. The walking tour narrated here is cinematically remediated, using these same images, in Syberberg's *Hitler – ein Film aus Deutschland*, analyzed in chapter vi.

Führertum.²⁹³ Giesler, for example, writes that upon entering the Ehrenhof, “öffnet sich eine andere Welt,” whose meaning, he claims, is made legible through its navigation: “Die Bauidee der Reichskanzlei...beruht auf dem Erlebnis der Raumfolge.”²⁹⁴ But it is primarily through the imposing rooms’ photographic reproduction that the supposed disciplinary effect of Hitler’s power on the visitor’s body is projected in architectural space. Since the primary symbolic site of the Volk’s embodiment excluded their actual bodies, the diplomatic route’s photographic representation was structured as the imaginary recreation of the subjective bodily experience of traversing its enclosed interior.

The photographs move through the building’s linear enfilade, constraining visibility to the opulent, representational rooms, undisturbed by any image of the outside world.²⁹⁵ Printed in both color and black and white, in varying sizes, the images accentuate the contrasting visual richness of each space, highlighting their changing shapes, dimensions, and materials. Key rooms are depicted with a single, full-page “Gesamtansicht,” often in color, supplemented by partial views from alternate angles, close-ups of details and furnishings. The images are captioned and interwoven with and explicated by Wolters’s essay and Lotz’s second piece on “Die Innenräume der neuen Reichskanzlei.”²⁹⁶ Lotz’s narrative and a simplified reproduction of the ground floor

²⁹³ In his essay, Lotz claims that the “abgeschlossener Weg” of the representational route, “verläuft nahezu ohne eine Verbindung mit der Außenwelt.” “Die Innenräume Der Neuen Reichskanzlei,” in *Die Neue Reichskanzlei, Architekt: Albert Speer*, ed. Rudolf Wolters and Heinrich Wolff (München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP; Franz Eher nachf., 1939), 63. The diplomatic route eschewed virtually all indications of its temporal or geographic context: aside from the swastikas, Reichs-Eagles, and Lembach’s portrait of Bismarck in Hitler’s office, no clearly identifiable trace of modernity, of previous regimes, of Berlin, or any particular German territory adorned its halls. Although it was outfitted with cutting edge technological utilities, these were slickly concealed behind plates of marble, brass fixtures, or masked with other interior design elements. See Arnold and Janick, 102-04. Like the other classical, architectural motifs used in the interior, the preference for mosaics as the “most suitable form of decoration” for state buildings was explicitly historicist. Scobie, 101. In the Mosaic Room, Kaspar had been “encouraged to emulate the artistry of the Capitoline ‘Taubenmosaik’ and the Alexander mosaic from the House of the Faun in Pompeii.” Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Hermann Giesler, “Symbol Des Großdeutschen Reiches,” in *Die Neue Reichskanzlei, Architekt: Albert Speer*, ed. Rudolf Wolters and Heinrich Wolff (München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP; Franz Eher nachf., 1939), 12.

²⁹⁵ Only two photos of the interior show views through any windows, both to the enclosed ministerial gardens: a single shot of the enormous table set against the north wall in Hitler’s office and one wide shot of the dining hall.

²⁹⁶ Wolter’s brief text opens the tour of the diplomatic route, giving an overview of its trajectory, reprising the 9-month construction myth, lauding Speer’s invention of “jene neue Form, die unser Großdeutsches Reich symbolisiert,” and acknowledging the New Chancellery as only its provisional introduction: “Die Formen, in denen dieses neue Bauen sich vollziehen, von denen ausgehend es sich entwickeln wird, sind vorgezeichnet.” Rudolf Wolters, “Werk Und Schöpfer,” in *Die Neue Reichskanzlei, Architekt: Albert*

plan allow the reader to trace the path through the interior, despite the lack of clear visual linkages between rooms.

Two understated images of the antechamber inside the Honor Court, identifying its position articulating the new structure with the old Chancellery and Siedler building, orient and initiate the narrative trajectory. (Fig. II-34) A full-page, color print of the Mosaic Hall, begins the tour in earnest. (Fig. II-35) The images then lead west through the sacral Mosaic Hall, the brightly illuminated, museal rotunda of the Round Room, the lavish Marble Gallery, and the Führer's Reception Hall. (Figs. II-36 – 38) Turning eastward and returning along the north side of the building, an image of the Cabinet Meeting room suggests the increasing visual and spatial integration of the building's administrative and representational functions as we approach its axial center, epitomized by the final destination that immediately follows: Hitler's ceremonial office.²⁹⁷ (Figs. II-39 – 40 & II-43)



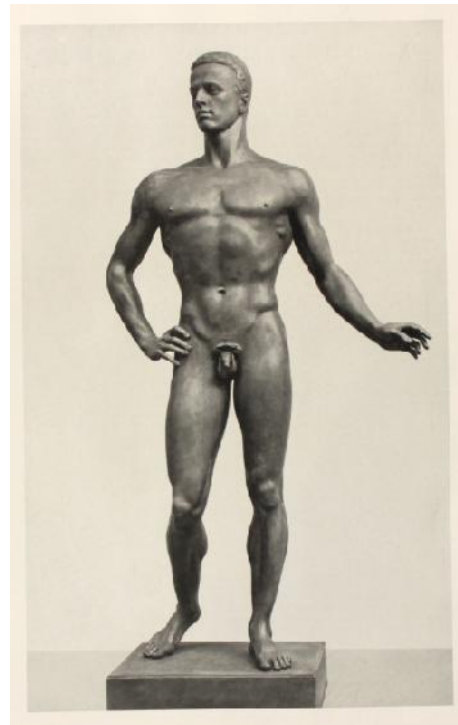
Figure II-34 – Frontal view of the antechamber, showing doorways to Honor Court (left) the Borsig Palace and Reich Chancellery offices (center) and Mosaic Room (right).

Speer, ed. Rudolf Wolters and Heinrich Wolff (München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP; Franz Eher nachf., 1945), 52. Equally short pieces from Kaspar and Breker that follow accompany the rooms outfitted with their works and detail images; Breker's reliefs and sculptures are photographed independently, not in their context in the building but, rather, from their museal representation in the *Haus der Kunst*. Lotz's second essay begins at the Marble Gallery and concludes on the same page as the final images of Hitler's office.

²⁹⁷ The Cabinet room was never used. Speer describes in his memoirs the tragi-comic practice of various cabinet members asking to be admitted into the chamber to wistfully caress the untouched, embossed leather pads.



Figure II-35 – Frontal view of the Mosaic room, viewed from its eastern entrance looking west toward portico leading into the Round Room.



Figures II-36 & II-37 – Partial view of the Round Room with doorway leading to Marble Gallery (left); Arno Breker's Wager (right)



Figure II-38 – Marble Gallery viewed from eastern end. Doorway to Hitler’s office third from right at center of image.



Figure II-39 – Führer’s Reception Hall, caption notes in ‘Vorläufiger Zustand’



Figure II-40 – Cabinet meeting room, door to the right leading into the Party Chancellery wing.

Lotz's text ends with the final images of this space (analyzed below), which are succeeded by a brisk epilogue of images exclusively accompanied by captions, breezing through the dining hall, the library, and concluding with six images of the entrance halls of the office wings, the corridor connecting to Hitler's private apartments in the old Chancellery, and the appendix of elevations and stylized technical drawings.

Limited to fewer than a dozen of the New Chancellery's more than 300 rooms, the photographs drastically manipulate and reduce the visibility of the building's interior to its representational spaces. Considering that the administrative spaces were chaotically packed between the diplomatic route and the facade, their exclusion is hardly surprising.²⁹⁸ Although the visually-constructed spatial narrative had little to do with the significantly larger and more

²⁹⁸ Arnold and Janick, 106. See analysis in the introduction to this dissertation.

complex architectural object it allegedly gave a comprehensive impression of, constraining photographic reproduction to these symbolic spaces reified the claim that they alone constituted the building's representational identity.²⁹⁹ The photographs (assisted by the ideologically saturated essays) assert that the NS state is best visualized in the same structure that concealed it from view. But the expansion of the state's administrative institutions accompanying Hitler's consolidation of power had ostensibly been an equally decisive factor necessitating the New Chancellery's construction, and thus a crucial dimension of its architectural identity.³⁰⁰ After all, its excessive cost could hardly have been justified in light of its provisional status if its *sole* function was representational. Still, as both symbolic *and* administrative center, the latter could only be seen by way of the former.

In addition to masking the complexity of the building's structure, therefore, the New Chancellery's photographic mediation also infused the symbolic screen of the diplomatic route with the visual representation of the hidden bureaucracy. This was not exclusively the effect of photographic reproduction; rather, the legibility of the bureaucratic apparatus was already present in the building design, manifest in optical strategies suggestive of physical control. Built into the axial organization of the layout and visually imposing, orthogonal rooms were implicit claims

²⁹⁹ Based solely on this selective reconstruction in photographs, Lotz's claim in *Reichskanzlei* that, "Es gibt in diesem großen Bau keine vernachlässigten Winkel und Ecken" was relatively unassailable, incessantly repeated elsewhere. Lotz, "Die Innenräume Der Neuen Reichskanzlei," 90.

³⁰⁰ Hence, at its dedication ceremony, Hitler insisted that the Neue Reichskanzlei's provided "einen anderen Platz zur Repräsentation und vor allem auch zum Arbeiten." Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*, 185, my emphasis. Hitler's narrative in his introduction to the monograph thus has him presiding over the renovations to the old Chancellery, necessitated as much by their allegedly shabby condition, as by the integration of the offices of President and Chancellor. His often-quoted excoriation of the building's physical state in 1933 offers an allegory of political decay by way of the architectural, corrected by Speer's renovations. The twinned architectural and political shake-ups, Hitler claims, offer only an "augenblickliche Lösung." Adolf Hitler, "Die Reichskanzlei," in *Die Neue Reichskanzlei, Architekt: Albert Speer*, ed. Rudolf Wolters and Heinrich Wolff (München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP; Franz Eher nachf., 1939), 8. That is, they are only a prelude to 1938 and the simultaneous reconstruction of Germany as an empire and Berlin as *Reichshauptstadt*. Hence, in Hitler's account, the fairy tale continues with the recently-begun work on the latter, which presents both the opportunity and the need for the old Chancellery's wholesale replacement. Ibid. In Hitler's account, the decision "ein Großdeutsches Reich aufzurichten" felicitously coincided with the demolition of buildings along Voßstraße. Ibid. But, as we've seen, this is, again, according to the narrative, only a temporary solution, to be again surpassed by future 'renovations' to be completed by 1950.

regarding the architecture's power over the body.³⁰¹ Moreover, often-overlooked, optical elements of Speer's design, responsive to the *visual* experience of navigating the diplomatic route *and* attuned to its *photographic reproduction*, further asserted claim to such bodily, disciplinary effects and inscribed them as analogous to the effects of the articulated, hidden organs of state power. Photography highlighted Speer's use of the layout and materials to produce optical effects suggestive of the architecture's ability to overwhelm, dominate, and contain the visitor's body. Without suggesting that there was any truth to claims regarding the architecture's physical and affective impact on the visitor, we can nonetheless see how they were illustrated and reified in photographic representation.

Reichskanzlei's interior photographs employ a severely limited, tightly choreographed subjective perspective, using a 'disciplined' gaze as a surrogate for a 'controlled' body. The images identify locations in the building plan which presented "visual opportunities," or, perhaps, visual imperatives, calibrating optical experience to the punctuated procession of the *enfilade*.³⁰² Wolters describes traversing the diplomatic route as "ein Erlebnis..., ähnlich dem eines festlichen Schauspieles, dessen einzelne Akte der Reihe nach Szenen beleuchten."³⁰³ The intensification of visual experience was already the goal of Speer's strictly controlled layout, which utilized the transitions between enclosed rooms to melodramatically punctuate each step approaching the center of power with a "three-dimensional picture." The diplomatic route was designed as a series of transitioning *room-images*. Doorways separating cavernous rooms enhanced the dramatic

³⁰¹ Giesler claims that, "der Besucher [wird] vom Schlendern oder Gehen zum Schreiten gezwungen." Hermann Giesler, "Symbol Des Großdeutschen Reiches," *ibid.*, 12.

³⁰² Zimmerman, 55. The photographic and architectural calibration of visual experience referred to by Zimmerman, Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavillion, is far more sophisticated and organic than the strategy of Speer's design. The open floor plan of Mies's structure allowed for generally free movement and, thus, the photos suggested an idealized, visual and physical choreographed path, not necessarily enforced or obvious on site, communicating freedom and autonomy of movement, punctuated by visual richness. In the New Chancellery, the visual tableaux were tightly choreographed and meted out through doorways and porticos, which were anyways usually the sole focal point of each 'room-image.'

³⁰³ Wolters, 47.

reveal of each, subsequent space—a visual-narrative strategy showcased in newsreels and duplicated in photographic reproduction, for which Speer had stipulated exact camera positions.³⁰⁴

The visual emphasis in Speer's design simplified the photographic translation of the New Chancellery, but also complicated the transmission of bodily experience. The single-point-perspective views of the Mosaic Room, for example, taken with a wide-angle lens and positioned in the exact center of the floor grid, highlight and exaggerate its depth and size, initially seeming to draw the gaze into the space. Yet, the subjective camera hardly *inhabits* the room.³⁰⁵ With no furniture or staffage (the door on the right-hand wall is easily overlooked) or apparent function, the space seems to exclude the presence of the imaginary body. Opposite the closed door in the darkened portico, the perspective flattens the room, triptych-like; finely worked and highly polished materials call attention to flat surfaces and their equally flat (though visually lush) reproduction. The room appears abstracted, opposite the body, which is reduced to a gaze, gliding across the orthogonal grid.³⁰⁶ Reducing the body to its visual perception, the photographs and their textual mediation posit the architecture's 'annihilating,' disciplinary control over the visitor.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ Schönberger, "Die Neue Reichskanzlei in Berlin Von Albert Speer," 171-72, footnote 14. Schönberger writes, in consideration of the Neue Reichskanzlei's massive reproduction in images, "In diesem Zusammenhang stellt sich die Frage, inwieweit bei der Planung der NS-Repräsentationsarchitektur deren fotogene Wirkung mit einkalkuliert wurde, ja möglicherweise sogar die Farbigekeit der Innenräume auf Farbfotografie abgestimmt war. Nicht nur Hitlers, sondern auch Speers Interesse am Film würde diese These unterstützen. Speer besprach nicht nur die genauen Standorte für Innenaufnahmen mit den Fotografen, sondern er ließ auch einen Farbfilm von dem Regisseur Fanck über die Neue Reichskanzlei drehen. 1941 gab Speer 'Anweisungen bis ins einzelne und besprach vor allem Probleme des Farbfilms, dessen Resultate bei den Innenaufnahmen der Reichskanzlei besonders befriedigend waren.'"

³⁰⁵ Lotz's description suggests: "Dem Menschen, der diesen Raum betritt, steht der Raum immer als großes Bild vor den Augen...Diese allein in sich ruhende Kraft der räumlichen Verhältnisse verleiht dem Mosaiksaal...das, was wir als monumental und erhaben bezeichnen." Lotz, "Die Innenräume Der Neuen Reichskanzlei," 64. It is in fact difficult to assess whether Lotz is describing the photographs or the building itself—and that is, perhaps, precisely the point, to establish their semantic equivalence in terms of their 'sublime' effect.

³⁰⁶ This description resonates with the Mosaic Room's cinematic reproduction, from an unreleased documentary of the building's construction. The camera strafes the floor along the gridlines, the gridded, illuminated drop ceiling illuminated in a reflection, that tracks along with the shot. We will, however, see this room filled with bodies, aligned in funeral rites in the newsreels discussed at the end of this chapter.

³⁰⁷ Lotz claims that the room's rational design and classical proportions offer a paradigmatic example of the architectural sublime "uncoupled" (loslösen) from the human body, which stood powerless before it. "Gerade das Möbel ist ein Element der Innenraumgestaltung, das die Verbindung zwischen Raum und Mensch sowohl maßstäblich wie gefühlsmäßig herstellt. Darauf ist in diesem Raum ganz bewußt verzichtet worden, weil seine Ausmaße so groß gehalten sind, daß sie nur in den ureigenen architektonischen Elementen untereinander harmonieren können." Lotz, "Die Innenräume Der Neuen Reichskanzlei," 64.

On the other hand, material and optical design elements resonant with modernist photographic and architectural technologies also paradoxically “reinsert” the body into space. Marble not only ideologically reflected the Third Reich’s prestige and durability—it also literally reflected bodies within the building. Modernist architects had also employed such materials to produce moments of “visual reckoning” and optical abundance.³⁰⁸ A detail image of the floor in the Mosaic room shows a luminous reflection of the ceiling-grid (Fig. II-41); in the Marble Gallery’s *Gesamtansicht*, the inverted reflection of the space dominates the foreground. These slippery surfaces were meant to both physically destabilize the visitor and to imply a *visual* asymmetry, symbolic of the Führer’s power, articulated in the state. The photographs emphasize the architectural effect *and* refer back to the “filmic and photographic correlates” that “impregnated” the architecture with meaning.³⁰⁹ The visitor’s (imaginary) body thus stands in sharp relief to the empty spaces it traverses, while the reflective surfaces amplify their (hypothetical) visibility—implying control over the body by intimating enhanced *surveillance*. An internally circulated cartoon from GBI architect Hans Stephan shows a diplomat walking the exaggerated length of the Marble Gallery, his body reflected on the floor, illuminated from all sides by spotlights, and surrounded by cameramen positioned along both walls. (Fig. II-42)

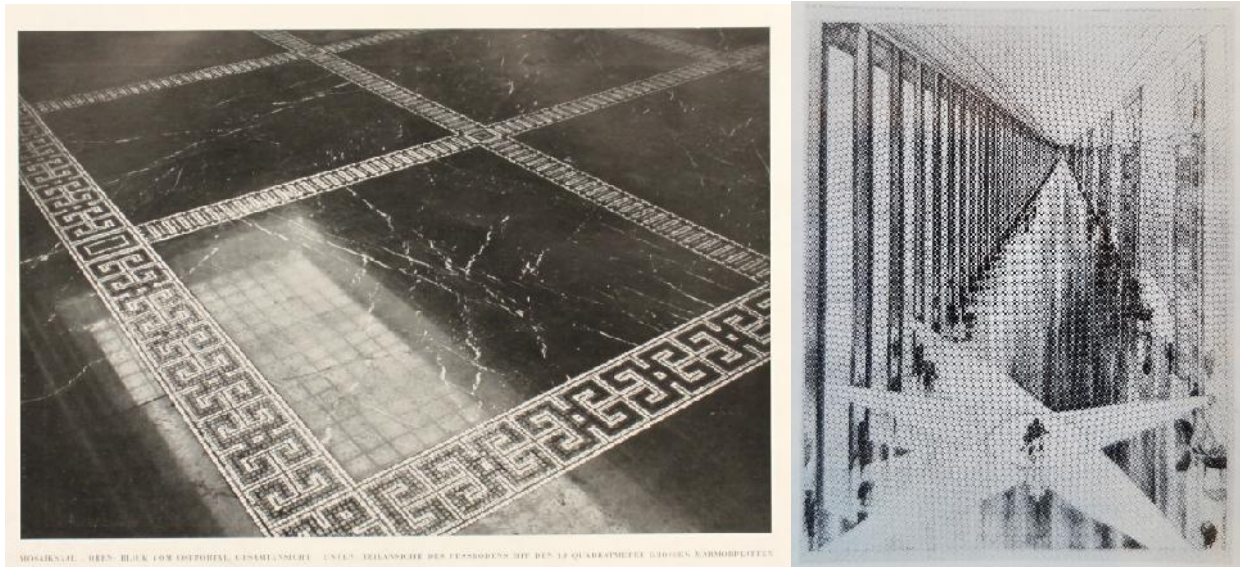
Cameras, a constant presence capturing every event staged in the New Chancellery, are thereby also written into the building design. The photographs self-reflexively invoke the technologies of the architecture’s reproduction—without, however, revealing them.³¹⁰ Hence, at the end of the journey inward, the Führer’s gaze becomes a kind of hidden camera, insinuating the visitor into an unseen, articulated organization of knowledge and power, issuing from and

³⁰⁸ Zimmerman, 58.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

³¹⁰ As in *Das Wort aus Stein*, which fetishizes the workmanship of cameraman and architect alike, while nevertheless invisibilizing the means of production, so, too, here, technologies of reproduction seem to fade seamlessly into the building itself, which appears as an autonomous image-space.

transmitting back to the state's embodied center, framed in and mediated by architectural space. That is, the visual-spatial narrative operates as an allegory for the state's hidden, synoptic gaze, constituted by the bureaucratic apparatus housed in the building.³¹¹



Figures II-41 & II-42 – Detail image of the inlay grid pattern from the Mosaic Room floor (left). Cartoon from Hans Stephan, reproduced in Schönberger, pg. 172. (right)

Not coincidentally, the representation of Hitler's office sharply contrasts with the rest of the narrative. (Fig. II-43) The obvious climax is shown in 19 photographs spread over 14 pages—twice as many as any preceding room. The first of these suggests a radically different visual and spatial experience, by introducing another imaginary body as the photographic 'subject': the embodied Führer in his space of power. The experience of space, communicated photographically, transforms and we momentarily inhabit a position of visual plentitude and scopic mastery. The introductory *Gesamtansicht*, printed in rich color, is positioned behind Hitler's desk.

³¹¹ Lefort writes, "It is as if power had the capacity to exhibit the collective social labour, or as if, through it, society exhibited itself to itself. However, the aim of transparency turns out to be in contradiction with that of opacity. For the 'whole' does not allow itself to be expressed through articulations, each of which would know its function. The 'whole' must remain outside its articulations and therefore a secret." Lefort, "The Logic of Totalitarianism," 288-9. Stephan's cartoon hyperbolically reveals a threatening inversion of the typical specular scenario of architectural photography, wherein the camera interpollates an invisible subject inhabiting, and thereby visualizing, space. Here, the invisible, photographic subject is nevertheless the *object* of a supreme gaze, located in the radically unseen spaces of the building's interior, relayed in the images' supposed translation of the architecture's subjugating, physical effects on the body.



Figure II-43 - Hitler's ceremonial office, viewed from behind his desk in the northwest corner of the room, doorway to Marble Gallery visible at far right.

Dominating the foreground, laden with conspicuously studious objects of work, the desk frames the space, humanizing its exaggerated dimensions.³¹² Offset to the left, the angle downplays the room's symmetry, accenting Hitler's invisible body, rather than the design, as producing the visual and spatial order.³¹³ The Führer's synoptic gaze is, further, suggested in the wide-angle lens's subtle distortion of space, compressing it into an easily surveyed visual unity.³¹⁴ Although

³¹² The furniture ensembles in the Marble Gallery, conversely, do exactly the opposite: arranged in repeating clusters down its length, they highlight the space's extreme depth.

³¹³ In fact, it is thus more standard for interior architectural photography than many of the diplomatic route images. Single-point perspective is discouraged in Lotz photographic principles, as it flattens the space, thus stymying the movement of the gaze and not providing any reference to relative dimensions or potential trajectories of movement.

³¹⁴ Further reinforcing the implication of visual mastery, Hitler's chair is aligned opposite Lembach's portrait on the far wall—Bismarck may keep watch but the Führer returns the gaze from his own position of scopic power.

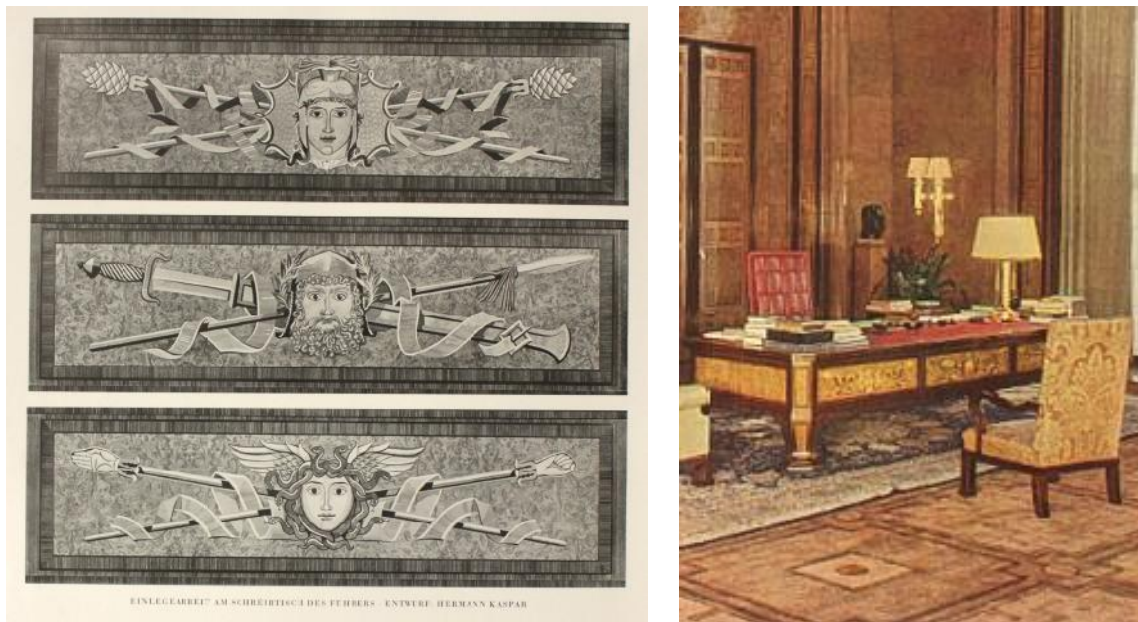
this position of viewing initially appears aligned precisely with the camera's gaze, the Führer's empty chair in fact stands in for his invisible body—the angle of view it suggests, shifted slightly from the focal point of the image, the upper corner of the left-hand doorway, is canted to imply a gaze directed, equally, toward Bismarck, the opposite chair, and the entrance to the *deeper* interior of the New Reich Chancellery: the corridor to the Dining Hall, the private offices of Hitler's attendants, and the *Kannenberggang*, leading into the old Chancellery (and the subterranean bunker complex). We are thus positioned adjacent to but still denied the Führer's perspective, as the image simulates, instead, perhaps a close adjutant or secretary, hovering just behind his shoulder, awaiting (or, rather, anticipating) his command.³¹⁵ This position is, however, withdrawn in two subsequent images, approximating the view of an approaching visitor. (Fig. II-44)



Figure II-44 – View of Hitler's office from next to the hearth, with his desk positioned in the center.

³¹⁵ This position will be expressly adopted by Syberberg's protagonist, Hitler's personal attendant Krause, at the conclusion of his walking tour through the New Chancellery's posthumous spaces.

The Führer's sunny, technicolor gaze is replaced with high-contrast black and white, sapping the room's warmth and replacing it with a somber and sacral atmosphere. The wide-angle-lens distortion, thereby, also becomes differently legible: now exaggerating the room's dimensions, plunging Hitler's desk into the distance; including more of the coffered rose-wood ceiling, reflected on the facing wall, the carpet's serpentine-swastika pattern, and the facing windows and niches. The photograph reasserts the architecture as the source of visual-spatial order, in the way it structures the imaginary viewer's position within its grid and directs the gaze toward the Führer's position at the center of the image. Without the grounding effect of the desk, we instead stand before the empty space, which must be traversed under Hitler's authoritative gaze, personified and multiplied by the mosaic inlays on the front of the desk, shown in detail a few pages later. (Figs. II-45a-b) Within the New Chancellery's photographic representation, the Führer's absent body consolidates the *perspective* and the *visibility* of the hidden bureaucratic network of state power—the images weld the Führer's gaze onto architectural space of power.



Figures II-45a & II-45b – Detail images of the mosaic inlay on the front of Hitler's desk, showing Athena, Mars, and Medusa (left); image of the desk in situ (right).

But rather than a throne room, crucially, we occupy the Führer's *office*.³¹⁶ The bureaucratic paraphernalia on his desk identifies this as the switchboard and command center of the state's interior. The 'petrifying' power of the Führer's or Medusa's gaze, supposedly pinning the visitor to his chair, is therefore also channeled through the telephone, writing block, and so on. Amplified by this connection to the Führer, the unseen bureaucratic apparatus, already invoked in the objectifying visual experience of the diplomatic route, radiates back outward. But, again, here we do not see Hitler's body, nor is the visual impression of space necessarily an accurate description of its photographic mediation. For, again, we do not 'meet' the (absent) Führer's gaze with the camera's, rather, the angle of view is slightly tilted up and to the left of his body's (hypothetical) position. The vanishing point of this image, too, is a doorway to the state's deeper-situated administrative interior—the Cabinet meeting room. This space, which, like the office, held a purely decorative function, can be viewed as a vanishing point in a more figurative sense: a site where the work of statecraft dissolved into nothing, but remained concealed and sustained in the public eye through the scenographic, visual reproduction of its representational architecture.

We should thus recall that even as it framed and implied the Führer's embodiment of the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent power, articulated and actualized in the state, the New Chancellery's very appearance as a unified architectural object was the pure effect of photographic representation, suppressing the reality of its actual, fragmented spatial articulation. Further, it is perhaps overhasty to suggest that the administrative spaces, physically isolated from the representational space of power, are *only* symbolically visible in this idealized, ideological narrative. For visual traces of the NS bureaucratic institution are, in fact, included in *Die Neue*

³¹⁶ The decorative elements visually hearken back to the representational route and are, further, highly suggestive of the embodiment of classical, masculine sovereignty. For a description of the design elements symbolic of male, sovereign domesticity, employed by Gerdy Troost in the interior design of Hitler's residence at Obersalzberg, especially the hearth in the Berghof's Great Hall, see: Stratigakos, 79-89.

Reichskanzlei. But to undermine any suggestion of the Führer's *dependence* on the state machinery surrounding him, they remain only marginal, an afterthought, subordinated to his symbolic presence. As mentioned above, six images of hallways in the Party and Reich Chancellery wings are included at the end of the monograph, following the brief interlude of the dining hall and library, along with single photographs of secretary to the President Otto Meißner's office, designed by Cesar Pinnäu, and a conference room. Their inclusion gestures toward the supposed, mostly hidden integration of administrative and representational space in the New Chancellery.³¹⁷

These rooms, however, are *only* seemingly seamlessly articulated with their representational counterparts through their appendix onto the monograph's visual-spatial narrative—and even then, only imperfectly. The appearance of the corridors in the Party and Reich Chancelleries plays up visual similarities between representational and bureaucratic realms: polished marble surfaces and ornamental columns echo the sumptuous materials and modified-neoclassical design of the diplomatic route. (Figs. II-46a-d & II-47a-b) Here, however, the subjective camera-perspective inhabits a space less hostile to the imaginary body. Carpeted surfaces mute the slippery floors and render them notably less treacherous; humanizingly-smaller-scaled doorways, practical light fixtures and sparse furniture suggest an orderly but certainly not subjugating bodily experience. The photographs suggest functional and elevated accommodations for a large, anonymous bureaucracy. Despite their modest size in the actual building layout, shot with a wide-angle lens, the hallways appear to extend endlessly, hearkening back to the forward movement toward the center of Führertum. In other words, thanks to their photographic reproduction, these spaces do bear a striking resemblance to images of the representational halls—but rather than reproducing the intensifying, dramatic effect of the diplomatic route, they suggest

³¹⁷ They also point to a notable differentiation in the quality of administrative spaces, with considerably better accommodations for the officer class of NS bureaucrats. See introduction.



SEINGANGSHALLE IN HOHEM VERWALTUNGSRAUM (TÜRSTRASSE 4)



HOHEM VERWALTUNGSRAUM (PUNKTSTRASSE 2) VERBUNDENHALLEN IN HOHEM VERWALTUNGSRAUM

Figures II-46a & II-46b – Views into the entrance halls of the Reich Chancellery (left) and S.A. Offices (right)



SEINGANGSHALLE IN HOHEM VERWALTUNGSRAUM (TÜRSTRASSE 4)



HOHEM VERWALTUNGSRAUM (PUNKTSTRASSE 2)

Figures II-46c & II-46d – Detail images of the peristyle in the Reich Chancellery foyer.



Figure II-47a – Corridor in the ground floor of the Party Chancellery wing, looking west.



Figure II-47b – Corridor on the first floor of the Party Chancellery wing, direction of view unclear.

that, due to the unidirectional trajectory of power articulated in the New Chancellery's spatial order, all paths lead to Hitler (a notion again underscored by the final photograph in the book, showing the articulation between the New Chancellery and the Führer's private apartments in the old Chancellery).

At least, they try to suggest this, since these space's lack of integration with the representational rooms remains relatively obvious. Further, the photographs are disorienting; only with difficulty can we determine that these hallways run parallel to the diplomatic route and this orientation falls short of spatial coherence.³¹⁸ Despite captions identifying their position in the building, the pedantically clear trajectory along the axis of the diplomatic route from the previous series (provided by the establishing images, accompanying text, and the ground floor plan) is not to be found here. The first two images are in fact opposite-facing views of the foyer and corridor connecting the Reich Chancellery and S.A. office tracts (located at the portal on Voßstraße 4 and the entrance to the Borsig Palace at Voßstraße 2). Yet, within the images, the connection of the two spaces is far from clear; the images of the peristyle in the Reich Chancellery foyer exacerbate the issue, appearing at first glance to show four alternate views of a single space, viewed first from the interior, then the doorway, the interior again, and the reverse angle of view. The kink in the hallway in the first two images, resulting from the articulation with the Borsig Palace, and the furniture along the south wall provide the only clues to these spaces' situation in the building relative to each other (especially since the foyer at Voßstraße 4 is so over-exposed in the second image as to render it virtually unrecognizable); the focal point of the first is roughly the camera position, reversed in the second. The two photographs of corridors from the Party Chancellery in the western tract are equally problematic. What initially appears as opposing views of the same

³¹⁸ As regrettably intimately familiar as I am with the New Chancellery's interior, determining the position of these photos was an exceedingly frustrating task.

space are in fact two different floors.³¹⁹ Are the lighted niches windows and the darkened ones doorways? Does anyone even work here? Instead of articulating the connection between representational and administrative spaces, these photos look like anonymous hotel corridors, appended on the fragment of some temple.

And rightly so—as these spaces did little to connect administrative spaces to each other or to the representational realm. Despite the *appearance* of symbolic and functional spatial order, these rooms, like the entire structure, constitute a representational screen and bottleneck; not leading to the center of power but dead ending at its margins. Far from concealing the tortuous and irrationally organized structures of government characteristic of the NS regime after 1939, the New Reich Chancellery's photographic, bureaucratic architecture provides on its face an unwittingly accurate picture of the disjuncture and dysfunction that percolated between the embodied representation and institutional organs of Führertum.

The immense work sunk into integrating the symbolic representation of the hidden bureaucratic apparatus into the visual reproduction of its classical architectural screen thus does, in fact, show the spatial and institutional effects of Hitler's embodiment of state power as Führer. In this manner, the architectural representation *and* representational architecture actually mirrored the inner structure of Führertum in the Third Reich, with Hitler utterly withdrawn from the daily operations of the state while its bureaucratic machinery multiplied in complexity and extended the reach of his 'will' into every aspect of civil life. The Führer's symbolic embodiment of the Volk rested, apparently, on his *utter isolation* from them and the reduction of their presence and participation in state power to the act of viewing photographs and imagining their bodily

³¹⁹ Hence, only the first image of the western hallway is shown on the map of the ground floor in the appendix. The other is only to be found in the unpublished plans of the first floor. See: Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*, Appendix, Plan 16. The lack of images of the upper floors in the Reich Chancellery tract is likely due to their problematic lighting situation, as described in the introduction.

submission and attraction to Hitler's all-seeing-gaze, framed by his architecture of power and mediated by the camera lens.

IV. The New Chancellery as Fortress & Cinematic Vanishing Point of the NS Imperial Fantasy

In closing, let's first turn to a short essay delivered by chief NS jurist Carl Schmitt to the Nürnberg interrogators in 1945. Through Schmitt's analysis, we can see how the Hitler-state's systemic disorder wasn't merely reflected in the New Chancellery's photographic architecture, but also specifically *localized* and *operationalized* in its bureaucratic institutions. Schmitt's critique focuses on Chef der Reichskanzlei, Hans Heinrich Lammers, and his office's function as the mouthpiece and "Mitzeichner" for Hitler's orders and decrees after 1938.³²⁰ As Hitler dismantled the previous ministerial hierarchy, his authority grew to cover virtually all legal matters, but lacked a formal system of execution. As his sporadic orders were "delphic," informal, often delivered verbally, Schmitt writes, "die Berufung auf eine Führerbefehl [konnte] im Grunde von niemand kontrolliert werden."³²¹ A gap thus arose between the "Spitze der politischen Macht" and the apparatus of its implementation.³²² Occupying this vacuum and channeling the Führer's will through the state, party, and military agencies, the Reich Chancellery acted as a "grosse Transformatoren zu dieser Spitze und von ihr Weg."³²³ This bureaucratic bottleneck, limiting access to the Führer and amplifying his power outward, predictably intensified Hitler's isolation from state operations and its radicalizing effect on policy. The New Chancellery thus architecturalized the void opened up by the monumental myth at the Third Reich's center of power and unleashed its ideological forces through the legal, juridical apparatus of the state.

³²⁰ Schmitt.

³²¹ Kershaw, "'Working Towards the Führer.' Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship," 106; Schmitt, 95.

³²² Ibid. 94.

³²³ Ibid., 98. This centrality of the Reich Chancellery offices is reflected in state-internal communication, often addressed to and from, simply, 'die Reichskanzlei.'

Schmitt's original critique has little to say about Hitler's *representational* isolation but a revision of the text nine years later points to the symbiotic relationship between state power's practical and symbolic-spatial organization. In 1954, Schmitt transformed his essay into a radio play, published in book form as *Das Gespräch über die Macht und Zugang zum Machthaber*.³²⁴ The *Hör-Denkspiel* largely hews to his original points, though it shunts Hitler into the background and notably employs an architectural metaphor as its main conceit.³²⁵ "Vor jedem Raum direkter Macht," Schmitt writes, "bildet sich ein Vorraum indirekter Einflüsse und Gewalten, ein Zugang zum Ohr, ein Korridor zur Seele des Machthabers."³²⁶ In other words, unable to be everywhere at once, rulers are dependent on mediating channels of information and implementation. The personal and bureaucratic network, or "Vorräume," the public must traverse to reach the sovereign and vice versa, "kann man nicht umgehen." Those admitted to inform or advise the ruler or receive and transmit orders thereby acquire "Anteil an der Macht."³²⁷ The more complex the system, as in a modern state, *and* the more power is centralized, as in an authoritarian regime, the more difficult it becomes to manage or assign accountability for power's effects.

"Der Machthaber selbst wird um so mehr isoliert, je mehr sich die direkte Macht in seiner individuellen Person konzentriert. Der Korridor schneidet ihn vom Boden ab und hebt ihn wie in eine Stratosphäre...In extremen Fällen wird das oft in grotesker Weise handgreiflich"³²⁸

³²⁴ *Gespräch Über Die Macht Und Den Zugang Zum Machthaber*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2012).

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 26-7. . At the beginning of the dialogue, Hitler is clearly invoked as a pregnant silence: "Woher stammt eigentlich die ungeheuerliche Macht, die, sagen wir Stalin oder Roosevelt oder wen immer man hier nennen mag, über Millionen anderer Menschen ausgeübt haben?" *Ibid.*, 9. The formulation is repeated two pages later. Schmitt's use of an architectural metaphor and a number of other clues in *Gespräch* point us to the New Chancellery as an obvious example of his argument, if not necessarily his intended one. *Ibid.*, 26-27. Since, however, the subject of Schmitt's critique is the bureaucracy surrounding Hitler, especially the bottlenecking of access to him aggressively controlled by Lammers and Bormann, it is entirely possible that Speer's building was exactly what he had in mind

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 21. David Ragazzoni writes, "As a result, the Machthaber is doubly fragile, as he is twice dominated: on the one side, by those who inform, and thus influence, him; on the other, by his own status, which alienates, and thus dethrones, him." David Ragazzoni, "The Ontology of Power, the Failure of Modernity: Insights from a 1954 Gespräch by Carl Schmitt," *Telos* 2016, no. 175 (2016): 64.

³²⁸ Schmitt, *Gespräch Über Die Macht Und Den Zugang Zum Machthaber*, 26-7.

By turning his structural critique into a spatial metaphor, Schmitt implies that the relational organization of power in a state is legible in both its bureaucratic *and representational* architecture.³²⁹ Following on this logic, the NS state's institutional dysfunction was both symbolically visible in and imperfectly compensated for by the New Chancellery's intermedial representation, shown by the analyses in this chapter. Clearly, for example, the inaccessible spaces leading to the seat of power, and the images and text of *Reichskanzlei* affirming this interior's isolation, underscore the symbolic separation inscribing the Führer's power as absolute and, simultaneously, his separation from the public.

But Schmitt's architectural metaphor also presents us with an opportunity for considering the symbolic function of the New Chancellery's unseen administrative spaces themselves. As the symbolic representation of a state that "aspires to be omnipresent through its bureaucratic network," metaphorically speaking, the New Chancellery's *Vorräume* extended beyond the diplomatic route into a near-infinite network of corridors.³³⁰ And despite their classical appearance, the *Vorräume* also consisted of the articulated, technological, and social apparatus of an advanced, modern, totalitarian state.³³¹ This function was, furthermore, rendered explicit in a war-time article from the illustrated magazine *Das Reich*, titled "Ein Tag in der Reichskanzlei."³³² (Fig. II-48) The article reprises the themes of secrecy and concealment, facilitated by symbolic, architectural representation, introduced at the beginning of this chapter, as it describes how,

³²⁹ The separation of society from the embodiment of the state is a standard feature of Schmitt's theory of *Ortung*, combining localization with representation. See: *Der Nomos Der Erde Im Völkerrecht Des Jus Publicum Europaeum*, 4. Aufl. ed. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1997). To be visible to the public he protects, thereby ensuring their obedience, the sovereign is necessarily separated from them, establishing a spatial hierarchy. Power enunciated in the law and visualized in architecture is, according to Schmitt, a relational structure. Although it is created by consensus—the ruler protects, the subjects obey—it retains a value all its own, exceeding both the conditions of its creation and the individual who wields it. The ontological status of power inclusive of this "surplus value" (Mehrwert) is constrained by its phenomenological appearance. *Gespräch Über Die Macht Und Den Zugang Zum Machthaber*, 16. In other words, "Power needs the sovereign body to become visible, and perceivable, at the phenomenological level." Ragazzoni, 61.

³³⁰ Lefort, "The Logic of Totalitarianism," 281.

³³¹ The New Chancellery thus condenses the image of the state orchestrating the production of the "new society...a single organization comprising a network of micro-organizations." "The Image of the Body and Totalitarianism," 301.

³³² Erich Neumann (Pseudonym Hubert Neun), "Ein Tag in Der Reichskanzlei," *Das Reich*, April 6 1941.

“Der Schleier des Geheimnisvollen überdeckt solche Bauten: diese Epoche, die alle Macht einem kleinen Führungskreis übertragen hat, läßt ihn besonders dicht und abschirmend wirken...Das innere Werden der Regierungsmaßnahmen entzieht sich weitgehende der Beobachtung durch Außenstehende.”³³³

Hence, when paired with the included image of the SS-Ausweiskontrolle checking papers required for entry, the New Chancellery’s deserted diplomatic route and bureaucratic hallways can be celebrated as evidence of the tightly controlled centralization of power.³³⁴



Figure II-48 – Full page view of ‘Ein Tag in der Reichskanzlei,’ images show (clockwise from upper left) NS officers luncheoning in the Dining Hall, a bureaucrat in the upper hallway of the Party Chancellery, staff serving patrons in the Dining Hall, an S.S. officer checking papers for entry, Hitler’s office, a secretary transcribing a document, telephonists operating the switchboard, Hitler greeting visiting diplomats, cleaning ladies vacuuming the Cabinet meeting room, a partial view of Meißner’s office, and civil servants at work in the mail-room.

³³³ Ibid., 8.

³³⁴ “Mit den eigentlichen Regierungsgeschäften sind etwa 70 Menschen beschäftigt...Die gesamte Gefolgschaft beläuft sich auf rund 250 Personen, deren erheblicher Teil aber...für technische Arbeiten, etwa für Botendienste und die Instandhaltung des Gebäudes benötigt wird.” Ibid.

Concealment and isolation facilitate the uninterrupted flow of knowledge inward and power outward. Even (and especially) in the Führer's absence, "geschieht die praktische Behandlung der Regierungsgeschäfte in diesem Haus, ein ständiger Kurierdienst unterhält die notwendigen Verbindungen."³³⁵ The article is thus a veritable parade of the select few allowed into the state's isolated interior. Shuffling information through the *Vorräume*, into the Führer's heart of power are secretaries, couriers, switchboard operators, telephonists, mailroom clerks wrangling thousands of letters—"Jedes Schreiben es mag noch so unwichtig sein, wird genau verbucht und...weitergegeben"—24/7, "Der Betrieb reißt nie ab." These civil servants and even the maids dusting the unused diplomatic route, too, thus work towards the Führer's will, as they transform the New Chancellery into a kind of *Volksempfänger* in reverse.³³⁶ The complex network of bureaucracy surrounding Hitler's power, symbolically articulated in his architecture of sovereignty—which Schmitt identifies as its limiting weakness—is thereby transformed in representation into the enabling mechanism of its omnipresence.³³⁷

Reichskanzlei's spatial narrative forcefully represents the Führer's power as multidirectional force, dominating bodies making their way toward the state's interior, and repudiating any suggestion of reciprocity. The bodily visibility projected onto opaque surfaces is

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Thanks to Andreas Gailus for this formulation

³³⁷ Despite the radically different style, Le Corbusier's visions of the utopian, metropolitan capital set the precedent for symbolizing and producing political and social order through architecture which centralizes and integrates the visibility and functionality of the apparatus of power in one. Seen in tandem with the wider reconstruction of Berlin, the New Chancellery's representation resonates strongly with Corbusier's architectural ideology. In his sweeping rationalization of the city, its center of power is transformed into "*the brain of the whole country...[embodying] the work of elaboration and command on which all activities depend...hierarchy prevails in every direction.*" As cited in Scott, 111, original emphasis. The rationalized power manifested in architectural space, as elaborated by Le Corbusier, is also deeply resonant with the language employed by the National Socialists in their discussions of architectural redevelopment. The emphasis on secrecy during the planning stages was asserted as essential for the building projects to be completed successfully. Corbusier de-personalizes the Bauherr in The Radiant City, favoring the Plan—perhaps indicative of his interest in Moscow over Germany, but the logic remains the same. "The despot is not a man. It is the Plan. The *correct, realistic, exact plan*, the one that will provide your solution once the problem has been posited clearly, in its entirety, in its indispensable harmony. *This plan has been drawn up well away from the frenzy in the mayor's office or the town hall, from the cries of the electorate or the laments of society's victims.* It has been drawn up by serene and lucid minds. It has taken account of nothing but human truths. It has ignored all current regulations, all exiting usages, and channels. It has not considered whether or not it could be carried out with the constitution now in force. It is a biological creation destined for human beings and capable of realization by modern techniques." Ibid., 112, original emphasis.

asymmetrical; the visitor is the pure object of the Führer's gaze—and this very opacity is constitutive of the spatial order and architectural ideology of NS power at large. As reconstructed in photographs, the New Chancellery suggests the neutralization of Hitler's *dependence* on the network extending and implementing his power, by employing a different, complimentary image of symbolic unity: the fully articulated body of the Führer.³³⁸ Through this symbolic space, the modern "machinery" of Führertum appears as an *organic* whole. As *Reichskanzlei* channels the gaze of the state through the invisible embodiment of the Volk, the latter paradoxically comes to occupy the very space of power, which acts upon it through the mechanisms of the state apparatus, but from which it is, as a rule, categorically excluded.

We have spent this chapter considering the symbolic, ideological meaning of the New Chancellery, as mediated and technologically reproduced in visual-architectural representation. At the NS architectural exhibitions, in *Das Wort aus Stein*, and in *Die neue Reichskanzlei*, the building is posited as manifestation and guarantor of Hitler's power as head of state—visualizing the future; enabling its industrialized creation by the unleashed bureaucratic apparatus; and concealing both the trajectory of Germany's political development and the machinery of its creation from public view, ostensibly to ensure the Volk's resurrection as a racial empire. In other words, providing the public with a surrogate image, mediating their collective will and future identity through the Führer's symbolic embodiment of both in the present. In closing, I would like for us to consider more concretely both what the New Chancellery's was for, on the level of the NS state's

³³⁸ The images of the New Chancellery frame the Führer's symbolic body, positing it as an organ of the all-encompassing network of State-Party-Volk. Or rather, as *the* organ, both identical with the whole "and the detached part that makes the whole, that institutes it." Lefort, "The Image of the Body and Totalitarianism," 299. Uniting state and society in a single, sovereign body, with its organic unity, "implies that there is nothing, in a sense, that can indicate an externality to the social." Ibid. Lefort writes, "the ultimate figure of...power, detached from the social whole, towering over everything, merges with the party, with the people...It merges with the body as a whole, while at the same time it is its head. A whole sequence of representations is to be found here...of the people with the proletariat, of the proletariat with the party, of the party with the leadership, of the leadership with the Egocrat." Ibid. The difference with Stalin is that the Plan is localized in Hitler's *body* while the machinery is not only the bureaucracy, but the wholesale renovation of the state apparatus as an organ of institutional *and* symbolic power.

development after 1939, and *for whom* it was constructed in a practical sense.

The New Chancellery's construction legitimized both the destructive 'redevelopment' of Berlin and, thereby, ideologically supported the regime's militarized expansion; the experimental work of 'state building' directed by Hitler's only vaguely articulated imperial aims. While the interior machinery of the regime, housed in the building, saw to the implementation of these ideological imperatives, its work remained invisible, concealed behind the representational screen of classically-styled embodiment. (the lack of an official order for the *Endlösung*, for one, is a key example of the violence unleashed by and unaccounted for within the vacuum of authority at the center of the NS state) The New Chancellery, as noted by Schönberger and cited in the introduction, reduced the public's political participation in governance to its symbolic-spatial mediation—the people's body as *audience*, viewing the scenographic, architectural images of Hitler's 'embodiment' of their 'will'—in the propaganda analyzed above and in the continued, repetitive reification of this myth in events staged and filmed in the New Chancellery. But as the war heated up, and the celebratory rituals of the Nazi regime were integrated with total mobilization for war, and as Hitler departed from Berlin and stayed on the front (or at Berchtesgaden) for the duration of the military conflict, the building saw changed use over time—and a broadening of the embodied representatives of the Volk and State, framed by its interior.

The horizon of Berlin's monumental redevelopment, by 1940, the New Chancellery became the metaphorical horizon of the war and the vanishing point of Hitler's imperial fantasy. This visibility was especially concentrated on film. Wartime episodes of NS newsreels regularly transitioned directly from ceremonial state events in its interior to footage of battles on the front. Indeed, the New Chancellery rapidly became nearly inseparable from the cinematic mediation of the Third Reich's military conflict—site of the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact, the

announcement of the war with the Soviet Union, and the ritualistic celebration of self-sacrifice in service of the Führer. In 1940, the unmounting of its brass furnishings featured in a newsreel promoting metal-collection for rearmament.³³⁹ In 1942 it was re-styled as funerary monument for Fritz Todt (after whose death, Speer assumed his position as Armaments Minister). Not only did this somber ritual of the state-sponsored death-cult offer some of the most powerful dramaturgical use of the New Chancellery's interior—in particular, the Mosaic Room—it furthermore reversed the symbolic trajectory projected into the building's representational layout. (Figs. II-49a-c) Instead of moving into the heart of power, the Führer now led the eulogy and then the processional from the building to the Invaliden Friedhof, laying his fallen comrade to rest.



Figure II-49a – Hitler leading the salute of Frits Todt's coffin in the Mosaic Room, as captured in the documentary film Zur Erinnerung an Dr. Todt. (1942)

³³⁹ BAFA UTW 501/16/1940 (K 192809)



Figure II-49b – Officer corps assembled around Todt's coffin in the Mosaic Room, flanked by eternal flames/



Figure II-49c – S.S. Pallbearers carrying Todt's coffin through the Honor Court, followed by a battalion of NS officers

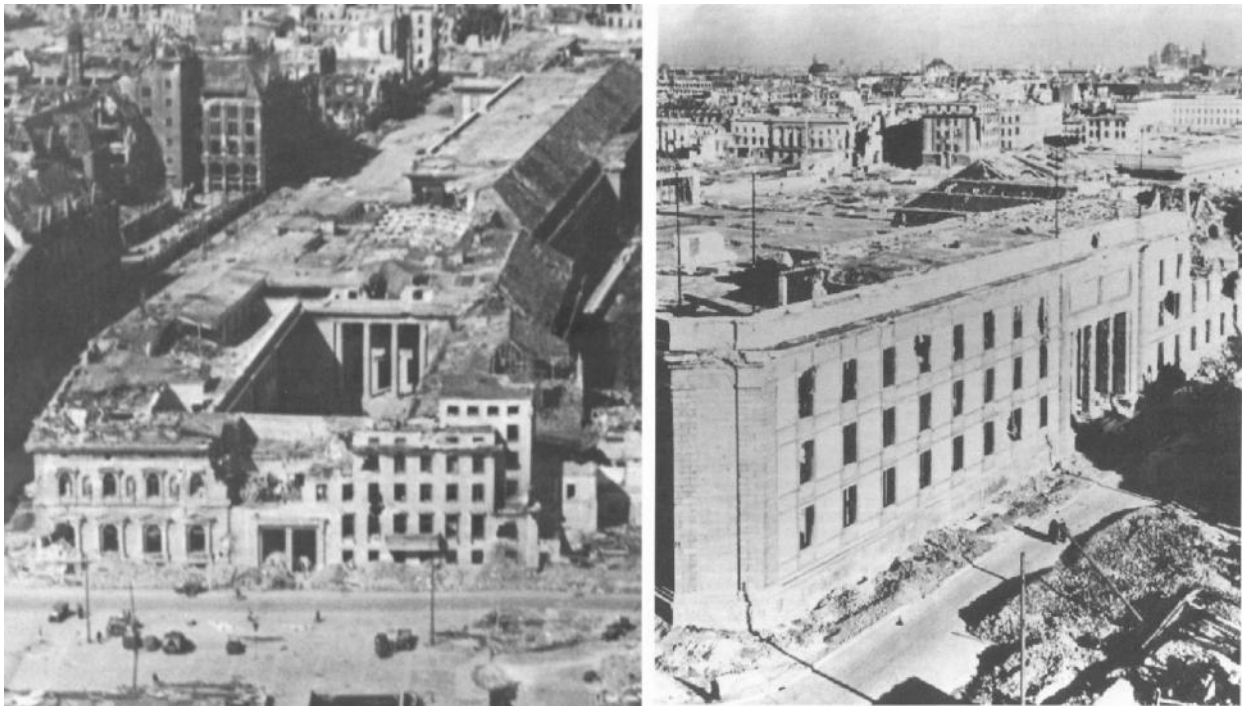
The stylized mass-participation of these events, especially as reproduced on film, continued to metonymically insist that Hitler was only the most visible, symbolic occupant of the provisional center of power, which truly belonged to the body of the people. But over the course of the war, the New Chancellery would become not just a metaphorical but a literal fortress, excluding the public's bodies, as the front collapsed inward from all sides and eventually enveloped the capital.

The Nazi elite had made good use of the New Chancellery's facilities throughout the regime; enjoying face-time with Hitler, pomp and circumstance of state events. By 1944, limited access facilitated not only continued luxury, as the rest of the Volk shouldered wartime austerity, it also ensured *physical protection*. The belated order of the Führer-Sofort-Befehl, for the construction of bunkers failed to fill the need for protection from the airwar—especially as hordes of refugees fled formerly occupied Germany territory in the East. But the employees and officers at work in the New Chancellery, along with Hitler, when he finally returned from the front in 1945, found private refuge in the vast network of bunkers underneath the complex. As the regime ramped up deportation of the Jewish population and looked favorably on the bombing war, as assistance in demolition, maintaining inexplicable faith in both the racial-imperial and architectural fantasy of Hitler's 'vision' to the very end, they took care to fortify only the center of power, leaving the rest of the population outside to fend for themselves. The New Chancellery's construction was thus not so much the climactic celebration of the end of history, but its prelude—and once this movement was halted in its tracks, it remained caught in the balance. The imperfect, provisional stand-in for an unrealized future became instead the icon of its own demise.

CHAPTER III

Zusammenbruch, Demontage, Abriß, Neuaufbau:

The ‘Monumental Ruin of Hitler’s Sovereignty in Occupied Berlin’s Rubble Landscape



Figures III-1 & III-2 - The New Chancellery ca. Summer 1945, seen from above Wilhelmplatz (left), and the Party Chancellery block, viewed from the corner of Voß- and Hermann-Göring-Straße (right). Source: Arnold and Janick, pp. 139, 152

I. Prelude: The New Reich Chancellery in Berlin’s Postwar Rubble Landscape

Following Nazi Germany’s total capitulation on May 8th 1945, the New Chancellery was like an island in Berlin’s seemingly endless sea of rubble and ruins. It lay at the center of an archipelago formed by the few spared buildings throughout the governmental quarter, Hitler’s

protected “Zitadelle,” which had been fortified by ca. 5,000 troops.³⁴⁰ (Figs. III-1 – III-3) As for the rest of the city center, the annihilation reached from the Reichstag to the Anhalter Train Station; from the City Palace to the Brandenburg Gate; the historic Adlon Hotel’s ruin on Pariser Platz was echoed by the collapsed front of the Kaiserhof, a block south on Wilhelmplatz.³⁴¹ There, the old Chancellery was gone; “nur noch einige wenige Mauerstümpfe [ragten] in die Luft.”³⁴² The adjacent Siedler building and Borsig Palace had both been struck by bombs and badly damaged.

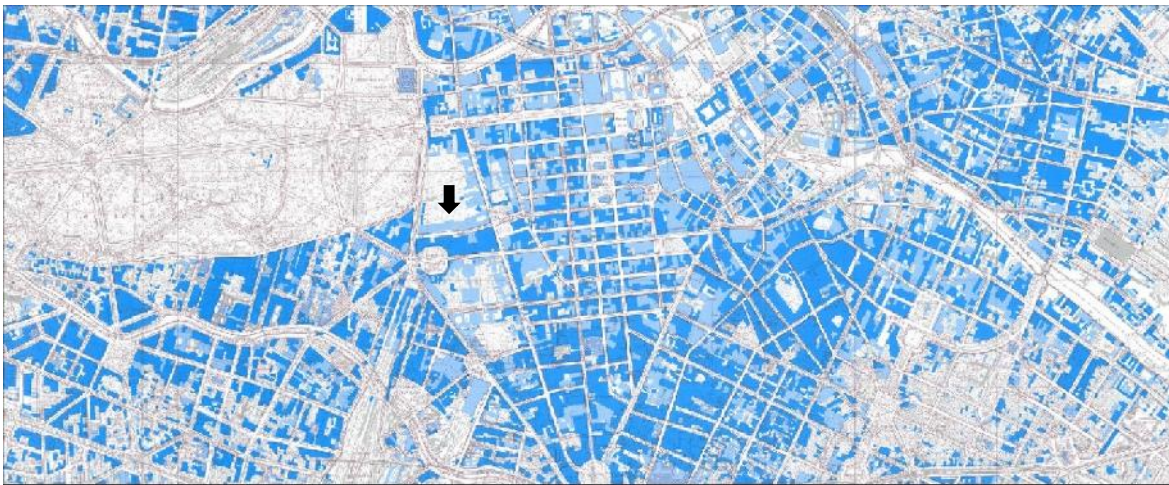


Figure III-3 - Bombing damage to Berlin in May 1945, shown in dark blue. The spared New Chancellery is visible just above the hexagon of Leipziger Platz, marked with an arrow. Source: <https://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/geoinformation/fis-broker/>

But Speer’s monumental addition stretching the length of Voßstraße had come out the other side basically unscathed. The glass in the Mosaic Room’s grand, gridded ceiling and the windows in the Marble Gallery and Hitler’s office had not survived, blown out by explosions and artillery fire; but despite damage to the roof, a sagging hole through the western Party Chancellery block, and its generally ravaged interior, the architecture remained largely intact. Surrounded by the rubble of the Third Reich’s collapse, its center of power since 1939 now stood as a monumental ruin.

³⁴⁰ 3,500 troops, mostly S.S.-Leibstandarte commanded by Brigadeführer Wilhelm Mohnke, protected the just the New Chancellery—its largest staff ever—the rest were French and Scandinavian volunteers, Hitler Youth, and the tank battalion Müncheberg. Despite the sorry state of their equipment, they managed to hold off the Red Army forces to the very end; at the time of surrender, the front lines remained roughly 100m away from the Reich Chancellery. Arnold and Janick, 131, 78n81.

³⁴¹ Berlin had taken “40,000 tons of shells in the final 14 days” of the war, leaving 75% of its buildings uninhabitable. Judt, 16.

³⁴² Arnold and Janick, 141.

The New Chancellery's afterlife, however, proved surprisingly brief—less than four years later, after serving as an Allied tourist attraction and then a derelict site, the building was dismantled in stages by the Soviet occupation authorities (*Sowjetische Besatzungsmacht*, hereafter SBM).³⁴³ The New Chancellery's progressive deconstruction began in 1947 with the stripping of non-structural building materials and the first attempt (of many) to destroy Hitler's *Führerbunker* in the rear garden.³⁴⁴ Over 1949, structural demolition proceeded in two stages, interrupted over the summer as crews were redeployed to dismantle the City Palace.³⁴⁵ By the early 1950s, shortly after the founding of West and East Germany (May 23 and October 7 1949, respectively), an elongated pile of rubble was all that remained of the above-ground structure.

A panorama taken by Fritz Tiedemann from 1952 looks east over the newly installed German-German border at Leipziger Platz—in the top left corner the upper-wall fragments of the New Chancellery's cellars and the intact network of bunkers along Voßstraße are visible; behind them, two toppled cement forms across from Wilhelmplatz, mark the location of Hitler's bunker. (Figs. III-4 & III-5) As Wolfgang Kil notes of Tiedemann's panoramas, they show "häufig etwas, was weg ist (bzw. was demnächst wegkommt). Es sind weniger die Reste des alten urbanen Gefüges, die interessieren, als vielmehr das Maß von dessen Aufkündigung: die übergroßen

³⁴³ The Soviet authorities in occupied Berlin will be referred to with the above abbreviation; the Soviet sector (die sowjetische Besatzungszone), as SBZ.

³⁴⁴ Assigning exact dates to the bunker's (or the New Chancellery's) demolition proves a near-impossible task due to the SBM's mostly non-existent and at times wildly inaccurate documentation of the process. The main stages of the *Führerbunker*'s demolition are as follows: the order for destruction was given in October 1947 and, according to the official record, completed by March 1948, but archival records show that crews encountered significant difficulty, owing to the reinforced structure's durability, the lack of adequate explosive material, and concern over damaging the foundations of nearby buildings. Hence, the initial attempt failed to do any real damage, aside from blowing off the roof and reburying the remains. In 1972/3, tunnels connecting to the bunker were reopened and the site investigated, documented, and re-sealed by the Staatssicherheitsdienst looking for tunnels into the West. In 1988, a more comprehensive process of Tiefentrümmerung and Ausschachtsarbeiten began in preparation for construction of luxury apartments along Wilhelmstraße. In 1992-9, after the bunker was unearthed following the fall of the Wall, the Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus commissioned an archeological study of the site and, ultimately left up to the individual Landesministerien, who had purchased lots on what is now In-den-Ministergarten for the construction of offices, what to do with the buried remains—they simply built atop and into the site without further ado. See: Arnold and Janick, 159-61; Demps, 199-200; Jordan, 183-90; and Kellerhoff, *Mythos Führerbunker : Hitlers Letzter Unterschlupf*.

³⁴⁵ Demps, 200. We will return to this history later in this chapter.

Löcher darin.”³⁴⁶ As we can see, owing to the staggered process of destruction, the panorama shows both: the absent building and its ongoing *unbuilding*. But since the absence of the Wertheim Kaufhaus on Leipziger Platz is decidedly more striking, the New Chancellery’s disappearance is consigned to the margins.



Figure III-4 - Tiedemann's Panorama of Leipziger Platz, April 17, 1952. Source: Berlinische Gallery, *So weit kein Auge reicht*. Plate 25

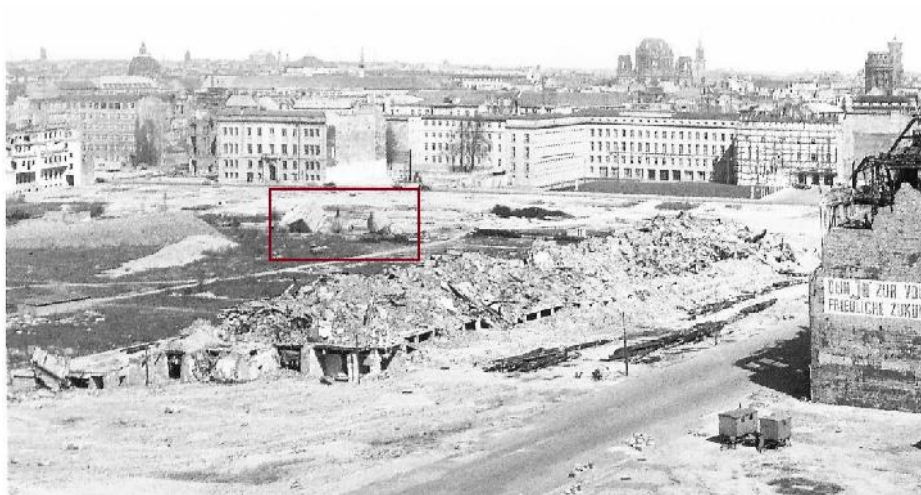


Figure III-5 - Tiedemann panorama, detail view. Führerbunker remains marked with rectangle. Former Propaganda Ministry visible across Wilhelmstraße, beneath the destroyed City Cathedral in the far distance. Source: *ibid*.

As we shall see throughout this chapter, not only did the stages of the New Chancellery’s demolition overlap and bleed into one another, the “Auskünfte” documenting this process—especially where aesthetically inclined—contained incomplete and contradictory information,

³⁴⁶ Kil, 120.

offering multiple, “zwiespältig” interpretations of events on the ground and their significance.³⁴⁷

What meanings, then, are legible in this image of the New Chancellery’s (not-quite-complete) destruction? How did the building’s architectural identity and the legibility of its representations change along with and/or in response to the staggered process of its disappearance?

To foreground this chapter’s narrative arc—tracing the symbolic transformation of the New Chancellery through its invasion, occupation, and deconstruction as captured in photographs, films, and reportage from 1945-1949—an example from the middle of this process offers a helpful illustration. Even before it was taken apart piece by piece, the New Chancellery’s fortified interior had already been blown open by the Red Army, allowing the world to “see” into the rotten interior of “Verschwender Adolf Hitler[s]” “Geheime Reichshaushalt.”³⁴⁸ As the New Reich Chancellery physically disintegrated, its meaning was simultaneously redefined in representation by the Allied-controlled and occupied-German media. An article in the SBZ-CDU daily newspaper, *Neue Zeit*, from June 1947 announcing the building’s “Demontage” offers a representative example of this dual process. Since it provides an overview of this chapter’s themes, I quote here at length:

“Ein Beispiel für den Wahnsinn des Hitler-Stiles, ein Anschauungsbild für die entseelte Architektur des Dritten Reiches, ein sichtbares Zeichen, das wahre Monumentalität nichts mit zehn Millionen Ziegelsteinen zu tun hat, bietet heute mehr als jemals zuvor die trostlose Ruine der Neuen Reichskanzlei. Wenn es nach Hitler gegangen wäre, sollte vom Jahre 1950 ab dieses monströse Bauwerk bereits wieder anderen Zwecken dienen, bis dahin nämlich sollte schon eine Ueber-Reichskanzlei errichtet worden sein, gewissermaßen eine Weltkanzlei...Dieser aufeinander gefügte Steinhaufen hatte schon in den ersten Maitagen 1945 seinen Zweck verloren...Unmittelbar nach dem Einzug der alliierten Truppen war die Reichskanzlei zur Hauptsehenswürdigkeit Berlins geworden, wie die zahlreichen Anschriften in russischer, englischer und französischer Sprache an Säulen und Wänden beweisen...Die vorgetäuschte Größe ist zertrümmert, und heute ist selbst der Reiz der Kuriosität aus den Mauerresten verschwunden. Es sind nur noch tote Steine, nichts

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 116. For example, the SBM had already celebrated the *fait accompli* of the demolition of the Führerbunker and New Chancellery in 1948 and 1949, respectively.

³⁴⁸ “Geld Spielt Keine Rolle!,” *Neue Zeit*, September 16 1945. The article covers the astronomical sums (845 million DM) paid to Hitler and shelled out for the construction and upkeep of his personal, provisional monument. An acerbic editorial about Speer appeared a week and a half later; its section titles give a good summary of its critique: “Berlins erste Zerstörung...Albert Speer baut, rüstet und enthüllt...Von Nürnberg nach Nürnberg...Architekt mit Parteibuch...Verschwendete Rüstung.” “Der Man Der Fehldisposition,” *Neue Zeit*, September 27 1945.

weiter...Man weiß nicht, was aus den Resten werden soll, wenn diese Hitlerstätte ihre letzte Aufgabe, als Steinbruch zu dienen, erfüllt hat.”³⁴⁹

Published without images, the article purports to document the New Chancellery’s non-structural demolition. But it mostly offers something else: a caustic critique of the ‘phony grandeur’ of the self-aggrandizing, inaugural monument to the ‘imperial’ Hitler-State and the designs of its chief architect. The representational identity of Speer’s ‘soulless,’ ‘desolate’ structure is reduced to the sheer accumulation of materials; its function demoted later in the article to *mise-en-scène* for the final act of the “schauerlichste Drama aller Zeit,” obviated with the death of its star-player; the practice-“Weltkanzlei” turned ‘tourist attraction,’ ‘curiosity’ (the writing on the wall, literally, in English, French, and Russian), no longer even able to attract visitors (a radically suspect and inaccurate claim, as it turns out). Yet, although articles like this one aimed to *dismantle* the New Chancellery’s symbolic value, the highly visual narrative merely revises it, transforming its “tote Steine” into a vivid emblem of Germany’s defeat and the site, as “Steinbruch,” into a metonymic image of Berlin’s impending reconstruction. In short, the editorial retraces the history of the Third Reich’s rise and fall through a series of revisions to the symbolic meaning of its provisional architectural center. In 1947, faced with the ruined remains of Hitler’s heart of power, “Man weiß nicht was aus den Resten werden soll,” but one thing seemed certain: any future revisions to the building’s representational meaning would have to be determined *in absentia*.

The first chapter of this dissertation explored the New Reich Chancellery’s intermedial representation as the architectural stage and frame of Führertum. Particularly, how the reproduction of its iconic spaces in propaganda was employed to communicate ideological meanings regarding the centralized, bureaucratic organization of the Hitler-State and the idealized vision of Germany’s impending, (racial-political-architectural) future—and how and whether it

³⁴⁹ Karl Brammer, "Demontage Der Reichskanzlei. Ein Steinbruch Am Wilhelmplatz," *ibid.*, June 17 1947.

withstood the deterioration of this myth. This chapter presents an archeology of the New Chancellery's postwar representation, produced by the occupying Allied powers and the emergent media of East and West Berlin. Working chronologically, I track the phases of the building's concomitant physical and symbolic appropriation, occupation, remediation, and destruction within Berlin's rubble landscape. Stated plainly, this chapter asks when, how, by and for whom the New Chancellery was documented and represented, in which media, and to what end? That is, how were its spaces reproduced and re-coded in representation to produce new political and ideological meanings—especially those aligned with the views and authority of the Western and Soviet occupying forces? Where did this space fit within or conflict with the narratives of German defeat, told first by the victors and then taken up by the losers? As I show, the New Reich Chancellery's aestheticized representation as a ruin, 'dead stones,' 'quarry,' and, eventually, an empty space frames a series of shifting political processes and power relations, corresponding to the physical reconfiguration of the erstwhile urban center of German sovereignty, as the nation was defeated, occupied, and cleaved in two. Through the architecture's kaleidoscopic appearance in different media, we can observe developments in the representation and material implementation of Berlin's reconstruction—refracted through this unquestionably significant site, simultaneously on the margins and at the center of Germany's topography of national identity and memory.

I begin by establishing the historical context of Hitler's defeat by the Red Army: the changed physical condition and revised use of the New Chancellery; the organization and division of Allied authority; and the media landscape of occupied Berlin at the end of the war. Positioned within this context, the New Chancellery's meaning obviously changed. In particular, I show how rubble photographs by German civilians and reportage from the Allied-controlled media redefined the ruin as a site of historical orientation, localizing the rupture between past and present

(*Zusammenbruch*), and framing the victors' symbolic occupation of Hitler's space of power (the visual *Demontage* of Führertum). These images and narratives, furthermore, established a new point of view on and interpretive framework for reading Speer's architecture, aligned with the aesthetic strategies and ideological aims of the Allies during the earliest stages of denazification. I then analyze the New Chancellery's cinematic reproduction in newsreels used to construct and disseminate the Allied victory narrative, showing how architectural devastation was employed to visualize German defeat—a destructive process brought to a halt once it reaches the Third Reich's political center. Further analysis of newsreels and peripatetic textual narratives of tours through the ruin illustrates how the New Chancellery was re-inscribed with regard to its previous representational identity, inverting its legibility, in part by appending the (invisible space of the) Führerbunker onto the iconic procession through its interior. Ultimately, however, these efforts failed to definitively erase or overwrite the visual memory of its representation in NS propaganda.

Hence, I then turn to the building's marginalization within the visual representation of everyday life in Berlin's rubble landscape in 1946—anticipating and initiating its physical disappearance through its diminished symbolic value. I likewise analyze the more aggressive strategy of its anti-representational destruction over 1947-9: both its degradation in the SBZ *Tagespresse*, and its staggered, physical erasure by the SBM, captured in unpublished demolition photographs (*Abriss*).³⁵⁰ As I claim, these artifacts reveal both the deleterious and surprisingly improvisational revision of Berlin's political-urban landscape by the Soviet authorities, and the stylization of demolition in representation as part of the future-oriented work of reconstruction (*Neuaufbau*). Yet, overall, the marginal status of this event in the SBZ and the general lack of a

³⁵⁰ That is, I analyze the use of demolition by the SBM to “repurpose, recode, and rearrange at will” Berlin's representational, urban landscape, to institute and visualize a “‘revolutionary’ rupture [with] the past,” manifest in a new, symbolic, Soviet architectural order. Aristotle Kallis, “The “Third Rome” of Fascism: Demolitions and the Search for a New Urban Syntax,” *The Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 1 (2012): 58.

response by Western authorities indicate a turning away from the site amid the political antagonism of the burgeoning Cold War—as the shifting postwar terrain pushed the centers of Germany’s nascent, political topographies east, from Wilhelm- to Marx-Engels-Platz, and west, to Bonn. Still, however, none of the repeated attempts to dismantle the New Chancellery as a symbol succeeded in fully eradicating *either* its material presence *or* the problematic attraction to its memories.

While authorities in East and West deployed various strategies to erase and repress the visibility of Hitler’s center of power, these attempts were undermined by a sustained international fascination with the site and its former occupants (both personal and architectural). Hence, in closing, I address the first spectral, post-mortem reappearance of the New Chancellery’s ruin (and the Führer’s voice) in Roberto Rossellini’s 1949 film *Germany, Year Zero*, and the virulent response of the West German press, confronted with a memory they seemed all too eager to forget—a disposition regarding the NS past that would come to dominate the early Adenauer era. This final analysis thus makes an initial attempt to answer the question posed at the opening of this chapter, which will concern us throughout the second half of this dissertation. Namely, how did the disappearance of Hitler’s representational architecture impact the legibility of the NS past, as it was subsequently resurrected in cinematic representation, centered on this symbolic site/sight?

II. Visualizing the Third Reich’s Zusammenbruch and Demontage in the New Chancellery

Let’s begin by outlining the events of Germany’s defeat, culminating in Hitler’s suicide in the Führerbunker and the Red Army’s invasion of the New Chancellery. More or less continually absent from Berlin since 1941, Hitler returned to the capital on January 16, 1945.³⁵¹ In late February, as bombing attacks intensified and destroyed the old Chancellery, taking Hitler’s residence along with it, the Führer withdrew permanently to his private bunker in the rear garden;

³⁵¹ Arnold and Janick, 124. The following historical information can be found in *ibid.*, especially pp. 130–41. See also the accounts in Antony Beevor, *Berlin : The Downfall 1945*, 10th ed. (London: Penguin, 2007); Trevor-Roper.

Speer had added this heavily fortified extension onto the Chancellery's original bunker complex in 1944.³⁵² With Hitler's return to Berlin, the command center of Führertum (the Führerhauptquartier) was re-articulated with its representational, architectural center; both were now consolidated underground.³⁵³ Likely Hitler's last foray topside—definitively his last appearance on film—took place on March 20th, in front of his ceremonial office's terrace nearby the bunker's emergency exit, decorating an anti-tank battalion of Hitler Youth (some as young as 12).³⁵⁴ On the same day, the German army began defensive preparations on the outskirts of Berlin, as Soviet forces, led by Marshall Georgy Zhukov began closing in on the capital.³⁵⁵

On April 20th, the Red Army encircled Berlin and began shelling the city center, breaching the S-Bahn Ring by the 25th. Over the next five days, they pushed west along Frankfurter Allee, north to Belle-Allianz-Platz (now Mehringplatz), south to the Reichstag, and east to Potsdamer Platz. (Fig. III-6) On the night of April 27/28th, as attacks on the Chancellery reached their highest

³⁵² The first 19-room bunker had been constructed in 1935/6 with the addition of the Garden Salon and an entire complex of bunkers along Voßstraße with the New Chancellery's construction over 1936-9, as noted in the introduction. After the loss of supremacy in the air-war in 1943, Hitler had ordered the construction of a 13-room addition onto his personal bunker, later identified as the Führerbunker and Vorbunker, respectively, which was completed in October of 1944. See: Arnold and Janick, 126-8; and Kellerhoff, *Mythos Führerbunker : Hitlers Letzter Unterschlupf*. It's worth noting that the above-ground structures, including the S.S. barracks were continually in use through the end of fighting.

³⁵³ The New Chancellery had, of course, remained administrative and symbolic center of NS sovereignty throughout the war. Not only was it still the bottleneck of communication, information, and access to the Führer, administered by Lammers and Bormann, it also remained the primary, ritualistic stage for displays of state power. The connection between these two realms around the pivot point of the New Chancellery was symbolically evident in newsreels throughout the war; after reports of state funerals and other events in the building, these often cut directly to the Führerhauptquartier or the front. See: Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, "Die Deutsche Wochenschau," in *DDWS 598/91/1942 (K 168226)* (1942); "Die Deutsche Wochenschau," in *DDWS 615/26/1942 (K183441)* (1942); *Die Deutsche Wochenschau*, Ddws 657/16/1943 (B 128496) (1943). and commentary in chapter ii. Nevertheless, this changed state of affairs reflects the consolidation of Hitler's representational, operational, and domestic interiors. Internal communication and the continuous flow of people support this reading: messages were addressed and issued from the Reichskanzlei; Hitler's formal and private audiences, military briefings, dinners with visitors, receiving lines for his birthday and wedding, and dictation of political and personal testaments were thus all held underground.

³⁵⁴ The newsreel was released as part of Hitler's birthday celebration on April 20, 1945 and retroactively re-dated as having taken place then. Historical sources inconsistently repeat the error. For a thorough account of the newsreel's production and legacy, see: Gerhard Paul, "«Das Letzte Aufgebot» Hitlers Letzter Propagandetermin Am 20. März 1945," in *Das Jahrhundert Der Bilder Bd. 1*, ed. Gerhard Paul (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009).

³⁵⁵ Stalin saw tremendous, symbolic significance in conquering the former capital of East Prussia, evidenced in the selection of Zhukov, the dates of the offensive, and the "documentation" or re-staging of representational acts like the famous raising of the Soviet flag on the Reichstag on May 1st. The British and American decision to cede the invasion of the capital to the Red Army and many of its central districts to the Soviet occupation, in order to preserve diplomatic relations, would prove fateful for the occupation of Berlin after the war and, therein, for the New Chancellery. For the military history of this decision, see: Judt, especially 103, 17-24. For the history of Yevgeny Khaldei's famous photo of the flag-raising on the Reichstag, see: Ernst Volland, "Die Flagge Des Siegers. Die Rote Fahne Auf Dem Reichstag.," in *Das Jahrhundert Der Bilder Bd. 1*, ed. Gerhard Paul (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009).

intensity, Hitler resolved in the bunker to marry his longtime mistress Eva Braun and commit suicide, “at the moment when I believe the residence of the Führer and Chancellor can no longer be held,” ordering his body’s destruction, to avoid its falling into enemy hands.³⁵⁶

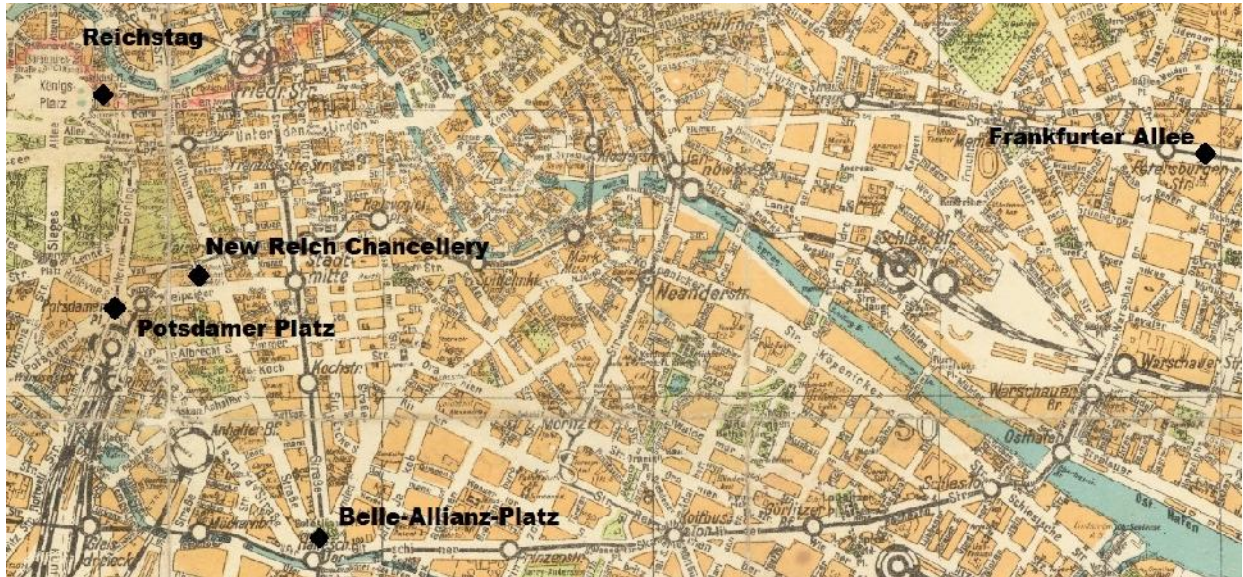


Figure III-6 – *Großer-Silva Map of Berlin ca. 1938, with key locations of Red Army siege marked. Source: raremaps.com, accessed January 15, 2020*

On April 30th, informed that Soviets occupied the Tiergarten, Potsdamer Platz, and part of the tunnel under Voßstraße, Hitler shot himself; his body was burned immediately thereafter just outside the bunker’s emergency exit.³⁵⁷ The report of his death was telegraphed to Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz on May 1st, who announced it (and his succession as President and Commander of the armed forces) that evening on Hamburg Radio. Over the next 24 hours, the Chancellery’s and Führerbunker’s remaining residents lingered in shock, took their own lives, and attempted escape in groups through tunnels along the Charlottenburger Chaussee and Friedrichstraße. When Red Army forces finally stormed the building on the morning of May 2nd, they therefore found the

³⁵⁶ Trevor-Roper, 152, 77. Not wanting to have his corpse exhibited by the Allies, as Mussolini had been, strung up at a gas station no less, was a primary motivation for Hitler’s order to burn his remains. The ritualistic desecration of the deposed ruler’s body is standard in overthrows of state power. See: Thomas Frank, “Investitur, Devestitur,” in *Des Kaisers Neue Kleider: Über Das Imaginäre Politischer Herrschaft: Texte, Bilder, Lektüren*, ed. Thomas Frank, Albrecht Koschorke, and Susanne Lüdemann (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2002), 218-21.

³⁵⁷ Trevor-Roper, 199-205.

center of NS power empty.³⁵⁸

Upon the Soviets' arrival, aside from its most important occupant, the New Chancellery was also empty in another sense: the meaning previously conveyed by the building had been negated. No longer the provisional center of Hitler's incipient empire, the New Chancellery wasn't even the center of a unified nation—as Germany had no sovereign government, leader, or territory to speak of.³⁵⁹ Everything the Nazis hadn't managed to destroy on their way out was now held by the Allies, who had divvied up Germany into four occupational zones and ceded its expanded territory back to provisional and national governments. What's more, the New Reich Chancellery wasn't even at the "center" of *Berlin* anymore; located within the Russian sector, the capital was designated as a shared, operational center for all occupying forces.³⁶⁰ (Figs. III-7 & III-8)

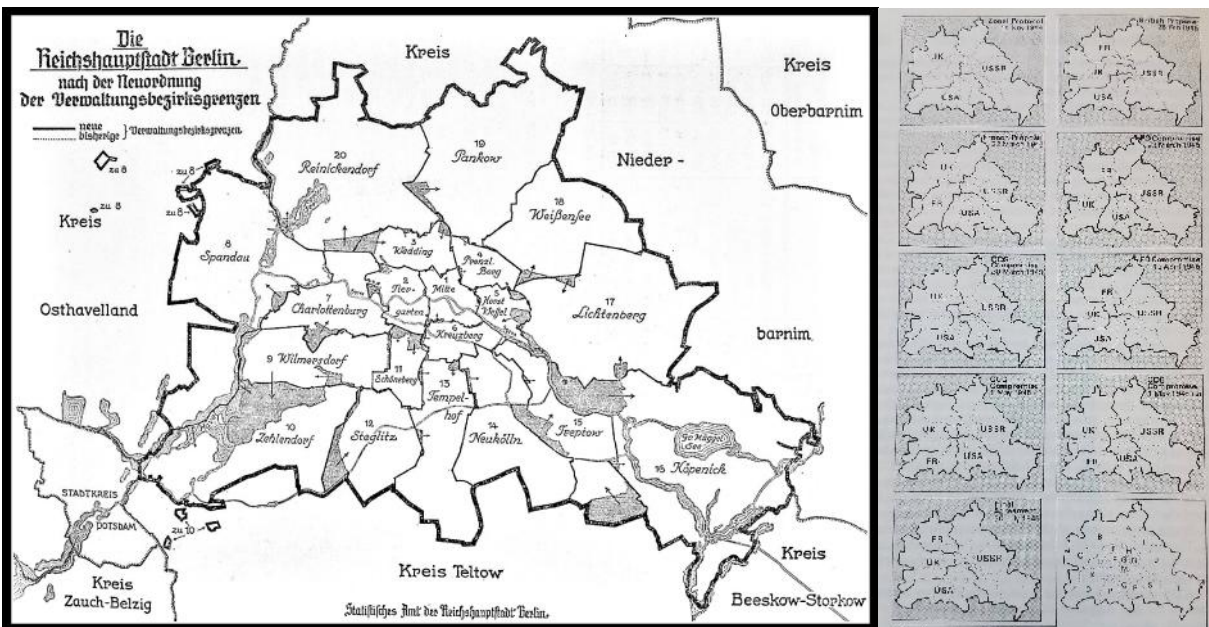
In light of its lack of function and altered urban-political situation, adjacent the borders of the Russian, British, and American sectors, the New Chancellery's meaning had obviously changed; its representational legitimacy been thoroughly undermined. But was its negated symbolic value visible on the architecture itself? Not necessarily. Answering this question requires refining it: for *whom* was the New Chancellery's new meaning *visible* and *legible*? On the one hand, its physical appearance was relatively unchanged—the architecture *as* representation largely intact. On the other, the New Chancellery was *invisible* to Germans not literally walking around Wilhelmplatz and Voßstraße. That is, the architecture was invisible inasmuch as it was absent from representation. In fact, Germany's whole media landscape had gone dark, as a blackout imposed

³⁵⁸ The details of the invasion of the building are a matter of some controversy, see: Arnold and Janick, 140-41.

³⁵⁹ As Richard Evans writes, "The arrangements Hitler made in his Political Testament for the continuation of government were an irrelevance in a situation where most of the Reich was now in the hands of the Allies"; he names Dönitz's appointment of his own ministers as equally pointless: "by now they had virtually nothing left to govern." Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich at War, 1939-1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2010), 736.

³⁶⁰ Negotiations in 1944 had separately apportioned the city's 20 districts into nationally controlled zones, their final distribution codified on June 5, 1945 in the "Berlin Declaration." The Russians' dubs on Mitte, however, were never up for debate. For an exhaustive history of the diplomatic negotiations regarding Germany's division and occupation, see: Tony Sharp, *The Wartime Alliance and the Zonal Division of Germany* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975).

by the Allies in all conquered territories since November 1944 now covered the entire nation.³⁶¹ A continuous focal point of the NS media since its construction in 1939, the New Chancellery suddenly blipped off the radar.



Figures III-7 & III-8 – Map of Berlin’s 20 districts, revised in 1938 (left). Proposals for Berlin’s division, 1944-5. Sources: wikipedia.de and Sharp, map 7

To be clear, representations of its ruin were visible just about everywhere else in the world during the “Presseverbot,” since jubilant reports of Hitler’s death and Berlin’s occupation were international, front-page news. Photographs and film footage from TASS correspondents during and after the Red Army’s invasion were processed and published immediately.³⁶² The Western Allies, once they arrived, likewise brought their own media corps. In the international press, the New Chancellery was an obvious object of fascination. Eager to catch a glimpse of Hitler’s ceremonial center of power, Allied soldiers, officers, government agents, and journalists flocked to the site—increasingly after Churchill made the rounds during the Potsdamer Conference.³⁶³ The

³⁶¹ Judt, 41.

³⁶² Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (*Telegrafnoye agentstvo Sovetskogo Soyuz*)

³⁶³ AP Archive, “The Big Three in Berlin,” in *British Movietone News* (BM 45952).

Allies documented their visits in images, which—along with physical souvenirs—were taken as trophies.³⁶⁴ These tours through the representational architecture re-inscribed it (in part through its fragmentation) as a definitive location and symbol of the Allies’ victory, made available for their exclusive consumption. Since it was foundational for the symbolic renovation of the building’s meaning, this material will concern us in a moment. First, however, let’s detour through a few counter-examples of the New Chancellery’s domestic representation from the same period in ruin photographs, which will illuminate the distinctly more ambivalent legibility of this symbol and the NS defeat at large, as seen from a strictly *German* perspective.

While the Allies immediately got to work producing “fotografische Siegesikone,” the Germans were also taking stock of and visually documenting the war’s aftermath—including during the media black-out.³⁶⁵ As Tony Judt writes in *Postwar*, “the war’s impact was measured...in the visible damage to [communities’] immediate environment... Ruined cities were the most obvious—and photogenic—evidence of the devastation.”³⁶⁶ Immediate postwar German photography and visual culture are thus characteristically pervaded by motifs of urban destruction and life among the ruins, particularly in the most devastated cities.³⁶⁷ David Crew, in his book *Bodies and Ruins*, shows how ruin photographs operated as “primary visual signifiers of [the] death and destruction” of the Allied bombing war from the early 1940s on.³⁶⁸ Later reproduced in local publications and picture books, this visual archive “provided postwar Germans with an iconic

³⁶⁴ And not only from the New Chancellery: the interiors of the Nazi elite were bustling with Allied forces all over Germany. In *Hitler at Home*, Stratigakos details the extensive tourism and “epic looting” of civic and private NS prestige buildings, especially in Berchtesgaden. , 266-69. In his account of visiting the New Chancellery’s ruin, British poet and essayist Stephen Spender describes souvenirs available “in exchange for a few cigarettes,” including fragments of marble from the massive card table from Hitler’s office. , 241.

³⁶⁵ Volland, 714. The accompanying archival information for one the photographs included below, attributed to an Oskar Dahlke, notes that it was “aufgenommen...während des durch die Alliierten verhängten Fotografiervots.”

³⁶⁶ Judt, 16.

³⁶⁷ David Crew notes that “At least 30 professional photographers took pictures of Dresden and Berlin after 1945...In Berlin, Friedrich Seidenstücker, Fritz Eschen, Henry Ries, and Horst Urbschat all took major photo series between 1945 and 1950.” , 62.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 91.

narrative that allowed them to contemplate and mourn a collective loss.”³⁶⁹ Ruin photography’s style and subject matter, problematically, “also perpetuated Nazi visual strategies that, “[i]nstead of reporting the suffering of the civil population...concentrated on...the destruction of German cultural and architectural monuments.”³⁷⁰

By 1942, the Nazis had begun to document the “kulturfeindliche Barbarei der Angreifer.”³⁷¹ Images of vast expanses of urban destruction and individual damaged buildings were used in NS propaganda to “stiffen the resolve of the German population to keep on fighting through to victory,” and intended as evidence for future claims for reparations against the Allies.³⁷² Ruin photographs produced in and after 1945, documenting intact landmarks and Germans “carrying on” despite everything, surrounded by rubble, are thus marked with ambivalence and communicate “at times contradictory[] messages,” tinged with an accusatory subtext regarding the brutality and senselessness of the air war.³⁷³ In spite of or, perhaps, because of these overlapping aesthetic and ideological sensibilities, ruin photography tended to exclude NS architecture and symbols.³⁷⁴

³⁶⁹ Anne Fuchs quoted in *ibid.*, 91-92.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.* For the tension between representations of the war’s violence and the promotion of entertainment and other cultural diversions in the NS illustrated press after 1943, see: Eva Vieth, “Der Letzte »Volksgemeinschaft« - Das Kriegsende in Den Bildern Einer Deutschen Illustrierten,” in *Kriegsende 1945 in Deutschland*, ed. Jörg Hillmann and John Zimmermann (München: R. Oldenbourg, 2002).

³⁷¹ Kil, 117.

³⁷² Crew, 59-60. Wolfgang Kil writes, “Vom Zustand der zerbombten und zerschossenen Städte, so sollte man denken, müssten die Zeugnisse verlässlicher sein,” compared to the shockingly normal portraits of the population. “Doch auch hier,” he continues, “lassen sich divergierende Bildinteressen erkennen, die Ausdruck unterschiedlicher Betroffenheiten sind. Die Spanne reicht von Zehntausenden emotionsloser, allein strategischer Auswertung dienender Luftbilder der alliierten Kampfverbände über die berühmten Aufnahmen von Lübeck oder Köln, mit denen die NS-Propaganda zu Beginn des Bombenkrieges im Frühjahr 1942 die...kulturfeindliche Barbarei der Angreifer anzuprangern versuchte, bis zu Friedrich Seidenstückers seltsam berührenden Blicken auf den buchstäblich kahlgefeigten Tiergarten, die einen völligen Stillstand nach dem Inferno suggerieren und so - womöglich - auf eine Wende der Geschichte hoffen lassen.” Kil, 117.

³⁷³ Crew, 111, 89.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 110. The media blackout and occupation of NS buildings, often better protected than the surrounding city, surely influenced their absence from representation; “after 1945, photographers could operate more freely, but certain subjects had now become harder to photograph.” Then again, professional and amateur photographers had illicitly documented the destruction throughout. *Ibid.*, 60-62. Further, images from Berlin constitute an exception to the general rule, “dort treten die zerbombten Überreste der NS-Herrschaft ins Bild - aber auch nur dort.” Klaus Naumann, *Der Krieg Als Text : Das Jahr 1945 Im Kulturellen Gedächtnis Der Presse* (Hamburg: Hamburger Ed., 1998), 36.

But a number of ruin photographs of the New Reich Chancellery were taken immediately following the end of fighting in 1945. These images are neither aesthetically nor thematically distinct from other ruin photographs. Mostly taken at raking angles from a medium distance from Wilhelmplatz and Voßstraße, they show easily recognizable views of the facade—the building’s identity and characteristic representational features are unmistakable, only slightly marred by cratered chunks along the roofline.³⁷⁵ The contrast between the New Chancellery and its surroundings mark it as a point of orientation, one of the few, remaining “coordinates of [Germans’] everyday lives,” communicating a deeply problematic image of survival.³⁷⁶ For the building’s condition is less striking than the rubble that frames it—debris from the destroyed Wertheimer *Kaufhaus* dominates the foreground of views from Voßstraße. (Figs. III-9 & III-10) A color image of the Siedler building offers a disturbingly novel perspective, taken from behind the crumbling facade of the *Ordenspalais* (Fig. III-11). These images, however, none of which were published until decades later, lack context; their dating is problematic, as is the rest of their spotty provenance.³⁷⁷ But they remain legible in reference to other images, especially as they show the influence of the NS visual regime—replicating views of the building familiar from propaganda and, further, from NS rubble photography. (Fig. III-12) Hence, although these photographs visualize Germany’s defeat, they do *not* do so by virtue of the changed appearance of their central, architectural object—rather, they are meaningful only in relation to other images depicting ruins and the changed scenery of everyday life among the rubble, notwithstanding the additional symbolic charge of their subject, the previous meaning of which they leave relatively untouched.

³⁷⁵ As a familiar NS landmark, the New Chancellery primarily identifies the location of Berlin, distinguishing it from “other cities destroyed by the bombing.” Crew, 95. Since “repetitive scenes” of rubble tended to result in a “lack of [visual] specificity,” photographs showing “the only intact structure in a field of ruins” produce orientation within this “surreal and unreadable” landscape, even without captions. *Ibid.*, 92, 110.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 110.

³⁷⁷ Throughout this chapter, photographers are only attributed to images where they appear in the archival record. Even in these cases, further information regarding the individuals is often entirely lacking, and thus will not be discussed.



Figure III-9 – New Chancellery viewed from SW side of Voßstraße, portal to Party Chancellery in foreground, dated May 1, 1945, Source: ullstein Bild



Figure III-10 – View of Party Chancellery block from SE side of Voßstraße, dated June 1, 1945, Photographer: Oskar Dahlke, Source: ullstein Bild



Figure III-11 – Siedler building viewed from Ordenspalais on NW corner of Wilhelmplatz, dated May 15, 1945, source: ullstein Bild



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-J31334
Foto: o.Ang. | März 1945

Figure III-12 – NS photograph of Siedler building viewed from SE corner of Wilhelmplatz, dated March 1945. Source: Bundesarchiv

That is, by showing only the war's *aftermath*, ruin photographs "remain[] in crucial ways silent," not "suggest[ing] any connection between Germany's ruined cities and the genocidal war Germans had fought for Hitler."³⁷⁸ They do so, remarkably, even when showing the administrative and symbolic center of Führertum. Revising and recoding the New Chancellery's meaning required a different political and historical perspective. The architecture's legibility as a symbol of Germany's defeat depended on a point of view aligned with the Allies, which was asserted in their reproductions of the building, and made possible by the altered conditions of the occupied media landscape.³⁷⁹ Determining how the New Reich Chancellery figured as both a site and symbol of recent historical events was the purview of the victors. Precisely because they do not visualize the New Chancellery's altered, representational conditions or give any indication of its *new* meaning, these ruin photographs thus stand in stark contrast to the rest of the representations analyzed in this chapter, which appeared in the media controlled and overseen by the Allied occupation, especially the *Tagespresse* and newsreels, to which we now turn.

The Red Army's invasion, Hitler's death, and Germany's surrender had all been announced in early May 1945 but, due to the media blackout, it was months before a more detailed (not to mention accurate) version of events was publicized.³⁸⁰ Careful attention to the representation of the war's end was critical—so that it would be accepted by the Germans and not antagonize them and so that it might project a unified front among the Allies, to assert legitimacy and establish

³⁷⁸ Crew, 109.

³⁷⁹ As Anne Fuchs writes, "The visual matrix that came into view at the end of the war was obviously dominated by the Allied photographer's viewpoint behind the camera and implied the victor's perspective. During the war all sides had used photography to legitimise their own war effort, but by the end it was the Allied war photographers who could claim the authoritative field of vision and set the moral map for the global memory of the war in the postwar period." , 23.

³⁸⁰ Dönitz's broadcast had declared that, "Aus dem Führerhauptquartier wird gemeldet, dass unser Führer heute Nachmittag in seinem Befehlsstand in der Reichskanzlei... gefallen ist" This bare bones account was unsurprisingly false in its details, getting the date wrong and claiming Hitler had died a "Heldentod," fighting "bis zum letzten Atemzüge gegen den Bolschewismus." Promptly communicating an accurate version of recent events was certainly important, but there was agreement among the Allies that discrediting National Socialism and its legacy above and beyond military defeat was necessary for suppressing the possibility of a national redoubt. Judt, 41. As articulated by the US Treasury Secretary, Germany was "not [to] be occupied for the purpose of liberation but as a defeated enemy nation," a point of "the utmost importance that every person in Germany should [be made to] realize." Ibid., 105.

stability for the occupation. Hence, “after the war it was considered necessary to reorganize and re-educate the media for the purpose of democratization.”³⁸¹ The Allies seized, dissolved, and reorganized the NS Propaganda Ministry’s sprawling apparatus of cultural production and what remained of the independent press. The *Presseverbot* on print publications was the first to be lifted in late July. While maintaining strict oversight over production and content, the Allies assigned newsprint and paper suppliers new owners and editors, with “genuine anti-Nazi credentials,” or, in the Soviet sector, bona fide “anti-Fascist” ones.³⁸² In service of reeducating and denazifying the German public and rehabilitating the press, the victors’ perspective, which would come to dominate the airwaves over the summer of 1945, was meant to drown out and efface the ‘Topography of Fascism’ and its media-dictatorship.

The division in oversight and political priorities listed above illuminates two further factors complicating the representation of Germany’s defeat in the occupied-press. First, an extremely complex series of events had to be reconstructed into a simplified, graspable, and believable narrative, communicating the right ideological position relative to its outcome (that it was good). This task was equally problematic since, secondly, the main sources of information regarding what had happened in Berlin were testimony taken from captured Nazis and the Red Army’s official account (including reels of TASS footage already saturating the Soviet public sphere). To call both sources ideologically suspect is an understatement. But even though the Allied account relied on

³⁸¹ Knut Hickethier, "The Creation of Cultural Identity through Weekly Newsreels in Germany in the 1950s. As Illustrated by the Neue Deutsche Wochenschau and the Ufa-Wochenschau," in *Constructions of Cultural Identities in Newsreel Cinema and Television after 1945*, ed. Kornelia Imesch (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2016), 39. Equivalent or at least analogous discussions of how to represent the Holocaust were happening simultaneously. There was a necessity to confront Germans with images of atrocities committed in their name and with their tacit approval; these representations were accompanied and backed by the accounts of actions committed by the official perpetrators and masterminds of the war and genocide, supplied in part by the publicized events of the military tribunals. For an account of the “pedagogical” necessity of the Nürnberg trials and their publicization, see: Judt, 53-55. For the role of film in the representation of the Holocaust to German citizens as part of denazification, see: Gerd Gemünden, "In the Ruins of Berlin: A Foreign Affair," in *German Postwar Films : Life and Love in the Ruins*, ed. Wilfried; Rasch Wilms, William (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). For a critique of the generally accepted opposition between atrocity and ruin photos, see: Crew, 87-88. The efficacy of atrocity films in the task of denazification will return in chapter iv; though, generally speaking, it bears mentioning at the outset, that they were not well received.

³⁸² Judt, 56.

testimony of questionable repute and wasn't yet complete, let alone univocal, the authenticity and authority of their version of events needed to be made abundantly clear to the German public. In the war's immediate aftermath, therefore, producing the victors' narrative required navigating and downplaying these complexities as best was possible.

The strategy that emerged in the occupied-press was, at first, pluralistic: dissociating reports from specific sources and reassembling them into an international narrative, independently collated, censored, and delivered more or less simultaneously in multiple formats across all sectors. Fittingly, likely intentionally, the Allied version of the Red Army victory was published right as the "Big Three" engaged in final negotiations at the Potsdamer Conference, which lasted from July 17 to Aug 2, 1945. For example, on July 28th, the basic account appeared in the 8th issue of *Neue Zeit*, the CDU daily licensed by the SBM, in a report, titled "Zusammenbruch ohne Legende."³⁸³ The article constructs a skeletal narrative, largely omitting detailed locations and information. It outlines the Red Army's sieges, which begins "als die ersten russischen Granaten... auf die Berliner Innenstadt niedersausten," followed by the Nazis' last ditch efforts to bolster their position with "Terrorjustiz und Propaganda," the chaotic dissolution of the Nazi chain of command and Hitler's death, "in der Stunde der bereits vollendeten Niederlage," ending with Germany's total surrender. Although it is scarcely mentioned, the New Chancellery nevertheless organizes the action as its central location: the target of Red Army troop movements, the setting for the complete "Auflösung und Zersetzung" of the "oberste...Führerschicht"—and, we learn obliquely, a current site of

³⁸³ The article, framed by an acknowledgment of the recent lack of information, evinces, along with the title, anxiety over the narrative's acceptance, opening with a disclaimer: "Wir geben an dieser Stelle in zwangloser Folge Berichte... die...weitgehend unbekannt bleiben, weil die Mitteilungs- und Nachrichtenmittel fehlten" The Berlin *Staatsbibliothek Zeitungsinformationssystem*, describes the *Neue Zeit* as follows: "Die Zeitung „Neue Zeit“ war die Parteizeitung der CDU in der DDR und erschien erstmals am 22. Juli 1945. Sie wird im DDR-Zeitungsportal exemplarisch für die Presse der Blockparteien in der DDR präsentiert. Auch wenn sie in der gesamten Presselandschaft der DDR eine untergeordnete Rolle spielte, war die „Neue Zeit“ die auflagenstärkste Zeitung der vier Blockparteien. Sie wies einen konfessionell-kirchlichen Bezug auf und sollte die Bevölkerungsgruppen ansprechen, die durch das *Neue Deutschland* und die SED-Bezirkszeitungen nicht erreicht wurden. Die „Neue Zeit“ erschien bis zum 5. Juli 1994. Die Auflagenhöhe umfasste im Jahr 1988 ca. 113.000 Exemplare. Insgesamt umfasst die Neue Zeit von 1945 bis 1994 etwa 158.100 Einzelseiten." <http://zefys.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/ddr-presse/neue-zeit/> accessed May 27, 2018

investigation into the “noch nicht authentisch geklärt” circumstances of Hitler’s death in the bunker and the “bisher nicht festgestellt” whereabouts of his body. In its concentration on Hitler’s center of power, the article presents a forceful historical account-as-critique, placing blame squarely on the centralized organization of Führertum. In other coverage—geared to support the recognition of Allied authority, in part by focusing solely on Germany’s ‘*Haupttäter*’—this narrative is variously restaged, employing the New Chancellery and the governmental quarter around Wilhelmplatz as symbolic points of historical and political orientation.

Wilhelmplatz offered an obvious site for contemplating Germany’s ‘tragic fate’—not only the 12 years of the Third Reich but also the political travails of the last few decades, dating back to the nation’s founding. An editorial in *Neue Zeit*, published on August 1st, four days after the article cited above, bears the title “Rund um den Wilhelmplatz.”³⁸⁴ Illustrated with a sketchy drawing of the devastated square, its narrative is focalized through a soldier-cum-civil-servant’s memories, framed by two instances of regime collapse, viewed symbolically in the act of gazing at the Reich Chancellery during the failed revolution of 1918 and the Third Reich’s defeat in 1945. (Fig. III-13) The soldier sees Wilhelmplatz for the first time on December 24, 1918, when he is witness to the Chancellery’s occupation during the *Weihnachtskämpfe*: “Kameradenblut auf den Berliner Pflaster...war die erste bittere Erkenntnis...auf dem Wilhelmplatz.” Evidently un-fazed, a few weeks later, the protagonist has exchanged his military uniform for a “Zivilrock,” and gazes, “Ehrfurchtsvoll,” at “Bismarcks Schreibtisch” in the old Chancellery, before moving into the *Ordenspalais* with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Press department. There he witnesses the “schweres Schicksal” of the Weimar Republic and its recasting as the “Systemzeit.” As this transition indicates, the Third Reich shows up only in euphemism: “Eines Tages jedoch saßen

³⁸⁴ "Rund Um Den Wilhelmplatz," *Neue Zeit*, Aug 1 1945.

andere Männer am Wilhelmplatz.” Without further ado, we skip ahead: “als der Soldat des ersten Weltkrieges nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg wieder auf Wilhelmplatz stand, da waren nur Trümmer übriggeblieben.” The narrative arc of the historical collapse of German society is thus framed by two moments of its sovereign architecture’s violent occupation, coinciding with the state’s dissolution. Seeing and seeing into the Reich Chancellery’s ruins, therefore, reads as a symbolic act. As a site of state power and national memory, the architecture functions as a screen for projecting the series of events, which led into the 12 years “der Lüge und der brutalsten geistigen Unterdrückung,” and visualizing their outcome in the rubble “Rund um Wilhelmplatz.”³⁸⁵



Figure III-13 - Illustration from the article "Rund um den Wilhelmplatz" Source: Neue Zeit

The Chancellery’s ruinous state in 1945 visually reflects yet another transfer of power—far more destructive than the one that had preceded it—or, rather, a rupture between governments, and between past and present. Notably, the soldier focalizing the narration disappears here, while the narrative’s visual orientation and architectural object remain static. After a line break, marked

³⁸⁵ As the narrative makes clear, the Chancellery wasn’t just Hitler’s space of power; after the Schulenburg Palace became Bismarck’s residence and office, each renovation and addition testified to a new iteration of government and coinciding reconfiguration of the apparatus of rule. On the other hand, some degree of consistency is hinted at in the article by references to the visible traces of Bismarck, Bülow, and Bethmann, persisting through the interwar period. Hitler, of course, had gutted the old Chancellery upon moving in, renovating continuously; the New Chancellery (or, more precisely, the Führerbunker) was only the latest (and unfinished) addition, accompanying other destructive alterations to Berlin’s symbolic and urban-architectural topography, as described in the introduction and chapter ii.

with an asterisk, the text continues in present tense, directing the reader's imaginary gaze to "Wilhelmplatz, Sommer 1945. Vor den Trümmern der Neuen Reichskanzlei stehen Soldaten der Roten Armee auf Posten"; the rest of the article meditates on this second scene of destruction. Textually eliding the recent catastrophe and showing only a sketchy representation of its aftermath, the article positions the ruin as a screen in a dual sense: a surface of *projection* and *concealment*. Because its representational surfaces—the physical structures playing host to successive images of the state—are now fragmented, the architecture is illegible. To produce historical understanding, the narrator states, "Es ist nötig, Trümmer, die den Weg der Verständigung drinnen und draußen versperren, aus dem Weg zu räumen." That is, architectural reconstruction metaphorically stands in for the work of historical processing, necessary for Germans to rebuild their society and system of self-rule. But reconstructing the past is limited to a *purely* symbolic act; the event stays hidden behind the now-illegible architecture. The reader is thus implored to "look" "hinter die Kulisse dieses Geschehens"—to what is *not* visible in representation—and connect the dots themselves.

The article, however, ends with a further visual metaphor: "Rund um Wilhelmplatz," the narrator ruminates in closing, is where "die Bilder des deutschen Leidenswegs lebendig werden [sollen]." Implying that images of the *Zusammenbruch* might actually be reconstructed and projected onto architecture alerts us to another layer of representational mediation—one with serious implications for the New Chancellery.³⁸⁶ For beyond the changing physical appearance and occupants of Germany's architecture of power signifying each regime came shifting strategies for mediating this particular building as a symbolic site of governance and national identity. With this clear allusion to "living images," i.e. *film images*, the metaphor suggests that the past might

³⁸⁶ As covered in the preceding chapter, the New Chancellery's use by the Nazis had instituted a total revolution in the visual, technological, and stylistic representation of Germany's sovereign architecture.

reappear in the future through this differently mediated experience of viewing.³⁸⁷ As already indicated, there were, indeed, “lebendig” images of Germany’s defeat in wide circulation. But, like the “Soldaten der Roten Armee” barring access to the building, the Allies were the gatekeepers and producers of the cinematic record of Berlin’s destruction—footage of which was subsequently released two days after this article’s publication.

Within the cinematic reproduction of the Allied victory narrative in Berlin, the New Reich Chancellery proved an indispensable symbol and point of orientation. Newsreels of its invasion and occupation, produced by the occupied media, emphasizing visuals of the destruction of the representational urban center of Führertum, serve to illustrate, in particularly expressive form, a new historical, political perspective on Germany’s defeat—one mandatory for German audiences to adopt. Despite being rightly regarded as a “tool of the occupying powers,” newsreels were a crucial medium for delivering political messages in an entertaining and highly aestheticized format—and one the Germans were already deeply familiar with.³⁸⁸ Although the “Filmpause” continued through 1946, it applied only to domestic feature film *production*—almost immediately after Germany’s surrender, foreign films and, thereby, newsreels reappeared in theaters recommissioned by the occupation.³⁸⁹ *Welt im Film* (hereafter, *WiF*), a British-American

³⁸⁷ Here, the narrative conceit of a cinematic story arc snaps into focus, foreshadowed at the article’s opening: “In diesem Augenblick wußte er noch nicht, wie viel bittere Erkenntnisse der Wilhelmplatz bereit für ihn bereit halten würde...daß mit dem Schicksal dieses Platzes ein Stück eigenen Lebens verbunden bleiben sollte.” The second half opens like a screenplay: “Wilhelmplatz, Sommer 1945. Vor den Trümmern der Neuen Reichskanzlei stehen Soldaten der Roten Armee auf Posten. Mit aufgefplantem Seitengewehr. Drüber der Kaiserhof ist ...ausgebrannt.”

³⁸⁸ Hicketier, 40. For the Nazi influence on wartime newsreels and documentaries, see: Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Italian Fascism's Empire Cinema* (2015). Ben-Ghiat describes NS nonfiction films and war documentaries as the touchstone for battle narratives produced within the “Cinematographic Axis”—a network of material, technological, stylistic exchange between the film-propaganda industries of the Axis powers that ramped up in the early years of the war. Not only had the Nazis “sent hundreds of camera operators into battle”; their dynamic footage of the action was edited together into dramatic, idealized (and increasingly fictional) victorious narratives, which allowed audiences to “relive their own dreams and escapes and enter into the events presented” *ibid.*, 218-26. For the history of newsreels during the Allied occupation, see also: Jutta Gröschl, “Die Deutschlandpolitik Der Vier Großmächte in Der Berichterstattung Der Deutschen Wochenschauen 1945-1949 Ein Beitrag Zur Diskussion Um Den Film Als Historische Quelle,” (1997). For the use of film propaganda during the occupation, especially by the American authorities, see: Gemünden. Understandably, film was viewed as a powerful “instrument...not only for confronting Germans with the atrocities they committed but also for providing Germans with relief...thus [serving] an educational, democratizing, and escapist purpose.” *Ibid.*, 111.

³⁸⁹ See: Rentschler, “The Place of Rubble in the “Trümmerfilm”,” 10.

collaboration, premiered already on May 16, 1945 (six episodes had been made preemptively) and was subsequently produced out of Bavaria Film studios (partially staffed by German crew and technicians but with an international bent and a clearly Western outlook).³⁹⁰ Footage of the Red Army victory and its aftermath was first shown in the 12th edition of *WiF*, released on August 3rd, the day after the signing of the Potsdam Agreement, in a segment titled “Die Alliierten in Berlin.”

The segment is composed of two sequences, around two and three minutes long. In the first, we see Soviet footage of the Red Army victory; the second is a mix of footage taken over the summer in all four sectors, showcasing the triumphant arrival of the Western occupying forces and the German population, acclimating to life under their authority and among the ruins. “Die Alliierten in Berlin” incorporates elements of the ruin aesthetics discussed above—specifically, it uses architectural destruction to visualize the Allied victory/German defeat and employs the New Chancellery’s ruin as a key point of orientation within the narrative, and, further, to symbolically stand in for a longer arc of historical events. Interestingly, both of the episode’s sequences end in the building and offer a comparative view of the strategies employed to reinscribe its symbolic space, first through its Soviet invasion and then its occupation by the international Allied forces.

The first act begins, the voiceover informs us, with “Die ersten Wochenschauaufnahmen des Endkampfes in Berlin”—they show less a battle narrative and more Berlin’s military-industrial

³⁹⁰ This perspective was signaled, in part, by the opening theme, which riffed on the opening music for the 1939 western *Jesse James*. The BAFA website outlines *WiF*’s history: “The *Welt im Film* was produced in London before the surrender in 1945, for the American and British sectors...In September of 1945 the production offices moved to the American-occupied Bavaria Film Studios in Munich. Sam Winston, US-film officer, and British film officers headed the newsreel production. The British Film Section in Hamburg and a subsidiary in Düsseldorf provided material from the British Zone. The German camera team worked under Anglo-American supervision...The British relocated their reporting activities to Hamburg and then discontinued the *Wochenschau* altogether, on June 1, 1950, with episode 260. Afterwards the Americans offered the title “Welt im Bild” to their soldiers in Germany. This newsreel would run until 1951.” Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, “Newsreels and Commissioned Productions, Federal Press Office 1945-2004,” <https://www.filmothek.bundesarchiv.de/contents>. Accessed May 27, 2018. For the history of the transition between *WiF* and what would become the *Deutsche Wochenschau*, see: Joachim Paschen, “Vor Der ‘Tagesschau’ Gab Es Die ‘Wochenschau.’ Hamburg Als Produktionsort Eines Untergegangen Mediums 1950-1977,” *Hamburger Flimmern die Zeitschrift des Film- und Fernseh museums Hamburg e.V.* 17, no. November (2010).

demolition.³⁹¹ The invasion is represented as an onslaught of architectural destruction; the Red Army simply blasts their way to and into Hitler's last scrap of sovereign territory. An unrelenting, two-minute long montage of 47 individual shots alternates between artillery blasts, rolling tanks, and crumbling and burning building facades, accompanied by audio of near-constant, diegetic and non-diegetic explosions and machine-gun fire. (Fig. III-14) The German army and civilians are notably absent, fallen bodies indistinguishable from the rubble as they flash by onscreen.³⁹² Swift cuts push the action forward in space and time; the tempo at odds with the unhurried appearance of the Red Army and what seems like brutally slow progress on the ground.³⁹³ Obscured by clouds of debris, Berlin is reduced to a discontinuous, disorienting image of destruction.³⁹⁴

The totally invisible NS defense forces—military and civilian—and the absence of any mention of the regime implicitly suggests their abandonment of the public to the oncoming forces of the Soviet Army. Indeed, the only organization and orientation within the montage comes from the Russian troop movements, minimally captioned by the voiceover: “30.er April, russische Truppen setzten zum Sturm auf das Zentrum der Reichshauptstadt an,” a few moments later, “Sowjettruppen dringen in die Reichskanzlei ein, das letzte Widerstandsnest Berlins.”

³⁹¹ Therein, the newsreel illustrates a characteristically Soviet representational strategy of hypotactic reinscription of urban space. The sequence posits *architectural* destruction as the primary means of “canceling the previous [political/symbolic] ordering of space and effacing memories associated with it...creating the necessary ‘blank canvas’” for imposing a new, dominant order and/or symbolic, political framework onto the urban landscape. Kallis, 41. We will see this strategy play out in the more controlled context of architectural reconstruction later in this chapter.

³⁹² Crew notes a common thesis, originating from Jörg Arnold, that “photos of the German dead were generally not exhibited in public. In their place, West Germans were shown images of ruins.” Crew, 87-8. Crew challenges this presumption, showing how photos of both bodies and ruins were used to construct narratives of survival and defeat. We shall attend to the cinematic and photographic images of dead Germans in postwar memory in the next chapter.

³⁹³ The rhythm is typical for both Nazi and Soviet war documentaries. Ben-Ghiat writes, “Nazi war documentaries were often newsreel compilations, which...show the influence of Russian montage theories...Only the movie camera had the agility and speed to capture the ‘lightning war’ and deliver it to spectators... ‘There is no conceiving of modern war without the cinema, especially a war of velocity like the one we are fighting now, which adopts the tactic of the Blitzkrieg, which makes facts old by the time they are recounted [and] can only be followed and recorded with the radio and the camera lens.’” Ben-Ghiat, 225-6. Shocking though the images must have been, they were also likely uncannily familiar, the answer to Germany's own propaganda. But, on the other hand, lately the NS *Wochenschau* had not included many images of fighting. Its narratives, unsurprisingly, were designed to skip over the actual violence—showing only German preparations, the unfair rubble left by the Allies, and allowing the *Volk* to narrate and reflect on their own heroic action. For example, the HJ decoration ceremony concludes with their retelling of the events, which had brought them to this audience with the Führer in his *Hauptquartier* in the Chancellery. See: Paul, 693-4.

³⁹⁴ Like ruin photographs, the repetitive shots “lack...visual specificity.” Crew, 92.



Figure III-14 - Stills from the Red Army invasion sequence, Source: WiF. Note: newsreel figures should be read top to bottom, left to right, unless otherwise noted

Without any other landmarks in sight, this is the first identified location and the only scene of organized action. It is, moreover, the only architectural space *reconstructed* in the sequence. Notably different from the montage that precedes it, when we reach the New Chancellery, the fragmented images are rendered easily legible as an articulated, navigable space. The invasion of the building is shown in three shots, which recognizably suggest and approximate the iconic architecture. Here, narrative movement is determined by the bodies onscreen, following individual Red Army soldiers as they rush out of the fray and into the building. (Fig. III-15)

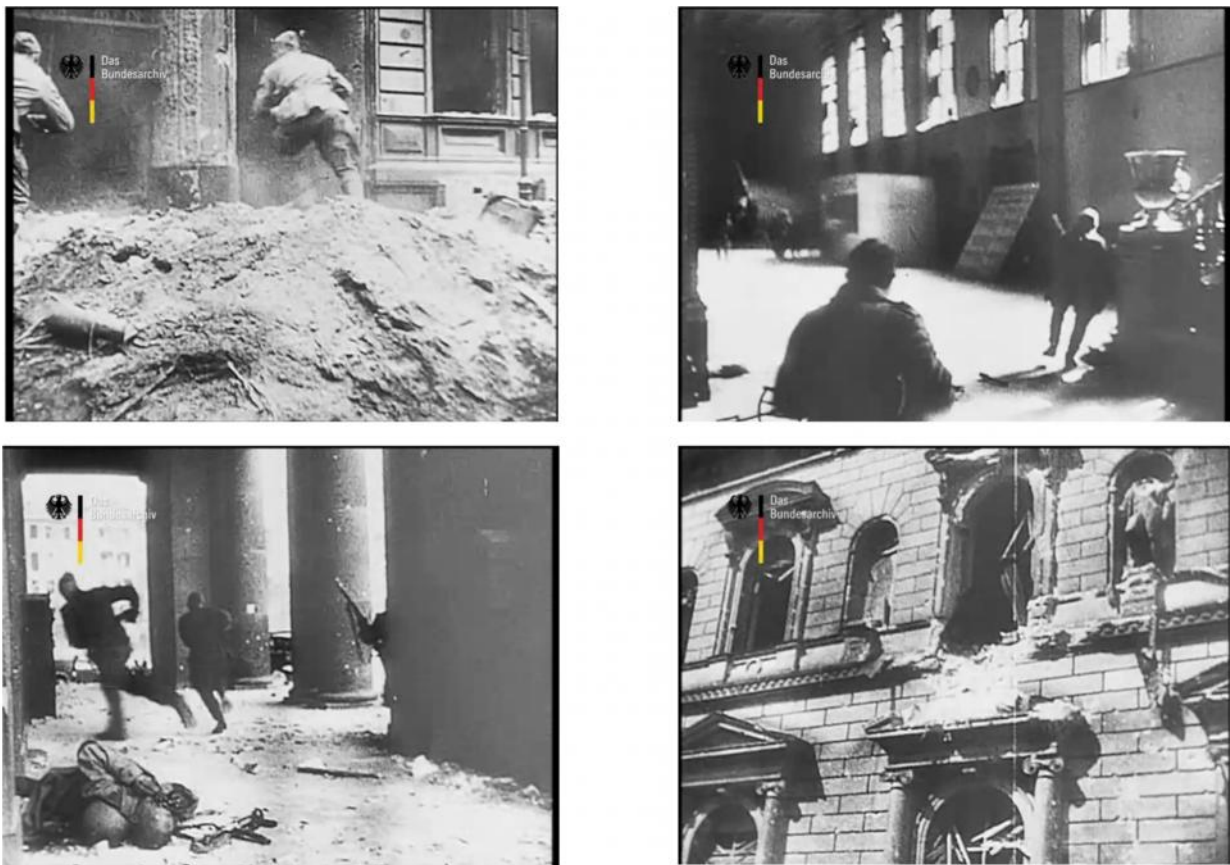


Figure III-15 – New Reich Chancellery invasion montage. Source: WiF

Yet, it must be pointed out, the charge moves through spaces that only *resemble* the iconic building. Save for a parting image of the Borsig Palace’s facade, the montage (showing an oversized entrance with a double portal, a shadowy portico, and a grand stairway) includes no

recognizable part of the (easily recognizable) New Reich Chancellery (the stairway in the third shot, in particular, constituting a total fabrication).³⁹⁵ As an additional marker of the sequence's fictionalization, here documentary footage is replaced by clearly staged shots. Whatever the particular motivation, which can't be verified with certainty, the symbolic cinematic movement through the 'New Chancellery' nevertheless successfully *visualizes, localizes, and stands in* for the narrated action of the Red Army storming of the building—which, in turn, stands in for the lengthier process of the Allied victory.³⁹⁶

For, in spite of the fact that fighting continued until Germany's official capitulation on May 8th, this is where *WiF*'s recapitulation of Berlin's destruction definitively ends. The New Chancellery is the narrative's pre-determined destination and works as a point of transition, a gateway, shunting the viewer days into the future. After the fleeting, close-up of the Borsig Palace's wrecked facade, over a crescendo of a few final explosions, the battle sequence concludes with two shots of the governmental quarter's other landmarks—the Reichstag (with flag) and Brandenburg gate (with passing tank). The interruption of the narrative with these sites/sights restores a semblance of spatial orientation and introduces a brief epilogue. Over a low-key victory march, the voiceover announces, "Das ist das Ende, Berlin kapituliert, die Überlebenden der Garnison legen die Waffen nieder." We cut between shots of parked tanks; surrendered German officers, standing around, shuffling by in uniform, appearing generally casual; pockmarked

³⁹⁵ The upper floors of the New Chancellery—where the Soviets claimed to have fought off the last entrenched defenders—were notoriously ill-constructed and never included in images of the building. The size of the diplomatic route's central rooms didn't afford room for entire upper floors, so stairways between them were tucked in inconvenient corners, none resembling what we see here. Further, this same sequence, in other Soviet newsreels of the invasion, is identified as the Reichstag. Admittedly, the voiceover only intones over the last two shots—thus, as we hear "Reichskanzlei," the Borsig Palace appears onscreen. But the frantic pace makes this kind of differentiation impossible on a first viewing and the caption is clearly intended to localize the action that appears only seconds earlier.

³⁹⁶ There was, perhaps, no footage at all or no usable shots, or there was and TASS chose to omit it and protect the Red Army's version of events. In any case, the line between documentary and fiction was blurry at best in cinematic battle narratives, especially newsreels. See: Ben-Ghiat; and Ulrike Bartels, *Die Wochenschau Im Dritten Reich : Entwicklung Und Funktion Eines Massenmediums Unter Besonderer Berücksichtigung Völkisch-Nationaler Inhalte* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2004). especially chapter 2 and the section "Die Kriegsberichterstattung der Propagandakompanien." Further, the New Chancellery's invasion was a *fait accompli*, however it might have specifically happened, as the next half of "Die Alliierten..." confirms without a doubt.

architecture, a building with a line of graffiti reading, “kapitulieren? Nein,” and balconies hung with white flags.³⁹⁷ An abrupt change of tone from the preceding violence, the climax of the victory is verily anticlimactic. Of course, illustrating the rupture between the war and the occupation was exactly the point: to suggest how quickly and humanely the occupying Allied forces restored order from the roiling, self-destruction of NS Germany once the Red Army stormed the center of power and established victory. Directly opposed to the Nazis’ scorched-earth policy, “Die Alliierten...” seems to insist that the Soviet’s demolition of Berlin halts immediately once they reach the New Chancellery (spoiler: it did not).

The second sequence then continues from this point, visualizing the aftermath of Germany’s defeat and the restoration of order by the Allied occupation.³⁹⁸ Each of the occupying authorities is shown taking control of the city: a young Soviet girl directs traffic at the Brandenburg Gate; the Americans move ceremonially into the Adolf-Hitler Kaserne; the arriving British military stage a parade around the Victory Column.³⁹⁹ This last event is intercut with footage of a docile, German public gazing on from either side of the boulevard (one man with a Hitler mustache and a sour look crosses his arms demonstratively as he watches tanks roll by). Military parades down the *Siegesallee* (the erstwhile East-West-Axis) were not, of course, an unfamiliar sight for the Germans; but the contrast to the NS *Inszenierungen* is obvious and explicit.

After this introduction to the new spatio-political organization of power in Berlin—corresponding to the division of the city—the newsreel takes stock of the surroundings, bouncing

³⁹⁷ The images assert a counterargument to the lethally enforced ideology of the Third Reich in its death throes that, “Es gibt kein Zurück mehr... Es gibt nur Sieg oder Untergang”—in fact, surrender was a viable option. Paul, 694.

³⁹⁸ The change is signified partially in the cinematic strategies employed to reconstruct Berlin’s landscape. It was a shared victory and occupational center; thus, an integration of perspectives is suggested, as the second half opens on the Soviets’ provisional monuments erected in the Tiergarten, which, despite their text in Cyrillic, feature an iconic image of Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill from the Yalta Conference and individual portraits of each leader.

³⁹⁹ As France entered late into the negotiations for the occupation, it was largely an independent player and did not feature nearly as prominently in propaganda compared to the Soviet or collaborative American and British forces.

around the city's "Trümmer, Schutt, Ruinen, Zerstörung." Although this second sequence includes a number of identifiable landmarks (e.g., the City Palace, Kaiserhof Hotel, Leipziger Platz), spatial and narrative order is still primarily produced by the montage and voiceover, symbolically "framing" and organizing the representational space of Berlin as 'seen' from the Allied perspective. Featuring Germans watching the occupation's displays of authority and, occasionally, returning the camera's gaze, the (implicitly German) viewer is invited to simultaneously identify with their compatriots and vicariously inhabit the Allies' point of view—to see their capital *and themselves* as the Allies see them, namely, as a defeated nation. Previously indistinguishable from the rubble, bodies of German civilians now visually contrast with it—shot from wide, pedestrian angles, dwarfed by the surrounding *Ruinenkulisse*. Framing the urban landscape and the defeated population together, the newsreel juxtaposes images of architectural destruction with symbolic acts of reconstruction, performed, for example, by *Trümmerfrauen*, as they set to work on the "Freilegung ihren zerstörten Häuser."

Just as "Die Alliierten..."s cinematic restaging provides 'living images' of the previously-unseen event of Germany's defeat, this dual perspective also provides visual access to otherwise inaccessible sites/sights: for one thing, the position of power associated with the Führer's gaze (more on that in a moment). On a less abstract level, the newsreel also provides visual access to the center of Allied authority in the distant capital—which was flooding with refugees despite a travel ban—and the (defunct) center of Führertum in the New Reich Chancellery.

The second half of "Die Alliierten..." thus ends where it began: in the governmental quarter. The voiceover announces, "So sieht der Reichstag heute aus, so die Reichskanzlei," cutting to a close-up of the Reich-eagle on the eastern portal's frieze—making clear from the outset which architectural iteration of German sovereignty we are dealing with. As in the invasion

sequence, the New Chancellery is the only space reconstructed in montage, moving into and through the building, recognizably articulating the iconic interior of the diplomatic route. This footage, however, of “britische und russische Offiziere inspizieren das zerstörte Gebäude,” is obviously authentic. From a pan of the Siedler building’s facade on Wilhelmplatz, we move through the Honor Court, Mosaic Room, Marble Gallery, Hitler’s office, and the Reception Hall. The ‘room images’ are uncannily familiar; the sequential presentation and visual framing mirror the spatial narrative established in NS propaganda. (Fig. III-16)

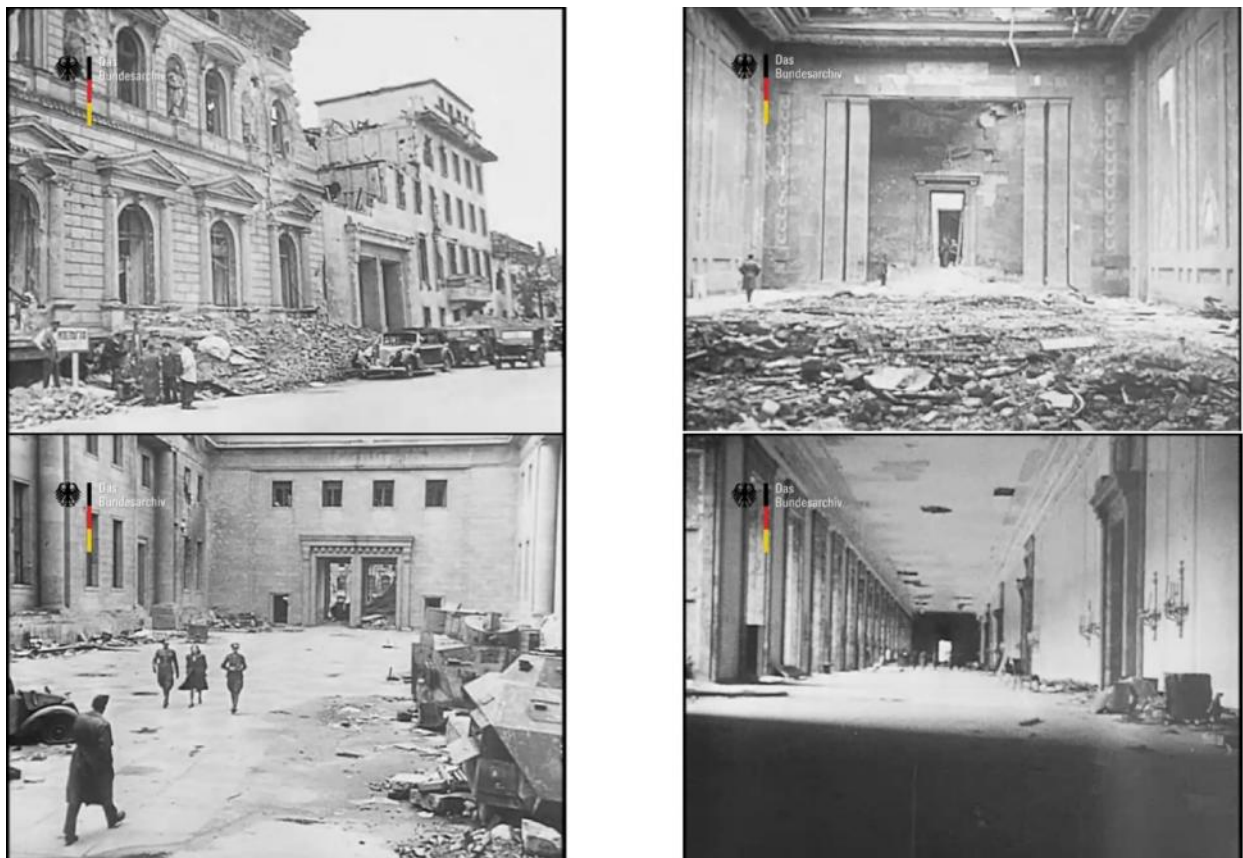


Figure III-16 - Allied tour of the ruined New Chancellery showing Wilhelmplatz, the Honor Court, Mosaic Room, & Marble Gallery Source: WiF

On the other hand, the harsh, natural lighting and ruinous state—littered with debris and showing unmistakable signs of looting and vandalism—testify to the building’s empty and derelict condition. Whereas, once the Red Army enters the building in the previous sequence, the process

of Berlin's destruction *ends*, the "return" to the scene *initiates* a more symbolic deconstruction of Hitler's architecture of power. The manner in which the occupiers inhabit the building directly refutes the Nazis' ceremonial pomp and circumstance staged in and cinematically reproduced in its hallowed interior. Further, the visual representation of this victors' rite adds a new layer of symbolic meaning. Or, rather, by incorporating the Allies' bodies inhabiting and looking at the ruin—showing the ruin from the victors' 'point of view' and through their literal viewfinder—instead of *adding* a *new* layer of meaning, the newsreel actively works to *dismantle* and *invert* the New Chancellery's previous ideological meaning, enacting a kind of "visuelle Demontage der Macht."⁴⁰⁰

Describing American *Vogue* correspondent Lee Miller's iconic self-portrait in Hitler's bathtub in Munich, taken around the same time, Katharina Menzel-Ahr writes, "Die im Bild festgehaltene «Besetzung» der Privatsphäre der Diktatoren...ist ein integraler Bestandteil der Überwindung diktatorischer Regime."⁴⁰¹ (Fig. III-17) Images like Miller's reveal the Führer's *domestic* interior, challenging the Nazis' representation of 'Hitler wie ihn keiner kennt,' and exposing him as mortal, even mundane.⁴⁰² Photographs and film footage of Allied bodies in the *representational* interior of Hitler's power expose the Führer's mortality in another way. As the "Sieger [nehmen] demonstrativ die Plätze ein, die Hitler vormals besetzt hatte," they render the *void* of German sovereignty left by Hitler visible in the simultaneously occupied-empty space of the New Reich Chancellery's interior.⁴⁰³ (Figs. III-18 & III-19)

⁴⁰⁰ Katharina Menzel-Ahr, "In Hitlers Badewanne. Die Visuelle Demontage Der Macht," in *Das Jahrhundert Der Bilder Bd. 1*, ed. Gerhard Paul (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009).

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 706.

⁴⁰² The grand *Inszenierung* of each of Hitler's residences in Nazi propaganda had been part and parcel of the construction of the Führer-Mythos. *Ibid.* See both Menzel-Ahr and, especially, Stratigakos's extensive analysis of Miller's photographs and accompanying reportage. Stratigakos, 269-80.

⁴⁰³ Menzel-Ahr, 709. As Claude Lefort describes, "If the place of power appears, no longer as symbolically, but as really empty, then those who exercise it are perceived as mere ordinary individuals, as forming a faction at the service of private interests and, by the same token, legitimacy collapses throughout society." Lefort, "The Logic of Totalitarianism," 279, original emphasis.



Figure III-17 – Lee Miller in Hitler’s bathtub in his private apartment in Munich. Source: Hitler at Home, pg. 273



Figures III-18 & III-19 – Screen capture of British and Russian officers in Hitler’s office, with his overturned card table (left); Soviet soldiers seated around the same table (right). Sources: WiF, ullstein bild

Having functioned as the architectural surrogate for the Führer—the embodied will of the Volk—the ruin now outlines and stands in for his body’s absence, following his suicide.⁴⁰⁴ In its heyday, while symbolizing Hitler’s centralized, bureaucratic-imperial organization of Führertum, its industrialized efficacy, and imperial dimensions, the New Chancellery had also been touted as

⁴⁰⁴ The significance of Hitler’s missing corpse is perhaps not as central as it may at first appear; had it been found, the Allies likely would have staged just the same photo-ops. These images take aim at the Führer’s symbolic body through his surrogate, architectural image of NS sovereignty.

the fortress *concealing* state operations from prying eyes. Drawing on standard practices of visual, architectural mediation, images of the New Chancellery's empty interior were used to assert Hitler's omnipresent will, articulated by his central position within the state apparatus and implied through the command of his (invisible) body over a space that was alleged to dominate and discipline all other bodies within its interior—approximated in representation by its sequential, photographic reconstruction and aestheticized framing.⁴⁰⁵ The New Chancellery's images thus reified the power of the Führer's gaze, as it housed the state's technological, disciplinary organs of surveillance and control. The scenes of the Allies fragment the symbolic, idealized image of a sovereign perspective localized within the architecture. Admittedly, the Nazis had themselves produced multiple, contradictory representations, relied upon the manipulation and multiplication of perspective, and exerted control over meaning through framing, the selection of images, and in their captioning and commentary. But *WiF*'s footage riffs on and refutes the ideological message of NS propaganda nonetheless, following the occupiers as they inspect the building—as they navigate and gawk at its interior, completely at ease.

In each shot, bodies are casually milling around, gesturing at overturned furniture, mugging for the camera, and grouped together by photographers for souvenir shots. A far cry from the Nazis' disciplining of the gaze—and, thereby, the imaginary body—the Allied perspective thus turns the New Chancellery's spaces from sacred interior to side-show; and from an object of reverence to one of morbid fascination. No longer subjugating the visitor's body to the Führer's hidden gaze, the space of power is dominated by the foreign bodies moving as they please within the building and subjecting it to their own gaze. That is, the meaning of the architecture is determined and made legible by the bodies within it, not the other way around.

⁴⁰⁵ Covered exhaustively in the preceding chapter.

Further, the technological, cinematic mediation of this symbolic, bodily experience is made explicit. Not only is the New Chancellery's ruin explored freely by the Allies but also *by the camera*—the operator's body registered in their unsteady, roaming gaze, which is, likewise, returned by others in the space. As they stare into the camera from within the former heart of Hitler's power, the Allies' gaze is implicitly turned on the viewer, simultaneously turning the defeated German public into its metaphorical object. Looking into the New Chancellery, while still barred access to its interior, compels the German audience to *see* the dissolution of NS power; that the Führer had abandoned them to be subjected to the will, the laws, and the gaze of the Allied authorities, the new occupants of the symbolic center of power and knowledge.⁴⁰⁶

On the other hand, however, one problem with turning the New Reich Chancellery's ideological representation back on itself—using the same object and bodily-visual strategies to produce a different meaning—was that it made obvious the possibility for multiple, contradictory interpretations of this symbol.⁴⁰⁷ Just because the Allied perspective on Germany's ruined

⁴⁰⁶ Especially for regimes that fancy themselves empires, as the Third Reich certainly had, representational acts of ruin gazing are particularly powerful, in that they, as Julia Hell writes, “crystallize...power relations...between conqueror and conquered.” Hell, 170, see also 72, 86, 89. They do so, in part, by “articulat[ing] these power relations visually,” doubling the symbolic gesture in representation: “on the one hand, the object of the gaze is the remnants of empires past; on the other hand, the subject viewing these remnants is itself the object of our gaze.” In classically styled representation, fallen empires are viewed first by the conquerors, as they raze the losers' urban centers, and then again by the “barbarians,” who inherit the future ruins of even the greatest civilizations. This was the basic art-historical understanding behind the Nazis' conception of *Ruinenwert*: even after their “Untergang,” civilizations can inspire their own return through the monuments they leave behind. Hitler and Speer had projected themselves into the future in visions of their own monuments-*cum*-ruins, “while keeping Spengler's barbarian out of sight,” and hurriedly begun with the human and architectural demolition, to clear the way for that future's arrival. In other words, they planned that only Aryans would be left to inherit and gaze upon their ruins, once the Nazis had wiped all “barbarian” societies from the face of the Earth. The New Chancellery had been the first, provisional-monumental installment and it was already a ruin: “The bombs left the chancellery looking very unlike what Hitler and Speer had intended. This was no noble, heroic ruin, but a ‘Jewish,’ modernist one: the modern building materials were exposed, leaving a skeleton of metal and concrete.” But beyond revealing the modern guts of the architecture, what the occupied New Chancellery makes legible is less the failure of the Nazi's monument to themselves but the fact that its ruination had arrived too early. Built to launch the Third Reich into its next thousand years, the building lasted only six and now the “barbarian,” Bolshevik “hordes” were already looking—and laughing—at its ruin. Then again, *Ruinenwert* had been born of an image demolition from the very beginning; Speer claims to have gotten the idea for the *Zeppelintribüne*, he explains, while driving by the demolition of the Nürnberger *Straßendepot*. Thus, the ruined New Chancellery can also be read as offering a fitting expression of its ideological basis. Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 69.

⁴⁰⁷ Compounding the issue was the Nazis' *Ruinenwert*, which had built on established Enlightenment and Romantic aesthetic traditions, symbolically depicting ruins as “tied to the notions of progress...Ruins inspire hope because they suggest that new revolutions will topple nations and empires.” Hell, 172. In fact, Hitler had beaten the Allies to the punch, staging his own photo ops, gazing at the ruin and, in the bunker, at the waning image of his projected future in the model of Linz's reconstruction. See: Hiller von Gaertringen, Blum, and Frentz.

architecture of Führertum was in force, this did not erase its previous meaning or the memory of the representations that had made it a powerful symbol in the first place. To the contrary, by inverting its meaning these new representations relied on them. How, then, could the Allies make this new meaning stick and be sure that it wouldn't simply drift apart from and merely exist alongside the relatively intact architectural symbol of Hitler's power and NS imperial futurity?

A developing strategy emerged throughout the first year and a half following Germany's surrender in newsreels and narratives depicting the New Chancellery's ruin. First, the addition of the Führerbunker to the architecture's iconic, spatial narrative: a distinctly *un*-representational space, simultaneously suggestive of a kind of visible, self-evidence of the Hitler-State's hidden, corrupted interior. Representations of the bunker were employed to bolster the legitimacy and acceptance of the victors' narrative through the display of its heretofore unseen physical evidence—they were also pointedly articulated together with the above-ground architecture and positioned *as its metonymic replacement*. Second, the repeated staging and publicization of this amended tour throughout 1946 and its canonization in historical documentation, newsreels, editorials, and, famously, in Hugh Trevor-Roper's *The Last Days of Hitler*, which was to become the more-or-less official history of the Third Reich's implosion in the Führerbunker in the immediate postwar period. Yet these tactics produced varying results—failing to definitively overwrite or negate the New Chancellery's previous meaning and thus necessitating more drastic measures of physical remediation (read: demolition), undertaken by the SBM beginning in 1947.

But let's begin with the addition of the Führerbunker to the New Chancellery's symbolic, spatial narrative. Aside from its visibility in newsreels, the act of 'seeing' into the NS state's heart of Führertum was reproduced in textual narratives, which nevertheless tended to emphasize the appropriation and inversion of NS visual strategies. These texts employ the peripatetic tour through

the New Chancellery (and now Führerbunker) to forcefully highlight the contrast between past and present by articulating imagery of the intact structure in use with scenes of its ruination, which, again, invite the reader to inhabit the position of the victors within the building. For example, an article from *Neue Zeit* in December 1945 titled “Hitlers Bunker, Hitlers Villa” features a peripatetic tour, which uses spatial navigation to also produce *temporal* orientation.⁴⁰⁸ The article describes the building’s interior, as it appeared in the recent past and postwar present, in an allegorical sequence, syncing movement through space to leaps forward in time. We enter the “Hochburg Hitlers” halls of “Prunk und Luxus,” seeing first the “Gobelins” and “Gemälde,” “livrierte Lakaien und SS-Wachen”—invoking without naming the rooms of the diplomatic route. Thereafter, the building seems to decay around us as we enter the “Zerfall und Ruinen” of Hitler’s office.⁴⁰⁹ While still articulating a progressive, causal connection between the construction of the Third Reich’s anticipatory architectural monument and the regime’s future development, “Hitlers Bunker, Hitlers Villa” brings the reader to a very different destination than the one trumpeted in propaganda.⁴¹⁰

From Hitler’s office, we move directly underground to the “Schauplatz” of the bunker and forward in time, from the initial destruction of the Red Army invasion to the aftermath of the Third Reich’s collapse and Germany’s occupation. The bunker exposes both the mundane, domestic-industrial interior and corrupt priorities of a leader unfit to rule.⁴¹¹ The description suggests that history is stored in and conjured by the space, legible in metonymic fragments, artifacts—Hitler’s

⁴⁰⁸ “Hitlers Bunker, Hitlers Villa,” *Neue Zeit*, December 12 1945.

⁴⁰⁹ This spatio-temporal narrative is reminiscent of the NS newsreels and the *Kulturfilm Das Wort aus Stein*, which accompanied the New Chancellery’s construction, the latter also situating the iconic tour of its interior within a larger narrative of Berlin’s redevelopment. In *DWaS*, as discussed in the previous chapter, a final transition from Hitler’s empty desk to a HJ school appearing on the shores of Chiemsee, illustrates the coming escalation of the Third Reich’s monumental, imperial scale—thus, the film asserts the New Chancellery as the symbolic proof, guarantor of and gateway to the fulfilment of the NS vision of the future, aligned with the Führer’s sovereign gaze. Here, as the narrative reaches Hitler’s office, it also shunts us into the future, but an entirely different one than the NS regime had promised.

⁴¹⁰ As analyzed in chapter vi, Syberberg’s peripatetic cinematic-photographic the tour through the New Chancellery likewise transitions from NS propaganda images of the building to ones of its postwar ruination in Hitler’s office.

⁴¹¹ “In den engen Räumen rief er zum letzten Widerstand. Dreitausend Soldaten waren eingesetzt, um ihn und seine Reichskanzlei zu verteidigen. Lieber sollten dreitausend Männer sterben, als daß er aus seinem blutigen Handel die Konsequenzen zog.”

bed and wardrobe, Eva Braun's writing desk and couch—reproduced in narrative. Further, the descent underground leads back out of the past's frozen image and into the present, occasioning a shift in tense: "In dem Licht des Tages wieder angelangt, blicken wir uns um." The tour concludes in the garden, articulating the New Chancellery's ruin to the bunker's interior in inexorable, forward spatio-temporal movement, focalized through the occupiers' gaze (though this remains unspoken). The narrator muses, "Das Schicksal läßt sich nicht betrügen. Hier in diesem Park vor den Ruinen wird uns das Bedeutungsvolle dieses Satzes klar. Hitler und seine Spießgesellen sind gekommen, wurden groß, hielten die Macht, wurden zu Verbrechern und stürzten in das bodenlose nichts." Transforming the New Chancellery into a symbol of the irredeemable past, the text strives to overwrite the idealized, spatial representation of Führertum and NS futurity, partly by revealing its contaminated, subterranean foundation. The architecture symbolizing Hitler's revolutionary appropriation of state power, as bunker/ruin, thus marks the *termination* of the NS historical 'movement.'⁴¹²

Still, however, the bulk of the narrative is spent visualizing the New Chancellery's symbolic architecture. The addition and central positioning of the Führerbunker is meant to undermine and counter the legibility of the building's previous, symbolic order—but as this space (only vaguely described in metonymic objects) has no descriptive visible presence in this highly visual account, the narrative works at cross purposes to its apparent goal. The Führerbunker pales in comparison to the iconic structure surrounding and contextualizing it—especially since images of this space were nowhere near as ubiquitous as its predecessor. Hence, Hitler's 'real' center of power remains concealed from view, especially as the Germans remained excluded from its interior and can only view it through the mediating gaze of the Allies. Rather than stripping the

⁴¹² The article thus concludes, "Die letzten Augenblicke brachten für uns die Befreiung und für sie [Hitler's 'Spießgesellen'] die Vergeltung. Das Schicksal läßt sich nicht betrügen..."

New Chancellery of its previous meaning, the Führerbunker seems to *fuse together* with and remain hidden behind the symbolic image of the representational ruin—both of which remain infested with Hitler’s spectral presence.

The failure of this expanded, spatial-visual narrative to deconstruct or displace the New Chancellery’s previous symbolic identity is apparent in its subsequent repetitions and cinematic remediation. Three episodes of *Welt im Film* from 1946 recapitulate the amended tour through the ruin and bunker, abbreviating the preceding architectural sequence and identifying the latter as the only goal of the narrative movement. The newsreels feature diplomatic visits by Eleanor Roosevelt and the Prime Ministers of South Africa and Canada, Jan Smuts and Sir William Lyon Mackenzie King.⁴¹³ (Figs. III-20 – III-22) They turn the phenomenon of Allied tourism into an opportunity for further affirmation of the destroyed NS state and re-education of the German public.



Figure III-20 – Eleanor Roosevelt’s tour through the ruin, entering the Honor Court, descending the steps of the terrace outside Hitler’s office, and entering the bunker through the emergency exit

⁴¹³ Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, "Frau Roosevelt Besucht Deutschland," in *Welt im Film* (1946); "Staatsmänner Auf Reisen," in *Welt im Film* (1946); "Kanas Ministerpräsident in Berlin," in *Welt im Film* (1946).



Figures III-21 & III-22 - Prime Ministers Jan Smuts (left) and Sir William Lyon Mackenzie King (right) tour the Führerbunker (WiF)

While these state visits were certainly more involved, the dignitaries' time in Berlin is shown only through the tour of the New Chancellery.⁴¹⁴ After a montage of their arrival, the visitors are led by Soviet guards to the empty center of Hitler's power. Again, there is no longer any sense of 'bodily discipline' ascribed to the interior enfilade—indeed, at times it disappears entirely. The episodes again both imitate and offer a symbolic refutation of NS state events, staged and filmed in the building. We move through the Honor Court, bypass Hitler's ceremonial office (Smuts skips the interior entirely, Fig. III-21) and watch the dignitaries enter and leave through the bunker's emergency exit: the route's literal dead end. The voiceover's captions are truncated along with the visuals, identifying only "die zerstörte Reichskanzlei" or "Ruine der Reichskanzlei" and "der Bunker Hitlers." Viewed along with the above-ground architecture, which now breezes by in the background, the bunker offers a clear focal point for the symbolic, visual demystification of the Nazi state. This, the narrative suggests, is the real ruin worth looking at: the true, barbarous achievement of and monument to the Third Reich; the site where the distinctly mortal Hitler had driven the nation into the ground and then disappeared; the empty space where the Führer's symbolic body used to supposedly be but never really was.

On the other hand, whatever self-evident sights the bunker contains are left vague because the camera and, thereby, the viewer stay topside, excluded from its interior. Only King is explicitly shown viewing "die Stelle, an der die Leiche Hitlers verbrannt wurde," and we see him *looking* at the site, *not* the site itself. (Fig. III-22) The newsreels focalize the viewer's gaze through the victors' perspective but, beset by spatial lacuna, this merely invites *imaginary* identification. The Führerbunker remains a site of symbolic contradiction: a space of visually apprehended self-

⁴¹⁴ The representatives clearly show the shared authority of the Americans and British Commonwealth—they also point to how fascinating these particular Allies found the New Chancellery and bunker. A report of a visit by Britain's foreign minister from April 1947 describes the same tour. "Bevin Und Bildaut in Berlin," *Neue Zeit*, April 29 1947. Indeed, British and American citizens would continue to visit the site even following the building's demolition.

evidence *and* exclusion. Appended to the end of the representational route, the center of NS power and the *mise-en-scène* of its collapse remains invisible; a blank space outlined and contextualized by the New Chancellery. The architecture's previous visual identity, relegated to the margins, still clings to and visibly echoes in its postwar cinematic mediation.

Nor does the exclusion of the New Chancellery's above-ground architecture—for, from this point on, images of the building continue to fade from publication—seem to have any effect on the durability of its visual archive. To the contrary, historical narratives, written by the very Allies whose perspective supposedly reframe the building and defuse its symbolic power, instead evince their ongoing fascination with it—as does the unabated tourism of the site—revealing just how deeply embedded the New Chancellery's symbolic presence was, even in international memory. For example, Stephen Spender's 1946 travelogue, *European Witness* includes multilayered, visual descriptions of the New Chancellery's past and present, above- and underground structures, using them to illustrate and meditate on Germany's defeat. Spender juxtaposes classical scenes of ruin with imagery of the New Chancellery's recent ruination: “acres of tomato-coloured marble” lead into a courtyard of “burned out tanks”; nearby, “Hitler's shelter...a waste of mud and clay, filled with small fragments of broken glass, bombs, pottery, marble, etc., just as the plain of Mycenae, near Agamemnon's tomb.”⁴¹⁵ Even when they comment on the suddenness of its destruction, identifying it as a “ruin[] of our own epoch,” at once remote and “still full of clues...almost footmarks,” these descriptions perpetuate, rather than challenge the New Chancellery's aspirations of ‘timeless’ monumentality.⁴¹⁶ Indeed, past and present images blend into one another—like temporal stereoscope, the reader flashes between views of debris in

⁴¹⁵ Spender, 241-2.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 239-40. Trevor-Roper's meta descriptions of his investigative work provide the same feel of recent abandonment—he details finding the diary of Hitler's daily schedule on a chair in September 1945. Trevor-Roper, 52.

1945 and the imposing space of 1939, with no real sense of orientation. Moreover, in Spender's account, the Führerbunker is not singled out as the site of the ruin's unmasking but simply sutured into the rest of the complex and, worse, identified as part of its *sacred* interior: the Führer's tomb.

Even Hugh Trevor-Roper's *The Last Days of Hitler*, the first foundational history of the war's conclusion in the bunker, evinces similar problems in localizing the non-representational space by way of its representational counterpart, thereby elevating it to the level of a sacred space.⁴¹⁷ Admittedly, Trevor-Roper provides one of the first exhaustive descriptions of the bunker's interior; its structure is outlined in a simplified diagram. (Fig. III-23) The text differentiates between the Vor- and Führerbunker, whose "miserable underground hutches" and respective functions he lists in exhaustive, utilitarian detail.⁴¹⁸ But despite the fact that his description of the bunker is thorough and suggests its macabre atmosphere, its visual representation is limited to this technical drawing.

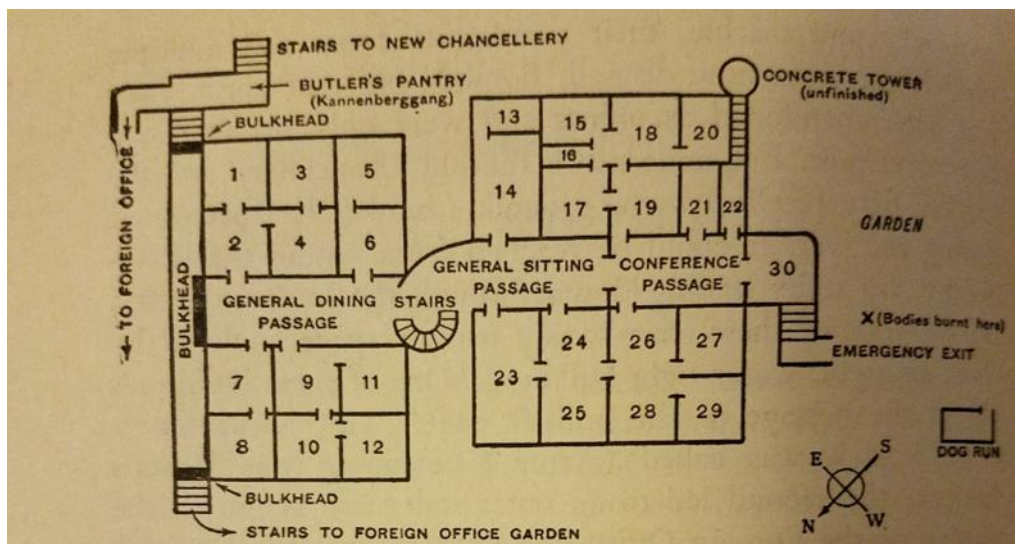


Figure III-23 - Diagram of the Vor and Führerbunker Source: *The Last Days of Hitler*, pg. 108

⁴¹⁷ A British intelligence agent, Trevor-Roper was sent to investigate the site in September 1945 and provide an account of the events that transpired in the Führerhauptquartier, compiling his report from onsite documentation and extensive interviews with captured Nazis. Published as a book in 1946, and translated into German almost immediately, in wide circulation by 1948, the narrative focuses April 20th-May 1st 1945, centered on the Führerbunker. For translation, see: Hugh Redwald Trevor-Roper and Joseph Kalmer, *Hitlers Letzte Tage* (Zürich: Verlag Amstutz, 1948).

⁴¹⁸ Trevor-Roper, 107-9.

Further, the non-representational space is articulated with descriptions of the New Chancellery saturated by its visual archive of propaganda. Trevor-Roper's reconstruction of the above-ground structure is loaded with ideological references, which skip back to its glory days. While somewhat unspecific, they establish a clear, if exaggerated, impression of the architecture's previous representational identity: asserting "the geometric magnificence of the new Pharaoh," "huge rooms, with their vast slabs of porphyry and marble, their ponderous doors and multiple candelabra," whose "Egyptian vastity...trembling ambassadors had taken...a fragment of eternity to cross."⁴¹⁹ This is not to say that the building didn't partially live up to its reputation—Speer's whole design had been based around emphasizing its highly visual scenography. But Spender's and Trevor-Roper's accounts resurrect and reify the Third Reich's *most idealized* and ideological self-images, projected into the building interior, including the apocryphal narratives of its overwhelming effects on visitors' bodies.⁴²⁰ Although Trevor-Roper, too, notes the building's disuse and "bombed out and burnt" interior, these asides hardly act as a counterweight to his breathless descriptions of the only "'structurally sound' remnant of the Third Reich...like the ruins of Memphis...the most substantial memorial in the great cemetery of central Berlin"—especially considering that he calls the building *in use* a "vast mausoleum"!⁴²¹

Most importantly, by claiming that there "could be no greater contrast" between these spaces, Trevor-Roper overlooks the degree to which the New Chancellery's representational and functional uses were not to be differentiated. Though he notes the physical integration of the

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., 106-7.

⁴²⁰ And nowhere do they comment on the problematic construction of the above-ground and administrative spaces, which Trevor-Roper, at the very least, likely would have investigated. Indeed, Trevor-Roper's lukewarm reproach of the "questionable elegance" of Speer's "architectural achievements" and apologia for the technocrat are the weakest part of his otherwise incisive critique of the Hitler-State's elite, inner circle. Ibid., 76. While he excoriates Hitler's entourage's self-representation as only a Brit can, he seems to lack this caustic gaze when it comes to Speer. See especially the commentary on Hanna Reitsch's and Graf Lutz Schwerin von Krosigk's diaries.

⁴²¹ Ibid., 76, 106-7.

bunker with its representational counterpart, this connection is undermined by his vehement insistence on the opposition between the two architectural realms.⁴²² *Welt im Film*'s diplomatic visits and "Hitlers Bunker, Hitlers Villa," both at least articulate a *symbolic* connection between the Third Reich's built representation and its ruination—one literally leads into the other. In this account, on the other hand, any coherent link between them is obscured by the disorganized and contradictory, spatial and temporal collage of architectural representation.

For the Führerbunker was *not* the New Chancellery's *successor* but an integral part of Hitler's architecture of Führertum from the beginning, built into the very foundation of his personal monument—its extension onto the Vorbunker only the latest renovation.⁴²³ Picturing the New Chancellery as the Third Reich's heyday and the bunker as its 11th hour ignores the undeniable reality that the two were constructed simultaneously, provisionally, continuously for the same purpose—as shelter for the Führer, as the 'embodied' center of the NS-Mythos. Just as the New Chancellery became the *ad hoc* Führerhauptquartier, the bunker was likewise the makeshift representational architecture of Führertum; their ruins could not be disarticulated from one another and nor could the bunker be established as a symbol without recourse to the ensemble to which it clearly belonged. This was the intractable problem of reframing and revising the building's meaning through the Allied perspective or trying to reverse and replace it via the bunker's "non-representational" addendum.

Yet, on the other hand, the representational revisions of the New Chancellery's meaning produced over 1945-6 were partially successful. The architecture offered a key symbolic point of

⁴²² Specifically, he details its articulation with underground passageways to the Foreign Office and the entrance to the bunker complex through the so-called "Kannenberggang" in the New Chancellery's butler's pantry. *Ibid.*, 107. It bears mentioning that this network of underground passages, connected to tunnels snaking throughout Mitte, only amped up the fascination with the NS state's hidden, subterranean interior and fed rumors of Hitler's survival and escape.

⁴²³ Its next iteration was even more obvious regarding the combination of the fortress and representation of the Hitler-State: the planned Führerpalast featured a reinforced steel frame for its totally windowless facade.

orientation for visualizing the Red Army's victory and the authority of the Allied occupation; the Führerbunker revealed the 'real,' empty center of Führertum behind the monumental "Kulisse." But, as Spender's and Trevor-Roper's narratives and the hurried, gestural omissions of the interior in newsreels suggest—not to mention the continuous repetition of this desacralizing ritual, belying the very demystification it was supposed to enact—the memory of the architecture's previous images was far from dead. Less a shadow of its former self, the New Chancellery became a fragmented, composite image of present and past, above- and underground. Separating these images, the *Ruin* from the *Wert*, seemed nigh impossible; the visual archive of the Third Reich's symbolic center of power proved durable, its multiple, mediated layers cemented together.

III. Demontage, Abriß, Neuaufbau: The New Chancellery & Berlin's (Soviet) Reconstruction

In spite of the apparent temporal dilation of the previous section, it's important to keep in mind that this series of media events encompassed a relatively short period of time, appearing in rapid succession over 18 months or so following Germany's defeat. As the reality of the occupation quickly set in, the urgency of delivering the initial messages mediated in the New Chancellery's ruin (that the Third Reich was over and Hitler was dead) dissipated. By 1946, the building's visible presence in the media was clearly on the wane—and its disintegration was about to be accelerated. This section outlines three, rapid, overlapping shifts in the New Chancellery's use, visibility, and symbolic meaning between 1946 and 1949: its marginalization and integration into the background of Berlin's ruin landscape; the initiation of its non-structural deconstruction in 1947 as part of (Soviet) Berlin's reconstruction (announced in the article opening this chapter); and finally, its structural demolition and "Enttrümmerung," primarily over 1949, as East and West Germany were founded and, thus, the corresponding centers of sovereignty were officially relocated elsewhere.

The disappearance of the architecture of Führertum was also accompanied by a

disintegration of the heretofore more-or-less unified aesthetic strategies employed by the Allied-controlled media in its visual reproduction. Not only are the building's multiple, contradictory meanings legible in representations produced over 1946-9, this material, moreover, increasingly conflicts with the historical timeline of its deconstruction—hence, a rift becomes visible between the building as mediated in representation and the building as a physical site and object. As the New Chancellery's image disappeared from public view, official documentation by the SBM of the architecture's physical fate simultaneously petered out, leaving behind gaps and contradictions in the historical record, which significantly impact the legibility of its symbolic meaning, as communicated in the fragmented representations of its material fragmentation. But let's start at the beginning of the end.

While the Allies projected their ideological point of view onto the New Chancellery's ruin, other readings of the building were still possible. Indeed, other representations continued to display what came to be known as the characteristic disposition of the *Stunde Null*—looking away from the Third Reich's remains and toward the present and future work of reconstruction. Thus, in spite of its international celebrity-status, within Berlin, the New Chancellery quickly became just another of the city's marginal, derelict spaces, evinced in reports of its public, improvisational use after 1946. These minor media events had already begun to appear simultaneously with the efforts analyzed above to revise the architecture's symbolic image with the addition of the Führerbunker to the ruin tour.

The building showed up intermittently in the *Tagespresse* and, occasionally, in newsreels, documenting its use as a black market, garden plot, billboard, and *Ruinenkulisse* for film projects by Wolfgang Staudte and Roberto Rossellini. (Figs. III-24 & III-25) In other words, it appeared basically like any other ruin in Berlin at the time. As Wolfgang Kil writes, throughout the mid to

late 1940s, “Die Ruinenwüste Berlins verblasst...oft beiläufig zum diffusen Hintergrund,” as photographers strove “die Kameras...auf jedes noch so kleine Indiz für Normalität und Zuversicht zu richten.”⁴²⁴ The New Chancellery offered a poignant backdrop framing the “stolze Ernte auf dem Grabeland,” or “die Minikrimis vom Schwarzenmarkt,” as the filmography and SED sloganeering on the facade suggest. Yet, none of these uses occasioned a major media event in their own right—until, that is, after a brief period of neglect, the site again became a focal point (or, perhaps, a blind spot) of Berlin’s reconstruction through the act of its deconstruction.



Figures III-24 & III-25 – SED-propaganda on Siedler building facade, dated October 1946 (left), A young German selling an Iron Cross to American GIs in the New Chancellery, 1947 (right). Sources: Landesarchiv Berlin, Pathe Pictorial Looks at Berlin

⁴²⁴ Kil, 117.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the New Chancellery's location in the Soviet sector would prove the most significant factor of its postwar fate. A bit of historical context is necessary here (extremely simplified in the interests of space): in negotiations since 1944 and throughout the occupation, an answer to the "German Question" was continually deferred. Western Allies were concerned that "the Soviet domineering policy...might draw a prostrate, resentful Germany into its orbit," while, for their part, the Russians, were "haunted" by "the spectre of German revanchism" and sought a regional buffer of states run by friendly, anti-fascist regimes.⁴²⁵ Thus, through 1946 and 1947, there were no firm agreements regarding Germany's economy, borders, or how democratization should proceed. As shared occupational center, Berlin was the obvious epicenter of this conflict, its landscape during reconstruction a particularly fraught terrain.

From the outset, the "Soviets [had] established...a de facto Communist led government ...and set about rendering superfluous the Potsdam accords by ruthlessly extracting and dismantling whatever fell within their grasp"—including and increasingly, salvaged building materials. With the resounding loss of the SED in the Berlin city elections of 1946—the occasion for the "nie wieder" banner on the Siedler building—"Soviet policy perceptibly hardened."⁴²⁶ Although the New Chancellery was far from the only casualty of this escalation of early Cold War architectural politics (the City Palace was another notable one), its fate was surely sealed in part by its site on the border of two increasingly agitated political zones, especially amid the ramping up of the SBM's more aggressive strategy, implementing a new symbolic order through the reconstruction of Berlin's urban landscape.

Although they employed differing strategies, architecture was a crucial element of

⁴²⁵ Judt, 106, 11, 22. For a thorough and international overview of this history, see Judt's chapter "The Impossible Settlement," 00-29.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 123.

representing the competing ideologies of Soviet and liberal democracy.⁴²⁷ Reconstruction on either side of the German-German border sought to transform defeat into *Neuaufbau* and *Wirtschaftswunder*, respectively—and, in both cases, the material and representational dimensions of these efforts were utterly inextricable from one another. Propaganda in the SBZ, countless newsreels, reports, and photographs featured Berliners in the rubble, picking up the pieces—the opposite pole of the photographic “Ruinenästhetik” highlighting the devastation of the Allied bombing, which mostly surfaced later in the 1950s.⁴²⁸ Further, the visual imaginary of ruin photographs helped redefine the physical impact of Germany’s defeat in the East in highly euphemistic, architectural terms. This reframing encompassed a recontextualization, turning the destruction of the Allied bombing war into the material for reconstruction, “Weil es einen Unterschied macht, ob man ein Leben mit Ruinen darstellt oder deren Beseitigung.”⁴²⁹ Seen in this way, “Die mechanische Auflockerung...durch Bombenkrieg und Endkampf,” as East Berlin’s Head of Building Hans Scharoun put it in 1945(!), cleared the way for the capital’s “Erneuerung.”⁴³⁰ And rather than restoring the previous architectural order, in the East,

“die Gestaltung Berlins zur gesamtdeutschen Hauptstadt...[suchte] durchaus nach zeitgemäß erneuerten Strukturen. Folgerichtig war statt von Wiederaufbau fortan nur noch von Neuaufbau die Rede. Und entsprechend freizügig wurden bei Bedarf altvertraute Straßen, Plätze, Silhouetten überplant, hier und da bis zur Unkenntlichkeit.”⁴³¹

The accelerated production of “Baufreiheit” through demolition and deconstruction—accompanied throughout by the celebratory reclamation of materials—was thus a significant

⁴²⁷ For the history of the development of Germany’s political architecture in East and West during and after reconstruction, see: Jordan; Heinrich Wefing, *Kulisse Der Macht Das Berliner Kanzleramt* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2001); and especially Michael Z. Wise, *Capital Dilemma : Germany's Search for a New Architecture of Democracy* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998); von Beyme.

⁴²⁸ Kil, 117.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., 119. Kil takes the opportunity to explain that this “makabre Beschreibung der Kriegsfolgen stammt nicht von einem zynischen Technokraten”—the preemption is necessary, for this was also how Speer’s Ministry discussed the “Wiederaufbau bombenzerstörter Städte.” Not to pile on the East for the resemblance, the vast majority of the GBI’s former members, like Rudolf Wolters, found themselves gainfully employed implementing modified versions of their designs throughout the West. See: Frei and Freimüller.

⁴³¹ Kil, 119-20.

component of the process of reconstruction and its representation in the SBZ media.⁴³²

Since “Die Gebäude der einstigen Reichskanzlei wollte niemand mehr haben – da war man sich einig,” the SBM took it upon themselves to free up this particular site for the production of new political-architectural horizons. And to do so, in part, through the reclamation of building materials from the rubble of the Third Reich.⁴³³ Owing to its enormous use of lavish, durable materials and its survival of the conflict mostly intact—not to mention its persistent symbolic meaning—the New Chancellery offered a quarry second to none.⁴³⁴ Further, since the ideological images of its past appearance in propaganda still haunted the building’s representation in the present, perhaps the best solution was to eliminate the architecture altogether. This was, in any event, the strategy ultimately chosen by the SBM.

We have thus now arrived back where we started, with the staggered, progressive “Demontage” of the New Chancellery, conducted over a period of around 20 months, begun with the removal of its representational, marble surfaces in Summer 1947, and mostly completed by

⁴³² An article in *Neue Zeit* from September 1945, titled “Vom Neubau Berlins,” revises an estimation of Berlin’s “Wiederaufbau” from 20 to only 10 years, noting improved efficiency of building methods and arguing that “Der in den Hausruinen liegende Schutt ist zum großen Teil beim Wiederaufbau verwendbar.” “Vom Neubau Berlins,” *Neue Zeit*, September 27 1945. The article appeared adjacent the one mentioned in fn9, “Der Mann der Fehldispositionen”

⁴³³ Demps, 200. While Demps takes the rejection of the New Chancellery as a given, this fact is rather confusing considering the use of countless other Nazi buildings in the governmental quarter by the SBM. For example, just one page earlier, he notes that the *Deutsche Wirtschaftskommission* had taken up residence in the NS Aviation Ministry around the corner, explaining “Auch nach 1945 wurde, ja musste zunächst einmal unter pragmatischen Gesichtspunkten gehandelt werden. In der Wilhelmstraße standen, mehr oder minder intakt, funktionstüchtige Gebäude, die genutzt werden konnten. Das Reichsluftfahrtministerium...war ein “Befehlsbau”, das heißt, er wurde auf Befehl der sowjetischen Militärbehörden wieder hergerichtet; ein Vorgang, den man an verschiedenen Orten der Stadt beobachten konnte.” *Ibid.*, 199. The likely explanation for the exception of the New Chancellery from such use didn’t rest only its symbolic value—though that surely did play a role, and the Soviet revision of urban space often included selective, symbolic acts of demolition (see: Kallis.)—but could have been equally motivated by its problematic construction and lack of functional administrative space, as described in the introduction. There was likely no way to retrofit the building without incurring massive expense, which, at the end of the day, would have still produced a building unmistakably, visibly contaminated by NS iconography. (While the Aviation Ministry, for example, appeared in NS propaganda, its representation was nowhere near as ubiquitous as the New Chancellery’s) This observation brings to light a curious potential advantage (for the SBM) of the NS building industry’s emphasis on future architecture: since they constructed almost none of their planned buildings, there was far less of a need to physically redact these structures from Berlin’s urban landscape. Rather, the SBM could (and did) simply conflate the destruction resulting from the bombing with the empty spaces cleared by Speer’s demolition crews. See, again, fn9.

⁴³⁴ The Third Reich’s wasteful opulence would be the DDR’s boon. Though, again, the New Chancellery was far from the only building in the area to meet this fate: “Für die Wiederherstellung wurden andere Gebäude der Umgebung “ausgeschlachtet”, um an Baumaterial, besonders Eisenträger, zu kommen.” Demps, 199.

late 1950. If the cinematic images of the Red Army in the New Reich Chancellery instituted the first phase of its post-45 renovation as a symbol, its non-structural deconstruction initiated another—which aimed to be the last. And in spite of its images’ growing marginalization, the New Chancellery’s demolition was, in fact, a symbolic media event—the disassembly, removal, and reuse of its physical materials was a representational process (similar to its construction, though on a much smaller scale), inscribing the structure’s fragments and fragmentation with new meaning, in accordance with Berlin’s Soviet reconstruction.

The article from *Neue Zeit*, analyzed in the introduction, announced the *Demontage* and asserted this process’s performative negation of the building’s already ‘phony’ representational identity; but another word on this piece is warranted. At this early stage in 1947, as you’ll recall, “Man weiß nicht was aus den Resten werden soll.” While the shape of the future to be constructed remained an open question (*Baufreiheit*), the end goal of this particular part of the process was clear nonetheless—the New Chancellery would be erased from Berlin’s new silhouette. As Karl Brammer, the article’s author, explains, the architecture had no right to preservation: it had neither aesthetic value, “Was an diesem Bau die Kunst des Architekten vermissen ließ, das sollte durch prunkhaftes Material ersetzt werden;” nor historical function, encapsulated by the “sogennante[r] Kabinettsaal...obgleich zur Zeit, als Hitler hier einzog, kaum noch Kabinettsitzungen abgebracht war,” nor particular function in the present, save as garden plot, since food was “heute wichtiger” than looking for the Führer’s remains, “aber man sucht sie auch nicht mehr.” The only thing the ruin had to offer was materials, robbed from under the feet of the Germans by the NS regime. And that was a finite resource, disappearing fast: “In der ganzen Reichskanzlei gibt es kein Stück Kabel mehr, keine elektrischen Schalter. Alles was irgendwie noch nutzbringend sein konnte, ist abgeholt worden, falls nicht Unbefugte es haben ohne Order mitgehen heißen.” Rampant looting and

investigations had removed the majority of unsecured items from the building—invoked here also in part to suggest an unhealthy fascination with it—but the article posits the beginning of a more systematic, thorough, and disinterested process of dismantling. After the building’s dressing down, Brammer writes in closing, “Es bleibt neben wirren Steinblöcken, zerschlagenen Kacheln, zerbombten Treppen und zerrissenen Mosaiken ein Haufen Steine ohne Sinn.” That is, in addition to preempting any continued fascination with the building, he further implies that its symbolic identity—the architecture as representation—is already illegible, already rubble.

Yet, here the author gets a bit ahead of himself. In June 1947 this description was far from accurate; after all, this was the inaugural announcement of *non-structural* deconstruction! Hence, over the rest of the year and throughout 1948/9, the saga continued. Appearing almost exclusively in the SBZ *Tagespresse* throughout this period, in local columns, like “Blick auf Berlin,” “Kleine Berliner Chronik,” are intermittent reports on the demolition’s progress—rarely accurate or in detail—interwoven with scenes of everyday life against the ruin’s backdrop. A non-exhaustive selection of highlights is shown in the following table:

1947	June 17 - “Demontage der Reichskanzlei”	Neue Zeit
	August 12 - Rossellini films in Berlin (location not mentioned)	Berliner Zeitung
	August 29 - Fire in New Chancellery cellars “aus ungeklärter Ursache”	Berliner Zeitung
	September 16 – Marble plating “wird ausgeschlachtet”	Berliner Zeitung
	November 7 - “Zigaretten gegen Schemen der Vergangenheit”	Neue Zeit
	November 21 - “Hitlers Bunker wird gesprengt”	Neues Deutschland
	December 12 - “Hitlers Bunker gesprengt”	Berliner Zeitung
1948	April 23 - A Herr Treschok injured by exploding Panzerfaust in his subsistence plot in the rear garden	Berliner Zeitung
	September 1 - Staudte films in the ruins	Berliner Zeitung
	September 10 - Staudte films in the ruins (newsreel)	Der Augenzeuge
	October 12 - “‘Reichskanzlei’ verschwindet”	Neues Deutschland
	October 15 - “Reichskanzlei wird enttrümmert”	Neue Zeit

	November 28 - “Rund um den Wilhelmplatz,” “In die Ruinen der Reichskanzlei sind die ersten Abrißkolonnen eingezogen”	Neue Zeit
	December 7 - “Aufräumungsarbeiten an der ehemaligen Reichskanzlei”	Neues Deutschland
1949	February 8 - “vollständige[r] Abriß der Hitlerschen ‘Reichskanzlei’”	Berliner Zeitung
	February 13 - “Das Ende der Reichskanzlei”	Neues Deutschland

In these reports, details are vague, delivered in a few sentences, rarely mentioning specifics nor commenting on the materials’ destination for reuse.⁴³⁵ Repetitions and contradictions abound—the Führerbunker’s definitive, one-month-long demolition alone undermines all credibility.

Further, somewhat paradoxically (and conveniently), although the demolition was a highly representational act, its coverage almost categorically excludes illustrations.⁴³⁶ Figuratively speaking, to borrow Kil’s description of Tiedemann’s panorama of Leipziger Platz: “Achtloser wurden die kläglichen Überreste von Hitlers Neuer Reichskanzlei nie an einen Bildrand gedrängt als hier, wo sich in der alten Berliner City...völlig neue Raumstrukturen auftaten. Lauter Bauplätze, an denen man die Stadt schrittweise anders definieren konnte!”⁴³⁷ But, opposed to the fragmented, meagre, textual representation circulating in the SBZ media, the New Chancellery’s deconstruction is rather exhaustively documented in archival demolition photographs. These images tell an entirely different story of the architecture’s disappearance, both in duration and kind.

⁴³⁵ Virtually no paper trail exists for the salvaged materials, which were vast. Demps, without offering sources, lists the following: “So waren Marmor und Kalkstein bei der Rerrichtung des Ehrenmals in Treptow und bei der Neugestaltung des U-Bahnhofes “Kaiserhof” verbaut worden, der nun “Thälmannplatz” hieß [more on that later] und heute den neutralen[!] Namen “Mohrenstraße” trägt. [Among the rumors regarding the fate of marble from the Mosaic Room, these are generally accepted as being true] Weiteres Material wurde für den Wiederaufbau der Volksbühne verwandt. Teile der Parkettfußböden kamen in den Kulturbundklub in die Jägerstraße. Granitblöcke wurden als Gesimsplatten bei Bauarbeiten an der Weidendammer Brücke eingesetzt. Auch die Baustelle Biesdorf-Süder erhielt fünf Blöcke Kalkstein. Ebenso an vielen anderen Stellen der Stadt – so auch im Hauptgebäude der Humboldt-Universität – sind noch heute Teile des Baumaterials der Reichskanzlei nachweisbar. Allerdings muss es sich um noch nicht verbautes Material gehandelt haben, das in Reserve auf dem Grundstück lag.” Ibid., 213-4. This suspicion is, in fact, confirmed in Alfred Kernd’l’s 1992 archeological study, which uncovered the largely-intact state of the bunker complex and substantial material from the New Chancellery’s foundation, facade, and ground floor still buried in the ground. Alfred Kernd’l, Berlin, and Landesamt Archäologisches, *Zeugnisse Der Historischen Topographie Auf Dem Gelände Der Ehemaligen Reichskanzlei Berlin-Mitte* (Berlin 1993).

⁴³⁶ A few photographs did, in fact, occasionally appear in the SBZ *Tagespresse*, but exclusively those centered on the massive pile of rubble and/or the workers. For example, in *Neues Deutschland* on December 7, 1948, on the front page, but without an accompanying article. The caption reads: “Belegschaftsmitglieder der Deutschen Notenback bei Aufräumungsarbeiten an der ehemaligen Reichskanzlei.” No part of the architecture’s previous structure is visible.

⁴³⁷ Kil, 120.

It bears noting that I do not emphasize the relative paucity of information regarding the New Chancellery's disappearance in order to claim that it was so scandalous that it was suppressed as a conspiracy. The explanation is more mundane: neither the building's physical nor symbolic deconstruction appears to have been thoroughly or systematically implemented—and that was, in fact, the point. The marginal representation and documentation of the New Chancellery's destruction asserted its *lack* of symbolic value; it was just a ludicrously wasteful accumulation of material, now to be anonymized and redistributed to the people by the people. Its demolition was, however, simultaneously linked to representational construction: the reclamation of Berlin's historic-political topography by the East German authorities, in part through Wilhelmplatz's renovation as Thälmannplatz, which was to be completed as part of the celebrations for Stalin's 70th birthday on November 30, 1949.⁴³⁸ A closer look at the New Chancellery's demolition thus reveals striking parallels with its construction. Both were improvisational, conditioned by unpredictable, shifting representational and architectural political imperatives, and, therefore, largely concealed from public view, poorly documented and/or strategically revised in the archival record. It is in this sense that the New Chancellery's demolition can be read as an expressly *anti*-representational act.

Yet, to say that the representation of this process was strategically *marginalized*, however, is not to say that the demolition photographs do not contain valuable information or aestheticized architectural visuals. Indeed, they provide a much more detailed account of the dates and process of deconstruction than any written archival documentation.⁴³⁹ The photographs track roughly

⁴³⁸ In early 1949, immediately preceding the founding of the East German state, Wilhelmplatz, reconstructed as Thälmannplatz, was projected to remain the center of government. The abrupt abandonment of these plans was likely motivated by both its uncomfortable proximity to the border, as Cold War tensions heated up, and the renewed emphasis on construction of desperately needed housing. Demps, 202-11. See also: Maoz Azaryahu and Kerstin Amrani, *Von Wilhelmplatz Zu Thälmannplatz : Politische Symbole Im Öffentlichen Leben Der Ddr* (Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1991).

⁴³⁹ Demps structures his timeline around the story they tell, setting this against the official version of events, gleaned from both the scant archival information and reports in the SBZ *Tagespresse* Demps, 200.

along with the terse newspaper reports above—working almost like captions that expand, contradict, and complicate the timeline. In other words, these photographs are useful because they both fill in the gaps from the official record and because they provide a new, uniquely Soviet perspective on the New Reich Chancellery’s mediated representation. Specifically, they modify the building’s legibility as a symbol through the ongoing process of its fragmentation and in reference to its previous photographic representation in NS propaganda. Hence, not only do these images reveal that the demolition took much longer than the orderly 20 some odd months of “Befehle,” “Abstimmung,” and “Abriß,” as implied in the official record; furthermore, even if they never made it into circulation, the visual strategies of representation employed in these demolition photographs show that its process was evidently a highly symbolically charged affair.⁴⁴⁰

This is apparent already in non-structural demolition images from 1947, which emphasize the building’s naked materiality and its ‘demystification’ through the unmounting of its marble plating. (Figs. III-26 & III-27) The photographs refute the ideological messaging of NS propaganda in part by highlighting the removal of materials signifying the regime’s prestige and durability. While the framing vaguely mimics NS architectural photographs, the subjects, the Marble Gallery and Hitler’s office, are stripped of their pretension to power, exposed in their hollow concrete reality—notably, the bare walls in Hitler’s office transform the space so as to resemble a harshly illuminated bunker. The images also indicate the nascent presence of a new architectural order, outside the frame, as the orderly stacks of marble in the above image suggest, metonymically, the broader project of reconstruction, orchestrated elsewhere. While the interior spaces’ initial framing is familiar, over the ongoing destruction, the visual strategies employed in

⁴⁴⁰ Demolition photographs are ordinarily employed to record technical information; but they are often also used as highly representational artifacts, to legitimize the construction of a new urban image by state actors. See the chapter on Rubble Photography in Paeslack.



Figure III-26 - Non-structural deconstruction of the Marble Gallery, dated September 15, 1947. Source: ullstein Bild



Figure III-27 – The hearth in Hitler's office stripped of Marble, with window to rear garden visible at right, dated (likely erroneously) September 15, 1947. Source: ullstein Bild

photographs of structural demolition from late 1947-1949 change dramatically.

They do so, first, by incorporating the anti-representational Führerbunker and visually telegraphing (and obscuring) its (unfinished) demolition. (Figs. III-28 – III-30) Thereafter, shifts in scale and composition both transmit an approximation of the architectural space and show its physical transformation during different phases of deconstruction. As the process continues and the structure gets progressively smaller, the exterior views zoom out, widening the perspective and increasing in scale. (Figs. III-31 – III-35) The effect is uncanny—expanding the frame of view, the architecture is accordingly diminished in size. On the other hand, the pedestrian staffage thereby appears *truly* miniscule, paradoxically re-emphasizing the ruin’s monumental dimensions. To counter the effect, whereas earlier images mirror and invert NS representational strategies, later images foreground the visibility of new bodies occupying and dismantling Hitler’s space of power.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-V04744
Foto: o.Ang. | Juli 1947

Figure III-28 - Emergency exit and exhaust tower of the Führerbunker, dated July 1947 Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-M1204-319
Foto: Donath, Otto | 1947

Figure III-29 - Hitler's bunker following the first attempt at demolition with the New Chancellery's central block (Führerbau) visible in the background, dated 1947 (likely December). Photographer: Otto Donath. Source: BA -Bildarchiv



Bundesarchiv, Bild 103-201065-0004
Foto: Schmidtke | 30. September 1950

Figure III-30 - Remains of the bunker's emergency exit and exhaust tower, with Reichstag visible in the background, dated September 30, 1950. Photographer: Schmidtke. Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-M1204-320
Foto: Donath, Otto | 1947

Figure III-31 - Trümmerbahn in front of the Siedler building, dated 1947. Photographer: Otto Donath. Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Figure III-32 - Demolition of the western Party Chancellery block, dated February 8, 1949. Source: ullstein Bild



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-S85962
Foto: o.Ang. | 24. Juni 1949

Figure III-33 – Site of the missing Siedler building on Wilhelmstraße, with small human figure to the right and fragments of the bunker's emergency exit visible in the background, dated June 24, 1949. Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-S87245
Foto: Funck, Heinz | 23. August 1949

Figure III-34 - Demolition of the Dining Hall seen from Wilhelmstraße, dated August 22, 1949. Photographer: Heinz Funck. Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-08106-0003
Foto: Schmidtke | 30. September 1950

Figure III-35 - Demolition on the central block, seen from the building rear, with miniscule human figures near building's central plinth, dated September 30, 1950. Photographer: Schmidtke. Source: BA-Bildarchiv

Interior views of deconstruction and photographs featuring the workers, on the other hand, employ the warping and manipulation of scale through the figure of the body to their advantage. (Figs. III-36 – 42) Whereas the photographs and films of the Allies in the ruin show their bodies undominated by and in control of the New Reich Chancellery's still-imposing representational spaces, free to move as they please within them, the demolition images employ different strategies to communicate a similar message. Photographs of workers handling oversized flagstones or collectively carrying half a capital from the portico outside Hitler's office aggressively employ the body's scale to simultaneously point to the ruin's monumental size, displace the invisible presence of the Führer, and emphasize the presence of new occupants, engaged in the work of 'cutting his architecture down to size.' Despite showing only fragmented, partial views of the space, or not visualizing it at all, angled perspectives, off-setting the architecture's cavernous doorways and

strict orthogonal lines, and tightly framed tableaux of figures loading carts of rubble, stacking massive blocks, or operating machinery give a sense of the architecture's (rapidly diminishing) monumental proportions, while simultaneously rejecting the impression of its purported disciplinary effect. The size of the fragments, themselves, encapsulate the anti-‘Anschauungsbild’ of Speer’s ‘phony monumentality’ and ‘Verschwendete Rüstung.’ Furthermore, in the workers’ hands, demolition appears nothing if not orderly (a stark contrast to its actual implementation, beset by constant interruptions)—blocks stacked in neat rows and bricks passed down the Trümmerbahn display a process of purposeful salvage.



Figures III-36 & III-37 – Workers removing flagstones from the Honor Court, dated 1948 (left). Workers carrying a capital from the portico outside Hitler’s office through the portal on Voßstraße, dated February 1949 (right). Photographer: Bratke. Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-N1114-319
Foto: Donath, Otto | 1949 Frühling

Figure III-38 - Workers piling stone blocks from the New Reich Chancellery, dated Spring 1949. Photographer: Otto Donath. Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-2012-0224-500
Foto: o.Ang. | Februar 1949

Figure III-39 - Structural demolition of the New Chancellery's foundation, dated February 1949. Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-583906
Foto: Rudolph | 12. März 1949

Figure III-40 - Trümmerbahn with workers in front of the Siedler building, dated March 12, 1949. Photographer: Rudolf.
Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-580074
Foto: Köhler, 02.03.1950



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-580074
Foto: Rudolph, 17.03.1950

Figures III-41 & III-42 – Trümmerfrauen at work on the New Chancellery's site, with the Reichstag visible in the background (left), dated 1950 (right image dated March). Photographers: Gustav Köhler (left), Rudolf (right) Source: BA-Bildarchiv

The images impart to the process a symbolic charge, evocative of the construction of a new sovereign architectural order, with the worker visibly positioned at its center. Overall, however, despite the occasional appearance of the Reichstag, it is remarkable how isolated the New Chancellery's site appears from the rest of Berlin. As shown above, Wilhelmplatz's "stärkste Veränderungen" were a constant (if marginal) theme in the SBZ *Tagespresse*—a reprise of the article "Rund um den Wilhelmplatz" in November 1948 in *Neue Zeit* rightly claims that, "Wer heute zu [ihm] kommt, ist erstaunt." In photographs, the site does look truly alien, unrecognizable, marred by both rubble and the process of its removal. Dramatic images of the demolition's more explosive stages are relatively few compared to those showing the eerily peaceful aftermath.⁴⁴¹ The panoramas of and wide angles on the demolition site show a yawning horizon (*Baufreiheit*) framing and, at times, framed by the increasingly diminutive fragments of the structure—the site, however, does not at all look *empty*. Despite the declaration of the "vollständigen Abriß der Hitlerschen 'Reichskanzlei,'" in February 1949, photographs from 1950 show the naked inner wall of the Honor Court, its darkened portico standing like a false wall on a film set.⁴⁴² (Figs. III-43 & III-44) These images suggests that what remained behind what remained of the New Chancellery's fortress-like *Kulisse* (i.e., nothing) was now plainly visible for anyone to see who cared to look—though, judging by the pedestrians in these photographs, few were really that interested.

In isolation, the first photograph is also somewhat misleading; in the other view, darkly framed from within some building across the street, the intact remains of the central block, obscured in the panorama by the nearly straight-on perspective, clearly extend much further into the distance. In another parallel to the New Chancellery's construction, as I show below, its demolition

⁴⁴¹ An American newsreel of the Siedler building's demolition, "The End of the House that Hitler Built," was never released.

⁴⁴² Perhaps accidentally, perhaps not, the scene repeats and revises an early sight from Nazi Berlin's architectural history: Speer's 1:1 models. This practice is explicitly called out in the article "Man der Fehldisposition," fn9.

photographs visually anticipate and symbolically mediate the production of what would imminently become the new urban image of East Germany in Berlin—without, however, revealing it.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-08106-0001
Foto: Schmidtke | September 1950

Figure III-43 - Panorama taken from across Wilhelmstraße, facing west. Street sign in the foreground shows the site already redubbed 'Thälmann-Platz.' Dated September 1950, Photographer: Schmidtke. Source: BA-Bildarchiv



Figure III-44 – View across Wilhelmstraße with the Honor Court portico off-center, with the remains of the central block extending to the edge of the frame. Dated May 1950. Source: ulstein Bild.

In a sense, the demolition photographs establish the building blocks of an ideological architectural narrative before its trajectory had been established and long before this particular part of the process was completed. While the absence of the demolition crews, in spite of the unfinished task of deconstruction, is visually discernible in both of these last two images, the significance of this fact is by no means legible without additional knowledge of historical context. Over the four years intervening between the institution of the Allied occupation and the establishment of the two German states, the development of designs for (East) Berlin's new urban image had to accommodate the shifting political and ideological context of their implementation.⁴⁴³ Within this framework, the New Reich Chancellery's demolition made way for the new center of governance in the Eastern sector. But the announcement of these plans in 1949, concomitant with the marginal celebration of the New Chancellery's demolition, never fully materialized, and were moreover stymied mid-way through completion by other, material and political factors: most notably, the establishment of two sovereign states in East and West.

IV. Turning Away from the Void at the Erstwhile Center of Führertum in East & West Germany

On May 8, 1949, the parliamentary council of the 11 German states of the Western occupation zones laid out the 'basic law' (*Grundgesetz*), in lieu of a finalized constitution, and, two days later, voted to instate Bonn as the provisional capital of the Federal Republic. In September, the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat* met for the first time, in the city chosen specifically

⁴⁴³ State building in all sectors had to accommodate the ruined urban landscape and shared administration. In the war's immediate aftermath, choice in buildings was conditioned by physical limitations—what sites were available and structurally sound in various occupation zones—and the prioritization of other building concerns. In addition to these practical factors, there was also no initial consensus within the East German regime regarding urban planning designs or the stylistic direction for reconstruction in general. The publication of the "16 Fundamentals of Urban Planning," and principles for Berlin's renovation, signed by Kurt Liebknecht and Walter Pisternick in July 1950, reveal a shifted emphasis toward construction of new plazas, boulevards, and monuments. Demps notes, however, that even these documents evince conflicting opinions regarding, among other details, the destruction of the Berlin City Palace. Demps, 207-11. But while the plans for Thälmannplatz underwent serious modifications and reduction in scope over this period, there appears to be no question about the precondition of the New Chancellery's removal.

because it was ‘without history.’⁴⁴⁴ As the Western Allies handed over the reins of state power to newly-elected Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and president Theodor Heuss, reconstruction finished simultaneously on the new, understated modernist architecture of democratic sovereignty in Bonn: renovating Martin Witte’s *Pädagogische Akademie* for use by the *Bundestag* and the Palais Schaumburg as Chancellery.⁴⁴⁵ Consideration of the recent NS past—and what was left of its architectural fragments in Berlin—thus appeared, for the moment, to have officially concluded in the West. While the architectural expression of democracy in the Federal Republic would continue to be haunted by the phantom of the New Chancellery—and reject anything which might resemble it in favor of employing “Demokratie als Bauherr”—the building’s images and, conveniently, its site, were both excluded from West Germany’s new (provisional) political landscape.⁴⁴⁶

In the East, the ongoing process of the New Chancellery’s physical disappearance continued. Its excision from Berlin’s political-architectural landscape by the SBM and, subsequently, the East German government was likewise accompanied by a further commitment to the architectural construction of a future, which would obscure the built image of the Third Reich once and for all. Or, at least, this was the plan in 1948/9—as Demps writes,

“Der vergleichsweise späte Abriss der Ruinen dieses zentralen Entscheidungsortes...zeigt, dass es ganz offensichtlich zunächst nicht in erster Linie um ein Auslöschen von Geschichte, eine Bereinigung der so belasteten Fläche ging, sondern vielmehr um eine

⁴⁴⁴ Wise writes, quoting the new chancellor Konrad Adenauer, “It was precisely this lack of history that made it so appealing. ‘Bonn was a beginning, a city without a past’” Wise, 23. As Tony Judt writes, “In his first official address to the parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany, on September 20th 1949, Konrad Adenauer had this to say about denazification and the Nazi legacy: ‘The government of the Federal Republic, in the belief that many have subjectively atoned for a guilt that was not heavy, is determined where it appears acceptable to do so to put the past behind us.’ There is no doubt that many Germans heartily endorsed this assertion. If denazification aborted, it was because for political purposes Germans had spontaneously ‘denazified’ themselves on May 8th 1945.” Judt, 61.

⁴⁴⁵ The rushed completion of these buildings’ renovations are included in episodes of *Welt im Film*, celebrating the transfer of power. See: *Welt im Film* September 12, 1949. BAFA: WIF 224, and October 3, 1949. BAFA: WIF 227.

⁴⁴⁶ This phrase was famously coined in a 1961 lecture on political architecture by Adolf Arndt, *Demokratie Als Bauherr* (Berlin: Akademie der Künste, 1961). See also: Wefing, 30, 50-1. It bears mentioning that the New Chancellery’s de facto disappearance in the Federal Republic, generally speaking, was countered by its continued *inclusion* on maps of Berlin, which, east of the border, was shown in its historical state. Alain Balfour writes, “The official Senate map of the city of West Berlin is, in many particulars, a complete fiction...the map records the precise outline of every building that existed there before the war and before the division...Among these ghostly traces are the chilling representations of past realities. The [New Reich] Chancellery is present, its grand court precisely marked.” Balfour, 185.

bewusste Hinwendung zu diesem Ort [Wilhelmplatz]...Der Schwerpunkt der nun einsetzenden ideologischen Arbeit zielte auf Berlin als Entscheidungsort der Geschichte, dem die Hauptstadt der Bundesrepublik, Bonn, nichts entgegenzusetzen hätte.”⁴⁴⁷

With the East German Economic Commission housed nearby in the former Aviation Ministry, the plans to reconstruct Wilhelmplatz as Thälmannplatz, were an integral part of larger designs, in which “Die Wilhelmstraße sollte wieder Sitz der Regierung, Zentrum der Macht werden!”⁴⁴⁸ Yet, despite the initial furor of architectural development, e.g. the relocation of the *Haus des Deutschen Volksrates* in the remains of the former Propaganda Ministry and the re-dedication ceremony for Thälmannplatz, held across from the New Chancellery’s mostly completed demolition, the plans for the renewal of Berlin’s former, architectural center of sovereignty would not come to fruition.

After the spurious announcement of the New Chancellery’s successful demolition in February and the founding of East Germany on October 7, 1949, demolition continued until August 1950, when crews were redeployed to dispatch the remains of the City Palace. In the meantime, the Soviet regime had ultimately opted to relocate the city’s symbolic center to its most Prussian heritage site (in line with Stalin’s personal taste), incorporating fragments of the City Palace ruin into the new silhouette of Marx-Engels-Platz on the Spree-Island, re-christened on May 1, 1951. By this time, the City Palace’s ruin was “schon geschleift und [wurde] nun hastig durch jene Tribüne ersetzt, die diesen zentralsten aller Orte Berlins dann 22 Jahre lang verunzieren sollte”—though fragments of the facade were at least incorporated into the new *Stadtratsgebäude*.⁴⁴⁹ In this change of plans, the East German state not only appropriated a great deal more space for the sovereign people (and their leaders) to showcase their new political order and its new architectural representation to the world; they also established some necessary distance

⁴⁴⁷ Demps, 200, 03, see also 00-14.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 203. For an architectural history of this process, which, however, curiously excludes any mention of the New Reich Chancellery’s demolition, see: Azaryahu and Amrani.

⁴⁴⁹ Kil, 120. The selective incorporation is typical of the Soviet strategy of hypotactic demolition. See: Kallis, regarding the reconstruction of Red Square in Moscow, 56-7.

from the erstwhile center of Führertum and, perhaps most importantly, from the increasingly fraught border with its ‘continuation’ in the ‘capitalist-imperialism’ of the Federal Republic. Hence, on Thälmannplatz, “Die Ruineteile der noch nicht beseitigten Reichskanzlei blieben liegen,” until September 1951, when demolition resumed, only to be paused again in Winter, and again picked up the next year, continuing like that until roughly 1956.⁴⁵⁰ By 1952, Berlin’s “Neuplanung” had further shifted away from symbolic state buildings to (equally representational) housing projects; and from the historical center of the city to the “veränderten Plan des »Zentralen Bereichs« von Berlin, der seinen Schwerpunkt eindeutig auf die Stalinallee, die zu bauende Wohnstraße, legte.”⁴⁵¹

The symbolically-inflected demolition photographs analyzed above thus lay in wait, as Berlin’s Soviet reconstruction continued to develop and take shape in real time. As the images languished in personal collections and official state archives, the New Chancellery’s fragments and site eventually disappeared—not with a bang or a whimper—first buried under a parking lot across from Thälmannplatz and later subsumed under the non-space of the Berlin Wall’s *Todesstreifen*. Its finally completed demolition, unsurprisingly, occasioned no public outcry: if the New Chancellery, intact, was an expendable part of Berlin’s Soviet topography, its destruction was likewise justifiably omitted from the official representation of the city’s architectural resurrection.

Since the record of these events, and their deliberation and implementation by the East German authorities, is marked by significant omissions, we can only speculate as to why the New Chancellery’s demolition failed to make the cut for inclusion in the public-facing narrative of *Abriß* and *Neuaufbau*. Perhaps the reusability of materials drew attention to uncomfortable visible

⁴⁵⁰ Demps, 212, 14.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 213.

resonances between supposedly ‘fascist’ and ‘anti-fascist’ representational building styles. Furthermore, although the images constructed an ideological style of demolition photography, mediating a new politicized relationship between bodies and state building(s), perhaps they also protested too much. The symbolic significance of the process, as it appeared in representation, presumed a highly charged object; and its meticulously framed documentation thus in a sense re-mystifies the very trappings of power that the demolition’s visual narrative sought to dismantle.⁴⁵² If there was nothing spectacular about the building, there was no need to make a spectacle of its unbuilding. In any event, the hardening of relations along the East-West, German-German border ultimately precluded any further access to the remains of this built image of NS power.

The building’s disappearance and the neglected reconstruction of its site, however, did not go entirely unnoticed in the West. Though what little mention it did receive points to a favorable disposition toward its destruction, representational marginalization, and consignment to the past. An article in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* from July 1950 repeats the question posed in the *Neue Zeit* three years earlier (now intimating the divergence in political views of reconstruction):

“Was wird daraus? Ob die neuen Machthaber...vorhaben, die riesigen freien Flächen...neue zu bebauen oder ob sie das gesamte Terrain mit seiner planen Weite als Aufmarschgelände und roten Massendemonstrationsplatz in Ihre Dienste nehmen wollen, ist noch unbekannt. Man dürfte richtig vermuten, daß das Gelände der ehemaligen Reichskanzlei dem Erdboden gleich bleiben soll...riesige[] Bauflächen sehen alle, ob in West oder Ost, nach kühnen städtebaulichen Projekten aus. Die Stadt ist jenseits aller schmerzlichen politischen Probleme immer wieder ein Phänomen des in die Zukunft gerichteten Lebenswillens.”⁴⁵³

Both the report of the New Chancellery’s complete absence and the future-oriented disposition with regard to its site and its significance remain, however, somewhat dubious. Months later, in

⁴⁵² Albrecht Koschorke discusses the ‘paradoxical’ effect of such meticulous documentation of the destruction of a deposed sovereign’s trappings of rule in reference to the execution of Louis XVI. “Even the calculated objectivity of the revolutionary measures themselves, the materialistic mockery with which [the new regime] destroyed the *supernaturalité* of the overthrown monarchy, did not spare them the paradoxical effect of being seized and infested by this same supernatural nature. For all the, one could say, vicious profanations, through which they considered the king’s personage, worked in turn like a kind of counter-magic to the spell of kingship...The ensemble of such apotropaic measures unintentionally confirmed the magical power still inherent to the dead king and his props.”, 224-5, my translation. This theme will be taken up again in chapters four and five.

⁴⁵³ “Wüsteneien in Der Weltstadt,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine: Zeitung für Deutschland.*, July 25 1950.

September, a single photo of the central block's 'final' demolition appeared in the *FAZ*, with a caption explaining that, "Die West-Berliner Polizei war von den Sprengungen nicht unterrichtet worden, so daß die Fußgänger von der Gefahrenzone nicht ferngehalten werden konnten."⁴⁵⁴ But keeping pedestrians away from the dangerous, historical sites and representational fragments of the Third Reich was an ongoing task, especially with regard to the fascination held by this particular object. In 1953, another report in the *FAZ* outlined American presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson's arrest by the East German police at the site, "wo er Fotoaufnahmen machte...Die Gruppe konnte ihre Fahrt erst fortsetzen, nachdem die Volkspolizei die Filme aus den Kameras entnommen hatte."⁴⁵⁵ The ideological message contained in this anti-representation of the New Chancellery's deconstruction and resulting void could not be clearer: there was nothing to see here.

Unable to fully erase the Nazis' representational, architectural re-inscription and cooptation of Berlin's governmental quarter, the SBM would at least control access to its historical site and have the last word on its significance. If the previous meanings projected in the New Chancellery's representational mediation could not be divested from the architecture or its historical location in the city, then these medial fragments would be delaminated from their physical, referential material, and both building and (un)building images would be left to languish in obscurity and the archives. But while the space of Führertum and Hitler's downfall, the New Chancellery and Führerbunker, were now visible *only* as a void in Germany's physical and political topography, their fragments did not stay buried for long.

V. *Coda: Roberto Rossellini's Cinematic Resurrection of the New Chancellery's Ruin*

As I have argued, despite its initial significance as a site of symbolic orientation in the

⁴⁵⁴ Photo in, *Frankfurter Allgemeine : Zeitung für Deutschland.*, September 1 1950.

⁴⁵⁵ "Der Ausnahmezustand in Ost-Berlin Aufgehoben. Stevenson Vor Der Ehemaligen Reichskanzlei Von Volkspolizisten Vorübergehend Festgenommen.," *Frankfurter Allgemeine: Zeitung für Deutschland.*, July 13 1953.

textual and cinematic representation of the Allied narrative of the war's conclusion and the ideologically-inflected photographic documentation of its demolition, the New Chancellery's deconstruction was hardly a highly-publicized media event; nor even a singly identifiable moment. Where it did appear in the media, information was fragmented, scattered, contradictory, multiple phases of reuse, dereliction, and demolition all visible at once across various stages of implementation, interruption, repetition, and (staggered) completion. It is impossible to pin down an exact moment of erasure in the New Chancellery's seemingly endless, architectural erosion. But disappear it did, eventually. For now, let it suffice to say that its physical absence neither diminished its fascination and stemmed the flow of tourists to the site; nor did its unbuilding bury the multiple layers of its representational images and symbolic meanings, which had accumulated over its 10 year lifespan as monument *and* ruin. But let's return, in closing, to late summer 1949—as demolition was temporarily halted and a phantom image of the intact, monumental ruin first reappeared on the scene in the Federal Republic in Roberto Rossellini's *Germany, Year Zero*.⁴⁵⁶

As touched on above, in August 1947, Rossellini arrived in Berlin to film in the SBZ, including in the New Chancellery's ruin, where non-structural deconstruction had just begun.⁴⁵⁷ Famous as an early pioneer of neorealism, Rossellini worked with amateur actors, scouted on location.⁴⁵⁸ As described by the crew, the environment in the city was striking, "like entering a fortress occupied only a short while ago, with the war ended only the day before," rather than two years earlier.⁴⁵⁹ Somewhat counterintuitively, the affective intensity in neorealist film is

⁴⁵⁶ Roberto Rossellini, "Deutschland Im Jahre Null; Germany Year Zero," (Rome, Paris, Berlin: Tevere Film, UGC, Sadfi, Salvo D'Angelo Poduzione, DEFA, 1947/1948).

⁴⁵⁷ *Germany, Year Zero* was famously filmed without a proper script, using instead a 15 page treatment, which had been translated into German by the director's close friend, Marlene Dietrich; the production had French financing and contracted equipment and staff from the German production company Sadfi. Tag Gallagher, *The Adventures of Roberto Rossellini* (New York: Da Capo P., 1998), 235.

⁴⁵⁸ Neorealism employs a "hybrid aesthetic," merging documentary film strategies with dreamy, expressive visuals and emotional staging, evincing what was, "For Rossellini, the purpose of realism...in its most reduced definition, finding images that convey the experience of suffering so as to avoid its perpetuation or repetition." Gemünden, 116.

⁴⁵⁹ Gallagher, 238. The description is notably similar to those of the New Chancellery from Spender and Trevor-Roper.

transmitted through a detached, depersonalized perspective, often effected through the “concentration on a photographed landscape” and/or isolated individuals.⁴⁶⁰ It thus combines “photographic authenticity” with “ideological fabrication,” in order that “new layers of historical memory [may be] exposed to the surface and with them the possibility of new representations of the city in [or just following] wartime.”⁴⁶¹ The rawness of Berlin’s ruin landscape and the fresh psychic wounds of the Germans are the focus of Rossellini’s wandering, cinematographic gaze.⁴⁶²

The film follows its young protagonist, 12-year-old Edmund, on a series of aimless, peripatetic tours through Berlin’s ruins, where he lives with his family—his sickly father, older sister and brother, the latter in hiding as he refuses to turn himself in, as he had fought, “bis zum letzten Ende,” and is now concerned about maltreatment by the occupying authorities. Thus short a ration card, Edmund roams the city looking for work and food; as he does so, he bumps into a former teacher (an obvious unrepentant Nazi and pedophile), who employs the boy and a number of other children as his proxies on the black market. Later in the film, he also advises Edmund that, “the weak must be left to die to support the strong,” which the boy understands to mean killing his father, which he does, and then (spoiler alert) kills himself by leaping from an upper floor of a ruined building. A little less than halfway through the film, among Edmund’s black market errands, he is instructed to go to the New Chancellery, where he will find “bestimmt einen Haufen Amis oder Tommies oder andere Dumme,” to whom he may sell a record album of a speech from Hitler. The epicenter of Berlin’s ground zero in *Germany, Year Zero*—that is, the New Chancellery—thus lies at the middle of this neorealist “Martian landscape” explored by the “boy of the future.”⁴⁶³

⁴⁶⁰ David Forgacs, “Rossellini’s Pictorial Histories,” *Film Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (2011): 26.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁴⁶² Or, rather, his partner Lizzani’s. Lizzani directed much of the shooting around Potsdamer Platz, including the famous sequence of Edmund wandering through the ruins of the Matthiaskirche, surrounded by the empty site left by demolition for Runder Platz. Gallagher, 243.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 247.

What new layers of meaning become visible—or, as it turns out, audible—in Rossellini’s cinematic resurrection of the New Chancellery’s ruin?

Not unlike in “Die Alliierten in Berlin,” the New Chancellery is one of the only identifiable landmarks shown in the film and the only interior explored and articulated by the camera in a detailed sequence.⁴⁶⁴ We do not, however, recapitulate the tour through the building’s diplomatic route, nor does the scene emphasize visual styles and framing appropriated from NS propaganda. Rather, the sequence riffs on visual tropes of the New Chancellery’s *postwar* representation. This historical context is already thematically evident: the ruin is used as a black market, populated with sightseeing American GIs (presumably, an actual tour group of them), primarily interested in walking away with some impressive souvenirs and photographs. Aesthetically speaking, the architecture’s ruin is (at least initially) framed by the Allied gaze and reconstructed following the movement of foreign bodies as they traverse exterior and interior spaces. But while the narrative sequence recognizably draws on the architecture’s post-45 representation, analyzed at length in this chapter, it further manipulates the material from this archive in several, crucial ways. Specifically, it reinscribes the New Chancellery through sustained visual attention to the ruin or, more exactly, through the presence of new bodies within the ruin and their obvious scopic fascination with it, and through its acoustic re-contextualization achieved in montage.

We begin in familiar territory: the establishing shot of the sequence is a panorama surveying the rubble strewn across Wilhelmplatz, panning from the ruined Ordenpalais to the facade of the Siedler building. (Fig. III-45). From there, a cut brings us to the rear garden, where the camera follows a group of American GIs, led by a tour guide offering information in English,

⁴⁶⁴ The only other identifiable interiors, the Zoologischer Garten train station and the Matthiaskirche, appear in scenes with few cuts and much simpler spatial and narrative structures: Edmund and his black market mentor, Jo, sell an empty packet of soap and run; Edmund wanders through the ruin of the church while an organ plays for no one. All of the interiors of Edmund’s family’s apartment were not filmed on location but, rather, in a sound studio in Italy.

to the emergency exit of the Führerbunker. The guide gestures to, “Hitler’s air raid shelter,” and points out “where they burned the bodies of Hitler and Eva Braun;” he continues, “I wonder whether you’d like to take a photo? Or I’ll take a photo of you first.” As the guide groups the GIs together, partially offscreen, the camera pans slightly away from the previous framing—which had mimicked photographs of the bunker’s exit from 1947, just before the first attempts at its demolition, (Fig. III-28) though with tighter framing (likely due to the use of a handheld 35mm camera, rather than a wider-angle lens for architectural photography). (Figs. III-46a & III-46b).



Figure III-45 – Panoramic establishing shot of the New Chancellery sequence in Germany Year Zero, recombined by the author. The camera’s pan moves from left to right in the film.



Figures III-46a & III-46b – Screen captures of introductory shot of GIs strolling through the New Chancellery’s rear garden. (left) American GIs shown the Führerbunker by the tour guide. (right)

The shot then centers on the cylindrical exhaust tower, framed by both the ruin in the background and the bodies of the tour group in the foreground. (Fig. III-46c) Hence, while the Allies' gaze and bodies continue to frame the building, the camera's gaze, on the other hand, contains and runs parallel to but does not exactly share in or inhabit their perspective.



Figure III-46c – American GIs grouped together for a photograph, with the Führerbunker and New Chancellery in background.

Before the shutter of the tour guide's camera clicks, the film's tour of the New Chancellery's ruin—already revised to begin at the end of the spatial narrative constructed in Allied newsreels—continues to diverge from the familiar route through the building, in part, simply because it *continues*. The scene cuts two American GIs wandering through the pockmarked Honor Court, gazing up toward the cornice-line, which mostly exceeds the image frame. (Fig. III-47) While we clearly occupy a different part of the building, the focal point of the GIs' interest, however,—that is, the site of Hitler's death—is also transposed into this space. With their backs

to the camera, one GI points to a charred corner of the Honor Court, quipping “That’s the place Hitler was burned,” the other responds, “What, through there?,” “Yap,” replies the first. (Fig. III-48) Are the Americans simply too ignorant to recognize that they are in an entirely different part of the building? Or are these different soldiers from the earlier group, on their own tour through the New Chancellery? Or is the entire ruin simply saturated by the symbolic presence of Hitler’s absent body? We don’t learn the answer, for the GIs simply mosey out of the frame; with their exit, the camera abandons their perspective, cutting to Edmund, dreaming of the future.

Still in the Honor Court, Edmund lounges with one of his black market companions, Christl, on the remains of a Red Army tank and muses, “Wenn ich groß bin, dann kaufe ich mir ein Auto.” (Fig. III-49) She replies, annoyed, “So lange kann ich nicht warten” (though Edmund won’t have the opportunity to fulfill her demand, anyways). Like the GIs’ craning necks, the children’s bodies, dwarfed by the rubble and fragments, emphasize the space’s dimensions. The exaggerated scale, in fact, becomes the subject of a monumental, visual gag. As Edmund is called by his underworld-mentor, Jo, our tiny protagonist dashes up the portico steps two-at-a-time, barely taller than the base of the columns to either side. Still seeming to take forever owing to the wide, static shot, he is reprimanded to “Komm schnell!” (Fig. III-50) While his movement determines the location of the next cut, the camera does not follow his path through the building—rather, it arrives before him, waiting with the GIs as the boys hurry downstairs to some ill-defined space in the interior. (Fig. III-51) Here, suddenly and strangely in one of the New Chancellery’s non-representational rooms, Rossellini’s filmic reconstruction of the ruin totally diverges from its predecessors; not only through the exploration of otherwise unseen spaces, but also through the innovative use of sound to re-inscribe space, overlaying historical acoustics onto present images.



Figure III-47 – Two American GIs crane their necks to gaze at the cornice line of the Honor Court



Figure III-48 – One of the GIs points out, erroneously, the place where Hitler's body was burned.



Figure III-49 – Edmund and Christl in the Honor Court.



Figure III-50 – Edmund races up the steps of the Honor Court's portico into the New Chancellery's interior.



Figure III-51 – Edmund and Jo play the record of Hitler’s speech for two American GIs in the bowels of the New Reich Chancellery.

As the needle hits vinyl, the sound of Hitler’s unmistakable bark resounds throughout the space, playing part of his last Beer Hall speech from November 8, 1943, mid-dramatic build-up. The boys look down at the record and then back, expectantly, at the GIs, seemingly unaffected by the content or emotional intensity of the Führer’s speech. The acousmatic voice rings out over the soundtrack, as Hitler insists, “Ich bin stolz darauf, der Führer dieser Nation zu sein, nicht nur in glücklichen Tagen, sondern besonders auch in schweren.” As the scene cuts to the Marble Gallery, the voice continues, “und ich bin glücklich, daß in solchen Tagen der Nation von mir ausgeht [sic!] der Kraft.” (Fig. III-52) The space, shot from a familiar angle but stripped of marble, is occupied by an elderly man holding hands with a toddler, who both gaze up in wonder at their surroundings. However, whether they are marveling at the altered space—the handiwork of the non-structural deconstruction—or searching for the sound’s source is unclear, since we cannot determine their position in the building relative to Edmund and the GIs. Moreover, as Hitler’s

voice swells, continuing from the line above, “...und Vertrauen gehen kann,” the shot cuts again, this time to an elevated panoramic shot of an unidentified building ruin. (Figs. III-53a-e). Again, the connection between spaces remains indeterminate—only Hitler’s voice produces continuity between locations. As it continues, “daß ich das ganze deutsche Volk aufrichten darf, und aufrichten kann,” the diegetic sound seems to pervade the New Chancellery, resounding from its bowels, and radiating outward to cover an ever-larger swath of Berlin’s rubble landscape. The camera’s pan drifts over the rubble, finally coming to rest on a roofless, charred building facade, as Hitler insists, “...daß ich Ihnen sagen kann, ‘Deutsches Volk, sei völlig beruhigt, was auch kommen mag, wir werden es meistern! Und am Ende steht der Sieg!’” With this last phrase, the film cuts back to the pair in the Marble Gallery, who look at each other and then continue on their way, as the crowd erupts in cheering and applause over the soundtrack.



Figure III-52 – Old man and toddler in the stripped Marble Gallery



Figure II-53a – Establishing shot of the pan over unidentified ruin, continued in following images



Figure III-53b



Figure III-53c



Figure III-53d



Figure III-53e

As our German ‘Father Time’ and ‘Baby New Year’ or, rather, year one, shuffle and toddle out of the shot, respectively, the recording abruptly cuts out and a horizontal wipe brings us out of the building and back to Wilhelmplatz.⁴⁶⁵ There Edmund’s teacher, peers out from behind a pile of rubble, awaiting his minions. Despite this return to familiar territory, the preceding sequence reconstructs and redefines the New Chancellery as a postwar space and symbol—deviating sharply from its NS representation in propaganda, while suturing its ruin into Berlin’s rubble landscape.

Further, while invoking the immediate postwar’s imagery and visual aesthetic, the contrast between overlapping sound and image introduces a temporal disruption: interjecting the past into the cinematic space of the (historical) present. The film allows what can no longer be seen (Hitler,

⁴⁶⁵ In addition to Rossellini’s innovative recombination of past/present sound/image in montage, the film’s visual aesthetics and techniques, along with its subject matter, are distinctly modern(ist), continuously emphasizing and calling attention to the historical context and material technologies of reproduction. Both NS cinema and neorealism employ dream-like aesthetics and narratives, but they diverge sharply in the self-reflexive character of the latter.

the fanatical belief of the Volk) to still be heard and felt, as its fragments are preserved (and manipulated) in representation—e.g. recording from 1943, set against visuals from 1947, staged as 1945, and played onscreen in 1949.⁴⁶⁶ The sounds are at once diegetic and not; attached to one space and overlaid onto another, where their source is not visibly present.⁴⁶⁷ The effect is disturbing, uncanny in how it suggests the permeation of the ruined present by the unwelcome artifacts and memories of the past, anchored to the space of the New Reich Chancellery. Although this is a moment of disjuncture, because of the montage’s recombination of material, the “disconnection [staged] here between ideology and its reception,” not only suggests the rejection of that ideology, delivered in Hitler’s voice.⁴⁶⁸ Rather, the scene also indicts its favorable, historical reception and points to the suppression of this past in the present, signaled by the sudden, suspect disappearance of the *other voices* contained on the recording. The cheering crowd therefore also invisibly permeates the rubble landscape, heard but not seen, simultaneously everywhere and nowhere—but, as snidely implied in the cut to Edmund’s teacher on Wilhelmplatz, maybe the Nazis, and ‘murderers among us,’ now turning a profit in Hitler’s absence, weren’t so hard to spot after all.⁴⁶⁹ Further, the scene reminds the viewer of the artifice of film, and its ideological utility and revelatory quality, which can be used for good or ill.

To summarize, Rossellini’s cinematic representation of the New Chancellery’s ruin in *Germany, Year Zero* exploits and reimagines the space through its postwar archive, and employs

⁴⁶⁶ Rossellini had, in fact, developed neorealism’s novel visual-acoustic, recombinatory strategies while still producing fascist films for Mussolini. In her analysis of *Luciano Serra, pilota* (1938), Ruth Ben-Ghiat describes “moments of disconnect between sound and image, and camera work that calls attention to the cinematographic apparatus, [working] against the illusionistic qualities that were the aim of classical cinema.” Ben-Ghiat, 253. The point is not deception but, rather, to highlight the act of artistic production accomplished with authentic, profilmic elements: “to call attention to the man behind the camera [the Auteur] and the power of the [his] gaze...[to initiate] a reflection about the ethical dimension of the acts of watching and producing images.” Ibid., 254, 7. These disorienting “disjunctures” and “rejoinings,” like the one described above, communicate their ideological messages as a sensual experience. Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ “The camera never returns to the speaker, who is left in the everywhere-and-nowhere realm of the acousmatic with respect to the concreteness of [the] listeners.” Ibid., 255.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ Profiteering by unrepentant Nazis is also a central plotline of Staudte’s rubble film, *Die Mörder sind unter uns*.

it as a site of innovative, mediated reconstruction of the past and ideological critique. The sequence appropriates the building's visibility from newsreels and radically transforms its symbolic function. It incorporates the Allied point of view (and viewfinder) but does not share in it. Instead, the camera establishes its own, detached perspective on the 'authentic' historical material. Any semblance of bodily 'sovereignty' is absent from the space—though it echoes through its walls—rather, it frames a scene of relative freedom, even lawlessness. Nevertheless, the building seems permeated by Hitler's absence, a site of scopic and auditory fascination, conjuring the past into the space of the present, which radiates over Berlin's rubble landscape. The New Chancellery operates as a stage, maybe a (re)construction site, for the film's recombinatory recontextualization of image, sound, and ideology.⁴⁷⁰ It is also, undeniably, a cinematic space of memory. For its ruin, as it appears in *Germany, Year Zero*, was already long gone from Berlin, by the film's release in 1949.

Now, finally, how did the New Chancellery's physical disappearance alter the legibility of its meaning or impact its cinematic representation (and reception), as it appeared within the media landscape of the early Federal Republic? For one thing: the changed political context of Germany dramatically limited the visibility of Rossellini's film in East and West. *Germany, Year Zero* was not released in East Germany at all.⁴⁷¹ In the West, it premiered with a single viewing in Munich in 1952 and was not shown again until a televised version was broadcast in 1978.⁴⁷² In fact, the West German response was more virulent—an aggressively negative review by film critic Hans Habe from 1949 outlines a few salient critiques.

Published in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Habe's review describes it as "ein erschüttender

⁴⁷⁰ The 'construction site' of film is the terminology often employed for and by Alexander Kluge with regard to his cinematic practice and materialist program with regard to media. This will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁴⁷¹ Staudte's DEFA film *Europa wird wieder lachen*, mentioned in the articles and featured *Der Augenzeuge*, would likewise, never be produced.

⁴⁷² Gemünden, 116. Gallagher, 245. Not coincidentally, just following the release of the two films that will be discussed in chapters v and vi.

Film...weil es erschütternd wäre, wenn die Welt das neue Deutschland durch die Brille Rossellinis sähe.”⁴⁷³ According to Habe, Rossellini, the darling of the post-fascist, European film scene, was digging up the remains of a barely-buried past and dumping its fragments into a present, whose gaze was firmly and determinedly fixed on the future. Especially because the film posits and indicts the corruption of the defeated Germans, Habe defensively rejects the combination of documentary style footage and emotional ideology as the “Tarnung” of year zero—a cinematic effect sharpened by the undeniably powerful images of the ruins. The review points several times to the supposed clash between Rossellini’s particular style of retrospective representation and its context in the present. Habe writes, “Es war das ‘Jahr Null’...in dem Sinne, in dem Null gleichzeitig Ende und *Anfang* ist...Für Rossellini aber gab es nur das Ende.” He thus neglects to include reconstruction as the nascent future, visible in the ruins, focusing only on the historical conditions that led to Germany’s ruination (the very ones typically excluded in rubble photography’s visual culture).

Further, Habe’s main problem is that the film is made by an outsider—he thus appeals to the necessity of a specifically *German* authority and testimony, necessary to reproduce this history.

“So war Deutschland im Jahre Null nämlich nicht – und das kann ich bezeugen, der ich es sah, während Signor Rossellini...noch allerhand Mühe hatte, den Besatzungsmächten und Italiens tapferen Untergrund-Kämpfern seine eben erst eingebüßte Begeisterung für den Faschismus zu interpretieren.”

The reconstruction of this (emotionally charged) history, using the painful memories of Berlin’s ruins was not the task of some meddling reformed Italian fascist, who “pflückt in dieser Film nicht Blumen von dem Grab einer Nation...er erbricht sich in den Sarg.” Habe thus writes in closing,

“Der wirkliche Film des ‘Jahres Null’ muß aber aus Deutschland kommen. Wenn sein Realismus die Seelen und nicht die Wände umfaßt [especially not the walls of Speer’s ‘entseelte Architektur’]...wenn er zeigt, daß im Gehäuse der deutschen Uhr wieder ein Herz tickt, dann kann er nicht nur politisch, sondern, was mehr ist, auch künstlerisch gutmachen, was das Rossellinische Schattenspiel verdorben hat....”

⁴⁷³ Hans Habe, “Rossellini Sieht Deutschland,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, September 28 1949.

This cinematic reconciliation with the past, however, is consigned by Habe to the future and, further, required a new shooting location. Berlin's now invisible ruins couldn't be used to visualize West Germany's new beginning and national history—but not because they were befouled by Rossellini's camera. By late 1949, no longer the capital, Berlin was rapidly becoming inaccessible.

In Rossellini's film, we may thus observe both the persistence of multiple layers of history contained in the New Chancellery's archival images and a remarkable plasticity in its cinematic use to uncover and recombine fragments of memory in new—and deeply uncomfortable—ways. Yet, as illustrated by the film's total lack of a reception in both Germanys, the fact remained that just because new meanings were made possible in the New Chancellery's cinematic resurrection, it offered an increasingly less than obligatory focal point for the German public. Indeed, the ruins of the NS past would continue to remain invisible throughout the Adenauer era—only to come roaring back onscreen a decade later in the inaugural, cinematic protest of the next generation.

CHAPTER IV

‘Remembering, Repeating, & Working Through’ the NS Cinematic-Architectural Archive: After-Images of the New Reich Chancellery in West German Film in the Adenauer Era

I. Prelude: The Absence & After-Image of the NS Past in the Bundesrepublik (BRD)

After Hitler’s defeat in 1945 and the founding of East and West Germanys in 1949, the New Reich Chancellery vanished, demolished by the Soviet government, taking the rest of Berlin’s historic architecture of sovereignty from the Weimar and Wilhelmine eras along with it.⁴⁷⁴ In his 12 years on Wilhelmplatz, Hitler utterly transformed Germany’s state architecture—especially its representational image. The scenographic spaces of Speer’s New Chancellery formed the symbolic heart of NS ideology; center stage for the embodied performance, bureaucratic mediation, and technological reproduction of Führertum; at once concealing and showcasing Germany’s imperial future and the articulation of Hitler’s power in the state. After his death in the Führerbunker, the New Chancellery’s monumental ruin became an emblem of Germany’s defeat in postwar Berlin, occupied by the Red Army and toured incessantly by the Allied victors. Images of the ruin and its new inhabitants circulated in newsreels, photographs, and narratives, until the building itself disintegrated under the Soviet’s construction of Thälmannplatz and, then, the Berlin Wall’s Dead-Zone (*Todesstreifen*). Only with the last major aftershock of the Third Reich’s collapse

⁴⁷⁴ As explained in the previous chapter, the New Chancellery’s structural demolition began in February 1949 but was halted several times; above ground structures were cleared from the lot by early 1950, but work continued into 1953.

(reunification), would Germany again be confronted with the physical, architectural fragments of NS sovereignty, the buried remains of Hitler's final retreat. The visual memory of the symbolic-spatial center and representational architecture of Führertum, however, was not destroyed along with the physical structure. Rather, images of the New Chancellery, in use, intact, and in ruins—in other words, spanning the dense archive of ideological representations produced over its brief lifespan—continually returned to haunt the postwar landscape over the following decades, albeit mainly on the Western side of the German-German border.

This chapter argues that the repeated reappearance of and reengagement with the Third Reich's architectural images formed a significant component of the memorialization and 'working through' of the Nazi past in the Federal Republic, especially as it transpired on film—a fact that has been surprisingly overlooked in scholarship on this period.⁴⁷⁵ It further claims that the New Chancellery, though initially marginal to the cinematic reproduction and confrontation with the NS past, constituted a privileged symbolic object for the representation of Berlin's destruction and the loss of the Führer, which both increasingly came into view at the heart of West Germany's mediated landscape of memory over the 1960s.

In the accepted narrative of *Wiederaufbau* and *Wirtschaftswunder*, modernist, international style architecture was employed to bury, erase, and repress the memory of Nazism and its built representations in the BRD.⁴⁷⁶ Especially in the capital "city without a past," Bonn, West Germany's sovereign architecture was overtly de-symbolicized; the nation freed of both the

⁴⁷⁵ The term *Durcharbeiten* comes from Freud's 1914 essay, "Remembering, Repeating, Working Through," and was adopted in modified form, *Aufarbeiten*, by Theodor Adorno in his 1959 essay "The Meaning of Working through the Past." Sigmund Freud, "Erinnern, Wiederholen, Durcharbeiten. Weitere Ratschläge Zur Technik Der Psychoanalyse Ii," in *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Anna Freud (London: Imago Pub. Co., 1914); Adorno. The process of 'working through,' identified by Freud and appropriated by Adorno, is addressed in detail below. The history of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is well researched. Key studies include: Frei; Aleida Assmann and Ute Frevert, *Geschichtsvergessenheit - Geschichtsversessenheit: Vom Umgang Mit Deutschen Vergangenheiten Nach 1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1999); Assmann.

⁴⁷⁶ The now-canonical account of this architectural erasure is articulated in Sebald. More detailed and historical accounts of Berlin's reconstruction, in East and West, and the negative influence of the Nazis' representational architecture on the construction and style of the BRD's state buildings can be found in: Wefing., and Wise.

architectural center and history of the Third Reich; the image of Hitler and his buildings rejected.⁴⁷⁷ In reality, however, physical remnants of the NS topography posed a consistent problem for local communities as they grappled with the decision to demolish or preserve NS buildings, which continued to draw Allied tourists and, increasingly, neo-Nazis. Further, the intermedial fragments and mythical narratives that constituted National Socialism's *architectural* archive and framed the image of its embodied leader gradually reappeared in circulation in West German media.⁴⁷⁸ Images of Hitler's spaces of power—especially those that were destroyed—constituted a central component of the political and aesthetic debates over the memory of the NS past, its repression, and its representation, which began to gain traction in the late 1950s and continued to rage throughout the 1960s and -70s.⁴⁷⁹

From the late 1950s on, against the competing narratives of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* and the *Schlussstrichdebatte*, a psychoanalytic framework dominated leftist-aligned, critical discourse concerning the Third Reich's history in the BRD. In Freud's famous account of "Erinnern, Wiederholen und Durcharbeiten," 'working through' is the result of a therapeutic process, by which the analyst assists the patient in filling in gaps in his or her memory, uncovering repressed fragments of past experiences that continue, unacknowledged, to shape behavior in the present. The analyst must first determine what the patient has 'forgotten' by identifying resistances, bringing them to the patient's attention, and tracing them back to past events

⁴⁷⁷ Wise, 23. For a contemporaneous plea for the development of a new, democratic, representational style for public buildings in the BRD, see: Arndt.

⁴⁷⁸ In addition to the films analyzed in this chapter, the exhibition "Bauen in Berlin, 1900-1964," held in 1964, was the first architectural exhibition to feature any NS buildings, specifically a model of the North-South-Axis. This marginal inclusion and reduction of the NS building program to its most ideologically charged (and hardly representative) project is noted by Anna Teut in her study, , 7.

⁴⁷⁹ This chapter deals exclusively with the beginning of this process; its continuation through the late 1960s and 1970s is analyzed in the two concluding chapters of this dissertation.

(remembering).⁴⁸⁰ In order to help the patient stop ‘acting out’ the past, the analyst facilitates the reconstruction of the original emotional experience in the “playground” of therapy (repeating), “allowing the patient...to become more conversant with this [now conscious] resistance,” and leading them, ideally, to revise their memories and reconcile themselves with what has been repressed (working through).⁴⁸¹ This process risks, indeed *requires* getting close to painful past experiences, in order to reactivate their affective power, and presumes further repetition over a lengthy period of failure. Ten years after the BRD’s founding, public discourse had still failed to approach or confront, let alone master the resistance to memories of the NS past.

In his famous essay from 1959, “The Meaning of Working through the Past,” Theodor Adorno invoked and modified Freud’s terminology, to argue that the “defensiveness against guilt...so absurdly associated with the thought of working through the past” in the BRD had blocked any chance at reconciliation, tending instead toward “the destruction of memory,” and an even more pervasive generalized “loss of history.”⁴⁸² Drawing on the results of the Frankfurt Institute’s postwar *Gruppenexperiment*, Adorno characterizes the resistance to the past as a neurotic emotional response: a disavowal and repression of fascist history, especially the memories of its victims, replaced by a crass assertion of Germans as the *real* victims of Hitler, the Soviets,

⁴⁸⁰ Sigmund Freud, “Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through,” in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Vol. 12 (1911-1913)*, ed. Sigmund Freud, James Strachey, and Anna Freud (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, 1958), 147-52.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 154-5. The end phase of this process is notoriously nebulous and not described in detail by Freud.

⁴⁸² Adorno, 89, 91. Adorno underscores the loss of history in “Empirical findings, for example, that the younger generation often does not know who Bismarck and Kaiser Wilhelm I were.” *Ibid.*, 91. The translator’s notes for this essay explain the “common meaning” of the terms *Durcharbeiten*, used by Freud, and *Aufarbeiten*, used by Adorno. The latter suggests “working through in the sense of dispatching tasks that have built up and demand attention...It thus conveys the sense of getting through an unpleasant obligation...and [was employed by] some politicians and historians...in reference to the need to reappraise, or ‘master’ the past.” *Ibid.*, 337-8, fn. 1. A notable and early example of this more dismissive disposition comes from Chancellor Adenauer in 1949, “In his first official address to the parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany, on September 20th 1949, Konrad Adenauer had this to say about denazification and the Nazi legacy: ‘The government of the Federal Republic, in the belief that many have subjectively atoned for a guilt that was not heavy, is determined where it appears acceptable to do so to put the past behind us.’ There is no doubt that many Germans heartily endorsed this assertion. If denazification aborted, it was because for political purposes Germans had spontaneously ‘denazified’ themselves on May 8th 1945.” Judt, 61.

and the Allied forces.⁴⁸³ Memories of the NS generation thus pointedly excluded Nazism's overwhelming public support; its inflation and affirmation "national vanity."⁴⁸⁴ This elision, Adorno claims, was responsible for the public's lack of identification with democracy as a political system—rather than an instrument of economic prosperity—and for the persistence of anti-Semitic and anti-Soviet sentiments, complicating international relations during the Cold War.⁴⁸⁵ Since "the objective conditions of society that engendered fascism continue to exist," protecting against its potential resurgence required confronting this history head-on, "through a lucid consciousness breaking its power to fascinate."⁴⁸⁶ Although Adorno's call for 'working through' was ultimately directed at eliminating fascism's structural causes (which persisted through the truncated process of denazification), he argues, crucially, that its first steps should be *representational*.⁴⁸⁷ "Essentially it is a matter of the *way in which the past is made present*; whether one remains at the level of reproach or whether one withstands the horror by having the strength to comprehend even the incomprehensible."⁴⁸⁸ The capacity to 'withstand the horror' of NS violence, and thereby overcome resistance and defensiveness with regard to its memories, Adorno concludes, could be

⁴⁸³ He describes: "defensive postures where one is not attacked, intense affects where they are hardly warranted by the situation, an absence of affect in the face of the gravest matters, not seldom simply a repression of what is known or half-known...one may assume that there is a relation between the attitude of 'not having known anything about it' and an impassive and apprehensive indifference" to the suffering of others, namely, Germany's victims. Adorno, 90.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁴⁸⁵ These topics would be taken up by Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich in their study from 1967, addressed in the next chapter. Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich.

⁴⁸⁶ Adorno, 98, 89.

⁴⁸⁷ Wolfgang Benz describes denazification as a necessary compromise between discrimination against and rehabilitation of former Nazis, since "Der Aufbau einer demokratischen Gesellschaft wäre mit Millionen von Parias nicht möglich gewesen." Faced with growing dissatisfaction and defensiveness, and its instrumentalization as a tool of denunciation by German citizens against their neighbors, "Ab Frühjahr 1948 kam die Entnazifizierung, infolge von Kaltem Krieg und Normalisierung der Lebensumstände, in der US-Zone hastig zum Ende. Diskreditiert blieb das Säuberungsverfahren in jedem Fall, auch deshalb, weil überall Fachleute durchkamen, die wieder für Funktionen im Wiederaufbau gebraucht wurden," appearing to most contemporaries as a "mißglückter Versuch, mit der Vergangenheit von 8,5 Millionen Deutschen, die Mitglied der NSDAP gewesen waren, abzurechnen." "Entnazifizierung Und Strafjustiz - Zur Aufarbeitung Der Nationalsozialistischen Vergangenheit," in *Auschwitz-Prozess 4 Ks 2/63 Frankfurt Am Main*, ed. Irmtrud Wojak and Fritz Bauer Institut (Köln: Snoeck, 2004), 118.

⁴⁸⁸ 100, my emphasis.

developed through the conscious re-use of propaganda “as a kind of vaccine,” exposing Germans to traces of their still-held-but-disavowed beliefs.⁴⁸⁹

As noted above, architecture and its reproduction in visual media were both central to Germany’s past identification with and support of the Hitler-regime, and linked to the destruction and denial of this past in the postwar era. That is, during the Third Reich and for decades following its defeat, imagery of ruins and rubble was employed to symbolically assert German victimhood and as a reproach of Soviet and Allied violence.⁴⁹⁰ Further, the BRD continued simultaneously ‘acting out’ and erasing the past in the 1950s and early -60s, architecturally speaking, by employing former NS architects and undemocratic building practices alike as they blanketed the Third Reich’s erstwhile-topography in the functionalist style of international modernism.⁴⁹¹ While employees of Speer’s office of *Generalbauinspektion* like Rudolf Wolters, Konstanty Gutschow, and Friedrich Tamms were initially banned from work on the *Wiederaufbau* by Allied authorities, necessity dictated that they were quickly ‘rehabilitated’ to assist in this process—aided in part by the support of modernist architects like Paul Bonatz.⁴⁹² The visibility of NS architects’ continued

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., 100.

⁴⁹⁰ See, for example, the discussion of ruin photography in chapter iii.

⁴⁹¹ Competition among West German cities for the status of the capital, which was only provisionally settled, resulted in often undemocratic and unauthorized construction of public buildings to rally support for the cause, including in Bonn. The issue was fraught enough that “the Bundestag imposed a ban on the construction of all public buildings which remained in force until 1965.” See: Klaus von Beyme, “Architecture and Democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany,” *International political science review; Revue internationale de science politique* 12, no. 12 (1991): 139. The use of international style construction, however, was widespread, ranging from its use for public buildings, as in Bonn, to housing. See: Alexander Mitscherlich’s critique of Frankfurt’s suburbanization and its negative effect on the facilitation of democratic socialization in: Alexander Mitscherlich, *Die Unwirtlichkeit Unserer Städte: Anstiftung Zum Unfrieden* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1965). And Wolf Jobst Siedler’s ironic critique of the loss of Berlin’s historic character through modern construction in his photo-book .

⁴⁹² Wolters was Speer’s second in command at the GBI, responsible for overseeing implementation of construction on the North-South-Axis, later head of the ‘Arbeitsstab für den Wiederaufbau bombenzerstörter Städte’; Gutschow was head planner for the NS redevelopment of Hamburg; Tamms constructed flack-towers for the Organisation Todt and was further tasked with designs for Berlin’s Technische Hochschule. Von Beyme writes that there was an overwhelming sense of “Corpsgeist der deutschen Architekten nach 1945,” facilitated, especially, by Wolters’s mobilization of his old circle and previous connections. While Wolters and others often wrote conciliatory narratives of their personal ‘Irrwege,’ “das Comeback der Belasteten wurde gelegentlich durch alte Verbindungen zur neuen politischen Elite erleichtert.” von Beyme, *Der Wiederaufbau : Architektur Und Städtebaupolitik in Beiden Deutschen Staaten*, 50-53. Former NS architects were often excluded from participating in design conceptualization, but still tasked with oversight; for the select few not employed in the official efforts of reconstruction, worst case scenario was often a slightly less public-facing career as an independent architect, as was the case with Cäsar Pinnau, designer of the interior offices of the New Reich Chancellery. See: Führ; Joachim C. Fest and Ruth Irmgard Pinnau, *Cäsar Pinnau, Architekt* (Hamburg: H. Christians, 1995); Deschan; Frei and Freimüller.

presence and activity was, however, attenuated by the decisive shift away from representational and historicist styles of building. Nevertheless, it can be no coincidence that Germany overcame the ‘inability to mourn’ and inability to build at roughly the same time. As we shall see in the next chapter, the end of the BRD’s ban on public building roughly coincided with a massive resurgence of NS architectural media and artifacts in popular representation in the late 1960s, continuing into the 1980s when, after the *Historikerstreit*, the nation began constructing a new topography of national memory, which included sites commemorating NS violence.⁴⁹³ As the rest of this dissertation argues, the repeated, *cinematic* encounter with the Third Reich’s architectural after-images—particularly of the destroyed New Chancellery—which began in the early 1960s, constituted an indispensable part of ‘working through’ the NS past in the Federal Republic.

I begin by outlining the alleged ‘invisibility’ of the NS past in the early Adenauer era, by way of its largest architectural remnant, the Nürnberg Parteitagsgelände. As I show, West Germany’s ‘turning away’ from this site and its ideological significance dovetailed with Adenauer’s politics of amnesty and reintegration, and the continued cinematic use of ruins to simultaneously visualize and decontextualize the architectural evidence of the Third Reich and its destruction. But by the end of the 1950s, the NS past’s repressed visibility began to show cracks, as perpetrators surfaced in the public eye, and domestic and international pressure motivated the BRD to begin juridically addressing Nazism’s structural and personal remnants. I thus historicize and analyze two attempts to cinematically represent this history against the backdrop of the NS trials in documentaries, which focus on the construction and destruction of Germany’s urban landscape during the Third Reich: Alexander Kluge’s critical appropriation of NS architectural

⁴⁹³ This history, which includes the construction of the Bonner National History Museum, the founding of the Deutsches Historisches Museum, the establishment of Gedenkstätte at concentration camps, for example, in Sachsenhausen, and the broader development of Berlin’s memorial topography will be taken up in the conclusion to this dissertation.

Kulturfilm in his experimental *Brutalität in Stein* (1961) and the revival of postwar ruin aesthetics and Berlin's rubble landscape in the Ufa newsreel production *auf der suche nach unserer vergangenheit: das ende* (1965). As I show, each film deploys and remediates architectural imagery and cinematic strategies from the preceding decades to stage competing historical narratives—generally aligned with leftist intellectuals and the mainstream public—emphasizing either Germany's culpability for and participation in NS violence or German victimhood and perseverance through the war's devastation.

Kluge's film, styled as equal parts psychoanalytic therapy and ideological critique, redeploys fragments of the Third Reich's intermedial archive, recombined in radical montage, to revive memories of the NS regime's industrialized production of death and self-destruction in the air war. Notably, this pedagogical and cinematic protest by the second generation—initiating the movement of New German Film—conceals emotionally charged (bodily and architectural) images of NS violence. Instead, it acoustically reinscribes both the Parteitagsgelände and NS architectural propaganda, using building images to stand in for and 'testify' on behalf of absent, invisible bodies, and to illuminate construction (*Aufbau*) and destruction (*Vernichtung*) as dual emanations of the same ideological state apparatus. As a counterpoint, following mounting public backlash against the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials, *das ende* interweaves historical footage of Berlin's destruction and contemporary images of its reconstruction and remaining ruins with personal testimony by German citizens of their experiences of the war's violence and the Allied occupation. As I claim, the film not only employs the cinematic record of Berlin's devastation to double down on the public's claim to their own victimhood, while eliding any mention of the Third Reich's other victims; further, it also evinces hardening anti-Soviet sentiments amid the burgeoning Cold War. Namely, *das ende* uses comparative depictions of contemporary reconstruction in East and West Berlin to point to

the mediation and potential loss of history in new construction—the latter of which, however, is localized exclusively on the eastern side of the border.

It bears mentioning that this chapter may appear as an outlier in a dissertation about the New Reich Chancellery—as noted above, the architecture of Führertum had, for the moment, disappeared from the Federal Republic’s landscape. Yet, while the destroyed building appears only marginally at the center these two films, I argue that their resurrection of its after-images identifies it as a significant symbolic site, intrinsically connected to Berlin’s destruction and division, and to the (repressed) memory of Hitler as the Third Reich’s center of political and affective identification. As I argue, Kluge’s careful inclusion of two photographs of the building functions to index the images of Berlin’s ruins, which the film elides, and to redefine its symbolic function, as a frame for visualizing the body of the Volk, rather than the Führer. In contrast, *das ende*’s cinematic recapitulation of the New Reich Chancellery’s invasion, documentation of its empty site, occupied by the Wall, and resurrection of its postwar ruin in the destroyed governmental quarter, not only revives the ‘painful’ memory of Hitler’s death and defeat, but also identifies its absence with the loss of Germany’s territory and political center to the Soviets—outlining a wound at the heart of national identity.

In other words, this chapter lays the groundwork for the next two, which analyze the excavation and proliferation of images of Hitler and his space of power in the West German public sphere and the cinematic confrontation with his memory as a crucial and highly politicized part of the process of ‘working through’ and ‘mourning’ the NS past in the Federal Republic through the 1970s. As I argue, appearing at the margins of West Germany’s cinematic-architectural representation of the Third Reich in the early 1960s, the fragments of the New Reich Chancellery’s intermedial archive moved, along with Hitler, increasingly to the center of this discourse, serving

as representational frame and symbolic object, employed to interrogate and deconstruct the continued emotional attachment to and identification with NS ideology and the Führer-Mythos.

II. ‘Working Through’ as Ideological Critique in Alexander Kluge’s *Brutalität in Stein*

By the early 1960s, the Third Reich’s topography had become an apparition, a phantasm. Reversing Hitler’s territorial expansion, the Allied powers had redrawn the map of Europe; eventually resolving the ‘German question’ by recognizing the permanence of its initially provisional division, now cemented into two sovereign nations.⁴⁹⁴ Fragments and artifacts of the NS symbolic-spatial order, i.e. its architectural landmarks, remained in evidence throughout the BRD. But these sites were hardly incorporated, symbolically or otherwise, within the political and representational terrain of the Adenauer era—even those still visibly in use.

A key example: in his book, *The Nazi Perpetrator*, historian Paul Jaskot notes a “total lack of interest” in the Nürnberger Parteitagsgelände (hereafter PTG), a “decided architectural and conceptual turning away” from the “largest architectural remnant of the Third Reich.”⁴⁹⁵ On the one hand, Speer’s complex remained largely unchanged. Notwithstanding the US Army’s demolition of the Zeppelin-tribune’s swastika in 1945 and addition of barracks in 1950, the PTG’s use as a recreational site by the public continued virtually unabated.⁴⁹⁶ On the other hand, memories of its “historical and ideological significance or the presence of local perpetrators,” had effectively (though not entirely) faded from view.⁴⁹⁷ Beset by architectural anonymity, a disavowal

⁴⁹⁴ Judt, 242-43.

⁴⁹⁵ Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 182, 79. Jaskot’s book traces the conceptualization of the Nazi perpetrator across artistic practice, political movements, urban development, and discourses of history and national identity in the Federal Republic as it took shape and through reunification. His account of the Parteitagsgelände over this period serves as the central resource for the following.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 167, 75, 77. The barracks offer a striking but entirely typical example of the politically fraught continuity of the PTG’s and other NS sites’ use in the postwar era. In addition to its use by the Hitler-Youth during party rallies, the camping grounds south of the Märzfeld train station had also been employed by the S.S. as “a gathering point for local and regional German Jews who were shipped from here to the death camps in the east.” In 1950, the new barracks became a displaced persons camp for “those fleeing the consolidating Soviet Bloc...ethnic Germans driven out of Silesia and the Sudetenland, German and Central European Jewish survivors waiting for visas.” *Ibid.*, 172, 77.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 183.

of its historical function, even the use of the PTG's most iconic spaces provoked "no reflection on their problematic political heritage."⁴⁹⁸ The buildings—and their scandalous, intermittent occupation by neo-Nazis—testified to the Third Reich's historical presence and continued afterlife.⁴⁹⁹ But local authorities (headed by a coalition of the CSU, SPD, and FPD) and their counterparts throughout the BRD showed little interest in participating in, let alone directing, any meaningful confrontation with this historical legacy. To the contrary, a "laissez faire historicism" reigned.⁵⁰⁰ Thus,

"While an avant garde artist like Alexander Kluge could choose the stands of the Zeppelfeld as the location for his exploration of fascism in his film *Brutalität in Stein* (1960), city officials and the US Army treated the site as little more than a convenient set of bleachers...Nazi perpetrators and the Nazi past were someone else's problem and other people's heritage, to be explored in photographs and paintings [and films], perhaps, but not codified in specific geographies of place."⁵⁰¹

As Jaskot suggests (and Adorno recommended), the initial resurrection and interrogation of the fragmented NS topography and the history associated with its symbolic sites primarily took place in *representational* space—that is, in the mediated public sphere.

Even as the ideological, architectural images and memories of the Third Reich drifted away from (and failed to shape the reception, use, or development of) its material remnants, in the early 1960s, this historical landscape's intermedial fragments were resurrected, refunctionalized, and weaponized by the younger generation of the West German *avant garde*.⁵⁰² Beginning at the PTG, in Alexander Kluge's first film, *Brutalität in Stein*, archival representations of Hitler's buildings were used to protest against the denial of NS history; to overcome the resistance to and repression

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid., 176.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., 183, 203.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., 170.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid., 190.

⁵⁰² On the motifs of violence and weaponization in the postwar *avant garde*, see: Langston. Langston devotes a chapter to "Alexander Kluge's Impossible Film. On the Usefulness of Anachronistic Media," (pp 195-256) which, however, does not include any discussion of *Brutalität in Stein*.

of its memories, through a confrontational act of remembering, repeating, and working through, projected in cinematic-architectural space.

But before turning to Kluge's film, it is necessary to address why it mattered that NS architecture's ideological significance and representational artifacts had been 'forgotten' at this moment in time in the BRD. Throughout the late 1950s, the Third Reich's 'invisibility,' mapped onto its built spaces, was belied by a growing awareness of other structural remnants of Nazism, which began to surface throughout the public sphere. In what follows, I outline the earliest attempts to *juridically* 'work through' the past in the trials of NS criminals; a series of events characterized by a paradoxical, mounting visibility and persistent denial of Nazism's continued presence in and influence on the social, political, and cultural community of the BRD.

The perceived rupture of 1945, the 'Zero Hour,' was both a commonplace and a fiction, supported by the disavowal of obvious structural, personal, and aesthetic continuities between the Third Reich and the BRD. Although West Germany was officially 'denazified' with the withdrawal of the Allied authorities in 1951, it was haunted nonetheless by the evidence and after-effects of the NS past as the decade continued. The Nürnberg Trials, initially conducted against *Hauptkriegsverbrecher*, by the Allied forces in 1945-6, had been met with wide public support, albeit dogged by questions of legitimacy centered on Soviet involvement.⁵⁰³ Their continuation in the *Nachfolgeprozesse*, however, which lasted through 1949, and individual denazification tribunals investigating civilians were faced with rapidly diminishing approval.⁵⁰⁴ As a

⁵⁰³ The 24 defendants were: Martin Bormann, Karl Dönitz, Hans Frank, Wilhelm Frick, Hans Fritzsche, Walter Funk, Hermann Göring, Rudolf Heß, Alfred Jodl, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Wilhelm Keitel, Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, Robert Ley, Konstantin von Neutrath, Franz von Pappen, Erich Raeder, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Alfred Rosenberg, Fritz Sauckel, Hjalmar Schacht, Baldur von Schirach, Arthur Seyß-Inquart, Albert Speer, Julius Streicher, of whom twelve were sentenced to death, four imprisoned, and three acquitted. For an overview of the proceedings' public's reception, see: Wilke et al., 26-31.

⁵⁰⁴ The twelve 'Nachfolgeprozesse' included the Ärzteprozesse, Wilhelmstraße-Prozess, and charges against Oberkommando der Wehrmacht. See: Benz, 118-9. For German trials, overseen by the Allied forces, see: Edith Raim, "Ns-Prozesse Und Öffentlichkeit. Die Strafverfolgung Von Ns-Verbrechern Durch Die Deutsche Justiz In Den Westlichen Besatzungszone 1945-1949," in *Ns-Prozesse Und Deutsche Öffentlichkeit Besatzungszeit, Frühe Bundesrepublik Und Ddr*, ed. Jörg Osterloh and Clemens Vollnhals (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011).

consequence, these early legal interrogations almost immediately gave way to Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's politics of reintegration.⁵⁰⁵ The declaration of amnesty for crimes committed before 1949 by Adenauer, was expanded by a second *Straffreiheitsgesetz* in 1954.⁵⁰⁶ Indeed, the overwhelming mood of most politicians and much of the public could be summed up in the famous declaration of FPD representative Erich Mende regarding the need to draw a 'Schlussstrich' under the past in September 1952—which is to say, there was as yet no substantive *Schlussstrichdebatte* to speak of.⁵⁰⁷ The *Kontrollratsgesetz*, which gave the Allied authorities sole power to prosecute war crimes and most other offenses committed between 1933 and 1945, was lifted in 1955 (though it had already been practically obviated in 1951 with the withdrawal of Allied forces)—but the reigning apathy toward pursuing further legal action against NS perpetrators or 'Mitläufer' was evident in the dramatic plunge in the number of cases brought to the West German courts.⁵⁰⁸

The public's distaste for any confrontation with NS crimes was further evinced, particularly with regard to film, by the negative response to Alain Resnais's documentary *Night and Fog*, which premiered at Cannes in 1956.⁵⁰⁹ The documentary short meditates on the sites of Auschwitz-

⁵⁰⁵ Nathan Stoltzfus and Henry Friedlander write, "Opinion polls conducted in the early 1950s found...that the majority of West Germans thought National Socialism had been more good than bad and that Hitler's would-be assassins had been traitors. In postwar West Germany, convicted war criminals were not generally ostracized by the population at large...[and] public opinion was strongly reinforced by Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's position on former Nazis and war criminals...inclined to exonerate professionals who had been part of the bureaucratic apparatus that carried out the 'Final Solution' and to shift blame to rougher-hewn members of the working class...so-called cold amnesty returned to public service many functionaries, bureaucrats, members of the judiciary, and others whom denazification had removed. By the mid-1950s, many former Nazis were integrated within the public and private sectors." Stoltzfus and Friedlander, 8-9.

⁵⁰⁶ See: the chapter "The Amnesty Law of 1954" in Frei and Golb, 67-95.

⁵⁰⁷ "Meine Damen und Herren, sieben Jahre danach scheint doch nun die Gelegenheit zu sein, einen Schlussstrich zu ziehen. Wir wollen den Blick nach vorn tun." Mende quoted in Claudia Fröhlich, "Der 'Ulmer Einsatzgruppen-Prozess' 1958. Wahrnehmung Und Wirkung Des Ersten Großen Holocaust-Prozesses.," in *Ns-Prozesse Und Deutsche Öffentlichkeit Besatzungszeit, Frühe Bundesrepublik Und Ddr*, ed. Jörg Osterloh and Clemens Vollnhals (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 237.

⁵⁰⁸ Judt, 246; Fröhlich, 238. From 1949, with 1465 cases, the numbers fell steadily to 957 in 1950, 386 in 1951, 225 in 1952, 157 in 1953, 81 in 1954—thereafter, falling to below 50 and reaching a low point in 1959 with only 22. Andreas Eichmüller, "Die Strafrechtliche Verfolgung Von Ns-Verbrechen Und Die Öffentlichkeit in Der Frühen Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949-1958," *ibid.*, 55.

⁵⁰⁹ Alain Resnais et al., *Nuit Et Brouillard* ([S.l.]: [s.n.], 2003). The West German Foreign Ministry launched a formal protest against the film's showing at Cannes, claiming it "would disturb the international harmony of the festival by its emphatic reminder of the painful past." Judt, 270-1; see also: Habbo Knoch, "Die Tat Als Ort Der Erinnerung: Alain Resnais' Film *Nacht Und Nebel*," in *Die Tat Als Bild : Fotografien Des Holocaust in Der Deutschen Erinnerungskultur* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2001), 523-27.

Birkenau and Majdanek, juxtaposing footage of their contemporary, abandoned ruins with historical footage of NS propaganda, atrocity images of industrialized mass murder, and the camps' liberation—one of the first cinematic works to grapple with the difficulty of adequately visualizing past NS violence.⁵¹⁰ At West Germany's insistence, the film was pulled from official competition—though it was still screened.⁵¹¹ Importantly, Resnais's film did not depict any part of German territory; nor did it draw any explicit connections between the past and present political systems.⁵¹² Nevertheless, its controversial reception was representative of the active and vocal resistance to any critical re-examination of the Third Reich's memories and/or symbolic historical sites, especially those associated with its violence and its (Jewish) victims during the 1950s.

In fact, the first major juridical, public confrontation with the structural and personal remnants of NS violence still in evidence in the Federal Republic came about purely by chance. In 1957, one Bernhard Fischer-Schweder was removed from his position as manager of a displaced persons camp in Ulm when his identity as commanding officer of the *Einsatzkommando* Tilsit and his falsification of his denazification paperwork was exposed to the regional government.⁵¹³ Fischer-Schweder's firing itself failed to arouse notice, rather, his appeal to authorities demanding his right to a pension drew the media's attention—and, soon after, charges from an eyewitness of his participation in mass murder. As the scandal mounted, in spite of the general reluctance to investigate NS criminality, a trial was launched against him and nine other members of his unit.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹⁰ Habbo Knoch writes, "Was *Nacht und Nebel* jedoch zu einer bis heute als beispielhaft geltenden filmischen Darstellung macht, ist gerade die gezielte Brechung der "authentischen" Wirkung vom historischen Bildmaterial. Resnais kehrte die Funktion von Fotografien als zuverlässige Augenzeugen um und deckte sie als besetzte Objekte von Erinnerungsprozessen auf. Als Narrative unter Verwendung von Filmszenen und Dutzenden dokumentarischer Aufnahmen montiert, problematisiert *Nacht und Nebel* zugleich die Unmöglichkeit, eine objektive Vorstellung der Tat zu vermitteln. Daß aus Dokumenten immer subjektive Erinnerungsbilder werden, hatte Resnais zum Metanarrative des Films gemacht." 520.

⁵¹¹ Allegedly Jewish survivors threatened to protest by staging a march in their camp uniforms. Ewout van der Knaap, *Uncovering the Holocaust: The International Reception of Night and Fog* (London: Wallflower Press, 2006), 53.

⁵¹² Knoch, 519.

⁵¹³ This particular Einsatzkommando was responsible for the mass murder of around 130,000 Lithuanian-Jewish men, women, and children over the second half of 1941. Fröhlich, 233. For Fischer-Schweder's discovery, see: *ibid.*, 239.

⁵¹⁴ In addition to the scandal of his discovery, the DDR's recently launched 'Blutrichter' campaign, internationally publishing the names of former NS judges still on the bench in the BRD added international pressure to the local and federal West German

The first such proceeding, its coverage in regional and national press tended to emphasize, at times sensationalize the brutality of the crimes and the gruesome details of witness testimony—and to focus on the allegedly ‘anomalous’ and ‘deviant’ nature of these ‘Exzesstäter.’⁵¹⁵ With little exception, commentary was utterly lacking on the circumstances of these men’s discovery nearly ten years after the conclusion of ‘denazification,’ or the implications regarding the broader problem of NS criminals, dispersed and undiscovered throughout the public sphere. Still, agitation of individual journalists, particularly in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, a few politicians, members of the intellectual elite, many of them re-emigres, and mounting international pressure forced the state’s hand, leading to the founding of the Central Office for the Investigation of NS Crimes in Ludwigsburg in December 1958.⁵¹⁶

But despite the initiation of this first NS trial directed by the BRD and the ‘belated’ founding of the Central Agency, the widespread inability “to overcome the native reluctance to do anything about the ‘murderers in our midst,’” as Hannah Arendt writes, continued with little interruption.⁵¹⁷ First in 1960, following the international publicity of Adolf Eichmann’s discovery,

authorities and was a major contributing factor in the establishment of the *Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen* in Ludwigsburg. See: Annette Weinke, “Bleiben Die Mörder Unter Uns? Öffentliche Reaktionen Auf Die Gründung Und Tätigkeit Der Zentralen Stelle Ludwigsburg,” *ibid.*, 272; Claudia Fröhlich, “Der ‘Ulmer Einsatzgruppen-Prozess’ 1958. Wahrnehmung Und Wirkung Des Ersten Großen Holocaust-Prozesses.,” *ibid.*, 256; Annette Weinke, “The German-German Rivalry and the Prosecution of Nazi War Criminals During the Cold War, 1958-1965,” in *Nazi Crimes and the Law*, ed. Nathan Stoltzfus and Henry Friedlander (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 158-60.

⁵¹⁵ Much was made, for example, of Fischer-Schweder’s alcohol consumption. *ibid.*, Fröhlich, 239-43.

⁵¹⁶ For the history of the Central Office’s founding see: Annette Weinke, “Bleiben Die Mörder Unter Uns? Öffentliche Reaktionen Auf Die Gründung Und Tätigkeit Der Zentralen Stelle Ludwigsburg,” *ibid.* For the push toward more critical engagement in the press, see: Claudia Fröhlich, “Der ‘Ulmer Einsatzgruppen-Prozess’ 1958. Wahrnehmung Und Wirkung Des Ersten Großen Holocaust-Prozesses.,” *ibid.*, 248-54. Key players included the *SZ* journalist Ernst Müller-Meiningen Jr., and West German jurist Barbara Just-Dahlmann. For the latter, see: Annette Weinke, “Bleiben Die Mörder Unter Uns? Öffentliche Reaktionen Auf Die Gründung Und Tätigkeit Der Zentralen Stelle Ludwigsburg,” *ibid.*, 277-9. The Central Office’s founding was simultaneous with state prosecutor Fritz Bauer’s internal push for the initiation of the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials in the regional courts, which we will return to later in this chapter. See: Werner Renz, “Der. 1. Frankfurter Auschwitz-Prozess 1963-1965 Und Die Deutsche Öffentlichkeit. Anmerkungen Zur Entmythologisierung Eines Nsg-Verfahrens,” *ibid.*, 352; Irmtrud Wojak, “Zur Einführung: Der Erste Frankfurter Auschwitz-Prozess Und Die »Bewältigung« Der Ns-Vergangenheit,” in *Auschwitz-Prozess 4 Ks 2/63 Frankfurt Am Main*, ed. Irmtrud Wojak and Institut Fritz Bauer (Köln: Snoeck, 2004), 53-4.

⁵¹⁷ Arendt, 14. Arendt describes “all kinds of difficulties,” encountered by the Central Office’s head attorney, Erwin Schüle, “caused partly by the unwillingness of German witnesses to cooperate and partly by the unwillingness of the local courts to prosecute on the basis of material sent them from the Central Agency.” *Ibid.* She notes that, before Eichmann’s capture in May 1960, despite the fact that evidence against the central functionaries involved in the deportation of Jews had been publicized in the press, “not one of them had found it necessary to live under an assumed name.” And even with the increased activity of the courts, after the

capture, and extradition from Argentina by Israeli authorities, did the BRD begin to address the situation more aggressively.⁵¹⁸ If the *Ulmer Einsatzgruppen-Prozess* first brought details of NS crimes and biographical questions of NS criminality into public view, Eichmann's capture and trial constituted a watershed moment, heightening West Germans' awareness of, interest in, and tempered support for a juridical working through of the NS past.⁵¹⁹ Yet the problematic optics and controversial status of the proceedings persisted. As Arendt points out,

“It is one thing to ferret out criminals and murderers from their hiding places, and it is another thing to find them prominent and flourishing in the public realm—to encounter innumerable men in the federal and state administrations and, generally, in *public* office whose careers had bloomed under the Hitler regime.”⁵²⁰

As noted above, highly skilled industries, especially law and civil service but also architecture and film, were populated by an overwhelming number of former party members and fellow travelers, still employed in their previous line of work. These individuals offered unwelcome evidence of the Germans' “almost ubiquitous complicity [with the Nazi state], which had stretched far beyond the ranks of Party membership.”⁵²¹ Yet no attempt to systematically address any of these problems materialized in the majority of public and/or political discourse in the first few years of the 1960s.⁵²²

extension of the statute of limitations on murder in 1960, and publicity of trials of Nazi criminals following Eichmann's capture, “the reluctance of local courts to prosecute [Nazi] crimes showed itself...in the fantastically lenient sentences meted out to the accused.” *Ibid.*, 14-15.

⁵¹⁸ In addition to Arendt's deservedly-famous if controversial account, for the public response to Eichmann's capture and trial, see also: Peter Krause, “Eichmann Und Wir: Die Bundesdeutsche Öffentlichkeit Und Der Jerusalemer Eichmann-Prozess 1961,” in *Ns-Prozesse Und Deutsche Öffentlichkeit Besatzungszeit, Frühe Bundesrepublik Und Ddr*, ed. Jörg Osterloh and Clemens Vollnhals (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011); and Wilke et al., 31-34.

⁵¹⁹ In 1960, surveys conducted in West Germany showed that 90% of the public had heard of Eichmann's capture. A year later, only 4% of the public claimed to not have heard about it, and only 14% to not be following coverage in the media. *ibid.*, 130.

⁵²⁰ Another example, nearly half of the 11,500 practicing judges in the BRD in the early 1960s had been active under the Third Reich. Arendt, 16-17. Judt likewise identifies overall “very little stripping out of Nazi-era bureaucrats” during the early years of the Adenauer era. Judt, 266.

⁵²¹ Arendt, 18.

⁵²² Further, the trials themselves were met with expressions of anti-Semitic and anti-Soviet statements and pleas from advocacy groups for clemency, represented by both the church and the NS sympathizer group ‘Stille Hilfe.’ Fröhlich describes letters sent to the Ulmer court and prosecution office, in which, “Manche Briefschreiber äußerten sich antisemitisch, in vielen Zuschriften wurden die deutsche Schuld und Verantwortung relativiert, indem an die alliierten Luftangriffe und an das Leid der Flüchtlinge aus den früheren deutschen Ostgebieten erinnert wurde.” Fröhlich, 258. Likewise, Weinke points to the fact that “die Bundesrepublik im Dezember 1959 [wurde] von einer antisemitischen Schmierwelle heimgesucht, worauf Bundesregierung und westdeutsche

The concomitant tabooization of NS media in this period can thus largely be viewed as a compensatory measure, a way of not dealing with (that is, denying) the uncomfortable reality of the potential presence of ‘murders among us.’⁵²³ But as the evidence of Nazism’s historical violence and the unresolved questions of its perpetrators continued to grow in visibility in the media, and, simultaneously, to alter the perceived ‘type’ of NS criminal, from sadistic monsters to everyday ‘Schreibtischtäter’ in the model of Eichmann, attention was perhaps unavoidably drawn to the larger framework and sphere of influence of the NS state.⁵²⁴ Further, while the Third Reich’s archive was marginalized in art historical discourse, the continued presence of its structural remnants was apparent throughout the 1950s and early 1960s in mainstream cultural productions.

Eric Rentschler points out that “as late as 1957 about 70 percent of all West German feature films employed either a director or a scriptwriter who had been active under Goebbels.”⁵²⁵ It is, then, no surprise that their films tended either to avoid the subject of the recent past entirely or offer problematically revisionist versions of it. “Papap Kino”—as Kluge and others would call it—largely perpetuated the commercially viable escapism of Nazi cinema.⁵²⁶ The Third Reich, where it did appear on screen, was reduced to a distant, depersonalized myth: “a primal scene that wreaks violence on the unwitting, or [] a negative family romance that renders everyone an orphan of history.”⁵²⁷ For example, films like *Des Teufels General* (1954) and *Die Brücke* (1959) aimed to

Öffentlichkeit mit starker Verunsicherung und kaum zu übersehender Hilflosigkeit reagierten.” “Bleiben Die Mörder Unter Uns? Öffentliche Reaktionen Auf Die Gründung Und Tätigkeit Der Zentralen Stelle Ludwigsburg,” *ibid.*, 265.

⁵²³ Regarding the visibility of NS architecture during this period, its status can be summed up by the pithy 1943 pronouncement of German-Jewish refugee and famous architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner, “of the German buildings for the National Socialist Party ..., the less said the better.” Nikolaus Pevsner, *An Outline of European Architecture* (Harmondsworth, Eng.; Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), 411.

⁵²⁴ Krause, 298.

⁵²⁵ Rentschler, “Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone,” 26. The cameraman for *Das Wort aus Stein*, Reimar Kuntze continued producing films through 1950; the director of *Die Bauten Adolf Hitlers*, Walter Hege continued producing documentary shorts through 1956; while Leni Riefenstahl was barred from the industry, her head of photography on *Triumph des Willens*, Sepp Allgeier continued to work through 1955, and likewise Walter Frenz through 1967. Source: filmportal.de

⁵²⁶ See also the analysis of *Heimatfilme* from von Moltke.

⁵²⁷ Rentschler, “Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone,” 30. In her analysis of Kluge’s “realism of protest,” Eike Wenzel writes, “Films construct historical reality...In the film, we gain imaginary access to a world in

“console rather than interrogate, focusing on victims of circumstance...innocent sufferers held captive by situations they neither control nor fathom.”⁵²⁸ There was an obvious ethical problem inherent in leaving the task of representing the NS past to the “powers that controlled image production in Germany,” such as they were.⁵²⁹ West German cinema in the Adenauer era was incapable of addressing the legacy of Nazism; assigning culpability for or even acknowledging the film industry’s role in supporting state-sponsored violence; confronting the fascination still possessed by its ‘contaminated’ media; incapable, in short, of coming to terms with the past. Within this media landscape, undeniable continuities of past and present were excluded from, obscured, and/or refuted in representation—especially where history appeared as entertainment.

Admittedly, there had been isolated attempts by young, intellectual filmmakers in the BRD to grapple more conscientiously with the difficult inheritance and aftermath of the NS past.⁵³⁰ One key example for our purposes is the short documentary *Schicksal einer Oper* (1958), co-directed by Edgar Reitz, Bernhard Dörries, and Stefan Meuschel.⁵³¹ Focusing on the history of the National Theater in Munich—its construction over 1811-8, destruction by fire in 1823 and reconstruction in 1825, bombing in 1943, and current state of ruin—the film marks an early moment of experimental, documentary reflection on the Third Reich’s historical violence, aesthetically

which the lives of psychologically credible individuals take their course...the world presents itself to us as a spontaneous phenomenon...The viewer, so it would appear, always arrives too late to be able to intervene in this re-presented reality. By the time the viewer has taken his seat, reality has always already become a world-picture and declared itself in its definitive meaning (‘history’, ‘past’). Eike Friedrich Wenzel, "Construction Site Film: Kluge's Idea of Realism and His Short Films," in *Alexander Kluge: Raw Materials for the Imagination*, ed. Tara Forrest (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 174-6.

⁵²⁸ Rentschler 30. Helmut Käuthner’s *Des Teufels General* follows a highly decorated WWI veteran turned Luftwaffe general, resistant to NS command, as he is persecuted for his lack of belief, and attempts to support the sabotage action of his flight engineer, ultimately crashing his plane into the control tower of his air base. Bernhard Wicki’s *Die Brücke* follows a troop of seven ill-fated Hitler-Youth, conscripted to hold a bridge against oncoming American forces at the war’s conclusion—they succeed in the ultimately senseless task, but only a single one of them survives.

⁵²⁹ Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone," 27.

⁵³⁰ Rentschler details early West German attempts to produce an ‘anti-Ufa’ film as early as 1946—yet the director of the first such project, *Liebe 47*, was itself directed by the former head of production at Ufa, Wolfgang Liebeneiner. Likewise, the initiative ‘DOC 59’ seeking closer international connections and to complicate the distinction between documentary and fiction was ultimately a failure. *Ibid.*, 25-6.

⁵³¹ Dörries. Rentschler quotes Reitz’s comment, “We were particularly interested in a sort of anti-architecture which had arisen. We were inspired by the operatic beauty of the ruins.” Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone," 32 fn29.

visualized through its ruins in the present. (Figs. IV-1a-d) Over ten minutes, a montage of the opera house's eroding structures, reduced to rubble, is interspersed with historical images of its previous intact appearance, and sparing descriptions of its phases of construction and destruction.



Figures IV-1a-d – Stills from Schicksal einer Oper, showing the National Theater's ruin in its present state.

The Third Reich's catastrophic collapse is, indeed, the latest instance of destruction, but its visibility remains largely symbolic, even beautified, as the documentary employs visuals undeniably similar to the ruin aesthetic popularized in cinema and photography from the immediate postwar era.⁵³² The film thus invokes but fails to comment on the historical conditions that produced this recent catastrophe and that continued to shape its fragments' problematic reception in the present. Rather, it (like other ruin narratives circulating simultaneously in print media) points only to historical loss, employing architectural ruins to identify a site of memory and ruminate on its impending disappearance, but omitting commentary on its significance or its

⁵³² See chapter iii of this dissertation.

connection to other violence.⁵³³

Considering the context of the film's release, however, the issue was not merely showing the *Ruinenkulisse* left in the wake of the Third Reich (a task well underway even during the war) but addressing the more pressing question of how to illustrate "die 'Beziehung' des Menschen 'zu der politischen Kulisse,'" as put by *SZ* journalist Ernst Müller-Meiningen Jr. in Summer 1958.⁵³⁴ In fact, Reitz and Dörries were members of a group of young filmmakers who began in the early 1960s to attend more critically to the Third Reich's problematic past and present reception (and the cinematic-architectural representation and contextualization of its memories), namely by asserting fascism's unacknowledged presence in and continuity with the BRD as a political and aesthetic *emergency*.⁵³⁵ Among their ranks was also Alexander Kluge. Born February 14, 1932 in Halberstadt, Kluge and his family survived the city's bombing on April 8, 1945, fleeing with his mother and sister Alexandra to settle in Berlin-Charlottenburg, where he completed high-school.⁵³⁶ Though Kluge initially studied law in Frankfurt, passing his state examinations in 1958, he soon turned to writing and filmmaking, under the influence of acquaintances Adorno and Helmut Becker, head legal counsel for the Institute for Social Research, ultimately becoming one of the most prominent and prolific members of the movement that would come to be known first as Young and then New German Cinema.⁵³⁷

Following on the heels of Adorno's essay in 1959 and Eichmann's capture in 1960, over

⁵³³ Almost two decades later, Syberberg would take up the question of Bavarian opera's connection to the Third Reich in his documentary, *Winifred Wagner und die Geschichte des Hauses Wahnfried*, which also begins with the ruined structure, its partial demolition and previous reconstructions—but then spends almost two uninterrupted hours with questions regarding Winifred's relationship to Hitler, and her leadership of the Bayreuth Festspiel under Nazism, interspersed with intertitles filling in details and noting pertinent instances of NS violence and persecution, elided by the film's subject. "Winifred Wagner Und Die Geschichte Des Hauses Wahnfried 1914-1975," (Munich: TMS Film GmbH; Bayrischer Rundfunk; Österreichischer Rundfunk, 1975).

⁵³⁴ Fröhlich, 252, my emphasis.

⁵³⁵ Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone," 30.

⁵³⁶ Kluge, also famous in for his literary work, chronicled this early event of destruction in his text Alexander Kluge and Thomas Combrink, *Der Luftangriff Auf Halberstadt Am 8. April 1945* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2014).

⁵³⁷ A good account and overview of Kluge's wide-ranging oeuvre can be found in the essay by Thomas Elsaesser, "The Stubborn Persistence of Alexander Kluge," in Tara Forrest, *Alexander Kluge: Raw Materials for the Imagination*, Film Culture in Transition (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 22-9.

the next two years, part of the initial wave of generational conflict regarding the memory and significance of the Nazi past that would culminate in the 68er-Bewegung, the earliest proponents of Young German Cinema—Kluge and the other 25 signatories of the Oberhausen Manifesto—staged a cinematic protest. In a series of publications, the so-called Oberhausenerers claimed that the failure to produce “films against fascism,” had precipitated in the West German film industry aesthetic bankruptcy, institutional ossification, and financial ruin, while, moreover, leaving the persistent fascination of NS aesthetics unanswered.⁵³⁸ They insisted this crisis was the direct result of “a national cinema without a distinct stylistic and critical will, devoid of experimentation, alternative strategies, and younger voices.”⁵³⁹ Declaring, “Der alte Film ist tot,” they posited that a new kind of cinema was necessary “to counter images of a past whose own images and imaginary dominated attempts to imagine and image that past,” and thus proclaimed the birth of a new film.⁵⁴⁰

Kluge and his cohort aimed for no less than the production of a new, cinematic public sphere.⁵⁴¹ They further demanded the institutionalization and financial protection of this New German Cinema, allowing the medium to fulfill its public responsibility and regenerate critical and historical consciousness, freed from the mandate of commercial viability.⁵⁴² The manifesto did not “outline a specific aesthetic program” but there was no need—Kluge’s first film, *Brutalität in Stein* (hereafter *BiS*), co-produced with Dieter Lemmel, Peter Schamoni, and Wolf Wirth, provides a first demonstration.⁵⁴³ The film, I argue, takes aim at the cinematic and architectural

⁵³⁸ Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone," 26. "The dire situation, recognized almost universally, reached its acme when the government awarded no state prize for the best film of 1961, and Ufa suffered financial collapse." Representative events of encounter with NS media and their ambivalent reception are sprinkled throughout Rentschler's article: screenings of *Das Blaue Licht* in 1963 and *Kolberg* in 1965 an exhibition of NS art from 1933-1945 held in 1986. The latter points to the article's larger critique, which suggests New German Film's project remained, to a certain extent, unfulfilled. *Ibid.*, 25, 28, 37.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁵⁴¹ See: Miriam Hansen's essay, "Cooperative Auteur Cinema and Oppositional Public Sphere: Alexander Kluge's Contribution to *German in Autumn*," in Forrest, 50-71. and Hansen. This topic is also covered in Christopher Pavsek, *The Utopia of Film: Cinema and Its Futures in Godard, Kluge, and Tahimik*, Film and Culture (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); and Wenzel, 181.

⁵⁴² Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone," 27.

⁵⁴³ Kluge and Schamoni.

reproduction of NS ideology, employing fragments from its intermedial archive as ammunition, resurrecting and refunctionalizing artifacts that had been erased from (or repressed in) public memory and artistic representation.

In extremely loose terms, *BiS* can be described as a documentary about NS architecture.⁵⁴⁴ Its primary subjects are the Nürnberg PTG's intact and unfinished structures and the intermedial archive of NS architectural propaganda, focused on Berlin's redevelopment. But the film has no linear narrative; it does not provide a historical overview of the NS building program or the development of these two, symbolic construction projects; nor does it *visualize* the aftermath of Germany's urban destruction in the air war. At 11 minutes long, composed of more than 200 shots, the film is constructed as a series of non-narrative 'movements,' each consisting of a montage of architectural images, which incorporate material from past and present in disorienting fashion. Following a brief title sequence are four main sequences featuring the PTG: views of the site in its 1960-state, the complex's 'Motive,' the Zeppelin-tribune's colonnade, and the unfinished Kongresshalle. Next, the film cuts to archival images of Hitler's architectural 'Zukunftsbilder,' and the designs and propaganda for the NS 'Umgestaltung der deutschen Städte.' Finally, a brief epilogue returns to the PTG, reprising the opening sequence before concluding with footage of the unfinished Märzfeld. The film is confrontational, employing chaotic visuals, kinetic camera work, and rapid cuts; subjecting the viewer to a barrage of fragmented architectural images and accompanying its visual deluge with a noisy collage of fictional and factual acoustic documents, delivered as both historical citations and voice-over narration. These citations—and the montage's visual strategies—are analyzed below, but an overview is warranted at the outset: the PTG

⁵⁴⁴ It can also be classified as an essay film, see: Nora M. Alter, "Translating the Essay into Film and Installation," *Journal of Visual Culture* 6, no. 1 (2007). For Kluge's *The Assault of the Present on the Rest of Time* as an essay film, see: Peter C. Lutze, *Alexander Kluge : The Last Modernist* (1998), 157-8.

sequences feature the sounds of NS film propaganda and a reading of Rudolf Höß's testimony from the 1946 Auschwitz trials; the 'Umgestaltung' sequence is accompanied by the air war's acoustics and internal documentation of Hitler's orders. The soundtrack thus produces an equally disorienting assemblage of the Third Reich's fragmented, past and present, propagandistic and bureaucratic artifacts.

BiS confronts the viewer with the repressed sites/sights and sounds of the NS representational landscape, the "place where Nazi perpetrators were initially made"—that is, both the PTG and the movie screen—and re-contextualizes their legibility through the addition of acoustic memories of the violence unleashed by the Third Reich across Europe.⁵⁴⁵ Projecting this associative, archival ideological critical and therapeutic work onto the space of the PTG, reconstructed onscreen as a traumatic flashback, *BiS* revives the memories that the Nürnbergers disavowed as they walked their dogs along Langwasser and congregated on the steps of the Zeppelin-tribune. Further, in addition to the reinscription of this specific site, *BiS* revives memories of the Third Reich's much broader, landscape of architectural propaganda and the ideological (and affective) context of its reception.

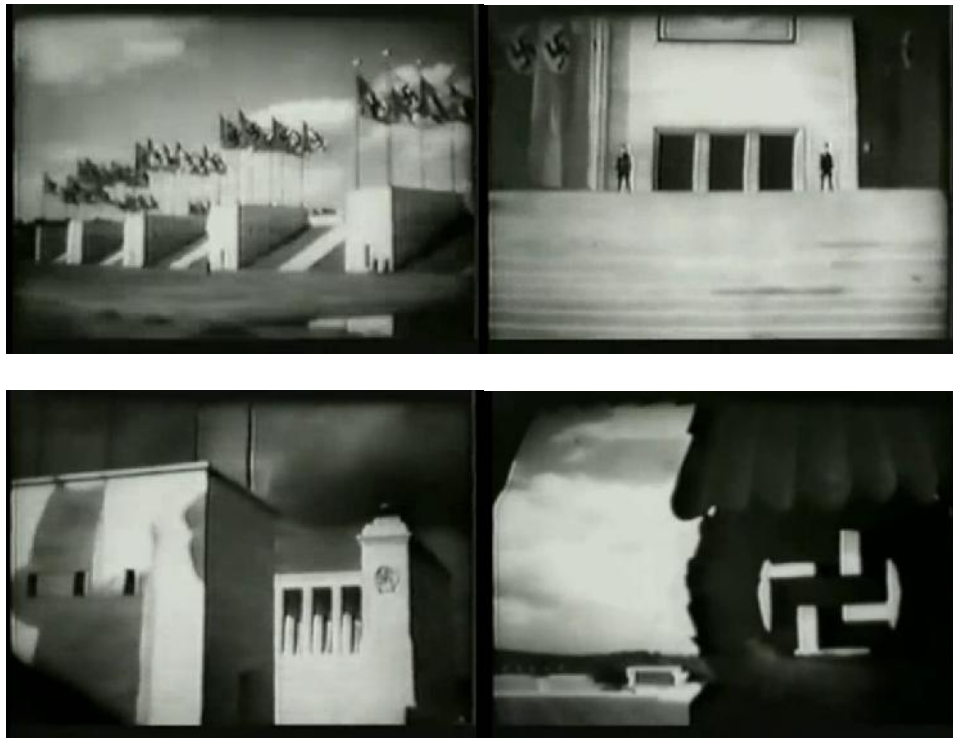
Specifically, *BiS* takes the form of a *Kulturfilm* or, rather, "an anti-*Kulturfilm*," as Eric Rentschler puts it.⁵⁴⁶ *Kulturfilm* was a key genre in the Third Reich, responsible for "matters of Weltanschauung."⁵⁴⁷ Characteristically, Kluge's film is an overtly political, experimental short, blending documentary and fictional material. Moreover, *BiS* narrows its focus to architectural

⁵⁴⁵ Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 167.

⁵⁴⁶ Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone," 32. As Rentschler notes, NS film viewing necessarily involved the shorts that preceded feature films. He fails, however, to bring out this connection in the analysis, referring vaguely to Speer's neoclassicism and generalizing about NS architecture's Prussian sensibility, but overlooking the specific connection between architecture and *Kulturfilm*. While he invokes the genre in framing his argument, his analysis only mentions Riefenstahl, overlooking the obvious references to the films noted below, and the other fragments from *Kulturfilm*'s close relative, the *Deutsche Wochenschau*, citations of which make up much of *BIS*'s soundtrack.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.* The genre and one of its two main examples, noted below, are analyzed in detail in chapter ii.

Kulturfilm by invoking its two iconic exemplars, *Die Bauten Adolf Hitlers* and *Das Wort aus Stein*.⁵⁴⁸ *Die Bauten Adolf Hitlers*, released in the flood of NS architectural propaganda in 1938 (from which Kluge's film also draws), offered a characteristic example of the PTG's scenographic representation as the *Kulisse* for the Volk's annual communion with the Führer. (Figs. IV-2a-d).



Figures IV-2a-d – Still images from *Die Bauten Adolf Hitlers* featuring the Parteitagsgelände's Zeppelintribune

Das Wort aus Stein, which accompanied the announcement of Berlin's and the rest of Germany's NS urban redevelopment in 1939, highlighting the New Chancellery's construction, supplies the basis for *BiS*'s title and opening shot, and is repeatedly cited in its central sequence. Kluge's revision of the 1939 film's title not only establishes it as the central cinematic intertext, but also foregrounds Kluge's film's artistic strategy: an inversion of NS film's dream-like aesthetics.⁵⁴⁹

However, *BiS* also widens its net, invoking the dynamic, energetic aesthetics of the

⁵⁴⁸ Hege; Rupli.

⁵⁴⁹ *Das Wort aus Stein*'s technologically innovative and emotionally powerful imagery—its ability to produce facts from fictions—makes it an exemplary target for *BiS*'s self-reflexive project of 'analysis.' Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone," 34.

Deutsche Wochenschau, and incorporating an array of multi-media architectural representations from propaganda; and finally, by continuously referencing (and acoustically citing) Leni Riefenstahl’s iconic cinematographic reproduction of Speer’s symbolic complex (though the film does not include any of her footage).⁵⁵⁰ Appropriating, fragmenting, and recombining National Socialism’s authentic fragments, representational spaces and self-images, *BiS* performs an ideological critique. Its first target—which I defined in chapter ii as NS’s cinematically-reproduced architectural futurity—is announced in the title sequence, opening with a citation from *Das Wort aus Stein*. In silence, on the shores of a glassy lake, a monumental building appears, superimposed onto the landscape in a dissolve. (Figs. IV-3a-c) The narrative miniature accelerates time in the movement from ‘word’ to stone, that is, from architectural representation to realization, cinematically erasing the industrialized process of production in its fleeting transparency in special effects. For it cannot escape the viewer’s attention that this is not a real building but a model filmed to look like one.⁵⁵¹

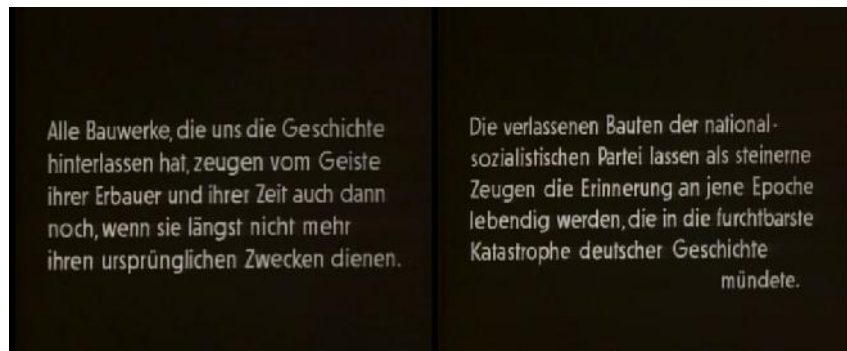


Figures IV-3a-c – Opening sequence of *Brutalität in Stein*, a citation of the *Chiemsee* sequence of *Das Wort aus Stein*

⁵⁵⁰ It bears mentioning that *Night and Fog* employs shots from Riefenstahl’s film in its opening sequences. The elision of *BiS*’s careful and abundant citation from the network of NS film production is pervasive through analyses of the film. Pavsek claims that *BiS* adheres to “a veritably imageless form of mimesis,” in reference to its exclusion of Riefenstahl’s imagery; but then takes this claim too far by claiming that the film, “is able to evoke the ‘utopia’ of fascism, to allude to its ‘experiential content’ and its organization, without ever directly imaging the utopia it attempted to realized and instantiate.” Pavsek, 222. The claim is only sensible in the argument if it the “utopia” is limited to Riefenstahl. Similarly, Wenzel writes, in error, “One searches in vain...for images from Nazi newsreels and culture films...they are there only in fragments, as cited shreds of discourse, in the soundtrack.” Wenzel, 184. The assertion is puzzling, since, as noted below, *BiS* in fact *opens* with a soundless clip from *Das Wort aus Stein*.

⁵⁵¹ Even without recognizing the planned NSDAP school on Chiemsee, the structure is clearly fake: sky behind it blank and flat, the facade invisible in the reflective surface of the lake.

A productive anachronism, the images from 1939 anticipated and indeed were meant to mobilize the construction of Germany’s racial-imperial future, symbolized in prospective monuments, and actualized through expansionist war. Instead of downplaying the temporal interplay of its media—the prospective model, durable building image, and manipulation of both through camera and film technology—the narrative relies on their multiplied visibility. Together, the intermedial-architectural representations produce a myth of the past in a dual sense: a fictional space of memory and imaginary future history. Interjecting the memory of a *past*-future into the present, *BiS* slices through the temporal legibility of the NS cinematic-architectural mythos, its ideological futurity. Continuing in silence, the conflicting levels of temporal and ideological legibility, layered together on film, are intensified and complicated by two didactic intertitles that follow, which read (Figs. IV-4a-b):



Figures IV-4a-b – Intertitles of Brutalität in Stein

“Alle Bauwerke, die uns die Geschichte hinterlassen hat, zeugen vom Geiste ihrer Erbauer und ihrer Zeit auch dann noch, wenn sie längst nicht mehr ihren ursprünglichen Zwecken dienen. Die verlassenen Bauten der nationalsozialistischen Partei lassen als steinerne Zeugen die Erinnerung an jede Epoche lebendig werden, die in die furchtbarste Katastrophe deutscher Geschichte mündete.”

The meaning of this epigraph is at once obvious and ambiguous—does it refer to real buildings or imaginary ones? Both? What was these structures’ original function? How can ‘stone witnesses’ enliven memories? The viewer is about to find out. The film cuts abruptly from historical images (i.e. leading into the catastrophe) into the present (its aftermath). (Fig. IV-5a) A jangly piano chord

accompanies a sudden cut to a static shot of one of the Zeppelin-tribune's rear entrances, fronted by overgrown flagstones, which transitions into a tracking zoom, bringing the viewer uncomfortably close to material evidence of the NS past and its violence—both the building and a large pockmark from an explosion (which also looks suspiciously like splattered filth thrown against the facade). (Figs. IV-5b-d) As it fills the screen, a jump cut moves to the blocky, almost pixelated title screen. (Fig. IV-6) This opening sequence, shifting disorientingly from imaginary to real, fiction to fact, past-future to futures-past, portends and telegraphs the rest of the film's dynamic, aesthetic strategy. Kluge's film goes on to hurl fragments in the viewer's face in a nightmarish barrage of sight, sound, and space.⁵⁵²



Figures IV-5a-d – Stills from opening sequence of Brutalität in Stein, showing rear entrance to Zeppelin-tribune and tracking zoom movement toward the facade. Images show one continuous shot.

⁵⁵² “The protest fueling this experiment blends radical imitation with a frontal attack.” Rentschler, “Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge’s Brutality in Stone,” 35.



Figure IV-6 – Title screen of *Brutalität in Stein*

The film resurrects and works through the memory of the Nazi past—making history alive, meaningful, and useful in the present, not deadened, mythologized, or disavowed entirely.⁵⁵³ Ever the media-materialist, Kluge unearths the context of NS architecture’s cinematic reproduction and reception to point to the media that helped mobilize the industrial production of the Third Reich and legitimize its accomplishment through the most destructive means. But while Kluge’s film invokes the NS cinematic-architectural imaginary and redeploys its fragments, it radically alters the legibility of the regime’s built environment as it is reproduced on film.

This is obvious in the initial sequence on the PTG. *Die Bauten Adolf Hitlers* oriented the viewer in panoramic vistas of Speer’s buildings; Riefenstahl provided a God-like aerial view of Nürnberg and kingly processional through its streets before reaching the complex in *Triumph des Willens*; Kluge, on the other hand, drops us immediately into the fray. A frontal shot of the Zeppelin-tribune opens the film proper, bloated by the distortion of the wide-angle lens. (Fig. IV-7a) The voice-over announces, curtly, “Nürnberger Parteitagsgelände;” we hear the growing sound of drumbeats in steady rhythm on the soundtrack, and we’re off. “Vorwärts! vorwärts! schmettern

⁵⁵³ Rentschler writes, *BiS* “constitutes an eccentric work of archaeology...the guiding energy here ferrets out *Zusammenhang*, analyzing the relationship of parts to wholes, of building blocks to entire structures, of shapes/forms/surfaces to overall *Gestalten*, of spectators to historical speeches.” Rentschler 34. Hansen observes of Kluge’s films that they “engage in salvaging historical rubble from the drift of amnesia...The method is allegorical...wresting fragments from petrified contexts and inserting them into a new discourse while preserving their strange and jarring character.” Hansen, 70.

die hellen Fanfaren” blares harshly and then fades slowly out (at “sollen wir auch untergehen”), as the montage cuts at a steady, rapid pace between mostly static shots of the Zeppelin-tribune. Though the object is recognizable, the framing and point of view is alien, asymmetrical, cramped against the structure, whose moldering decay is visually emphasized in high contrast black and white. (Figs. IV-7b-f) Occasional rapid zooms toward window slits interrupt the montage’s otherwise steady pacing, synchronized with the revival of sound in further drumbeats—creating a kind of perceptual whiplash. Alternatively, detail close-up shots are sometimes suddenly doubled in size by a cut, allowing their object to be partially identified and giving the viewer a closer look, but mostly obscuring the space in its repetitive, almost abstract appearance, flattened into geometric planes. The sky is a notable absence, visible only at the margins of side-long views of



Figures IV-7a-f – Screen shots from PTG sequence showing frontal view of the central rear entrance to the Zeppelin-tribune (top left), side view of Zeppelin-tribune’s colonnade and flanking sides (top right), righthand side of Zeppelin-tribune’s central staircase (middle left), unidentified view of Zeppelin-tribune structure (middle right), detail view of Zeppelin-tribune cornice line (bottom left), diagonal view of Zeppelin-tribune’s front entrance with pilasters (bottom right)

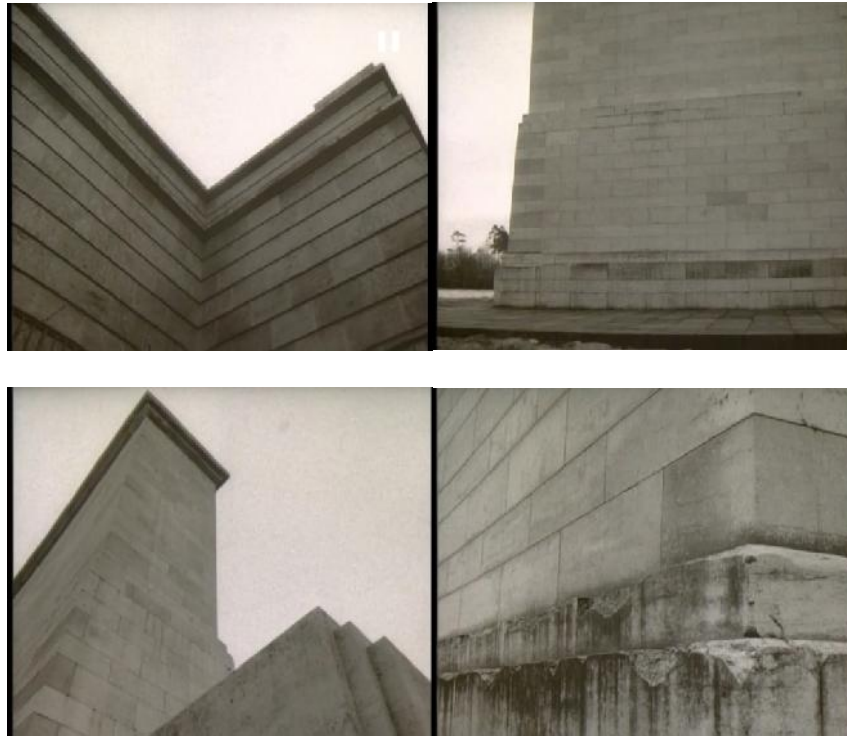
the central tribune.⁵⁵⁴ (Fig. IV-7b) The cadence of cutting and the repeated close ups of visually resonant subjects imitate Riefenstahl's and the *Deutsche Wochenschau*'s kinetic montage work; their fabrication of unity through repetition and the submersion of individual faces into a mass. In Kluge's film, however, there is no crowd, no visual order, and no Hitler at the center of the action, organizing the spatial (and ideological) construction of the montage and anchoring its ceaseless movement.

Nonetheless, Hitler and the Volk are spectrally, acoustically present.⁵⁵⁵ Kluge renders them symbolically, architecturally visible, shooting the ends of the Zeppelin-tribune's wings in a low-angle shot, an exaggerated imitation of Hitler's elevated framing from NS film. (Figs. IV-8a & d) Simultaneously, we hear Hitler proclaim, "Nur der kleinste Geist kann das Wesen einer Revolution ausschließlich in der Vernichtung sehen! Wir sahen es im Gegenteil, in einem gigantischen Aufbau!" Interspersed with these shots are alternate images of the structure: a medium shot of the enormous plinth (at "kleinste[r] Geist"), and close-ups of its jagged corners, jutting into the frame, as though the audience were squeezed too tightly against the stage to see upward. In this acoustic citation—the only one repeated in the film—*BiS* makes explicit architecture and cinema's mediating function, concealing historical violence behind its mythological imagery, and announces the purpose of its own critique. Namely, to resurrect and shatter—to begin *De-montage* on—the NS cinematic-architectural mythos of racialized, ideological unity. Citing this speech from 1934 (a stroke of genius from the collaborative production team) the film clearly articulates

⁵⁵⁴ There is virtually no horizon in these images, though it is standard in architectural photography to have two planes above and below to orient the viewer in space, and articulate the space in its framing.

⁵⁵⁵ Wenzel writes, "The temporal status of the camera image is additionally undermined through the soundtrack....The Party grounds in the 'now' of the 1960s are ominously depopulated...In their present-day desertion, however, they subtly correspond to the inhuman mobilisation of the masses brought to presence in the soundtrack. The film prompts us to ask: 'Where are the people who, not all that long ago, came here to acclaim their Führer? And where are those who didn't acclaim him?'" Wenzel, 183.

the Nazis’ admission of their own architectural chicanery.⁵⁵⁶ They knew all along that ‘Aufbau’ was inextricable from ‘Vernichtung’— Hitler announced as much at the outset!⁵⁵⁷ The film, therefore, allows buildings to stand in for and speak on behalf of absent, invisible bodies; to revive forgotten or repressed memories; and to refute the defensive claim of the NS generation, that they had ‘known nothing about it.’



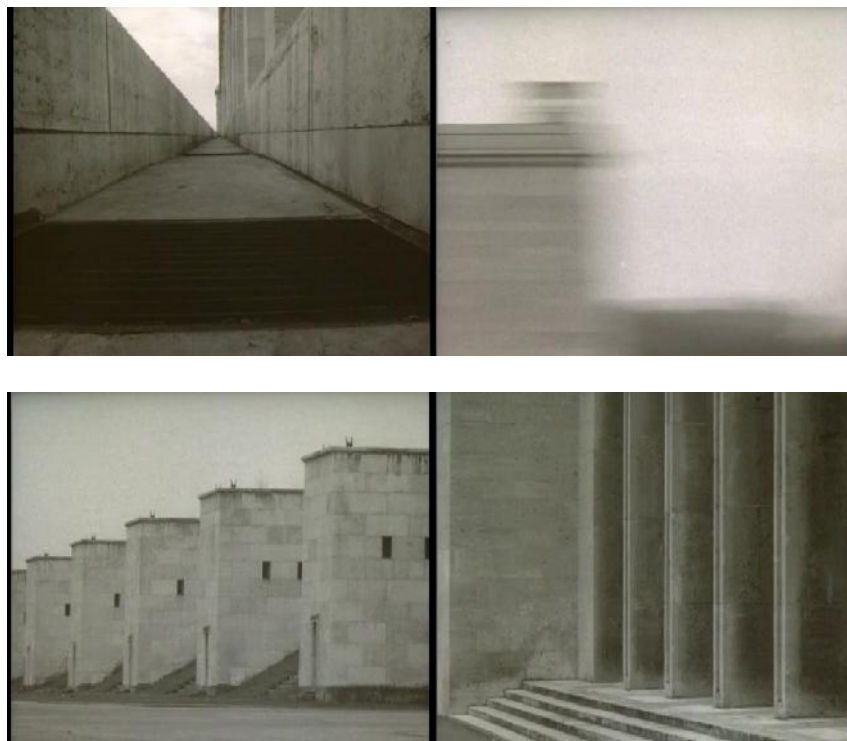
Figures IV-8a-d – Screenshots of the Zeppelin-tribune’s wings from PTG sequence. Left images mimic Hitler’s framing from NS film

Where the Nazis’ historical ‘movement’—which has no orientation in Kluge’s film, at least not one legible in space—leads is already known to the viewer. This trajectory is visually foregrounded as Hitler’s voice falls silent, in an almost-symmetrical, lengthy static shot, constrained by its single-point perspective; staring down a gutter with a massive industrial grate in the foreground toward an invisible vanishing point. (Fig. IV-9a)

⁵⁵⁶ The speech, which is never cited in secondary literature, was delivered in Unterhaching in Bavaria and can be found reproduced in full in "Die Führerrede in Unterhaching," *Namslauer Stadtblatt*, March 23 1934.

⁵⁵⁷ For the ideological connection between NS construction and industrialized mass murder, see: Michaud and Fox.

But before addressing this destination in detail, the film makes another round of the PTG, isolating ‘Motive,’ around the Zeppelin-feld, beginning with its Eternal Flame and empty plateaus of flagstones, again bereft of people and orientation, accompanied by a kettel-drum beat. (Figs. IV-9b-d) As in Riefenstahl’s *Triumph des Willens*, the shots are repetitive, and the sequence clearly borrows her style for the 1934 roll calls. But instead of panning across or cutting between faces, the camera whip-pans between rows of columns and towers, viewed askance, until we are brought back to the endless gutter-view, and the scene transitions to an anti-climax.



Figures IV-9a-d – Static shot down gutter behind Zeppelin-tribune (top left), whip pan across Zeppelin-tribune wing (top right), static shot of towers flanking Zeppelin-field (bottom left), canted view of Zeppelin-tribune colonnade & steps (bottom right)

A series of down-ward gazing tracking shots glide seemingly endlessly up the grand staircase of the Zeppelin-tribune, whose steps are slick with stagnant pools and lined with creeping black veins of filth. (Fig. IV-10a) (The effect is not unlike tracking shots of the New Chancellery’s marble floors in NS newsreels, though the reflection is at odds with the matte, stone surfaces) As the camera finally remains fixated on a single architectural object, we hear the Reichssymphonie

Orchestra warming up for a performance of Brahms, and Alfred Rosenberg’s announced delivery of the ‘Schlußwort,’ which gives way to a repetitive, communal chant of ‘Sieg heil,” as the camera finally centers on the central doorway of the Zeppelin-tribune’s front facade.⁵⁵⁸ Following immediately on this transition, the next sequence again adopts visual strategies from NS film—this time, expressly architectural—but switches gears, both in terms of the aesthetic style and the content of its acoustic citations. Specifically, it expands the range of ‘testimony’ symbolically delivered by its architectural subjects. As the ‘Sieg-heiling’ fades out, the camera tracks momentarily backward and then steadily toward the closed portal. (Fig. IV-10b)



Figures IV-10a-b – Still from the tracking shots up the Zeppelin-tribune’s steps (left), symmetrical shot of central portal on the building front as the tracking shifts from backward-to forward (right)

A dissolve brings us into the Zeppelin-tribune’s colonnade and the montage continues with a series of forward tracking shots. The camera’s view, canted upward from a pedestrian view to capture the inlaid swastika pattern on the ceiling, also occasionally looks askance at the bases of neighboring columns, and moves through other similar spaces, doggedly symmetrical in their framing, toward closed portals, and up and down interior staircases, eventually arriving in the unfinished Kongresshalle. (Figs. IV-11a-f) This unbroken forward movement, replacing jump cuts with soft fades, distinctly mimics the trajectory through the New Chancellery’s diplomatic route

⁵⁵⁸ While the sounds are partially, undeniably authentic, it is unclear whether the narration, in almost hushed tones, comes from the acousmatic material or the contemporary voiceover. This is, of course, because we cannot see any bodies, only buildings.

reproduced in newsreels. But the acoustic collage of NS propaganda has here fallen silent. Instead, the steady flow of spatial images is accompanied by an affectless reading of Rudolf Höß's testimony from 1946, describing the industrialized, mass murder of deported Jews from Poland. The voice-over details the difficulties in preventing panic among the victims, as they are forced into the gas chamber "und die Türen zugeschraubt"; e.g. women hiding their infants in piles of clothing, discovered by SS officers and forced to bring them along to their deaths. Within the Kongresshalle's vacant interior, opposite an empty window radiating harsh, brilliant light, Höß's testimony emphasizes the need to maintain a constant flow of bodies to accommodate the incoming transports. (Figs. IV-11e-f) The voiceover remarks, "Es muss auch Nachts verbrannt werden, um die eintreffenden Transporten nicht abstoppen zu müssen." The interior window's shape distinctly reminiscent of the crematoria ovens.



Figures IV-11a-f – Forward tracking shot through Zeppelin-tribune colonnade (top left), sidelong views from tracking shots of an unidentified set of columns (top right), forward tracking shot toward inner door of Zeppelin-tribune colonnade (middle left), tracking shot up stairs from within Zeppelin-tribune colonnade (middle right), tracking shot toward empty window in unfinished Kongresshalle (bottom left), continuation of previous shot (bottom right)

The scene thus appropriates the movement of NS architectural films—used to symbolically articulate the NS ideological order, as the invisible body, made present by the subjective camera, is directed in space toward an already-determined destination (Hitler’s vision of the *Volksreich*). But, here, cinematic-architectural representation is deployed to evoke the unstoppable, senseless violence and monstrous ‘unfinished business’ unleashed by the NS state apparatus, inextricably tied to the production of its imperial-architectural mythology.

Through the repeated engagement with the Third Reich’s intermedial archive, *BiS* outlines an alternate history, in which the memory of the Nazis’ victims is preserved and projected in the cinematic mediation of their prospective, architectural monuments. *BiS*’s images of NS buildings are thus symbolically employed to remember a past that can no longer be seen, either because it has been *destroyed* or because it was *never constructed*—as was the case regarding the majority of their monumental buildings. It further exploits the historical/utopian impulse behind NS architectural (re)production and its *prospective* temporality: i.e. Hitler’s aim to provide monuments through which the Third Reich’s historical rise could be symbolically mediated in advance of its arrival, without revealing the destruction (*Vernichtung*) necessary for its construction (*Aufbau*).⁵⁵⁹

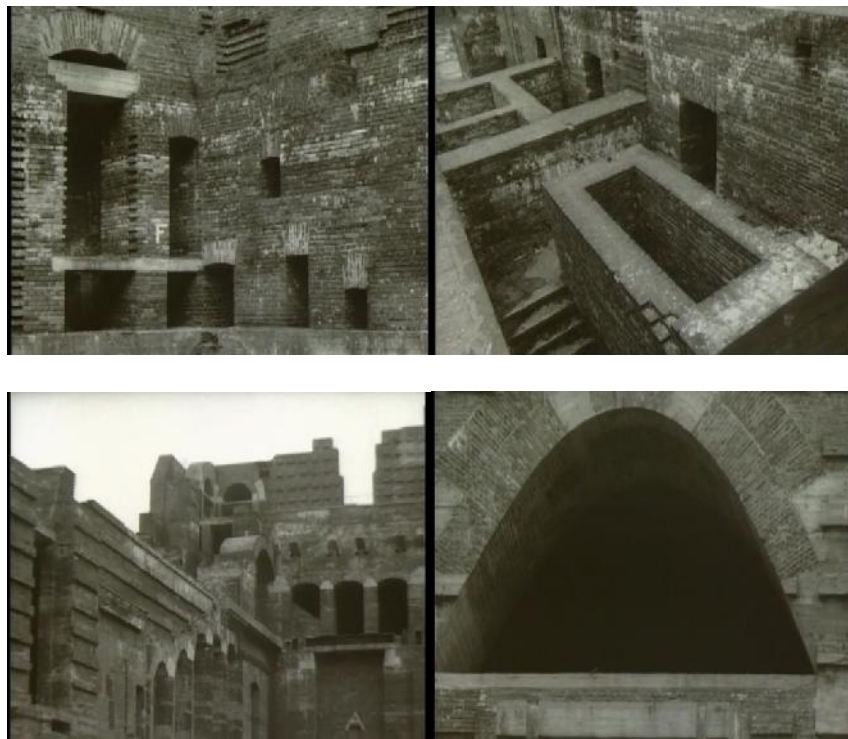
Hence, in the next sequence of the “Baustelle Kongresshalle” the voiceover notes the suspension of building during the war but then insists, in a 1943 citation from the *Deutsche Wochenschau*, “so nimmt die deutsche Kulturschaffen auch während des Krieges ungestört seinen Fortgang.” (Fig. IV-12a-e) As the montage—and the film’s only panoramic shot introducing the site—visually registers the empty, rubble strewn space of the postwar landscape, it simultaneously indicates the *foreclosure* of the Nazis’ historical movement and the voids left in their wake. The

⁵⁵⁹ Pavsek discusses the utopian impulse behind Kluge’s cinematic practice in *The Artists in the Big-Top: Perplexed* (1967) and regarding *BiS*. See: Pavsek, 152-5, 216-23. For Kluge, “the critique of fascism cannot be exclusively negative; it must acknowledge the utopian aspects, the collective identifications and libidinal attachments, the figurations of collective life that the fascist project entailed and which remain unclaimed” *ibid.*, 220.

film, therefore, evokes the simultaneous presence and absence of the NS past—making its memories ‘come alive’—mediated through its cinematically fabricated, fragmented visibility and audibility, reconstructing past experience in a theater of memory through the film’s didactic, accusatory montage.



Figure IV-12a – BiS’s panoramic shot of the unfinished Kongresshalle, cut together by author. Camera moves from right to left.



Figures IV-12b-e – Concluding shots from the Baustelle Kongresshalle montage sequence showing detail views of the interior.

If the Germans refused to acknowledge what they had to do with the bodies piled up outside their borders, or to look at or listen to evidence of their having been there at all, Kluge cinematically resurrects these ghosts in decidedly more familiar sites, closer to home, in a style the audience

could readily understand. Crucially, however, the film does not limit its meditation on the Third Reich's violence to its industrialized production of death. Rather, its central sequence also turns to Germany's urban (self-)destruction in the air war. Much like in the preceding scenes, it continues to elide the emotionally charged images of devastation; instead, it again uses sound to project painful memories onto architectural images of the NS state's unrealized, past-future.

As in the preceding scenes, in the montages of 'Zukunftsbilder' and 'Die Umgestaltung deutscher Stadt,' architectural media is employed to visually articulate the ideological relationship between Fuhrer and Volk in space, while acoustic 'commentary' revises its legibility. Here, however, the critique is framed in reference to and relies on images of *bodies* inhabiting the representational landscape of the NS past. Doubling down on the explicit connection between 'Aufbau' and 'Vernichtung,' the opening shot zooms in on a cropped photograph of Fritz Erler's *Portrat des Fuhrers* (1939) in the Haus der Kunst, as we hear a truncated repetition of the same citation from Hitler's 1934 speech (beginning at 'ausschlielich'). (Fig. IV-13) The citation extends to the next shot, which pans down over a 'candid' photograph of Hitler at work on architectural designs, moving from his face to hands. (Figs. IV-14a-b) The ensuing montage then stages a confrontation between the fantasy world Germans told themselves they were building—the myth of monumental construction, envisioned and led by the Fuhrer as Bauherr—and the reality they actually produced—the total destruction of Germany's cities, first at the hands of Speer's demolition crews and, where they left off, by the Allied bombers.⁵⁶⁰ By the 1960s, the mutually reinforcing connections between the NS building economy and the destruction of Germany's architectural landscape had already been well established.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁶⁰ Berlin's demolition at the hands of Speer's office of the Generalbauinspektor, and its transformation in the Nazi press into a symbolic image of the capital's reconstruction is covered in detail in the first chapter of this dissertation.

⁵⁶¹ Speer's GBI had internally accepted the bombing war as the continuation of their own work, and while this was not widely publicized until the release of Speer's autobiography, the rhetorical connection between practices of purposeful and "unintentional" demolition was common in reportage from the immediate postwar period. See chapter iii.



Figure IV-13 – Opening shot of BiS’s central sequence, showing Fritz Erler’s *Porträt des Führers* in the *Haus der Kunst*



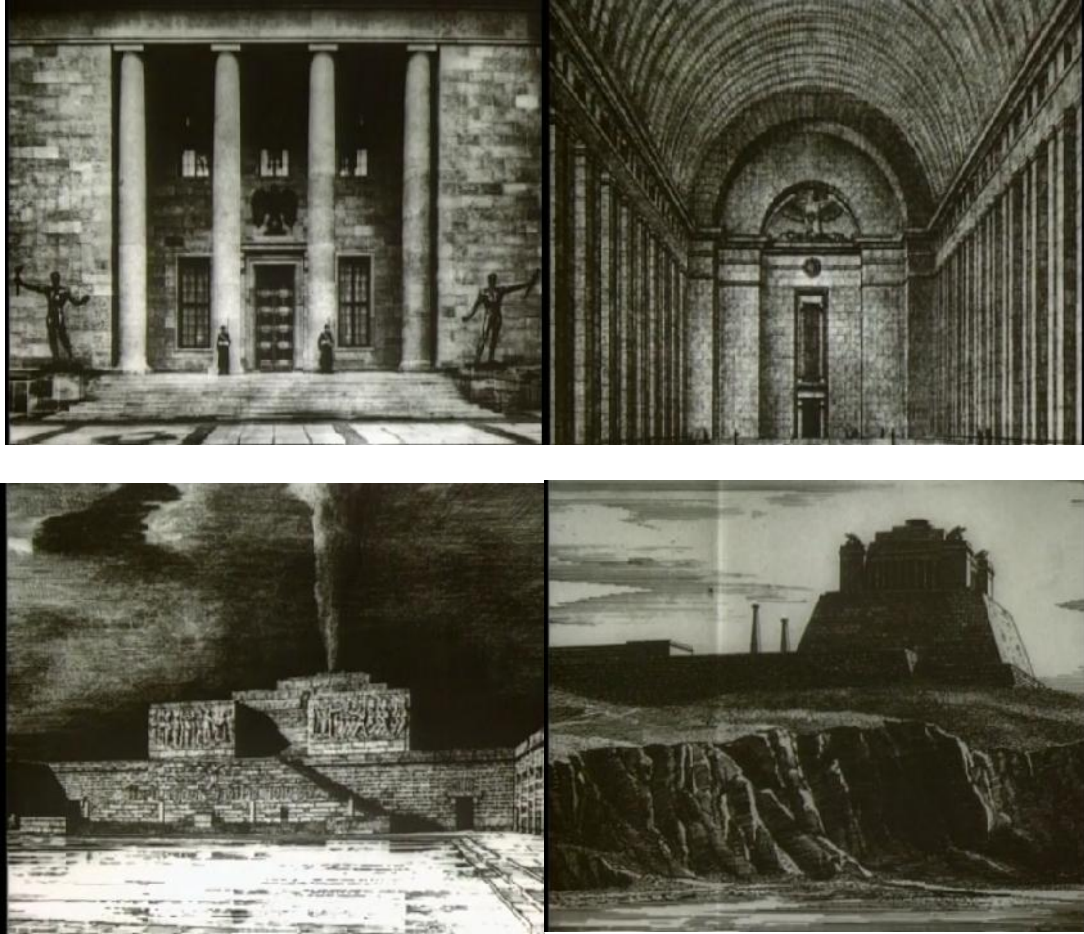
Figures IV-14a-b – Stills of the second shot of BiS’s central sequence, showing Hitler at work on architectural drawings. The images show the opening and concluding frames of a single shot, following a downward pan.

Their juxtaposition here, in sound and image, doesn’t reveal the *contradiction* between fantasy and reality, so much as their *dissonance*. No coincidence, a dissonant funerary dirge plays over the montage that follows. Announced by the voice-over, we see “Ideenskizzen Hitlers,” a series of sketchy drawings culminating in the Great Hall. These transition, introduced by a photograph of the New Chancellery’s Honor Court, toward which the camera briefly zooms, into “Zukunftsbilder,” (again, announced by the voice-over without further commentary). We see conceptual drawings of Speer’s plans for the North-South-Axis, the crypt of Wilhelm Kreis’s

Soldatenhalle, and his Totenburgen, destined to line the furthest reaches of the empire. (Figs. IV-15a-d) Framing future NS buildings with a single representative of an actually constructed one, the New Chancellery, the montage subtly signals the material implementation of Hitler's ideological, architectural fantasy in the lead up to war.

Further, these images of propaganda continue to foreground and fragment the ideological NS architectural aesthetics, invoked in the preceding sequences. The camera initially continues the forward motion from the initial shot over the next several cuts of interior views—again reminiscent of the cinematic reproduction of the New Chancellery from NS newsreels, fading seamlessly between spaces. Framed by the personalization of the NS future as seen through Hitler's 'sovereign gaze,' and informed by his romantic tastes, the slow zooms and frontal perspective highlight the images' fascinating quality and depth, drawing the viewer *into* the scenes. Yet this fascination is constrained by the suddenly largely-static camera's more detached perusal, even as it begins to vary the techniques employed in montage: panning across cropped images, repeating (at a markedly slower pace) cuts to closer views of the same buildings, and suggesting the progression between sketch to conceptual design in sequential images of Kreis's *Totenburgen*. Still reeling from the barrage of fragmented views from the PTG sequence, the viewer is provided relief in the form of critical distance, which subjects the architectural images to a more alienating, interrogating gaze. The building images' realism and complexity increases over the course of the sequence; the montage subtly intimates the architectural production of ideological unity, framed by the Führer's symbolic perspective (at least initially). In the sequence's second half, curtly titled by the voiceover, "Umgestaltung der deutschen Städte," the visual-architectural montage is submerged in the sounds of violence, unleashed as the Nazis failed to produce the future they envisioned.⁵⁶²

⁵⁶² In his discussion of the NS state's superimposition of classical, 'charismatic authority' onto the modern machinery of bureaucratic governance, Ian Kershaw writes, "The tension between the two could neither subside nor turn into a stable and



Figures IV-15a-d – Frontal view of the Honor Court’s portico leading into the main structure of the New Chancellery (top left), design sketches showing an interior view of the arched interior of Wilhelm Kreis’s Soldatenhalle (top right) and designs for Kreis’s Totenburgen (bottom left and right)

The wail of an air raid siren extends over an interpretive drawing of Hitler and Speer overseeing a collage of building projects from Hans Liska. (Fig. IV-16a) Far from letting the building images ‘speak for themselves,’ *BiS* does just the opposite. Punctuated by the sound of incoming ballistics, the ensuing montage silences the romantic acoustic dimension of NS architectural cinema. The cutting rate and depth of the images increase over a series of partial building views—cropped illustrations from NS publications showing elevations, ornamental details, and blackened window grids of monolithic structures. We further encounter increasingly

permanent form of state. Allied to the underlying ideological thrust and the varied social forces which Hitler represented, this created a dynamism—intrinsically self-destructive since the regime was unable to reproduce itself.” Kershaw, “Hitler and the Uniqueness of Nazism,” 246-7.

complex representations: aerial views of city plans, model photographs, and the slick, expressive cinematography of *Das Wort aus Stein*. (Figs IV-16b-f) In the obvious technological work of the authors—past and present—the sequence visually emphasizes the mediated reproduction of this architectural fantasy.⁵⁶³

Paradoxically, the cinematic images appear at once increasingly realistic and spectral; rendered eerily silent, both due to pauses in the din and because the originals had always been accompanied by a dramatic score.⁵⁶⁴ Reframed in this way, the soundtrack produces further critical distance in the viewer by providing *commentary* to the images onscreen: the acoustic, bureaucratic documentation of NS violence, expressly connected to architectural production. The voiceover announces a citation from “Tischgespräch Hitlers vom 8.en Juni 42, Protokol:”

“Man müsse die Völker kontinental Europas ganz planmäßig auf den germanischen Gedanken hinlenken. Es sei sogar gut diese Arbeit durch Umbenennung der Reichshauptstadt Berlin in Germania einen besonders nachhaltigen Auftrieb zu geben, denn der Name Germania für die Reichshauptstadt in ihrer neuen repräsentativen Form sei geeignet zwischen jedem Angehörigen des germanischen Rassekerns an diese Hauptstadt ein Gefühl der Zusammengehörigkeit zu erzeugen, dass eine solche Umbenennung Berlins auch technisch keine Schwierigkeiten mache, zeige die Verdeutschung Gdingen in Gotenhafen und die Umbenennung vom Lodz in Litzmanstadt.”

Invoking a series of cascading associations—the air war, the racialized policies of NS expansion into the East, and its material connection to Berlin’s redevelopment—the soundscape anchors the images, not allowing them to drift into the utopian. Like the building images, which refer to a material reality, but not necessarily the one depicted onscreen, the acoustic citations correspond to real historical events and simultaneously abstract from them. Who is reading Hitler’s words? Who carried out his orders? Do we hear authentic recordings of the bombings or merely sound effects? The soundtrack makes us consider what we *cannot* see.

⁵⁶³ The claims regarding *BiS*’s exclusion of direct, visual citations of NS architectural film, noted in fn550, are thus downright confusing, considering these are some of the most jarring moments of audio-visual contrast in the film.

⁵⁶⁴ e.g. Clemens Schmalstich’s swelling Wagnerian imitation in *Das Wort aus Stein*, and the *Deutsche Wochenschau*’s use of *Götterdämmerung*’s *Trauermarsch* for Siegfried for state funerals held in the New Chancellery’s Mosaic Room.

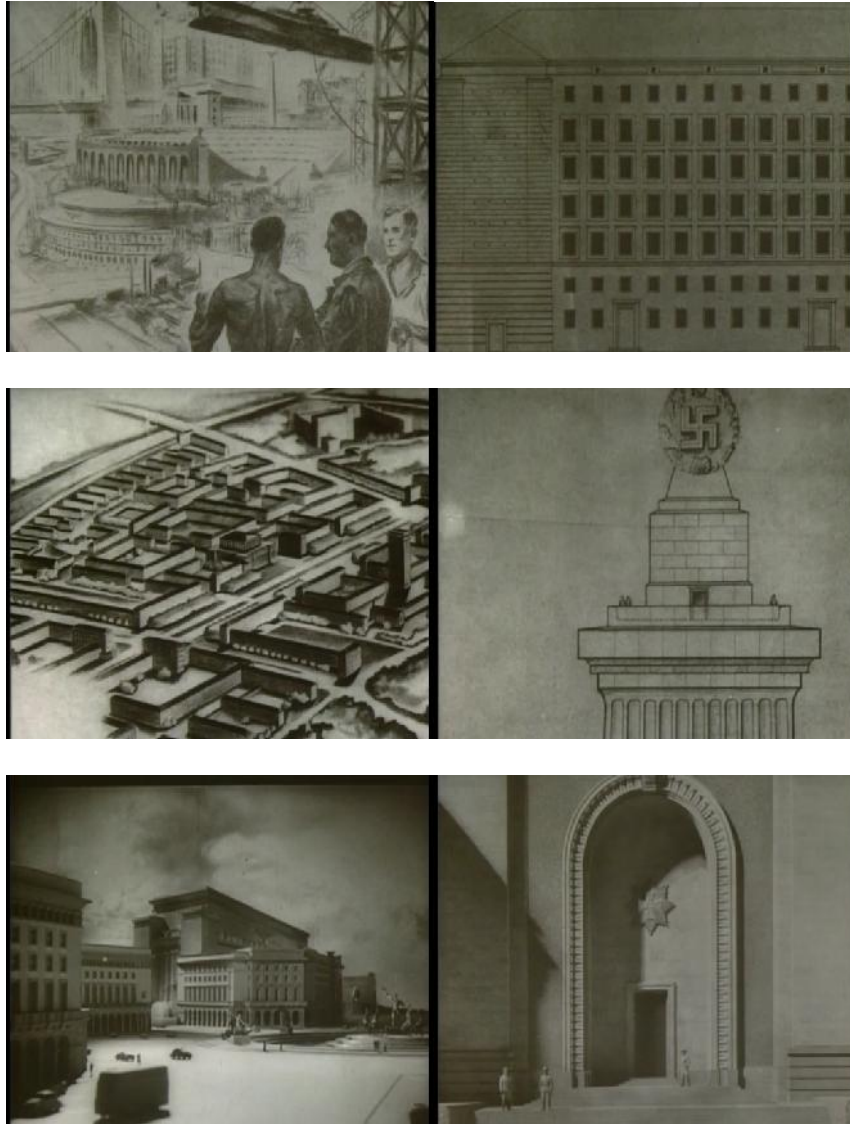


Figure IV-16a-f – Introductory image from the ‘Umgestaltung deutscher Städte’ sequence, a drawing showing Hitler and Speer overseeing building projects (top left), cropped elevation of an unidentified NS building (top right), aerial view of an NS city plan (middle left), finial of an unidentified NS building shown in a conceptual elevation (middle right), still from a citation of *Das Wort aus Stein* showing Runder Platz with the Soldatenhalle in the background at center (bottom left), model photograph of oversized entrance to unidentified NS building.

For, despite the phantasmatic character of the images, the sequence reminds the viewer that the (urban and human) demolition clearing the way for the NS future—the context of these images’ production—had certainly been real. It identifies architecture’s ideological function as “Hinlenkung,” not distraction (*Ablenkung*) but *steerage, guidance*, generating political cohesion amid crisis. In a similar fashion, images of *ruined* architecture were also employed throughout the

war and since to show that Allied bombing was as brutal as it was senseless, having “not destroyed German morale”; the nation had ‘stiffened its resolve’ with images of its aspirational architectural prowess and its own devastation.⁵⁶⁵ But the film *refuses* to reproduce the emotionally-laden visuals of the rubble landscape and, thereby, reinvigorate the narrative of German victimhood.

Instead, *BiS* simply points to how the morale, tenacity, and the mobilization for ‘total war’ was sustained: in the symbolic, architectural promise of a future yet to come, which would make the Germans’ suffering worthwhile, by building an indelible image of the Volk into world-historical memory or, failing that, burning out in a blaze of glory. Alongside the surely triggering sounds of the bombs, falling steadily throughout the sequence, Hitler’s own words are commentary enough to expose the folly of this pilgrimage into the abyss. The second acoustic citation of a “Führerbefehl vom 20.en August 43” drives the point home:

“Ich brauche schnell eine million Wohnungen für Fliegergeschädigte und Ausgebombte. Die Wohnfläche stelle ich mir vor in dem Ausmaß von 3 bis 3,5-4 Meter, Ausführungsmaterial, ob aus Holz oder Beton usw ist mir gleichgültig. Ich denke sogar an Lebenshütten oder schlimmstenfalls Erdlöcher einfach mit Brettern überdeckt. Die Häuser sollen möglichst einzeln aufgestellt werden in Schrebergärten, in Anlehnung an Städte und Dörfer, an der Peripherie der Städte möglichst unter Bäumen versteckt in der Nähe von Höhlen oder Schutzraumanlagen usw.”

The evidence of the Third Reich’s real architectural affordances, under construction even as images of the ‘Wort aus Stein’ continued to flood Germany’s media landscape, offers a damning indictment. In 1943, while Hitler was renovating and reinforcing his personal Führerbunker, these were the accommodations he had in mind for the rest of the Volk. If Kluge’s film doesn’t have a precise narrative, its message is clear enough: this was Germany’s collective fantasy, viewed in theaters, while the material evidence of war, annihilation, death, and demolition raged and piled up all around. And it wasn’t even a particularly believable one.

⁵⁶⁵ Crew, 111, 59-60.

Yet the evidence that the Germans *had* believed in the Führer and his vision of the (unbuilt) future is abundantly, photographically on display in the sequence, since the montage includes images of the Volk sharing in his mythos. Overlaid by the above quotation are five images of parades held at Troost's *Haus der Kunst* showing Germans garbed in medieval costume, carrying the models from the 2nd Architecture and Handicrafts-Exhibition (the occasion for *Das Wort aus Stein*'s production). (Figs. IV-17a-d) There is no mistaking the purpose of their sardonic inclusion: to emphasize the literally central ideological role of NS architecture and its mythical, multimedial representation in producing the success, popularity, and dogged faith in the Führer-Mythos. The evidence of the Volk's enthusiasm for it is obvious in the traces it left behind: widespread devastation, building projects, finished and unfinished, and the archival media preemptively documenting their historical rise.

The photographs provide evidence showing that the 'reconstruction' of the Volk's body in architectural space was not pure abstraction or symbolic representation but corresponded to a material reality produced *through their participation*. The film thereby undermines the symbolic legibility of the Volk's body—incorporated by Hitler as "Bauherr," represented in space. It visualizes, instead, Germany's perpetrators, the absence haunting the landscape of the present. The PTG may have been deserted now, but not too long ago, the faithful had been carrying these models like they were holy relics through the nearby streets of Munich, the *Hauptstadt der Bewegung*, and saving the image for posterity—or, better, for their national myth of resurrection. The film acoustically contextualizes the visual evidence of their participation in this fantasy with documents of the reality that it helped produce and lets the viewer's memory or imagination do the rest.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶⁶ For a detailed discussion of Kluge's 'film in the head' and his conceptualization of *Phantasie*, leaning heavily on Kantian theories of cognition, see: Pavsek, 160-7; and Hansen, 59-61.



Figures IV-17a-d – Stills from BiS showing photographs from the parades held for the Tag der deutschen Kunst in Munich⁵⁶⁷

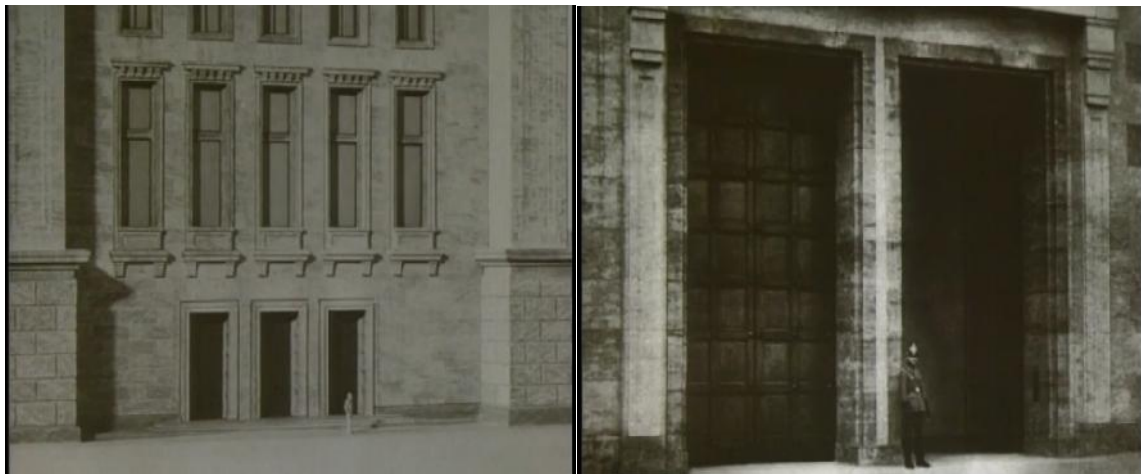
The outsized, megalomaniacal nature of the shared fantasy of Hitler’s Volksreich is also critiqued in the sequence through the relation of the body to architectural space. The visual representation of built space always invokes its occupation by a body; implied by the camera’s subjective perspective or symbolically visualized in staffage. As is typical, the NS models and drawings include human figures to indicate scale, which the camera shows in selective close-up. (Figs. IV-16d & f) The framing renders the monumentality of the spaces evident, even while much of the buildings are bracketed from view. It is also awkward enough that the figures appear comically tiny.⁵⁶⁸ The dissonance in scale points to both the self-negating and self-parodying megalomania of Speer’s designs and the magnitude of (unseen) destruction enacted in service of

⁵⁶⁷ For the history of these parades, see: Stefan Schweizer, *"Unserer Weltanschauung Sichtbaren Ausdruck Geben" Nationalsozialistische Geschichtsbilder in Historischen Festzügen Zum "Tag Der Deutschen Kunst"* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007). Notably, amateur footage from this event provide the material for the opening sequence of Joachim C. Fest’s *Hitler – Eine Karriere* (1977), analyzed in the following chapter.

⁵⁶⁸ One might be tempted to point to the “domination” of the body by the space—but the casual disposition of the figures—since staffage is rarely expressive—suggests no such thing.

their production; the destruction, as before, is acoustically invoked but visually concealed.⁵⁶⁹

The montage of Germany's architectural past-future is bracketed by two photographs of an actual built space, inhabited by real bodies: both of the New Chancellery. The inaugural accomplishment of Berlin's NS redevelopment, as mentioned above, the photograph of the Honor Court serves as the hinge between Hitler's "Ideenskizzen" and the subsequent "Zukunftsbilder." As it turned out, this was the *only* completed part of the project—fittingly, another photograph of the building concludes the sequence. Following a final model photograph, which pans down to show a tiny human figure standing, casually, with its hands in its pockets, the montage cuts to a tightly cropped photo of the New Chancellery's double-portal on Wilhelmplatz, fronted by a single S.S. guard, his position and casual demeanor echoing the preceding image. (Figs. IV-18a & b) The New Chancellery had been the architectural frame for the Führer's embodiment of the NS state and people, 'proof' of his efficacy as *Bauherr*—yet here we see an isolated member of the Volk.



Figures IV-18a & b – Second to last shot of the 'Umgestaltung der deutschen Städte' sequence, showing a model photograph following a downward pan (left), final shot of the sequence, showing a photograph of the New Chancellery's entrance on Wilhelmplatz, fronted by an S.S. guard (right)

⁵⁶⁹ This symbolic-spatial comparison is reversed in the photographs of the parade-pilgrims carrying the models, but produces similar results. The juxtaposition at once places the Volk in the symbolic, scopic position of the Führer, by virtue of their size, and mocks the stature of their preemptively celebrated accomplishments. Germany's complicity in ideological fantasies—the capacity of the Volk to see *themselves* through the Führer's eyes, within this future landscape while, in fact, situated in the destruction of the present—is undeniable as it is documented in photographs.

In this and the image of the Honor Court, the human figures appear, at first glimpse, to again function as a mere measurement of scale; the building is mostly occluded from view, but their tiny stature suggests its monumental size. In the Honor Court, the guards' bodies are further scaled up, doubled to either side by Thorak's bronze nudes of the 'Partei' and 'Wehrmacht.' As the second image makes clear, what these images in fact display the crass opposition between the scale of the architectural future NS Germany imagined for itself, through Hitler, and the people's own position within it. The image of the portal on Wilhelmplatz, which closes the sequence, uses the building's excessive scale to cut the body back down to size. The slouching SS guard, staring blankly into the camera, is dwarfed by the doors behind him, meant for automobiles rather than people. Contrary to the purported disciplinary effect of Speer's architecture, his body is neither aligned with the orthogonal lines, nor even at attention. The photograph highlights the embarrassing reality of the Führer's architectural accomplishments. Not only does this image highlight the regime's sole success in Berlin—which, further, had already been destroyed—but also the misalignment in scale and *exclusion* of the Volk from their own castles in the sky (and on the ground). And, here Kluge's montage hangs, unmoving, as a repeated, almost playful, quiet piano phrase brings us back to the PTG in the present.

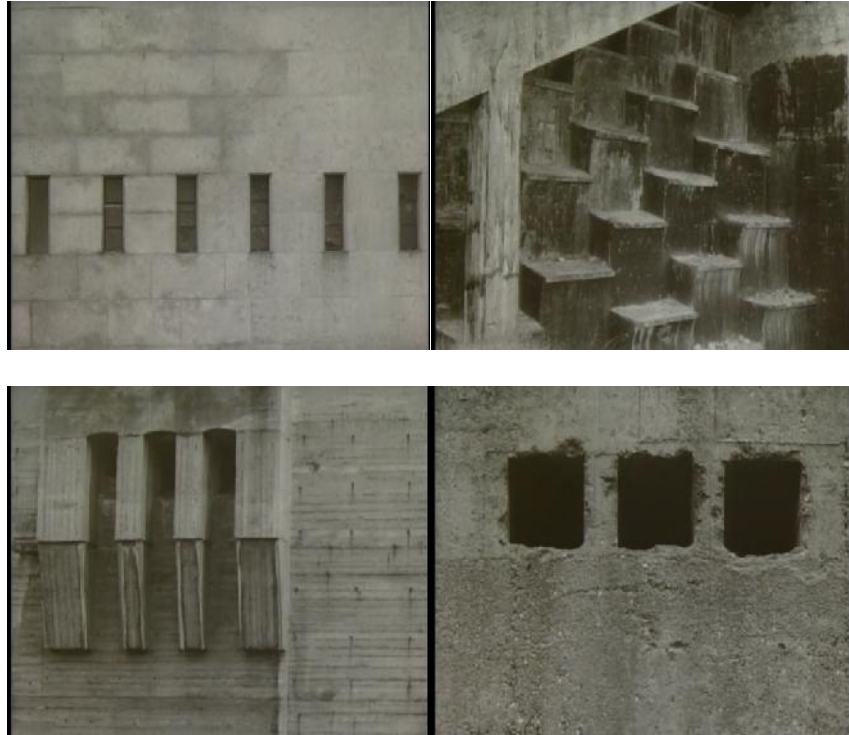
Before addressing the film's conclusion, it bears mentioning that, in a work so utterly concerned with *deconstructing* the ideological order of the NS architectural archive, Kluge leaves the New Chancellery relatively intact. Meant to act as a gateway into Germany's imperial future, its portal, closed and guarded, hints at the foreclosure of the NS historical 'movement.' But, further, *BiS* can dispense with demolishing this central site on the Third Reich's phantom topography, for it had already disappeared. Tellingly, by concluding this sequence at the New Chancellery's portal on Wilhelmstraße, the film gestures to but ultimately elides the visual archive

of Berlin's rubble landscape. As argued in chapter iii, images of the New Chancellery's ruin on Wilhelmplatz were employed in the immediate postwar period to index the destruction of Berlin and NS Germany at large. Kluge instead projects it as a screen over the memories of German victimhood; using it to frame the Volk as participant and perpetrator. The building remains positioned, however, at the far side of the gap opened by the Third Reich's collapse, the blank space of the intervening 15 years—which, as in the opening, we skip over to return to the present.

With the sounds of the past echoing in our ears, and the visual-architectural memories conjured over the previous eight minutes in fast forward imprinted on the mind's eye, at the end of Kluge's film we return to the PTG. (Figs. IV-19a-d) Repeating the imagery of the opening sequence—now overlaid with silence and moving in an unsteady rhythm between static shots—the abandoned, partially constructed landscape, viewed in fragmented images, reinforces the materiality of history and the continued presence of its unredeemed evidence. The “construction site” of the past evokes the unfinished business of fascism still littering the present.⁵⁷⁰ But, revised through the commentary of the preceding sequences, the silent shots of blackened window grids and unfinished interiors now appear both more bunker-like and more reminiscent of the other, unseen, ruined industrial sites of NS violence (like those in Resnais's *Night and Fog*). That is, their ideological meaning, merging of *Aufbau* and *Vernichtung*, is more easily legible in the architectural images, owing to the film's preceding critique. Shown in silence, the viewer has a moment to contemplate the scene, as the acoustic montage offers a final piece of evidence: a reading of a vile *Bund der deutschen Mädchen* song by a female voice-over.⁵⁷¹

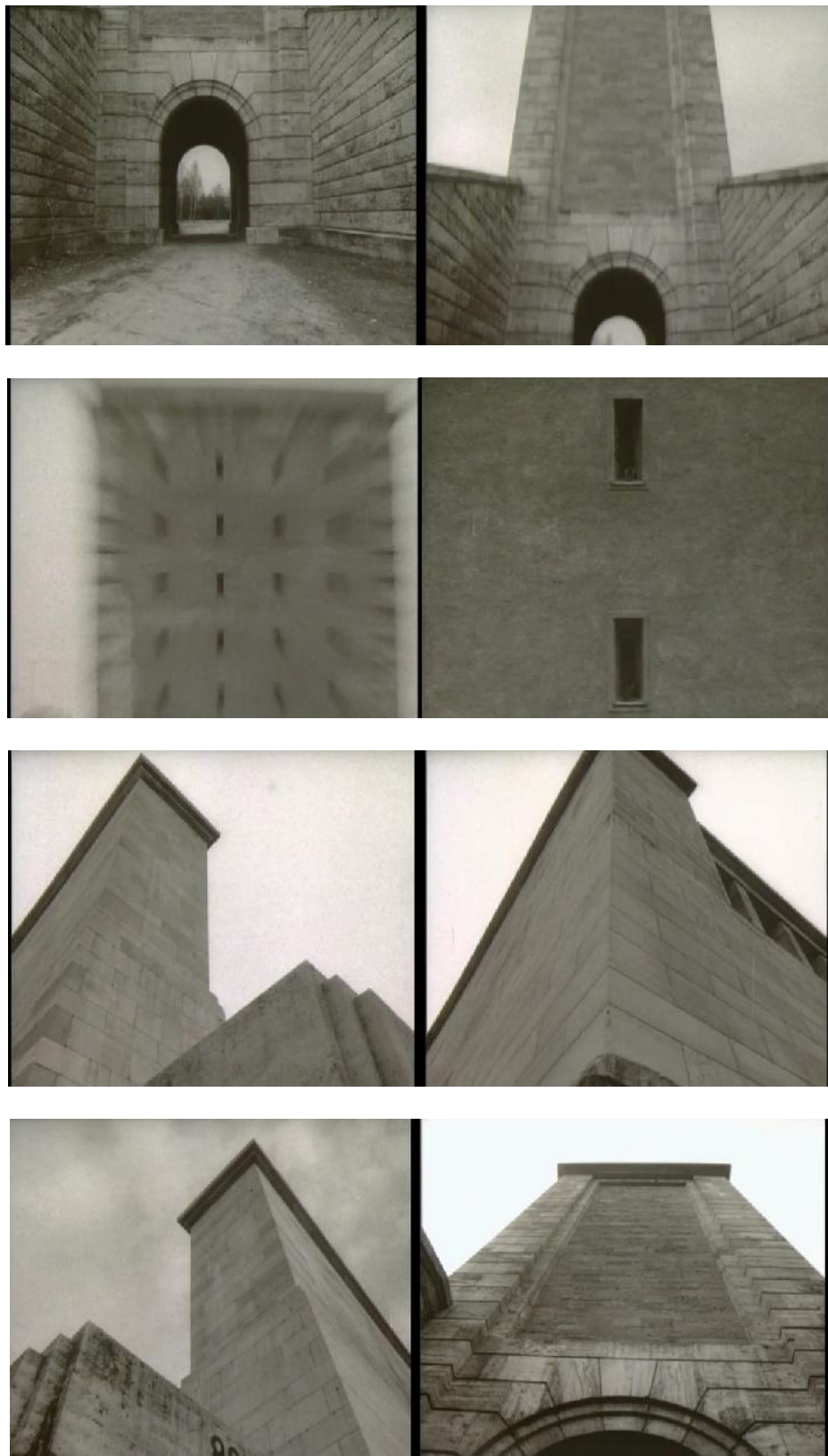
⁵⁷⁰ Hansen, 70; Pavsek, 204-8.

⁵⁷¹ The voice is possibly Alexandra Kluge's, but it is uncredited. The song text reads, “Lied der Geusen: Nun tapfer Schwert sei geehrt deinen Wert, schmetter zu Erde die grimmen Leuen, die uns bedräuen, die blutrunstigen Scharren, möge das Blut dieser Brut unsere Schwelle bespritzen, über Schutt und Leichen die Bann, feige Knechte rückte nur heran. Vaterland, wir schützen dich gut, Fließen sollen strömen, feindes falsches Blut.”



Figures IV-19a-d – Stills from concluding sequence, showing Zeppelin-tribune and the unfinished Kongresshalle

Thereafter, just before its conclusion, the film symbolically reprises the Third Reich's collapse. Following one, last kinetic montage of low-angle shots of towering buildings and frantic zooms, introduced with a sudden whip-pan upwards and a final blast of Liszt's *Fanfare*, the brass orchestra intones over a static shot of ruined steps, fading into the belated sound of an explosion. (Figs. IV-20a-f & 21) The camera then cuts to a pile of forsaken blocks (unused material for the Märzfeld and Kongresshalle), which appears, at once, as rubble and construction site. The concluding sequence, further, blends cinematic intertexts from the past and present—ones, moreover, specifically concerned with representing history in architectural space. Strafing the massive pile of blocks, scattered through an empty field, in a series of silent, lateral tracking shots, the camera's movement is suddenly smooth, only occasionally interrupted by long cuts to close-ups of the material. The images are distinctly evocative of Renais's meditation on the destruction of the Jews, mediated through the ruins of Auschwitz-Birkenau—the numerical codes inscribed



Figures IV-20a-f – Final kinetic montage of BiS, shown in sequence. First four images show single shots, incorporating a vertical whip-pan and zoom (top two rows), bottom four show cuts between static images.



Figure IV-21 – Still shot of the unfinished Märzfeld, which appears onscreen and is then followed by the sound of an explosion. on stone draw an uncomfortable visual analogy to the bodies of the camp inmates. (Figs. IV-22a-b) The scene also, however, visually references the opening of Riefenstahl's *Olympia*, with its cinematic-genesis of the Volk from the Acropolis's ruins; particularly the final cut, which fades out as the camera approaches the Kongresshalle's ruined courtyard in a tracking shot. (Fig. IV-23)

Contextualizing these two moments in the Third Reich's cinematic-architectural archive with each other—while acknowledging and implicitly pointing to their ideological contradiction—*BiS* suggests that both are useful and necessary for the task of remembering, repeating, and working through the past. The landscape of the present, strewn with historical debris, visually emphasizes the inability to restore or easily represent what has been lost; while also asserting the imperative to critically reflect on the past, assisted through the medium of film, in order to subvert further catastrophe in the future. Yet by looping back and beginning again, at the end of the film (at the cinematic site of Germany's mythical, ideological origin), *BiS* leaves unanswered the question of what might become of this rubble.



Figures IV-22a & b – Establishing shot of final montage, a static image of piles of blocks (left), central frame during tracking shots through the blocks (right)



Figure IV-23 – Concluding shot of BiS, showing three frames of a lateral tracking shot through the Kongresshalle ruin; film fades out over far right-hand image

In light of its visual emphasis on and symbolic use of architectural debris, *BiS* is a kind of *Trümmerfilm*. More specifically, it is a performative, productive act of cinematic archeology and demolition. The film reconstructs the memories of NS architectural fantasies, resurrecting their affective dimension, in order to critically engage and deconstruct their ideological fascination and legibility. The memory work of Young German Film, represented in this early act of protest, is thus both Marxist: critiquing fascist ideology by identifying its continuity with the conditions and technologies of its material and aesthetic reproduction; and Freudian: an act of historical revision that aims to change pathological behavior. In both cases, the film aims for change in *the present*. As Freud writes, psychoanalytic treatment engages illness “not as an event of the past, but as a

present day force.”⁵⁷² Repetition is thus intended to raise awareness of this very fact, “conjuring up a piece of real life,” in order to overcome resistance and repression, to awaken memories, “out of which things of value for [the patient’s] future life have to be derived.”⁵⁷³ We can see this motivation in *BiS*’s resurrection and refunctionalization of NS film aesthetics: it points to the continued presence of the historical structures of fascist image production in the BRD and memorializes fascism’s victims; it asserts film’s political role in society, and aims for the creation of a renewed aesthetic and industry, freed from constraints of the commercialized media landscape. And, indeed, the Oberhausenerers successfully altered the conditions for cinematically reproducing national memory and history, establishing a counter-discourse and alternate mode of representation, and an institutional structure ensuring its continued protection.⁵⁷⁴

But in addition to constituting a polemic, it is clear that *BiS*’s memorial project also engendered a risk: namely, that it would reactivate the fascination with the very ideological images that it critiques. Freud likewise acknowledges that the analytic work of repetition “cannot always be harmless and unobjectionable,” as it raises specters of the past into the present, leading, unavoidably, to “deterioration during treatment,” by intensifying the patient’s illness and bringing “deeper-lying instinctual impulses” to the fore, which must then be harnessed by the “reins of transference.”⁵⁷⁵ That is, while repetition in therapy constructs a kind of “playground” or theater of memory for projecting past experience, the danger remains that history will escape from this frame and be released into the present, i.e. in the continued ‘acting out’ of the past. Anxiety over

⁵⁷² Freud 151

⁵⁷³ *ibid* 152

⁵⁷⁴ Specifically, the Institute for Film Design in Ulm, founded in 1962, the Curatorium for Young German Film, established in 1964, and a system of complex, publicly funded subsidies for independent film production in the BRD. For Kluge’s status as the “undisputed master strategist of the parliamentary lobby and the chief architect of [the] state film-subsidy system,” see: Thomas Elsaesser, “The Stubborn Persistence of Alexander Kluge,” in *Alexander Kluge : Raw Materials for the Imagination*, ed. Tara Forrest (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 22.

⁵⁷⁵ Freud 152, 4

reactivating the seductive power of Nazism's cinematic-architectural fantasies is apparent in *BiS*'s careful work of audio-visual addition and subtraction. The film invokes but refuses to visualize the unity symbolized in the constellation of Führer, Volk, and their future buildings. It likewise (mostly) skirts the most emotionally laden sites of this historical landscape: the horrific violence enacted against the Jews and the regime's other victims, and Germany's destroyed cities. Hence, the degree of success achieved by *BiS*'s working through of the broader, intermedial and architectural archive of National Socialism and its key symbols was, as we shall see, debatable.

For despite *BiS*'s initiation of the working through the Nazi past and its aesthetic artifacts—understood as “breaking [their] power to fascinate...through a lucid consciousness” —this process was far from complete.⁵⁷⁶ For one thing, it's hardly arguable that the film had a wide range of viewership—premiering at the Oberhausen film festival—despite its impact on the film industry.⁵⁷⁷ In fact, it is evident that Kluge's revival of the Third Reich's *architectural* aesthetics touched on highly charged memories of the NS past, but failed to fully integrate the other memories of Germany's victims or their own role as perpetrators (however unrealistic this intention might be, in light of the film's brevity). Indeed, the loss of Germany's political, architectural, and ideological center, Berlin, the memory of ruination indexed by the photograph of the New Chancellery, was a particularly sensitive subject. Especially after the Wall's construction in August of 1961, the city became an increasingly fraught site, an open wound in the political and public sphere. If anything, *BiS*'s experimental appropriation of the NS architectural archive was met with an intensified compulsion to repeat the narrative of German suffering and a heightened resistance to any critical revision of this account or its (architectural and cinematic) representation.

⁵⁷⁶ Adorno 89

⁵⁷⁷ The film premiered at the festival on February 8, 1961 and was awarded one of the six top prizes. See: Rainer Lewandowski, *Alexander Kluge* (München: C.H. Beck : Text + Kritik, 1980), 9.

In other words, that the West German public was *not at all* finished working through the NS past, processing its symbolic images, or fessing up to and/or facing their own complicity in its violence was painfully on view following this film's release.

III. The Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials & the Repeated Narrative of German Victimhood

By 1963, the NS past's ostensible invisibility had indeed been shattered, though not by the marginal event of *BiS*'s release and the restructuring of the BRD's state-sponsored film production. Rather, the West German public's new awareness of and critical attention to NS crimes and the status and fate of NS perpetrators, which took shape in the early 1960s, was thanks to the dedicated work of Hessen state prosecutor Fritz Bauer, the initiator of the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials.⁵⁷⁸ Before the *Ulmer Einsatzgruppen-Prozess*, in early 1958, Bauer received a letter with a list of perpetrators' names from a former prisoner at Auschwitz, Adolf Röger (who was, at the time, imprisoned Bruchsal), which he parlayed into the charges against 24 defendants, "Mulka und andere" (only 20 of whom would appear in court).⁵⁷⁹ Bauer, who was Jewish and an active member of the Social Democratic party since the 1930s, had been forced into exile in Denmark by the Nazis in 1936, returning to Braunschweig in 1949 to work as solicitor general of the high regional court.⁵⁸⁰ It was Bauer's express intention that the Auschwitz trials not only constitute a moment of public reckoning, illustrating the brutality and widespread perpetration of NS crimes, but also an opportunity for public reflection, with long term psychological and pedagogical impacts.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁸ It bears mentioning that Bauer's (and the West German courts') centrality to the public confrontation with the NS past was not overlooked by Kluge. His first feature film, *Abschied von Gestern*, opens in a courtroom—though the proceedings are charges of theft levied against Anita G., a Jewish refugee from the East. In a central scene, Bauer is introduced, playing himself, as he reminisces about witnessing a moment of injustice against an impoverished defendant. In the next scene, Anita G., refused an appointment with Dr. Bauer, whom she had read about in the newspaper, spies on him in the Justizgebäude, where works at a desk piled with files for amnesty cases and oversees renovations to the courtroom, suggesting the installation of a round table, so that all defendants and plaintiffs might sit "gemeinschaftlich und um die Wahrheit kämpfen." "Abschied Von Gestern," (München, Berlin: Kairos Film; Independent Film GmbH, 1966).

⁵⁷⁹ Wojak, 53-5; Renz, 355-6.

⁵⁸⁰ Wojak and Fritz Bauer, 820-1.

⁵⁸¹ Wojak, 59; Renz, 351. Renz writes, "Bauer hat eine strikt instrumentalistische Sicht auf die Prozesse. In den Verfahren gegen 'Kriegsverbrecher' spiele der einzelne Angeklagte – so Bauer nicht ohne Rigorosität – 'nur die Rolle eines Mittels zum Zweck.' ...In NS-Prozessen ging es Bauer nicht um die Täter, sondern 'um das Verbrechen als solches und die Aufrechterhaltung der Normen,

To this end, Bauer engaged historians in the collection of materials for the prosecution, hoping that their account might render the proceedings “lebendig” and “verständlich,” while avoiding alienating academic discourse; and, further, employed multi-media presentations of critical details, “um die erwünschten historischen Lektionen im Gerichtssaal für das Publikum und die Pressevertreter leichter nachvollziehbar zu machen.”⁵⁸² Furthermore, testimony from victims was of the utmost importance; 357 witnesses were called to the stand, including 211 former inmates of Auschwitz.⁵⁸³ The longest and largest trial in German history to date, lasting from December 20, 1963 through August 20, 1965, the proceedings were indeed a public sensation and watershed moment—but the public’s response was far more varied and fraught than desired. From its inception, the trial was the subject of constant media coverage, appearing in print publications and on radio and television throughout its duration.⁵⁸⁴ In contrast to the reporting on the *Ulmer Einatzgruppen-Prozess*, these articles finally evinced a more systematic consideration of the pervasive reach of NS ideology and the unresolved cases of perpetration by ‘Beihilfe’ and ‘every day’ Germans, apparent in articles published with titles like “Die Mörder sind wie du und ich.”⁵⁸⁵ However, public approval of the continued investigation of NS criminality and reflection on the NS past was distinctly on the wane.⁵⁸⁶

die die Gemeinschaft zum Schutz ihrer Existenz und Entwicklung aufgestellt hat. Die Wirklichkeit dieser Normen, das geltende Recht, muss unterstrichen werden.” *ibid.*, 350. See also Bauer’s reflections on “Was hat Auschwitz mit dem >deutschen Menschen< zu tun?” in Wojak and Fritz Bauer, 614.

⁵⁸² “Wie ernst es Bauer war, im Gerichtssaal eine Geschichtsstunde abhalten zu lassen, zeigt auch ein Schreiben von Rechtsanwalt Henry Ormond...von Januar 1963, in dem es heißt: ‘Dr. Bauer möchte mit den modernsten Mitteln und allem zur Verfügung stehenden Anschauungsmaterial die Anklage geführt wissen, wobei Schaubilder, Filme, etc. durchaus eine Rolle spielen sollen.’” Renz, 357.

⁵⁸³ Wojak and Fritz Bauer, 262.

⁵⁸⁴ Renz notes 933 articles published in a span of 22 months in the newspapers *Die Welt*, *FAZ*, *SZ*, and the *Frankfurter Rundschau*. Renz, 360-1. For television coverage, see: Sabine Horn, “Erinnerungsbilder : Auschwitz-Prozess Und Majdanek-Prozess Im Westdeutschen Fernsehen” (Klartext, 2009). In addition to the trial’s coverage in the media, the proceedings were famously the basis for Peter Weiss’s *Die Ermittlung*, which premiered in 1965, the 20th anniversary of the war’s end, simultaneously in 16 theaters in East and West Germany. Over the course of the year, over 1,000 articles appeared regarding the play. See the chapter on “Peter Weiss un sein Theaterstück *Die Ermittlung* - “Die Angeklagten lachen” in Wojak and Fritz Bauer, 782-807.

⁵⁸⁵ See the reproduction of this article from the March 7, 1965 issue of *Die Stern* in *ibid.*, 383-7.

⁵⁸⁶ In a survey conducted in June 1964 by the Frankfurt based DIVO-Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, Sozialforschung und Angewandte Mathematik showed that 40% of adults had no awareness of the trials and, in general, were of the opinion “man solle die Vergangenheit auf sich beruhen lassen.” Renz, 361.

The response, in fact, turned from interest to apathy to a mounting backlash, which was palpable in the hardening and amplification of the general public's or, rather, the NS generation's insistence on its own historical suffering. The resistance to revising the historical account of the Third Reich, specifically, to extend its focus beyond German victimhood—that is, to include the memories of Germany's victims—was particularly visible in the proliferation of ruin imagery in print publications and mainstream cinematic representation, which ramped up in the 1960s.⁵⁸⁷ In the following analysis of one such made-for-television documentary regarding the NS past and its presence in the BRD, Berlin, again, provides the exemplary symbolic site for visualizing the nation's victimhood and loss in architectural ruin imagery.

On April 20, 1965—the anniversary of Hitler's birthday—two years after the initiation of the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial, and only four months before the verdict was delivered, Ufa released a special episode of its newsreel series, a documentary short directed by Wolfgang Esterer titled: *auf der suche nach unserer vergangenheit, das ende* (hereafter, *das ende*).⁵⁸⁸ Its appears like a direct rebuke of Young German Film's revised narrative of the NS past. Just under ten minutes, the film chronicles Berlin's destruction, and localizes its historical account in the city's contemporary space, cutting together archival films and photographs of the Red Army siege and Allied occupation, which appear alongside first-person individual accounts, delivered in man-on-the-street-style interviews of German citizens. These scenes are also interspersed with footage of Berlin's remaining ruins and symbolic sites of reconstruction on both sides of the border. The recently erected Wall implicitly organizes the present urban topography throughout. This meridian, however, is also superimposed with another destroyed landmark: the New Reich Chancellery.

⁵⁸⁷ Representative examples of such photo-monographs, often regionally specific, can be found in Crew.

⁵⁸⁸ Wolfgang Esterer, "Auf Den Spuren Unseren Vergangenheit: Das Ende (Mistitled in Archival Notation)," in *UFA-Wochenschau* (1965).

das ende's representational style is not unlike *Brutalität in Stein*. In fact it appropriates some of Kluge's film's audio-visual strategies and, in a similar fashion, works to remediate the historical, cinematic-architectural archive of the Third Reich and the record of its destruction. The titles are superimposed over a montage of the ruined interior of Schinkel's French Cathedral on Gendarmenmarkt—in a clear imitation of *Schicksal einer Oper*'s visual style. (Figs. IV-24a-c)



Figures IV-24a-d – Opening shot & images from title sequence of *das ende*, showing ruin of Schinkel's French Cathedral

Accompanied by melancholy organ music, the camera pans over and cuts between static shots of the ruin, fragments of the roof, and broken statues. As the titles appear, gliding over the black, silhouetted structure, the melody gives way to marching jackboots and an acoustic collage of NS songs, radio broadcasts, and speeches.⁵⁸⁹ A voiceover occasionally punctuates this historical

⁵⁸⁹ Notably, the *Englandlied*, and clips from Goebbel's Total War Speech, The acoustic collage is similar to parts of Syberberg's polyphonic soundtrack for *Hitler – Ein Film aus Deutschland*, which will be analyzed in chapter vi.

soundscape throughout the film—which later adds bombs, machine gun and artillery fire to its citations of NS broadcasts—identifying pertinent dates and locations, shown onscreen in both archival and contemporary images. Otherwise, the filmmakers provide little further commentary.

The assembly of intermedial material from past and present, repeated throughout the film, echoes *BiS*'s strategy—but does not share its deft hand in editing, sense of brevity, or critical detachment with regard to its objects. In fact, it more truly resembles a number of sequences from Rossellini's *Germania anno zero* (1949), a central scene of which, shot in the New Reich Chancellery's ruin and analyzed in the preceding chapter, incorporates a recording of Hitler's voice, ringing out across Berlin's ruin-scape.⁵⁹⁰ This similarity is also visible, after the credits, as the tour of the city expands in a series of driving shots of ruined facades, gazing through empty windows onto darkened interiors or bright, empty sky. Again, the clear cinematic intertexts are rubble films, most notably, the romantic ruin-imagery and expressive angles of Rossellini and Wolfgang Staudte's *Die Mörder sind unter uns* (1946).⁵⁹¹ Hence, in this mainstream documentary, the return of the NS past also encompasses a repetition and/or revival of the cinematic-architectural narratives and imagery of the immediate postwar—precisely the ones hidden from view in Kluge's film—composed not only of Auteur-films, but also propaganda and newsreels.

Unlike the complex, spatio-temporal desynchronization in *BiS, das ende* situates the viewer firmly the present—and on the Western side of the border. As we hear Goebbels exclaim, “dass wir dieses Gebiet niemals aufgeben werden und es verteidigen werden wie eine Festung bis zum letzten Atemzug,” we see the Brandenburg Gate shot from the Tiergarten by car, fronted by the newly-erected Wall.⁵⁹² The shot then cuts to what at first appears to be a photograph of the site in

⁵⁹⁰ Rossellini.

⁵⁹¹ Staudte.

⁵⁹² The audio is a clip from the Deutsche Wochenschau: “Dr. Josef Goebbels hält eine Rede in einem Rüstungswerk in Köln, Deutsches Reich, 1944.” Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv (DW 736/43/1944) The implicit gesture maps the Third Reich onto the space of East Berlin, the latter as the continuation of ‘totalitarianism’ under Stalin. The phenomenon of anti-Soviet sentiment was

1945. (Figs. IV-25a & b) But with the sound of a detonating bomb, the image springs to life, as flames and smoke in the foreground flicker and billow.⁵⁹³ Thereafter, NS Germany's defeat by the Red Army is announced by the voiceover, "die letzte Schlacht des zweiten Weltkrieges in Europa, der Kampf um Deutschlands Hauptstadt." The scene that follows is a montage of heavy artillery fire and urban destruction, in part composed of re-cut footage from *Die Welt im Film's* 1945 coverage of "Die Alliierten in Berlin," which is periodically interrupted by eyewitness accounts.



Figures IV-25a & b – Still of a shot of the Brandenburg Gate, fronted by the Berlin Wall (left), still of historical footage of the Brandenburg Gate amid fighting in 1945 (right)

While Kluge had let the buildings do the testifying, and in general representations of the recent past in previous decades had been characterized by the *absence* of direct narration, it now appeared that the West Germans were ready to fill in the gaps and tell their own side of the story. That is, they were ready to recount what they personally experienced in the rubble, at least as they remembered it—which is to say, their *own* victimization by the Nazis, Allies, and Soviets alike.

typical—the after-effect of anti-Bolschewist propaganda, and would be discussed by the Mitscherlichs in 1967. The strategy was of course similar on the other side of the border. In 1962, DEFA released its own rubble-documentary, *Schaut auf diese Stadt*, in which they superimpose footage of the Fackelzug through Wilhelmplatz on January 30, 1933 with newsreels of Adenauer and the Allied forces in Bonn during the transfer of power. Karl Gass, "Schaut Auf Diese Stadt," (Berlin: DEFA-Studio für Wochenschau und Dokumentarfilm, 1962). Neither side was particularly subtle in mapping the former architectural center of the Third Reich onto the current capital of the respective republics—though the East could only plausibly do so through cinematic, special effects. Regarding the context of *das ende's* release, it bears mentioning that a plenary session of the West German Bundestag in Berlin on April 7, 1965 had been declared unlawful by the East German government.

⁵⁹³ This oscillation between photographic and filmic representation, which occurs a number of times throughout the film, indicates the slippage between and shared representational strategies of these media employed in the ruin aesthetic, established in the immediate postwar period.

The three interviews each serve as an indictment of these actors. In the first a middle-aged man standing outside the Friedrichstraße train station recalls,

“Am 27. April 1945 kam ich vom Alexanderplatz her, hier durch die Georgenstraße zum Bahnhof Friedrichstraße, Hier, gerade über mir, hingen zwei deutsche Soldaten, ohne Stiefel, ohne Rangabzeichen, die Leichen von Granatsplittern durchlöchert. Bei dem einen hing um den Hals ein Schild: ‘ich hänge hier, weil mir Frauen und Kinder wichtiger waren als der Endsieg.’”

He delivers the monolog in a strangely casual, almost pedantic manner, pointing up into the blackened void above him (shown, disembodied, in a cut), and rarely looking at the camera, except as he suddenly stares directly into it as he quotes from the sign hung about the corpse.⁵⁹⁴ The speaker’s discomfort is evident in his body language, his downcast eyes, and his suddenly direct, implicit accusation of the unjust persecution of German civilians—implicitly leveled at the NS state in its death-throes but also, simultaneously, directed toward no one in particular other than the viewer.⁵⁹⁵ If Kluge had been reluctant to revive the visual memories and personal testimonies of Berlin’s destruction, it is obvious as to why as this sequence from *das ende* continues.

Abruptly cutting back to historical footage, the ensuing montage of devastation does not shy, traumatized, away from its violent imagery, but seems to revel, fixated on it. An elderly woman runs through the rubble, illuminated shots of bombs, and immolating buildings, Red Army soldiers firing mortars into the city—the sequence can only be described as demolition porn. (Figs. IV-26a-d) Again, a freeze-frame—a still of Red Army soldiers with artillery—mediates the transition between past and present, safely consigning these images of destruction to the past through the shift in medium, but also repeating the memory in the form of personal testimony.

⁵⁹⁴ This interview and the following adhere to Adorno’s description of the ‘pathological’ emotional relationship to the past, described in fn483.

⁵⁹⁵ Accounts of the NS regime’s ‘Terrorjustiz’ in the end stage of the siege of Berlin are to be found in early reports of the Allied victory in the occupied media, and are discussed in chapter iii.



Figures IV-26a-d – Stills of the montage of Berlin's destruction from das ende

An older woman, standing in front of a Gaststätte, holds the print, which fills the frame as we hear her voice. (Fig. IV-27) We cut to a medium shot of her staring at the photograph, speaking into the microphone held by a silent interviewer.⁵⁹⁶

"Ich erinnere mich genau an meinen Laden, ich war während dem Beschuß, wo die Russen kamen, die Kanone zeigte auf den Stettiner Bahnhofszug, und wir haben den Luftschutzkeller mal aufgesucht. Wie wir hier früh morgens aus dem Luftschutzkeller kamen und wollten Wasser holen. Da gab doch kein Wasser in den Häusern nicht? Da haben wir die ersten Russen gesehen in der Gartenstraße vor dem Hotel unten stehen. Da sind wir alle wieder zurückgerannt nach'n Keller, haben wir Angst gekriegt nicht? Aber wir sind verschont geblieben von alles, uns hat keiner was getan, nicht?"

The montage illustrates her memorial account, still audible in voice-over, as we see footage of elderly women emerging from air raid shelters looking haggard; Russian soldiers dashing through

⁵⁹⁶ Identified in the archival info as Esterer, the director. www.filmothek.bundesarchiv.de, accessed February 3, 2020.

rubble and fire-lined streets; a group of young women carrying their belongings, stopped on the street as a nearby facade crumbles apart; another elderly woman running and falling, face-first, onto the ground. (Figs. IV-28a & b) As her monolog concludes, replaced by machine gun fire, this final image, again, freezes into a photograph. Images of Berlin's ruins, thus, do not stand in for and symbolically visualize German victims, but literally frame and multiply the evidence of their suffering at the hands of the Red Army. While the speaker, herself, was 'spared' mistreatment by the Russians, her account evokes the notorious reports of sexual assault of female civilians.



Figure IV-27 – Still image from das ende showing interviewee holding a photographic print of footage seen moments before, with Red Army soldiers firing a mortar into nearby buildings.



Figures IV-28a & b – Stills from das ende showing elderly German women exit from an air raid shelter (left), and a fleeing woman falling in the rubble (right)

Before the final interview, the documentary then makes a detour to visualize the Russian victory, citing from the *Welt im Film* montage of the New Chancellery's invasion. That is, in the midst of *das ende*'s retreading of the relatively standard narrative of German victimhood, we are presented with a site of loss, the inclusion and emotional treatment of which comes as something of a shock—and is employed to point to fascism's continued afterlife in the East. As it had in 1945, the New Reich Chancellery marks the point of transition between the Soviet Army's siege of the capital and the Allied occupation. The montage shows the first three shots from the invasion sequence of "Die Alliierten," analyzed in chapter iii, accompanied by the *Deutscher Rundfunk* broadcast from May 1: "Aus dem Führerhauptquartier wird gemeldet, daß unser Führer, Adolf Hitler, heute nachmittag, in seinem Befehlsstand in der Reichskanzlei für Deutschland gefallen ist." But the sequence is interrupted—at "unser Führer"—by two photographs of the building's postwar ruin, the facade on Wilhelmplatz and Marble Gallery's interior during its deconstruction.⁵⁹⁷ (Figs. IV-29a-d) As the historical audio continues seamlessly, the montage then jumps forward to the present, cutting to the empty site, occupied by the Wall's no-man's-land. (Fig. IV-30) With the word "Reichskanzlei," the camera begins to pan over the space, landing on the hill over the buried remains of the Führerbunker as the citation concludes. The montage then cuts back to historical footage of surrendering German soldiers and the Soviet flag-raising on the Reichstag, accompanied by further announcements from the *Deutscher Rundfunk*—"Deutsche Männer und Frauen, Soldaten der deutschen Wehrmacht, unser Führer, Adolf Hitler, ist gefallen. In tiefster Trauer und Ehrfurcht verneigt sich das deutsche Volk"—which fades out as we cut back to the New Chancellery, viewed from the Tiergarten.

⁵⁹⁷ In doing so, avoiding showing the footage of Soviet and Allied soldiers occupying and reveling in the ruined space.



Figures IV-29a-d – Stills of Red Army invasion of the ‘New Chancellery’ from “Die Alliierten in Berlin” (top row), photographs of the ruined Siedler building on Wilhelmplatz with Hitler’s balcony (bottom left) and the Marble Gallery ca. 1947 (right)



Figure IV-30 – Pan over the Wall’s ‘Dead-Zone,’ cut together by author, with the hill over the ruins of the Führerbunker at right.

With no audio accompaniment, the soundtrack falls momentarily silent, we are presented with the New Chancellery's barracks, visible at the center of the frame, as the panoramic shot moves to the left, over the rest of the rear of the governmental quarter on Wilhelmstraße, eventually landing on the Brandenburg Gate and Reichstag. (Figs. IV-31a & b) The film's fixation on Berlin's architectural destruction suddenly seems to shift, becoming a meditation on the loss of—and a moment of silence for—Germany's Führer and its capital city, projected onto the New Reich Chancellery's ruin. The building, preserved in the panorama, but already shown as a symbolic void becomes, thereby, an object of memory. In sum, the sequence resurrects and preserves a lost object—the wound left by Hitler's death and the Third Reich's defeat, localized at the empty site of the New Chancellery—and employs its past and present images as a reproach: an indictment of the DDR as the continuation of German fascism, composed of the nation's 'lost territories.'



Figure IV-31a – Panoramic shot of the ruined governmental quarter on Wilhelmstraße, viewed from the Tiergarten, cut together by author, with the New Chancellery's ruin visible at right in front of the statue.



Figure IV-31b – Detail view of the New Chancellery's ruin from previous image, viewed from the rear, with barracks on Hermann-Göing-Straße at right, Führerbau roof just left of center, and rear of old Chancellery and Garden Salon at far left

As the voiceover announces Berlin's capitulation, the film continues, cutting to footage from the period of occupation of Germans clearing away the rubble, and detailing the effects of its devastation. The voiceover notes the city's loss of population and architectural damages, backed

by a melancholy, violin-heavy musical accompaniment. This narrative of reconstruction, however, is simultaneously underlaid by the suggestion of Berlin's *continued* destruction (and loss of its historical, architectural legacy) through its Soviet redevelopment. This is especially palpable in the film's cutting together of ruin images of Berlin's iconic buildings with contemporary footage of the same locations in the present: showing first the City Cathedral and Palace, and then the Kaiser Wilhelm *Gedächtniskirche*. The Cathedral's dome, for example, is awkwardly topped with an almost industrial-looking structure (Fig. IV-32); the Palace's contemporary site is pointedly identified by the voice-over as located, "Heute im Ost-Berlin, neben dem Staatsratsgebäude ein leerer Platz." (Fig. IV-33a) A cut brings us closer to Marx-Engels-Platz, which is crossed by two young boys drawing on the flagstones in chalk, with the massive (though provisional-looking) tribune in the background. (Fig. IV-33b) The disappearance of the past—and thereby the necessity of its memorializing documentation, narration, and mediation—is thus projected onto *East* Berlin's architectural redevelopment. The film makes the point more sharply in the following shot of the *Gedächtniskirche*, which it introduces with contemporary footage, a tightly-framed shot of a modern building with overpass, which then pans to the preserved structure of the ruin, fronted by its recently-added, geometric bell-tower. As the montage cuts back to historical footage from 1945, the abundance of new construction—and, simultaneously, the integration of past ruins in the present landscape—is a strong visual assertion of the conscientious preservation of the past in West Berlin amid the boom of the *Wirtschaftswunder*.⁵⁹⁸ (Fig. IV-34)

Continuing with footage of reconstructed public transportation infrastructure, this recapitulated narrative of Berlin's ruination and resurrection, interwoven with scenes of everyday life, also revives the symbolic function of ruin imagery, to point to the undiminished spirit of the

⁵⁹⁸ A later aerial shot of Alexanderplatz during this sequence is perhaps the most neutral example of the film's engagement with reconstruction in the Eastern half of the city.



Figure IV-32 – Still images of contrasting shots of the City Cathedral shown in 1945 (left) and in 1965 (right)



Figure IV-33a – Still images of contrasting shots of the City Palace shown in 1945 (left) and the new Staatsratsgebäude (right)



Figure IV-33b – Panoramic shot of Marx-Engels-Platz neighboring the Staatsratsgebäude, cut together by author, with the East Berlin city hall visible just right of center in the background.



Figure IV-34 – Still images of contrasting shots of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche shown in 1965 (left) and 1945 (right)

populace, ‘carrying on’ despite everything. The next scene emphasizes that their perseverance lasted not only through the war’s end, but also, the occupation. The voiceover reads the first order of the occupying authorities—showing footage of German crowds crushing toward a single woman, handing out flyers, and then cutting between shots of the occupying forces and German civilians, reading the commands of their new sovereigns. As if to underline this point, we return to a final interview: an elderly man standing on a balcony speaks into the microphone. "Hier vor der Tür stand eine Pumpe, eine Wasserpumpe. Da kamen die Leute oft kilometerweit, um sich einen Eimer Wasser zu ergattern. Das war auch sehr knapp. Es herrschten Zustände, wie man sie sich eigentlich nicht vorstellen kann." If these memories are ‘beyond the imagination,’ they do not (or at least no longer) exceed the scope of the film—the narrative is intercut with images that drive home the extremity of Berliners’ status as victims. As the interviewee speaks and thereafter, we see footage of German civilians lined up at the free-standing pumps around the city holding buckets; crowded, frantic around trucks delivering food rations, reaching desperately and fighting each other for a single loaf of bread; climbing in and out of broken shop windows, scraping with their hands empty barrels of soup; an elderly man cutting the flank off the corpse of a horse laying in the street. (Figs. IV-35a & b) The sequence concludes, however, with a shot of joyful-looking

Berliners, waving and smiling at the camera as they walk through the ruins—evidence of the indomitable spirit of the (West) German people.



Figures IV-35a & b – German civilians crowded around a truck distributing bread rations (left), and an elderly German man cutting meat from the flank of a horse's fallen corpse

This final sequence, thus, again remediates the Third Reich's cinematic-architectural archive, recalling the citations of rubble films from the opening. Like in *BiS*, *das ende*'s final scene returns us to the present, which echoes with the sounds of the past. A shot from a moving train, exiting a tunnel, is accompanied by triumphant fanfare, briefly interrupted by a citation of Hitler's speech on the final anniversary of the *Machtübernahme* and Goebbels's speech from April 19, 1945, as a series of cuts show further mobile shots of rubble, train tracks, facades of Berlin's remaining Prussian buildings and new modernist construction. The historical (acoustic) archive, however, is left in the past in the concluding scene; though its fragmented remains remain (architecturally) visible in the present. A paradoxically triumphant and melancholy organ march plays over a brief montage of footage of contemporary, well-dressed (presumably West) Berliners, strolling through the streets, finally panning up to still blacked-out windows on a pockmarked facade. In the film's concluding moments, we return to a series of rubble images, over which the voiceover recites the words of French poet, Michel Butor, who observed, twenty years after 1945,

“Leute, die nach Berlin kommen, weil sie von seinen Denkmälern angelockt werden, so wie die Berliner von früher, die seit Jahren, vielleicht seit dem Krieg, nicht mehr in ihre Stadt zurückgekehrt sind, und an die Orte ihre vergangenen Freuden wiederzukehren suchen, ihre Freuden als Kinder, als Verliebte, die durch Zaunlücken forschend von Gestrüpp überwucherte Gärten betrachten, verfallende Terrassen, geborstene Schalen, die steinerne Gärtnerin von einst, die mit ihren riesigen Augen auf die Verwüstung blickt, zebrochene Balustraden, die auf verlassene Straßen führen.”⁵⁹⁹

The sequence, which fixates on the images described in the poem in almost literal fashion—broken statues, balustrades, overgrown ruins—ends with a frogs-eye view panning across and coming to rest in a symmetrical shot of an empty, tree-lined, cement street, terminating in large buildings on the horizon. (Figs. IV-36a-d & 37) Berlin, therefore, operates as a site of memory, a place for



Figures IV-36a-d – Stills of concluding ruin montage of *das ende*

⁵⁹⁹ The text is an edited selection from the introduction of Butor’s text “Zweifacher Blick,” in Bernard Larsson and Michel Butor, *Die Ganze Stadt Berlin Politische Photos* (Hamburg: Nannen, 1964), 7-18. In the vein of *das ende*’s anti-Soviet sentiments and their association with Nazism, the book concludes with a photograph taken across the Wall’s Dead-Zone, centered on a large sign reading: “Wer die DDR angreift, wird vernichtet.” *Ibid.*, 206-7.



Figure IV-37 – Concluding shot of *das ende*, showing an unidentifiable, empty street

visualizing the loss of history—the film provides a politically inflected elegy for its destruction, asserts its status as a site for memorializing and mediating the past through its fragmented remains, and implores the viewer to search for their own memories, before they disappear entirely.

Remembering and repeating the experiences of the past is central to the film’s project—working through? Not so much. *das ende* doesn’t so much revise as resurrect and re-invigorate the memorial discourse and cinematic-architectural strategies of representation that had reigned in the BRD for the last fifteen years. In stark contrast to the efforts of Kluge and the other proponents of Young German film, it entirely elides (represses) the memory of Germany’s collective and/or individual culpability. Where NS criminality is invoked at all, through the first interview and the historical citations on the soundtrack, it is only identified with the leaders of the regime—an identification amplified through their voices—and perpetrated against the *German* public. The film includes no mention of the persecution of the Jews, the concentration camps, or indeed anything

that might illuminate the far more complex historical conditions of Berlin's destruction and subsequent division. The memories of the Third Reich—limited to the trauma of its collapse, cinematically and architecturally visualized and symbolically localized in the city's lost sites—are thus solely represented through the narrative of Germany's destruction, not the identification of its destructive character.

While this film provides only a single example of this narrative of victimhood, it accords with the repetition and reification of this trope in visual-architectural print publications—and almost certainly possessed of a much greater audience than Kluge's. Likewise, it complimented the West German public's growing distaste for the far more critical, *avant garde* confrontation and/or juridical working through of the NS past. Despite the efforts of the intellectual left and artists of the second generation, the disarticulation of Germany's memories of the Third Reich from its investment in and fascination with NS architectural aesthetics and ideology, and egoistic attachment to its lost symbols would clearly require more work. After all, therapy often gets worse before it gets better.

Most pointedly, for the purposes of this dissertation, is the New Chancellery's re-appearance at the margins of the NS past's cinematic-architectural representation. While Kluge employed its isolated, photographic fragments to bracket the visual archive of Berlin's rubble landscape, as we see in *das ende*, not only did the building reappear in the midst of the latter's emotional revival in the BRD's mainstream, televisual media—its absence now occupied a central, if not exactly privileged place. As the decade continued, the after-image of this re-invigorated symbolic site and object—the wound at the center of Berlin—crept increasingly back into view in the debates over the NS past. Moreover, Hitler's spectral presence, which still seemed to infest the narrative of national history and cling to the cinematically mediated memories of his

architecture, would also return to the scene, amplified, and increasingly visualized as a void, symbolically marked at the site of the New Chancellery. First revived in popular representation, as we shall see in the next two chapters, New German Film would also return to this absence—and its photographic after images—in the next major cinematic act of ‘working through the past’ in 1977.

CHAPTER V

The Fascinating Führer in the Federal Republic

The Return of the Hitler-Myth & the NS Architectural Archive in Mainstream Mass Media

I. Prelude: The Return of the Repressed NS Past in the Late Adenauer Era

Following the stabilization of the political situation in postwar Europe and the resolution of the ‘German question,’ conditions at the site of the destroyed New Reich Chancellery remained relatively static. The empty, erstwhile center of Führertum was subsumed in 1961 by the non-space flanking the Berlin Wall, the Dead-Zone separating Soviet and Democratic territories *cum* nations.⁶⁰⁰ Initially imagined as a provisional capital, by the late 1960s, it was apparent that Bonn’s status as the West’s new, unassuming center of democratic governance was more-or-less permanent.⁶⁰¹ Underground in Berlin, there was intermittent activity in the tunnels snaking throughout Mitte, dead-ending at walled-off bunkers along Wilhelmstraße.⁶⁰² In 1973, for example, the East German Staatssicherheitsdienst secretly re-opened and photographed the largely-intact Führerbunker (declared destroyed in 1947), checking for passages beneath the

⁶⁰⁰ Tony Judt writes that this event initiated West Berlin’s “steady descent into political irrelevance”; but this proves a problematic claim. , 254. Berlin indeed diminished in significance as a site for staging federal politics, following the hardening of Cold War relations in the mid-1960s, but the western half of the city remained a site of fraught politicized conflict and a central scene of cultural relevance for the Left. In her history of the Red Army Faction, its coverage and memorialization in West German media, Tina Gerhardt identifies West Berlin as “a frontline city” of the Cold War and student movements, especially their actions against the Axel-Springer publishing house; due to “the extraordinary media landscape...Berlin was ripe for spectacle.” Gerhardt, 74.

⁶⁰¹ In 1965, the BRD lifted the ban on public building, opening a design competition for a new chancellery in 1970. Completed in 1976 by Planungsgruppe Stielsdorf, its functionalist, international style was described as possessing the “Charme einer rheinischen Sparkasse.” von Beyme, “Architecture and Democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany,” 139.

⁶⁰² The New Chancellery bunker complex was less demolished and more buried, clustered adjacent the newly remodeled U-Bahn Station at Thälmannplatz, purportedly tiled with marble from the Mosaic Room. See: Demps, 213.

border (and uncovering Goebbels' diaries in the process).⁶⁰³ But above ground, there was no major turbulence. The peace that descended at this (in)famous site, following the political and topographical upheavals of the preceding decades, would reign undisturbed until reunification. In the meantime, however, representational artifacts and symbolic fragments of the NS past—especially those connected to this destroyed center of power and its previous occupant—erupted across the Federal Republic's media landscape, gaining in intensity and visibility over the decades.

Throughout the 1970s, archival images of the New Reich Chancellery and the other iconic NS buildings that had anchored the symbolic-spatial order of Hitler's sovereignty flooded the West German public sphere—in contrast to and, increasingly, uncoupled from their material sites' neglect, disavowal, and occasional erasure by local authorities.⁶⁰⁴ Perhaps unavoidably, images of the Third Reich's architecture, particularly its destroyed center of Führertum in Berlin, conjured, or were conjured by, the spectral presence of Hitler himself. The 1967 publication of Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich's influential study, *The Inability to Mourn* undoubtedly catalyzed the growing fascination with the Führer in the Federal Republic.⁶⁰⁵ But the subject(s) of Hitler (and the intermedial architecture of his power) ultimately occupied a much broader field of domestic and international, public and political discourse. Over the decade, Hitler—the man and the myth—shifted to the center of historical, artistic, and commercial representations of the NS past. By the early 1980s, while the erosion and erasure of Nazism's physical topography continued, virtually unremarked upon, after-images of the buildings that had symbolized and institutionally actualized

⁶⁰³ Kellerhoff, *Mythos Führerbunker : Hitlers Letzter Unterschlupf*, 110-7. Before the Wall's construction, Judt describes Berlin as site of the East's "hemorrhaging population." The BRD's claim as sole representative of German citizens had motivated some 2.8-3 million East German residents, 16% of the population, to flee through the "open city," where they were automatically granted citizenship. Judt, 250.

⁶⁰⁴ As noted in the last chapter, the Nürnberg Party Rally Grounds form a key example of this laissez faire historicism and the selective re-appropriation and re-development of NS architectural sites in West Germany. See: Chapter 5, "The Nuremberg Party Rally Grounds and Local Politics. The Historicized Perpetrator." in Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 167-204.

⁶⁰⁵ Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich. Introduced in detail below.

NS ideology would come to take the shape of myth. As I show in this chapter, archival images of the architectural centers of Hitler's power served throughout the 1970s as representational scenery used to re-enact and re-stage his rise and fall; Germany's fascination with, seduction by, and belief in the Führer; and their failure to recognize the possible consequences of the violence he unleashed until it was too late, the nation already plunged into a cataclysmic orgy of self-destruction.

This chapter explores the return of Hitler to West Germany's highly politicized media landscape in the 1970s, and investigates the role played by NS architecture in the reproduction and remediation of the NS past and the Führer-Mythos. As I argue, the BRD's shifting relationship to and representation of Hitler during this period was reflected in and refracted through the symbolic spaces that had operated as stage, surrogate, and mediator of Führertum, especially as they (re)appeared in the public sphere in archival photographs and films. In other words, it picks up where the previous chapter left off, maintaining an analytical focus on the self-reflexive, cinematic-architectural representation of the Third Reich's history and legacy in the BRD. The line of argument, however, diverges in response to the dramatic changes to West Germany's socio-political and cultural landscape: namely, the revolutionary upheavals of the late 1960s and continued turmoil of the 1970s. Yet throughout this period, as I show, the NS architectural archive remained a central component in the public discourse over 'coming to terms' with the past and its reproduction and representation in the mass media in relation to the figure of the Führer.

I begin by outlining the Third Reich's shifting visibility in the West German public sphere over the late 1960s, historicized with the ongoing trials of NS criminals, the publication of the Mitscherlich's famed study, and the beginning of what would come to be pejoratively known as the 'Hitler-Boom'—examining the impact of these events on mainstream representations of Nazism and its memory. Within this overview, I analyze Albert Speer's strong influence on the

increasingly nostalgic tenor of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, as it played out in the West German mainstream media after 1969. Considering the significance of architecture to the NS regime in general and the role played by Speer in the popularization and narrativization of the NS past during this period, it is not surprising that NS buildings formed a central leitmotif within this network of representation. Revitalized and reprinted in Speer's famous memoirs, the architectural imagery that served in NS propaganda to reify the Hitler-Mythos—framing his fascination as both ordinary everyman and embodiment of monumental charismatic power—was subsequently employed as a medium of demystification and (self-exculpatory) critique. But the fascinating character of this narrative and its archival imagery were not diminished, but rather intensified following the success of Speer's memoirs—and met with staunch critique in the pages of the West German *Feuilleton*.

Thus, my second analysis takes up the documentary work of famed Hitler-historian Joachim C. Fest, particularly his film *Hitler - eine Karriere*. Released in 1977 by a key player in the BRD's popular, public sphere, the film was a controversial blockbuster, marking a watershed moment. Fest's film attempts to show, explain, and defuse the widespread fascination with Hitler, and to deconstruct the ideology behind and manipulative aesthetic strategies of his media arsenal, by illustrating their connection to the regime's violence. Seeking to depoliticize and dismantle the Hitler-Myth, through the self-reflexive use of its cinematic-architectural archive, Fest resurrects the scenographic spectacle of *Führertum*—placing particular emphasis on the representation of Hitler's body within his spaces of power. Therein lie the innovations of Fest's cinematic work. Namely, it enacts the symbolic ritual of divestiture—bringing the deposed sovereign back to the initiating scene of their investment with the state's power, in this case the New Reich Chancellery, stripping them of their insignias of rule, and exposing the fiction concealing their banal, mortal identity. Further, it also reintroduces in mainstream representation images of NS atrocity, which

had been repressed and rejected throughout the early years of the Federal Republic's existence. Yet, while undeniably influential, Fest's film remained controversial in terms of the success of its critical project. The next chapter thus takes up an opposing attempt to 'come to terms with' the NS past and its central figure, through the self-reflexive redeployment of its intermedial archive and key *topoi*: Hans Jürgen Syberberg's epic work of 'mourning,' *Hitler – ein Film aus Deutschland*.

II. 'Coming to Terms with the Past,' the 'Inability to Mourn,' & the Return of the Hitler-Myth

To understand the significance of the return of Hitler and his architecture of Führertum to the West German public sphere and the repeated attempts to demystify the fascinating power of their visual archive, we should begin by outlining the terms of the debate; that, is the place of National Socialism within the mediated, socio-political landscape of the Federal Republic as it transitioned out of the Adenauer Era. Over the course of the 1960s, there was a radical transformation in the NS past's visibility and representation in mainstream public and political discourse. As discussed in chapter iv, against the backdrop of the NS trials in the late 1950s and early 1960s, works by the young proponents of New German Film, like Alexander Kluge's *Brutalität in Stein*, rebelled by reintroducing the taboo topics of the Third Reich, its architectural imagery, and intermedial archive to West German theaters and audiences.⁶⁰⁶ Their *avant garde* approach to this material, however, was countered by mainstream productions, which were both far less experimental and more sympathetic to claims of German victimhood, such as Ufa's made-for-television-documentary *das ende*, with its revival of the ruin-aesthetic from the immediate postwar era.

⁶⁰⁶ The Young German Film movement, initiated by Kluge and the other signatories of the Oberhausen Manifesto, transitioned over the 1960s and 1970s in its formal style and politicized content, and was ultimately re-dubbed New German Film. Its central figures, the so-called big three plus one, were Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Werner Herzog, Wim Wenders, and Hans Jürgen Syberberg. For a salient critique of the shift in the movement, from its initial project memorializing the victims of National Socialism and agitating against mainstream commercial film producers, becoming a far more established, critical-historicist endeavor, at least partially intent on rehabilitating (and revising) German national identity, see: Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's Brutality in Stone." For broader perspectives on New German Film in the 1970s see: Elsaesser, *New German Cinema a History*; Hake; Lenssen.

Despite its reputation as such, therefore, the topic of National Socialism was by no means repressed in West Germany the 1950s and early -60s, though it was generally omitted from conversation in the home and absent from school curricula.⁶⁰⁷ Rather, as Paul Jaskot writes, the NS past “was anything but a silence in West German society...[it formed] a consistent point of reference...owing to artistic innovations...as well as the shifting public discourse on recent history.”⁶⁰⁸ Partially in response to the travails of the late Adenauer administration, by the mid-1960s and into the early 1970s, Nazism became an omnipresent and markedly personal topic of public, political, and artistic debate.

A number of factors contributed to the NS past’s mounting visibility in West German society. Of paramount importance was the belated, slow-going prosecution of Nazi criminals. The *Ulmer Einsatzgruppen Trial* and the founding of the Central Agency for the Investigation of NS Crimes in 1958 were followed by Eichmann’s capture and trial in 1960/1, and the Frankfurt-Auschwitz Trials, initiated and headed by state prosecutor Dr. Fritz Bauer, running from 1963-5.⁶⁰⁹ Each of these trials and the others that followed received heightened media attention, forcing Nazi criminality, its agents and victims into the public eye.⁶¹⁰ The resulting spectacle altered the debate over ‘coming to terms with the past,’ by introducing both new information about the

⁶⁰⁷ Aleida Assman speaks of the lack of personally lived experience of the Third Reich as a rift between the older and younger generations in West Germany; “Das heißt keineswegs, daß die nachwachsenden Generationen gänzlich aus dem Schatten der NS-Vergangenheit herausgetreten wären, aber sie verkörpern diese Zeit nicht mehr in ihren Erinnerungen und müssen sich neue, notwendig vermittelte Zugänge zu ihr erwerben.” Assmann and Frevert, 25. See also Joachim Fest’s comments on the lack of coverage of the Third Reich in public education in the introduction to his film, discussed below. As for the disappearance of fascism from scholarship, art history offers a key example: dominated in the 1950s by an explicit rejection of the topic; but, as shown below, this invisibilization was already disrupted by the early 1960s by a younger generation of scholars.

⁶⁰⁸ Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 54.

⁶⁰⁹ This history is covered in detail in the preceding chapter, but a few additional points bear mentioning. In 1965, the statute of limitations on murder was extended, in light of the NS trials, and was ultimately fully lifted in 1979 amid the Majdanek Trial, discussed below. See: Judt, 271, 811. As discussed in chapter iv, individual members of the West German press were instrumental in exposing perpetrators and generating public interest in the ‘murderers in our midst,’ though coverage in general was often ambivalent or sensationalist with regard to both victims and perpetrators.

⁶¹⁰ The Frankfurt Auschwitz trials consisted of three proceedings conducted over 1963-5, 1965-6, and 1967-8, concurrent with the considerably lower-profile Belzec (1963-5), Sobibor (1965-6), and first Treblinka trials (1964-5).

brutality of Nazi crimes and the bureaucratic ‘banality of evil,’ and a new face of Nazi criminality—not fanatical ideologues or elite state actors, but everyday perpetrators.⁶¹¹

The West German press’s voyeuristic, often sensationalized focus on the violent extremity of the alleged crimes, described in witness testimony, simultaneously raised the profile of the trials and their defendants and ‘bracketed’ their content from the ordinary experience of everyday Germans.⁶¹² As a result, as Jaskot notes, “The public was demonstrably equivocal about perpetrators.”⁶¹³ Yet, while public interest in the proceedings was undeniable, the push to sniff out and prosecute Nazi criminals was not driven by a grassroots movement or widespread popular support, but primarily by the Adenauer government’s desire to save face, especially internationally, as former members of the NS-State continued to be exposed by the press, often in high-ranking positions.⁶¹⁴ Further, the cases’ high profile was contradicted by their relatively modest scope and limited impact, in terms of sentencing.⁶¹⁵ Still, the trials reverberated widely, albeit without consensus as to their significance, beyond their coverage in the *Tagesschau* and

⁶¹¹ These comments refer to Arendt’s . and similar analyses from agitators in the West German media and state, discussed in the previous chapter. The subject of the ‘everyday perpetrator’ and its impact on *avant garde* artistic production in the Federal Republic is exhaustively covered in Jaskot’s chapters on Gerhard Richter and Anselm Kiefer. See: Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, “Gerhard Richter and the Advent of Nazi Past. The Persistence of the Perpetrator,” 47-81, and “Anselm Kiefer and the Ascendance of Helmut Kohl. The Changing Perception of the Perpetrator,” 83-125.

⁶¹² *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 66.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁶¹⁴ Though Adenauer’s politics of reintegration reigned throughout the 1950s, the rehabilitation of civil servants with NS backgrounds in high-ranking positions became starkly problematic in the 1960s—though there was never a consistently or strictly enforced prohibition based on public consensus. For example, Hans Globke, who had overseen the implementation of the Nürnberg Laws, was appointed chief of staff in 1953 and later state secretary in the cabinet, forming a personalized “point of reference [used] to shame the Adenauer administration,” ultimately leading to Adenauer’s resignation under pressure from the student movements in 1963. *Ibid.*, 60. On the other hand, after his resignation and Ludwig Erhard’s brief interlude as chancellor, the latter was replaced by Kurt Georg Kiesinger, a NSDAP member since 1933, clerk in the Foreign Ministry, and head of Radio Propaganda after 1941—while his tenure as executive was short-lived, ending in 1969, he remained head of the CDU through 1971. *Judt*, 417-20, 811.

⁶¹⁵ Arendt paints a particularly damning picture of the trials’ public reception, but the issue was complicated. Certain parts of West German society were indeed agitating to remove all NS Mitläufer from their current positions, while the government attempted to downplay and contain the systemic survey of potential perpetrators. While there was no consensus, there was a rising discussion on who, exactly, could and should be held responsible for Nazi violence.

Tagespresse.⁶¹⁶ Thus, in general, through the 1960s, “*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*...took center stage as West Germans struggled with their inception of and participation in the Holocaust.”⁶¹⁷

The Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials, in particular, were accompanied by an outpouring of scholarly publications, mediated discussions, and *avant garde* artworks.⁶¹⁸ Peter Weiss famously dramatized the proceedings in his *Die Ermittlung* in 1965, which premiered in 16 simultaneous theater productions in East and West Germany and was reworked into a radio-play over the following year.⁶¹⁹ In the art world, the revival of NS artifacts was also on the rise, for example, in the Degenerate Art Exhibition’s controversial re-staging at the *Haus der Kunst* in Munich on its 25th anniversary in 1962.⁶²⁰ In addition, works by younger artists like Gerhard Richter and Anselm Kiefer, and films by members of the New German Cinema continued to focus attention on the memorialization of NS victims and “the contemporary status of past perpetrators...[T]he presence of former Nazi Party members and supporters in families, institutions, and government offices forced the question of whether West German society had broken with or continued to sustain the criminal past.”⁶²¹ In the political realm, the election of SPD head Willy Brandt to the chancellorship in 1969 and his famous *Kniefall* in 1970 at the Warsaw Ghetto memorial suggested,

⁶¹⁶ For West German television coverage of the Frankfurt Auschwitz and Majdanek Trials, see: Horn.

⁶¹⁷ Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 65. He continues, “They [West Germans] could not avoid the question of personal agency, the question at the heart of defining the functional role of the everyday perpetrator. Still, the [Auschwitz] trial did not define the status of the perpetrator as clearly as one might expect, and a great deal of ambiguity remained about the role of these concentration camp officials and their potential relationship to other German ‘bystanders.’” *ibid.*

⁶¹⁸ See: Renz; Atze, “»...An Die Front Des Auschwitz-Prozesses« - Zur Zeitgenössischen Rezeption Der »Strafsache Gegen Mulka Und Andere«.”

⁶¹⁹ Peter Weiss, *Die Ermittlung : Oratorium in 11 Gesängen* ([Frankfurt am Main]: Suhrkamp, 1965); see also: Atze, “Peter Weiss Und Sein Theaterstück *Die Ermittlung* - »Die Angeklagten Lachen«.”

⁶²⁰ See catalog: Jürgen Claus et al., *Entartete Kunst; Bildersturm Vor 25 Jahren* (München: Ausstellungsleitung München e. V. Haus der Kunst, 1962).

⁶²¹ Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 54. The decline of the CDU in the mid-1960s illustrates the political salience of these questions. Judt writes, of Kiesinger’s election, “The new Chancellor had been a paid-up Party member for twelve years, and his appointment was taken by many as conclusive evidence of the Bonn Republic’s unrepentant cynicism. If the head of the government was not embarrassed to have supported Hitler for twelve years, who could take seriously West German professions of repentance or commitment to liberal values at a time when neo-Nazi organizations were once again surfacing at the political fringe?” Judt, 417. The response of the younger generation on the left was, unsurprisingly, overwhelmingly critical. Gerhardt notes, for example, a sensation in 1968 caused by activist Beate Klarsfeld, who slapped Kiesinger across the face at a public gathering, explaining, “I wanted to prove to the public worldwide that a portion of the German population, particularly its youth, is opposed to having a Nazi at the head of government.” Gerhardt, 17 fn9.

on the one hand, a new “overt symbolic acceptance of German culpability” by the state.⁶²² But, on the other, throughout the period of liberal dominance, which lasted through 1974 with the SPD's Grand Coalition, there was little consensus about the Nazi past or the appropriate future direction for West German politics, in light of and/or reponse to its reappearance in the public eye.⁶²³

A growing contentiousness and polarization was strikingly apparent during the Majdanek trial, the longest in German legal history, conducted from 1973 to 1981. The 15 defendants were everyday people, low level functionaries, mostly camp guards—including six women, an anomaly among NS trials—some of them and their lawyers current, outspoken neo-Nazis.⁶²⁴ The proceedings revealed both ever more details about the extremity of Nazi brutality and, simultaneously, its perpetrators’ relatively undisturbed continuation of life in the decades that followed.⁶²⁵ The accused publicly lamented and protested their innocence—legally and ideologically—in increasingly theatrical, macabre fashion. In interviews and through their general comportment during the trial, defendants insisted on their status as symbolic scapegoats of ‘Kollektivschuld’; though employed by the NS state, they had behaved no differently from any

⁶²² Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 88. Brandt’s election also signaled a change in the status of emigres; “During the 1965 Bundestag elections certain ‘inside information’ was whispered about Willy Brandt...that in the 1930s Brandt had emigrated from Germany and had served in the Norwegian army – and had perhaps even fired on his fellow Germans. This allegation proved very powerful; nearly everyone who was asked at the time agreed that, while Brandt was an attractive personality and a loyal Democrat, with such a past he could not become German Chancellor.” Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 51.

⁶²³ The SPD’s support for rearmament, nuclearization, shift away from the working class, and formation of the Grand Coalition with the CDU in 1966, were major sources of contention for the party, exacerbated by the defection of its youth organization, which split to form the independent party of the SDS (Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund) in 1961. Even before Brandt’s election, Gerhardt writes, with the SPD’s renegeing on its previous platform and the banning of the communist party (KPD), “a range of voters suddenly found themselves without solid political representation in the parliamentary system...As a result, the extraparliamentary opposition [APO] social movements in West Germany grew dramatically, starting in the mid-1960s.” Gerhardt, 24.

⁶²⁴ Horn, 60-1. The Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD) formed in 1964 and still exists. Gerhardt, 24.

⁶²⁵ The defendant Hildegard Lächert, for example, was accused of a number of particularly brutal murders, kicking inmates into latrine pits where they drowned in human waste, smashing an infant against the side of a cart in front of its mother, and beating inmates to the point of unrecognizability. Though briefly imprisoned by the occupation, after her release she worked as an informant for the CIA and, after 1957, the German Federal Intelligence service (BND), ultimately finding employment as a taxi-driver in her home town near Heidelberg. Lächert’s maintenance of her firmly middle-class existence, however, gestured to in accounts of her fondness for collecting Meißner Porzellan and the fact that she owned the taxi she drove, could not be fully explained by her generally working-class resume. Oliver Das Gupta, “Wie Eine Kz-Aufseherin Von Cia Und Bnd Angeheuert Wurde,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, September 6 2016.

other ordinary German, simply following orders and attempting to survive during the war.⁶²⁶ They denied any strong allegiance to Nazism or involvement in the extra-legal violence of which they were accused; arguing that they, too, had suffered at the hands of both the NS regime and the occupation. Yet the defense's tactics and actions of some of the accused, notably Hildegard Lächert and her lawyer Ludwig Bock, belied the protestations of this apparently apolitical disposition. During the trial, Bock caused a scandal by ordering the arrest of a prosecution witness for "Behilfe zum Mord," after they recounted being forced to carry canisters of Zyklon B to the gas chambers.⁶²⁷ Lächert, meanwhile, dubbed 'Blutige Brigitte' by the former camp-inmates, used the trial as a platform to mount an unsuccessful campaign as a NPD candidate for European Parliament in 1979.⁶²⁸ The chaotic proceedings thus radiated out from the courtroom in Düsseldorf, on television and radio, in the *Feuilleton*, a constant buzz and spectacle, seen and heard by audiences at home.⁶²⁹

Simultaneously, further undead remnants of Nazism had returned to haunt the BRD's public and private spheres, surfacing in the intensifying political events of the 'long sixties.'⁶³⁰ In particular, those born during the war years began to mount an offensive against their parents' generation, which in part thematized their fascist inheritance and came to a head in the student revolts of 1968.⁶³¹ The identification of the everyday perpetrator inserted questions of personal

⁶²⁶ See interviews in Eberhard Fechner, *Der Prozeß - Eine Darstellung Des Majdanek-Verfahrens in Düsseldorf* (Waltham, Mass: National Center for Jewish Film, 2007).

⁶²⁷ Horn, 65-6.

⁶²⁸ Gupta.

⁶²⁹ For the displacement of the question of personal agency into the space of the home in New German Cinema and in the work of Gerhard Richter and Anselm Kiefer, see, respectively: Elsaesser, *New German Cinema a History*; Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*.

⁶³⁰ Gerhardt identifies the 'long sixties' as lasting between 1957 and 1972, characterized as "at once responsible for the democratization of West Germany and simultaneously the implementation of its most repressive laws and agencies." Gerhardt, 66. Specifically, with regard to the latter, the Emergency Powers law, enacted in 1968 in response to the events described in fn631, and the Basic Principles on the Question of Anti-Constitutional Personnel in Public Service, enacted in 1972 and commonly known as the 'Radikalenerlass' and/or 'Berufsverbot.' *ibid.*, 102-3.

⁶³¹ Student movements opposing overcrowding and the conservative, authoritarian nature of the university, and protesting rearmament and the Vietnam war proliferated in West Germany throughout the late 1960s. These were, as Gerhardt puts it, further radicalized and politicized by the killing of student protester, Benno Ohnesorg, by the West German police on June 2, 1967, during

agency squarely into the private as well as public sphere.⁶³² The wave of protests consolidated the younger generation's rejection of values instilled during their upbringing, and the institutions for which those values stood, under the umbrella of fascism.⁶³³ Tony Judt writes,

“If ever there was a generation whose rebellion really was grounded in the rejection of everything their parents represented—everything: national pride, Nazism, money, the West, peace, stability, law and democracy—it was ‘Hitler’s children’, the West German radicals of the Sixties.”⁶³⁴

Antifascist accusations about the Nazi past and the perpetuation of fascism were weaponized by the younger generation—rhetorically and more literally—as suggested by the title of Jillian Becker's controversial 1977 book about the most extreme outgrowth of this movement, the Red Army Faction.⁶³⁵ But both sides of the political and generational divide took part in this weaponization.⁶³⁶ By the mid-1970s, their mutual antagonism had hardened into an intractable, ideological conflict of mounting violence and volatility.

a visit of the US-backed authoritarian Shah Pahlavi of Iran. Ibid., 45. Led, in part, by the reaction of RAF co-founder Gudrun Ensslin in the leftist media, resistance movements increasingly sought to counter state-sponsored violence with their own revolutionary violence, often in solidarity with Third World uprisings. Momentum was sustained, most prominently, in the BRD, as the future members of the RAF set fire to a department store in Frankfurt, a preview of the group's subsequent spate of bank robberies, arsons, and kidnappings, which picked up steam during their ‘May Offensive’ in 1972. Before this time, the situation had already degenerated due to the attempted assassination of Rudi Dutschke by Josef Bachmann, a self-proclaimed devoted reader of the *Bildzeitung*, who was found carrying an edition of the *National-Zeitung*, and thus “called attention to the corporate media's role in fomenting increased violence.” Ibid., 46-9. That is, these events were imbricated with a larger polarization and politicization of the media, especially concentrated on Axel-Springer Verlag's monopoly over newspapers and periodicals, and their demonization of the student movements. In addition to massive protests outside Axel-Springer's West Berlin offices, intellectuals such as Adorno, Heinrich Böll, Alexander Mitscherlich, and Kluge-collaborator Oskar Negt also responded in op-eds addressing the manipulative practices and ‘yellow journalism’ in the mainstream media's characterizations of student protesters. Ibid., 79-83.

⁶³² One can only imagine the angry, exasperated dinner table conversations surrounding the Majdanek Trials, parallel those regarding RAF terrorism and the BRD's anti-democratic crackdown, restaged by Fassbinder and his mother in Alexander Kluge et al., “Deutschland Im Herbst,” (München: Pro-ject Filmproduktion im Filmverlag der Autoren GmbH; Kairos Film; Hallelujah-Film GmbH; ABS-Filmproduktion; Tango-Film; Edgar Reitz Filmproduktion, 1978).

⁶³³ Judt discusses the overlap between anti-capitalist and anti-fascist rhetoric employed by the second generation. “Lacking direct knowledge of what had gone before, they saw all Germany's faults through the prism of the failings not so much of Nazism as of the Bonn Republic...West Germany's post-war democracy was not the solution; it was the problem. The apolitical, consumerist, American-protected cocoon of the *Bundesrepublik* was not just imperfect and amnesiac; it had actively conspired with its Western masters to deny the German past, to bury it in material goods and anti-Communist propaganda...As Peter Schneider and others would later explain, they lived in a vacuum constructed over a void: even at home—indeed, especially at home—no-one would talk about ‘it’.” Judt, 416-7.

⁶³⁴ Ibid., 417. For the proliferation of ‘armed struggle’ among leftist social movements, see: Gerhardt, 62.

⁶³⁵ *Hitler's Children : The Story of the Baader-Meinhof Terrorist Gang* (Philadelphia u.a.: Lippincott, 1977).

⁶³⁶ Gerhardt writes, “Domestic events of 1968...were marked by a divergence between left and right politics and an increase in left-wing and right-wing violence.” Gerhardt, 51, original emphasis.

As Aleida Assmann explains, once the memorialization of Nazism's victims became increasingly visible and sayable in public, other memories of the Third Reich, namely those held by the NS generation, were placed on the defensive. This was owing, in part, to their double loss in worth and legitimacy, having already been defeated by the Allies and now under siege by their own offspring and in the court of international public opinion.⁶³⁷ A significant number of older, middle class, non-Jewish Germans still held fast to the historical notion of national identity established at the conclusion of the war. They considered themselves to be victims of the Third Reich, comparable to any others, and bristled in resentment at the ongoing, patronizing presence of the Americans and their 'Cultural Colonialism.'⁶³⁸ Aside from unrepentant Nazis or outspoken neo-Nazi sympathizers, many everyday Germans of the NS generation rejected the presumption that they, too, had behaved in ways during the war deserving of reproach; or the saga of prosecution and, it seemed to them, politicized persecution to which they were now subjected. A backlash was soon to erupt, in the form of a nostalgic rehabilitation of the Third Reich's memories and archival media—notably, those most closely associated with Hitler.

Even before the explosive events of late-1960s and early -70s, social scientists Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich had already warned of a potential breakdown in the fabric of West German society precipitated by the festering, unhealed wound of the Nazi past.⁶³⁹ In their widely influential study, *The Inability to Mourn*, published in 1967, the Mitscherlichs diagnosed the static quality and pervasive "unreality" of West German political life as a symptom of a pathological

⁶³⁷ Assmann and Frevert, 208.

⁶³⁸ See: Judd, 273-5; and, more generally, Frei and Golb.

⁶³⁹ Alexander Mitscherlich was head of the Sigmund Freud Institute in Frankfurt, which he had co-founded with Margarete, his wife, in 1960. He was also head of an observational committee during the *Ärztprozesse* in 1946-7 and co-author with Fred Mielke of *Das Diktat Der Menschenverachtung Eine Dokumentation* ; [Aus Der Deutschen Ärztekommision Beim Amerikanischen Militärgericht I in Nürnberg] (Heidelberg: Schneider, 1947).

emotional relationship to the past.⁶⁴⁰ Evidence of the public's poor psychic and socio-political health, they claimed, was perceptible in the past's detrimental effects of on present, collective behavior.⁶⁴¹ They posited that the "stubbornly maintained rejection of memories," and 'strenuous denial' of "any sense of involvement in the events of the Nazi past," (its 'derealization') had led to the antagonism, political immobility, and creative stultification permeating everyday life and saturating the representation of history.⁶⁴² The refusal and/or failure "to understand the terrifying past and...the terrifying influence which Nazi promises were able to acquire over the German people" at the end of the war had, in the Mitscherlichs' view, disarticulated the nation from its historical tradition.⁶⁴³ Thus, "What now survive are remnants of external habits, patterns of behavior and conformisms that, like stage props...are set up everywhere and give...political and everyday life a theatrical and unreal flavor."⁶⁴⁴ The representational dimension of politics and the 'manic' work of reconstruction form key points of reference.

The return to a traditional, masculine ideal of authority, embodied by Adenauer, "a very aged father-figure," proceeded throughout the early period of economic redevelopment with no

⁶⁴⁰ This stasis refers to unresolved political antagonism, the general public's ambivalence regarding the NS past, and the pervasive absence of political resolve by state elites for promoting new ideas, comparable to those developed in earlier times of crisis in Germany. The Mitscherlichs describe "a sluggishness of reaction discernable throughout Germany's whole political and social organism. Here, psychological barriers are helping to ward off insights into unresolved or insufficiently understood problems of contemporary German society. Where one would expect to find the greatest involvement, one finds indifference..." and, contrary to the spirit of innovation during the *fin de siècle*, "when the Third Reich came to an end, no trace of any such revolutionary, forward-looking thinking was to be found. The country seems to have exhausted its capacity to produce politically effective ideas, since most of its citizens agreed with the Nazi ideas of racism and world domination. And thereupon, with the downfall of the Nazi regime, they lost the very basis of their orientation." Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 7-11.

⁶⁴¹ The study clearly draws on Freud's theorization of repetition and 'acting out,' described in the previous chapter, from "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through."

⁶⁴² Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, xxv, 11, see also 6-13. "The inability to mourn the loss of the Führer is the result of an intensive defense against guilt, shame, and anxiety, a defense which was achieved by the withdrawal of previously powerful libidinal cathexes. The Nazi past was de-realized, i.e., emptied of reality. The occasion for mourning was not only the death of Adolf Hitler as a real person, but above all his disappearance as the representation of the collective ego-ideal. He was an object on which Germans depended, to which they transferred responsibility, and he was thus an internal object...his death, and his devaluation by the victors, also implied the loss of a narcissistic object and, accordingly, an ego- or self-impoverishment and devaluation." Ibid., 23-4.

⁶⁴³ Ibid., 10. This claim echoes Adorno's from 1959, discussed in chapter iv. Adorno. The Mitscherlichs continue, "Above all, there is a total lack of any sense that an effort should be made – from kindergarten to the university – to incorporate the disasters of the past into the stock of experience of German young people, not just as a warning, but as a specific challenge to their national society to deal with the brutally aggressive proclivities these disasters revealed." Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 13.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid., 11.

interrogation of its compromised status.⁶⁴⁵ Likewise, architectural reconstruction was “carried out almost literally on the same foundations as before – but never in any considered connection with tradition,” as in the case of the Party Rally Grounds, discussed in chapter iv.⁶⁴⁶ Local city planners had ignored the site’s historical significance while taking advantage of the large property to construct the *Meistersingerhalle* in 1963 and a convention center in 1973.⁶⁴⁷ But the turn to international, anti-historicist building styles was not localized to former Nazi sites. As Alexander Mitscherlich had charged in a previous study, *Die Unwirtlichkeit unserer Städte*, published two years earlier, the anonymous, commercial-driven, and haphazard style of reconstruction implemented throughout West Germany was, itself, an “Anstiftung zum Unfrieden,” as he put it in the subtitle.⁶⁴⁸ Thus, the question the Mitscherlichs posed in 1967: built atop such shaky social, political, cultural, and psychological foundations, “Is German democracy capable of withstanding challenges to its stability?”⁶⁴⁹ Several years later, their question had only become both more prescient and more urgent.

Crucially, for our purposes, the Mitscherlichs’ study placed Germany’s relationship to Hitler, past and *present*, squarely at the center of the issue—key to understanding and resolving

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁶⁴⁶ “This applies not only to new building, but also to what was taught in the schools, to the legal system, to municipal administration, and to a great many other things as well.” Ibid.

⁶⁴⁷ The latter’s new layout and design countered Speer’s axial orientation and stripped, muscular neoclassicism with “a seemingly neutral and international Modernist rationality.” Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 184. See also the lengthier discussion: 83-91. As discussed in chapter iv, the Parteitagsgelände’s historical significance and ideological heritage, downplayed in the concerns of regional planners, was thematized in Kluge’s *Brutalität in Stein*. The displacement of the issue into the realm of representation, however, seemed to defuse the conflict at the level of policy. Which is to say, Kluge’s film had little impact on the continued use or development of the site, even as it reverberated throughout West Germany’s culture industry. The ideological connection between Germany’s ‘renewed self-esteem’ and Wagner, invoked by the *Meistersingerhalle*, will be explicitly taken up by both Fest and Syberberg.

⁶⁴⁸ Mitscherlich. Mitscherlich was hired as a consultant throughout the 1970s for construction projects, which he ultimately denounced as providing planners with an ‘alibi’ while his recommendations were ignored in their design principles. See: Klaus Englert, “Die Unwirtlichkeit Unserer Städte. Zum 100. Geburtstag Von Alexander Mitscherlich - Psychoanalytiker Und Stadtkritiker,” *Deutschlandfunk* (2008), https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/die-unwirtlichkeit-unserer-staedte.700.de.html?dram:article_id=83778.

⁶⁴⁹ Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, xxiiv.

the resistance to confronting and coming to terms with the NS past.⁶⁵⁰ The public, they claimed, was not suffering from mass melancholia but had managed to stave off *any* confrontation with the reality of their historical loss of the war.⁶⁵¹ With Hitler's defeat and the NS regime's destruction, the desires and fantasies, values and identity symbolically projected onto the Führer—consistent with German nationalism as it took shape through the end of the 19th and early 20th century—had not *disappeared*, but been *de-realized*, repressed, and withdrawn from view.⁶⁵² Continuing to thrive in the unconscious, they now reemerged in uncontrollable (because disavowed) ways.⁶⁵³

Hence, it wasn't simply a task of 'working through' or 'mastering' the past—indeed the past *could not* be mastered, juridically or otherwise (as the equivocal reception of the NS Trials seemed to prove).⁶⁵⁴ Before such work could even begin, the past must be allowed to produce self-knowledge for the Germans. In other words, before West Germany could establish a new, healthy political identity (and object of identification), they would have to try to understand how Hitler had established himself as the nation's collective ego ideal, through the colonization of its cultural

⁶⁵⁰ See fn642. The analysis expressly draws on Freud's "Mourning and Melancholia (1917)," in *General Psychological Theory: Papers on Metapsychology*, ed. Philip Rieff (New York; Toronto: Simon & Schuster, 2008).

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 25-6. Eric Santner elucidates this claim in his essay on Syberberg, discussed in the following chapter.

⁶⁵² Both on a psychic level—repressed in the broadest sense, i.e. not permitted to rise to the level of conscious perception—and a social one—withdrawn into the realm of privately held political views rather than publicly stated sentiments. A prime example would be the members of Hitler's inner-circle, who professed their a-political status throughout the postwar period, while continuing to refer to 'Unser seeliger Adolf' (USA) with nostalgic affection in their personal correspondence. See: Despina Stratigakos's account of Gerdy Troost's letters to Winifred Wagner in , 116. and Syberberg's interview with the latter in his film . The fantasy of Nazism, embodied by Hitler, had also been largely withdrawn from view in the public sphere, especially in art historical discourse and publications. As the above reference to the Degenerate Art Exhibition's restaging suggests, this erasure applied more to architecture than other fine arts or film. See also Eric Rentschler's account of individual exhibitions and film showings reviving NS art and cultural production throughout the 1960s in Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's *Brutality in Stone*," 25, 28, 37.

⁶⁵³ The persistence of an over-inflated self-esteem, identified with Wilhelmine bourgeois para-military industrial prowess, appropriated and strengthened by Hitler, could be seen, for example, in the refusal to accept the historical conditions that brought about Germany's division; especially in the case of Berlin, which the West continued to try to reclaim as 'Hauptstadt,' as it refused to recognize the DDR. Fragmented preservation of Nazi ideals were also visible in the ambivalence and aggressivity toward authority figures and 'others.' i.e. anti-Soviet and anti-American sentiments and mounting antisemitism. Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 4-5, 29-31. The 1959 "Schmierwelle," noted in chapter iv, which followed the founding of the Central Agency for the Investigation of Nazi crimes included the vandalism of a synagogue in Cologne. See also: Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 61.

⁶⁵⁴ "It is obvious that the murder of millions of people cannot be 'mastered.' This is illustrated in symbolic condensation by the impotence of the German courts when confronted by the perpetrators of crimes dating from the Nazi period; the very scale of those crimes is baffling" Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 14.

forms. They would need to examine the objects, symbols, and beliefs still magnetically attached to the Führer; to evaluate the (repressed) fantasy they represented and he embodied in relation to themselves.

Apart from a purely psychoanalytic perspective—which will be taken up in greater detail in chapter vi—the impact of the Mitscherlichs’ study on public and academic discourse indicates the extent to which the subject of Hitler (and to a lesser but still significant degree, architecture) was central to the confrontation over coming to terms with the past in a broader sense.⁶⁵⁵ The shift in critical discourse on Nazism in West Germany, introduced not exclusively but most prominently (and, perhaps, most polemically) by the Mitscherlichs, foregrounded the Führer’s significance as a symbolic object of *desire*; it directed critical attention to the mediating sites, technologies, and forms that had framed and structured his visibility as the *embodiment* of sovereign authority in relation to the German state and the public; and it targeted his status as an object of Germany’s collective, emotional and political *identification*. This line of inquiry was also palpably present in historical research on the Third Reich and Hitler, which appeared throughout the 1960s, as a new generation of scholars released critical studies on the subjects across disciplines—e.g. Hans Mommsen’s *Beamtentum im Dritten Reich* (1966), Martin Broszat’s *Der Staat Hitlers* (1969), Hildegard Brenner’s *Die Kunstpolitik des Nationalsozialismus* (1963), and Anna Teut’s *Architektur im Dritten Reich* (1967) (these last two the first to deal substantially with NS architecture).⁶⁵⁶ These works assessed the degree to which NS ideology had pervaded various

⁶⁵⁵ Film and architecture, the two media of national self-representation most closely aligned with Hitler and NS aesthetics were thus those most subject to critical interrogation by historians and other disciplines in the 1960s-70s. It is the work of this chapter to illuminate the connection and intermedial strategies shared between them in reference to the reproduction and remediation of the NS past in the mainstream media of the 1970s.

⁶⁵⁶ Hans Mommsen, *Beamtentum Im Dritten Reich; Mit Ausgewählten Quellen Zur Nationalsozialistischen Beamtenpolitik* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt); Martin Broszat, *Der Staat Hitlers Grundlegung Und Entwicklung Seiner Inneren Verfassung* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1969); Hildegård Brenner, *Die Kunstpolitik Des Nationalsozialismus* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1963); Teut. All of the above-named scholars were born between 1926-30. I limit my selection here to a few of the most prominent and subsequently influential studies published in Germany. Joachim Fest’s (also born in 1926) dissertation, *Das Gesicht Des Dritten Reiches : Profile Einer Totalitären Herrschaft* (München 1963). is likewise notable, and will be taken up

levels of civil service and cultural discourse; documented and exposed the state's systemic criminality; and considered who was responsible for the successful implementation of NS policy, Hitler or his followers?⁶⁵⁷ And if the latter, how had they been persuaded to abandon their own tastes, positions, and morals and in favor of the Führer's? The quality of these studies notwithstanding, they failed to influence or gain a firm foothold with the general public.

Likely because they were drowned out by a more mainstream—and decidedly more suspect—popular demand for Nazi history. As the taboo on the NS past lifted in the 1960s, in part through the work of leftist intellectuals and *avant garde* artists, the artifacts of the Third Reich and the Führer-Mythos likewise returned in force in the form of postmodern kitsch.⁶⁵⁸ A commercial market for Nazi histories and historical representations, souvenirs and fragments, memoirs and memorabilia boomed in the early 1970s.⁶⁵⁹ But the most prominent voice within this market undoubtedly belonged to Hitler's favored architect, Inspector General of Building turned Armaments Minister Albert Speer. We can now thus circle back to themes foregrounded at the beginning of this chapter: the conjoined representation of Hitler and NS architecture, which increasingly monopolized the West German public's attention and framed the (not-so)critical reception of the NS past.

below. International publications worth mentioning in this context are, in particular, on the subject of the Holocaust, Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews. Volume Iii.*, first published in 1961, and, on architecture, Barbara Miller Lane's .

⁶⁵⁷ Historical studies of the NS state remained divided about Hitler's centrality or superfluity to the regime. The influence of Cold War politics on Nazi historiography and the debate over the 'intentionalist' or 'functionalist' nature of the NS State is discussed in detail in Ian Kershaw's *The Nazi Dictatorship : Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*. The aesthetic studies, especially Teut's, push back against the insistence of Hitler as unifying 'author' of all NS cultural production, pointing instead to its stylistic heterogeneity, decentralized development, and implementation by other state actors, agencies and semi-autonomous artists. Teut, 13-4.

⁶⁵⁸ While this chapter focuses on mainstream representations, the revival of Hitler's images was not consigned to either high or low art. Eric Rentschler quotes the artist Christo, who notes, "In the seventies, the Germans suddenly began to reinvent National Socialism. The Hitler period became an extraordinary creative resource for a whole generation of filmmakers and writers." Rentschler, "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's *Brutality in Stone*," 37-8.

⁶⁵⁹ The subject of Susan Sontag's famous essay: ., also taken up in depth, in Friedländer; and Rosenfeld.

Albert Speer's Resurrection of *the Führer-Mythos & the NS Architectural Archive*

Released from prison in Spandau in 1966, Speer made quick work of parlaying his exculpatory testimony from the Nürnberg trials and 20-years-worth of 'Secret Diaries' into a new career: celebrity mythologist of Hitler's inner circle of feuding functionaries and wayward artists, most especially, himself. Speer's *Erinnerungen*, published by Ullstein in 1969, met with immediate (and still continuous) public acclaim, and was followed four years later by his *Spandauer Tagebücher*.⁶⁶⁰ Although later confirmed to be riddled with inaccuracies, revisions, and outright lies, the importance and impact of Speer's memoirs to the commercialization and (re)popularization of the Führer (and his architecture) as a subject suddenly up for discussion was enormous.⁶⁶¹ I do not mean to imply that Speer *set off* the fascination with Hitler that seemed to take hold over the West German public in the 1970s. Rather, a calculating opportunist, Speer rode a wave of interest, popularity, and marketability—and turned a handy profit.⁶⁶²

The response of the BRD's *Konsumgesellschaft* spoke volumes.⁶⁶³ Saul Friedländer's 1984 book *Reflections of Nazism* outlines the "new discourse" on Hitler and the Third Reich,

⁶⁶⁰ Speer, *Erinnerungen; Spandau : The Secret Diaries* (1976). For reasons that will become clear below, it bears mentioning that Ullstein had been acquired by Axel-Springer in 1959. On a different note, despite Speer's careful avoidance of psychoanalytic terminology, the *Spandauer Tagebücher* take the distinct form of 'remembering, repeating, and working through' the past. The diary entries, themselves deeply repetitive, offer an extensive account of Speer's reflections on his career, his dreams, and his wrestling with his own continued expression of Nazi ideology, in spite of his insistence that he was no longer spellbound by Hitler. Notably, Alexander Mitscherlich, appears in an early entry—from October 23, 1946—and it would be surprising, if Speer had not been aware of the Mitscherlich's study and perhaps also Adorno's essay from 1959. *Ibid.*, 14. Still, the active (conscious or unconscious) *repression* of his own culpability for NS crimes, especially his explicit knowledge of and involvement in the deportation and expropriation of Berlin's Jewish population (covered in chapter ii), and the expansion and operation of concentration camps is apparent throughout both memoirs. For the GBI's mutually beneficial relationship with the S.S. see: Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The Ss, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy*; Reichhardt and Schäche.

⁶⁶¹ In addition to memoirs, Speer was interviewed by Playboy, and would remain in the public eye until his death; his testimony and personal account was central to Fest's publications, as will be discussed later. Eric Norden, "Playboy Interview: Albert Speer," *Playboy*, June 1971..

⁶⁶² Profitability and self-preservation can be identified as Speer's central, driving motivations—and two areas in which he excelled both during the Nazi period and in the postwar era. Speer's personal enrichment through the office of the GBI, especially during construction on the New Reich Chancellery, is laid out in detail in Arnold and Janick; Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*; Reichhardt and Schäche; Thorau and Schaulinski. Speer himself highlights his streamlining of cost and multiplication of output as Armaments Minister in the *Erinnerungen*. Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 225-7. Further, the *Spandauer Tagebücher* explicitly thematize his will to survive through the early period of imprisonment, sustained through writing and self-reflection. *Spandau : The Secret Diaries*, 26.

⁶⁶³ The Left's derogatory term for the BRD's mainstream consumer market.

initiated by Speer's memoirs.⁶⁶⁴ This discourse's primary narrative centered on "emotional bondage" to the Führer, structured in representation by a specular relationship to authority.⁶⁶⁵ And, indeed, Hitler's charismatic power and its seductive effect on Speer are woven throughout the *Erinnerungen*, beginning with his first encounter with the Führer in 1931 (at that time, only of the NSDAP).⁶⁶⁶ At a speech at Berlin's Technische Hochschule, Speer describes being drawn in by Hitler's everyday appearance, "bürgerliche Korrektheit," initially humble oratory style, and "süddeutscher Charm."⁶⁶⁷ But during the speech, Hitler's demeanor intensifies into an "eindringlich[e] ...suggestiv[e] Überzeugungskraft," transforming into a medium of the crowd's desire.⁶⁶⁸ In fact, the impression of his performance is so powerful that Speer claims to have entirely forgotten the content of his speech.⁶⁶⁹ But its effect is apparent nonetheless: several weeks later, despite his supposedly generally apolitical disposition, Speer joins the Party; "ich wählte nicht die NSDAP, sondern trat zu Hitler, dessen Erscheinung mich in der ersten Begegnung suggestiv berührt und seither nicht mehr freigegeben hatte."⁶⁷⁰ Speer's personal relationship and spellbound encounters with Hitler structure the entire ensuing narrative, which is chronologically divided between his employment as Inspector General of Building and Armaments Minister.⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶⁴ Friedländer in fact opens his introduction with a quotation from Speer's *Spandauer Tagebücher*, and centers his critique on a number of passages from both memoirs. Friedländer, 11.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁶⁶⁶ Speer describes their relationship in distinctly homosocial, if not homo-erotic terms. "Einer meiner engeren Mitarbeiter faßte den Eindruck, den diese merkwürdige Beziehung auf ihn machte, in die Worte: 'Wissen Sie, was Sie sind? Sie sind Hitlers unglückliche Liebe!'" Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 148. see also: *Spandau : The Secret Diaries*, 139.

⁶⁶⁷ *Erinnerungen*, 32.

⁶⁶⁸ "Hitler schien am Ende nicht mehr zu sprechen, um zu überzeugen; vielmehr schien er davon Überzeugt, das auszudrücken, was das zur Masse gewordene Publikum von ihm erwartete: als handele es sich um die selbstverständlichste Sache der Welt, Studenten und einen Teil des Lehrkörpers der zwei größten Hochschulen Deutschlands willig an der Leine zu führen." *Ibid.*, 33.

⁶⁶⁹ Continued presence of positive emotional impressions of memories of Nazism, stripped of their negative ideological content, is typical in the case studies described by the Mitscherlichs. e.g., Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 33-6.

⁶⁷⁰ Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 33-4. Speer explains that he does so in spite of feeling disgusted, in the intervening weeks, by a mass assembly led by Goebbels. Even at the outset of the memoir, he thus establishes critical distance to Nazism, its ideology, and other figureheads, which, however, fails to undermine or counteract his personal attachment to Hitler.

⁶⁷¹ This analysis will focus on the first section of the narrative, leaving aside Speer's role as Armaments Minister.

With Hitler as “Katalysor,” Speer outlines his *own* rise to power as an enthusiastic, escalating act of submission and self-negation, with monumental results.⁶⁷² Speer is pulled into the Führer’s orbit and inner circle by the gravitational force of his charisma; their mutual infatuation and dynamic collaboration propelled by a shared passion for architecture. His progressive professional achievements “im Auftrag des Führers” punctuate the memoir’s first third, spanning 1931-1942—e.g. outfitting a parade route and renovating the party ministry in Berlin in 1932; designing the German Pavilion at the 1933 Paris World’s Fair; and conceptualizing ‘ruin value’ and constructing the Parteitagsgelände in 1934. As the geographical radius increases, following Hitler’s trajectory within the Third Reich’s expanding topography, so do the dimensions of its architectural scenery. From the ‘Gebaute Megalomanie’ of Nürnberg, Speer advances to ‘Der größte Auftrag’ of Berlin’s redevelopment as representational capital, detours to renovate the Berghof at ‘Obersalzberg’ into a citadelle, before returning to the monumental construction of ‘Die neue Reichskanzlei.’⁶⁷³ The section climaxes in the megalomaniacal plans of the ‘Enfesseltes Empire,’ Berlin’s reconstruction as Germania, and the ‘Beginn der Talfahrt’—whereupon Speer’s proximity to Hitler and their future, architectural designs are increasingly encroached upon by the outbreak of war and the efforts of his other feuding paladins. The section concludes with a retrospective account of ‘Das Übermaß’, referring to both the regime’s military and architectural excesses.⁶⁷⁴ In elaborative, aestheticized (and often exaggerated) detail, Speer recounts these plans’ implementation and the design of each representational, architectural project.⁶⁷⁵ Citing

⁶⁷² “Alle meine Kräfte wurden mir abverlangt in immer sich steigendem Tempo und mit ständig größerer Beanspruchung.” Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 45.

⁶⁷³ Referenced in quotations throughout this paragraph are the titles of chapters 5-13 of Speer’s *Erinnerungen*.

⁶⁷⁴ Again, the account is selective in the extreme, and elides all salient information regarding the collaboration of Speer’s GBI with the SS and his involvement in the expansion of Auschwitz.

⁶⁷⁵ Regarding the New Chancellery’s construction, in particular, Speer’s account of NS building operations is revisionist in virtually all of its key details. The mythology of the New Chancellery’s nine-month construction, which Speer and, in his biography of him, Joachim Fest also repeats was not exposed until the publication of Angela Schönberger’s dissertation in 1979. This history and its revision in NS propaganda are addressed in this dissertation’s introduction and first chapter.

propaganda and historical accounts, the text contextualizes their production and provides insight to the Führer-State's inner workings and ideological mobilization of building.⁶⁷⁶ The imbrication of Speer's representation of himself, Hitler, and NS architecture, held together by a nexus of state power, charismatic authority, shared aesthetic vision, and bourgeois sensibility, pervades the narrative.

But the heart of the story is formed by the dynamic, intimate, interdependent relationship of Speer and his 'Bauherr.' For example, during an account of his amazement at the crowds thundering to see the Führer as they tour through Bavaria, Speer remarks, self-reflexively,

“Vielleicht ist es begreiflich: Ich war von diesen Huldigungsstürmen mitgerissen. Aber noch überwältigender war es für mich, einige Minuten oder Stunden später mit dem Abgott eines Volkes über Baupläne zu sprechen, im Theater zu sitzen oder in der »Osteria« Ravioli zu essen – es war dieser Kontrast, der mich bezwang. Während ich vor einigen Monaten noch vor der Aussicht, Bauten entwerfen und ausführen zu können, begeistert war, stand ich nun völlig in seinem Bann, bedingungslos und besinnungslos von ihm festgehalten – ich wäre bereit gewesen, ihm überall zu folgen.”⁶⁷⁷

The periodic, inserted sections of images, supplemented by Speer's private archive, affirm the intensification of their professional collaboration and personal bond. In the first of these, the order, dignity, and grandeur brought to Hitler's performance as Führer by Speer's architecture is suggested by two photographs of the Reich Chancellery's facade on Wilhelmplatz, showing him first leaning, undignified, out the window during the Machtübernahme and then standing in military dress on the added Führerbalkon, fronted by a squadron of S.S. guards. (Fig. V-1) On the bottom right of this page, another photograph places the Führer eye-to-eye with his first favored architect, Paul Ludwig Troost.⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁶ The same archive assembled, critically, by Teut, e.g. Hitler's speeches, internal orders, Speer's own publicized articles, etc., is also employed by Speer, but woven into the narrative, and cited in scholarly fashion in the endnotes, simultaneously lending credence to both the ideological archival material and Speer's account, itself.

⁶⁷⁷ Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 62. See also fn691 We will return presently to this contrast, between Hitler's superhuman power and ordinariness, which Friedländer describes as crucial to the fascination and attraction of the Führer-Mythos.

⁶⁷⁸ Speer alleges that Hitler was intimidated by Troost, but, in contrast, always spoke to him as an equal. *Ibid.*, 53-6.



1933 hatte ich in größter Eile nach dem Wilhelmplatz zu dem neuen »Hitlerschen Balkon« angebaut, damit Hitler sich dort der jubelnden Menge repräsentativer zeigen konnte. »Das Fenster war mir zu »absurd«, meinte Hitler zu mir befriedigt, »ich wollte mich vor allen Seinen gesehen. Schließlich konnte ich mich doch nicht weit hinausbeugen.«

Hitlers Verhältnis zu Troost war wie das eines Schülers zum Meister. Wenn er alle zwei bis drei Wochen nach München fuhr, war sein erstes ein Besuch beim »Professore«. Selbstsicher und zurückhaltend zeigte ihm Troost dann seine Pläne und Eleenskizzen.

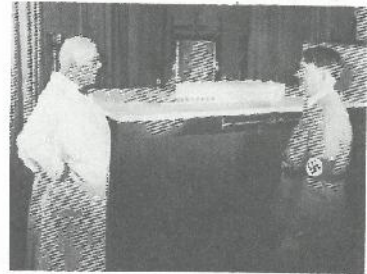
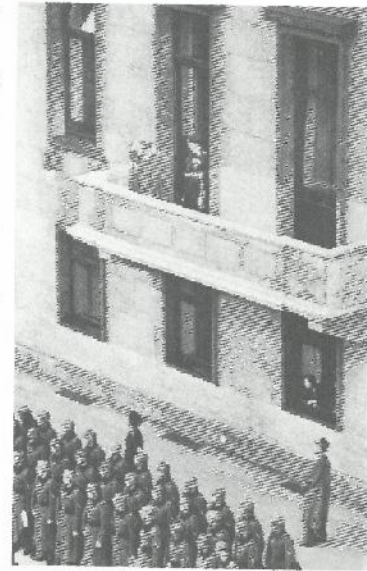
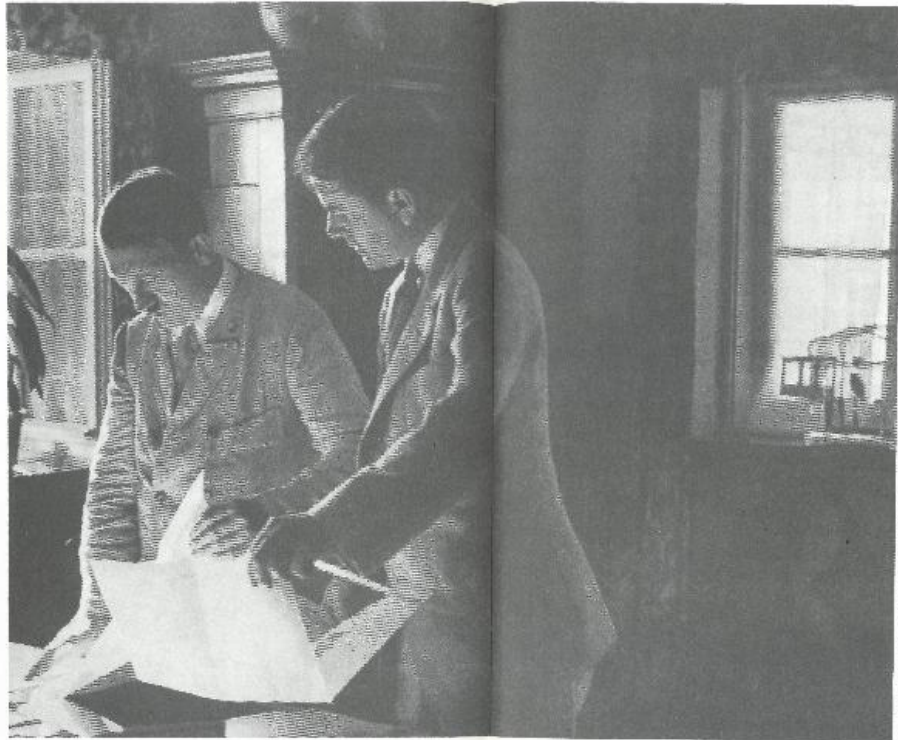


Figure V-1 – First images in Speer’s *Erinnerungen*, showing Hitler in the Siedler building in 1933 & ca. 1939 (left, above right)

The following image, spread over the next two pages, suggests an entirely different, more private manner of exchange between Speer and Hitler: illuminated in a sunbeam, submerged in discussion of plans spread out in the darkened living room at Obersalzberg.⁶⁷⁹ (Fig. V-2) Subsequent images show thronging masses around the Führer; the increasingly grandiose models and buildings for the Parteitagsgelände. The first section’s concluding photographs, a large print of Hitler asleep, and image spreads of the New Reich Chancellery’s and Berghof’s interior and designs, emphasize Speer’s construction of and presence within the architectural centers of Hitler’s civic and domestic sovereignty. (Figs. V-3 & 4)

⁶⁷⁹ Speer’s caption denigrates the space in its pre-renovated form: “Die Einrichtung des alten gemütlichen Holzhauses Hitlers am Obersalzberg entstammte der Vertikoperiode altdeutscher Heimattümlerei und gab der Wohnung das Gepräge einer kitschigen Kleinbürgerlichkeit.” Gerdy Troost, P.L. Troost’s widow and a key player in the NS building industry, shared this opinion and was responsible for the renovated interior design and furnishing. Stratigakos, 78-89.



Die Einleitung
 der neuen
 Reichs-
 Chancellerie
 im
 Reichs-
 Chancellerie-
 Gebäude
 am
 1. April 1935

Figure V-2 – Overleaf of preceding image, a photograph of Speer and Hitler discussing plans in the Berghof ca. 1935



Hitler, der Führer
 der Deutschen
 Reichs-
 Chancellerie
 am
 1. April 1935

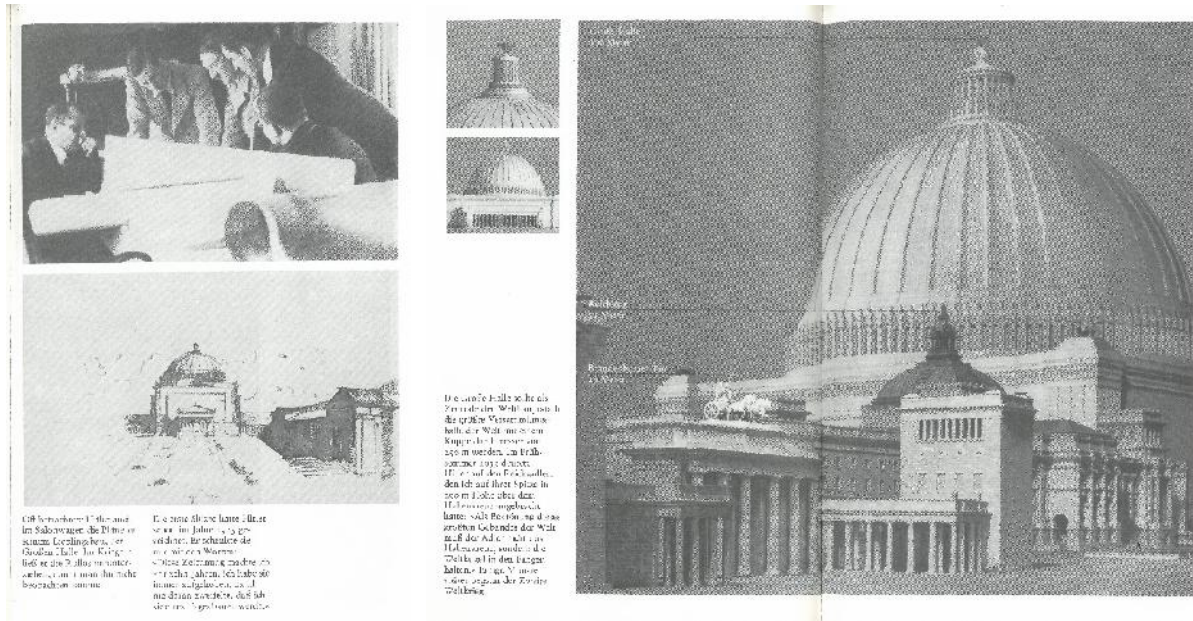


Die Einleitung
 der neuen
 Reichs-
 Chancellerie
 im
 Reichs-
 Chancellerie-
 Gebäude
 am
 1. April 1935

Figures V-3 & V-4 – Hitler asleep in an armchair at the Berghof (left), photo-spread of New Reich Chancellery (right)

The next image section, consisting primarily of Berlin’s future architecture, further develops this visual narrative. Speer’s intimacy with Hitler is again implied through the inclusion of the latter’s personal sketches and photographs of them together. Speer’s amplification of the Führer’s ‘vision’ is illustrated in contrasting, detailed and heavily stylized images of ‘Germania’s’

monumental buildings—or, rather, photographs of architectural models, full-scale facade mock-ups, and highly aestheticized ground-plan renderings.⁶⁸⁰ (Figs. V-5 & 6) In the surrounding text (not the captions), however, Speer delivers a mounting critique of the overblown, phantasmatic nature of these designs.⁶⁸¹ The retrospectively-acquired critical distance in the narration dovetails with the apparent artificiality and multiplied mediation of the buildings in the images.



Figures V-5 & V-6 – Images of Hitler and Speer discussing architectural plans, (above left), Hitler’s sketches for the Great Hall (below left), and model photographs of the structure with detail views (center & at right)

At the same time, the growing rift between the men is foreshadowed in a photo of them in Obersalzberg, separated by the length of a bench, exaggerated by the foreshortened angle, with a blurry Speer looking toward Hitler, who does not return his gaze. (Fig. V-7) I will omit detailed descriptions of the following sections of images, only noting that they continue to indexically

⁶⁸⁰ In addition to the images shown here, the North-South-Axis is depicted in a photograph of the 1:1000 model of the plan, which Speer notes Hitler’s obsession with (see: Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 147-8.); a partial view of the model of the Führerpalast’s facade and its representational layout; photographs of the modeled interior and 1:1 facade mock-up of Göring’s Reichsmarschallamt; and Hitler’s sketch from 1935 and the presentation model of the Triumphbogen from 1939, displayed in the New Chancellery’s library, with a fleet of admiring state elites, illuminated in the background

⁶⁸¹ In the chapter ‘Entfesseltes Empire,’ Speer describes his father’s reaction to the model of the North-South-Axis: “‘Ihr seid komplett verrückt geworden.’,” noting in an aside, “Wenn ich heute in den zahlreichen Modellfotos unserer ehemaligen Prachtstraße blättere, sehe ich: es wäre nicht nur verrückt, es wäre auch langweilig geworden...was ich vorher in Jahren nicht bemerkt hatte: wir bauten maßstablos...Selbst bei den Fotos der Geschäftsbauten erschrecke ich jedesmal aufs neue über die monumentale Starre, die alle unsere Bemühungen, großstädtisches Leben in diese Straße zu bringen, zerstört hätte.” Ibid., 148-9.

recapitulate and thematically develop on the narrative of the next two sections, which cover Speer’s tenure as Armaments Minister, veering into the violence of the Blitzkrieg (in the West) and the annihilating destruction of Total War (in the East) and Germany’s defeat (in Berlin), followed by an epilog of his postwar imprisonment and trial (in Nürnberg).⁶⁸² In sum, Speer’s memoir constructs a visual, architectural, at times almost haptic, mnemonic memorial topography, onto which he projects the drama of his relationship with the Führer, intertwined with the events of the Third Reich’s rise and fall.⁶⁸³ In essence, he produces a new account (and photo album) of both his own and the Hitler-Mythos.

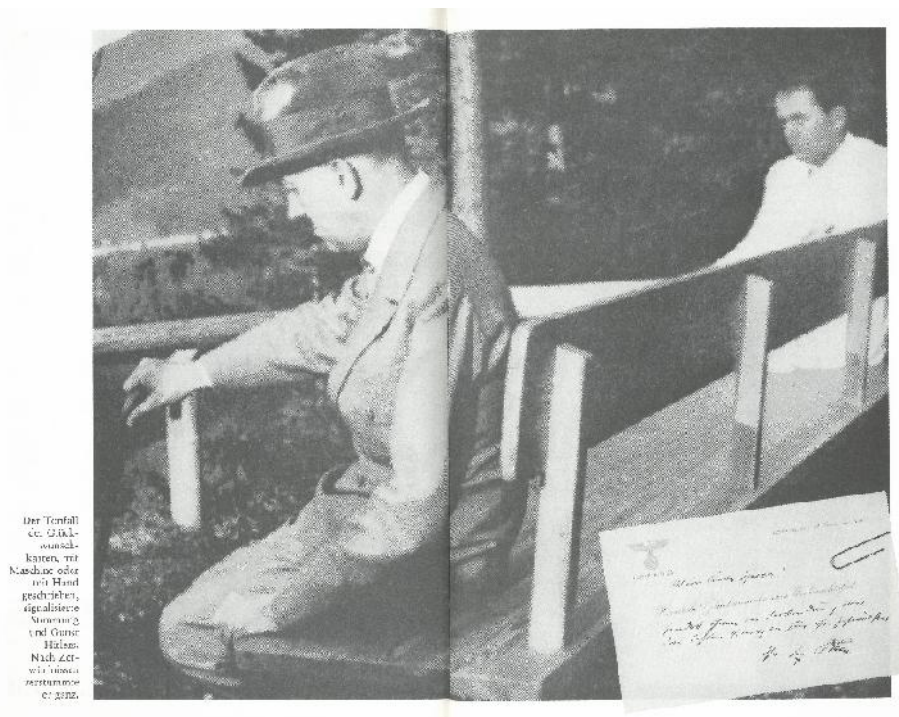


Figure V-7 – Hitler and Speer on a bench at Obersalzberg, with a personal note from Hitler wishing Speer a Merry Christmas superimposed over the bottom right of the image. The caption reads: “Der Tonfall der Glückwunschkarten, mit Maschine oder mit Hand geschrieben, signalisierte Stimmung und Gunst Hitlers. Nach Zerwürfnisse verstummte er ganz.”

⁶⁸² The images sections show: the siege of Paris and tour of its architecture, further designs for Germania following Hitler’s visit to Mussolini’s Rome in 1939; a model photograph Wilhelm Kreis’s Soldatenhalle, an order affirming architecture as a state priority during war, Speer’s visits with Hitler at the Führerhauptquartier and Obersalzberg, as his entourage swelled and he declined in authority and health; bunker construction on the Atlantic Wall, Speer’s break with Hitler due to the Nero Befehl, the defeat in Berlin (metonymically visualized in three photographs of the New Chancellery’s destroyed interior), and Speer’s Imprisonment and Trial in Nürnberg.

⁶⁸³ While I have omitted further citations, Speer’s descriptions of clothing and building materials focus heavily on their tactile elements, particularly in the New Chancellery scenes. See, especially: Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 127-30.

Friedländer, describing the genre of myth as central to the ‘new discourse’ on Nazism, identifies it as “the history everyone already knows.”⁶⁸⁴ Its formal dimensions are externally determined by defined characteristics: the kitsch appropriation of pseudo-spirituality, universal and legendary archetypes, which operate through a logic “accumulation, repetition, and redundancy...the circular language of invocation” of key “leitmotifs.”⁶⁸⁵ The components of Speer’s narrative are thus both remarkably familiar and newly transformed in his account—especially through his reproduction and remediation of the NS architectural archive.

Crucially, Speer performs critical distance regarding his most problematic objects—both NS architecture and Hitler. Yet, on the other hand, the narrative suggests and, further, seems to *animate* fascination. Speer’s retrospective *performs* the seductive, hypnotic hold of Hitler over his subjects, his ability to transform other’s worldview to match his own, but simultaneously works to *deconstruct* this effect through the inclusion of his own reflections and asides.⁶⁸⁶ The dual strategy is strikingly apparent in descriptions of Berlin’s destruction by the Allies in the chapter, ‘Bomben’:

“Die Angriffe auf Berlin boten vom Flakturm aus ein unvergeßliches Bild, und es bedurfte eines ständigen Zurückrufens in die grausame Wirklichkeit, um sich nicht von diesem Bild faszinieren zu lassen: die Illumination der Leuchtfallschirme, von den Berlinern »Weihnachtsbäume« genannt, gefolgt von Explosionsblitzen, die sich in Brandwolken verfangen, unzählige suchende Scheinwerfer, das aufregende Spiel, wenn ein Flugzeug erfaßt war und sich dem Lichtkegel zu entwinden suchte, eine sekundenlange Brandfackel, wenn es getroffen wurde: die Apokalypse bot ein grandioses Schauspiel.”⁶⁸⁷

The highly aestheticized, spectacular descriptions are no innovation in themselves—similar to postwar literary accounts of Germany’s destruction in the air-war, and the more recent revival of this image archive in architectural publications and on film.⁶⁸⁸ What Speer adds, however, is

⁶⁸⁴ Friedländer, 46.

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 46, 50-1.

⁶⁸⁶ Friedländer describes an “uneasiness” that “stems from the dissonance between the declared moral and ideological position of the author or filmmaker, the condemnation of Nazism and the will to understand and the aesthetic effect,” which transforms it into “voluptuous anguish and ravishing images.” *Ibid.*, 20-1.

⁶⁸⁷ Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 301.

⁶⁸⁸ In addition to the clear similarity to the ruin-porn images in *das ende*, analyzed in the previous chapter, this section also distinctly resembles Ernst Jünger’s descriptions of Weltuntergang in *Auf Den Marmorklippen* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlag-Anstalt,

commentary. That is, his reflections on *how* he became ‘fascinated’ by the ‘brutal reality,’ drawn in to the ‘grandiose spectacle,’ as an effect of his misguided belief in both Hitler *and* Nazi propaganda (the same material *he* had produced!).⁶⁸⁹ For example, a few pages later, he continues:

“Immer hielt ich es für eine der erstrebenswerten Eigenschaften, die Realität zu erkennen und Wahnvorstellungen nicht zu folgen. Wenn ich jedoch mein Leben bis in die Jahre der Gefangenschaft überdenke, blieb ich in keiner Periode frei von Trugbildern...Während aber unter normalen Umständen die Abkehr von der Realität durch die Umwelt, durch Spott, Kritik, Verlust und Glaubwürdigkeit, berichtigt wird, gab es im Dritten Reich keine derartigen Korrektive, besonders wenn man der oberen Schicht angehörte...Wie in einem Spiegelkabinett vervielfachte sich jeder Selbstbetrug zum immer wieder bestätigten Bild einer phantastischen Traumwelt, die mit dem düsteren Außen nichts mehr zu tun hatte...In diesen Spiegeln konnte ich vielfältig immer nur mein Gesicht sehen, kein fremder Anblick störte diese Uniformität von hundert immer gleichen – meinen Gesichtern.”⁶⁹⁰

In passages like this, Speer’s narration is both explicitly self-reflexive and subtly attendant to the contemporary (critical and psychoanalytic) discourse on fascism in the Federal Republic.⁶⁹¹ His invocation of architecture (and other propaganda) as a mirror of the self, producing an illusory image of unity, highlights the narcissistic foundation of Hitler’s fascination, insisted on by the Mitscherlichs. Further, Speer’s symbolic use of architecture as mnemonic topography *and* phantasmagoria (*Trugbild*) of memory (both standing in for and potentially beautifying or distracting from the real history of destruction); and, thereby, his reintroduction of the visual-architectural archive of NS propaganda, heretofore repressed from public view, renders him,

1939). and his postwar sci-fi novel *Heliopolis: Rückblick Auf Eine Stadt* (Tübingen: (Rottweil, Druck von Banholzer): Heliopolis-Verlag 1949). But such destruction imagery, a kind of aestheticized rubber-necking, was employed across the political spectrum, likewise appearing, for example, as in Hans Erich Nossack’s meditation on the destruction of Hamburg in *Der Untergang* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1948).

⁶⁸⁹ Žižek describes this as the reversal of the ‘manipulative’ form of fetishistic disavowal, “The manipulator ‘knows very well’ that all magic ritual is only deception – the moment of belief (‘but nevertheless’) is displaced, projected into the other...into the object of his manipulation; he always needs the credulity of the other and if the deception is ‘too successful’, if...a fortuitous harmonization between the intended manipulation and reality occurs, if it seems as though the real ‘answered’ the manipulation, the distance between manipulator and manipulated is destroyed and *the manipulator himself falls into credulity*, begins to believe in his own deception.” Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 248, original emphasis.

⁶⁹⁰ Speer, *Erinnerungen*, 303-4.

⁶⁹¹ His recognition of his own self-interest and culpability is noted in passages where he reflects on his technocratic position within the regime. At the beginning of the chapter ‘Mein Katalysator,’ he remarks, “Ich habe mich während der zwanzig Jahre, die ich im Spandauer Gefängnis zubrachte, oft gefragt, was ich getan hätte, wenn ich Hitlers wirkliches Gesicht und die wahre Natur der von ihm aufgerichteten Herrschaft erkannt hätte. Die Antwort war banal und deprimierend zugleich: Meine Stellung als Hitlers Architekt war mir bald unentbehrlich geworden.” *Ibid.*, 45.

surprisingly (and likely unwittingly), bedfellows with another key player in the (aesthetic) discourse on ‘remembering, repeating, and working through’ the NS past: Alexander Kluge.

As analyzed in chapter iv, Kluge’s resurrection of the NS intermedial-architectural archive in *Brutalität in Stein* critically framed and aggressively defamiliarized its artifacts, even as it sought to revive the memory of their seductive, aestheticized power.⁶⁹² The film presents NS media (specifically, architectural *Kulturfilm*) in the manner of ideological critique, claiming that the destructive trajectory of history is and was legible in the (mass-)cultural objects that assisted in its production. Hence, the past could have turned out otherwise, had circumstances been viewed at the time with a greater degree of critical, intellectual distance. Speer, on the other hand, hews closely to the original, emotionally laden ruin aesthetics of the Third Reich and the immediate postwar period, lately revived in the West German mainstream media. He furthermore insists that there was *no* ‘corrective’ point of view to counter the seductive, self-image, generated by Nazis, projected onto the Führer and his buildings, at least not at the time (only hindsight is 20/20). And, notably, Speer’s version of the narrative was by far the more popular and visible of the two, and the one more palatable to West German audiences.⁶⁹³

The ‘new discourse on Nazism,’ firmly established with the success of Speer’s memoirs, thus revived and collated the Third Reich’s intermedial archive, the material of which subsequently flooded the market in the 1970s in a host of consumer products and commercial representations. Not only were Nazi artifacts suddenly, inescapably available everywhere for view and purchase, their reproduction had moved away from the critical, intellectualized, and often politicized (leftist)

⁶⁹² Speer, like Kluge, explicitly links NS architectural propaganda to the air-war’s destruction and employs many of the same images as *Brutality in Stone*, of Hitler and the Soldatenhalle, among others. Additionally, from the other direction, Kluge’s theoretical practice is not only cinematic but as critics like Rentschler have pointed out, also *textual*. See: Rentschler, “Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge’s *Brutality in Stone*,” 34.

⁶⁹³ For the status of New German Cinema as an export-media in the Federal Republic, see: Elsaesser, *New German Cinema a History*; and Hake.

aims of the preceding decades, taking on the distinctly eroticized, titillating appearance of kitsch entertainment. Explicitly or implicitly, photo-books of SS Regalia, newly-produced images from Leni Riefenstahl of the Sudanese Nuba, and film productions like Visconti's *The Damned* (1969) and *Cabaret* (1972) played up the pornographic and prurient fascination with the Third Reich, its erotic fixation on the body and death.⁶⁹⁴ In addition to Speer's memoirs, a host of autobiographies from other Nazi elites and minor functionaries circulated widely, evincing broad popular interest—and forming a kind of perverse funhouse mirror to the testimonies of concentration camp survivors, still being delivered in Frankfurt and Düsseldorf at the NS trials.⁶⁹⁵

Within this network of representation, though isolated from the bulk of its output, the fixation on Hitler, his psychology, and his manipulative effect on the public was undeniable; its own cottage industry. The Mitscherlichs may have started the discussion, but its proliferation (and diminishing, critical character) was urged on by Speer's memoirs and publications like Walter C. Langer's psychological analysis of Hitler, originally commissioned by US Intelligence, but published as a book in 1972 (and immediately translated into German).⁶⁹⁶ In short, the revival of Nazism's ideological, mythological landscape and its central characters reappeared on the scene at the same time as—and drew attention away from—the evidence of what they in fact left behind, namely, violence, destruction, and widespread social and political unrest.

The durable fantasy of the 'good old days' with 'Brother Hitler' seemed to outlast and outshine the devastation caused by his reign, which was still actively being determined by the

⁶⁹⁴ This phenomenon and the two books of photographs named above are analyzed in Sontag. Jack Pia, *Ss Regalia* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1974); Leni Riefenstahl, *Die Nuba* (Frechen: Komet, 1973); Luchino Visconti, "Die Verdammten," (Rome, Munich: Praesidens Film S.p.A.; Pegaso S.p.A.; Italnoleggio Cinematografico; Eichenberg Film GmbH, 1969); Bob Fosse, "Cabaret," (Los Angeles, New York, Munich: Allied Artists Pictures Co.; ABC Broadcasting Inc.; Bavaria Atelier GmbH, 1972).

⁶⁹⁵ Notable among these are: Hans Frank, *Im Angesicht Des Galgens : Deutung Hitlers Und Seiner Zeit Auf Grund Eigener Erlebnisse Und Erkenntnisse : Geschrieben Im Nürnberger Justizgefängnis* (München-Gräfelfing: F.A. Beck, 1953); Karl Dönitz, *Zehn Jahre Und Zwanzig Tage : Erinnerungen Des Befehlshabers Der Deutschen U-Boote Im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Frankfurt am Main etc.1964). and Ernst Jünger's wartime diaries.

⁶⁹⁶ Langer; Walter C. Langer, Theodor Tagger, and Friedrich Hacker, *Das Adolf-Hitler-Psychogramm* (Wien, München: Molden, 1972).

courts (and playing out in protests and politicized clashes on the West German streets). Of course, the aestheticization of politics and politicization everyday life under Hitler had always held broad appeal; a fact that had not changed over time, though its depiction had shifted in temporal valence from an utopian, future fantasy to a nostalgic attachment to the mythical past. Undoing the public's fascination with the Third Reich's symbolic objects required attending to how they sustained belief in a reality that was no longer there and had *never* really existed, except as mediated in propaganda. Instead, through their kitschy approachability and eroticized attraction, commercial reproductions of NS images and narratives seemed to only invigorate the attachment to and incite morbid fascination with Hitler, even and *especially* as their framing insisted that his spell was broken.⁶⁹⁷

Hence, by 1973, Claus Heinrich Meyer, author of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung's* popular 'Streiflicht' column, had occasion to wonder "Warum wird Hitler wieder ausgegraben?," in an editorial, subtitled "Analyse einer Nostalgie."⁶⁹⁸ Meyer identifies the significance of the intertwined resurrection and exploitation of the public's 'wistful' desire for Hitler in the sheer volume of material saturating the market. 1973 was a banner year for "*die Biographie, der neue Beitrag zur Hitler-Forschung, das unübertroffene, klassische Material!*"⁶⁹⁹ Meyer lists a number of West German players driving and profiting from what he describes as the "Hitler-Schwemme."⁷⁰⁰ As he claims, this material's melodramatic, sensationalist quality and widespread

⁶⁹⁷ Sontag describes Nazism as resistant to ironized critique. Regarding its appropriation by mass media and avant garde artists, she writes, "Shocking people in this context also means inuring them, as Nazi material enters the vast repertory of popular iconography usable for the ironic commentaries of Pop art. But the material is intransigent... Nazism fascinates in a way other iconography staked out by the pop sensibility...does not...the definitely sexual lure of fascism...seems impervious to deflation by irony or overfamiliarity." Sontag.

⁶⁹⁸ 'Nostalgie' is defined by Meyer as "Heimweh, wehmütiges Wiederauferstehenlassen, oft auch kommerziell vorausberechnete Rückkehr," Claus Heinrich Meyer, "Warum Wird Hitler Wieder Ausgegraben? Analyse Einer Nostalgie," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, August 18/19 1973.

⁶⁹⁹ The first edition of Speer's *Erinnerungen* also bore this kind of marketing-based subtitle: "Mit 78 zum Teil unbekanntem Bild- und Textdokumenten auf Tafeln."

⁷⁰⁰ The publishers Econ, Bechtle, Molden, Desch, Hanser, Schneekluth, Propyläen and Ullstein (both owned by Axel-Springer), List, Melzern, Hoffmann, and Campe; the periodicals, *Der Spiegel*, *Bild*, *Die Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Stern*; Visconti's film, the bunker-chamber drama from Ennio De Concini, "Hitler - Die Letzten Zehn Tage," (United Kingdom; Italy: Wolfgang Reinhardt Prod.; West-Film, 1973), starring Alec Guinness, and Hans Jürgen Syberberg, "Ludwig - Requiem Für Einen

success—seen in conjunction with the lackluster impact of more sober historical documentation—testified to the rightness of the Mitscherlichs’ diagnosis. That is, to the NS past’s derealization, visible in its representations’ theatrical *unreality*. Further, the kitschy dumbing-down of this discourse to “Taxifahrer-Dialog-Niveau,” was not merely unethical, or evidence of pathological denial. Meyer denounces it as a missed opportunity with serious, potential social and political consequences:

“Nun könnte die Rechtfertigung für einen neuerlichen Massenangriff auf das deutsche Unbewußtsein so konstruiert werden, daß eine von unten nachschiebende Generation ohne eigenes ‘Miterleben’ endlich unbefangen, informationswillig und aufklärungsbedürftig sei, wobei zugleich erst auch die Masse der bisherigen Hitler-Verdränger ‘ansprechbar’ geworden sei. Doch diese denkbare Motivation für die Exhumierung des Führers verbietet sich, ernsthafte Neugier ist nicht erwacht...in den betroffenen gewesen, sich nicht betroffen fühlenden Mittelschichten überwiegt tatsächlich eine quasi nostalgische, lediglich peripher ausgerichtete und ‘Personales’ vorziehende Lust am Nazi-Geschene: Die Enthüllung ist so spannend, der Faschismus wird zum Criminal-Fall in einer anderen Straße.”

In the midst of the ‘Specter of Revolution,’ the thoughtless foregrounding of economic motives undermined the possibility for political, social-psychological development in West Germany’s relationship to the past.⁷⁰¹ Rather than a salient example from history, which might clarify current nostalgia and political instability alike, the Third Reich had become a spectacle. Meyer is unequivocal in assigning culpability for the origin of this free-market phenomenon: Speer, assisted by his interlocutors at Ullstein-Propyläen, Wolf Jobst Siedler and Joachim C. Fest (to whom we will turn in just a moment).⁷⁰²

In addition to their broad popularity, Meyer writes, Speer’s memoirs had opened a space for justifying Nazi criminality as an unfortunate but unavoidable effect of succumbing to the fascinating power of Hitler’s persona. His memoirs offered, thereby, a pre-packaged apologia to

Jungfraulichen König," (Munich; Mainz: TMS Film GmbH; Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF), 1972), which we will return to in the following chapter.

⁷⁰¹ See fn698 regarding Meyer’s economic critique.

⁷⁰² Siedler, author of *Die Gemordete Stadt*, joined Ullstein in 1963, and was the executive director from 1967-79.

the ‘everyday perpetrator’ and her or his sympathizers: “Wenn sogar der Intellektuelle A. Speer, Hitlers wichtigster Minister, den Durchblick nicht hatte finden können, konnte es dann eine überzeugendere Absolution für die Nachgeordneten geben?” The acknowledgment of Hitler’s remarkable charismatic power, of course, did nothing to *lessen* the fascination with him or Nazi media in general. Nor did it approach the question of the other crucial dimension of this ‘demonic’ force: its marketability; for “Gegenüber Hitler war die Bereitschaft zum Unterliegen gegeben.” The unsettling speed and enthusiasm with which Nazi personnel and artists were rehabilitated in the public sphere spoke to their uncanny ability of their work—and their personal proximity to Hitler—to arouse interest, desire, and *sympathy*. The task of *countering* the Führer-Mythos’s commercial exploitation, demystifying Hitler and dismantling his fascination (in accordance with Meyer’s desires, but likely not what he had in mind) was also taken up in West Germany’s mainstream media in the 1970s, specifically in Joachim C. Fest’s film productions. Let’s now turn to Fest’s creation of a new populist style of documentary, intended to explicitly depoliticize the representation of the Nazi past and critically examine the figure at its center.

III. Cinematic-Architectural Deconstruction of the Führer-Mythos in Hitler – Eine Karriere

Fest was perhaps West Germany’s most important mainstream, moderate-liberal historian of Hitler and, since the 1960s, a major producer on the national media landscape. Born in Berlin-Karlshorst in 1926 and educated in Berlin and Frankfurt, Fest wrote his dissertation, *Das Gesicht des dritten Reiches* in 1963, while concurrently employed at the RIAS (Rundfunk im amerikanischen Sektor) and as a CDU representative in Neukölln.⁷⁰³ He moved to Hamburg, holding a position at NDR (Norddeutscher Rundfunk) from 1961-68; leaving to write his

⁷⁰³ His obituary notes his ejection from the CDU in 1968 for criticizing Hamburg’s politics. and that “Die Verbindung von Geschichte und dem Medium Film ist zentral für das gesamte Wirken des Historikers und Journalisten Fest, dessen Karriere als damals jüngster Chefredakteur 1963 seinen ersten Höhepunkt erreichte.” Christopher Stolzenberg, “Der Intellektuelle Unter Den Konservativen. Joachim Fest Gestorben,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, May 19 2010.

acclaimed Hitler biography, commissioned by Ullstein and published in 1973.⁷⁰⁴ The same year, Fest became co-editor of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and head of the *Feuilleton*, remaining in the position until 1993.⁷⁰⁵ As noted above, he was one of Speer's key interlocutors at Ullstein, a relationship which would continue until and beyond Speer's death.⁷⁰⁶ Finally, as noted above, Fest was centrally involved in mainstream film and television productions on the subject of Hitler.

In 1969, following the publication of his dissertation, facilitated through his connections at NDR, Fest produced the "umstrittenen Fernsehfilm" *Versuch eines Porträts*, assisted by television-documentary-filmmaker Christian Herrendoerfer, which was released the week before what would have been Hitler's 80th birthday.⁷⁰⁷ Excerpts from the film's text, published by *Die Zeit*, outline its critical engagement with the Führer and his representation in NS propaganda, which Fest would again take up in *eine Karriere* (including by literally adopting some of its phrasing verbatim). Opening the article with the call, "Deutschland erwache!" Fest outlines Hitler's articulation of the German public's desire for simple solutions to a complex world; for an imperious authority to reestablish order within the tendentious conflicts of the Weimar era.⁷⁰⁸ The Führer, he suggests, simply gave the people what they wanted: "Ziele, Anschaulichkeit, Enthusiasmus, Selbstbewußtsein, Ordnung"—or he at least appeared to. In reality,

⁷⁰⁴ Joachim C. Fest, *Hitler : Eine Biographie* (Frankfurt/M: Ullstein, 1973). The first edition's title noted: "mit 212 zum Teil unbekanntem Bild- und Textdokumenten." Fest's narrative can be understood as the dominant mainstream historical account of the Third Reich in Germany, evidenced by his biography's success: number one on the *Spiegel's* Bestsellerliste from Oct 22, 1973 to Feb 17, 1974, and its use as the source text for his *Der Untergang : Eine Historische Skizze* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verl., 2004)., the basis of Oliver Hirschbiegel's film of the same name, ., which has anchored the historical representation of the Third Reich's end, especially in Berlin, ever since. See remarks in this dissertation's conclusion.

⁷⁰⁵ Fest was thus head of the *Feuilleton* when it published, in 1986, Ernst Nolte's editorial "Vergangenheit, die nicht vergehen will," which, answered by Jürgen Habermas in *Die Zeit*, would set off the 'Historikerstreit.' See: "Special Issue on the Historikerstreit," in *New German Critique* (Duke University Press, 1988).

⁷⁰⁶ Fest also penned a biography of Speer in 1999, the reception of which was far more controversial, *Speer : Eine Biographie* (Berlin: Alexander Fest, 1999). In addition, four years earlier, he published a biographical photo-monograph of former NS architect Cäsar Pinnau, who designed the offices for high-ranking officials in the New Reich Chancellery. Fest and Pinnau.

⁷⁰⁷ Joachim Fest, "Versuch eines Porträts," *Die Zeit*, April 18 1969. I have been unable to locate a copy of the film, which is possibly still held by NDR. Herrendoerfer produced and directed "Eigentlich Wollte Ich Nach Indien - Baron Victor Von Plessen Und Seine Filme," (Hamburg: Norddeutscher Rundfunk, 1976)., and continued to work on documentary productions for NDR through the 1980s.

⁷⁰⁸ The phrase comes from Dietrich Eckart's 1920 'Sturmlied' used by the NSDAP and became the official slogan for the call for a racist, nationalist revolution, with highly antisemitic overtones, and is still employed by Neo-Nazis.

“Wie kein anderer wußte er seinen Machtanspruch mit den Bedingungen des historischen Augenblicks zu vereinen. Die pathetischen Neigungen der Epoche – aber auch ihr Schundcharakter, und das eine im anderen, haben durch ihn ihren überzeugendsten Ausdruck gefunden.”

Hitler’s drive to power, according to Fest, eagerly assisted by the belief (and low-brow taste) of the prostrate public, resulted in the appearance of an unprecedented destructive, political force. Describing its effects in loosely psychoanalytic and religious terms—“der Bezugspunkt zahlloser aus Hysterie und Frömmigkeit gemischter Erwartungen, Hingabewünsche und Unterwerfungsbedürfnisse”—Fest insists these were not the product of Hitler himself but, rather, “eine mediale Erscheinung.” All show and no substance, the extent of the Führer’s political abilities lay in his prowess as orator and keen sensibility for self-stylization as artist, assisted through the modern technologies of mass-cultural propaganda: “Im ganzen führte er das Leben eher eines Stars als eines Staatsmanns.” The entirety of this multi-media production rested not on any specific ideology but served only to feed Hitler’s insatiable desire for power and adulation and to conceal his “merkwürdig menschenleer[e]” existence. Once his defeats forced him out of the public eye and into the Führerbunker, Fest concludes, we find only a “von Melancholien geplagte[n] Mann,” gripped with “Todessehnsucht,” leaving behind only cataclysmic destruction, detritus of bourgeois banality, and the archive of his celebrity and mobilization of the masses in the state-run media.⁷⁰⁹

The film was evidently controversial—which *Die Zeit* apparently anticipated, since they published commentary from the editor, Karl-Heinz Janßen in the same issue.⁷¹⁰ While noting the

⁷⁰⁹ “Im Schubfach seines Nachttisches fand man: einen Kalender des Jahres 1922, als noch alles, was er vom Leben verlangte, ein Auskommen als Chefredakteur des ‘Völkischen Beobachters’ war; ein Verwundetenabzeichen, das EK I, ein vierblättriges Kleeblatt sowie eine Bartbürste.” The list of mundane, domestic talismans and keepsakes resembles the Allied accounts, exposing the banal, mortal, everyday existence of the deposed sovereign, documented and visually represented in the iconic photographs from American journalist Lee Miller, discussed in chapter iii. The detailed, almost voyeuristic scrutiny in passages such as these are characteristic for the public, symbolic ritualism of divestiture—the reversal of investment of symbolic power in a deposed, political authority by the new regime, the press, and the courts—as described by Albrecht Koschorke in . We will return to this theme presently, at the end of this chapter, and again in chapter vi.

⁷¹⁰ Karl-Heinz Janßen, “Das Phänomen Adolf Hitler. Zu Einer Provozierenden Fernseh-Sendung Des Westdeutschen Rundfunks,” *Die Zeit*, April 18 1969.

film's phenomenal success and impact among the public, Janßen pointedly identifies the audience as “Zeugen der experimentellen Schwierigkeiten, das Psychogramm eines demagogischen Genies ins Bild zu setzen,” and warns, “Die Lücken sind nicht zu füllen.”⁷¹¹ Despite the inclusion of ‘never before seen material’ illustrating Hitler’s rise to power and manipulation of the media, Janßen names the film too intellectual, too dependent on Fest’s scholarly writings and on his optimism, “daß man das Massenpublikum allmählich an höhere Ansprüche gewöhnen kann.”⁷¹² Clarifying the older generation’s attachment to Hitler, “der ja in der Tat einem Chaplin-Film entlaufen sein könnte,” is impossible, he claims, without attending to the conditions of politics and mass-culture, both old and new—the subject of Fest’s critical publications but, according to Janßen, absent in the film.⁷¹³ Further, Hitler’s representation in the film, we learn, reproduces too much of the “faszinierend ...orgiastisch[e] Entladung” of his oratory skill.⁷¹⁴ Nevertheless, despite Janßen’s complaints, he lauds Fest for not reducing Hitler to a demon or an object of ridicule. And, it turns out, Fest was given an opportunity for a second documentary ‘Versuch,’ after the release of his Hitler biography.

Commissioned by Munich Interart, again co-produced with Herrendoerfer, *Hitler - eine Karriere* caused a sensation when it premiered at the Berlin Film Festival in 1977.⁷¹⁵ The film attracted attention for its bold premise: to confront the public with evidence of the widespread

⁷¹¹ Regarding the film’s reception, he writes, “Welch schöneren Lohn hätten sich die Redakteure und Techniker des Westdeutschen Rundfunks, hätte sich vor allem der Autor...wünschen können, als daß man sich landauf und landab über diese Dokumentationssendung die Köpfe heißredet und alle größeren Zeitungen sich darüber auslassen.”

⁷¹² Interestingly, regarding the question of the younger generation: “Wie konntet ihr diesem Schmierenskomödianten, diesem rasenden Derwisch, diesem komischen Rattenfänger ins Verderben folgen” Janßen writes, “Ich fürchte, auch der beste Film, die reinste Schallplattenaufnahme können diese Frage nicht genügend beantworten. Dazu bedarf es der Hintergrund- und Milieuschilderung – im Fernsehen könnte dies wohl nur ein Spielfilm vermitteln.”

⁷¹³ Which, he notes, “wäre das Thema einer anderen Sendung, einer ganzen Sendefolge.”

⁷¹⁴ As we shall see in *eine Karriere*, the sexual dimension of Hitler’s appeal, despite the homo-erotic overtones of Speer’s memoir, is thoroughly and offensively gendered female. Janßen writes, “Sie blicken einen ungläubig an, die Jungen, wenn man ihnen erzählt, wie rechtschaffene Frauen außer sich geraten konnten, weil ‘ihr Führer’ blaue Augen hatte, wie andere es stundenlang nicht über sich brachten, ihre Hände zu waschen, die der ‘Führer’ berührt hatte.”

⁷¹⁵ Fest, “Hitler - Eine Karriere.” The head of Interart, Werner Rieb, was also the film’s producer; the firm appears to have made just three films in 1976-8.

belief in and success of the Führer-Mythos and to reproduce Hitler's fascination "ohne dieser zu erliegen."⁷¹⁶ A favorable review from Heinz Höhne in *Der Spiegel*, published on the festival's third day, gives an overview of Fest's self-described motivations for his cinematic "Wagnis."⁷¹⁷ Since the topic of Hitler was "in der Schule totgeschwiegen," while it unavoidably circulated in the media, Fest aimed to reach a broader, younger audience with an entirely new approach:

"Zum ersten Mal befreien bundesdeutsche Filmher den zum Zelluloid-Monster degenerierten Führer von den Denkschablonen antifaschistischer Aufklärungsfilme und entwerfen ein glaubwürdiges, auch historiographisch zuverlässiges Bild von Hitler und seiner Epoche...nicht den NS-Diktator weißwaschen, wohl aber dazu beitragen, die filmische Auseinandersetzung mit der Vergangenheit auf ein höheres, der Zeitgeschichtsforschung adäquates Niveau zu hieven."

Fest's film would attempt to rend the NS past from its appropriation by the radical left, and 'clarify' its central figure, filling the vacuum of knowledge and experience for the second generation. It was directed specifically toward those who, ignorant of the economic and social successes and fascinating power of the Hitler-regime, declared with hubris that they "nicht vorstellen können, wieso denn die Älteren auf Hitler hereinfliegen konnten." Fest's proposed solution: "Man sollte die Faszination durchaus zeigen; verständlich machen, daß es eine Faszination für viele gab, und damit versuchen, die Leute etwas immuner gegen ähnliche Reaktionen zu machen." The film's stated aims resemble both Adorno's call for 'Aufarbeitung' in 1959, with its reference to immunity, and Freud's 'working through' (the past), achieved through remembering (the emotional experience) and repeating (its effects in a controlled environment), revived as a potential palliative by the

⁷¹⁶ In his well-known critique of the film, the New German Cinema director Wim Wenders notes the "kräftig[e] Erklärungen" of the film in the festival program: "Dort stand: 'Dieser Film zeigt die Zeit Hitlers unvoreingenommen, sachlich und rational. Er vermittelt die Faszination der Karriere Hitlers, ohne auch nur in die Versuchung zu geraten, dieser zu erliegen. Dieser Film manipuliert unsere Geschichte nicht. Er verklärt auch nicht. Er erklärt.'" "That's Entertainment: Hitler. Eine Polemik Gegen Joachim C. Fests Film 'Hitler - Eine Karriere'," *Die Zeit*, August 12 1977.

⁷¹⁷ Heinz Höhne, "Hitler-Film - Faszination Des Demagogen," *Der Spiegel*, June 27 1977. Höhne, managing editor for serials of *Der Spiegel*, was also notably the author of a series of historical articles on the SS, later published as a book: *Der Orden Unter Dem Totenkopf: Die Geschichte Der Ss* (Hamburg: Der Spiegel, 1966).

Mitscherlichs. But Fest's methodology of critique is neither ideological nor psychoanalytic, though it does situate its project within the same discursive framework of 'coming to terms' with the past.

Rather, in defusing the "Faszination des Demagogen," the film has a clearly didactic aim, which hews to the macro-text of divestiture.⁷¹⁸ That is, the symbolic disinvestment of a political leader from their role as head of state, rendering explicit the fictional foundation and mediation of power through the ritualistic destruction of its representational signifiers.⁷¹⁹ Film offers the primary medium of Hitler's power self-reflexively targeted by Fest; but NS architecture also forms a central conceit and archive for his didactic narrative. That is, *Eine Karriere* redeploys the Führer-Mythos's cinematic-architectural imagery—both scenographic backdrop and symbolic surrogate for Hitler's embodiment of Volk and State—to illustrate and deconstruct the aesthetic strategies and technologies used to mediate the public's (continued) desire for and fascination with Hitler.

Two and a half hours long, *Hitler - Eine Karriere* is thus a documentary reconstruction of the Hitler-Myth, assembled from an enormous international archive of NS film, but also including amateur footage and other media of propaganda from the Third Reich. The archive's magnitude

⁷¹⁸ Frank, 229-30. Divestiture refers to the symbolic narrative structured around the revolutionary overthrow of a political regime, associated with the establishment of modern democracy. Its myth-like structure is exemplified by the execution of Louis XVI, and the collapse of the *ancien regime* at the end of the 18th century. The process targets the bodily iconography of state sovereignty and aims for the separation of the ruler's 'sublime' or 'supernatural' body from the central space of power. The identification of the King's 'two bodies' draws from the writings of Ernst Kantorowicz, which were further developed and analyzed by Claude Lefort, in reference to totalitarianism and its 'grafting' of the leader's bodily image onto the 'empty space' of democratic sovereignty and the bureaucratic state machinery in "The Image of the Body and Totalitarianism." See also: Kantorowicz and Leyser. Since the French Revolution, the body itself has declined in importance, especially following the collapse of the Napoleonic regime. See: Susan L. Siegfried, "Staging an Empire," in *Staging Empire: Napoleon, Ingres, and David* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006). Beginning with the establishment of the modern state, as Albrecht Koschorke writes, "waren nicht allein Politik und Justiz, die auf die Demontage der Symbolik des Königtums hinarbeiteten. Auch die sich etablierende vierte Gewalt im republikanischen Staatswesen, die Presse, wirkte daran mit...So gingen politisch-juristische Prozeduren und massenmediale Phantasmenproduktion Hand in Hand. Gemeinsam etablierten sie so etwas wie ein *Regime des Blicks*, in dem sich eine neue, republikanische Souveränität manifestierte." Koschorke, 223. The process of divestiture is both highly eroticized and voyeuristic, as shall be addressed below, and frequently tied to psychoanalytic discourse, addressing the necessary splitting off of (political) subjectivity from the (symbolic) identification of a state or ruling authority. See also on this topic: Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*; Oliver Marchart, *Die Politische Differenz: Zum Denken Des Politischen Bei Nancy, Lefort, Badiou, Laclau Und Agamben* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2010). Hitler's embodiment of state and people theorized by Lefort, is analyzed with regard to NS architectural propaganda and the New Reich Chancellery in chapter ii. The next chapter returns to divestiture's ritualistic and symbolic dimension in relation to the Freudian notion of 'Trauerarbeit.'

⁷¹⁹ The word 'divestment' refers specifically to clothing, the most iconic, classical signifiers of a ruler's power; but the operation of 'divestiture' extends to all symbolic objects associated with the sovereign's body. Frank, 229.

is, itself, part of the argument. Fest and Herrendoerfer began collecting and soliciting material in 1975, which was restored and enhanced, sparing no expense.⁷²⁰ The film tells the story of Hitler's origins, rise, reign, and defeat, spanning from ca. 1908 to 1945—for the most part as the Führer himself styled this narrative. It largely ignores the other figures in his orbit (e.g. Speer, Goebbels, Himmler), though Fest's voiceover points them out when they appear onscreen.⁷²¹ The chronology tends toward the linear but skips around, making asides and developing certain themes.⁷²² The film thus unearths, re-produces, and re-organizes the intermedial NS archive, centered on Hitler, adding historical commentary and (especially near the end) interweaving a counter-discourse, in the form of Allied propaganda and ruin imagery. Its two-fold aim is slightly contradictory: to illustrate and counteract the emotional power of the media, which transformed the historical person, Hitler, into the symbolic, mythological figure of the Führer.

Nary a missed-opportunity for product diversification, a photo-book from Ullstein also accompanied the film's release. (Figs. V-8 & 9) In its introduction, Fest gives an overview of the film's organizing themes and aesthetic strategy.⁷²³ Presuming adequate historical distance to the material it reproduces—Nazism's people, places, and propaganda—*eine Karriere* seeks to generate critical distance, by pointing out and amplifying the representational strategies and technologies used to manipulate the audience (the German public) and mediate the object(s) of their desire (Hitler, as he appeared and represented himself). Fest writes, "Wie kein anderer

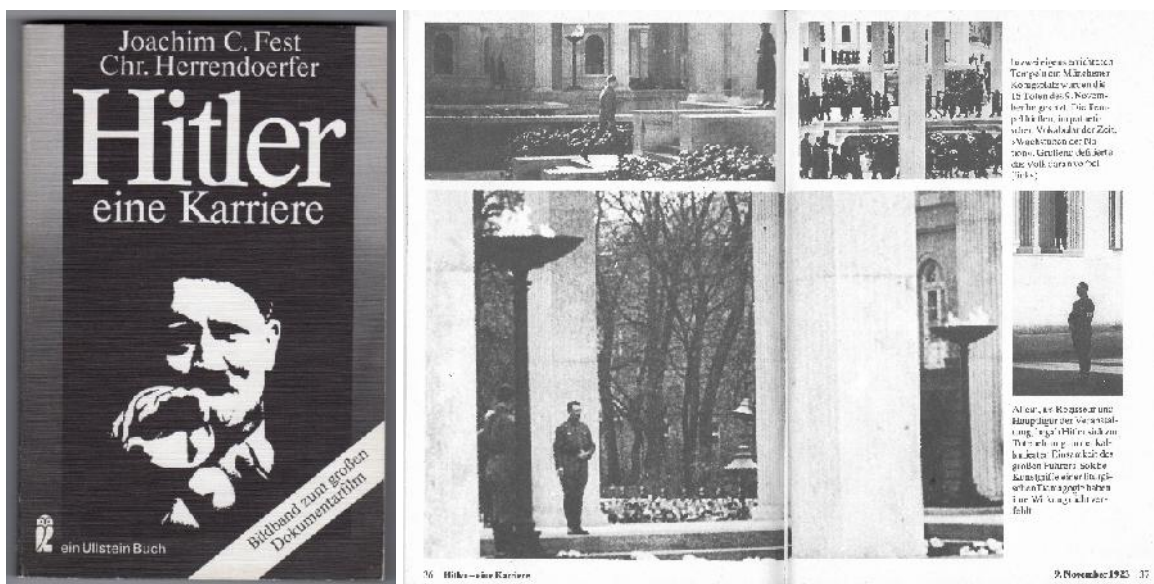
⁷²⁰ The expanse and expense of the film's archival research is noted in Höhne's and Wenders's reviews, and in a review from Janßen, discussed below. Karl-Heinz Janßen, "High Durch Hitler. Das Neue Werk Des Führer-Biographen Fest Entpuppt Sich Als Ein Gefährlicher Film.," *Die Zeit*, July 8 1977.

⁷²¹ Höhne is in fact critical of this detail—Janßen takes Fest to task for neglecting the topic.

⁷²² Höhne complains that following the start of the war, the film loses its grip on the chronology.

⁷²³ The chapters, which can be further subdivided into three sections, mirror the film's movements. First, an overview of Hitler's ideology and rise to power: Deutschland erwache! Der Hintergrund. Hitlers erster Anlauf. 9. November 1923. Die zwanziger Jahre. Hitlers zweiter Anlauf. Machtergreifung. Then, everyday life and state representation under Nazism: Gleichschaltung und neue Ordnung. NS-Alltag. Der Traum vom Künstlerleben. Die "Blumenkriege". Faschismus. Hitlers fünfzigster Geburtstag. Obersalzberg. And, finally, the war and its loss: Blitzkriege. Der Feldzug gegen die Sowjetunion und die Wende des Krieges. Die Vision. Dem Ende entgegen. Der Untergang.

Staatsmann hat Hitler in der Fotografie und später vor allem im Film ein Mittel zur Selbstdarstellung, aber auch zur Verheimlichung der eigenen Person gesehen.”⁷²⁴ The film thus self-reflexively highlights Hitler’s performance and reproduction of Führertum as mass-market spectacle.⁷²⁵ Hitler’s reliance on his photographer Hoffmann to refine and control the circulation of his bodily image; his love for film as a diversion and tool for political indoctrination; his fantasy of reconstructing Germany in the image of his ‘bürgerlicher Traum’ of Vienna and attempted realization of this dream in Speer’s theatrical, monumental buildings—each media and the myths they represent, Fest attempts to make clear, were part of a calculated manipulation. Hitler’s career was a lie, which eventually the Führer also fell for himself.



Figures V-8 & 9 - Ullstein Photo-Book. The slash reads “Bildband zum großen Dokumentarfilm” (left), two page spread of its images, showing Hitler at the November 9 ceremony at Paul Ludwig Troost’s ‘Ewig Wache’ in Munich (right)

As such, the “Bilderflut” he left behind held little that might transmit “ein kritisch charakterisierendes Bild seiner Erscheinung.”⁷²⁶ Nevertheless, Fest claims, “Die suggestive

⁷²⁴ Joachim Fest and Christian Herrendoerfer, *Hitler, Eine Karriere : [Bildbd. Zum Grossen Dokumentarfilm]* (Frankfurt/M., Berlin, Wien: Ullstein, 1977), 6.

⁷²⁵ This is the heart of Wender’s critique, that the film reproduces the spectacle of Hitler *as* spectacle, while, “mann kann nicht ausgiebig etwas zeigen, von dem man sich distanzieren will.”

⁷²⁶ Fest and Herrendoerfer, 7.

Perfektion, mit der das Regime seine Propaganda-Filme »gestaltete«, läßt sich durch Schnitte zerstören.”⁷²⁷ That is, the Hitler-Myth reproduced in NS film propaganda is to be countered, in Fest’s film, through the ‘destructive’ juxtaposition of images in montage, and through their remediation, e.g. freezing them into photographs or employing special effects to disrupt the appearance of ideological unity and continuity.⁷²⁸ “Diese Technik reißt die Erscheinung...immer wieder aus dem monumentalisierenden Zusammenhang...Insofern kommentieren diese Bilder streckenweise sich selber.”⁷²⁹ The purported self-evidence of these ‘decontextualized images’ notwithstanding, the photo-book applies captions to all of them. (see: Fig. V-9) In the film, caption-like commentary, delivered by Fest’s voiceover, draws attention to the representational strategies onscreen, identifying their political motives and psychological underpinnings. As he writes in the introduction, “Was jedoch nach einer solchen Entzauberung von Hitler übrig bleibt ist nur selten mehr als die menschliche Leere einer öffentlichen Figure, die ihrer Rolle beraubt wurde.”⁷³⁰ Thus, in accordance with divestiture’s symbolic logic, the film directs special attention to Hitler’s body’s representational framing as a vector of political power and indoctrination, declaring it void of real substance, a pretender to the throne, and ejecting it from the ‘empty’ space of power.

Accordingly, *eine Karriere*’s representational topography and narrative trajectory, like Speer’s, is structured by the architectural sites framing Hitler’s embodiment of Führertum—anchored by his two main residences, the Berghof in Obersalzberg and the New Reich Chancellery

⁷²⁷ Ibid.

⁷²⁸ Ibid. *Eine Karriere*’s editors were thus largely responsible for the visual critique staged by the film; while Friedrich Schwaiger has no other film credits, Elisabeth Imholte had worked on feature films throughout the 1960s, and Karin Haban went on to edit a number of TV and feature documentary films in the late 1970s and 1980s. Source: filmportal.de ‘Freezing’ film images into photographs was not itself a novel technique of defamiliarization, but one of the oldest (used, for example, in the 1931 film *Menschen am Sonntag* and, more recently, in the Ufa production *das ende*) and least clear in terms of its intended legibility. New German Cinema also employed similar techniques of visual defamiliarization, e.g. juxtaposition in montage, manipulation of speed, but foregrounded their critique through intertitles. Their (at least initial) collaborative mode of production is also at odds with Fest’s *Auteur-Historiker* style.

⁷²⁹ Ibid., 7-8.

⁷³⁰ Ibid., 7. Again, divestiture seeks to both reveal the sovereign in his banal, mortal bodiliness and destroy the surrounding signifiers mediating the power of his ‘sublime,’ and ‘invisible’ body. Hence, the demotion of Louis XVI to Louis Capet. Koschorke, 219-20; Žizek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 254-5.

in Berlin. Fest, however, does significantly more to emphasize and interrogate the spectacular, intermedial, cinematographic reproduction of both Hitler and his buildings as foundational to the construction (and deconstruction) of the Führer-Mythos. Though, whether he successfully demystifies his objects or dismantles their fascination is another matter. Let's turn to the film itself.

At its opening, a golden Reichsadler bursts onto the screen to brass fanfare, sailing past in vivid technicolor, at once ministerial and garish (Fig V-10a). The title sequence shows, classically, a parade. (Figs. V-10a-c) The unreleased, amateur footage of the Tag der Deutschen Kunst's opening ceremony in Munich offers 'never before seen images' in a literal sense. Though, on the other hand, its subject and style are immediately recognizable, heralded in the next shot of vivid red, waving swastika banners.⁷³¹ After a brief montage of medieval-garbed Germans riding horses and toting Teutonic tapestries, Hitler appears, rounding the corner on Königsplatz. As his face fills the screen, gazing just to the left of the camera, the image freezes, and is suddenly shattered by a star-wipe and eruption of glass, accompanied by a kitschy synthesizer whoop (Fig. V-11a-b).⁷³² As the film's title is projected in white text onto the growing void, the sound fades out to a horror-film-like billowing echo, which continues to drone as Fest and Herrendoerfer's names appear onscreen. This initial interruption visually telegraphs the film's aim: to use the technological and representational media that had spectacularized the Führer against itself; to shatter, destroy, and dissolve his image; to amplify and, thereby, disrupt the fascinating power and fictional quality of these "Verblendungen," exposing the void at the center of the Nazis' symbolic ideological order.

The emotional power still held by the archival images is apparent in the shock-value of the opening. Until it 'shatters,' we encounter the historical world of the Third Reich with surprising,

⁷³¹ Kluge employed photographs of the same event in *Brutalität in Stein*, as analyzed in chapter iii. The shots of the flags are also visually resonant with Riefenstahl's 'sea of flags' from *Triumph des Willens*—though they lack the density produced through the Riefenstahl's use of telephoto lenses, their visual effect is intensified by the color-film.

⁷³² The burst resembles the water effects from the *Runder Platz* sequence of *Das Wort aus Stein*.



Figures V-10a-c – Shots from opening title sequence of *Hitler – eine Karriere*, amateur color footage of the opening of the Tag der Deutschen Kunst on Königsplatz in Munich, with Troost's Ewige Wache visible in background (center, left)



Figure V-11a-b – Special effect ‘shattering’ Hitler’s image from title sequence

even alarming immediacy. (Hitler! In living color!) The resurrected Führer and Volk traipsing through the monumental architecture of NS power are strikingly alive. The *intention* is clear: *eine Karriere* wants to contain its subject (he’s just a politician!), dismantle the representation of his embodied power (just a celebrity!) and undermine the efficacy of its technological mediation (it’s only movie magic!). To underline this point, the effect is repeated four additional times during the rest of the opening credits—over elites giving the Hitler salute, Hitler again, a young girl smiling at the camera nearby an SS officer, and another SS officer holding an enormous swastika flag. After each eruption, however, playback of this major NS media event continues, seemingly channeled through its own cinematic apparatus, more or less unaffected.⁷³³

⁷³³ While this scene is amateur footage, the music in particular gives it a more official air. The rest of the documentary draws from the *Deutsche Wochenschau*, NS *Kulturfilm* and feature films, unfinished and unreleased footage; in short, the entire official and unofficial archive of NS film production.

Problematically, the documentary reassembles the Hitler-Myth not just from its protagonist's perspective but using the very same media with which Hitler produced and marketed himself as the Führer, successfully securing legitimacy and support throughout the regime. But the capacity of Fest's representational strategy to control and subvert the ideological images and deconstruct the fascination of their symbolic objects remains questionable at best.⁷³⁴ Further detail regarding the film's 'demystification' of its bodily and architectural images will clarify this point.

Throughout the film, Fest zeroes in and maintains a laser focus on Hitler's eroticized embodiment of Führertum; his performance as the singular object and representative of the Volk's desire; and on the mediation of their identification and fascination with him in cinematic and photographic images. As such, Hitler's body is rarely out of the frame—save when lengthy clips of his speeches and parading around are intercut with footage of the ecstatic masses following his every move.⁷³⁵ It bears mentioning that alternating between these subjects (the elevated, singular Führer and the unified mass) is not Fest's innovation but a strategy employed by NS film propaganda, which the film points out.⁷³⁶ But Fest also privileges how these scenes document the public's *actual* fervor for and obsession with Hitler, framed by and concentrated around particular, representational spaces of power. The Berghof in Obersalzberg, in particular, features as Hitler's bourgeois idyll, the domestic interior of his private masculine, 'bürgerliche' identity, and his *retreat*, fortified against the Volk, as they assemble *en masse*, trying to catch a glimpse of the Führer (Figs. V-12a-b).⁷³⁷ The film, thereby, pointedly implicates the public's participation in, and

⁷³⁴ In contrast to Kluge's *Brutalität in Stein*, for example, Fest's central focus on Hitler evinces none of the caution evident in the earlier film, i.e. Hitler's selective inclusion in photos, and the desynchronization of his image and voice.

⁷³⁵ Fest also amplifies Hitler's bodily *presence* and its symbolic weight in a number of sequences, for example, by adding the echoing sounds of his footsteps to the November 9 ceremony at the Ewige Wache celebrating the Bierkeller-Putsch, and allowing the Führer to speak at length, uninterrupted, in the montages of his speeches.

⁷³⁶ See Kracauer's analysis of NS newsreels, "The Conquest of Europe on the Screen: The Nazi Newsreel, 1939–40.", and my analysis of this strategy's use with regard to the New Reich Chancellery in chapter ii.

⁷³⁷ As Despina Stratigakos notes, the Berghof saw up to 5,000 visitors a day, who would "wait for hours, chanting, 'We want to see our Führer!'" and some of whom tore apart the surrounding fence, seeking to acquire a relic of Hitler's home. Stratigakos, 171. As detailed in her chapter "'Adolf Doesn't Live Here Anymore': The Troublesome Afterlife of Hitler's Homes," tourism continued

thus shared responsibility for, the success of Hitler's spectacle—especially as it was used in support of the realization of his imperial military aims.

As the war heats up, in the film's narrative, the public's enthusiasm for Hitler's military victories is intertwined and juxtaposed with their erotic fixation on him. For example, after the Sudetenland's annexation, in the film's second half, extended sequences examine "die Gefühle, die Hitlers Erscheinen auslöste," which, as the voiceover notes, "sind mit politischen Motiven allein nicht zu erklären." Rather, "In solchen Ausbrüchen suchten dumpfere Bedürfnisse nach Befriedigung." In wide-angle shots, seething masses of bodies are shown to coalesce into a single organism of desire, anchored to the architecture that amplifies Hitler's *presence*, if not his *visibility* (the task left to the montage) (Fig. V-13). When personalized, in close-up shots, the public's fascination is all but exclusively gendered female (Figs. V-14a-c). Hitler's strategic presentation of himself as the object of female desire is explicitly noted in the film, in relation to Eva Braun's concealment from the public. But, further, the presumption of women as primary film viewer—those most prone to be seduced and distracted by its images—is thematized in close ups of their weeping, hysterical faces and Beatle-mania-like fervor.⁷³⁸ (Fig. V-14c) In Fest's description, following mass assemblies, "Der Lustcharakter dieser Begegnungen, ihre Übereinstimmung mit den öffentlichen Beischlafhandlungen primitiver Völkerstämme, wird in den Mienen, die Glück und Erschöpfung spiegeln, offenbar."⁷³⁹

long after the building's destruction through the 1950s. Ibid., 284-317. This phenomenon will be taken up by Syberberg and analyzed in the next chapter.

⁷³⁸ As Susan Sontag puts it, "Hitler regarded leadership as sexual mastery of the 'feminine' masses...The leader makes the crowd come." Sontag.

⁷³⁹ The racist element of this claim should also be foregrounded and investigated, especially as it might be compared to Riefenstahl's photos of the Nuba, analyzed by Sontag. Certainly the description posits the public's infantilization, highlighting the narcissistic element of identification with the Führer—but, again, its target is specifically women.



Figures V-12a-b – Hitler with a group of children on the steps of the Berghof (left), a crowd of visitors Sieg-Heiling and waving at the Führer from the road beneath the Berchtesgaden complex (right)

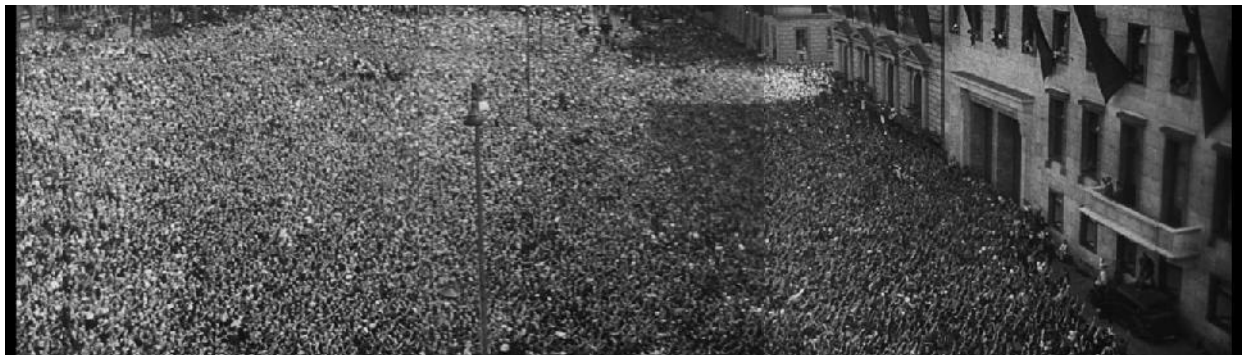


Figure V-13 – Crowd assembled on Wilhelmplatz during the celebration for Hitler's 50th birthday. Elevated pan shot, assembled into panorama by author.



Figure V-14a – Women from the Sudetenland Sieg-Heiling Hitler following its annexation in 1938



Figure V-14b – Woman overcome with emotion upon seeing the Führer



Figure V-14c – Beatle-mania like crowd scene of women surging toward the camera, restrained by S.S. guards⁷⁴⁰

⁷⁴⁰ My colleague Danny Gronmaier points out that it would be interesting to consider the aspect of these women ‘performing for the camera,’ as if they were auditioning as actresses or had been coached or instructed by the filmmakers. The speculation seems entirely warranted, considering the careful attention to staging paid Goebbels and the employees of the propaganda ministry to the on-site and cinematic staging of NS events. My analysis of this film is deeply indebted to Danny’s thoughtful comments and his correction of my German typos.

In other words, newly on-view in Fest's film is an implicit accusation of women's (sexualized) culpability for Hitler's success, the targets of his seduction.⁷⁴¹ Yet, although the film draws attention to Hitler's self-conscious performance and mediated exploitation of erotic, irrational desires to drum up support for, legitimize, and conceal the brutal details of his military policy—namely, through an unprecedented expenditure of resources, manpower, and technology in propaganda—merely rendering this explicit is insufficient. For Hitler was just as explicit about this dimension of his power.

Thus, in addition to simply pointing out the capacity of cinematic media to record and amplify the (feminized) public's desire, *eine Karriere* works to demystify and deconstruct another keystone of the multi-media universe involved in the ideological, technological reproduction of the Führer-Mythos: NS architecture. Throughout, the film emphasizes Hitler's personal obsession with and strategic production of architecture as both medium of propaganda and backdrop for his theatrical performance of Führertum. Early on, Fest highlights the dual significance and intertwined symbolic character of film and architecture. As we see Hitler's motorcade glide through Nürnberg, Fest's voiceover explains how "Scharen von Kameraleuten...stilisiert ihn zum Monument. Als Denkmal, so wollte er sich in die Geschichte bringen, umjubelt vor grandiosen Kulissen." The montage then cuts to the 1939 diplomatic welcome in the New Chancellery—the corps striding through the Marble Gallery (Fig. V-15). Nürnberg and Berlin are thereby introduced as central *topoi* of Hitler's erotic, cinematic, architectural spectacle; the spaces in which he performed as "Regisseur und Hauptfigur der Vorführung." The ensuing tour of symbolic sites and scenery includes Troost's Ewige Wache and Haus der Kunst in Munich, Werner March's Olympic

⁷⁴¹ On women as victims of Nazi seduction in the "new discourse" on Nazism see: Friedländer, 7. As noted by Sontag, male submission is generally pictured in militarized, mass *formation* of bodies, or, as I might add, in feminized depictions of elderly men weeping and Sieg-Heiling in association with the ecstatic desire of the (female) public.



Figure V-15 - The diplomatic corps traversing the Marble Gallery in January 1939 from the opening of Fest's film

stadium; Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Paris's transformation into parade-grounds, etc. The sites structure the narrative and provide opportunities for critical digression, examining how the architectural and cinematic reproduction of Hitler's ideological fantasy obscured the regime's violent reality. Fest's point is that behind the fiction of Hitler as embodied Führer, symbolically projected in the architecture that framed, enhanced, and operated as surrogate of his monumental presence, lay nothing but destruction—that the aestheticized, eroticized representations mediating the public's belief in the Führer concealed a *void* at the center of power.

The Chancellery in Berlin, in particular, forms a central leitmotif, a point of orientation for Hitler's itinerary and center-stage of his spectacle, symbolically legible in relation to his body. Moreover, various stages in the Führer-Mythos's realization, stagnation, and collapse are perceptible in concomitant changes to the visual reproduction and physical structure of its representational architecture. Halfway through the film, footage of the "Machtergreifung" shows an already-enhanced strategy of dramaturgical use and visual reproduction of the old Chancellery on Wilhelmplatz. The visual pleasure of the NS Inszenierung is amplified by the built environment: the space visually reconstructed around its center of gravity. The camera keeps Hitler at the center

of the action, on the move in his motorcade, leaning out the window. The framing enhances the Siedler building's facade's monumental volume; while high-contrast lighting (Speer's specialty, here and elsewhere, as in his 'Lichtdom' at Nürnberg, put to cinematic use) emphasizes Hitler's body's visibility and the scene's emotional gravitas and romantic quality. (Figs. V-16a-c) Over the film, we witness the refinement of this strategy of cinematic-architectural representation over time, in later celebratory events staged in the Chancellery and on Wilhelmplatz: i.e. following the Anschluss, for Hitler's 50th birthday and the victory over Paris. Further, we observe the intensification of Hitler's symbolic role in relation to architecture, at its *center* as both *subject* and *co-producer*. The ratcheting up of these dimensions is historically linked to the construction of the New Reich Chancellery in 1938/9.⁷⁴² Hence, in the images of the building that appear throughout the film's second half, transitioning into the war, we see the development of new strategies for its reproduction in and as propaganda, afforded by the theatrical design of Speer's extension, and tightly intertwined with the visibility of the Führer's body.⁷⁴³



Figure V-16a-c – Hitler leaning out the window of the Siedler building on Wilhelmplatz to receive a rose, handed up by a member of the crowd during the Fackelzug on January 30, 1933 following his ascent to the chancellorship.

⁷⁴² In the film, the building's introduction comes ten minutes after Fest explains Hitler's consolidation of power in 1938. Unaware that it had been planned since 1936, he repeats the myth of its 9 month construction. For the comparison of the myth to the real conditions of construction, see: this dissertation's introduction and chapter ii.

⁷⁴³ The referenced scenes, not analyzed here in view of space, depict the chancellery's use during: Hitler's first victory in Berlin during the Machtübernahme including the Fackelzug on Wilhelmplatz; his assumption of the presidency following Hindenburg's death; the explosion of NS architectural propaganda preceding the annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland; Mussolini's signing of the Stahlpakt in 1939; the celebrations for Hitler's 50th birthday and following his return from Paris after the successful Blitzkrieg; the final Militärgespräche as the New Chancellery also became the Führerhauptquartier; the funerals of Fritz Todt and Reinhard Heydrich; and, finally Hitler's last appearance on film decorating a H-J anti-tank battalion outside the Führerbunker and the last known photograph of the Führer, accompanied by his adjutant Julius Staub in the New Chancellery's ruined interior.

The opening clip of the diplomatic welcome in the New Chancellery already hints at the enhanced attention to the use of its interior as *Kulisse*: both a symptom and product of the design's favorability for photographic and cinematic mediation.⁷⁴⁴ The wide angle, pan shot of the Marble Gallery plays up the theatrical layout; its diffused light and palatial interior heighten the visibility of the bodies on the move; and finely worked tapestries in the background underline the sacral atmosphere. The exploitation of the photogenic space is especially noticeable in contrast to the older footage of the old chancellery's interior from the *Machtübernahme* sequence. (Fig. V-17, compare to Fig. V-15) The New Chancellery introduced a new style of representational NS state architecture—to be further developed in Berlin's reconstruction as 'Germania'—and brought with it new, technologically mediated forms of architectural representation. An array of visually resonant images of (future) buildings and architectural models flooded the media alongside its construction, projecting Germany's ideological (and racial) 'unity,' concentrated in the Führer as *Volks- and Bauherr*.⁷⁴⁵ Within this representational network, especially in the New Chancellery's cinematic reproduction—featuring tightly choreographed movement through the building, 'subjectivized' by the camera's gaze, and articulated in sequence by montage—the power of the NS state embodied in Hitler as Führer was symbolically mediated as an imaginary experience of the space and its 'overwhelming,' 'disciplinary' effect on the body.⁷⁴⁶

The spatial narrative of the procession through the New Chancellery's diplomatic route toward Hitler's office at the building's axial center, shown in excerpt later in Fest's film, is

⁷⁴⁴ See the analysis of the building's design and use as backdrop for Hitler's spectacular staging of statecraft in the introduction and chapter ii.

⁷⁴⁵ The New Chancellery was featured as the inaugural accomplishment of Berlin's redevelopment, alongside designs for this project's future continuation, at the second annual Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibition, held at the Haus der Kunst in Munich. In chapter 1, I analyze the exhibition's visual strategies, centered on the symbolic reproduction of the Führer's sovereign gaze in architectural models, and the reinscription of Berlin's future topography and the state apparatus in the New Chancellery's representational layout, reproduced in NS film and photo-publications.

⁷⁴⁶ For the relationship between the New Chancellery's 'photographic architecture' and the 'sovereign gaze' in conjunction with the hidden, technological articulation of state power in the NS bureaucracy, see, again: chapter ii.



Figure V-17 – Hitler in the old chancellery building, directly after being named Chancellor in 1933

emblematic of this strategy. Immediately following the *Anschluss* sequence, Fest digresses at length about architecture as a diversion for Hitler and means of distracting the public from the brutality of war. After a montage of Speer and Hitler, inspecting building sites, discussing plans (echoing the photographs from Speer's memoirs), Fest introduces the New Reich Chancellery with the Marble Gallery sequence from *Das Wort aus Stein*, panning across the illuminated space (which is in fact, an architectural model). He repeats the myth of its nine-month construction, identifying it as "eine der wenigen Bauten, die je fertig gestellt wurden, alles andere blieb Projekt oder Modell." (The irony of this statement, considering the image shows a model, not a building, is perhaps lost on the filmmaker) During this damning by faint praise, the film does cut to the real structure: a lush sequence from the New Chancellery's debut on the *Deutsche Wochenschau*.⁷⁴⁷ Gliding seamlessly from the Marble Gallery into Hitler's office in a tracking shot, the scene emphasizes the architecture's visual pleasure, the refined, sensuous, reflective materials, and the implied bodily submission to Hitler's gravitational pull (echoed but transformed in the SS guards'

⁷⁴⁷ Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, "Die Deutsche Wochenschau " in *DTW 368/1939* (Berlin1939).

rigid forms flanking the door). (Fig V-18a-c) As argued in chapter ii, the New Chancellery's cinematic and photographic representation projected the architecture's dual function in images—i.e. enclosing the Hitler-State's institutional order (the hidden, bureaucratic apparatus) and/or operating as mediator, standing in for and framing the Führer's embodiment of state and Volk. Both are suggested here by the powerful 'effect' of the interior on the (imaginary) body of the visitor; but also decontextualized, as the shot showcases the camera's 'seductive' reproduction of the space.

Regardless of his bodily invisibility, for the continuous tracking shot cuts to a tightly framed image of Hitler's desk, the New Chancellery's cinematic reconstruction suggests his presence. (Fig. V-18d) It furthermore visualizes his influence over other (non-militarized) bodies as an experience of irresistible *attraction*—transforming the depersonalized, bureaucratic state apparatus's subjugating effects into a pleasurable experience of submission, heightened by gentle violins on the soundtrack. To undermine this attraction, Fest's voiceover emphasizes the New Chancellery's *purely* representational function—zooming in on the desk, he notes that Hitler “benutzte es kaum. Der Schreibtisch blieb bloßes Dekorationsstück.” The point is then underlined by a cut to the “Kabinettsaal, in ihm hat nie eine Kabinettsitzung stattgefunden”; an empty, upholstered chair, framed by the camera, echoes Hitler's and literally visualizes the 'empty' space of NS power.⁷⁴⁸ The New Chancellery's value (and function) is thereby diminished to that of *Kulisse* (a true but oversimplified reading)—Hitler's heart of power as an empty film-set.⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁸ Lefort writes, “If the place of power appears, no longer as symbolically, but as *really* empty, then those who exercise it are perceived as mere ordinary individuals, as forming a faction at the service of private interests and, by the same token, legitimacy collapses throughout society. The privatization of groups, of individuals and of each sector of activity increases: each strives to make its own corporatist interest prevail. Carried to an extreme, there is no longer a *civil* society.” Lefort, “The Logic of Totalitarianism,” 279.

⁷⁴⁹ This critique is made explicitly and staged more self-reflexively by Syberberg using photographs, rather than film footage, of the diplomatic route, as will be discussed in chapter vi.



Figure V-18a – Opening tracking shot from Deutsche Wochenschau gliding toward door to Hitler’s office in the Marble Gallery



Figure V-18b – Continuation of previous shot, camera pans upward to capture the crest of Hitler’s initials above the doorway



Figure V-18c – Continuing through the door, the tracking shot captures the finely-worked, coffered ceiling, then pans back to a pedestrian view and looks left



Figure V-18d – Cut from previous shot to Hitler's desk (a provisional furnishing, not Speer's final design), with bureaucratic accoutrement piled on its surface. (Note: this shot is inscrutably dark in the original and Fest and has been brightened by author)

However, the sequence is immediately followed by the annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland (celebrated on Wilhelmplatz) and Mussolini's signing of the Stahlpakt (in the New Reich Chancellery), signaling Germany's impending, militarized expansion. The juxtaposition suggests the intertwined, ideological function of NS architectural (re-)production and wartime propaganda. That is: the construction of a (bodily-architectural) fantasy, employed to conceal, distract from, and legitimize the Hitler-regime's destructive violence (meted out onto other bodies outside the Third Reich's borders). Moreover, the film points to the senselessness of both acts of architectural and militarized state-building; motivated by Hitler's megalomaniacal, narcissistic fantasy of his own (racial) supremacy, rather than any justifiable political aim. Fest thereby rightly highlights Hitler's ultimately unrealized architectural plans as foundational to his self-styled representation, and redefines the meaning of these building images: identifying them as symbols of the nothingness that lay behind the Führer-Mythos and the destruction it unleashed. Yet, on the other hand, the visual fascination of the architectural space is not diminished but, rather, if anything, reinvigorated; thus a more critical reading depends on the audience's ability to at once distance themselves from what they see onscreen and internalize the voiceover's commentary.

The final twenty minutes of *eine Karriere* thus take another pass at this material and render the connection between architectural production and wartime violence explicit—in part by cutting together the NS cinematic and architectural archive with atrocity and rubble images. The images are recognizable from their circulation in the immediate postwar era and their more recent revival in the Federal Republic (e.g. in artistic productions, media surrounding the NS trials, Speer's memoirs). The recombinatory strategy employed by Fest is simultaneously derivative in its content, innovative in its aesthetic representation, and deeply, ethically problematic.

Following the war's turning point in Stalingrad, and Hitler's withdrawal from public view, but before we turn to Germany's urban destruction at the hands of the Red Army and Allied forces, Fest detours to outline the utopian and dystopic extremes characteristic of Hitler's 'Visionen.'⁷⁵⁰ The next montage opens with Hitler's retreat into his fantasy of reconstructing Linz, inspecting a construction site in the midst of war, and imagining his survival into retirement, "hingegen seinen Träumen, und den Blicken durch die Seitentür ins Paradies." To illustrate these dreams, Fest cuts to shots of Josef Thorak's studio from the *Deutsche Wochenschau*, showing enormous nudes meant for the Parteitagsgelände's Märzfeld and clips from *Triumph des Willens*. The images visualize the depersonalized, *racialized* image of "Der neue Mensch," exemplified by both the planned monumental buildings and the SS marching in formation. The voiceover comments on the contradiction intrinsic to NS ideology: a combination "von Mittelalter und Modernität, von Alt-Nürnberg und der Asphaltwelt der SS...Hitler hat diese Widersprüche beispielhaft verkörpert." Moments later, introduced first on the soundtrack, we cut to footage of a young Hitler, announcing,

"Wir haben eine Revolution machen wollen, und es wurde eine Revolution gemacht! Allein, nur der kleinste Geist kann das Wesen einer Revolution ausschließlich in der Vernichtung sehen. Wir sahen es im Gegenteil in einem gigantischen Aufbau!"

This citation, from a relatively unknown speech delivered in 1934, was also employed by Kluge in *Brutalität in Stein*, as I show in chapter iv, to symbolically link the Parteitagsgelände's representational architecture and the strategies of its cinematic representation to the 'Vernichtung' of Auschwitz, as emanations of the same ideological state apparatus. The sound of the clip then, again, bridges between cuts, superimposed of further footage of Thorak's nude mock-ups. Kluge

⁷⁵⁰ The title of the section of these images from the Ullstein photo-book. It's worth mentioning that the preceding sequence concludes with Hitler's sparing appearances in the *Deutsche Wochenschau* at state funerals for Reinhard Heydrich in Prague and Fritz Todt in the New Chancellery's Mosaic room. Fest, however, confusingly claims that "Hier war nichts mehr inszeniert, kein Theater der Lebensverachtung mehr," despite the fact that these funerals are obviously highly orchestrated, ritualistic affairs and, in the New Chancellery, characterized by careful staging, lighting, and cinematographic reproduction, highlighting the 'eternal flame,' a key symbol of the Führer's death cult. Syberberg puts this funerary iconography, detached from its original mise-en-scène, to much better critical use.

had also cited the soundtrack from this episode from the *DW*, but excluded its footage, instead projecting the original voiceover onto the unfinished Kongresshalle. Fest takes the opposite track, preserving the images but maintaining only a low, pulsing, almost mechanical string sound as the backdrop for his own voice, as the camera roams, voyeuristically over the enormous stone faces and bodies, as they are slowly chiseled into form by the sculptors, who appear tiny in comparison.

Further acts of ‘depersonalization,’ or, rather the effects of its artistic mediation on the Volk’s collective ‘body,’ are shown in a montage of repeated close-ups of H-J and SS faces from Riefenstahl, exemplary of idealized ‘Aryan’ physiognomy and resonant with the preceding images, and a clip from Hitler’s speech to the mass-ornamental crowd on the Zeppelin-field.⁷⁵¹ The voiceover notes, “die erstarrten Mienen verrieten etwas von der Bereitschaft, die eigene Persönlichkeit auszulöschen, und zum gesichtslosen Instrument zu werden. Das Instrument sollte herrschen, vor allem im Osten.” The point—one of the few indictments of the *male* German public’s willing participation in and voluntary submission to the Führer-Mythos and its militarized outgrowth—is comically underlined by another shot from Riefenstahl, which tracks around the face of an uncomfortable-looking youth, until it is fully concealed behind a shovel.

Here, however, the film takes an unexpected turn: cutting from images of the ‘symbolic’ “Auslöschung der Persönlichkeit” to film footage and photographs of the literal dehumanization and “Verschrotten” of “Bastardvölker” in Eastern Europe and the industrialized mass-murder of the *Endlösung*. The transition visually intimates the connection between ideological fiction and real historical violence. The brief sequence that follows includes archival material used by Alain Resnais in *Night and Fog*—showing the deportations and brutalization of Europe’s Jewish population, footage of the concentration camps, and close-up shots of mutilated corpses. It also

⁷⁵¹ Hitler declares, “Wir sind entschlossen ein neues Geschlecht heranzuziehen, und wer will zweifeln, dass die Zeugen dieses Geschlechtes nicht in unserer Fantasie leben, sondern hier vor uns stehen!”

employs a similar contrasting visual structure used at the opening of Resnais's film: framing atrocity images with a montage of the NS 'machine' from propaganda.⁷⁵² But Fest radically inverts the proportional visibility of each subject. The first minute-long sequence, employing scenes from Riefenstahl, in Resnais's 32 minute-long film follows the prologue, which shows the contemporary ruins of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek; Resnais later returns to photographs and film clips of the camp overseers' peaceful, domestic life. Hence, *Night and Fog*'s brief interludes of NS propaganda contextualize and contrast with its elegaic meditation on the alien world of inhumane torture and suffering in the camps. In contrast, the sequence in Fest comes almost 2 hours and 15 minutes in, lasts under a minute, constitutes the only appearance of NS crimes against humanity in the film, and excludes any mention or depiction of German civilians in the camps, limiting their personnel to Heinrich Himmler, "Herr über die Lagerwelt," and uniformed SS officers. "Als romantische Ordnung des Regimes gegründet, diente sie bald nur noch der Einschüchterung, dem Terror." It, thereby, erases the vast majority of German defendants currently on trial for "Beihilfe zum Mord" in the NS-Prozesse, both non-military concentration-camp personnel and members of the Wehrmacht's *Einsatzgruppen* (which receive no mention at all).

In fact, *Eine Karriere*'s momentary glimpse into the "Entvölkerung" of Eastern Europe is primarily used to frame the repressive nature of the NS state regarding its *own* citizens. Subjected to the inhumane dimensions of Hitler's racialized, imperial fantasy, "ein straff gegliederter Machtstaat, der seine sozialen Konflikte, aber auch alle Menschlichkeit in Reih und Glied erstickte. Die dadurch aufgestauten Aggressionen sollten in Energie umgesetzt werden: Energie für Eroberungen und Verfolgungen." Having illustrated the 'energetic' work of 'persecution' in the brief images of violence, the aggressive project of 'conquest' is then illustrated architecturally.

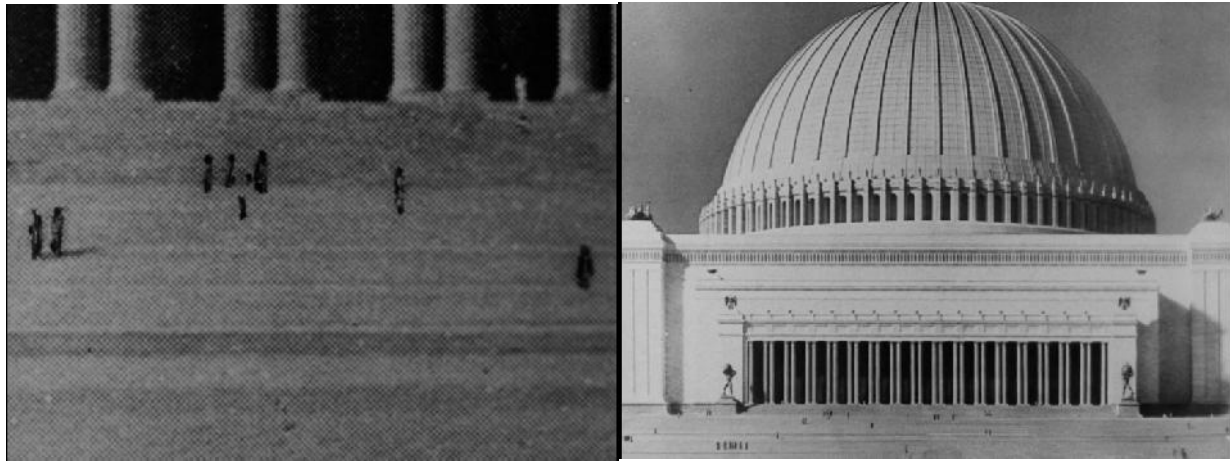
⁷⁵² The juxtaposition and the use of footage from *Night and Fog* are remarkable considering the virulent, defensive response to Resnais's film's release, discussed in chapter iv.

That is, the film's most gruesome scenes of atrocity are followed by images of unbuilt, monumental NS buildings (almost all of which appear in Kluge's film). Clips from *Das Wort aus Stein* show the models of the H-J Schule at Chiemsee and Oberkommando des Heeres; followed by model photographs of the Soldatenhalle and Große Halle; and sketches of Wilhelm Kreis's Totenburgen, meant to line the 'Volksreich,' "vom Atlantik bis tief in die russische Steppe, vom Nordkap bis nach Afrika...Symbole für die Macht germanischer Ordnungskräfte an einer ewig blutenden Grenze." Each of these projects is linked by Fest's voice-over to territorial expansion and the conquest and enslavement of Eastern Europe, and overlaid with a pathetic muted horn, mimicking their original, romantic scores. But the association drawn by the film is more symbolic than historical.⁷⁵³ The sequence's primary purpose is to illustrate the magnitude of Hitler's own fantasy and, within it, the diminishing stature and importance of the German public. Such a reading is suggested in zooms out from cropped shots of two model photographs of the Große Halle. The first highlights the monumental structure's disproportionate relation to the Brandenburg Gate, "wie ein Wächterhäuschen," using an image from Speer's memoir (Fig. V-6); the second, the miniscule human figures. (Figs. V-19a-b)

This strategy is also employed by Kluge, to similar effect, but with a different aim. Fest's implicit claim, as will be further explained below, is that the Hitler-State's depersonalizing, destructive character, legible in architectural 'Übermaß,' like the violent excesses captured in atrocity photos, was *invisible* during the regime—quite literally, as both subjects were only publicized following Germany's defeat (the former only partially visualized in propaganda, the latter entirely concealed from public view). Fest thus 'reveals' the extremity, characteristic of the Hitler-Mythos: its mobilization of violence and amplification of self-representation in service of a

⁷⁵³ Fest makes no mention, likely because he did not know, of the dependence of the GBI on the S.S.'s expropriation of resources and slave labor from conquered territories, for the completion of these building plans.

narcissistic fiction; and the obfuscation of both behind a spurious monumental, architectural image of the *unity* of Führer and Volk.



Figures V-19a-b – Opening and final shot of a zoom-out from staffage on the steps of a model photograph of the Große Halle

Allow me to digress, before coming to the film’s and this chapter’s conclusion. In her article “Can Images kill?,” Marie José Mondzain notes that, “Images of virtue or of beauty can generate violence. This was the case...in the Nazi films that exalted Aryan perfection and sustained the fusion of the group through the hatred of the other. Speechless visibilities were aroused by a deafening discourse.”⁷⁵⁴ NS ideology’s ‘deafening discourse,’ reconstructed in Fest’s film, claimed that Hitler was the personal embodiment of the future, racially unified, imperial Volk, and that each representational incarnation of his vision, be it a building or the synchronized bodies of a military unit, helped usher in its arrival—thus hastening the ‘speechless’ annihilation of bodies ‘threatening’ its purity.⁷⁵⁵ Mondzain continues, “The propagandist is not content to employ already-existent symbols and emblems...he overdetermines them in order to impose a univocal regime of interpretation and to manipulate the desire to kill and the desire to die.”⁷⁵⁶ Fest

⁷⁵⁴ Marie José Mondzain, “Can Images Kill?,” *Critical Inquiry* 36, no. 1 (2009): 25. Notably, the soundtrack goes almost silent during a the atrocity images, reduced to a faint, electrical buzzing noise.

⁷⁵⁵ “If Hitler’s body personifies the German nation, if when he speaks it is the Aryan nation that speaks, it is because every fictional construction of this body and voice refers to a rhetoric and a semiotics common to those who look at him.” *Ibid.*, 46.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 46-7.

emphasizes the universalizing, univocal quality of NS propaganda by showing the sheer magnitude of its reproduction and the totalizing inscription of its imagery under the banner of Hitler's personal embodiment of the Volk, and their internalization (or at least performance) of his interdiction that they live, die, and kill to achieve his vision. NS architecture embodies this representational logic and the symbolic discourse that surrounds it (including its violent maxim). As Eric Michaud writes,

“The deliberate ‘making-past’—the monuments erected or projected by the National Socialists to incarnate the community of the people, which were therefore planned as common graves for a heroic race of soldier-artists—cannot be separated from the refusal to provide some people with any grave at all... The gigantic mausoleums imitated from the past and destined for the eternally heroic Volksgemeinschaft correspond to the anonymity of mass graves, of gas chambers, and of crematory ovens, to a radical anonymity that was to erase from history even the very name of the Jewish people.”⁷⁵⁷

Fest works to demystify Hitler's architectural incarnation, projecting the embodiment of a terrible, impersonal historical movement, by juxtaposing this mythological imagery with its inverse. That is, with the bodies of the Jews and the sites of their annihilation—as the sequence includes partial views of concentration camp structures, barbed wire, watchtowers, etc. These sites/sights incarnate the *unspeakable* inhumanity that Hitler's imaginary power (and its images) unleashed.

However, sutured together under the heading of ‘Visionen,’ each subject remain spectral, somehow unreal (de-realized). As the images index but fail to fully capture their referents (the presence of a really existing building or the pain and suffering of the Nazis' victims), they therefore incite a kind of desire. The attraction of the aestheticized, phantom images of architecture—in their visual pleasure and implicit trajectory directed toward future realization—is contrasted with but also paralleled in the morbid fascination and sense of unease generated by the atrocity photos—the sense of repulsion and simultaneous voyeuristic, visual scrutiny of debased, naked, dead bodies. However, while the film highlights the connection between these historical images, their

⁷⁵⁷ Eric Michaud and Christopher Fox, "National Socialist Architecture as an Acceleration of Time," *ibid.* 19, no. 2 (1993): 232.

meaning, individually and in relation to one another, remains vague. As Mondzain writes, “The image awaits its visibility, which emerges from the relation established between those who produce it and those who look at it. As an image, it shows nothing... an unseen,” as meaning is only *anticipated* and must be determined in public debate.⁷⁵⁸ If the German public, repeatedly faced with the images and accounts of NS crimes, had responded (at best) equivocally—failing to see or acknowledge what this history had to do with them—how would they respond to their representation by Fest? To answer this question, let’s turn to the film’s conclusion and the relation it posits between its historical images and the contemporary audience.

In its final 10 minutes, *eine Karriere* shows the centripetal movement of destruction, originating from Hitler and projected outward in the Third Reich’s “ewig blutende Grenze,” contracting back inward, revisited upon the Germans in their brutal defeat by the Allies.⁷⁵⁹ After foregrounding the fascinating, seductive character of Hitler’s architectural-imperial mythology, the film works to undermine its viability, by suggesting its manipulative effects as inextricable from the destruction, playing out beyond the frame of the images. Immediately following the shots of Kreis’s Totenburgen and sculptures of the New Man, the next cut brings us to 1943. Fest notes: “Jetzt waren es nicht mehr Visionen, die die Blick auf die Wirklichkeit verstellten. Das war die Realität.” Intercut with images of urban destruction, footage of the “gewaltige Luftflotten,” as they “ließen Feuer und Vernichtung auf das Land herabregnen,” and piles of bodies amid the ruins, Fest describes the mobilization for ‘Total War,’ and, simultaneously the public’s abandonment by the NS regime. He further points out Hitler’s continued withdrawal into “Scheinwelten,” filled with promises of miracle weapons and threats of scorched earth policies; even following the siege of

⁷⁵⁸ Marie José Mondzain, “Can Images Kill?,” *ibid.* 36, no. 1 (2009): 30-1. The comment resembles Kluge’s notion of a cinematic counter-public-sphere and its incitement to debate. See: chapter iv.

⁷⁵⁹ It thus does, in some ways, adhere to the necessity (outlined by both the Mitscherlichs and Adorno) of contextualizing the present, political situation with the conditions of its historical production. Yet, as we shall see, it does so by re-animating the narrative and architectural and bodily imagery of German suffering and victimhood.

Normandy, “auch im Rückzug kannte Hitler nur eines: Zerstören.”⁷⁶⁰ As Goebbels organizes the senseless resistance, the Führer appears in notable physical decline, “vergeblich bemühte er sich den Körper zu kontrollieren.”⁷⁶¹ As the front collapses, and the Red Army reaches Berlin in 1945, Hitler still refuses to surrender, “er hat nichts mehr zu verlieren, aber ein großer Untergang konnte ihn noch zum Mythos machen.” In footage of Allied bombers, the Red Army siege of Berlin, fleeing refugees, captured NS soldiers, and bodies strewn in the rubble, the conclusion enacts a kind of denouement. It stages a collision between ideological fiction and real historical violence—which, notably, resolves in the mutual destruction of Hitler’s body and the New Reich Chancellery.

Composed of Nazi, Allied, and Soviet newsreels and other footage from 1945, the final montage shows Berlin’s destruction in ruin imagery recognizable from circulation in the postwar period and the recent present.⁷⁶² Amid shots of disheveled German refugees emerging from air raid shelters and lengthy sequences of destruction porn, the brutality of the war’s conclusion, the film frames Hitler’s retreat into the last vestige of his architectural fantasy at the bitter end. Returning to the space of the New Chancellery, we see his final appearances on film, decorating H-J Panzerfäuste in the rear garden and in a photograph of him contemplating its ruined interior. (Figs. V-20a & b) The now-familiar Soviet footage of the New Chancellery’s siege heralds the Allied victory, as usual. Once the Soviet troops reach the governmental quarter on April 29, 1945, “erst da entschloss sich Hitler to sterben.” Hence, “das letzte Bild,” (Fig. V-20b) is followed in the

⁷⁶⁰ The sequence also includes the narrative of Hitler’s attempted assassination and the ensuing persecution of its perpetrators—but asserts that “die Untersuchungen hatten eine breite Verschwörung aufgedeckt,” proceeding to both exaggerate the scope of the resistance and emphasize its unjust trial and sentencing by the Volksgerichtshof.

⁷⁶¹ The collapse of his sovereign power is, thus, manifested in his bodily degeneration, a not uncommon component of the narrative of divestiture. See, for example, Žižek’s comments on Stalin’s letters to Gorky. Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 257-60.

⁷⁶² The sequences employ clips from newsreels, analyzed in chapter iii, and footage used in *das ende*, analyzed in chapter iv; e.g. the images of female civilians exiting bunkers and the Brandenburg Gate fronted by burning rubble.

montage by the same well-known shots of surrendering German soldiers and civilians, dazed, “betroffen,” wandering in the ruins—those left outside the fortress protecting the Führer.



Figures V-20a-b – Pan of the H-J Panzerfäuste assembled outside the New Chancellery’s rear terrace behind Hitler’s office, with the Führer approaching in the background, assembled by author (left). Final photograph of Hitler in the New Chancellery’s ruin, with Hitler’s body and clothing artificially enhanced in the image, visible in the subsequent zoon (not shown) (right)

The film thus passes quickly over Hitler’s suicide, noting only that the Red Army troops storming the New Chancellery on May 1st, “fanden alles verlassen,” immediately thereafter, however, it employs the ruin to visualize Hitler’s bodily disappearance, the disintegration of his myth, and the presence of the new embodied representatives of sovereignty.⁷⁶³ The camera pans across the New Chancellery’s rear stair-case, its windows blown out, walls stripped of marble, and interior strewn with debris.⁷⁶⁴ (Fig. V-21a) Fest’s voiceover, backed by an eerie oboe and discordant piano figuration notes, “In der zerstörten Reichskanzlei machten sich die Eroberer auf die Suche nach der Leiche Hitlers.” The location of Hitler’s missing body is indicated architecturally, in a cut to a frontal slightly elevated shot of the Führerbunker, guarded by a Soviet soldier, followed by clips of further officers, gesturing excitedly at empty gasoline cans and the “Erdvertiefung,” in which they found “die verkohlten Überreste” of his remains. (Fig. V-21b) In place of the absent body, the camera pans over “einen Uniformmantel, einen Schlafanzug”—the Reichsadler on the uniform’s sleeve, centered in close up in the bottom half of the frame, and the

⁷⁶³ “[D]er natürliche Körper des Königs [bleibt] nicht unbeschädigt, wenn er vom politischen Körper getrennt wurde.” Frank, 227.

⁷⁶⁴ The physical condition of the building suggests that this footage is possibly not from 1945 but 1947, after the initiation of its non-structural demolition by the Soviet authorities. See analysis of similar images in chapter iii.

pajamas' striped, rumpled fabric call unsettlingly back to the bodies of the S.S. and the concentration camp inmates from the previous scene. (Figs. V-22a & b) The camera's proximity to the objects also suggests voyeuristic fascination and the images, again, symbolically hint at an unseen act of violence—but the empty clothing indicates that there is 'nothing to see,' in both a literal and figurative sense.⁷⁶⁵



Figures V-21a & b - End of pan shot over the New Chancellery's rear staircase (likely the Kannenberggang) (left), Soviet soldier guarding the entrance to the Führerbunker (right)



Figures V-22a & b - Hitler's empty 'Uniformmantel' (left) and 'Schlafanzug' (right) in the ditch beside the Führerbunker

⁷⁶⁵ Koschorke writes, "Auch Devestituren gingen nicht selten mit der Anfertigung von Schandbildern einher. Insofern können die Fassungen, in denen statt unsichtbarer Kleider unsichtbare Bilder verkauft werden, tatsächlich Varianten *einer einzigen* Geschichte über die Symbolik politischer Herrschaft gelesen werden." Frank, 229.

That is, because Hitler's body was *already* destroyed; and, as the iconography hearkens back to the symbolic logic of divestiture, because stripping Hitler of his insignias of power reveals him to be nothing more than an empty suit. This reading is underlined by the next cut, to a crowd of Allied soldiers posing on the ruined balcony over Wilhelmplatz, aping Hitler's gestures. (Fig. V-23) The empty space of Hitler's power and the demolition of his myth are thus multiply visualized: in the camera's demystifying (but simultaneously fascinated) gaze on the debased signifiers of Führertum, and in the (likewise debased) New Chancellery's re-inscription as an emblem of Germany's defeat, visualized through its re-occupation by Allied bodies.



Figure V-23 – Allied soldiers on the Führer's Balcony on Wilhelmplatz, the man in the center holds his fingers over his upper lip in the style of Hitler's iconic mustache

In the film's final two minutes, the demolition of the Nazis' symbolic order and ideological landscape is shown radiating out from this center—as it had been in the postwar cinematic archive, which is appropriated and remediated by Fest. The final sequence, along with the voiceover, hammers home the message that with Hitler's bodily destruction, the war's violence and the empty

ideology that lay behind it was now suddenly *visible* to the German public. Over footage of Allied victory celebrations, weeping H-J, liberated concentration camps, and surrendering NS officers, Fest narrates the Germans' abrupt confrontation with reality and this epiphany's traumatic, psychic effects:

“Die ganze Welt feierte...nur die Deutschen waren allein. Befreit waren auch sie, aber das Land war zerstört, das Reich in Stücke gegangen. Ihr Name war zum Schrecken geworden. Ein menschenfeindliches Zwangssystem war am Ende. Mit seinem Ende endete viel, es hat mehr zerstört als Häuser und Menschen. Der Schrecken lähmte zu begreifen, was geschehen war.”

The ‘unfathomable’ horror of this system’s end is depicted in aerial shots of urban ruins—Germany’s symbolic-spatial order become *illegible*. The visual trope is likewise recognizable from rubble and ruin imagery from the postwar period and its recent revival in West German cinema. Fest, however, diverges from the standard narrative, not immediately turning to the ‘manic’ work of reconstruction, but pausing to contemplate the impact of the Third Reich’s destruction.

As it continues to cinematically deconstruct the representational (bodily and architectural) NS topography in its final sequence, the film puts its archival material to new use. Telegraphing Nazi Germany’s total disintegration and the Allied occupation, Fest foregrounds the public’s traumatic confrontation with the reality of defeat, now ‘freed’ from the spectacular scenery of Führertum. In doing so, it constructs a visual narrative, which is pointedly sympathetic to the NS generation’s ‘painful’ memories. Denazification is shown metonymically and metaphorically in explicit, bodily imagery. “Für die Sieger waren die Deutschen von einer Krankheit befallen,” Fest notes, cutting from the aerial ruin images to shots of Germans, roughly handled, disinfected and invasively, physically inspected by Allied workers (Figs. V-24a-c). The imagery suggests a problematic, but commonly posed parallel between the dehumanization of Jews and subjugation of the defeated Germans—both ‘innocent victims’ of the historical catastrophe of the Third Reich. But Fest’s commentary differentiates between everyday Germans, subjected to such scrutiny and

humiliation, and the culpability and denial of the regime’s worst offenders. Specifically, “Die SS Leute, die das Zeichen des Regimes eingebrannt trugen, verleugneten es jetzt.” The marked bodies of these perpetrators seems to justify their harsh, disciplinary treatment. Their physical ‘branding’ implicates and reveals their responsibility, and implicitly indicts them as responsible for sweeping up the rest of the public as collateral damage in their abnegation of guilt. (Fig. V-24c)



Figures V-24a-c – Allied workers spraying Germans with powdered disinfectant (left); a shirtless former SS officer being inspected by a medical worker, who indicates the brand on his inner arm marking him as a member of the battalion, noted by Fest in the voiceover (center and right).

To emphasize the NS regime’s deconstruction, breaking through the *unreality* of the world, as it had been perceived throughout Hitler’s reign, Fest turns back to architecture in the film’s concluding shots. Directly following the above sequence, we cut to the removal of “Versatzstücke”: a Reichsadler, unmounted from above a doorway clatters to the ground, children burn heaps of swastikas and portraits of Hitler. (Fig. V-25a & b) Fest notes, with confidence, “mit seiner Macht verging auch das Regime. Nichts blieb.”⁷⁶⁶ Bridging the final shot of a burning image of Hitler, bearing the text “Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer,” the voiceover continues, at a slower pace, “aber was endete mit den Symbolen?” The last word is punctuated by the final shot, architecturally underlining the Third Reich’s and Hitler-Mythos’s total destruction, showing the US army’s demolition of the Zeppelintribüne’s swastika in Nürnberg. (Figs. V-26a & b)

⁷⁶⁶ My colleague Danny points out the unusual use of a pronoun here, as Hitler has not been mentioned by name for several minutes, since the above-described scene showing the Führerbunker.



Figures V-25a & b – Unmounting a Reichs-eagle, the two images above show the initial and concluding images of a single shot.



Figures V-26a & b – Final and concluding shot of the detonation of the Zeppelintribune's swastika finial

The question is provocative and a bit nebulous.⁷⁶⁷ On the one hand, the insistence that ‘nothing remained’ of the Third Reich’s symbols (to say nothing of its political and ideological foundations and actors) is at odds with the film itself. For Fest has, of course, just spent hours illustrating the opposite—that is, the continued *vitality* of the bodily, architectural, and cinematic imagery of the Hitler-Mythos. Even as it posits critical, historical distance, the film (like Speer’s memoirs) reveals and foregrounds (and, indeed, enhances) the fascination with and continued

⁷⁶⁷ The quotation is adapted from the text of *Versuch eines Porträts*, which reads: “Mit seinem Ende endete viel. Er hatte sich die totale Umwandlung des Weltzustandes zum Ziel gesetzt. Dies, am Ende doch, war ihm gelungen,” omitting the assertion that “Nichts blieb,” and the final question, instead detailing the contents of his night-stand’s drawer, described above. Fest, “Versuch Eines Porträts.”

emotional charge held by Nazism's archival representations in the Federal Republic, even decades after the Third Reich's destruction. In this case, the words thus sound as more of a plea than a reflection of reality: to let this history die and, for once, stay dead. On the other hand, however, especially in light of the film's concluding question, a different interpretation is possible. Namely, that *nothingness* remained; that a void was opened in the wake of Hitler's defeat; an empty space. In this reading, the remaining symbolic artifacts and representations of Nazism, themselves, now signify 'nothing'—that is, they are the mere fragments of an already-concluded, mediated spectacle, harboring nothing of substance behind their seductive, surface-level appearance. This interpretation would, of course, align with the ideal outcome of the ritualistic process of divestiture.

Before considering the implications of this reading, let's summarize briefly the project of Fest's film and its impact on the 'new discourse on Nazism' and Hitler's revival in the Federal Republic. With *eine Karriere*, Fest attempted to produce a new, de-politicized (that is, *anti-anti-fascist*) documentary mode for engaging with NS media—to demystify and deconstruct Hitler's image in all its forms and expose the destructive void at the center of NS ideology. Especially at its conclusion, the film thus consolidates the highly-charged symbolic images and narratives of the postwar period, spanning 1945 into the 1970s; it remediates the archive employed in the work of 'coming to terms with the past,' as it was negotiated on film, in particular, through images of both bodies and buildings. While the cinematic juxtaposition and staged confrontation between representations of NS architecture and violence was not, in itself, innovative—already practiced by both Resnais and Kluge—this strategy's re-appearance in a work like Fest's is truly remarkable, considering the mainstream German public's long-standing resistance and defensiveness to accusations of their own complicity with and culpability for the Third Reich's violence. However, Fest's particular recombination of material and the film's aesthetic strategies, with its eroticized

focus on Hitler's body and unlimited airtime afforded to his powerful archive of propaganda, get in the way of its stated aims. This was the archive that needed to be confronted just *because* it was so effective at politicizing, mobilizing, and polarizing the German public—even when its subjects had been exposed as a fiction, or destroyed entirely, they still wouldn't *go away*. At worst, Fest's 'new' strategy for representing and critically deconstructing the NS past and the Hitler-Mythos, namely, by letting its images 'speak for themselves,' constituted a dangerous risk—at *best* it offered ambiguous results.⁷⁶⁸ The film, furthermore, problematically appropriates representations of the Nazis' victims, positing untenable equivalences between their suffering and the Germans', and instrumentalizing images of violence and atrocity to mobilize oversimplified readings of historical and political events of monumental complexity (e.g. the Holocaust, Germany's occupation).

Moreover, the success of the film's demystification of its objects is not as straight-forward as it might initially appear. The ritual of divestiture seeks "böse Kräfte unter Kontrolle zu bringen und unschädlich zu machen."⁷⁶⁹ But the fact of the matter was, the NS dream factory was staffed with far better film- and image-makers than Fest and Herrendoerfer; the archival material's production value and durability is incommensurate with the minimal deconstructive work of the contemporary re-edit. As a result, Fest vastly overestimates his representational strategy, editorial ability, and reserved commentary's capacity to control and subvert the images onscreen; to deconstruct the fascination concentrated in these symbolic objects. Indeed, after a stupefying two and a half hours, it's obvious which aesthetic (spectacular ideological mythology vs. conservatively critical documentary, since Fest wants to have it both ways) makes the stronger

⁷⁶⁸ See Friedländer's comments in fn686.

⁷⁶⁹ Frank, 220.

impression; which part of the sensory experience (the overwhelming visuals or their periodic disruption through remediation and/or acoustic commentary) remains lodged in memory.

IV. *Conclusion: Fascination with Fascination & the Paradoxical Effects of Divestiture*

For, indeed, *eine Karriere*'s spectacular representation of NS history and its star player and revival of the Third Reich's mediated mythology on film elicited the public's fascination—but it failed to generate the kind of intelligent, critical discourse (or distance) regarding its subject matter or visual content desired by the filmmakers. Rebroadcast several times on television, the stir it generated reverberated through the Feuilleton and the talk-show circuit—constituting a spectacle in itself.⁷⁷⁰ Overall, the reaction in the West German press was decidedly mixed, and watching the various camps fight it out was itself part of the show.

Karl-Heinz Janßen, who had offered tempered praise for Fest's first 'Versuch,' now mounted a staunch critique of *eine Karriere* in *Die Zeit*. His review, titled, "High durch Hitler," offers an outline the criticisms leveled against the film's aesthetic strategy and the warnings of its potential dangerous impact on the audience, which were concentrated in the more intellectual (and moderately more progressive) side of the BRD's media.⁷⁷¹ Janßen writes that the new "filmische[s] Standardwerk über Hitler," offered, in fact, "das alte, in Bild und Ton gesetzte Psychogramm eines genialen Demagogen, zum Teil mit fast wörtlich den gleichen Texten wie damals. Nur diesmal auf Großleinwand mit Stereoeffekt."⁷⁷² The film thus *amplifies* and monumentalizes the Hitler-

⁷⁷⁰ Wenders describes his experience, "Eine Wut bekommen habe ich dann erst nach der traurigen Veranstaltung vorige Woche im Fernsehen, der ASPEKTE-Sendung, in der über den Hitlerfilm diskutiert werden sollte. Der redliche Wille dazu wurde zum Bumerang. Die Sendung geriet zu einer einzigen Reklame für den Film. Schon nach den Nachrichten wurden Ausschnitte des Films als Trailer gezeigt, und Janßen wiederholte seine Thesen aus der ZEIT [discussed below] vor einer Studiowand, die bis unter die Decke mit dem Hitler-Plakat beklebt war." Wenders.

⁷⁷¹ Karl-Heinz Janßen, "High Durch Hitler. Das Neue Werk Des Führer-Biographen Fest Entpuppt Sich Als Ein Gefährlicher Film.," *ibid.*, July 8.

⁷⁷² Wenders critique goes further in suggesting that the film's techniques enhance the power of the archival footage. Regarding Fest's voiceover and its limited commentary, Wenders writes, "Die gängelt und betört den Zuschauer nicht viel anders als die andere Stimme, die es dauernd zu hören gibt. Ebenso zählt immer weniger, was sie sagt und immer mehr, wie sie es sagt. Auch sie stellt langsam aber sicher einen Sog her und lullt einen ein. Was erst allmählich in meinen Kopf will: Sie steht nämlich nicht 'nüchtern und sachlich' über dem Besprochenen, sondern versucht es zu illustrieren, geht darauf ein, wechselt ihre Stimmungen...legt einem nahe, sich in Hitler hineinzufühlen, versucht, ihn zu interpretieren, ihn zu verstehen. Ja, mitunter erzählt

Mythos, turning history into an erotic, voyeuristic spectacle, while failing to account for its (and its intermedial archive's) *continued* attraction and popularity in the present. Nor, according to Janßen, does Fest successfully address the social and historical preconditions of Hitler's former success. Rather, in the film's focus on exhaustively reproducing the Führer's totalitarian hold over the media and the public's gaze, it provides *minimal* details regarding the regime's crimes (as noted in reference to the brief interlude above). The atrocity photographs and scant commentary on the mass killings of Jews "gehen nicht unter die Haut"—especially as the film fails to provide context, or even any numbers or statistics to make this history real or quantifiable for the viewer. And the viewer is *distracted*, of course, by the Hitler show and the performative strategies of the re-edit; "Mätzchen," which rob the film of its didactic intention.⁷⁷³ In Janßen's account, Fest sacrifices historical rigor for "verführerischen optisch-akustischen Reiz," in order to reach broader audience—which, of course, he did. But by reducing the entire universe of NS propaganda to the figure at its center, *eine Karriere* merely (re)produces 'fascination with fascination.'

If *eine Karriere* loses its grip on Adolf Hitler "überhaupt als historischer Gegenstand," as Janßen writes, what, in addition to the Nazis' victims, is largely occluded in the process? For one thing, the connection to a longer narrative of historical development. "Wo," he asks, "wird jemals der Ort Hitlers in der Geschichte des preußisch-deutschen Nationalstaats ausgelotet?" His relationship to "wilhelminischer Bramarbasiererei"?⁷⁷⁴ Further, where were those, who had

sie fast subjektiv, aus Hitlers Sicht." Wim Wenders, "That's Entertainment: Hitler. Eine Polemik Gegen Joachim C. Fests Film 'Hitler - Eine Karriere'," *ibid.*, August 12.

⁷⁷³ In addition to examples of audio-visual juxtaposition and counterpoint indicated above with regard to architecture, a scene reverses and replays a shot of Hitler dancing on the Berghof's terrace (in the contemporary style of boomerang videos on social media); Janßen also notes, "Wenn Hitler auf dem Münchener Königsplatz allein zu den 'Toten der Bewegung' in die Tempel steigt, knallen seine Stiefel über die Marmorfliesen. Und während wir wieder einmal aus nächster Nähe die Ersatzbefriedigung miterleben dürfen, die der kontaktgestörte Hitler beim 'Bad in der Menge' genöß," namely, the scenes of the Sudetenland's hysterical women, "schiebt sich ein Zeppelin phallusgleich ins Bild."

⁷⁷⁴ In addition to the Mitscherlichs' comments on the subject, Anna Teut also points out Hitler's self-stylization as failed-architect-politician as an appropriation of Wilhelm II's own personal mythology, employing both the medium and a similar style of state building to the one characteristic of the Kaiserreich. Teut, 13-4.

assisted in transforming his ideological vision into reality: “Hitlers Paladinen [und] Diplomaten,” Speer, Schacht, and Todt, among others? To Janßen’s list, we should also add: where were the *women*, who, in addition to ‘hysterical’ audience, were also instrumental co-producers of the Hitler-Mythos: Gerdy Troost, Leni Riefenstahl, and Winifred Wagner?⁷⁷⁵ Or the other unseen, female civil and domestic functionaries inside the whirring machinery and bureaucratic interior of NS power?⁷⁷⁶ The concentration camp personnel, like Hildegard Lächert, who had likewise personally participated in the regime’s atrocities.⁷⁷⁷ Or, to again broaden our lens, where was the Wehrmacht? The Einsatzgruppen? The everyday and ‘Schreibtisch-’perpetrators? That is to say, where were the people *outside* or only visible at the margins of these historical images, whose bodies had nevertheless occupied the *profilmic* and *unfilmed* spaces of the Third Reich, including the movie theaters; and what did they have to do with those people now watching the show in real time? This last question seems especially salient, as Janßen is distinctly concerned about (and rather patronizing regarding) *eine Karriere*’s seductive effect on the *contemporary audience*.⁷⁷⁸

⁷⁷⁵ These women, Wagner and Riefenstahl in particular, were also participants in the contemporary revision of NS history, the mythologization of Hitler’s charismatic power, and the exculpatory account of their own actions as *apolitical*. See: Syberberg and Riefenstahl’s interview in Ray Müller, *The Wonderful Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl* (New York, N.Y.; Chatsworth, CA: Kino on Video; dist. by Image Entertainment, 1998), videorecording, 188 min. Riefenstahl, as Janßen mentions, is not even credited in Fest’s film, though her footage provides crucial, archival material, employed throughout. In the documentary, Eva Braun’s footage of the Berghof is likewise reduced to naive ‘documentation’ of the private life of Hitler’s inner circle. Stratigakos’ analysis, on the other hand, shows just how aligned Braun’s perspective was with NS propaganda; it further emphasizes the degree to which the Berghof’s architecture and interior, the latter designed by Troost, was geared to incorporate the panorama of the mountains surrounding Obersalzberg and frame this spectacular scenery in its orchestration of views. Stratigakos, 95-9, 79-85.

⁷⁷⁶ As indicated in a 1941 article showcasing “Ein Tag in der Reichskanzlei,” analyzed in chapter ii, a significant number of the New Chancellery’s staff were domestic workers and, combined with the overwhelming preponderance of female secretaries serving the limited staff of civil servants, it’s likely that at least 50% of its regular occupant-employees were women. Neun). The personal accounts and autobiographies of two such secretaries, Christa Schroeder and Traudl Junge, would be instrumental to the representation of the Third Reich’s conclusion in the Führerbunker in the late-1980s and through reunification. Christa Schroeder and Anton Joachimsthaler, *Er War Mein Chef : Aus Dem Nachlass Der Sekretärin Von Adolf Hitler* (München: Langen Müller, 1985); Traudl Junge and Melissa Müller, *Bis Zur Letzten Stunde : Hitlers Sekretärin Erzählt Ihr Leben* (München: Claassen, 2002).

⁷⁷⁷ As mentioned with regard to the Majdanek trial, six of its defendants were women.

⁷⁷⁸ Janßen writes, “Fest hat offensichtlich zu wenig bedacht, daß dieses Massenprodukt...Millionen Menschen erreichen kann, die den (immerhin 500.000fach aufgelegten) Weltbestseller und die Kritiken niemals gelesen haben und in der Mehrzahl wohl den jüngeren Generationen zuzurechnen sind, denen man in der Schule höchst mangelhafte Kenntnisse über Hitler und seine Zeit vermittelt hat. In diesem Film werden jene ‘Zusammenhänge, Faktoren und Personen’ in sträflichem Maße vernachlässigt. Naive Betrachter müssen glauben, in den zwölf Jahren sei ein Übermensch am Werk gewesen.”

At the beginning of the decade, Speer personally revived the Hitler-Mythos's romantic and eroticized narrative and architectural scenery—and provided an alibi for the unwavering belief in the Führer through the war. Namely, by chalking it up to the effect of Hitler's personal, charismatic fascination and the efficacy of (Speer's own) propaganda, the seductive imagery of which brooked no resistance or corrective through criticism. By 1977, Fest, building off the momentum generated by the rehabilitation of Speer and other NS artists and personnel, opened the floodgates. *Eine Karriere* unleashed archival images of Hitler's eroticized, cinematic-architectural spectacle into a "geistiges Vakuum"—and a markedly unstable socio-political environment, the summer preceding the German Autumn.⁷⁷⁹ Janßen wonders, "Wie wird eine von Existenzängsten, Heilserwartungen und Solidaritätssehnsüchten erfüllte Jugend darauf reagieren? Wie ein Bürgertum, das des Parteienhaders allmählich überdrüssig wird und an der Leistungsfähigkeit der Demokratie zu zweifeln beginnt?"⁷⁸⁰ The risk seemed great indeed and Janßen's final judgement is damning: "Wer so ungeschützt den Geist Hitlers aus den Filmbüchsen entweichen läßt...der macht sich (wenn auch guten Willens) der exkulpierenden Mythen- und Legendenbildung schuldig." What we encounter in *eine Karriere* is not the *demystification* but *re-mythologization* of Hitler and his favorite media of political seduction: film and architecture. Fest's film, therefore, reproduces Nazi mythology, using two pillars of Germany's cultural, artistic identity, yet to be purged of the taint of their appropriation by Hitler, to recover as stabilizing mechanisms for the public sphere, representational technologies mediating Germany's relation to its past and/or present socio-political order.⁷⁸¹ What new horror or contagion might this material unleash in the hardly-solidified body politic?

⁷⁷⁹ This history will be detailed in the following chapter.

⁷⁸⁰ This sentiment is also gendered female and identified with the older generation in Fassbinder's contribution to *Deutschland im Herbst*, in the staged debate with his mother, Liselotte Eder, during which she questions the Germans' capacity as a nation for democracy and visibly rhapsodizes at the thought of a new, benevolent authoritarian leader.

⁷⁸¹ Wenders critique hinges on the damage done to a film market only just recovering its bearings from totalitarianism.

Turning once again to the symbolic logic of divestiture will assist us in addressing these questions in closing. As analyzed above, we can see the appropriation of this narrative in Fest's film in his concentration on Hitler's body and its physical degeneration, alongside its self-reflexive use of the Führer's media arsenal. The film works to expose not only the *performer* Adolf Hitler, but also his status as bodily wreck, unfit to rule, and dilettante artist—not a Bismarck or a Wagner, but a *Taugenichts*. Yet, this exposure, in itself, is insufficient to annihilate the symbolic, emotional power of Nazism's mediated mythology and the figure at its center. As Thomas Frank notes of the conclusion of Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairy tale, "The Emperor's New Clothes," "Der Kaiser *ist* nach den Maßstäben des Topos vom verschwenderischen, charakterlich insuffizienten *rex inutilis* von vornherein amtsuntauglich; indem er sich auf die Weber einlässt, riskiert er überdies auch noch die Aufdeckung seiner Amtsuntauglichkeit."⁷⁸² However, after his (and the public's) self-deception is exposed in all its fictionality, "Doch dann geschieht – fast nichts. Der unangezogene Kaiser wird *nicht* devestiert...Er zieht im Gegensatz zu seinen mittelalterlichen Vorläufern *keine* Konsequenzen aus der Erkenntnis, Lüge und Wahrheit verwechselt zu haben."⁷⁸³ The ruler's exposure in his mortal, bodily, banal existence and fallibility—a moment of crisis and interregnum for the *ancien regime*—is standard procedure and, in fact, the operational condition for modern democracy.⁷⁸⁴ The Hitler-Mythos may have adopted and appropriated all the trappings of a medieval regime but, as Fest himself points out, this symbolic order of power was grafted onto an undeniably modern, bureaucratic, democratic state and was thus conditioned by a contemporary

⁷⁸² Frank, 230.

⁷⁸³ *Ibid.*, 230-1.

⁷⁸⁴ Frank writes, "die Herrscher der nachrevolutionären Moderne [repräsentieren] bereits eine unsichtbare staatliche Öffentlichkeit, die sich ihre traditionellen Attribute (der Kleider) entledigen kann, sofern sie sich immer wieder medial (in der Prozession) zu erzeugen weiß." *Ibid.*, 231. Likewise, Žižek writes, regarding what Lefort calls the "democratic invention": the radical break in the very mode of the performing of Power introduced by the emergence of democratic political discourse...is that with [its] advent...the locus of Power becomes *an empty place*; what was before the anguish of interregnum, a period of transition to be surmounted as soon as possible – the fact that 'the Throne is empty' – is now the only 'normal' state...within the democratic horizon, *everyone* who occupies the locus of Power is by definition a usurper." Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 267.

representational framework. Perhaps the Nazi ruler was naked, but the playback of his technologically mediated and archived procession, still continued with little interruption.

At issue in *Eine Karriere*, is the fact that, in a sense, it failed to show the West German public anything they didn't already 'know.' Hitler had lost the war and failed to produce the victory he promised; the Third Reich was responsible for crimes against humanity and genocide; its defeat led to Germany's and much of Europe's catastrophic destruction. The problem, however, lay in their ability to internalize these facts *and* to see the connection to the fantasy of national (and racial) superiority touted by the NS regime and crystalized in the Hitler-Mythos. Žizek describes this as the "gap between (real) *knowledge* and (symbolic) *belief*," articulated in the fetishistic disavowal (of castration), "I know, but nevertheless..."⁷⁸⁵ As he notes, with regard to *Mein Kampf*,

"it displays all the weakness of the view that Hitler simply cheated, manipulated, consciously counted on 'base instincts', and so on – the problem with such a reproach is not that it does not hold but, much more uncanny: it is shoving against an open door in painfully trying to demonstrate what Hitler himself openly admitted...Such a perception misses the key fact: notwithstanding his awareness of manipulation, Hitler basically believed in its results."⁷⁸⁶

And those results were still to be seen pervading the West German public sphere in the 1970s—and they remained, in general, untouched by the brutal facts of what this belief had generated on the ground.⁷⁸⁷ Disseminating knowledge of the violence legitimized by the Nazi-Mythos achieved little in diminishing or defusing the *desire* and *pleasure* still generated by its symbolic objects (Hitler, NS film and architecture), which continued to fascinate West German audiences. Indeed,

⁷⁸⁵ *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 241.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 244-5.

⁷⁸⁷ The fetishistic belief, concentrated in the Hitler-Mythos, can be summed up in what Žizek calls "the matrix of *totalitarian authority*: the point is no longer that the other ('ordinary people') would be deceived manipulatively [by the Nazis' propaganda] but that we are ourselves those who – although 'we know very well' that we are people like others – at the same time consider ourselves to be 'people of a special mould, made of special stuff' – as individuals who participate in the fetish of the Object-Party, direct embodiment of the Will of History." *Ibid.*, 251-2. The Mitscherlichs describe this as a continued attachment to fantasies of national superiority and masculine authority, undiminished by the reality of the loss of the war, the death of Hitler, and the collapse of the NS regime.

as evident in Fest's film, the articulation of NS propaganda with atrocity images seemed to (troublingly) only ramp up this fascination (regarding both objects).

For despite divestiture's intended aim, as Albrecht Koschorke writes, "den königlichen Leib [zu] entsakralisieren, um es am Ende eines Prozesses der Reduktion mit der nackten, geheimnislosen Physis zu tun zu haben, die von ihrer handgreiflichen Eliminierung ganz und ohne Rest getroffen wurde," this ritualistic process produces paradoxical results.⁷⁸⁸ Namely,

"Denn all die, man könnte sagen, grimmigen Profanationen, mit denen sie die Person des Königs bedachten, funktionierten ihrerseits wie eine Art Gegenzauber zur Magie des Königtums...Das Ensemble...apotropäischer Maßnahmen bestätigt ungewollt, welche magischen Kräfte sogar dem toten König und seinen Requisiten noch innewohnten."⁷⁸⁹

The symbolic investment of Hitler's authority, reified by the mediated universe of NS propaganda, seemed to not only evade 'rational' strategies of deconstruction performed by Fest's film. Rather, Fest's 'demystifying' project, affirmed (and amplified) the emotional, eroticized charge of the very objects it sought to negate and destroy. If *eine Karriere* wonders, at its conclusion, "was endete mit den Symbolen?," the answer surely was not politics' representational dimension in all its myriad forms. These may have taken on a sense of 'unreality' or functionalist appearance in the Federal Republic, but the efficacy of the NS appropriation of Germany's myths and 'irrational' aesthetic of national(ist) iconography had not been defused. Frank notes, "daß man dem Kaiser zwar seine Amtsinsignien nehmen, neuen Verkörperungen der Macht aber damit nicht entrinnen kann"; to which Koschorke adds, "dass die Könige nur noch als Phantome auf Zeit zurückkehren konnten."⁷⁹⁰ The 'nothingness' at the center of the Third Reich, 'revealed' by Fest was not a remedy, but a continued *source* of fascination.

⁷⁸⁸ Koschorke, 224.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid., 224-5.

⁷⁹⁰ Frank, 231; Koschorke, 226.

The question remained: how to disarticulate Hitler's symbolic 'body' from the empty space of power—how was it possible to deconstruct a void? This seemingly intractable problem, it bears mentioning, also applied to the empty site of the New Chancellery, as the building's images continued, increasingly, to surface in popular representation. Fest, perhaps, may not have been prepared to answer such theoretical and abstract questions but, as we shall see in the next chapter, his film was not the only game in town.

CHAPTER VI

Cinematic ‘Mourning’ & Architectural Divestiture:

Hans Jürgen Syberberg’s *Hitler – Ein Film aus Deutschland*

“Die Sprache hat es unmißverständlich bedeutet, daß das Gedächtnis nicht ein Instrument zur Erkundung der Vergangenheit ist sondern deren Schauplatz. Es ist das Medium des Erlebten wie das Erdreich das Medium ist, in dem die toten Städte verschüttet liegen.”

-Walter Benjamin, *Berliner Chronik*⁷⁹¹

“Da wir die Mythen ernstnahmen, wörtlich, fanden wir Troja, ganz real unter dem Schutt der Geschichte. Wir haben die Trümmer der Geschichte eines Hitlers und müssen nun die Mythen darunter suchen.”

-Hans Jürgen Syberberg, *Hitler – Ein Film aus Deutschland*⁷⁹²

I. Prelude: The (Continued) Return of the Repressed in the Federal Republic in the 1970s

To begin this final chapter, let’s return to the historical context of West Germany in the late 1970s and re-orient ourselves with the socio-political and cultural conditions surrounding the revival of the intermedial NS archive and the Hitler-Mythos in the mainstream media, exemplified by Joachim Fest’s cinematic ‘Wagnis’ and documentary of divestiture, *Hitler – eine Karriere*.⁷⁹³ The Federal Republic’s political polarization and volatile social climate, growing since the late 1960s, reached its peak in the second half of the next decade, amid economic instability (linked to

⁷⁹¹ Walter Benjamin, *Berliner Chronik*, Bibliothek Suhrkamp, Bd.251 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1988), 40.

⁷⁹² Hans-Jürgen Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland* (Reinbek b. Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, 1978), 17.

⁷⁹³ Fest, "Hitler - Eine Karriere." Fest’s quotation may be found in Höhne, "Hitler-Film - Faszination Des Demagogen."

global instability) and a worsening recession.⁷⁹⁴ As gestured to in the previous chapter, the West German youth and leftist protest movements' politicization and radicalization over the late 1960s and early 1970s was met with a hardening response by the federal government.⁷⁹⁵ The conflict only intensified, erupting in violent uprisings, guerilla warfare, and a burgeoning spate of terrorism—which, on the left, targeted key players of the capitalist, free-market, international 'system,' spread throughout the nation's decentralized metropolises.⁷⁹⁶ In particular, the 1972 'Mai Offensive' by the Red Army Faction, which hit Frankfurt, Hamburg, Augsburg, Munich, Heidelberg with a series of bombing attacks, marked a turning point, dramatically shifting public opinion, as support for the group plummeted.⁷⁹⁷ It also led to the capture of the RAF leaders: Ulrike Meinhof, Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, and Jan-Carl Raspe; however, their imprisonment in Stammheim, trial, begun in 1975, and conviction for murder and life sentencing in April 1977 only drove on further actions by the RAF's 'second generation.'⁷⁹⁸ The chaotic situation itself underlined the gravity of the concerns noted in the last chapter from Karl-Heinz Janßen, regarding

⁷⁹⁴ The 1970s marked the Wirtschaftswunder's conclusion, with 1973 the first year of economic stagnation, in part due to the oil crisis. Judt, 455-8.

⁷⁹⁵ Christina Gerhardt writes that "The 'long sixties' (roughly 1957-72) was at once responsible for the democratization of West Germany and simultaneously the implementation of its most repressive laws and agencies." , 66. She points to the ratification of the Emergency Laws (*Notstandsgesetze*) in 1968, the instatement of the Basic Principles on the Question of Anti-Constitutional Personnel in Public Service, colloquially known as the *Radikalenerlass* or *Berufsverbot*, the *Bundeskriminalamt's* expansion, including the establishment of the Special Commission on Terrorism in 1971 and the GSG 9 in 1972, a tactical unit of federal police formed in response to the Munich massacre at the Olympics; and, in general, increased scrutiny of political views by the federal government, in part through enhanced surveillance practices. Ibid., 102-5.

⁷⁹⁶ In addition to the Red Army Faction, the 'Bewegung der 2. Juni,' and a number of other leftist-aligned resistance groups sprouted throughout West Germany, often coordinating with international liberation movements. Right-wing terrorism often targeted the leftists themselves, as with the attempted assassination of Rudi Dutschke. Notably, antisemitic acts of terrorism were perpetrated by both the right and left. Ibid., 116-8, see also fn64.

⁷⁹⁷ The attacks hit the American military bases in Frankfurt and Heidelberg, police buildings in Augsburg and Munich, and the Axel-Springer AG offices in Hamburg, resulting in four deaths and injuries to around 40 people. Ibid., 120-1.

⁷⁹⁸ In February 1975, members of the June 2 Movement kidnapped CDU mayoral candidate Peter Lorenz, securing the release of six imprisoned RAF members; in April, members of the RAF's 'second generation' took the West German embassy in Stockholm hostage, demanding the release of 26 further imprisoned RAF members, but the government, headed by SPD leader Helmut Schmidt, refused to negotiate, leading to the assassination of military and economic attachés, Baron Andreas von Mirbach and Heinz Hillegaard, before the building was bombed and the terrorists arrested. Further actions followed in 1977: the assassination of West German Federal Prosecutor Siegfried Buback and his chauffeur in April and the murder of Jürgen Ponto, executive of the Dresdener Bank in July, leading into the 'German Autumn,' which culminated in the kidnapping of Hanns Martin-Schleyer, head of the *Bundesverbandes der deutschen Industrie*, in September, his murder in October, the high-jacking of the Lufthansa passenger jet 'Landeshut' on October 13, and its eventual recapture by the GSG 9 in Mogadishu, Somalia, on October 18, 1977. Ibid., 202-5, 136-7, 40-1.

the potential exacerbating effects of the ‘Hitler-wave’ and Fest’s film on the polarization of the public’s warring factions. As an atmosphere fear and paranoia gripped the nation—possessed by the recent events and troubled by their seeming but nebulous relationship to the NS past and the current wave of Nazi nostalgia—the West German state fought back. Its tactics and policies occasionally appearing to operate in tandem with, or at least the general support of a large portion the mainstream, commercial media.⁷⁹⁹

The West German press could no longer be relied upon as a stabilizing medium of state power, as in the Adenauer era, characterized by ‘consensus journalism.’⁸⁰⁰ Rather, its positions and behavior regarding recent events were just as volatile: at times supporting and coordinating with the state; sometimes fomenting right-wing violence, as with Axel-Springer; or, in its publicly funded branches, like the New German Cinema, criticizing domestic politics in works made largely for international audiences.⁸⁰¹ Yet, within each of these realms, with their various interests and ideological positions, the press and public sphere as a whole seemed incapable of coming to grips with or intelligently commenting on current affairs or articulating their relationship with the past.⁸⁰² No one seemed to know how to adequately respond to the situation—without drawing ire

⁷⁹⁹ The *Spiegel* Affair in 1962, in which a journalist was arrested for writing an article critical of the Bundeswehr, along with the editor, and a number of the editors’ and journalists’ offices were subsequently searched, had led to the resignation of CSU Defense Minister Franz Josef Strauss and “mark[ed] the emergence of a new public sphere in West Germany.” Ibid., 66, see also fn3. But despite the general shift and increased critical disposition of much of the media, tacit coordination between the government and the press was still in evidence throughout the 1970s. As Gerhardt writes, during the German Autumn, “a media news blackout, an act of self-censorship, took effect on September 8, 1977.” Ibid., 140.

⁸⁰⁰ Press coverage, as Gerhardt writes, often “exemplified holdovers of the practice of ‘consensus journalism’ dominant in West Germany in the 1950s. At the heart of consensus journalism...’lay the idea that the function of mass media was to foster social and political consensus. This consensus in turn was meant to stabilise the state, which was regarded as a value in itself. Since the media was to serve the interests of the state...’consensus journalists’ promoted broad co-operation with governmental institutions.” Ibid., 70. A shift in the 1950s toward ‘*zeitkritischer Journalismus*,’ however, meant that “by the late 1960s, mass media publications such as *Spiegel* and *Stern* were thus also supporting the student movement,” while the “Springer [publishing house] was a source of widespread contention.” Ibid., 4-5.

⁸⁰¹ For New German Cinema’s counter-public sphere, see: Hansen. For its international export status, see: Hake, 154-5; Lenssen, 252-3.

⁸⁰² For example, the pearl-clutching in the *Feuilleton*, noted in the last chapter, at the ‘Hitler-Schwemme,’ not only failed to stem the tide, but was, furthermore, thereby drawn into the fracas, feeding public controversy.

or ‘*Lynchjustiz*’ from the press and public—and things only seemed to get worse.⁸⁰³ Amid the RAF crisis, the press’s freedom (though not its free-market status) and the freedom to express (leftist) political opinions also stood increasingly in question.⁸⁰⁴ The intellectual left, on the defensive if not marginalized in the media, thus faced a popular explosion of right-wing sentiments and NS media.

That is, not only were right-wing political beliefs, held primarily by the older generation, openly re-affirmed and, thus, de-anonymized, but further, these were accompanied by a wave of nostalgic, commercial representations of the NS past, which swept through the West German public sphere, as described in the previous chapter.⁸⁰⁵ Fed by market consumption and accompanied by the rising visibility of neo-Nazism, this phenomenon was utterly at odds with the simultaneous, supposedly objective and critical adjudication of NS crimes against the Jews in the Holocaust by the West German regional courts. In fact, it is hard to see how these later NS trials could have been anything other than a spectacle within this highly polarized media environment. Just imagine: in a single issue of a West German newspaper in 1977, you could read about the Majdanek Trial, the hunger strikes and maltreatment of the RAF’s imprisoned leaders, their associate’s assassinations and kidnappings of public officials, the federal government’s surveillance activities and coordination with the US military—and then turn to the *Feuilleton* to see a full-page spread of images of Hitler, or Albert Speer, or NS buildings and other propaganda.

⁸⁰³ The inability to capture the spirit of the moment or respond adequately to the crisis thus formed the primary motivation behind the production of the New German Cinema omnibus film *Deutschland im Herbst*. Gerhardt, 137-40; Kluge et al. We will return to this film at the conclusion of this chapter.

⁸⁰⁴ Heinrich Böll’s article in January 1972, “Does Meinhof Want Clemency or Safe Conduct,” in *Der Spiegel* “criticized the depiction of attacks by the media, particularly of the Springer press...[and] unleashed a furious response.” Following the May Offensive, his house was searched by the state under allegations that he was an RAF sympathizer. These events form the basis of his novel *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum*, which was produced as a film by New German Cinema directors Volker Schlöndorff and Margarethe von Trotta in 1975. Gerhardt, 119-21.

⁸⁰⁵ The sudden ‘sayability’ of nationalist and authoritarian leaning sentiments is noted in an editorial from Claus Heinrich Meyer, “Hitler-Veredlung: Wie in Den Siebziger Jahren Das Führerbild Restauriert Wurde,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, May 17/18 1980., which we will return to at the end of this chapter.

Considering this was also the historical moment of the rise of television, a similar—undoubtedly also surreal and bewildering—experience could be had in technicolor just by viewing the evening news.⁸⁰⁶

One of the more unsettling features of this phenomenon was just how abstracted the return of the (formerly repressed) NS past seemed from present events.⁸⁰⁷ Whether or not the ‘Hitler-Boom’ actually worsened the political situation or attracted further citizens to neo-Nazi parties is beyond this study’s scope. But we can say with some confidence that the resurrection of, nostalgia for, and commercial reproduction of the Third Reich and the Hitler-Mythos as historical entertainment (which has not ceased to this day) certainly did not help *solve* any of the Federal Republic’s urgent problems; it primarily constituted spectacular distraction from present events.⁸⁰⁸

For the rehashing and revival of the NS past in the mediated public sphere—whether characterized by morbid fascination, corporate profiteering, critical aims to restore historical consciousness, or ironic pop-art sensibilities—seemed to exist in a universe unto itself. For example, as noted in the preceding chapters, despite the NS architectural archive’s resurrection in mainstream and *avant garde* artistic productions (which only increased through the 1980s), there was almost no practical consideration or critical mediation of its remaining physical sites and fragments in West Germany throughout this period—that is, *within* the nation’s borders. One silver

⁸⁰⁶ For example, Wim Wenders’ critique of the spectacle on the talk-show circuit following the release of *Hitler – eine Karriere*. Wenders. See: chapter vi of this dissertation, fn171. Since Fest’s film was rebroadcast on television, changing channels might also have brought the viewer from Third World uprisings and atrocity images from the Vietnam War directly back to the vivid historical world of the Third Reich.

⁸⁰⁷ In his book, *Representing the Holocaust*, Dominick LaCapra considers, “the extent to which certain modern sociocultural phenomena can be seen as a return of what has been historically repressed,” contending that “things sometimes seem to happen as if the repressed were returning in disguised and distorted form, and such a hypothetical construction of events can be correlated with a different understanding of temporality or the movement of history itself (one suggested in related ways by Freud, Heidegger, and Derrida).” *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 169. We will only concern ourselves here only with Freud’s version.

⁸⁰⁸ Though, on the other hand, perhaps it was a useful diversion after all since, startlingly but also fittingly, the American television production of Marvin Chomsky’s miniseries *Holocaust* (1978) proved to be one of the most significant events, resulting in a public reckoning and markedly empathetic reconsideration of the NS Past by the broad middle class. See: Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator: Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 117.

lining to this (physical) topography's repression was the comparatively *enhanced* visibility of sites of NS violence in Eastern Europe, especially the concentration camps.⁸⁰⁹ The domestic remnants of the NS landscape, on the other hand, were generally treated as an issue already dealt with and largely forgotten—e.g. the Parteitagsgelände's redevelopment and newly constructed convention center sutured the site into the terrain of Bavarian consumer capitalism, the New Chancellery in Berlin and the Berghof in Obersalzberg were long since destroyed (though they continued to attract visitors), the former no longer even part of the Federal Republic's topography, submerged under the Wall. The fragments of the Third Reich's archival architectural *media*, on the other hand, were only just beginning to return from the dead—part of the larger discourse on memory, which played out almost entirely *in representation*.⁸¹⁰ In line with the solipsistic and theoretical mood of the day, West German *avant garde* cinema featuring the NS past and its architectural sites was often highly self-reflexive, particularly regarding the role of (architectural and cinematic) media in generating (or degenerating) personal, political, and artistic subjectivity, and/or in producing adequate and appropriate representations of (and discourse on) national history.⁸¹¹

⁸⁰⁹ Visits to the former concentration camps were often a standard, televised component of NS trials, beginning with the Frankfurt-Auschwitz trial in 1963, as was the exhaustive, heavily mediated representation of their layouts and operations as part of the pedagogical work performed by the prosecution, advocated by Fritz Bauer. Professor Eyal Weizman, director of the research agency Forensic Architecture describes the privileging of witness testimony 1960s and 70s as necessitating a turn to “the field of investigation of the materiality of politics,” including through the architectural manifestations and mediatization of political forms and ideologies. Yve-Alain Bois et al., “On Forensic Architecture: A Conversation with Eyal Weizman,” *October* - (2016): 120-1.

⁸¹⁰ Not only in artistic works, like Anselm Kiefer's series of architectural paintings, *Dem unbekanntem Maler*, it bears mentioning, but also in both commercial and more critical scholarly publications on NS architecture. Noteworthy from this period are: Hinz, Schönberger, *Die Neue Reichskanzlei Von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang Von Nationalsozialistischer Ideologie Und Architektur*; Albert Speer, *Architektur: Arbeiten 1933-1942* (Frankfurt am Main; Berlin; Wien: Propyläen, 1978); Albert Speer, Léon Krier, and Lars Olof Larsson, *Albert Speer : Architecture 1932-1942* (Bruxelles: Archives d'Architecture Moderne, 1985). The first exhibition of NS architecture also took place in 1984 in Berlin, see the catalog: Hans Joachim Reichhardt et al., *Von Berlin Nach Germania : Über Die Zerstörungen Der Reichshauptstadt Durch Albert Speers Neugestaltungsplanungen : Eine Ausstellung Des Landesarchivs Berlin, 7. November 1984 Bis 30. April 1985* (Berlin: Landesarchiv Berlin, 1985).

⁸¹¹ As noted throughout part two of this dissertation, the work of ‘coming to terms with’ or ‘working through’ the past in West Germany was heavily concentrated on film, and often employed archival, architectural images and media to stage competing narratives about German culpability or suffering during the Third Reich. In general, much West German film from the 1970s was characterized by theoretical, counter-cultural, navel-gazing, regarding the end of progress and modernity, and the fragility of (usually male) artistic subjectivity. See: Hake, 156-63; Lenssen, 251-61.

This chapter analyzes one, particularly famous such work, which not only exists in but also aspires to create its own universe—a cinematic cosmos of German and world historical memory—and which embarked upon its aesthetic and psychoanalytic project directly in response to the vicissitudes of the Federal Republic in the 1970s. In 1977, Hans Jürgen Syberberg, enfant terrible of New German Cinema and rabble-rouser of the *Feuilleton*, released his magnum opus, *Hitler - ein Film aus Deutschland*, identifying it as a rebuttal to Fest's film, a salutary response to the chaos of the 'German Autumn,' and answer to the Mitscherlichs' diagnosis of the 'inability to mourn.'⁸¹² A cinematic epic of *Trauerarbeit*, Syberberg's seven-and-a-half hour long, four-part, Wagnerian-Brechtian film cycle claims to perform 'auratic de-auraticization,' i.e., mourning, attempting to salvage the symbols, memories, and cultural forms of Germany's mythical, irrational traditions, by disarticulating them from the image of Hitler.⁸¹³ As Syberberg informed his audience: "Wir haben die Trümmer der Geschichte eines Hitlers und müssen nun die Mythen darunter suchen." As I show in the following pages, Syberberg, like Fest, centers his topographical, mnemonic memory narrative on Hitler's spectacular centers of power, the destroyed New Chancellery and Berghof, and the unbuilt architecture of 'Germania,' resurrecting and critically re-inscribing the fragments of their seductive, intermedial archive, in order to expose these sites' 'fictional' status, to deconstruct the *Kulisse* of *Führertum*, and illuminate their connection to historical violence. *Our Hitler*, however, goes beyond reconstructing and self-reflexively commenting on NS architecture's use in staging and cinematically reproducing the Hitler-Mythos—it attempts a more mystical act of deconstruction and deconsecration of these spaces and their mediating artifacts.

⁸¹² Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*. Hereafter, *Our Hitler*.

⁸¹³ Eric L. Santner, *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), 126. The Freud text invoked by Syberberg and underlying the Mitscherlichs' analysis is Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia (1917)." The process will be elucidated further below.

That is, in contrast to Fest's populist-mode of documentary spectacle, Syberberg assembles an array of cinematic, theatrical, and photographic strategies of remediation, using them to dissect and exhaust Hitler as a subject of *desire*.⁸¹⁴ Specifically, key sequences of the film, staged as allegorical processions in front of photographic frontal-projections of these destroyed (and never constructed) buildings, work to dismantle them as *sites of identification*, places where the body may be invested with sovereign power or (the appearance of) its aura. Hence, as I claim, and as has interestingly not been explored in the vast archive of scholarship on the film—in addition to mourning, Syberberg, like Fest, thereby also performs a cinematic act of *divestiture*.⁸¹⁵ That is, the ritualistic killing of the sovereign, the exorcism of his body from the space of power—purging Hitler's *flesh* from the symbolic order of political authority—which necessitates an architectural stage, reproduced as *mise-en-scène*.⁸¹⁶ Without body or building with which to re-enact this inversion of the Hitler-Mythos, Syberberg relies on, and eviscerates, debases, and mythologizes the intermedial archive of the iconic architectural sites/sights of Führertum. The film employs architectural photographs as transitional (fetish) objects, mediators/media of Hitler's spectacle and

⁸¹⁴ This point is made by a number of critics, especially Elsaesser, "Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation," 114. This chapter draws heavily from both his extremely well historicized, ideological-critical reading of Syberberg's films and from Santner's exhaustive and illuminating psychoanalytic readings.

⁸¹⁵ In addition to Susan Sontag's well-known and deservedly famous review of the film, and its republication as a long-form essay, Susan Sontag, "Eye of the Storm," *New York Review of Books*, February 21, 1980 1980; "Syberberg's Hitler," in *Under the Sign of Saturn* (New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, 1980), a number of the figureheads of German (Film) Studies have also written articles on the film, in addition to Elsaesser (fn814): Frederic Jameson, "'In the Destructive Element Immerse': Hans-Jürgen Syberberg and Cultural Revolution," *October* 17; Anton Kaes, "Germany as Myth. Hans Jürgen Syberberg's *Hitler, a Film from Germany*," in *From Hitler to Heimat: The Return of History as Film* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1989); Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg." All of these articles offer their own points of strength and discuss the issue of mourning, and Hitler's 'exorcism' from Germany's political subjectivity, and from its Romantic and mass-cultural artistic traditions. None of them, however, take up the issue of sovereignty or its iconography, or attend systematically to the film's critical deployment of architectural imagery and media in staging its psychoanalytic, self-reflexive critique, despite pointing to the importance of the artificially reproduced scenery of Speer's iconic buildings. This absence is striking and this chapter will hopefully contribute something new to this otherwise well-worn discussion.

⁸¹⁶ While Santner does not use the term 'flesh' in his reading of Syberberg, he has more recently theorized it in his book: *The Royal Remains : The People's Two Bodies and the Endgames of Sovereignty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011). As he writes, drawing on Claude Lefort, the notion characterizes the primal idea of a political formation: "'Flesh,' in this context, refers not to the corporeal matter beneath the skin that normally remains hidden from view, but rather to the semiotic—and somatic—vibrancy generated by the inscription of bodies into a normative social space in the first place." His study thus examines "modes of appearance of the 'flesh of the world' at the point where [in modernity] the *body of the king* is no longer able to give some measure to, no longer able to figure, form, and distribute, this sublime somatic materiality that, as Lefort suggests, serves as the very 'stuff' that binds subjects to that space of representation that is the 'body politic.'" *ibid.*, 4.

fascinating, spectral presence, in order to ‘work through’ and visualize his radical absence (lack), reverse the ideological mechanisms of identification, thereby purging West Germany’s ‘body politic’ and aesthetic heritage of the historical ‘wound’ of National Socialism.

I begin by outlining the Freudian dimensions of the Mitscherlichs’ assertion of Germany’s ‘inability to mourn,’ examining the ideal function of ‘working through’ traumatic past events by restaging them in a ‘theater of memory.’ This, the Mitscherlichs claimed, could both clarify the continued attachment to and fascination with Hitler, by revealing and counteracting the Nazis’ colonization of Germany’s representational forms and cultural traditions, associated with a mythic ideal of bourgeois, masculine, political identity. I then turn to Syberberg’s identification of his film cycle as a response to Fest, the political turmoil of the 1970s, and the debasement of the nation’s Teutonic, artistic traditions through their commercialized and commodified reproduction in the mainstream media, and provide an overview of his cinematic practice and its psychoanalytic, Wagnerian, and Brechtian framework. Thereafter, I analyze three scenes that I take to be central to the film’s intertwined aims of mourning and divestiture, attending to the self-reflexive strategies used to appropriate and remediate the NS architectural archive and the imaginary body at its center.

As I show, however, like Fest, Syberberg’s obsessive focus on Hitler and remediation of NS architecture comes at the price of significant erasure. Due to these films’ ambitious aesthetic projects, and evinced by their (continued) notoriety, each participated in the rehabilitation of the NS archive within Germany’s commercial media and cultural canon. They thus helped stabilize the ‘dominant fiction’ of artistic, masculine, political subjectivity, marginalize the visibility of other subjects (e.g. women and Germany’s victims), and reproduce NS buildings as objects of myth, abstracted from their material sites and context, to the detriment of critical studies on the subject of Hitler and his architecture. Not only did this mythologization help decontextualize and

de-politicize arguably one of the most powerful (and durable) media of NS ideology; it has also obscured our understanding of the development of Germany's topography of national memory following the cultural turn of the 1980s. As I argue, the New Chancellery's transformation, in particular, facilitated by its remediation over the 1970s, would have a real, deleterious impact on the treatment of its site and remains, once they were again unearthed by the shock of reunification.

II. Hans Jürgen Syberberg's Cinematic *Trauerarbeit* & *Gesamtkunstwerk*: Our Hitler

Let's begin by turning to Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich's diagnosis of Germany's 'inability to mourn,' and considering both what mourning is and what it is supposed to accomplish in a Freudian sense. As Eric Santner writes, in 1967, the Mitscherlichs "were struck by the apparent absence of any sustained emotional confrontation with the Nazi past in postwar German society."⁸¹⁷ Assisted by the sudden economic upswing of the *Wirtschaftswunder*, and American concessions to the Adenauer administration's position regarding denazification amid the early Cold War, West Germany "had avoided what might—and in a certain sense should—have been the psychological reaction to the defeat in 1945, the direct confrontation with the facts of the Holocaust and, above all, the loss of Hitler as *Führer*, namely a massive fall into depression and melancholy."⁸¹⁸ In doing so, Santner notes, the Mitscherlichs "offered a new framework of interpretation, one that promised to extend the reach of the analysis and moral evaluation of social and political behavior in postwar Germany."⁸¹⁹ While the previous chapter attended to the general

⁸¹⁷ *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany*, 1.

⁸¹⁸ *Ibid.* This history is dealt with in some detail in the preceding chapter. The Mitscherlichs note that, "only a patient whose symptoms cause him suffering greater than the gain he gets from repression is willing to relax, step by step, the interior censorship preventing the return to consciousness of what has been denied and forgotten. But here we are asking that this therapy be carried out by a society which, at least materially is on the whole better off than ever before. Therefore, it feels no incentive to expose its interpretation of the recent past to the inconvenient questioning of others; especially now that the manic defense of using the 'German economic miracle' to obliterate the past has been so successful, and the world, whatever else it may think about the Germans, acknowledges the German virtue of industriousness." Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 15. In contrast to the late 1960s, however, as outlined in the introduction, the 'symptoms' of this repression had, by the late 1970s, notably worsened along with the stagnating economic conditions of the Federal Republic.

⁸¹⁹ Santner, *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany*, 2.

proliferation of psychoanalytic discourse within the West German public sphere with regard to memories of the Third Reich, and especially in the new focus on the eroticized fixation on Hitler reproduced in and fostered by NS media, we should now look more closely at the theoretical basis of the Mitscherlichs' diagnosis, in order to examine its appropriation and aesthetic mobilization by Syberberg in *Our Hitler*.

As described by Freud, in the process of mourning, the individual must recognize and make peace with the loss of a loved object.⁸²⁰ The ego, however, is generally reluctant to give up these kinds of objects, particularly since they are attached to all manner of memories and sensory impressions of experience, i.e. interwoven with the psychic structure of identity.⁸²¹ Thus, the lengthy process of recognizing loss is facilitated by the hidden work of the unconscious, which must reactivate ('hyper-cathect') each memory, symbol, and image with which the object had been associated—hence, in Freud's estimation, the subject's loss of interest in the outside world and meditative obsession on her or his pain and memories.⁸²² As a result, the energy expended to maintain the previous fantasy, through denial and repression, may be released and re-directed toward new, healthy objects. In the case of melancholy, however, the situation is more complicated, as the object is confused and/or identified with the ego itself.⁸²³

⁸²⁰ Laplanche and Pontalis identify the 'work of mourning,' a subcategory of 'working through,' an "Intrapsychic process, occurring after the loss of a loved object, whereby the subject gradually manages to detach himself from this object." Jean Laplanche, "The Language of Psychoanalysis," (2018): 485-6.

⁸²¹ Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia (1917)," 166.

⁸²² Laplanche, 485. Freud writes, "The task is now carried through bit by bit, under great expense of time and cathectic energy, while all the time the existence of the lost object is continued in the mind. Each single one of the memories and hopes which bound the libido to the object is brought up and hyper-cathected, and the detachment of the libido from it is accomplished." Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia (1917)," 166.

⁸²³ Santner writes, "What melancholy must work through is not so much the loss of a particular object...but rather the loss of a fantasy of omnipotence...The melancholic grieves not so much for the loss of the other as for the fact of otherness and all that that entails. Melancholy, one might say, is the rehearsal of the shattering or fragmentation of one's primitive narcissism, an event that predates the capacity to feel any real mourning for a lost object, since for the narcissist other objects do not yet really exist." *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany*, 3. Investigating the topic of narcissism in this context would be worthwhile, but is omitted here in the interest of space.

Positing narcissistic identification—a replacement of the ego’s internalized self-image with a reflection of the idealized other—faced with the loss of the loved object, the individual experiences a shattering of self. The subject’s reaction should thus be characterized by panic and distress—exactly what had not happened in Germany immediately following the war’s conclusion. Rather, according to the Mitscherlichs, the loss of the war and of Hitler had been repressed, withdrawn, along with the values, beliefs, and desires invested in the Führer’s person, into the unconscious, where they continued to flourish and support the “previous idealized self-portrait of a privileged race.”⁸²⁴ Melancholy can only be overcome if the patient works through their “fantasy of omnipotence.”⁸²⁵ Thus, Santner writes,

“Before Germans could really begin to perceive the full magnitude of the crimes committed in the name of the fatherland and to mourn for the victims of Nazism, they would first have to work through the traumatic shattering of the specular relations they had maintained with Hitler and the Volksgemeinschaft.”⁸²⁶

In other words, the question to be answered was not ‘who was Hitler’ but, rather, what had he *represented* to the public that followed and identified with him? And, further, how had that identification been constructed and sustained against all odds, during the war and for decades following its conclusion? To that point, what had the symbolic forms and representations that structured Germany’s identification with Hitler left behind, in archival objects and aesthetic media, especially those most deeply intertwined and closely associated with politics? How could the fascination still held by and desires still projected in these objects and networks of NS representation be explained, processed, and anesthetized in the future?

While the work of mourning in Syberberg’s film will be addressed momentarily, we should outline in broad strokes the aestheticized objects and structures of cultural identity that continued

⁸²⁴ Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 12. Again, see analysis of the ‘de-realization’ of the past in the previous chapter.

⁸²⁵ Santner, *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany*, 3.

⁸²⁶ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

to manifest the public's fascination with and attachment to Hitler. For the moment, let it suffice to say that this network of symbols and images were linked to historical reality but became meaningful in representation (i.e. propaganda), which collated and structured a visual order of power and fantasy of national identity, centered on bourgeois family life, authoritarian masculinity, and united through the figure of Hitler as Führer. This field of vision was produced in the *modern* media of the culture industry, especially architecture and film. In other words, Germany's aesthetic industries, localizing sites and technologies of identity formation, had both made Nazism possible and, presently, continued to inhibit critical engagement with it, especially as the regime's media artifacts outlasted the ideological world to which they belonged and resurfaced in popular culture and postmodern representation.⁸²⁷

Hence, the substance of this fantasy (and the 'new discourse on Nazism') was *not* Hitler the actual person but, rather, as Saul Friedländer writes, a "composite Hitler image," which corresponded to a real archive "presented and broadcast during the 'conquest of power' and under the Third Reich," characterized by the "projection of tastes and desires *most broadly accepted in his times*."⁸²⁸ The ceaseless reproduction of the Führer's banal, everyday existence and pathos-laden, fixation on death and the sublime was a reflection of Germany's idealized self-image, which drew on a firmly established representational framework and media repertoire, and which still held purchase in the present. At issue, then, was the *co-existence* of "two sides of Hitler...yesterday and...today...the facts...and their reinterpretation...reality and its aestheticization"—the

⁸²⁷ "[T]he psychological mechanisms of identity formation which helped to guarantee Hitler's success in Germany in the thirties and forties, as Adorno and the Mitscherlichs have suggested, continue to inhibit the work of mourning in post-Hitler Germany, [and] are of the same order as those that, to an even greater extent today, organize postmodern psyches. These mechanisms, so the argument goes, not only block one's capacity to carry out the work of mourning but, what is more, so numb one's sensibilities that one is incapable of knowing any longer what human loss feels like. Syberberg aims to inscribe the so-called inability to mourn endemic to postwar Germany within a larger history of Western culture, understood as a series of shifts and transformations of the sites of identity formation." Ibid., 104-5.

⁸²⁸ , 67, my emphasis. Anna Teut makes a similar point regarding NS architecture, and the return to the styles and narratives of building characteristic of the Wilhelmine regime. Teut.

continued vitality of the *desire* represented in Hitler and the historical *fantasy* of its fulfillment.⁸²⁹ Germany, as the Mitscherlichs had insisted, particularly its older generation, continued to be marked by the unshaken belief in the nation's superiority and undamaged moral character, despite all evidence to the contrary. The fantasy embodied by Hitler continued to entice the imagination, to appear as utopian reality, even as its falsehoods and dystopic violence became materially apparent—historically, in the nation's defeat, and, presently, both in the chaos left in its wake and in the evidence of its destruction, still being uncovered and legally adjudicated in real time.

No amount of ruin imagery (or actual demolition of NS buildings, for that matter) had been sufficient to dismantle the Hitler-Mythos or the fascination with its imagery over the last three decades. And neither Fest's production of *Hitler – eine Karriere* in 1977 (unsurprisingly), nor the ongoing NS trials, still flooding the public sphere at the very moment of its release (more surprisingly), had done anything to slow the demand for Nazi kitsch, to diminish the nostalgia generated by the Third Reich's contemporary aestheticization, or to undermine the fantasy that things had been better with 'Brother Hitler' (than with 'Hitler's Children'), or at least not as bad as Germany's 'enemies' made them out to be.⁸³⁰ Fest's film, which premiered in July, just following the sentencing of the RAF leaders in the Stammheim trial in April and amid the group's retaliation in additional assassinations and kidnappings, likewise did nothing to alleviate or illuminate the current pathological political situation.

⁸²⁹ Friedländer, 72.

⁸³⁰ The Mitscherlichs write, "Within a society united in this way," by their identification as a group through the leader, "...the aggression that was previously bound up in it soon re-surfaces; invariably, aggression is projected 'outward' onto an alien group, be it another nation or a minority...Anyone who does not share the ideals of the masses and their hostility toward the chosen objects of aggression is automatically felt to be an enemy. This was evidenced not by the Nazi movement alone; it still holds true." Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 58. Compare to: Lefort, "The Image of the Body and Totalitarianism," 298. In melancholy, this aggression, the ego's criticizing faculty, and feelings of hate and ambivalence are re-directed back at the ego itself, "depreciating it, making it suffer and deriving sadistic gratification from its suffering." Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia (1917)," 172-3.

In the manifesto-like-book that followed the release of Hans Jürgen Syberberg's polemical, cinematic response to Fest, *Hitler – Ein Film aus Deutschland/Our Hitler* (1977), Syberberg writes that Fest's film's commercial success was clear evidence of the Federal Republic's failure to 'work through' or come to terms with the NS past since 1945. Its reception appeared especially crass in light of the contemporaneous, socio-political instability.

“Dieses Scheitern schließt den kommerziellen Erfolg gerade eines Films über das wichtigste Thema unserer Vergangenheit logischerweise in einem Marktsystem, wie dem unseren ein...Nur Deutschland und unsere Zeit konnte einen Film über Hitler — eine Karriere nennen...Auch nicht zufällig ist das Zusammentreffen dieses Films mit dem heißesten politischen Sommer und Herbst, den Deutschland nach dem Kriege erlebte. An diesem Beispiel Film...erweist sich der Bankrott der seit 1945 so fleißig und siegessicher begonnenen Aufklärungsbemühungen in Deutschland.”⁸³¹

Syberberg's acerbic critique, which is also directed at the New German Cinema's various attempts to demystify and deconstruct the Hitler-phenomenon, and the commercial media for profiting from it, identifies many of the same issues as the Mitscherlichs. Namely, West Germany's failure to confront its responsibility for producing the conditions of post-Nazi reality.⁸³² The Wirtschaftswunder allowed for the successful reproduction of the same economic, cultural, and political structures that had resulted in Hitler. The current 'unreal' quality of public life (and impotence of public discourse) was a product of the continued use of anachronistic forms of self-representation, drawn from preceding eras, and/or their distorted transformation into new, anonymous (international) styles.⁸³³ Germany's media landscape, so effective at politicizing the people in the

⁸³¹ Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 11.

⁸³² Through the denial of the severity of the events of the war, “Germany tried to compel the victors...to deal with the consequences of Nazi crimes as if the whole thing had been a relatively inconsequential military conflict,” allowing them to persist in “just claims,” for example, for ‘lost’ territories, e.g. Berlin. Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 4-5.

⁸³³ “What now survive are remnants of external habits, patterns of behavior and conformisms that, like stage props, conceal a very inarticulated way of life. Moreover, these stage props are set up everywhere and give German political and everyday life a theatrical and unreal flavor.” *Ibid.*, 11.11.

1930s, may have had a new, more fragmented and post-modern look—but it had left untouched the fantasy of national (racial) superiority, which it had been instrumental in creating.⁸³⁴

In Syberberg's account, Fest's film's success and the rampant consumption of NS kitsch and nostalgia offered evidence of the continued capacity of the Third Reich's ideological fictions to activate desire and generate belief in, or at least fascination with, its symbolic objects. If Germany had up till now staved off melancholia through denial and de-realization of the past, these pathological structures of identification—exploited by Hitler and mediated in Nazi propaganda—had now returned with a vengeance, assisted by the free market wave. Considering the abrupt slide from a fairly mild-mannered historicist (masculine) image of social order in the Adenauer Era into the present, political *disorder* and public indictment, these symptoms would have to be addressed.⁸³⁵ Accordingly, Syberberg anointed himself the sole candidate capable of taking on this task, of assisting Germany in overcoming its 'inability to mourn.'⁸³⁶

Born December 8, 1935 in East Berlin, Syberberg's family emigrated to the West in 1953, where he ultimately settled in Munich.⁸³⁷ Educated early on in the classical tradition of the DDR, Syberberg styled himself as a conservative modernist, his personal aesthetic conjoining romantic

⁸³⁴ For the continuity between the NS architecture and film industries in the West German media landscape of the Adenauer era, see chapter iv of this dissertation.

⁸³⁵ In addition to the personalization of the Nazi perpetrator, identifying everyday Germans as part of the problem and culpable for their ideological participation in the NS state, the breakdown of the family as a stabilizing social unit through generational conflict, and a crisis of masculinity and gender in general, encompassing the feminist movement, were rocking the foundations of West German society. See the concurrent exemplary Freudian reading of West Germany's 'male problems' in Klaus Theweleit, *Männerphantasien* (Frankfurt am Main: Roter Stern, 1977). In her book *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), Kaja Silverman notes a general crisis of *vraisemblance* following World War II, a collective "loss of belief" in established systems of representation, and identifies the dominant ideological fiction of male (sexual) subjectivity, as "a crucial site for renegotiating" its stability, in part through its cinematic reproduction in postwar film. *Ibid.*, 2-3. While film is often employed to restore the 'lack' of male subjectivity, in part through its imaginary disavowal by and displacement onto women, Silverman points to the works of Rainer Werner Fassbinder as an example of cinema's capacity to buck its normative function: "desire and identification may actually function as mechanisms for circumventing or even repudiating the dominant fiction whose most privileged term is the phallus," by both problematizing the notion of a 'whole' masculine identity in general and positing a more marginal positions of subjectivity, constituted through specular relations. *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸³⁶ Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 103.

⁸³⁷ Coincidentally, somehow fittingly, Syberberg and Fest share a birthday: separated by 9 years. *Ibid.*, 105-6.

grandiosity with radical *avant garde*.⁸³⁸ His film practice developed filming rehearsals of the Brecht Ensemble in Berlin over 1952/3; and later, in a more mainstream vein, producing culture segments for the *Münchener Abendschau des Bayerischen Rundfunks* after 1963.⁸³⁹ As his biography might suggest (though nowhere near as bombastically as he does), Syberberg was the self-appointed heir of Brecht and Wagner. He was, moreover, in his own account, anti-hero of New German Film and committed enemy of Hollywood, American ‘cultural colonialism,’ in general, and the BRD *Feuilleton*, in particular.⁸⁴⁰ Like his cinematic contemporaries, Syberberg’s films are deeply psychoanalytic, obsessively introspective regarding questions of (male, artistic) subjectivity; insistent on attending to the impact of National Socialism and capitalist consumerism on Germany’s media, cultural traditions, and representational (cinematic) forms of identification (on an individual and collective level).⁸⁴¹

But he developed a radically alternative style: specifically, in his cinematic commitment to preserving and revitalizing Germany’s irrational traditions and grand, epic forms, its *Teutonic* mythology and radical, revolutionary, aesthetics and politics. The Wagnerian dimension of Syberberg’s films is tempered by their didactic staging, in the tradition of Brecht’s epic theater.⁸⁴² His aim, stated exhaustively in manifesto-like publications, is to restore German myth, to

⁸³⁸ His film practice conjoins high-art, classical references and Romantic myth with mass culture, Hollywood, pornography, and the kitsch products and detritus of the pop-art and consumer capitalism, and its conservative, pessimistic refusal. Santner writes, “Syberberg engages in what later becomes a long history of struggles for economic and moral support from the very system of cultural production which his own work attempts to undermine.” Trained in the tradition of the radical *avant garde*, not only by Brecht; Syberberg also wrote his dissertation in Munich on “Das Absurde bei Dürrenmatt.” *Ibid.*, 108, 06. While his aesthetic certainly hews to this style, Syberberg’s use of the mass media, in particular the *Feuilleton* has more in common with strategies of *detournement*. That is, a strategy of resistance that harnesses the mass media, “so that—despite its negatively tinted reportage—it helps to spread precisely those ideas that it actually wants to suppress or silence,” widely employed by the student movement. Gerhardt, 74.

⁸³⁹ Santner, “Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg,” 105. See also filmography on: filmportal.de

⁸⁴⁰ Syberberg cultivated his own status as a pariah, given to publishing his bad reviews from West German critics. The *Our Hitler* book contains such a section, a chapter titled “Die deutsche Misere,” Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 35-52. See also: Santner, “Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg,” 108, and fn18.

⁸⁴¹ Although associated with New German Film, he remained an outlier among his contemporaries—while nevertheless equally benefiting from its ‘export status’ and West Germany’s federal film subsidies, as he produced difficult-to-watch, alienating, and stubbornly esoteric works. See: Elsaesser, *New German Cinema a History*, 92-5; Hake, 159-60; Lenssen, 276-7.

⁸⁴² The Brechtian dimension also applies to Syberberg’s film productions of Wagner, notably his famous version of *Parsifal* (1982), which employs far more than its fair share of oversized marionettes.

disarticulate its metaphysical content from the debased forms of its realization and reproduction in modernity.⁸⁴³ In addition to this more ideological-critical dimension, Syberberg describes his films as performing almost the work of psychoanalytic therapy: re-sublimating irrational drives into symbolic desires.⁸⁴⁴ Thus, in all of his works, but especially his ‘Hitler-trilogy,’ *Ludwig - Requiem für einen jungfräulichen König* (1972), *Karl May* (1974), and *Our Hitler*, he takes it on himself to perform (or, rather, induce in the viewer) Germany’s collective work of mourning.⁸⁴⁵ His object, further, is to work through not just the tragic loss of Hitler but the failure of Western modernity, the dream of the Occident, of which he sees fascism as only the most extreme expression.⁸⁴⁶



Figures VI-1 & 2 – Cover for the publication accompanying the release of *Our Hitler* (left); poster for Syberberg’s production of *Parsifal*, with Wagner’s death-mask, the terrain of the set (right)

Let’s take a moment to further explain what Syberberg understands to be the cinematic work of mourning.⁸⁴⁷ As noted above, in Freud’s account, the disappearance of all significant objects of desire must be dealt with, inasmuch as they continue to exist in the unconscious as

⁸⁴³ See: Elsaesser, "Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation," 114-6.

⁸⁴⁴ See especially: Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 107-9.

⁸⁴⁵ Two related works, though both departing from the ‘central figures’ of history and Germany’s nationalist mythology to investigate the characters at the margins are: *Theodor Hiernis oder: Wie man ehem. Hofkoch wird* (1972) and *Winifred Wagner und die Geschichte des Hauses Wahnfried 1914-1975* (1975). The former is a clear model for the Kammerdiener scene in *Our Hitler*, the latter is noted in the last chapter; for a feminist reading, see: Marcia Landy, "Politics, Aesthetics, and Patriarchy in the Confessions of Winifred Wagner," *New German Critique*, no. 18 (1979).

⁸⁴⁶ See: Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 105; Elsaesser, "Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation," 132-5.

⁸⁴⁷ Santner names Freud the mediator between “the historical and theoretical poles of Syberberg’s oxymoronic aesthetic system.” "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 107.

memories and sensory impressions of experience.⁸⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the ego must eventually come to terms with reality and face the external absence of what still exists internally as a memory trace. Again, problems arise when the lost object has been introjected, adopted as a mirror of their own (bodily) self-image.⁸⁴⁹ When a fantasy image sustaining identity has been shattered, the shock of this loss must be acknowledged, assimilated, “transformed [into] a notion of normatively regulated [social, intersubjective] interaction,” lest the subject dissolve, along with their fantasy, into psychosis.⁸⁵⁰ Santner explains how this work is accomplished through a “Spiel,” in which the subject masters their trauma by translating it into a symbolic experience.⁸⁵¹ This *Trauerspiel*, further, adopts a certain affective, elegiac *Haltung*, temporally bounded character, relating past to present, and *allegorical* form.⁸⁵² Its props are all manner of images, emblems, talismans, fragments, which signify the object of desire and its loss, and which must then be symbolically ‘destroyed,’ ritualistically, repeatedly ‘auratically de-auraticized’ in representation.⁸⁵³ The goal of

⁸⁴⁸ Drawing on Althusser’s work on ideology, Silverman insists that, in addition to personal memories, the symbolic forms in which unconscious desires appear draw from external representations, hence, “Ideological belief...occurs at the moment when an image which the subject consciously knows to be culturally fabricated nevertheless succeeds in being recognized or acknowledged as ‘a pure, naked perception of reality.’” Silverman, 17. Thus, the internal ‘screen’ image of identity exists as “that culturally generated image or repertoire of images through which subjects are not only constituted, but differentiated in relation to class, race, sexuality, age and nationality,” and she continues, in line with Foucault, this “field of vision may [be] variously articulated at different historical moments.” Ibid., 150-2.

⁸⁴⁹ i.e. narcissistic identification, in which case, Freud writes, a loss “has been experienced, but...the patient...cannot consciously perceive what it is he has lost. This, indeed, might be so even when the patient was aware of the loss giving rise to the melancholia, that is, when he knows whom he has lost but not *what* it is he has lost in them. This would suggest that melancholia is in some way related to an unconscious loss of a love-object, in contradistinction to mourning, in which there is nothing unconscious about the loss.” *ibid.*, Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia (1917),” 166, original emphasis.

⁸⁵⁰ LaCapra, 208. LaCapra points out that, in Lacan, “The ego is not, as in Freud, a mediating agency...It is the construct of the Imaginary, totally consumed by illusion and compulsion – particularly the compulsive illusion of its own wholeness or identity that masks and exacerbates its inner divisions, self-rivalry, and mimetic deceptions.” ‘Working through’ this fragmentation is, thus, not a response to trauma but a fundamental condition of normative psychic functioning, as the imaginary relation to a fantasy image of ‘wholeness,’ associated with the mirror stage, must submit to (and is retroactively defined by) transformation into a Symbolic framework of language and the Law. *Ibid.*, 207-8.

⁸⁵¹ Santner, *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany*, 20-6. The basis for this formulation is Freud’s famous description of the ‘fort/da’ game from *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). Replaying the trauma of the mother’s disappearance with symbolic objects, the child is able to integrate and thereby master the loss of its narcissistic fantasy (its recognition of difference between self and other). Santner writes, “By learning to engage in symbolic behavior at a distance from the self through play and through identification with figures of power...the child is able to survive loss and to discover new possibilities and satisfactions of a life in the symbolic order.” *Ibid.*, 23-4.

⁸⁵² *Ibid.*, 11-2. The assertion draws on Benjamin’s work *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*.

⁸⁵³ These props thus operate as mediators of *mèconnaissance*, (mis)recognition of the self in a Lacanian sense, similar to ideological interpellation, “a sensation whose verbal translation would be ‘Yes, it really is me!’” However, since the ego is situated from the very beginning in a ‘fictional direction,’” as its internalized objects are externally determined, “that which commands belief is once again profoundly phantasmagorical.” Silverman, 20. The relational structure of *mèconnaissance* is generally formulated in the

this process is not to ultimately replace one illusory image of wholeness with another but, rather, to make peace with fragmentation.⁸⁵⁴

According to Syberberg, there was something rotten in the state of West Germany, submerged in its political unconscious: a ‘Hitler-in-uns,’ which continued to surface in the mass media’s (especially cinematic) reproduction of Nazi fantasies and nostalgia, and left the nation in speechless consternation, now confronted with new social conflict.⁸⁵⁵ While this identification, and its mediation in kitsch-cultural production, prevented Germany from moving on from the attachment to the Führer or critically engaging with the past, Syberberg claims that it might also be deconstructed and symbolically transformed in representation as *Trauerarbeit*.⁸⁵⁶ I will now describe Syberberg’s film before going into detail regarding how it cinematically remediates photographs, or ‘after-images,’ of Hitler’s architecture (the destroyed New Reich Chancellery and

constellation of the screen image of the body, the gaze, and mise-en-scène, which facilitate the recognition of the subject’s self, its image of reality, and objects of desire. Whereas, regarding Syberberg, Santner is interested in the presence of an empathetic *witness* to the work of mourning, and Sontag on melancholy’s visual dimensions as a aesthetic practice, my analysis emphasizes architectural images used to condense and structure the operations of (mis)identification, making the body visible, and invisibly mirroring the viewing subject, who is likewise projected into space. Syberberg employs architectural media to destroy this imaginary relation, by disarticulating building images as a unified space of viewing or site for projecting bodily experience.

⁸⁵⁴ Dominick LaCapra explains the goal as, “not to transcend all blind spots, bring total integration, or even serve as a ‘cure’ for psychoanalysis...[but] to enable (while never ensuring) a viable role for critical judgement and responsible action.” LaCapra, 208. In this way, mourning operates in a similar fashion to ideology critique. Where a certain symbolic order has established hegemonic control over the representation of ‘reality,’ with the assistance of the culture industry, ideological critique disrupts the appearance of unity, by undoing the quilting point.

⁸⁵⁵ Syberberg writes, “Die Presse in Deutschland, und speziell die im Bereich des Films, hat in diesem Land, ohne Hauptstadt als Metropole, die Funktion vom Demokratieersatz...Kein Land sonst ist so seltsam abhängig von seinen Medien. Wehe wenn sie nicht funktionieren, wenn nicht mehr berichtet wird, Information unterschlagen, Zitate entstellt werden, Beschreibungen nicht mehr den Fakten entsprechen, boykottiert wird, Haß und Aggressionen zunehmen.” Specifically calling out the president Walter Scheel’s remarks, delivered at the funeral for Hanns Martin Schleyer, warning of the breakdown of the mediated public sphere, he continues, “Aber er sprach von den Chefetagen dieser Medienrepublik. Aber gehen wir doch einmal in die unteren Gänge, an die so gerne beschriebene Basis, dorthin, wo am Modell Film öffentliches Leben in diesen Medien gemacht und diskutiert werden soll, wo ganz entsprechend den vornehmsten Aufgaben der Aufklärung erzogen werden soll, zu politischer Verantwortung oder Qualität...was da scheiterte, war eine materialistische Aufklärung mit dem Versuch, an Stelle der Toleranz bewußte Parteilichkeit zu setzen als gefährliche Gegenforderung zu verbürgerlichten Liberalität.” *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 12-3.

⁸⁵⁶ According to Elsaesser, “The attempts to ‘realize’ myth in inadequate forms – be it kitschart or apocalyptic politics – is at the very core of Syberberg’s dual critique of German fascism and commercial cinema. This core is dialectical, because it implies a notion of myth as the promise of a fulfillment, and – for those with hope and patience – the fulfillment of a promise, which history cannot take away...Syberberg wants to demonstrate how such hope (‘Sehn-Sucht’) [to live outside of history originating in modernity] attaches itself to whatever debased materials and outworn forms present themselves, and how it manifests itself in fragments, relics, and fetish-objects.” Elsaesser, “Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation,” 115-6.

Berghof, and the unbuilt structures of Germania) to stand in for his absence;⁸⁵⁷ and, moreover, how it uses the visual fragmentation of these spaces to profane the symbolic object projected in their interior, to disarticulate Hitler's *flesh* from the submerged structure of Germany's myth of historical origin, the architecture of its national, political, and artistic subjectivity.⁸⁵⁸

Filed over 20 days on a shoestring budget of 1 mil. DM (around \$500,000), *Our Hitler* defies its material and financial constraints in the enormity of its length (around 7.5 hours) and the narrative it aims to tell—while both submitting to and exploiting these limitations in its aesthetic strategy.⁸⁵⁹ Wagner's operas provide the film's two primary intertexts: *Parsifal*, his final work and *Bühnenweihungsfestspiel*—which takes place in a fallen world, corrupted by the sovereign's, Amfortas, un-healing wound—is visually announced by the subtitle 'Der Gral,' and, acoustically, by the cycle's opening overture and repeated citation of its score on the soundtrack.⁸⁶⁰ *Our Hitler* also adopts the magnitude and formal dimensions of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* and the mythical, narrative content and structure of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, a cycle of four chapters.⁸⁶¹

⁸⁵⁷ I refer to these photographs as 'after-images' since the buildings themselves are not there—the archive forms the primary repository of their real or imagined historical existence. An investigation into the relation between archeological, photographic, and architectural metaphors in Freud and German classicism, mobilized by Syberberg, would be productive here. For a literary analysis of such relations, see: Eric Downing, *After Images : Photography, Archaeology, and Psychoanalysis and the Tradition of Bildung* (Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State Univ. Press, 2006).

⁸⁵⁸ As Žižek writes, the problem with divestiture, disarticulating the sovereign's material body from his "sublime body, a body made of special, immaterial stuff," arises in the fact that this body is "a pure semblance without substance." Thus, its destruction re-ignites its symbolic power: "we cannot elude the paradoxical, contradictory impression that the decapitation of the king was fundamentally superfluous and a terrifying sacrilege confirming the king's charisma by very means of his physical destruction." The anxiety and repeated attempts point, therefore, back to a fundamental question, articulated in *Hamlet*: "is the thing really with this body? Did it really die with it?" Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 255-6.

⁸⁵⁹ Timothy Corrigan, "The Exorcism of the Image: Syberberg's *Hitler, a Film from Germany*," in *New German Film: The Displaced Image* (Indianapolis: University Press, 1994), 148. The film was partially funded by Francis Ford Coppola. Sontag, 142. Filming ran from February 25, 1977, through April—that is, precisely as the Stammheimer-Prozess against the RAF leaders was concluding. Source: filmportal.de

⁸⁶⁰ In Syberberg's film, as Sontag notes, however, "the grail has already been destroyed...it is no longer permissible to dream of redemption." 161. We might, thus, conceptualize it as a *Bühnen-entweihungsfestspiel*. Syberberg also fantasized about constructing a kind of cinematic equivalent of Wagner's *Festspielhaus* in Bayreuth for viewing his own films. Elsaesser, "Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation," 150, 54.

⁸⁶¹ *Parsifal* and the *Ring* cycle, it bears noting, are both tied to Wagner's theorization of and fixation on producing *architecture*—not only his exhaustive notations regarding staging but also his reconceptualization of the opera house's interior, minimizing visual distractions and amplifying the acoustic presence of the orchestra, while concealing its players from view. As noted below, Wagner's stage designs are interwoven throughout *Our Hitler*, used as back-projections. Notably, as highlighted in Syberberg's documentary on Winifred Wagner, the *scene* architecture was of central importance to stagings of Wagner in Bayreuth during the Third Reich. In the film, Wagner relays an account of Hitler's direct intervention to relieve Wieland Wagner of military service,

1. Hitler, ein Film aus Deutschland. Von der Weltesche bis zur Goethe-Eiche von Buchenwald
2. Ein deutscher Traum...bis ans Ende der Welt
3. Das Ende eines Wintermärchens und der Endsieg des Fortschritts
4. Wir Kinder der Hölle erinnern uns an das Zeitalter des Grals.

In broad strokes, the ‘prelude’ provides an overview of the cycle’s chrono-topography, its extensive temporal frame highlighted by the title. The second film recounts Hitler’s rise to power and reign through the turning point of the war, Stalingrad. The third focuses on NS atrocity, the SS and militarized expansion into the East, Germany’s defeat, and the earliest moments of the post-war period. The last installment conjoins the aftermath of Nazism to its nostalgic revival in the present, before dissolving the world constructed by the film in a meditative final sequence: *Götterdämmerung* with Syberberg’s silent, somnambulistic daughter in place of Brünnhilde.⁸⁶²

Despite the romantic, mythical dimensions of *Our Hitler*, its materialist staging and production undermine any suggestion of metaphysical redemption or aesthetic totality (or, at least they seem to; we will return to this question at the conclusion), instead pointing continually to their fragmented quality. There is no proper ‘set’ to speak of, but a sound-stage, periodically visible in tracking zooms; frontal projections of photographs and artworks establish narrative ‘locations’ for the episodic sequences, shot in lengthy, single-takes.⁸⁶³ (see, for example, Figs. VI-4a-c) The frontal projections give the impression of depth, especially as actors occasionally emerge from the images, but they also flatten the space; that is, the actor does not appear *apart* from it, per se, but *alienated* from it as they cannot move *within* it. More alienation (or defamiliarization), the actors,

and to clear Emil Preetorius of his status as ‘Judenfreund,’ so that they could, respectively, continue working as *Bühnenbilder* for the opera house’s productions

⁸⁶² Remarkably, almost none of the secondary literature on *Our Hitler* make an attempt to outline the cycle’s narrative structure, despite pointing to its Wagnerian elements. While difficult to parse, the arc of the film cycle and the internal order and narrative distinctions of each of its chapters is apparent throughout, at times almost linear.

⁸⁶³ The anachronistic technique of frontal projection is described in detail in Corrigan. “This frontal projection uses a complicated camera set-up in which the camera shoots the scene through a glass positioned at a 45-degree angle before it; a projector angled below the mirror side of this same glass projects a scene in the same direction behind the actor or action onto a special glass.” *Ibid.*, 149. The work of reflection and refraction is then, also incorporated into the film’s aesthetic strategy of mourning. “Behind Hitler as fascistic representation...stands the psychoanalytic image of the castrated phallus...an image repressed and maintained through this century as a continual displacement of the lack it represents and the anxiety it generates.” *Ibid.*, 158.

notably Harry Baer, Peter Kern, and Helmut Lange (all favorites of New German Cinema), play multiple roles, delivering not monologues but dialogic soliloquys, occasionally accompanied by puppets. The ‘characters’ continually articulate the film’s didactic intentions, sometimes directly into the camera, reflecting on the roles of both players and audience. Thus, the film continually attracts self-reflexive attention to its own artifice, exposing the elevated, mythical narrative in its debased, materialist contrivance.⁸⁶⁴

If Fest wanted to reveal the void at the heart of the Führer-Mythos, he had lent too much credence to its Wagnerian pretensions. Syberberg, on the other hand, insistently reveals and magnifies the kitschy substance and commercial strategies of its reproduction. As Elsaesser writes, “the ‘banality of evil’ must not be dignified by metaphoric equivalence,” with the epic tragedies or myths to which it pretended, “but extended to the point where nothing but banality remains.”⁸⁶⁵ Such a banalizing perspective could not be achieved by focalization through the ‘man behind the movie camera.’ *Our Hitler*, in contrast, shatters any possibility of a single, sovereign, cinematic gaze, through which history might appear as myth.⁸⁶⁶ Rather, it aspires simultaneously to project the gazes of the director, the audience, and a radically depersonalized camera-eye.

“Hitler, in Syberberg’s film, dissolves as a ‘subject’—in both senses, as a historical individual and as a subject for further research—and is posited instead provocatively as a ‘nullity,’ in order for another subject to project itself onto the blank, onto the absence. The imaginary lines intersect in a space that designate [sic!] ‘us’: (German) spectators in the cinema, (German) participants in history. The subject of the film is us: fascism and film – two imaginary constructions of the subject, two equally problematic and possibly related structures of identity.”⁸⁶⁷

⁸⁶⁴ This strategy, as noted above, is common to many of Syberberg’s films, and particularly notable in *Theodor Hiernis* (1972), especially in the film’s staging of its peripatetic tour of Ludwig II’s residences. Elsaesser writes, the film’s method “recalls that of Brecht: the unreflected materialism of a cook may tell more about history than the textbooks, and an economic analysis of the King’s expenditure may be most usefully conducted by reciting a menu, or the inventory of a wardrobe...That this materiality can itself be exploited commercially, or as a mere show-effect, is made strikingly evident by having the actor playing the cook address the camera and give a ‘performance’ as a tourist guide, itself a contemporary parallel of the film’s premise.” Elsaesser, “Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, *Cinema and Representation*,” 122.

⁸⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 143-4.

⁸⁶⁶ Compare to Kluge’s rejection of the historical totality of documentary and feature film, discussed in chapter iv.

⁸⁶⁷ Elsaesser, “Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, *Cinema and Representation*,” 114.

The film thus appears as a phantasmagoria: a radically fragmented, kaleidoscopic, pornographic burlesque, constantly shifting voices, perspectives, from voyeur to exhibitionist, from the audience to the director to the camera.⁸⁶⁸ As the artificial and multilayered quality of the staging of *Our Hitler* makes clear, however, this radically shattered and pluralized perspective is also achieved through fragmentation of *space* in (front of) which the image of Hitler is projected in bodily form.

That is, through Syberberg's dissected 'theater of memory,' the multilayered proscenium and profilmic space, which is projected and articulated as 'Spielraum.'⁸⁶⁹ Deconstructing Hitler as an object of mythical longings requires *reconstructing* the "mechanisms of identification and projection" constitutive of desire, including their *mise-en-scène*.⁸⁷⁰ Syberberg is, therefore, acutely attuned to the *architecture* structuring the *mise-en-scène* of desire—in a literal and theoretical sense—and insistently invokes and calls attention to the *representational spaces* mediating specular relations.⁸⁷¹ The film undermines identification with Hitler by projecting and dismantling his 'auratic' presence in the symbolic, aestheticized artifacts of its mediation: the camera and cinema (the Führer's synoptic 'gaze'); audio recordings (the trace of the voice); and, crucially, architecture (the sight/site of Führertum's embodiment). Most analyses of the film take into account its outlining of "realm of intimacy and participation," a self-reflexive, cinematic space.⁸⁷²

⁸⁶⁸ "Against expectations fostered by the technology of special effects which promises action and spectacle, Syberberg sets up a series of detours, reversals and displacements, all of which have to do with vision and point of view...Syberberg's distancing devices aim not at a historical 'truth,' but at the structure of a relation, be it philosophically, the relation of subject and object, as the conditions of knowledge, or politically, the relation of master to slave, producer to product." *Ibid.*, 136-7.

⁸⁶⁹ With regard to the film's self-reflexive cinematic dimension, this space of 'play' is symbolized and condensed in the image of Thomas Edison's Black Maria, which appears at the end of the opening sequence and is reproduced throughout the film in various iterations, e.g. a snow-globe, miniature model, and frontal projection. This object/site of the re-production of both screen images and identity is analyzed in *ibid.*, 136; Kaes, 42; Sontag, 142.

⁸⁷⁰ In a psychoanalytic sense, "Evoking Hitler's aura in order to de-cathect it within the auratic parameters of play." Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 136.

⁸⁷¹ i.e. the reflection and recognition of the self, mirrored in fetish and kitsch objects, attached to bodies and signifying relationships of power and authority, through which identity takes shape. Discussing Syberberg's mythical landscapes in relation to "the psychic terrain as explored and mythologized by Freud," Santner writes, "all become ciphers for a singular, primal yearning. What makes one expression of such longing more acceptable than another, one true, another false, appears to be the presence or absence of self-reflexivity as well as the degree of complicity any particular enactment of this primal yearning might exhibit with the forces that destroy the object of desire." *Ibid.*, 102-1.

⁸⁷² *Ibid.*, 136, 41. See also: Elsaesser, "Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation," 145; Jameson, 116; Kaes, 42; Sontag, 140-2.

Yet they overlook Syberberg's use of quite specific historical coordinates and technological strategies of reproduction associated with this *particular* mythical topography.⁸⁷³ Namely, the scenographic architecture of NS sovereignty; the spaces, where Hitler performed as the Führer, transforming into the "typically German self-image... an idealized, but also sentimentalized mirror."⁸⁷⁴ Since we are concerned here with both subjective identification and *political subjectivization*, mourning Hitler necessitates more than the confrontation with a lost love-object. It also requires destroying the *political fantasy*, concentrated in the embodied image of Führertum and in its mediating *spaces of power* (and their mediated representation). In other words, the sites of the German 'Volk's' *external* representation of itself, the state, personified by Hitler but localized in architecture.⁸⁷⁵

The landscape of the Führer-Myth was materialized in the Third Reich in the symbolic sites of his reign, and in their aestheticized, technological reproduction in propaganda.⁸⁷⁶ As the analysis of Fest's film in the preceding chapter makes clear, these archival images were a definite

⁸⁷³ Kaes pushes his post-modern critique slightly too far, claiming the film includes "no representative images of an independent reality," and identifying the images as primarily "quotations from paintings, theater productions, and other films." Kaes, 47. Sontag, likewise, confusingly writes that "The image is constructed on the same assemblage principle as the sound track except that, while we hear many historical sound documents, Syberberg makes sparing use of visual documents from the Nazi era." Sontag, 143.

⁸⁷⁴ Elsaesser, "Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation," 127. The comment, however, is made in reference to Karl May as represented in Syberberg's film.

⁸⁷⁵ Teut writes that "Die Abhängigkeit von dem Willen eines Bauherrn und die öffentliche Wirksamkeit eines Bauwerkes erklären auch, weshalb sich aus der Baugeschichte so viel zuverlässigere Information über die kulturelle und soziale Beschaffenheit einer Epoche herleiten lassen als aus Werken der freien Kunst. Auch wenn man einen Gemeinplatz wiederholen muß, die Baukunst spiegelt die Staatskunst," Teut, 8. See also: Miller Lane. The comment echoes Kluge's architectural epigraph in *Brutalität in Stein*. It could also be loosely reformulated in Syberberg-speak: architecture (and its manifold visual, intermedial reproduction) is the continuation of political (public) life by other means.

⁸⁷⁶ At issue, as analyzed by Elsaesser, is the way that technology is mobilized to produce an aesthetics that seems to withdraw from history, to suggest a mythical paradise and an unmediated proximity to it, while relying on material and strategies "massively inserted in politics, history, and economics, [which] thereby speak their own language of public address." Thus, Syberberg is "only marginally interested in the sociological fact of Germany's identification with Hitler and much more specifically bent on demonstrating the mechanisms and causes of such identification." Elsaesser, "Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation," 134-5. Cinema and Wagner, as the "inheritors of Romanticism," lie at the center of Elsaesser's (and Sontag's) analysis. But we can observe a similar conjunction of ahistorical aesthetics and modern technologies of visual transmission/mediation in NS state architecture. That is, through the regime's hegemonic appropriation of preexisting styles and representational structures (historicist, nationalist, Prussian, but also Biedermeyer, *Heimastil*, and its rustic but domesticized masculinity)—i.e. those most attached to Germany's romantic and imperial national mythology. Likewise, it is evident in NS architecture's reproduction and popular consumption in modern, mass media forms (film, exhibition, photography). Despite the more or less dignified appearance of Speer's modified-muscular-neoclassicism, mediated representations of NS buildings produced by the state, especially on film, as shown in chapter ii, often veer undeniably into the realm of kitsch.

target of self-reflexive, cinematic critique. But whereas, in *Fest*, Hitler's body and buildings are interchangeable objects—both equal parts of the fiction deconstructed onscreen—for Syberberg, the (imaginary) body *only* takes shape within this (equally imaginary) space. As quintessential *Schauplätze* structuring specular relations of identification, the mediated reproductions of Hitler's central sites of power are thus indispensable to dismantling the attachment to him, his fascination as an object of desire.⁸⁷⁷ Syberberg, therefore, reconstructs the history of Nazism and the Hitler-Mythos as a *Studiogeschichte*, with the New Reich Chancellery, reproduced in photographs, as its central stage.⁸⁷⁸ Further, the film enacts a spatialized narrative of divestiture: a ritualistic, reversed procession, using images of the destroyed New Chancellery, Berghof, and the unbuilt architecture of 'Germania,' to lead the Führer back to the original sites of his symbolic investment, and divest him of his 'aura.'⁸⁷⁹ The journey culminates in the destruction of the ruler's sublime body through the meticulous profanation of the symbols, previously emblematic (mediators) of his immortality.⁸⁸⁰ In lieu of a body or a building, Syberberg employs architectural photographs as transitional objects to stage and perform his dual cinematic act of desacralization and *Trauerarbeit*.

III. The Intermedial Architecture of Divestiture: Mourning (& Destroying) 'Hitler in uns'

The first film of the cycle establishes the chrono-topic landscape and theatrical-cinematic *mise-en-scène* on which National Socialism will be restaged and revealed to the viewer as a modern myth, particularly its lengthy opening sequence. The montage telegraphs a temporal,

⁸⁷⁷As Elsasser explains, technologically produced media, like cinema and architecture, supply the immediacy, presence, and participation that is hinted at only negatively in the content of myth (as a counter-narrative to history), in "commercial, mass-consumption form." In the assertion of the reciprocity and mystical, unifying power of Hitler's gaze and the collective, bodily image of wholeness and plenitude, fascism employed "the new technolog[ies] of mass communication to create the illusion of common purpose and the aura of presence." Thus, in his film, Syberberg exposes the "Volksgemeinschaft" as "in the main the product of mass-media techniques in the service of an essential medieval notion of community." *Ibid.*, 138-42.

⁸⁷⁸ Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 23.

⁸⁷⁹ Santner makes a similar claim but regarding more mythical sites associated with Germany's Romantic and cinematic traditions, rather than its political topography and iconography: "The World Ash Tree in the Black Maria...becomes the complex emblem of *the quest* structuring this entire cinematic allegory." Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 142.

⁸⁸⁰ Problematically, as noted at the conclusion of the last chapter with regard to *Fest*, the work of divestiture has the paradoxical effect of sacralizing the very trappings of rule which it seeks to profane. Koschorke, 222-3. We will return to this observation at the conclusion of the analysis.

aesthetic, and technological trajectory—already established in critical discourse on cinema and Nazism—from Wagnerian Romanticism, to *Caligari*, to Hitler.⁸⁸¹ The initial shots issue from out of the cosmos, *Star Wars*-like, flying through the empty night sky.⁸⁸² An enormous numeral ‘1’ flies toward the viewer, and the void fades to black, cutting to a painted backdrop of the set of *Lohengrin*, overlaid with *Parsifal*’s overture. A series of abstruse subtitles are projected onscreen, eventually morphing into the shattered letters of ‘The Grail’ (in French, German, and English), which float upwards across the screen.⁸⁸³ (Fig. VI-3) The image then rips apart, taking us back to the stars, where a teardrop appears, slowly filling the frame, as we hear André Heller’s voice from off, quoting Heine and monologizing on the impending cycle’s artificiality.⁸⁸⁴ The background dissolves into a moonscape from Méliès, with Edison’s Black Maria centered in a snow-globe; zooming in and freezing, a fade cuts to a sound-stage, at its rear, the World Ash Tree backdrop from *Walküre*, toward which the camera slowly zooms.⁸⁸⁵ (Figs. VI-4a-c) As it slowly fills the frame, accompanied by the Nibelungen leitmotif from *Rheingold* on the soundtrack, the conclusion of Heller’s monolog is followed by a cut to the credits, in black text projected over fog.



Figure VI-3 – Title sequence of *Our Hitler*, showing title and subtitles projected over a painted backdrop from *Lohengrin*.

⁸⁸¹ Referenced is, of course, Siegfried Kracauer’s *From Caligari to Hitler* (Princeton: University Press, 1947).

⁸⁸² Sontag identifies the film as about history and “also a moral and cultural science fiction.” See: Sontag, 160, 62.

⁸⁸³ The final two, most intelligible lines read, “Alle Irrtümer einschliessend in unserem Innern, die Banalität und barocke Askese der Massenriten. Lang ist die Geschichte des Glaubens, seine Siege über uns und seine Niederlage durch uns.”

⁸⁸⁴ From Heine, “Denk ich an Deutschland in der Nacht, dann bin ich um den Schlaf gebracht.” Of necessity, this analysis will omit significant portions of the film, focusing on the appearance of NS architecture.

⁸⁸⁵ The backdrop is also evocative of Fritz Lang’s *Die Nibelungen* (1924). The Méliès film is likely *A Trip to the Moon* (1902). The film book includes a long appendix of cited works and names, but it is often unreliable. In the entry on Méliès, the only film mentioned is *Arroseur arrosé* (1985), which is in fact a Lumière brothers film, though Méliès did produce a remake of it in 1896, titled *L’Arroseur*. Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 305.



Figure VI-4a – Establishing tracking shot at the opening of Our Hitler with World-Ash-Tree as backdrop



Figure VI-4b – continued from above



Figure VI-4c – continued from above

The credits' final cut brings us to Syberberg's daughter, shrouded in black, crowned in celluloid film strips, playing with dismembered Barbies. After a series of shots of the debris crowding the stage, including a puppet of Hitler hung from the gallows, Syberberg's daughter, now clutching a stuffed dog with Hitler's face, wanders through the cluttered scenery, in front of projections of further backdrops from Wagner, romantic paintings, and Expressionist film sets, accompanied by Heller's musings from off. Fourteen minutes later, we hear a recording of a Hitler speech from 1932, the title finally appears, and we arrive at our destination: the Third Reich, introduced as a circus. The screenplay reads:

“Im Stil einer Zirkus-Ansage mit wechselnden Projektionen aus jener Zeit. Fotos von Berlin, Wien aus den Anfängen des Dritten Reichs und dem Berlin der Zukunft in Speer- und Hitler-Entwürfen nach dem Sieg des letzten Krieges. Auch Wagner-

Projektionen...Davor als Ansager Heinz Schubert. Zwischen seinem Text die historischen Archivtöne aus der ersten Zeit des Dritten Reichs.”⁸⁸⁶

The opening, thereby, recapitulates the mythical origin story of National Socialism and Hitler, as a projection of the culmination of German history—the cosmos, Wagner, and Romanticism as the mystical point of origin, and Speer’s Germania, as destination, bookend its trajectory. Heinz Schubert, as circus barker clad in white, says much the same, announcing “The greatest show of the century, the big business, the show of shows.”⁸⁸⁷

The scene visually asserts the debased quality and substance of the performance—and, pointedly, its smoke and mirrors. Further, the circus barker announces at the outset that the world will be destroyed in service of producing Hitler’s side-show. Schubert, standing in front of a drawing of the North-South-Axis, rendered in an aerial view, tinted blue, and framed by the suggestion of a curtain, over the farting sounds of a smoke-machine, identifies the images: “Phantasiekatarakte der Blutorgien vor aufgehenden Sonnen am Ende. Keine Menschengeschichte, sondern Menschheitsgeschichte, kein Katastrophenfilm, sondern die Katastrophe als Film, Weltuntergang, Sintflut, Kosmos im Verenden.” (Fig. VI-5) As the less-than-subtle staging suggests, Syberberg is concerned less with the everyday spaces of lived history but, rather, with the internalization of NS propaganda by the German public as the substance of their own fantasy.⁸⁸⁸ “Es geht um die Menschen, die ihn [Hitler] gewählt und ihm alles geopfert haben..es geht um den Hitler in uns, ohne Kulissen, in Projektionen.” National Socialism’s imaginary projections and ideological, technological reproductions, “Phantasiehandwerk, die das Budget gerade noch erlaubt,” offer evidence of their participation in the circus of destruction

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid., 78-9.

⁸⁸⁷ Sontag invokes this sequence as she writes, “Syberberg assumes importance for both his art (*the* art of the twentieth century: film) and for his subject (*the* subject of the twentieth century: Hitler)...Leavening romantic grandiosity with modernist ironies, Syberberg offers a spectacle about spectacle: evoking ‘the big show’ called history.” Sontag, 138.

⁸⁸⁸ See: Silverman’s comments, in fn848.

wrought by Hitler. Yet Syberberg, like Kluge, includes almost *no* rubble visuals in his film, the familiar symbolic images of Germany's destruction. Instead, the audience faces the monumental *screens* through which they projected their own history as mythology.⁸⁸⁹



Figure VI-5 – Heinz Schubert as Circus Barker before a projection of an aerial view of ‘Germania’s’ center

In other words, the fragmented spaces of Hitler's sovereignty, his ‘body of work,’ frame the cinematic reproduction and vaudeville reenactment of the nation's *Götterdämmerung*. Before these frontal-projections, the actors perform in the role of Germany's diseased body politic (*‘das Publikum’*) and, variously, the Third Reich's errant figureheads and minor players. The rest of the first film is devoted to introducing the cycle's key characters, *topoi*, and Leitmotifs. The ‘real’ Hitler is present only in acoustic and photographic projections, archival traces of his body. (Figs.

⁸⁸⁹ Elsaesser writes that Syberberg is concerned with interrogating Germany as “a society demanding from its culture a self-contemplation that invariably seems to take the form of a redemptive self-sacrificial mythology, and for whose survival as objectified belief and goal no price seems too high to pay.” Elsaesser, “Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation,” 132.

VI-6a-b) His cinematic doppelgänger, on the other hand, appear in a series of grotesque, ‘embodied’ performances, lit by strobe, appearing out of the void (his impersonators and effigies, silent here, will receive more lines later on).⁸⁹⁰ (Fig. VI-6c) As for the audience, Hitler’s death cult



Figures VI-6a-c – Still images of Hitler & one of his ‘impersonators’

is acoustically present in a continuous reading of names from the November 9th *Trauerfeier*, which recurs throughout the whole cycle on the soundtrack. Hitler’s celebrity is audible in roaring Sieg-Heil-ing crowds. Germany’s pathological compulsion to follow the leader is evoked in Peter Kern’s expressive performance of the final monologue from *M*.⁸⁹¹ We also receive a more tame introduction of the narrators, who will later walk us through Hitler’s centers of power: Harry Baer as *Kammerdiener* Karl Wilhelm Krause, who retraces his steps through the Berghof and New Chancellery; Peter Kern, again, as a neo-Nazi, play-acting as Hitler’s film-projectionist Fritz Ellerkamp as he strolls through the ruins of the Berghof. Near the first film’s end, Heller, the most chorus-like narrator (often addressing puppets of Ludwig II, Hitler, or no one at all), delivers an extended, solipsistic meditation on romanticism, the Occident, gazing out of the Berghof’s Great Window at the Untersberg.⁸⁹² (Fig. VI-7)

⁸⁹⁰ “Alle Schauspieler des Films treten nacheinander auf, in verschiedenen Rollen, an Stelle des Publikums, als Hitler, nämlich, gleich Anstreicher, Teppichbeißer, Nero, der kleine Kinder (Puppe) auffißt, größter Furz des Jahrhunderts, Frankenstein, Charlie Chaplin usw. zu historischen Tonaufnahmen aus der Zeit zum Beispiel Jubel beim Einmarsch in Wien 1938 und Hitler-Ansprache. Dazu auch der von Goebbels gekürzte Text aus *Jud Süß*.” Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 88.

⁸⁹¹ See: Elsaesser, “Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation,” 139-40; Santner, “Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg,” 139-40.

⁸⁹² The Berghof’s panoramic window in the Great Hall exemplifies the cinematically-inflected, theatrical elements of the design of Hitler’s domestic interiors. Despina Stratigakos discusses the invocation of Bergfilme and the myth of Barbarossa, sleeping under the mountain, in the panoramic views of the Untersberg in the Berghof’s Great Hall. She also notes the ‘special effect’ of the



Figure VI-7 – Heller gazing out the ‘window’ of a frontal projection of the Berghof’s Great Window at the Untersberg

That the most iconic historical persons who populated this scenery will not be joining us, save in burlesque impersonations or as echoes on film and tape recordings, is made evident in an extended fugue in the first film, delivered by puppets of Goebbels, Speer, Eva Braun, and so on (the performers visible articulating their movements and speech).⁸⁹³ Their posthumous testimony issues from a Hollywood-squares style bunker/grave.⁸⁹⁴ But its melody hasn’t changed over the last three decades—e.g. “Ich mache euch zur Legende, zum Mythos, wenn ihr wollt, durch euer Sterben...Kein Volk lebt länger als die Dokumente seiner Kultur...Er hatte mich gewählt...Hitler

window’s design, which rolled up and down like a screen; and the rest of the hall’s technological furnishings, which included a concealed, built-in projector and extendable screen, behind a tapestry, and speakers hidden in a sideboard, adorned with bust of Wagner. These details regarding Hitler’s mountain retreat were well-known, highlighted, for example, in Speer’s memoirs. Syberberg was certainly familiar with this fact, as evidenced by his inclusion of Ellerkamp. See: Stratigakos, 81-3, 89.

⁸⁹³ Himmler and Hitler are the exception to this rule, the two central figures embodied onstage throughout the film.

⁸⁹⁴ The scene clearly appropriates imagery from Dante’s *Inferno*. In it, Syberberg, hilariously and cheekily, preemptively turns Speer into a ghost, buried in his prison uniform. The fixation on the Führerbunker, noted in the last chapter but absent in Syberberg, continued through the 80s, and found its most expressively and grotesquely *avant garde* expression in Christoph Schlingensiefel’s *100 Jahre Adolf Hitler. Die letzte Stunde im Führerbunker* (1988/9).

unsterblich geworden durch uns, in uns.” The voices, documented on record but waylaid in Limbo, are audible on the precipice of their downfall. Throughout, Syberberg’s film offers only *dead* fragments of the NS ‘Kulturerbe,’ which appear inhuman, the debris of modernity, kitsch and pornography, mass reproductions of ‘fake aura.’

Near the end of the first film, following Heller’s monologue, Syberberg illustrates this point architecturally. Heller’s disembodied voice describes the annihilation of German film culture under Hitler, listing emigrés and continuing, in elegy, to vaguely describe the cinematic images produced under Nazism: “Und leer die Ecke, von Menschengesichtern, selbst zerstörten, wo sie stehen müßten, die Goebbels, die Lehrmeister der Sprache bis heute. Kein Platz für menschliche Gesichter, wie auch immer verunstaltet.” As we hear this text we see mocked-up trappings typical of NS state funerals: a Reichs-eagle at the front of the stage in spotlight and two smoking eternal flame pillars before a black background.⁸⁹⁵ (Fig. VI-8a) Hitler’s death-cult is then visually projected in space: the crypt in Wilhelm Kreis’s Soldatenhalle designed for the victorious conclusion of the NS myth. A model photograph is projected into the void at the rear, an apparition, which then fades into a photograph of the New Chancellery’s Honor Court, illuminated at night. (Figs. VI-8b-c) The Reichs-Eagle disappears; replaced by a cardboard cut-out of the Ufa logo and a blackboard reading “Paradies der Kulturhölle.” Due to the intense high contrast of the image, and its stylized, studio-like lighting, the photograph almost appears to be a negative, an inversion of the original.⁸⁹⁶

⁸⁹⁵ The stage dressing thus resembles the funeral dressings, displayed in the New Reich Chancellery’s Mosaic Room at state funerals, and reproduced on the *Deutsche Wochenschau* and in entire films, like for Todt’s Funeral. Notably, Wagner also provided the soundtrack for these events, in the form of Siegfried’s *Todesmarsch*.

⁸⁹⁶ Those unfamiliar with Speer’s stylized lighting might mistake the image as a negative (the lining in the flagstones give it away). When this image appears in the next film, however, in a *series* of night-time images, the misrecognition is undone. Considering Fest’s discussion of the ‘decontextualization’ of film images, remediated and ‘frozen’ as photographs (and the lackluster effect of this technique), Syberberg’s more properly *photographic* strategy of remediating architectural images, namely by incorporating them *as* still images, is far more effective at decontextualizing and redefining their symbolic legibility, since they are employed *as fragments*. With the exception of the New Chancellery and Berghof, Syberberg includes NS architecture only as emblematic objects, detached from physical, material context and use, and thus obfuscates these places’ as historical sites.



Figure VI-8a – Hoheitszeichen flanked by pillars holding Eternal Flames



Figure VI-8b – Continued shot from above with frontal-projection of a model photograph of the Soldatenhalle's crypt



Figure VI-8c – Continuation of shot from above with frontal projection of New Chancellery’s Honor Court, replacing the *Hoheitszeichen* with an Ufa logo and blackboard reading ‘Paradies der Hölle’

The message is clear: we see projected on-screen the perverted, cinematic after-image of Hitler’s destroyed Valhalla.⁸⁹⁷ But Syberberg does not conclude the episode here (*Our Hitler* has only anti-climaxes, entropic repetitions of its message).⁸⁹⁸ Zooming in onto the blackboard until it *almost* fills the frame, blocking the space from view (the distant figure of Breker’s ‘*Die Partei*’ still visible at the edge of the frame), the camera allows us to read the distorted language of NS law on its surface—euphemisms for dehumanization and destruction of bodies under its power, which are simultaneously read aloud by Heller in voice-over.⁸⁹⁹ The scene thus narrows in on the

⁸⁹⁷ It bears mentioning that *Rheingold* also concludes with the construction of Valhalla—illustrated in back-projection, per Wagner’s original stage design. In fact, the opera’s entire narrative centers on Wotan’s Trump-like disputes over paying his contractors, the giants, Fasolt and Fafner, and the Nibelungs, headed by Alberich. In lieu of payment, Wotan offers his sister, Freya, but re-negs on the deal, ‘resolving’ the issue by murdering one of the giants; Alberich he simply swindles out of the Tarnhelm and magic ring. These two events set the plot of the entire cycle in motion.

⁸⁹⁸ See: Friedländer, 50-3; Sontag, 163-4.

⁸⁹⁹ e.g. *ausrotten*, *Blutzoll*, *erledigen*, *minderwertig*, *Endlösung*, *Sonderbehandlung*, *Abschaum*, *Ausmerzen*, *Abspritzen*, *Abschlachten*, *erbarmungslos*, *entartet*, *Abknallen*. For a Lacanian reading of totalitarian ideology and the law, see: Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 323-41.

destructive, material (linguistic and legal) capabilities of fascist ideology to reproduce itself, turning utopian fantasy, simultaneously, into kitsch reproductions and dystopic reality. As the New Chancellery's spectral image, and the film's topography at large, then disappear from view, Syberberg reminds us of both the destruction of this ideological fantasy and its continuation in the present. One blackboard is replaced by two, reading "Kulturhölle um uns," "Kaderwelsch Ost und West," flanked by smoking effigies of Germany's film-refugees and pornographic, phallic stand-ins of its contemporary media figureheads. Only after this sequence does the first film finally end, as Syberberg's daughter reappears, and then flees back into the mist at stage-rear. Hopefully, with the example of this scene, Syberberg's cinematic strategy of architectural remediation is somewhat clear; that is, his use and re-inscription of architectural photographs as symbolic objects, both making legible and deconstructing the ideological meanings and unconscious structures of identification associated with Hitler, which adhere to these spatial images—a kind of imaginary, mediated memory that survives absence and loss.⁹⁰⁰

Instead of exhaustively documenting every instance of NS architecture's appearance in the rest of the cycle, I will merely proceed, in increasingly brief fashion, to analyze its use in three scenes. These, I claim are essential to the film's overall project of 'mourning' Hitler, at least within its own aesthetic logic, and for what I take to be its more grandiose aim: deconstructing his 'aura,' purging Wagner, film, and a kind of Teutonic, sovereign, artistic masculine subjectivity of its debased, commodified, fascist form; and restoring the irrational, mythic dimensions of German identity.⁹⁰¹

⁹⁰⁰ Of a specular relationship to power, signifying an NS subject, and projecting them in to a scene of meconnaissance.

⁹⁰¹ It is precisely my point that in this, far from the ethical practice of mourning outlined by Lacapra and others, Syberberg enacts something else entirely. Santner and Friedländer are both wisely skeptical and critical of Syberberg's intentions (and success) in his project of mourning, far more than Sontag. See: Friedländer, 95-7; Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 146-9. I, too, agree that there is something grotesque, trivializing, and voyeuristic about the film's representation of Nazism and especially its use of atrocity photographs—an issue perhaps only attenuated by the thoroughly punishing experience of viewing the entire cycle. Pace Sontag's claim that Syberberg, like Wagner, "spoils our tolerance for others," a more fitting

Hitler's Kammerdiener's Peripatetic Narrative of Berlin & Berchtesgaden

Let's now turn to Syberberg's cinematic-architectural project of divestiture, staged in three key locations of Hitler's sovereignty: the New Chancellery in Berlin, Berghof in Berchtesgaden, and the imaginary architecture of Germania. The first of these, performed by Helmut Lange in the role of Krause, Hitler's personal valet and bodyguard, occupies the last 40 minutes of the second film. One of the most coherent sequences of the entire cycle, Krause, speaking from the present (signaled by his modern dress), recounts a mnemonic, memorial narrative of his service to the Führer, spanning 1934 to 1945. While the sequence of Krause's retelling follows his memory, digressing, circling back, jumping ahead, it is nevertheless largely tied to the trajectory of its subject: Hitler's itinerary throughout his parabolic career. It may be broken down into three main segments: Krause's account of his first interview with Hitler in 1934 in the old chancellery on Wilhelmplatz and daily life in Berlin until around 1938; then reminiscences about life in the Berg-Idyll in Berchtesgaden during the second phase of the regime through the onset of the war; and finally, a romantic walk with Hitler, undiscovered, through the snow-covered streets of Munich during Christmas 1937. 'Traveling' across the Third Reich's historical topography, Krause's narrative follows the body at its ideological center, viewed from within the private interior of NS power, primarily oscillating between the Führer's two main haunts in Berlin and Bayern.⁹⁰²

Throughout, Syberberg frames Krause's narrative with contravening visual and acoustic cues. In a kind of architectural counterpoint, the narrative locations are reversed in the back-projections: that is, as we hear about Berlin we see Berchtesgaden, and vice versa. Before he steps

description might read that Syberberg spoils our tolerance for films about Hitler entirely, especially his own, which is not necessarily a bad thing. Sontag, 165.

⁹⁰² *Theodor Hiernis*, as noted above, provides a model for this sequence, as the protagonist's memorial narrative also follows Ludwig II's movements through his various residences as Hiernis offers the viewer a tour of the late-mad-king's residences at Linderhof, Neuschwanstein, and the Berghaus Schachen. In contrast, however, Hiernis tours the actual buildings—thus highlighting the significance of the photographic reconstruction and remediation in *Our Hitler*.

onstage, the camera sweeps across a panorama of the mountains surrounding the Berghof, fronted by dense fog, eventually landing on the Untersberg (where Barbarossa sleeps, awaiting his future return). Simultaneously, we hear the conclusion of Goebbels' Total War speech—“[Der Sieg] liegt begründet im Glauben an den Führer!” (Fig. VI-9) The film thus visually invokes the mythological landscape into which Hitler inserted himself: its Teutonic, imperial archetypes, while the sounds point to the failed invasion of the Soviet Union (Operation Barbarossa)—at the conclusion, we will acoustically return to Stalingrad. Yet, as the staging suggests, the destructive reality of Hitler's career is, for Syberberg, background noise. The film is interested in deeper mechanisms through which Hitler projected himself into Germany's cultural unconscious. Hence, as Krause speaks, he first descends into the subterranean space *underneath* this scenographic landscape. Recounting his first meeting with Hitler, which extends over five days of waiting around Wilhelmplatz and concludes in a five minute interview, the frontal-projections show film footage traversing the 200m long tunnel, leading to the elevator to the Berchtesgaden Teehaus. (Figs. VI-10a-c)



Figure VI-9 – Krause as Hitler's Kammerdiener before a frontal projection of the Untersberg



Figure VI-10a – Helmut Lange ‘descending’ into the frontal projection of the tunnel leading to the Berghof Teehaus



Figure VI-10b – Continuation of shot from above



Figure VI-10c – Continuation of shot from above

The sole film footage to be employed in this way, its presence at the very heart of the cycle, and its imagery, hint at a heightened symbolic ‘charge.’⁹⁰³ Syberberg reconstructs the journey to this heart of power ‘in real time,’ synchronizing Lange’s movement with the *mise-en-scène* and, once he reaches the elevator, emphasizing the structure’s phantasmatic, sci-fi-like interior. (Figs. VI-11a-c) The scene evokes Hitler’s literal isolation in his spectacular, fortress-like architecture.⁹⁰⁴ It, moreover, painfully extends the gravitational pull, the force of his attraction, symbolized in architectural space, and heightens the visibility of its *cinematic reproduction*. Syberberg, thereby, deftly invokes the obfuscating power of modern technology to re-produce the mythical appearance of Hitler’s architecture, framing and mediating his visibility as embodied Führer.

⁹⁰³ The only other examples appear in the final film: amateur recording of the opening of the Haus der Kunst, the same as in Fest’s, and aerial views of urban destruction. These, however, are not employed as sets, but simply play behind Harry Baer as he soliloquizes from a table bedecked with a candelabra and, further, are distorted by the overlay of colored filters and alteration of their speed of playback into slow motion.

⁹⁰⁴ See the analysis of the New Chancellery’s scenographic *enfilade*, its cinematic reproduction, and the building’s function as bottleneck and transformer of Hitler’s power in the introduction and chapter ii. The ‘attraction’ to Hitler’s center of embodiment of the state is similarly visualized in Fest’s *Eine Karriere*, analyzed in the last chapter.



Figure VI-11a – Lange ‘entering’ the frontal projection of the elevator to the Berghof’s Teehaus



Figure VI-11b – Continuation of shot from above



Figure VI-11c – Continuation of shot from above

This, however, is only the prelude. Once Krause arrives upstairs and his narrative continues beyond its point of origin in 1934, film footage is replaced by photographs of the Berghof's Teehaus, shown in disjointed sequence. The use of still, rather than film, images highlights the disjuncture between the body and backdrop; disarticulating movement within and between spaces; emphasizing the building's *absence*, the images' status as fragments, symbolic objects of a destroyed world; and providing the opportunity to further manipulate (remediate) their appearance, through cropping and staging. Krause sometimes meanders through the frame from one side to another; sometimes appears at its center following a cut, as in the first shot. With Krause off-center in front of the windows overlooking the mountains, the scene is reminiscent of the previous view of Heller, but tightly cropped and slightly askew. (Fig. VI-12) Further, while the framing initially appears to align our point of view with Hitler's, the Führer's cinematic gaze, within his picturesque, domestic interior, the film's remediation undermines the capacity of this perspective to 'frame' the ideological legibility of Krause's mnemonically articulated, memorial narrative.



Figure VI-12 – Lange before a frontal projection of the Berghof's Teehaus's window overlooking the Untersberg

And what story does the Kammerdiener tell? A truly boring one. He recounts Hitler's *Tagesablauf* in Berlin, consisting of phatic greetings and goodnights from the Führer, the arrangement of his household in the chancellery, his morning routine, afternoon coffee, evening film viewings, and late-night table talk, all of which “blieb sich eigentlich bis zum Jahre 1938 ziemlich gleich,” and lasts an interminable fifteen minutes of screen time. This narrative, largely told in fireside reverie, in front of photographs of the Teehaus's hearth, is central to the film's performance of divestiture. (Figs. VI-13a & b) To reiterate, divestiture is the ritualistic stripping of a deposed ruler of the representational insignia that mediate the relationship between an institution or office of power and its individualized appearance—i.e. the symbols of power that appear on or in relation to the body.⁹⁰⁵ As he exists in intimate proximity to the localized expression of power and its articulation with a particular body, the Kammerdiener traditionally plays a

⁹⁰⁵ Koschorke analyzes the paradox of the isolation and marginalization of a deposed sovereign by way of a host of juridical, administrative, and policing *Instanzen*—in a modern republic, politics, justice, bureaucracy, and the press—which, on the other hand, all undeniably direct the public's gaze and discourse toward his *body*. Koschorke, 219-24.



Figures VI-13a-b – Lange’s fireside reverie before frontal projections of the hearths in the Beghof

significant role in this process. His narrative is central to the ritualistic and juridical ‘dressing down’: the exhaustive, bureaucratic documentation, demystifying and preserving the formerly mystically embodied ruler in their banal, ‘naked materiality.’⁹⁰⁶ Krause’s descriptions, often referring to Hitler in metonymic, bodily fragments, “die Hand,” “die Antwort,” the substance of his “Mahlzeit,” thus expose the banality of Hitler’s body, morphing ‘fascinating’ tidbits about his private existence into excessive microscopic, voyeuristic obsession.⁹⁰⁷ As the body, projecting Germany’s symbolic, racial unity, is verbally disarticulated into discrete fragments, the metonymic space of domestic Führertum in Obersalzberg, is likewise visually reduced to the hearth, and then simply its symbolic friezes. (Fig. VI-14) But the symbolic images and narrative fragments of ‘Hitler at Home,’ evident in the scene that follows, articulate a general topographical association with Germany’s mythical, provincial traditions rather than its historical present under Nazism.

⁹⁰⁶ The key example is Louis XIV’s servant, questioned following the former’s demotion to *citoyen*. *Ibid.*, 219. The testimony given by Krause also alludes to the many testimonies given by the surviving staff of the NS state interior, notably including Hitler’s chauffeur, Erich Kempka, who provided the key account to Hugh Trevor-Roper of the burning of Hitler’s body following his suicide. Trevor-Roper, 231-2. Kempka, it bears mentioning, had recently published his own memoir on the subject: Erich Kempka and Erich Kern, *Die Letzten Tage Mit Adolf Hitler* (Pr. Oldendorf: Schütz, 1975).

⁹⁰⁷ See: Koschorke, 223-5; Friedländer, 61-2, 66-7; Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 255.



Figure VI-14 – Lange before a frontal projection of a frieze from the Berghof

A break comes in Krause’s seemingly interminable narrative, as he notes “Dieser Tagesablauf in Berlin blieb sich eigentlich bis zum Jahre 1938 ziemlich gleich. Bis dahin sind wir eigentlich auch niemals einen Sonntag in Berlin gewesen. Wir fahren immer auf den Obersalzberg bei Berchtesgaden,” and then falls momentarily silent, as if struck by a sudden realization (or overcome by a memory, seen only in the mind’s eye). Thus, as the substance of his narrative moves to Bayern, continuing his inventory of Hitler’s dress—the emperor’s invisible clothes, as it were—the invocation of Hitler’s changed routine also signals a relocation to the geographical, political center of NS power. That is, Berlin, its redevelopment by Speer into *Reichshauptstadt* Germania already well underway. A montage-interlude of photographs effects the transition. As we hear the *Deutsche Rundfunk*’s jubilation at Mussolini signing the *Stahlpakt* in 1939—the first act of war-mongering staged in Speer’s new building—we flash through illuminated *Nachtbilder* of the governmental quarter: the illuminated Brandenburg Gate, *Siegessäule*, the be-swastika-ed East-West-Axis, the iconic shot of Hitler leaning out the Siedler building’s window during the *Machtübernahme*.⁹⁰⁸ (Figs. VI-15a-d)

⁹⁰⁸ This event is also included in Fest’s *eine Karriere*—though, predictably, shown in speeches by Hitler and Mussonlini. As I aim to show below, Syberberg’s use of photographs far outstrips its predecessor in its critical effect.



Figure VI-15a – Photograph of the Brandenburg Gate seen from the Tiergarten, illuminated, flanked by swastikas atop pillars



Figure VI-15b – Photograph of Wilhelmstraße, illuminated and bedecked for a Nazi parade



Figure VI-15c – Photograph of the plinth and base of the Victory Column



Figure VI-15d – Photograph of Hitler leaning from the Siedler building window during the Machtiübernahme

If the first part of Krause's sequence dismantles the most traditional architectural site of Hitler's sovereignty and Mythos in Obersalzberg, the second deconstructs its most modern site of (re)production: Berlin's theatrical reconstruction and reproduction as cinematic-architectural *Gesamtkunstwerk*, concomitant with the onset of war. But despite the powerful visual imagery, the harsh illumination and largely empty spaces undermine the photographs' theatrical effect, instead foregrounding the calculated staging of Hitler's spectacle of sovereignty and embodiment. The street-scenes appear almost like a depopulated film set.⁹⁰⁹ While emblematic for real events—the physical transformation of Berlin as part of Germany's representational and industrial mobilization in preparation for militarized expansion—since they appear almost like production stills, the photographs index history without reproducing the effects of its monumental, ideological visual staging under Nazism. Rather, the images are denied both moving bodies and the dream-like continuity of their original cinematic reproduction—elements which might otherwise 'enliven' the objects (as in Fest's film). Further, as indicated in both their spectral appearance and the montage's final destination, the New Chancellery, the photographs are posited as the artifacts of a destroyed landscape. Krause voice resumes over the din; the montage cuts to the New Chancellery's Honor Court, and detail views of its portico and portal on Wilhelmplatz. (Figs. VI-16a-d) The screenplay explicitly notes its posthumous status in introducing the second half of Krause's walking tour:

“Weiter der Kammerdiener in heutiger Kleidung, sich erinnernd. Geht durch die Räume der zerstörten Reichskanzlei, d.h. der heute nicht mehr existierenden Reichskanzlei in unserer Projektion. Wie zu einer Schloßbesichtigung...Es sind die Räume Speers in unseren Projektionen wiederhergestellt. Am Anfang unser Kammerdiener in normaler Größe zu den Raumdimensionen, nachher liliputanerhaft, klein, vor den großen details des Hitlerschen Schreibtisches.”⁹¹⁰

⁹⁰⁹ Speer's lighting effects were often produced by using anti-aircraft spotlights, as in the 'Lichtdom' in Nürnberg, captured on film by Riefenstahl. In this sequence, the overlap between his militarized 'cathedrals of light' and the commercialized spectacle of Hollywood boulevard, illuminated for a premiere is striking indeed—and indicative of Syberberg's opinion regarding the imbrication of the mass cultural aesthetics of Nazism and capitalist popular culture.

⁹¹⁰ Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 181.



Figure VI-16a – Photograph of the New Chancellery’s illuminated Honor Court



Figure VI-16b – Photograph of the portico in the New Chancellery’s Honor Court

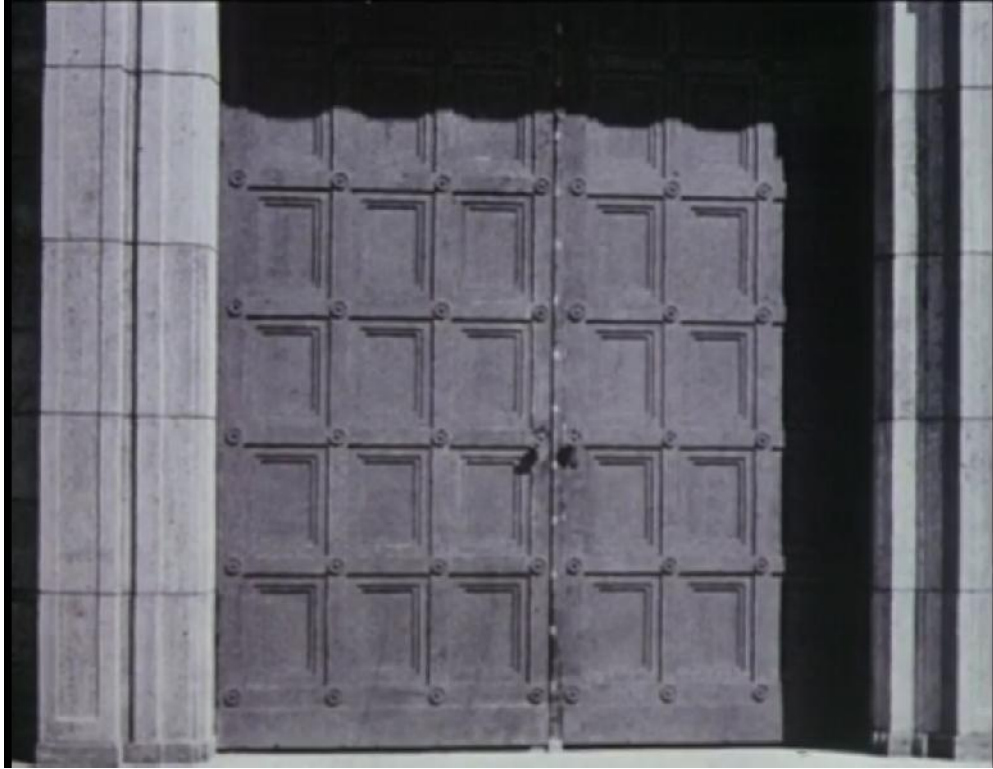


Figure VI-16c – Photograph of the New Chancellery's portal on Wilhelmplatz. Note similarity with New Chancellery photograph used in Brutalität in Stein (see: chapter iv)



Figure VI-16d – Photograph of the portico in the New Chancellery's Honor Court

The spatialized, narrative movement through the New Reich Chancellery, retracing the diplomatic route toward Hitler's office at the building center in frontal-projections, therefore, reconstructs a space that no longer exists. Moreover, as made evident in the visual strategies employed throughout the sequence, the montage works to deconstruct the fantasy of Hitler's embodied presence, cinematically and photographically projected onto the mythical, mediated space of its appearance, which, like the body at its center, was only ever an ordinary, material, mortal object.⁹¹¹

The second part of Krause's peripatetic narrative opens in a cut from the Honor Court directly into the Mosaic Room—the most iconic photograph of the space.⁹¹² As his voice continues from off, competing with the ongoing cacophony of the *Deutsche Rundfunk*, Krause strolls onto the screen, his back to the camera, mouth unmoving. (Fig. VI-17a) As in the previous sequence, the stage is free of all other objects that might obscure the 'Raumbilder.' Yet the space appears distinctly distorted by the frontal-projections, which crop in on details of the mosaics—although the projection renders the room's dimensions essentially true to life, with Krause's head barely reaching the inset of the panel, his lone body appears tiny against the monstrous backdrop. Syberberg then doubles (and fictionalizes) the effect, zooming in on the tesserae. (Figs. VI-17b & c) As analyzed in chapter ii, the spectacular, theatrical design and optically inflected layout of the New Chancellery's enfilade, and the distinctly modern strategies of its photographic and cinematic reproduction, were exploited to symbolically inscribe the architecture as manifesting the force of Führertum, Hitler's embodiment of the state and unification of the Volk, in an (imaginary) 'overwhelming' bodily experience. This strategy, described in the analysis of Fest's *eine Karriere*, is truncated (and eroticized), reduced to its climax in the Marble Gallery, entering Hitler's office.

⁹¹¹ Syberberg's introduction in the Film-Buch outlines this scene and the Berghof sequence with Kern (analyzed below) as metonymic examples of the cycle's overall project. Ibid., 23-4, 26-7.

⁹¹² The sequence draws all of its images from the 1939 monograph *Die neue Reichskanzlei*, analyzed in chapter ii.



Figure VI-17a – Lange before a frontal projection of the New Chancellery's Mosaic Room



Figure VI-17b – Continuation of above shot with detail image of mosaic



Figure VI-17c – Continuation of above shot with extreme-close up detail image of mosaic

Syberberg does a number of things differently. First, he again extends Hitler's gravitational pull to interminable dimensions, turning visual pleasure into voyeuristic rigamarole. Moreover, the montage diffuses the appearance of a unidirectional trajectory produced by the architecture, since we navigate the space according to Krause's distracted meandering.⁹¹³ We move without orientation through the New Reich Chancellery, from the Mosaic Room to the Cabinet Meeting Room, into the Marble Gallery and Reception Hall, then detour through the Dining Hall and—quite remarkably—the Party Chancellery's office wing, past the colonnade in the rear garden, and then back to the entrance to Hitler's office in the Marble Gallery, before entering the heart of power itself. (Figs. VI-18a-f) This last transition between spaces employs near identical shots to the footage used by Fest, but disarticulates them into discreet, disjointed images and enters the space not through the subjective perspective of the camera but, crucially, as an effect of the subjectively *focalized* perspective of Krause, facilitated in the montage by frontal projections. (Figs. VI-18g-k)

⁹¹³ The sequence takes 10 minutes, compared to *Das Wort aus Stein*'s accomplishment of the task in only 3 minutes.



Figures VI-18a & b – Lange before frontal projections of Cabinet Meeting Room and Marble Gallery



Figures VI-18 c & d – Lange before frontal projections of the Reception Room and Dining Hall



Figures VI-18e & f – Lange before frontal projections of the Party Chancellery interior and colonnade outside the Dining Hall



Figure VI-18g – Lange before frontal projection of the doorway to Hitler's office in the Marble Gallery



Figure VI-18h – Continuation of above shot



Figure VI-18i – Continuation of above shot



Figure VI-18j – Continuation of above shot



Figure VI-18k – Continuation of above shot

Which brings me to the third qualitatively different feature of Syberberg's sequence, in contrast with Fest. By employing photographs, rather than film clips, and manipulating both their dimensions and sequence, Syberberg disarticulates the symbolic, spatial narrative, mediating the force of Hitler's auratic presence in the New Chancellery's interior: rendering it visible as the effect of an agglomeration of discrete, representational fragments, assembled around an essentially empty ideological center. This dimension of Syberberg's critique—Hitler as the 'void' at the center of Germany's cinematic unconscious—and its mediation through architectural photographs, is particularly evident as Krause enters Hitler's office. Or rather, as the montage first projects us, metonymically, into the space in a series of decontextualized, detail images of its lavish furnishings and ornamental details. A cut finally brings Krause into the space: a wide-angle image of the office, with Hitler's desk, positioned at the vanishing point, toward which he begins to walk. (Fig. VI-19) The montage preceding and following this shot, symbolically multiplies the Führer's all-seeing



Figure VI-19 – Lange before frontal projection of Hitler's office in the New Chancellery

gaze: in the famous oversized globe (appropriated and put to good use by Chaplin); in the stares of the Bismarck portrait and the desk's mosaic inlays of Medusa, Athena, and Mars; in the empty oversized chair, to be 'occupied' by Hitler; and in the telephone and writing block, connecting him to the hidden state apparatus, his eyes, ears, and hands, implementing his will. (Figs. VI-20a-d) This presence, however, is implicitly shown to be 'present' only as an effect of the photographs.

That is, although the space is *empty* (save for Krause's alienated, gazing presence), *Hitler's* body and gaze *and* the body of the visitor *subjected* to his gaze are implicitly mediated through the *camera*.⁹¹⁴ (I mean, here, the camera photographing the architecture, *not* the film camera, which 'looks' into the space, along with Krause, but nevertheless remains palpably external to it.)

⁹¹⁴For a more detailed reading of the visual and bodily symbolism articulated in these photographs, see chapter ii.



Figures VI-20a & b – Lange before frontal projections of detail images of Hitler’s office



Figures VI-20c & d – Continued from above shot

The photographic-architectural space suggests a(n invisible) presence in the room both beholding and *beheld by* Hitler—the arrangement of the chairs in particular, is indicative of this face-to-face relation to power—but it is undeniably void of this return-of-the-gaze.⁹¹⁵ In fact, not only is it *not* bodily ‘mirrored’ in the image, our externalized position of looking (at ‘nothing’) is highlighted

⁹¹⁵ Santner writes of Syberberg’s *Karl May*, in a description that equally applies to *Our Hitler*, “The absence of a space where eyes return a gaze initiates, according to the film’s allegorical argument, all those quests for and conquests of new territories of auratic experience, new searches for the gaze that would finally authenticate one’s worth and reality. The movie star and the charismatic leader are for Syberberg the two distinctly modern figures that have come to embody such a gaze...these two forms come together in Hitler.” Santner, “Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg,” 122. The goal of the film, then, is to deconstruct and expose the “narcissism at the core of [this] hallucinatory exchange” and its fictional reproduction in modern, mass media. *Ibid.*, 138.

through the *multiple* layers of *mediation*: Krause, as we look over his shoulder and the *remediation* of the photographic image by the film camera, its (seen and unseen) lenses of literal and figurative *projection*.⁹¹⁶ Moreover, Krause's continuously casual gait, glancing around, occasionally looking back into the camera, underscores the radical absence and *lack* of the Führer's alleged, scopic power, condensed in the (equally alleged) dominating effects of the New Reich Chancellery's architecture and its technological reproduction in images.

To return, again, to divestiture—and get a bit more intimate with its bodily content—the goal is not to entirely demystify or destroy insignias of power, but to render the strategies of power's mediation *explicit*.⁹¹⁷ The 'symbolic architecture' projecting Hitler's auratic presence into the empty space of Führertum is made materially, photographically evident in the deconstruction of the New Chancellery's 'fascinating,' 'sublime' '*Raumbilder*.' Krause's narrative, simultaneously, performs a similar unmasking, focused on the Führer's *body* and its sartorial trappings, signifying authority and 'self-importance in a uniform.'⁹¹⁸ Throughout his journey, Krause offers a detailed inventory of Hitler's closet and an account of his meticulous, misguided attention to his appearance—at its peak in the presence of female 'admirers.'⁹¹⁹ Amid Hitler's sartorial mishaps and grousing over socks and underwear, we also hear criticism from Krause,

⁹¹⁶ Silverman writes of Lacan that "The gaze confirms and sustains the subject's identity, but it is not responsible for the form which that identity assumes," which is, instead, projected as a screen, "the locus of mediation"...the image or group of images through which identity is constituted," becoming, thereby, the *object* of a depersonalized gaze, associated with the camera. Hence, through its mediated/mediating quality, Silverman continues, the screen can also "assume the status of a shield or defensive weapon...Those attempts at a collective self-redefinition which rely upon masquerade, parody, inversion, and bricolage will [therefore] consistently be more successful than those aimed at the *ex nihilo* creation of new images, since they work upon the existing cultural imaginary...In positioning its practitioners so tensely in relation both to dominant representation and the gaze, these strategies also work to maintain a productive distance between the subject and its 'self,' a distance which is indispensable to further change." Silverman, 145-50.

⁹¹⁷ The 'transitional objects' employed in mourning are preserved just because they can symbolically *stand in* for the lost object as 'good enough,' even and especially in light of the object's *loss*. Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 126-7. Because they are consciously acknowledged as *only* symbols—not the *thing* in itself—their meaning is subject to change, able to signify a different object. In divestiture, dismantling the relationship between the insignias of an *office* from the particular body to which they were attached, likewise, allows for the continued use of these signifiers, to elevate another, newly legitimate body to the place of power.

⁹¹⁸ Mitscherlich and Mitscherlich, 18.

⁹¹⁹ Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 188.

backed by the likes of Frau Gerdy Troost: “Mein Führer, unmögliche Krawatte.”⁹²⁰ The collective meaning of the anecdotal fragments is obvious: the emperor has no clothes. But crucially, in the fable, it is not merely that the ruler is exposed in his nakedness—which was obvious for all to see from the outset—but rather in the moment of recognition, when he *sees himself being seen* in his nakedness by the child in the crowd.⁹²¹ Since, to reiterate, Hitler has been posited by the film as a void, the implied object revealed and annihilated by the gaze is in fact *us*, the (German) viewer, projected and mirrored in the specular, spectral, architecture, framing the Führer’s (dis-)embodiment.

The collapse of this ‘field of vision’ is, likewise, simultaneously, symbolically invoked in Krause’s narrative and the architectural image. Precisely as we hear of Hitler’s misrecognition of a grey jacket of his Felduniform—maligned on its first viewing, now naively embraced, six months later at the start of the war—the soundtrack is interrupted by the boom of an explosion and an abrupt cut that shifts Krause’s body to the right third of the frame. The image of Hitler’s office intact is replaced by a color photograph of the space in ruins. (Figs. VI-21a & b) The collapse of Hitler’s architecture of Führertum, the inability of the fiction to sustain its reproduction in reality, results from its fragmentation in the face of war. The soundtrack continues to evoke the Third Reich’s imperial expansion, signaled by the Feldgrau, acoustically stretching this topography to its limits in the 1942 Weihnachtsringsendung: a roll call to “allen Fronten...Stalingrad...an der Wolga...die Lappland-Front...Südfrankreich...die Kaukasusfront...die Mittelmeerfront und Afrika ...Kreta... bis ans Ende der Welt,” as the film’s title would have it.

⁹²⁰ Krause is backed in his duties, according to his monolog, by all of the female members of Hitler’s inner circle: Frau Goebbels, Frau Troost, and “nicht zuletzt Eva Braun.” Friedländer writes, of the scene, “When Hitler exclaims ‘Isn’t it possible for the Führer to get a pair of decent socks?’ it is chalked up against him. The spectator knows that the reproach is unjustified—that it is he, the Führer, who does not know how to choose proper socks, and he has only himself to blame. But this double weakness is pardoned twice over,” since the narrative suggests both Hitler’s own naivete and, disarmed by the anecdote, incites compassion in the viewer. Friedländer, 63-4.

⁹²¹ See comments at the end of the last chapter and Silverman, 130.



Figure VI-21a – Lange before frontal projection of Hitler's office in the New Chancellery



Figure VI-21b – Continuation of previous shot, following cut in frontal projection to a photograph of the office in ruins

Yet it is here, as the audience knows—and the ruin photograph and topo-phony of war articulate—that the seemingly-unlimited expansion of Hitler’s territory and authority caved in on itself. As Krause performs a kind of ruin gazing, the perspective he symbolically inhabits is, again, multiplied: now also standing in for the bodies of the victors, as they photographed this very space (for example, in this very image) and their own position of power within it.⁹²² Whereas the victors stared out through the camera, daring the defeated to meet and ordering them to submit to the new, authoritative gaze, as Krause likewise turns and stares directly into the camera, falling momentarily silent. But here, it is an embodied figure of Germany’s own past that looks back—not a petrifying Medusa, but a human face, full of pity.⁹²³ (Fig. VI-21c)

Again, however, things do not end here. Despite the symbolic visualization of the Third Reich’s destruction, like mourning, the process of divestiture is incapable of *fully* dispatching its object; it encounters ‘resistance,’ ‘excess,’ as it ritualistically employs the very symbolic traces of the body it seeks to expose as a fraud.⁹²⁴ The exhaustive, bureaucratic documentation involved in the ritual both *demystifies* and *preserves* the fascination still possessed by the embodied figure of the ruler, even beyond death, inscribed on living emblems become relics. The inventory of ‘de-auraticized’ objects thus works at cross purposes to its intention, namely that “nichts...dürfte übrig bleiben” of the previous symbolic order.⁹²⁵ Further, the afterlife of these fragments is ensured as they are preserved and recirculated in the *media*—one of the institutions actively participating in the destruction of the previous ruler’s ‘flesh,’ through the shattering and depersonalization of

⁹²² See the analysis of these images in chapter iii.

⁹²³ Regarding the next scene to be analyzed in this chapter, but fittingly applied here, Santner writes, “At stake in each of these scenes is the constitution of an intimate space of my-face-your-face communality, whether in the sudden fraternity of master and servant who finally meet as two regular guys, the pathological imaginings of a psychotic fan who secures his alter ego by way of delirium, or the immediacy instituted by the magic of electronic media.” Santner, “Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg,” 141.

⁹²⁴ This process, importantly, culminates in return of the body to the original the *mise-en-scène* of its symbolic investment: the site of the body’s destruction reveals the “antizeremonielle[r] Aspekt der Entblößung,” as it operates as a site for inverting the ritual coronation of the sovereign. Frank, 221.

⁹²⁵ Koschorke, 222.



Figure VI-21c – Continuation of shot from above

his gaze into a populist “Regime des Blicks”—e.g. in the present revival of the visual archive of Hitler and his destroyed architecture in West Germany.⁹²⁶ This is, of course, integral to the entire argument of this chapter and furthermore, to Syberberg’s refutation of Fest. In the reproduction and consumption of Hitler, particularly as the picture of ‘ordinariness pushed to the extreme limits of kitsch,’ “Vom Körper der einstigen Macht blieb nichts als eine zugleich anrührende und jämmerliche Privatheit übrig, über deren Einzelheiten sich das Publikum i[n]...Blättern auf dem Laufenden halten konnte.”⁹²⁷ Yet this was not *nothing*, but *something*, still fascinating the public.

⁹²⁶ Ibid., 223.

⁹²⁷ Friedländer, 62; Koschorke, 224.

Thus, Syberberg is only halfway done—the New Chancellery disappears for the rest of the film, but the symbolic body occupying its center, adhering to its images persists.

The Führer-Mythos's preservation, beyond the destruction of its symbolic, material anchors—Hitler's body and the New Chancellery—is made obvious in the conclusion of Krause's narrative and its de-territorialization. We hear the radio hail Stalingrad, warping momentarily into distortion, as Krause gazes one last time at the ruin-image, walks out of the frame, and we cut to a backdrop of the Untersberg, submerged in twilight. Returning to the stage, as the background fades to black and the camera slowly zooms in, Krause recounts an intimate experience with Hitler at Christmas, strolling, undiscovered through Munich's snowy streets in 1937, a Bavarian folk-tale. (Fig. VI-22) The sounds of Stalingrad—layered with 'Lili Marleen' and the *NS-Totenfeier* – 9. November—continue to resound throughout his narrative and the rest of the film, thus leading into 'Das Ende eines Wintermärchens.'⁹²⁸ But this fairy-tale's mythical recapitulation, however, does not conclude either its retelling or its commercial reproduction.



Figure VI-22 – Lange before frontal projection of the Untersberg, submerged in twilight

⁹²⁸ The analysis of divestiture in Syberberg could be productively expanded to include the scene of Himmler and his Masseur, which operates parallel to the Kammerdiener sequence and appears at the beginning of the third film. Whereas the earlier scene refracts the body's symbolic visibility through architectural space, eroticized only through the disembodied but penetrating gaze of the sovereign, the second narrows in on the body itself as a symbolic site, the embodiment of sexualized desire, rooted in the scopic relation and identification with power. In the interests of space and focus, I will not be addressing either topic here.

The After-Life of the Hitler-Mythos: Ruin Tours through the Berghof in the Present

As promised, we will speed through the rest of Syberberg's film cycle, stopping briefly at two more stations on the way to its climax, which enacts a final de-consecration of the body at the center of the Führer-Mythos and the archive of its cinematic-photographic architecture (and, thereby, attempts a re-consecration of the aesthetic structures of Wagnerian, masculine, political, and artistic subjectivity, which Syberberg sees as the foundation of Germany's irrational, symbolic order). But first: the Berghof.

In each of the final two chapters of *Our Hitler*, we revisit the ruins of 'Hitler at Home.' Both times, the encounter with the Berghof is mediated through the figure of Peter Kern; first in the role of a Neo-Nazi, who turns his own pilgrimage into an impromptu tour, playfully adopting the role of Ellerkamp, Hitler's film-projectionist; then as one of two "Touristen-Direktor von Berchtesgaden," announcing the opening of a new Freilicht-Hitler-Museum. The Berghof's progressive transformation from a site of symbolic power into a kitsch commodity *following* its destruction—becoming a tourist destination, then, Nazi-Disneyland—is shown in architectural photographs. "[N]och einmal der Obersalzberg, in einer Schnitt-Montage das Hitler-Haus in wechselnden Zuständen. Immer größer werden vom Umbau bis zur Bombardierung und seiner endgültigen Sprengung."⁹²⁹ (Figs. VI-23a-f) Owing, not only to the Berghof's picturesque location, but also its ubiquitous reproduction in postcards (showing *all* of these states, including the destruction), the montage invokes, in architectural metonym, the Third Reich's production and demolition, *and* the reproduction and consumption of *both* of these states, as kitsch and souvenir.⁹³⁰

⁹²⁹ Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 221.

⁹³⁰ Berchtesgaden was home to a booming tourism industry, for both German citizens and Western visitors. Tours of the Berghof's ruin (and its underground complex of bunkers) were a reality, as were the photobooks and postcards of the structure. See: Stratigakos, 303-5. Syberberg would have likely been aware of this industry, owing to the proximity of his home in Munich. My own Grandmother, secretary to the Head of the Allied Commission for Economic redevelopment, had among her own mementos a brochure for vacations in Berchtesgaden, organized in English, and specifically targeting American visitors.



Figures VI-23a & b – Frontal projections of the Berghof in its original form and following renovations



Figures VI-23c & d – Frontal projections of the Berghof's destruction



Figures VI-23e & f – Continuation of above shots

The continued presence of Hitler, in debased, commodified form, is not only indicated visually, but also in the ensuing narrative that is then staged, again, as a photographically projected walking tour—through both the ruin and the archival images of the former space of his embodied, sovereign domesticity. Peter Kern wanders, yodeling, through the frame (of Fig. VI-23f), clutching a radio playing the final act of *Aida*. Another cut brings us to a medium shot of Kern, directly addressing the camera. “Wände sind was Schönes,” he informs the viewer, in crass opposition to the scrawled surface behind him: a photograph of a ruined structure from the Berghof complex, covered with graffiti.⁹³¹ (Fig. VI-24) “Sie erzählen Geschichten. Sie können sich das ja gar nicht vorstellen. Ich hab viel gesehen, ich kann viel erzählen.” The visual and verbal dissonance reveal the rules of the game at the outset: the wall *cannot* talk, it requires an interpreter.



Figure VI-24 – Peter Kern as ‘Ellerkamp’ before frontal projection of the Berghof’s ruin

⁹³¹ The image is, thereby, also reminiscent of the conquered spaces of Berlin, including the New Chancellery, inscribed by the victorious Allies.

Identified in the screenplay as “heutiger Hitler-Verehrer” impersonating Hitler’s film projectionist, ‘Ellerkamp,’ positions himself, simultaneously as ‘fly on the wall’ and, metaphorically, screen illuminated on its surface.⁹³² ‘Ellerkamp’s’ performance announces itself as a fiction, spoken by no-one in particular, a phony, but, at the same time, by a voice of (historical) authority. He recapitulates the myth we are already know, the same old story we’ve heard before (and are, by now, are growing sick of hearing): a nostalgic account of Hitler’s love of film, his dog Blondi, dietary peculiarities, attention to architectural detail and theatrics in his residences, and so on. Each of these narrative components are mapped onto the sites/sights of the destroyed topography that Kern traverses in frontal-projection. Ellerkamp’s mnemonic narrative, delivered in an unctuous, smug, occasionally aggressive, Bavarian lilt, takes us, unsystematically, through the Berghof complex. From the ruins of the SS-garage, through the processional entrance of the main building into the Great Hall, onto the terrace, and into the surrounding woods. Faintly overheard throughout his musings, interrupted periodically by his yodeling or his radio, are the sounds of the *Deutscher-Rundfunk* ‘Front-Theater’ from 1943, warped by periodic distortion. As we tour the site, sometimes adopting the first-person perspective of a hand-held camera, ‘Ellerkamp’s’ ‘Denken an den Führer’ conjures the space as it was, the *heimlich* (in both senses of the word) domestic existence of the everyday Hitler in his alpine retreat—the effect is simultaneously *unheimlich* (again, in both senses).⁹³³ That is, both in the decayed appearance of the site and the unsettling intimacy of the details told by Kern, and his obvious pleasure in relating them to the viewer.⁹³⁴

⁹³² Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 221.

⁹³³ These shots are particularly disorienting as the camera pans, *Blair-Witch*-style, over an empty, anonymous grove of trees. The sudden enhanced verisimilitude of the footage reminds the viewer that there is, in reality, nothing there to see, even as ‘Ellerkamp’s’ droning monologue continues from off-screen.

⁹³⁴ For the architectural uncanny, see: Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992).

‘Ellerkamp’s’ fetish-like attachment to Hitler is localized (cathected) in architectural space. The heart of his tour details the Berghof’s furnishings and interior design, gesturing to back-projection of photographs, using them to relate ‘charming’ anecdotes about the Führer and his intimates. (Figs. VI-25a-f) The images and narrative stand in for what both is and is no longer there: the building, the bourgeois fantasy of Nazi domesticity it ensconced; now void of material substance, but still present in memories, nostalgia, consumable objects. The scene suggests that, outfitted with such talismans, one may ‘play’ at being a Nazi, even with some ironized detachment. The effect is nonetheless troubling, both in the present-ness of the address and how it calls for us to ‘play along’—as if Hitler’s obsession with ‘Blut’ and the final aria of *Aida* had nothing to do with the regime’s actual violence or the experience of being buried (and immolated) alive at the climax of its *Götterdämmerung*.⁹³⁵



Figures VI-25a-d - Kern before frontal projections of the Berghof’s ruin

⁹³⁵ At the conclusion of *Aida*, the two protagonists are buried alive together and sing a *Liebestod* in their communal grave. It’s worth mentioning that Berchtesgaden was one of the ‘symbolic’ targets of the later-stage of the air-war.



Figures VI-25e & f – Kern before frontal projections of the Berghof’s Great Hall (before its renovation) & Great Window

Grotesque as the retreading of the Hitler-Myth over lunch already is, the perverse, voyeuristic pleasure, identified with the commercial exploitation of Nazism is extended further. In the final, and only narrative scene of the fourth film, Kern and Martin Sperr christen the opening of a Hitler-Museum in Obersalzberg.

“Der Touristen-Direktor von Berchtesgaden am Rednerpodium. Vor dem Panorama des Königssees am Obersalzberg als Projektionen. Viele Figuren der Hitlerumgebung. Sekretärinnen, der Pilot Bauer, usw., Eva Braun, alle als Fotofiguren im imaginären Freilichtmuseum am Obersalzberg aufgestellt. Der Kammerdiener, Linge, Krause, die kleine Henriette, Frau Raubal, die zerfetzte Hose, die Hitler am 20. Juni trug und der Henker von Nürnberg mit dem Strick für die Gehenkten usw.”⁹³⁶

In a Vaudevillian, Hollywood-Bavarian spectacle, the ‘museum directors’ announce their wares and absolve themselves of responsibility for the undeniable demand: “Konzessionen sind klar: Gefühle, das Publikum, aber das Publikum hat immer recht. An der Kasse entscheidet sich die Qualität ganz demokratisch: Porno.” Nowhere in the film is Syberberg’s opinion of the fixation on Hitler in West Germany’s *Konsumgesellschaft* and democratic landscape (“nur möglich bei Wirtschaftswachstum”) so clearly and polemically articulated. What remains of Hitler, the wound poisoning the public’s artistic, political body, and its representational media, is pure spectacle.⁹³⁷

⁹³⁶ Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 256.

⁹³⁷ Friedländer names Hitler an object of desire defined by “the idealized image of the chief expressing both a universal sentimentality and the attraction to nothingness that sometimes seizes contemporary crowds.” Friedländer, 76.

The ‘theatricality’ of public life, described by the Mitscherlichs, is literalized in two-dimensional figures, a conglomeration of Hitler/Hollywood, framing the center of the action. (Fig. VI-26) Its prurient senselessness—defiant of the hangman—is embodied in Kern and Sperr, as they cavort and can-can across the stage: the Führer-show, amplified in post-modern, free-market form, hardly dignified by the exploitation of the mise-en-scène of Germany’s *Heimat*.



Figure VI-26 – Kern & Martin Sperr as directors of Hitler-Museum before frontal projection of the Berghof

In Santner’s brilliant, psychoanalytic reading of *Our Hitler*, he identifies the “emblem of the quest” as “structuring this entire cinematic allegory”—the return to the original site of Germany’s ‘woundedness,’ its site of ‘primal homesickness’ (following the logic of *Parsifal* and the *Ring*).⁹³⁸

“According to this mythic tale of guilt and corruption, *cinema*, understood as a technology for the production of reality effects, became the literal and figural *site* of that lethal aestheticization of politics which was German fascism. The guilt or fallenness of cinema derives, then, from its complicity in mechanisms of projection and identification which

⁹³⁸ Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 142.

were deployed by the Nazis to mobilize the population and which have become integral to a postwar society largely grounded in image consumption and spectacle.”⁹³⁹

Dismantling this spectacle requires exposing “the guts of this apparatus,” looking, “inside the machine,” and, in doing so, tearing asunder the gears of the phantasmagoria, through which history (and Hitler) is (are) projected as mythology. Thus over the course of the film “Syberberg attempts to transform all historical attempts to realize and fulfill mythic longings for power into so many cinematic ruins,” journeying through their “mnemonic detritus.”⁹⁴⁰ This is the film’s work of mourning: “clear[ing] a space where [the] audience may reclaim those longings [desires] in the mode of a *chastened* remembrance.”⁹⁴¹

The allegorical structure of divestiture is, likewise, a mnemonic procession, bringing the deposed ruler back through the symbolic stations of his reign, to its point of origin, concluding at the gallows—the empty space left by his body forms the sight/site of a new beginning. As we have seen throughout this chapter, the journey, at the end of which we encounter (and recognize) the ‘wound’ (void) embodied by Hitler, is projected by Syberberg in and mediated through both *cinematic* and *architectural* space. Thus, at the climax of his cycle, we return again to the beginning, making a final, funerary procession through Hitler’s Valhalla and his capital, Germania—a ritualistic reminder that this world is dead and can now be laid to rest.

Götterdämmerung & Germania

In the final sequence, immediately following the above-described Hitler-Museum scene, Syberberg’s daughter, silent and shrouded, wanders through the fragmented spaces of the Nazi spectacle—both the sites re-produced throughout the film on stage and, in frontal-projection, those never constructed, *only* visualized in architectural images. As noted above, before she enters, we

⁹³⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁰ Ibid., 143.

⁹⁴¹ Ibid., 144.

return to the beginning of the film: “Das erste Bild der Siegesfeier ist der Schwarze Adler in der Soldatengruft, wie sie fürs siegreiche Berlin und seine Opfer geplant war. Rot-rauchende Pylonen, Kanonenschüsse zum Salut, wie im ersten Teil des Films bei der Vorstellung des Paradieses der Hölle”⁹⁴² (see: Fig. VI-8b) Over the sound of distant explosions, André Heller’s disembodied voice reads: “Ich glaube und bekenne, ich hatte einen Traum. Das Kunstwerk von Staat und Politik und Volk und jeder Teil davon, jeder an seinem Platz....Das Gesamtkunstwerk Deutschland, das Modell”—what we see, is literally a model photograph—“ich verkünde den Tod des Lichtes, den Tod allen Lebens und der Natur, das Ende.”⁹⁴³ In perhaps the softest transition of the film, preceded by a faint xylophone figure, from the briefly illuminated vision of *Untergang* we are transported by a cut into a peaceful, kitschy underworld.

The pilons, now lining the frame to either side, spill white, extinguished smoke, the Soldatengruft’s sacral interior replaced by a dimly illuminated sketch of Hitler’s Führerpalast; in place of the Reichs-eagle are three skeletal figures, one in a loosely hanging S.S. uniform, one slumped in a metal chair, and one a skull atop an oversized plastic globe. The final radio Wehrmachtsbericht from May 9, 1945 plays over the soundtrack, implicitly acknowledging the end of fighting as it praises the soldiers, who “haben jede vorzeitige Übergabe abgelehnt,” and eventually closes with the announcement of “eine Funkstille von 3 Minuten” (though this is not replicated in the film, as the voices continue—now in Russian). Syberberg’s daughter wanders from the front right of the frame to the rear, disappearing momentarily into the mist. (Fig. VI-27) The end, at once evoked and elided, continues to echo over the soundtrack, in broadcasts

⁹⁴² Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 261.

⁹⁴³ The monolog is evocative of Brünnhilde’s final aria in *Götterdämmerung*, in which she bids Wotan’s ravens “Fliegt heim...Raunt es eurem Herren, was hier am Rhein ihr gehört... Denn der Götter Ende dämmert nun auf. So—werf ich den Brand in Walhalls prangende Burg.” Richard Wagner and Andrew Porter, *The Ring of the Nibelung* (1977), 327. Syberberg, however, as will be explored in further detail below, silences not only Wagner’s protagonist, but purges his film of nearly every other possible female voice. For the marginalization, silencing, and displacement of the female voice in cinema, see: Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror : The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

announcing Germany's surrender and the allied victory, and to appear onscreen in disarticulated fragments.

Whereas, as I have argued, the destruction of Hitler's body is symbolically mediated in architectural images in previous sequences of *Our Hitler*, here the connection is made explicitly. Syberberg's daughter proceeds through series of similar spaces, styled as phantasmagorical mausoleum—the next projections at the rear shows Hitler's 1923 sketch of the Great Hall, replaced in later shots by lush model photographs from 1939 of these buildings meant for the axial center of 'Reichshauptstadt Germania.' The space, furthermore, is figured as a site of execution—in the foreground of the second shot, Sieg-Heil-ing effigies hung from gallows stand in for the symbolic bodies, projected into these images of (and now set to be erased from) Hitler's mythical space of power. (Fig. VI-28) Syberberg's daughter continues the procession, passing by symbolic fragments of the Führer, Volk, and the Third Reich's 'Others': human effigies and architectural embodiments; high-art propaganda (Kreis's buildings and Thorak's friezes); film figures, celebrities (from Ufa and Hollywood); cheap-looking props and grotesque imitations of life. The third shot of the montage cuts to a mid-range close-up of a replica of Goebbels's charred corpse, arched in fish-pose, face twisted in an open-mouthed grimace, with the stuffed dog with Hitler's face from the beginning of the film on the table beside it (snatched up by the girl in passing). The camera slowly pulls back to reveal a harshly illuminated model photograph of the Great Hall and Führerpalast in the background.⁹⁴⁴ (Fig. VI-29) The earlier use and remediation of architectural images reveals and deconstructs the projection of Hitler's invisible, auratic presence in the symbolic spaces of Führertum—showing how his 'fleshy' substance is preserved (and may also

⁹⁴⁴ As we subsequently see photographs of Goebbels's actual corpse, presumably taken by the Soviets after finding his charred body outside of the Führerbunker, the mannequin is likely modeled on these and thus visually announces itself, in a very literal sense, as both a simulacrum and a special effect (movie magic).



Figure VI-27 – Syberberg's daughter wanders toward a frontal projection of Hitler's sketch of the Führerpalast



Figure VI-28 – Syberberg's daughter wanders through a set hung with NS effigies before a frontal projection of Hitler's sketch of the Great Hall



Figure VI-29 – Syberberg’s daughter before a frontal projection of a model photograph of Adolf-Hitler-Platz with an effigy of Goebbels’s charred corpse in the foreground at right

be confronted), beyond the destruction of his body in this archive of representational fragments and their commercial reproduction. This sequence, in contrast, seeks to layer together the *demystified, de-consecrated* image of the body with its spectral *mise-en-scène*. And, furthermore, to render the debased, commodified, fetishistic character of *both* explicit in the emblematic image. In other words, the film seeks to contain the ‘wound’ (Hitler) by symbolically linking (cathecting) it to certain topographical sites, localizable and archived in representation, remediated and projected in images that now announce their own falsehood and fragmentation, reveal at face value their phantasmatic and spectral nature. Syberberg’s daughter thus continues to traverse the next tomb-like-space of the post-fascist underworld (framed by the Soldatenhalle’s crypt, visible only in the model’s arched ceiling).

But what will fill the vacuum left by this debased mythical imagery? And *who* will take the place of the deposed Führer at its center, symbolized in the image of Goebbels's ruined face, blown up in the next shot into a death's head, which fills the screen? (Fig. VI-30) The question is explicitly asked by Heller, who's voice returns from off: "wer will der nächste sein?" That is, the next pretender to occupy the space of power, inscribe the (architectural) signifiers of national authority and identity, and embody the projection of Germany's unconscious desires?⁹⁴⁵ Heller also offers the answer: *us*, the public. "Er wird kommen, immer, in anderer Gestalt, er ist schon in uns, wenn wir es nur wollen. Nicht unser Bruder [Hitler], nicht in uns, wir selbst, du und ich." But how, in the logic of Syberberg's film, will Germany represent itself, politically or aesthetically articulate its (hopefully democratic) identity in the future? Let's remind ourselves that Syberberg's goal, throughout the film cycle, has not been to *destroy* the Wagnerian aesthetics and romantic, irrational foundations of Germany's (masculine) political, artistic myth of identity, or its cinematic forms of representation. It is, rather, to disarticulate this symbolic order from its association with and debasement by the Hitler spectacle (and its reproduction in the West German media); to purge Germany's grand aesthetic, political tradition of its attachment to fetish objects, signifying identification with the fantasy of NS ideology. His performance of this self-reflexive spectacle of mourning thus gathers together the fragments of Hitler's demonic, auratic presence, the material to be sublimated and exorcized, condensing them in a multilayered, symbolic image of the body, projected in/onto cinematic, architectural space.⁹⁴⁶

⁹⁴⁵ Of the deposed monarchs of the pre-modern era, Koschorke quotes Jean Jaurès "Feststellung, dass die Könige nur noch als Phantome auf Zeit zurückkehren konnten." Koschorke, 226.

⁹⁴⁶ The film's 'posthumous' status, and its conscious recognition of fragmentation, partiality, and division, according to Santner, can be read in "the crumbling blocky letters of 'The Grail' seen at the beginning and end of Hitler...For Syberberg...the only source of hope in a world that threatens to become absorbed, without remainder, into a global system of technologically produced immediacy is to be seen in the capacity to remember and preserve negative spaces, fissures, traces: to preserve, as it were, the wailing walls of the world and to keep them from becoming so many tourist attractions." Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 144-5.



Figure VI-30 – Frontal projection of the head of Goebbels's charred corpse

That is, in a final, dream-like montage, the body of Syberberg's daughter, eyes closed, crowned in celluloid, is translucently superimposed over and under model photographs of the Führerpalast and Great Hall. (Figs. VI-31a & b) These quintessential objects signifying loss—of Hitler, of Berlin, of a utopian imagination, of the monumental dimension of German idealism—are thus disarticulated into fragments, quilted together cinematically in an embodied emblem of mourning, and of future possibility (the next generation).⁹⁴⁷ But while the sequence thus clearly draws on the imagery of the Wagnerian climax—a funeral, wherein the world is purged of its curse in a gesture of self-sacrifice, complete with the lost topography as it fades into the abyss, the twilight of the gods—it lacks a number of elements. There is no flood, no fire, no fat lady singing—and, as it turns out, this is not the ending at all (though I promise we are nearing our conclusion).

⁹⁴⁷ Film, the weapon responsible for the “wound,” thus also a “transitional object,” which provides some measure of closure. In this sense, it functions in parallel to Siegfried's sword (which kills the father) in the *Ring* and Klingsor's spear, in *Parsifal*, which both heals Amfortas's wound and absolves him at the opera's conclusion.



Figure VI-31a – Syberberg's daughter superimposed with projected model photograph of the Führerpalast

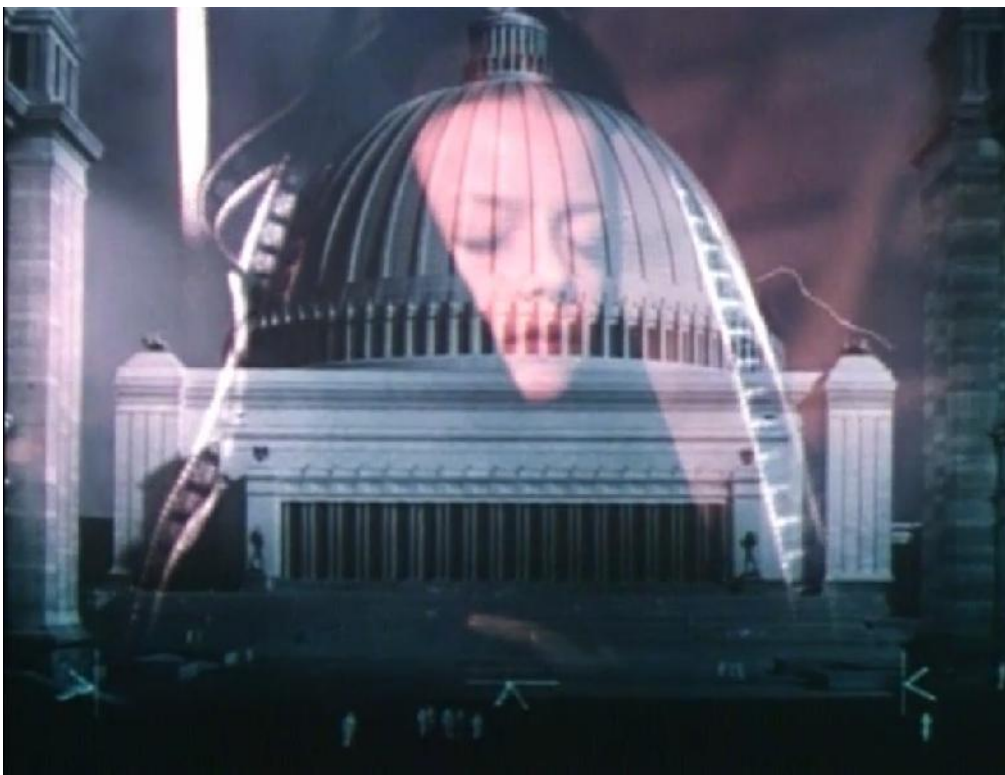


Figure VI-31b – Syberberg's daughter superimposed with projected model photograph of the Great Hall

The climax of Syberberg's *Gesamtkunstwerk* is an anti-climax—the film continues for another 30 minutes. Overlaid by the Nov. 9 *Trauerfeier* and Harry Baer's voice from off, narrating an imaginary procession of all players from NS history, we see a series of romantic drawings of the Volk, photographs of dead Nazi officers from Nürnberg.⁹⁴⁸ (Figs. VI-32a & b) We then move on to more of Syberberg's theatrical, didactic, pornographic tableaux—the second of which is striking indeed. In front of a projection of the Great-Hall's iconic model, the replica of Goebbels's corpse, hung from a noose and clutching a blow-up doll styled as Eva Braun, twists in the wind, surrounded by wisps of smoke from a fog machine. As a waltz from *Die Fledermaus* strikes up on the soundtrack, overlaid with radio announcements of the signing of the UN charter and Truman's order to drop the atomic bomb, the camera moves in voyeuristically, and then cuts back to a wider shot.⁹⁴⁹ (Figs. VI-33a-c) The bodies appear to come to a standstill; the camera cuts to a tight close-up of the blow-up doll's face and slowly zooms in on its gaping mouth; the opening strains of the *Deutschlandlied* play faintly. In its maw, figured as an eye, a Hitler doll appears, surrounded by Barbies, delivering his 'Gruß' and waving a frozen farewell to the audience. (Fig. VI-34)



Figures VI-32a & b – Projected images of the 'Volk' & Wilhelm Keitel's corpse from the closing sequence

⁹⁴⁸ Identifiable from their body-tags, shown are: Julius Streicher, Fritz Sauckel, Alfred Jodl, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Alfred Rosenberg, Arthur Seyß-Inquart, Wilhelm Keitel, and eventually Himmler and Goebbels.

⁹⁴⁹ The acoustic citations thus point to, and draw a problematic equivalence between, fascism and the violence of the Americans and Western powers, and its continuation in the 'capitalist imperialism' of the Cold War.



Figure VI-33a – Replica of Goebbels's corpse hanging from a noose with sex-doll styled as Eva Braun before frontal projection of the Great Hall



Figure VI-33b – Continuation of above shot



Figure VI-33c – Continuation of above shot



Figure VI-34 – Adolf Hitler doll surrounded by Barbies framed by sex-doll's mouth in closing sequence

But despite repeatedly invoking the cataclysm—the catastrophic end of both the Third Reich and the utopian dream of modernity—the event either never arrives, or has already past. Two more monologues, alternating between Baer addressing a Hitler ventriloquist doll and Heller, addressing the camera before mythical scenes from Karl May, and the film finally, blessedly ends. Reversing through the opening images from the title sequence, the cycle concludes with an image of Syberberg’s daughter, hands clasped over her ears, superimposed over Méliès’s moonscape, as the *Liebestod* from *Tristan und Isolde* and then Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony blare over the soundtrack and fade out, along with the images, to silence and black. (Fig. IV-35) Even thereafter, however, the concluding credits, returning to the starry void, continue the messaging: citing the Heine poem from the opening, identifying the dates of the film’s production as coinciding with the peak of the German Autumn, quoting 1. Corinthians, identifying the cycle as “Eine Projektion ins schwarze Loch der Zukunft,” and dissolving the title’s letters in three languages.⁹⁵⁰ (Fig. IV-36)



Figure IV-35 – Syberberg’s daughter before frontal projection of Méliès moonscape

⁹⁵⁰ The verse is 1. Corinthians 13: 2-3.

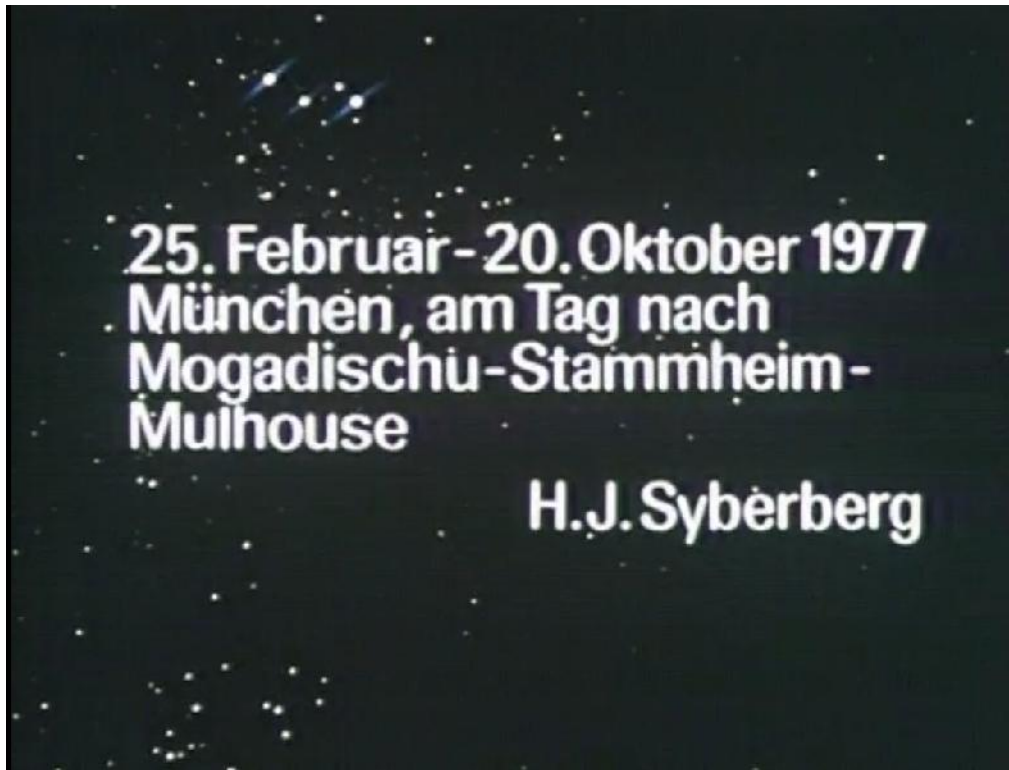


Figure IV-36 – Invocation of German Autumn in closing credits

Santner (and, more mildly, Sontag) therefore rightly critique Syberberg for not fulfilling the promise of his film but, rather, turning mourning into a melancholic repetition compulsion.⁹⁵¹ Due to the film's strategy of "ritual dispersion of anxiety [and sovereign aura] by means of relentless accumulation of visual detail and the sheer verbal spell sustained throughout the film," it can only be ended by a leap into the realm of science fiction, a black hole.⁹⁵² Such a move allows the filmmaker to preserve (or at least look one last time on) all of the supposedly 'transitional

⁹⁵¹ "The ceaselessness of the allegorical action in *Hitler* seems to be primarily a function of the principle of contagion at the core of Syberberg's vision of the fallenness of the German language and imagination, that is, the pollution by Nazism of the utopian imagination...In such a vision there can be no real place of rest...Melancholy is a sort of chronic liminality; one becomes, as it were, addicted to the homeopathic drug, uses transitional objects in order to block, rather than to facilitate, transition into a 'sobered' space of object relations...What Syberberg finally seems to be lamenting is, to put it somewhat crudely, that Hitler gave the death drive a bad name." Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 146-7. Friedländer makes a similar critique. Friedländer, 95-8. Sontag, acknowledging the compulsive elements of the film's conclusions, softens the blow in a more suspect manner (also, thereby, implicating the audience): "The film is itself the creation of a world, from which (one feels) its creator has the greatest difficulty in extricating himself—as does the admiring spectator; [author's note: I can only disagree] this exercise in the art of empathy produces a voluptuous anguish, an anxiety about concluding." Sontag, 163-4. I would, contend, at the end of seven hours, the viewer is far more anxious about the possibility of the film's never concluding.

⁹⁵² Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 147. Sontag, 164.

objects' employed throughout the film. Hitler, as the film asserts, might be gone, but Syberberg remains wholly attached to the negatively signified transcendental content of German *myth*.⁹⁵³ "The intermediate area" of melancholy, a chronic liminality in which continued play with transitional objects blocks the transition back into a more "'sobered' space of object relations," "is in a sense the only habitable space for a Syberberg."⁹⁵⁴

As I have shown throughout this analysis, in addition to an imaginary cinematic space of play, Syberberg's is also an *architectural* 'theater of memory,' equally attached to and, to a lesser extent, invested in disenchanting (decathecting) its archival objects and after-images. That is, with deconstructing the symbolic spaces, images, and memories still invested with the 'flesh' of Hitler's absent body; by revealing that both body and space never existed, but were only narcissistic projections of Germany's own (political) ego, an intermedial fiction.⁹⁵⁵ I thus propose that we apply some pressure to Syberberg's remediation of the Third Reich's architectural archive—investigate whether it, in fact, managed to destroy or demystify its objects, to purge Germany of its (specular) fascination with this fetishized, phantasmatic component of the Hitler-Mythos, his spectral, architectural 'body of work.' Did *Our Hitler* do anything to curb West Germany's pathological behavior in the present (the political crises to which it periodically alludes), to undermine or end the commercial reproduction and nostalgic attachment to Hitler, to revise the public's narrative and historical perspective on the NS past (from its current kitsch-spectacle), to revitalize its modern myths and romantic aesthetics, or renew its cinematic public sphere?

⁹⁵³ Elsaesser writes, "Syberberg wants to rediscover art, this time imitating not the heroic self-and world-denying stances of German idealism, but one that builds on the kitsch debris of history, the material residue of the consequences of such heroism. Modern myth, as it appears in literature and totalitarian politics...in the mythomania of the late 19th century the classical bourgeois ideology of self-transcendence is preserved, but negatively, as the [modern] aesthetics of self-estrangement, bombast and decadence." "Myth as the Phantasmagoria of History H. J. Syberberg, Cinema and Representation," 116.

⁹⁵⁴ Santner, "Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg," 147-9.

⁹⁵⁵ Not unlike Speer's comments in *Erinnerungen*, analyzed in the preceding chapter, but with a more critical eye.

IV. Conclusion: Repetition with Change? The Intermedial Architecture of West Germany's Representational Politics on the Eve of the Historikerstreit

Having thus far taken Syberberg's film cycle on its own terms—let us now, in conclusion, evaluate, with some assistance from Dominick LaCapra, whether it fulfills its stated aims (both mass cultural and metaphysical) of 'mourning' or 'working through' the NS past and then widen our lens and situate it within the politicized media landscape of West Germany in the late 1970s. All psychoanalytic processes of 'working through' trauma, of which mourning is only one particular kind, as articulated by LaCapra, are intimately bound up with repetition.⁹⁵⁶ Importantly, however, the goal is to produce repetition with *difference*—to “permit [and promote] desirable change.”⁹⁵⁷ That is, on the one hand, the patient must stop 'acting out' the past—i.e. “action in which the subject, in the grip of his unconscious wishes and phantasies, relives these in the present with a sensation of immediacy which is heightened by his refusal to recognize their source and their repetitive character.”⁹⁵⁸ Clearly Syberberg identifies this repetition compulsion with the nostalgic reproduction of the NS spectacle, centered on Hitler; equally clearly he does not resolve it. But moreover, on the other hand, the *change* produced by this process has to be “desirable”; it must “enable (while never ensuring) a viable role for critical judgement and responsible action,” fostering an ethical and empathetic disposition, conscious of past, in all its complexity, tragedy, and unknowability.⁹⁵⁹ To illustrate, LaCapra cites Saul Friedländer's comments regarding the ethical responsibility of (and emotional risks undertaken by) historians writing about the *Shoah*.

⁹⁵⁶ “...acting-out may be necessary and perhaps never fully overcome. Indeed, it may be intimately bound up with working through problems.” LaCapra, 205. He goes on to theorize this assertion in reference to Lacan and Freud. See: *ibid.*, 206-10.

⁹⁵⁷ He quotes Laplanche and Pontalis's assertion that, “working through is undoubtedly a repetition, albeit one modified by interpretation [or commentary] and—for this reason—liable to facilitate the subject's freeing himself from repetition mechanisms,” continuing, “working-through is not a purely intellectual process but requires a form of work involving not only affect but the entire personality.” *Ibid.*, 209.

⁹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 208.

⁹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

The problem they face is to establish balance between an affective response to the events about which they write, and the risk of emotional ‘numbness’; thus requiring a kind of oscillation between reconstructing history and deconstructing the form in which it appears (as a narrative of depersonalized authority). LaCapra writes, “In a sense, what is suggested here is the simultaneous acceptance of two contradictory moves: the search for ever-closer historical linkages and the avoidance of a naive historical positivism leading to simplistic and self-assured historical narrations and closures.”⁹⁶⁰ Applied to the case of Hitler in West Germany, in order to process and behave ethically regarding history (of the identification with the Führer and its violent consequences), the past must be linked to and contextualized with its material context and across different frameworks of experience; history must illuminate his *relationships* to other structures of power, belief, economy, aesthetics, etc., while preserving the complexity of past events and their development in their representation as narrative—i.e. not reducing them to the platitudes and easy morals of myth.⁹⁶¹ Furthermore, this work should differentiate between and, as the Mitscherlichs insisted, “criticize the inclination to remain invested in...unworthy objects.”⁹⁶²

Syberberg may have, clearly, intended to reveal Hitler as one such ‘unworthy’ object—yet, as noted above, he wanted to do so while retaining and *restoring* the value of a host of nationalist, radical, romantic artistic traditions (those associated with a simultaneously bellicose and bourgeois masculine ideal and mythos, originating at the end of the 19th century), which could no longer be viewed without skepticism (by the left) or, it seemed, prurient fascination (by the mainstream). In other words, *Our Hitler* wants to have it both ways: to preserve Germany’s grand ‘myths’ while simply symbolically erasing or undoing their modern appropriations by Hitler and Hollywood,

⁹⁶⁰ Friedländer quoted in Lacapra 212

⁹⁶¹ Thereby, also preserving the memory of lost possibilities, as in Alexander Kluge’s film practice see: chapter iv.

⁹⁶² LaCapra, 214.

replacing them with Syberberg's own bombastic, radical refusal of capitalist decadence and frivolity. If the public wanted Hitler, Syberberg would (in the style of Brecht) give them porno and call it Wagner—and, in the process, polemically assert his own artistic genius on an international stage. Let's take a closer look at what's wrong with this picture.

Our Hitler—and a number of other significant, mainstream and *avant garde* artworks concerning the NS past produced in West Germany during the late 1970s—can be read as attempts to stabilize and restore a form of representational politics (or politically inflected mode of representation) and artistic identity, which was strongly associated with a phallogentric ideology, masculine ideal of bourgeois subjectivity, and was, furthermore, deeply intertwined with the 'contaminated' (and/or destroyed) architectural heritage and modern media technologies (film, in particular).⁹⁶³ We observed the beginning of this process in the preceding chapter, with the rehabilitation of Albert Speer through the success of his memoirs. It is also evident, to a lesser extent, in Fest's *eine Karriere*; though there it appears negatively, in the displacement of the pathological desire for and identification with Hitler onto the female body—figured as both 'body politic' in its most hysterical form and naive film-viewer, vulnerable to its seductive images.⁹⁶⁴ Its continuation, as Paul Jaskot has described (though in less gendered terms), was further to be seen in the shifting notion of the (male) perpetrator, negotiated in representation in the relationships between fathers and sons, evinced by the paintings of Anselm Kiefer—which "had its corollary in

⁹⁶³ My argument, here, draws from Silverman's position regarding the 'shattered' status of *vraisemblance* following the second World War, strongly identified with masculinity, and the subsequent work of film to either stabilize or repudiate questions of specularly and subjectivity in relation to forms of ideological power. See: fn835. She also notes Elsaesser's description of "a subjectivity specific to fascism, whose prototype is 'the German petit-bourgeois, identifying himself with the State, and making a public spectacle of his good behavior and conformism.'" Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*, 129. This description aligns with the Mitscherlich's comments on the lack of internalization of democracy by the West German public, discussed in the previous chapter. It, however, does not so much describe Syberberg's position as its inverse. Nevertheless, the grand artistic tradition of *refusal*, associated most strongly with romanticism and Germany's radical modernists (including Ernst Jünger and Thomas Mann, but also Wagner) can also be read, I claim, not as a marginalized subject position within the dominant ideological fiction of German modernity but, rather, its narcissistically inflected mirror image, registered in the nostalgia for a masculine identified figure of 'authority in uniform,' who is both revolutionary politician and artist.

⁹⁶⁴ See: *ibid.*, 45-7. and *The Acoustic Mirror : The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema*.

politics, particularly with the ascension of Kohl and the CDU,” and which resulted in the abstraction of both the NS perpetrator *and victim* as subjects (in a dual sense, of discourse and representation).⁹⁶⁵ We might assert that this abstraction first begins in the 1970s with the purely symbolic representation of the (marginalized) subject positions identified with Nazi Germany’s victims: both women and Jews.⁹⁶⁶

If, in Fest’s film, women are reduced to screaming, crying hordes or, as in the case of Eva Braun, naive participant-audience and silent objects of mystery, in Syberberg, the feminine is reduced to a silent, infantilized observer—his daughter—or to a sexualized object of the public’s pornographic, cinematic gaze.⁹⁶⁷ In either case, the consumer of the image, like the producer, is undoubtedly implicitly gendered male. Indeed, it is truly remarkable the degree to which women are erased from the ‘new discourse on Nazism’ and its focalizing perspective—save for their

⁹⁶⁵ Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 115. Jaskot is, however, keenly attendant to the disappearance and abstraction of women from this discourse and its representational forms. Ibid., 98-102. Andreas Huyssen’s readings of Kiefer’s paintings makes a complimentary argument—though he more acutely attends to Kiefer’s rehabilitation of a mythical notion of artistic, painterly identity (only implicitly coded masculine in my own reading), rather than the vicissitudes of male kinship within the family structure, as in Jaskot. See: Huyssen, "Anselm Kiefer: The Terror of History, the Temptation of Myth." Huyssen, importantly for underlining my point here, writes that, “There are especially striking parallels between Kiefer’s treatment of fascist imagery and Syberberg’s major films,” though he is referring to accusations leveled at both artists of “sympathizing with fascism.” Ibid., 27. I would counter that the ‘fascistoid’ dimension of either artist—to the extent it can even be claimed to exist, since the two are both obvious in their explicitly negative stance re Nazism—is to be found in their dogmatic adherence to and veneration of Germany’s Teutonic and idealist traditions, exemplified by Wagner and, in Kiefer, also by Heidegger. See also: Matthew Biro, *Anselm Kiefer and the Philosophy of Martin Heidegger*, Contemporary Artists and Their Critics (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁹⁶⁶ Friedländer makes much the same point regarding women: “the erotic dimension of this fascination has many components. On the first level, an erotic relationship of a female...who symbolizes the victims with a man identified with the hangman has all the force of desire despite ideology. On the second level, the relationship is sustained, at least for the viewer, by the implicit symbolic assets both sides bring to the situation, especially so in the case of the man.” Friedländer, 77. Though, as noted below, his primary focus is on the problematic or often entirely absent representations of Nazi Germany’s Jewish victims.

It is surely too reductive of a reading of Kiefer’s famous paintings, *Margarethe* (1981) and *Sulamith* (1983), the latter of which depicts the interior crypt of Kreis’s Soldatenhalle, to suggest that they encapsulate the reduction of Germany’s victims into two symbolic archetypes (a feminized ‘body politic’ and the Jews), which are then figured only in abstract representation—and yet, the thought nevertheless presents itself. Jaskot writes of the paintings, which he historicizes in reference to West Germany’s conservative turn, that they “pose a question as to whether understanding the perpetrator was an issue of articulating the agency of individuals...or a matter increasingly of representation, of a turn to cultural abstraction...Binary opposition, symbolism, cultural expression, memorialization, and historical abstraction: these are the artistic terms Kiefer uses to stage his tragedy of the intertwined fate of Margarete and Sulamith. These terms avoid the more explicit political signs and the thematization of particular militarist policies of [his] early works and evacuate a specific agency in favor of a cultural and allegorical turn...brought...together...most definitively in the architecturally inspired paintings of the early 1980s.” Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*, 84, 106. These paintings, it’s worth noting and is explored in detail by Huyssen, were the first of Kiefer’s works to receive a widely positive reception in West Germany.

⁹⁶⁷ Other than Syberberg’s daughter, only a single female body appears on stage throughout the duration of the film: a nude woman, holding scales, on which lay a number of grotesque, castrated phalluses.

appearance as its silent victims.⁹⁶⁸ They are, thereby, particularly excluded and written out of the equation as *both co-producers and perpetrators of Nazism*. Despite his documentary made only three years earlier on Winifred Wagner, and its critical portrayal of her instrumentality in staging some of the Third Reich's most hallowed public rituals in Bayreuth and her personal intimacy with Hitler as private everyman (sustaining his myth), Syberberg now seemed intent on stripping her presence from the Wagnerian-Mythos altogether (along with all of the composer's female protagonist, since there is no Brünnhilde, Isolde, or Kundry anywhere within the film cycle, despite their indispensability to Wagner's canonical works). Likewise, beyond Fest's anonymized inclusion of footage from Riefenstahl's films, Syberberg performatively refuses to show a single one of her frames. And, again, though Speer may have been a shade of his former self in *Our Hitler*, Gerdy Troost was nowhere to be found (though her interior designs offer the backdrop for much of the Berghof sequence). Finally, as in Fest, there is not the faintest whiff of the everyday female perpetrator in Syberberg's cycle—a Hilde Lächert, for example—nor even a female consumer of his spectacular mimicry of the 'Hitler-wave' and its Disney-fied commodities—Kern and Sperr's feminized, homo-socially inflected cavorting and can-canning alone does the job.⁹⁶⁹

The Nazis' Jewish victims underwent a similar process of near-systematic marginalization and erasure as actual historical subjects, often re-appearing, instead, in antisemitic representations gesturing toward "the triumphant Jew," who somehow (spuriously) emerges from this history not only unscathed but in a better position than before. "In other cases," Friedländer writes, "it is his [the Jew's] absence that is so striking," invoking Speer's memoirs and Fest's film, though the

⁹⁶⁸ The overlap between symbolic and actual images of violence is part of their tendency to veer into the voyeuristic and pornographic, for example, one of the few atrocity photos in *Our Hitler*, which is also seen in Fest, is the famous image of a Ukrainian Jewish woman, stripped and beaten, kneeling amid the crowd enacting the pogrom. This is a detail Sontag notes but then seemingly forgets in relation to Syberberg, as explained by Friedländer, and critically placed by him in comparison with Resnais distinctly un-pornographic representation of NS violence. Friedländer, 96.

⁹⁶⁹ Likewise, the homo-eroticism of the extended masseur scene with Himmler finds resonance with the transformation of the SA purge into a gay orgy in Visconti.

observation also applies to Syberberg.⁹⁷⁰ Yet the change in present behavior accomplished by the work of mourning or working through, as noted at the outset and throughout the last few chapters, should both enable the selection of a new, healthy object of desire and, perhaps most importantly of all, *empathy* for others who have also been wounded by historical trauma. LaCapra writes,

“the difficult problem for public education and practice [was] to reorient both emotion and value in the direction of the victims who [in contrast to Hitler] are indeed deserving objects of mourning. In this sense, any attempt to facilitate processes of mourning and to further the emergence of viable public rituals would require an effective critique of anti-Semitism and related forms of scapegoating and victimization.”⁹⁷¹

But this aspect of working through the past, so critical to New German Film at its inception, seemed to have been abandoned a decade later.⁹⁷² And, furthermore, absolutely crucially, this fact applied not *only* to the reproduction of the past on film.

Rather, a striking absence of empathy, let alone rational discourse, was evident throughout the Majdanek trials, for example, in the benign response to the shocking treatment of Jewish witnesses for the prosecution by Lächert’s neo-Nazi lawyer, reduced to a ‘scandal’ in the media; in the ‘shameless’ behavior and casual comportment of the accused; and in the embarrassingly lenient sentences meted out at the trial’s conclusion.⁹⁷³ While this lack of empathy surely didn’t

⁹⁷⁰ Friedländer, 109.

⁹⁷¹ LaCapra, 214.

⁹⁷² This point is made by Eric Rentschler in his retrospective reading of *Brutalität in Stein*: “[in] the late 1970s and early 1980s, when New German Film had gained stature, self-assurance, and wide recognition, we glimpse a cinema invested in recreating national identity...These films rewrite history from the present; one might speak of them as retro-scenarios, transforming history into myth, or as restaged versions of the past that exorcize the shock of that experience and thus soothe the present. Three characteristics stand out: (1) the fixation on Germany as a nation of victims and martyrs [among which Syberberg surely, inappropriately, counts himself], and an attendant identification with innocent and impotent bystanders that undercuts the Holocaust and Jewish suffering; (2) the figuration of German history as woman: as an allegory of mourning (*Our Hitler*), as the central presence and source of continuity (*Heimat* [by Edgar Reitz]), as a voice pressed into public service (*Lili Marleen* [by Fassbinder]), or as a victim of rape (*Germany, Pale Mother* [by Helma Sanders-Brahms]) – a strategy that represents the nation as a violated or vulnerable female body, a stand-in and medium for a hapless Germany; and (3) the reflection on the Nazi past as an unwitting reflection of that past...which replaces guilt with fascination, shame with shamelessness, awareness of wrongdoing with a (however unintentional) complicity with criminals.” “Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge’s *Brutality in Stone*,” 37-8.

⁹⁷³ This interlude with Bock is described in the last chapter. Of the Majdanek’s trials 16 defendants, five were cleared of all charges, two released due to health concerns, one died during proceedings; regarding the other eight, most of their sentences ranged from three to eight years, only the camp overseer, Hermann Hackmann received twelve, and Lächert ten—though she never in fact went to prison but was released at the trial’s conclusion for time served, during the Allied occupation in Poland, and in Düsseldorf during the court proceedings.

apply to the entire West German public at large—and was, in fact, commented upon with consternation by a large number of the trial’s observers, both experts and everyday people—it was nevertheless a still and increasingly *possible* response.⁹⁷⁴ It remained seemingly impervious to and unaffected by the shock and nominal ‘rebuke’ of the media, and was furthermore aligned with the broader rehabilitation of and fascination with NS ideology and its key figures in mediated, artistic production, in which, despite its best intentions, Syberberg’s film certainly participated.

It is indeed alarming to note that the abstraction and erasure of Germany’s victims and the restoration of the nation’s previous dominant fictions and masculine-gendered cultural norms and phallic signifiers coincided with—and was almost certainly related to—what Claus Heinrich Meyer would dub in 1980 the “Hitler-Veredelung.”⁹⁷⁵ (Fig. VI-37) The article from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, which employs the iconic image of a be-toga-ed Führer rising from Wagner’s grave (though it scarcely mentions Syberberg’s film), reflects this fact in the language of its critique. Meyer provides a critical overview (relatively indiscriminate in its objects) of the student movements’ rebellion against the “Faschismus der Väter,” the (necessary) de- tabooization of NS media, and (more problematic) resurrection of repressed ideological beliefs by the commercial market, abetting the rise of neo-Nazism and antisemitism. In particular, he indicts Speer and Fest as the driving motor of the amplified fascination with Hitler—helping turn ‘Nostalgie’ into ‘Nekrophilie’—submerging the issue in sensationalism and spectacle. He writes,

“Es war ja nicht nur schwieriger und mühsamer sondern gefährlicher, den Ursachen nachzugehen, wie es zu Hitler gekommen war; es war erfolgssprechender, in einer immer mediengerechteren Darstellung fasziniert das Bild vom dämonischen Führer wieder und wieder zu zeichnen, auszumalen, zur Ehre des *jungfräulich zu seinem Hitler gekommenen* deutschen Volkes.”⁹⁷⁶

⁹⁷⁴ See interviews in: Fechner.

⁹⁷⁵ Meyer, “Hitler-Veredelung: Wie in Den Siebziger Jahren Das Führerbild Restauriert Wurde.”

⁹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* My emphasis.



Figure VI-37 – Claus Heinrich Meyer’s article on the front page of the Süddeutsche Zeitung’s Feuilleton

He additionally warns that through “die optische und verbale Omnipräsenz der gesamten Thematik,” of Hitler and the Third Reich, “konnten allein schon berühmten alten Kämpfern wie dann dem kleinen einfachen Volksgenossen von nebenan das Gefühl stärken, wieder wer zu sein.” At risk is not, necessarily, that fascism itself will return—stayed by the structures of the democratic state—but, rather, that identification with Nazism and the Führer was again possible, awakening “frühere Neigungen in einem älteren, lebendigen, aktiven, mächtigen, berechtigten Teil des Volkes der Bundesrepublik.” And, further, that the eroticized, sensationalized fascination with Hitler continued to obscure and drown out more sober and critical historical scholarship on the subject of Nazism, as it polarized the public sphere.⁹⁷⁷ To consider the significance of these remarks, let’s return, one last time, to Syberberg.

⁹⁷⁷ In Rancière’s terminology, the ‘new discourse’ on Nazism might be said to have shifted the coordinates of the ‘distribution of the sensible,’ the aesthetic dimension of politics determining what appears as both visible and sayable in public discourse and artistic representation alike. See: Jacques Rancière and Gabriel Rockhill, *The Politics of Aesthetics : The Distribution of the Sensible* (2019).

First, was *Our Hitler* successful in purging Germany's artistic traditions and commercialized media from the 'wound' and curse of Hitler, banishing his image from its continued reproduction and undeserved place within the cultural canon of national mythology? As evidenced by the article above, published two years after its release, the film accomplished no such thing. For one thing: Syberberg's doggedly maintained position of pariah within West Germany's public sphere ensured the film an international (rather than domestic) initial release and contentious reception once it reached home.⁹⁷⁸ Despite its longevity within the *avant garde* film canon, its impact on the mainstream public was decidedly marginal, especially when compared with Fest's film or Chomsky's *Holocaust*.

Secondly, the truly impressive and careful work of cinematic remediation aside (which, I might contend, is hardly graspable for the average viewer), Syberberg's reproduction of the NS architectural archive provides some of the film's most mesmerizing and aestheticized images—hardly in line with his burlesque debasement of the figure of Hitler, himself.⁹⁷⁹ In other words, Syberberg's film cannot be said to *dismantle* or, in the style of Kluge, *demolish* the after-images of the destroyed, symbolic spaces of the Third Reich's ideological topography—though he does at times successfully defamiliarize them. Moreover, he, much like Fest, *profited* financially and in terms of his reputation as *Auteur* through the appropriation, abstraction and, it must be said, re-mythologization of these really existing (if, in the case of Germania only as construction/demolition) sites of NS architecture, utterly obscuring their connection to the

⁹⁷⁸ The film was first shown in 1977 in London, New York, at Cannes, and then in Paris, first appearing in West Germany on July 8, 1978 as part of the Aschaffener Gespräche on Zeitgeschichte and then released on television on January 4, 1980 on ARD. Source: filmportal.de

⁹⁷⁹ Sontag, for example, writes, "The most wonderful shift [in perspective in the film] occurs in Part II, when the valet's [Krause/Lange's] forty-minute monologue with its mesmerizing trivia about Hitler's tastes in underwear and shaving cream and breakfast food is followed by Heller's musings on the unreality of the idea of the galaxies." Sontag, 153-4. As the content of Krause's monologue is, itself, far more stupefyingly dull than mesmerizing, one can surmise that it is the architectural images that produce the hypnotic effect. She, likewise, names the cabinet meeting room in the New Reich Chancellery and the Berghof terrace as "a more stylized kind of allusion. They are a ghostly décor rather than a 'real' set." *Ibid.*, 144.

regime's historical violence and bureaucratically facilitated, material implementation of its racist, authoritarian ideology.

That the flood of NS architectural images onto the West German media landscape, like the material of the 'Hitler-wave,' obfuscated and drowned out more critical investigations of this history can be shown through a comparative example in the realm of print publications—one, moreover, inflected by gender and concerning this dissertation's primary object. In 1978, Propyläen Verlag released a lavish, quarto-sized hardcover titled *Albert Speer: Architektur*, showcasing his 'body of work.'⁹⁸⁰ Not only is the volume styled, audaciously, after the manner of NS architectural publications—adopting their format, color-scheme, and integrating model-photographs and real buildings, side-by-side—its images were, furthermore, largely selected from Speer's personal archive, and featured a forward by the man himself.⁹⁸¹ The widespread success of this book, which included a stylized elevation of the terrace outside Hitler's office in the New Reich Chancellery on its inner front-cover and a large number of photographs from the original NS monograph published in 1939, should be seen in relief against the more modest stature and impact Angela Schönberger's groundbreaking history of the New Reich Chancellery from 1981.⁹⁸² It perhaps goes without saying which of these performed better on the market and served as a key site of reference for popular encounters with Speer's buildings—but the fact that the myths regarding the New Chancellery's nine-month-construction, 'unified' design principles, and supposedly seamlessly integrated bureaucratic and representational function continue to be perpetuated throughout the commercial media and historical scholarship alike today underlines the

⁹⁸⁰ See fn809. Critical commentary on this volume may be found in Reichhardt and Schäche, 19-21.

⁹⁸¹ The success of this less-well-known volume, which was reissued in 1995, can further be identified in its status as a precursor to the more famous work by Leon Krier, *Albert Speer : Architecture 1932-1942* (Estados Unidos: The Monacelli Press, 2013), originally published in 1985 and recently re-released.

⁹⁸² See, again, fn809

point.⁹⁸³ Thus, over the course of the 1970s and into the 1980s, in part through their cinematic reproduction and remediation in an attempt to deconstruct the Hitler-Mythos, the representational fragments of the key architectural sites of NS ideology became, like the Führer, symbolic artifacts, objects of myth, utterly, entropically decontextualized from the Third Reich's lived reality and legacy of violence—both as it existed in the past and as it was recapitulated in the present.

I will return, momentarily, to this observation, but first, it bears mentioning, as the example of Schönberger's work shows, that the masculine-inflected representation of the NS past and its 'working through' (which both sustained and restored the dominant fiction of male-identified political and artistic subjectivity) was not the only game in town. Indeed, their disappearance into symbolic representation notwithstanding, women were key producers of both critical scholarship and *avant garde* artworks on the subject of Nazism—Syberberg's own assistant director and editor, Jutta Brandtstaedter, for example, though her work disappears behind his relentless self-promotion and his film's phallogentric navel-gazing *cum* black hole—and central participants in West Germany's public sphere and political discourse. Though their role as political subjects, as suggested by the highly myopic view of cultural production outlined here, might have seemed irreparably marginalized, this was in no way the case on the ground. Ulrike Meinhof was, of course, not only an indispensably significant player in public discourse and the leftist media throughout the RAF crisis but also the first founding member to be imprisoned by the state in 1972—and the first among the inmates to commit suicide, as she was found hanging in her cell on May 9, 1976.⁹⁸⁴ Likewise, Gudrun Ensslin, along with Raspe and Baader, could not be erased from recent political events, despite their deaths on October 18, 1977—and it was largely through

⁹⁸³ One is tempted to say that the biggest disservice done by Germany to the architectural history of National Socialism was that, in general, they allowed Speer to write it himself with little pushback or contradiction.

⁹⁸⁴ Gerhardt, 136.

Gudrun's sister, Christiane's advocacy that the group was ultimately granted "a proper burial regardless of their political actions" by Stuttgart mayor, Manfred Rommel.⁹⁸⁵

That *Deutschland im Herbst* highlights this very fact is, in part, what makes this alternate answer to the 'German Autumn' produced by the New German Cinema a far superior, more targeted and critical response, and more capable narrative, regarding its invocation of the link between the fascist past and the present political chaos, in comparison with Syberberg's cycle.⁹⁸⁶ The film's collaborative aesthetic consciously incorporates the work of female filmmakers, most crucially, the deft editing of Beate Mainka-Jellinghaus, but also co-director Katja Rupé.⁹⁸⁷ Moreover, its narrative expanded the range of both classical and modern myths— importantly, *Antigone*, Kluge's Gabi Teichert, and Rosa Luxembourg—in the documentary and fictionalized remediation of present political events through the lens of the past.⁹⁸⁸ Syberberg's solipsistic, phallo-centric act of divestiture, restoring the media and myths that might support the renewal of Germany's radical, masculine, artistic subjectivity, recently besmirched by Hitler and Hollywood, thus appeared against the backdrop of the symbolic investment in *other, real* bodies, possessed of vastly different forms of (often marginalized) identity, which his film entirely elides (along with any sustained critical attention to the present). Yet the risk remained, nonetheless, that their

⁹⁸⁵ Ibid., 142. Hence, Gerhardt Richter's painting series *Oktober 18, 1977* regarding the group's deaths gives the women equal weight.

⁹⁸⁶ Syberberg, however, dismisses their efforts owing to their use of a televised aesthetic, which he deems incapable of capturing the mythical spirit of Germany's 'woundedness.' He writes, "Nun entstand ein Film zu diesem Thema mit dem Title: «Deutschland im Herbst» von Kollegen meiner Generation, zu der Schuld, der größten unserer Gegenwart, die auf eine andere zurückgeht. Wie aber sollen wir Schuld darstellen ohne Konzept? Ohne ästhetische metaphysische Kontrolle und Verantwortung?" Syberberg, *Hitler, Ein Film Aus Deutschland*, 15.

⁹⁸⁷ Gerhardt names Mainka-Jellinghaus and Kluge equally responsible for the montage structure. Gerhardt, 139.

⁹⁸⁸ For commentary on Gabi Teichert and Kluge's subjectivization of his female protagonist, see: Hansen, 66-8. Volker Schlöndorff's section of *Deutschland im Herbst* features a conference between two filmmakers and a room full of television producers in Munich, wringing their hands at the potentially 'inflammatory' prospect of showing Sophocles's classic drama, as it might be too resonant with current, political events.

position within the political and public sphere might be drowned or shoved out of view by the rehabilitation of a predominantly masculine myth of historical, national, and artistic identity.⁹⁸⁹

Allow me to thus highlight two things in closing: first, despite the rather narrow focus of this chapter, the political and representational landscape of West Germany's mediated public sphere in the lead up to the *Historikerstreit* was distinctly *heterogeneous*. While often reduced to the male figureheads of artistic production—Fest, Speer, Syberberg, Kiefer, Kluge, and so on—its population was far more diverse in both its demographic make-up and its array of aesthetic approaches. The point I am trying to make here is that *hegemony*, the attempt to establish a “privileged mode of representation by which the image of social consensus is offered to members of a social formation and within which they are asked to identify themselves,” is not a zero sum game.⁹⁹⁰ It is, rather, a distinctly heterogenous site of *struggle* and *contestation*, which largely takes place in representation and is defined, in a democratic society—which, it cannot be denied, West Germany was, for better or worse—by a plurality of positions.⁹⁹¹ Which is to say, that despite the efforts of certain artistic figures to establish their own works as definitive accounts of history and its significance, there was neither a sole dominant narrative nor central ‘symbolic object’ of National Socialism to speak of. Rather, its fetishized objects and modes of appearance were manifold; which is perhaps the best that could be said of the so-called ‘Hitler-Boom,’ that its mediated objects offered the possibility for competing interpretations. Thus, the appearance of the

⁹⁸⁹ One might surmise that the predominance of the narrative of divestiture in the discourse on Hitler, evident in Syberberg and Fest's works, might have something to do with this marginalization.

⁹⁹⁰ Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*, 30.

⁹⁹¹ Quoting Chantal Mouffe, Silverman writes, “that a class is hegemonic only ‘when it has managed to articulate to its discourse the overwhelming majority of ideological elements characteristic of a given social formation,’ thereby suggesting that ideological struggle takes place in relation to the representational and signifying elements which are not the sole preserve of any one class, but which constitute a kind of *vraisemblance*.” *Ibid.*, 27.

NS past continued to shift and develop over the next decade—and, thankfully, to adopt a more ethical, empathetic disposition regarding Germany’s victims following the *Historikerstreit*.⁹⁹²

Building off of this point, the second regards the fate of the Führer-Mythos and the intermedial archive of NS architecture. As Hitler, himself, dissolved into the still-continuously-circulating repertoire of post-modern imagery—appearing as both demonic, fascinating Führer and banal, bourgeois caricature—the after-images of his architecture, built, unbuilt, and destroyed, likewise took on a life of their own. However, these objects, too, as noted above, had been displaced, along with the body they once framed, into the realm of representation (and, occasionally, mythologization), and were thus abstracted from the material reality of the NS past, thereby functionally disappearing as recognizable sites within the landscape of the present. As for their physical counterparts, most significantly the New Reich Chancellery, this process of fragmentation continued apace (almost like a mirror of its mediated representation). In fact, when the Federal Republic was faced with another return of the repressed, this time in archeological form, once the Führerbunker’s site was uncovered by the fall of the Berlin Wall—a contaminating wound in the re-unified topography of German democracy—the entropic disintegration of Hitler’s space of Führertum into isolated, metonymic, mythical fragments, rebounded from representation into the physical world, scattering its disarticulated artifacts around the city’s mediated landscape of national memory.

⁹⁹² This point, regarding the construction of Germany’s ‘Gedenkstätten’ and incorporation of sites of historical violence into the national topography will be discussed in the conclusion.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Remediating the New Reich Chancellery & Führerbunker in the Memorial Landscape of 'New Berlin'

To conclude this dissertation, it will be helpful to retrace our steps, and consider the role of film, architecture, and the New Reich Chancellery within the development of National Socialism and the 'working through' of its cultural legacy in the Federal Republic. Let's do so in reverse order, beginning with Syberberg, as this will bring us from the general to the specific, from the broader, cinematic remediation of the NS architectural archive, deconstructing the mythology of Führertum in images of Hitler's buildings, back to our original object, the New Chancellery, and the historical, material, and medial conditions of its construction and destruction, allowing us to reflect on the implications of its after-life as a symbol and site of memory.

Although the representational remediation of Hitler and his space(s) of power continued long after *Our Hitler's* release in 1977, I end my analyses here, since, despite the film's shortcomings, Syberberg seems to best understand the object of his critique to be both the *mythology* and *memory* of National Socialism. The 'materials' of such nebulous concepts are sustained, archived, and reproduced in mass media, the 'culture industry,' and consumed as images by a public with an ostensibly shared, national, historical tradition, however at odds it may be over the appropriate form for representing its aesthetics, politics, and history at any given time.

(Inter)Medial artifacts, fragments of this highly politicized archive lend themselves to criticism and deconstruction; their representational forms and strategies may be turned back on themselves, used to process and interrogate the past, deconstruct history's narratives and myths, and address its negative after-effects on the present. On the one hand, as I showed throughout the last chapter, this renders artifacts of specific historical forms—like the architectural after-images of Führertum, the New Chancellery, the Berghof, and 'Germania'—broadly applicable for addressing a number of wide-ranging issues and ideas (aesthetic, metaphysical, psychoanalytic, political, etc.). Yet, on the other, and particularly evident in this case, the appropriation of the NS past's 'mythical' images and memories, however useful, abstracts these fragments from the material reality of both past and present, turning history (and politics) into spectacle, (cinematically) mediated experience, and excluding the plurality of the 'body politic' from the frame, especially its more marginal subjects (i.e. women, Jews).

Furthermore, such remediation may depend on an esoteric, intellectualized, symbolic mode of reading, hardly self-evident to the uninitiated viewer.⁹⁹³ Indeed, central to Syberberg's critical project is deconstructing and defamiliarizing the 'Myth of History,' its figures, landscapes, dominant narratives and styles, vulgar oversimplifications, and their simultaneously suspect and broad mass *appeal* in 'auratic' representation. This is the point of utilizing the New Reich Chancellery's images to restage Nazism as a 'Studiogeschichte'—film may be 'the continuation of life by other means,' but life goes on without the presence of a camera and is far more complex and heterogeneous than it appears in representation. History, therefore, (like a building, reconstructed in photographs) consists only of fragmented images that, if we are to understand

⁹⁹³ I often, over the course of writing this chapter, had the unsettling feeling that I was the ideal audience for Syberberg's film—having immersed myself in the archive and cultural discourse of National Socialism and its postwar reception for the last few years and, previous to that, having worked as a former intern at Seattle Opera specializing in educational outreach for their annual Wagner program. This realization does not favor the film's general accessibility.

them, must be more closely investigated, dissected, remediated, placed in context with the bodies and myths that inhabit and infest its destroyed, representational spaces of memory.

However, as I argued with regard to Syberberg's overall project, the manner of mediation, the style and forms in which past events and destroyed worlds are committed to memory matter tremendously, especially in the case of Nazism, which demands (or at least it should) a certain *ethics* of representation. That is, an interrogation of *who* is remembered, *why*, and *how* these memories appear in representation is necessary to do justice to history's victims, to avoid simply repeating (rather than also working through) the past. In a sense, Syberberg cannot have things both ways: it is impossible to dismantle the Hitler-Myth while leaving intact Germany's veneration and aestheticization of history and (masculine) national identity more generally, by 'purging' them of debased forms. For one thing, the work done by the film is purely metaphorical—the meaning of the NS archive and its symbolic objects may be open to reinscription in films like Syberberg's, but its media, and the other memories, ideological values, and meanings attached to them have not in any sense *gone away*. A key example, the New Chancellery and Berghof were physically destroyed in the aftermath of the war, but their empty sites continued to attract visitors and their intermedial archive repeatedly returns to haunt the landscape of the present.

For another thing, as Friedländer and LaCapra point out, it is in the very nature of historical representation to assume a depersonalized perspective of authority, which erases contradiction and all too often seeks for simple closures and explanations to irrevocably complex events, which defy understanding. This was not only a central issue of the *Historikerstreit*, but an ongoing debate in the Federal Republic since its founding in 1949—one pertinent to the status and representation of NS architecture in general and the New Reich Chancellery in particular. Namely, how is it possible to competently and empathetically reconstruct and deal with the NS past in all its complexity,

when the media of its representation, the vehicle for this project of memorialization, gets in the way of its critical aims—because the archive is hopelessly fragmented, incomplete and consists largely of propaganda, which seeks to fascinate and mythologize, not interrogate the past?

Syberberg's film thus must be read with reference to the historical, socio-political, and cultural context of its production and reception, which I outlined and analyzed in chapter v.⁹⁹⁴ While, as I show in that chapter, the fascination with Nazism and, especially, the figure of Hitler was an international phenomenon, it was an exceptionally politically charged and acute problem in West Germany in the 1970s—in which architecture and film played central, mediating roles. The 'Hitler-Boom's' development resulted, somewhat paradoxically, from the democratization of the public sphere (driven on by the politicization of the youth movement). The post-modern appropriation and sensationalism of Nazism in mass media throughout the West—focused on Hitler, framed by the NS architectural archive, facilitating the rehabilitation of other NS figures, most importantly, Speer—was specifically to be seen in West Germany in light of the continued critical, juridical, and cultural engagement with NS perpetrators by leftist intellectuals, artists, and to a lesser degree, state actors in the NS trials. Hence, the legal and psychoanalytic discourse of 'working through the past' developed concomitantly with a popular fascination with the Third Reich's history and intermedial archive, which has to this day not ceased, but which took shape in the inflammatory social conflicts following the long sixties. In this sense, *Our Hitler* responded to a populist historical rhetoric and representation that simultaneously 'normalized' (in the sense of made graspable within political and cultural norms) and sought to 'deconstruct' the NS past and

⁹⁹⁴ In contrast, readings of the film which attend only to the more metaphysical and symbolic dimensions, like Sontag's, have a tendency to universalize its representational strategies and narratives, without attending to the ways in which these respond to the specific event of the Third Reich, employ the (architectural) archive of its distinctly modern media arsenal, and refer back to its after-effects on the social fabric and commercial public sphere of the Federal Republic.

the figure of Hitler, finding its key cinematic expression and strategy of architectural remediation in Joachim C. Fest's films.⁹⁹⁵

The Führer, abetted by NS film and architecture, in the logic of *Eine Karriere* presents an extreme case of political 'mythologization.' As the source of the continuing fascination with the Third Reich, Hitler's extremity and the magnitude and efficacy of his intermedial archive of propaganda invite critical investigation, the will to clarity and understanding, which seeks to undermine this material's appeal by revealing the banal reality behind the spectacle, the man behind the myth, and the violence behind the images. Yet, as I argued in chapter v, despite best intentions, Fest's strategies skew fetishistic, in part because of their reliance on the symbolic narrative of divestiture—amplifying and reifying the very seductive, eroticized image of the Führer and his buildings, which it seeks to dismantle. They also, in their use of bodily and architectural images, problematically link specular fascination to artifacts of both NS ideology and NS atrocity. Furthermore, the film, like Speer's memoirs, makes the case for the German public as equal victims of the Third Reich, not participants in the creation of the Führer-Mythos; and it does so while reviving the fascinating, intermedial, cinematic-architectural arsenal that sustained public support.

As shown in the second half of this dissertation, NS architecture and film, two dominant media in which modern, nationalist politics are staged and visualized, became embroiled in the NS generation's backlash against the agitation of leftist intellectuals and activists on behalf of Nazism's victims. Due to their importance to National Socialism, their massive archive, ideological interlinkage and co-production, they provided objects *par excellence* in the West German inter-generational conflict and culture wars. As I argued throughout the second half of

⁹⁹⁵ Fest's domination of this dimension of Vergangenheitsbewältigung, especially in reference to Hitler, is evinced by both the longevity of his film, which is, for example, well reviewed and easily accessible on Amazon streaming, compared with Syberberg's inaccessible (in every sense) 7.5 hour long work, and Fest's reassertion as central authority on this aspect of NS history with the blockbuster success of *Der Untergang*, based on his text of the same name.

this dissertation, however, film, rather than buildings, functioned as the primary medium for ‘coming to terms with the NS past’ in the West German public sphere—though building images were central to this project. One reason for this asymmetry was the fact that the NS film archive was far more comprehensive, better documented and more fully realized (and researched) than its architectural counterpart, since the vast majority of the Third Reich’s representational buildings were never constructed or, as in the case of the New Chancellery, ultimately destroyed, and, in any event, repressed.⁹⁹⁶

Historical scholarship throughout the late 1960s and 1970s thus worked to re-/deconstruct the NS architectural archive and to expose its key sites and their interconnectedness with NS violence and the material and industrial operations of the NS state. Yet this counter-discourse was drowned out by mainstream reproductions of national (architectural) history as entertainment for popular consumption—centered on its most notorious sites/sights of Führertum. Further, physical remnants of the NS architectural topography were partially built over, erased from, or quietly embedded within the new landscape of the post-reconstruction era (or located outside the Federal Republic’s borders), as gestured to in chapter iv; a status indicative of the state’s laissez faire historicism regarding key sites of its most ‘difficult heritage.’ Thus, although West German film in the 1970s made use of the NS architectural archive, its artifacts appeared as after-images, symbols of an already-destroyed past—a phenomenon, as I claimed in chapter iv, which developed out of the cinematic strategies and rubble aesthetics of the postwar period and the Adenauer era.

⁹⁹⁶ Only extremely recently, namely since reunification, have NS architectural sites become a subject of interest and critical mediation. For example, the Topography of Terror in Berlin was founded in 1992 as a result of activism by local historians; in Nürnberg, the Stadtrat voted to establish a Dokumentationszentrum at the Parteitagsgelände in 1994, which first opened in 2001. For the history of the Topography of Terror’s establishment, see: Jennifer A. Jordan, *Structures of Memory : Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006). For the Parteitagsgelände see, of course: Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator : Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right*; Sharon Macdonald, *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2009).

The cinematic-architectural representation of memory in West German film in the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, looked remarkably different—namely because ‘working through’ the past first meant orienting oneself in a present radically different from what had immediately come before, even though it still contained evidence of the previous era. That Nazism, Hitler, and his buildings have continued to sustain interest and fascination in the decades following their destruction, is understandable since the Third Reich indeed irreversibly, dramatically, and fundamentally altered the physical, political, representational, and demographic landscape of Europe and, specifically in West Germany, the politics of representation (and representation of politics) as such. The postwar, cinematic *avant garde*, as I showed in reference to Young German Film, thus relied on architecture and its intermedial archive to polemically confront the NS generation with documentary evidence of the continuity of the present with the NS past. Filmmakers like Kluge responded critically to reconstruction, reflecting on how political, social, and cultural-aesthetic structures had changed or stayed the same since 1945; or, rather, how they had stayed the same while adopting the *appearance* of change, facilitated by cinematic and architectural production alike.

West Germany’s purported loss of memory—the forward-looking disavowal of the past and refusal to memorialize Nazism’s victims—a la Adorno and the Mitscherlichs—was thus mitigated and mediated through film and architecture, initially and most prominently in rubble films. For example, in the radical documentaries that resurrected and re-inscribed ruins in montage as evidence of the Third Reich’s destruction—made not only by New German Cinema, but internationally by Resnais and Rossellini, whose cinematic memories were initially rejected by West German audiences but later integrated and appropriated, made palatable (and fascinating) by Fest. As shown through my analysis *Brutalität in Stein* and *das ende*, cinematic-architectural

representation of the NS past in the Adenauer era already displayed hints of the simultaneously shared and oppositional aesthetic strategies deployed by the leftist and mainstream media, evident in their negotiation and mediation of history through building, ruin, and rubble images. *Avant garde* filmmakers worked to demolish the NS architectural archive's value, to produce a new cinematic aesthetic for visualizing the past and memorializing its victims in the ruins. Mainstream films likewise made use of ruins; especially Berlin's, to reassert and amplify German victimhood, while eliding the history of Germany's violence, even as its individual perpetrators were re-entering the public eye.

As I argued in chapter iv, foreshadowing the New Chancellery's and Hitler's return to prominence, each appeared at the margins of this cinematic-architectural engagement with the NS past. The destroyed New Chancellery was, in a sense, only one building image among many—although it was a singular and significant one.⁹⁹⁷ However, during the earliest period of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, memories of *other* histories and destroyed places, of Nazism's victims and sites of brutal inhumanity, were of greater importance. Kluge's careful inclusion of isolated photographs of the New Chancellery, exclusion of sites of industrialized violence *and* rubble imagery, and selective use of the Führer's image and voice gesture to the left's potential concern over arousing a defensive response to or renewed fascination with the NS past. And, as is clear from the use of the New Chancellery's ruin in *das ende*, mapping its disappearance together with the 'lost objects' of the Führer and East Berlin, such concern was well warranted. Still the belated establishment of West German memory discourse unavoidably relied on the mediation of lost NS spaces, since many of the objects in question, their images, and the circumstances of their

⁹⁹⁷ Considering the overwhelming importance of psychoanalytic discourse to 'remembering, repeating, and working through' the NS past, in line with Freud, the most highly cathected and emotionally burdened symbolic objects are often the last to be uncovered. In undoing repression or breaking through a taboo, it is hardly wise to immediately turn to the most 'contaminated' or powerful objects of memory—especially, as in this case, when they have been repressed with good reason.

disappearance had been suppressed or lost; the already ideologically charged archive hopelessly fragmented.

The chaotic historical conditions of the NS regime's collapse—including the demolition of its central space of power—therefore necessitated reconstruction through its media archive, which I partially reconstructed in chapter iii. Amid Europe's devastation in the aftermath of war and the rapidly shifting political situation, architecture was indispensable for visualizing German defeat, and asserting legitimacy of new state authorities: both occupying forces and subsequent regimes. While citizens documented their everyday experiences of the postwar—e.g. in ruin photography—they were hardly in control of the narrative or public image of recent history. As my analysis shows, ruins of Berlin's architectural landscape, the New Chancellery in particular, were valuable tools for visually, spatially, and cinematically representing Allied power and establishing a victory narrative. The occupation and representational reproduction of ruined NS prestige buildings was certainly not confined to Berlin—but not only were the New Chancellery's ruin on Wilhelmplatz and the Führerbunker exceptionally popular in this regard, they were also uniquely employed in representation by the nascent German media to reflect on national history and envision future possibilities for reconstruction. But the initially unified image and narrative of the Allied victory, as I show, disintegrated at the site of the New Chancellery, as opposition between East and West hardened, and deconstruction began on the building itself.

As the architecture disappeared, its visual archive likewise faded temporarily from view, first reemerging in the films named above. But my analysis of its demolition photographs shows that, although its documentation was ultimately buried in the archives, this event nevertheless at least initially offered the building blocks for a politicized, symbolic narrative of erasure and

Aufbau.⁹⁹⁸ That is, it framed the provisional heart of Berlin's new Soviet landscape, inhabited and (de)constructed by the new embodiment of the state (the workers). But the images never made it into circulation. Their suppression, along with the absence of comprehensive or reliable archival information documenting the process of demolition, almost certainly contributed to the persistence of the New Chancellery's mythology and ultimately amplified the 'auratic' power of its archival NS representation and association with Hitler.⁹⁹⁹ On the western side of the border, the New Chancellery's erasure was one dimension of Soviet reconstruction that met with no resistance. Its disappearance—unlike Berlin's division—was implicitly welcomed. But West Germany, for its part, also participated in the suppression of the architecture's after-images.¹⁰⁰⁰ The New Chancellery's physical destruction and its repression from representation therefore disarticulated and isolated it from Germany's architectural topography and heritage as they developed after the second World War. Ceasing to function as an architectural site and object, evincing the presence of the Hitler-State, the New Chancellery's images became instead signs of its absence, objects of loss, outlining a space of memory, the transformations and meaning of which I retraced through its cinematic remediation. Yet reconsidering the New Reich Chancellery as an architectural object,

⁹⁹⁸ Symbolic in a broader sense, and a more literal one: as the erasure of NS buildings from Berlin was far from thorough, and in fact, the various successor regimes' state architecture overlapped significantly, as discussed below. Despite repeated intentions to demolish all of the Third Reich's remnants, owing to financial and material limitations, no subsequent state has managed to do so.

⁹⁹⁹ Demolition images are just as much about building as unbuilding—and perhaps the Soviets were not eager to draw attention to the integration of the Hitler-State's representational fragments into their new capital architecture (though their presence in former East Berlin persists in rumors and legends). Or perhaps the images also suggested a preservationist mentality, of which Speer's building was implicitly undeserving. This would echo the paradoxical problem of divestiture encountered on film, the symbolic charge of Hitler's presence, left on the destroyed signifiers of Führertum. The fervor of Allied tourism and, in turn, the persistent fascination with the artifacts, fragments, and empty site of Hitler's space of power would affirm such a reading. And this fascination is not confined to representation, the fascination with physical souvenirs from the site also persists. In 2015, Thorak's bronze horses from the terrace outside Hitler's office in the New Reich Chancellery were discovered in Bad Dürkheim, outside Heidelberg. Authorities determined that they had been up for sale for up to 4 million Euro. Hitler's phone from the Führerbunker was recently listed by the Maryland auction house, Alexander Historical Auctions, in 2017 with an estimated value of \$200-300,000.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Curiously, however, while refusing to look at the New Chancellery's *ruin* on film, its presence was preserved intact in the Adenauer era on West German maps showing the other side of the border—indicative of the persistent disavowal and de-realization of the loss of the war and the defensive assertion of their 'rightful' claim to newly-Soviet territories.

contextualizing and historicizing it within the continued transformations of Germany's and, specifically, Berlin's topography is, I claim, an immensely useful and productive exercise.

As I argued in chapter ii and the introduction, it is crucial to consider not only what this building *meant*, as an image of Führertum, but also what did it *do* as a key site of NS state power; how was this function articulated in its physical structure and, even more so, through its mediated reproduction. The New Chancellery's construction, as a building but, primarily, as an image, was fundamental to representing Hitler's reorganization of state power. Reproduced as the inaugural success of Berlin's redevelopment, it implicitly legitimized sweeping reforms in industrialized urban planning, obfuscating and eliding their destructive consequences—a provisional, compensatory image, metonymically linked to the creation of a political *tabula rasa*, but concealing and ameliorating the violence of its construction. Its representational surfaces, geared toward their technological mass reproduction, concealed NS state operations, mediating their visibility in a symbolic-spatial narrative, and reifying the organization and bureaucratic articulation of the Führer's absolute power. In practice, however, the scenographic spaces of exterior and interior obscured the state's radically disordered institutional operations and allowed for Hitler's isolation, entrenchment, and protection throughout the war—along with the NS elite and everyday people who operated the regime's bureaucratic machinery, as the rest of the nation suffered the consequences of its disintegration and defeat.

Still, as I argued in chapter ii, despite the experimental nature of Hitler's transformation of the state, facilitated by the administrative and symbolic architecture of Führertum, the New Chancellery's construction and mediated representation were in no way unprecedented. Rather, as my analysis illustrates, the NS building program simply appropriated, amplified, and, indeed, radicalized modern visual strategies and technologies of architectural representation, developed

largely by the *Neues Bauen*, which were thus in no way beholden to or defined by their use under Nazism (a la ‘fascist’ architecture). What is then so remarkable about the New Chancellery is the degree to which it simultaneously evinces the uniqueness of Nazism as a fascist state—the symbolic, ideological centrality of Hitler and his mythology to its internal functioning and external support—and the regime’s dependence on and appropriation of one of the most basic tools of modern, political power: representational architecture.

It is of course true that the New Reich Chancellery has endured as a symbol due to its association with Hitler, but more important is the fact that the very establishment and continued power of the Hitler-Myth is unthinkable without this architectural frame—which was not a symbolic manifestation or sacral space of Führertum, a miracle of industrialized building, or scene of specular subjugation and/or eroticized identification with Hitler. It was, instead, a representational and administrative *building*, which he hardly ever occupied and which affirmed the most pathological dimensions of the NS state’s operation. It is these dimensions—modern, mundane, material—that have largely faded from view as a result of the New Chancellery’s destruction, buried under the layers of repeated, visual reproduction and cinematic remediation. For its demolition and transformation into an object of memory, as we have seen throughout, have not diminished but rather proven its enduring, absolute centrality to the Hitler-Mythos and its continued fascination—even as its images have operated as a central element of Hitler’s deconstruction in representation.

The fixation on the New Chancellery as icon of NS *mythology* and its use in the cinematic remediation of NS *memories* have ultimately obscured its functional use in National Socialism’s transformation of Germany’s structures of governance, political representation/representational politics, and its impact on the past and present landscape of its (now long since) reunified capital

city. For example, its strong symbolic association with Hitler has tended to suggest that the building possessed a stable, identifiable meaning, diminishing the complexity of its original use, as an experimental construction project, a provisional and problematic building, and a stage and shooting location for the production of some of National Socialism's most powerful imagery. It has further obfuscated the vicissitudes of its post-45 afterlife in representation, the significance of its ruin images, the motivations for and politicized dimensions of its destruction, and its multi-faceted use in the 'working through' and mediated reproduction of the NS past. This dissertation has thus worked to unearth and unfold a series of improvisational approaches to this particular site and structure of NS ideology and to explore their consequences: the instrumentalized construction and use of the building and its internal contradictions; its strategic post-45 appropriation, staggered demolition, and the failure to sufficiently document this process or publicize its images; and the canonization of its archive as a collection of 'dangerous' artifacts that must be repressed or deconstructed and/or, conversely, as a corpus of fascinating talismans (and consumable products) of NS history. In other words, it offers a cultural history of the post-fascist era and a genealogy of the narrativization and reinvention of its intermedial archive, oriented by its focus on a single object, inextricably intertwined with the production and persistence of the Hitler Mythos.

What this project illuminates is the continued attachment between (NS) politics and its material and medial expressions—the objects and mediators through which the symbolic charge of political ideology is made manifest—the fate of which remains indeterminate and must be examined on a case by case basis. In the particular case of the New Reich Chancellery, its subsequent development and transformation as a symbol was not halted but, rather, driven on by its material destruction. Without a physical object, accessible images, or archival documentation through which its mythology might have otherwise been 'dismantled,' confronted, or laid to rest,

the NS archive, the primary basis for the New Chancellery's posthumous reconstruction, took on a life of its own, initially unburdened by a countervailing discourse, which could have undermined this image regime's ideological messaging. Closer investigation indicates that the New Chancellery, itself, was not so much the iconic, monumental, architectural image of the Hitler-State—nor even its most important or impressive exemplar. This does not mean, however, that it is not worth our time. Rather, as I have shown, it may be employed as a point of orientation, a hermeneutic for analyzing the development of (West) Germany's relationship to the NS past. This study, therefore, illustrates how (architectural) images capture and re-channel political (and thereby ethical) relationships within a society, especially with regard to national history.

Furthermore, retracing the trajectory of the New Chancellery's post-45 afterlife can help to explain its paradoxical continued presence in representation and relative absence from the Berlin's memorial landscape, compared to other NS sites. For the building's material traces, inseparable from its sequential permutations and the agglomeration of contradictory associations and meanings, occupy a strange place within the landscape of contemporary Berlin, reconstructed as representational capital of German democracy and national memory.¹⁰⁰¹ Although historic ruptures between regimes, localized to Berlin, have erased the building and its site, the effect of its construction, destruction, and mediated reproduction are to be seen throughout the city.¹⁰⁰² Yet they are hardly unified or legible, as the federal and local governments have continued to treat this and many of NS's architectural remnants in Berlin with the same attitude of *laissez faire* historicism that has reigned in the Federal Republic since 1949. By 1991, when Berlin was reinstated as the German capital, Wilhelmplatz's redevelopment as Thälmannplatz had already

¹⁰⁰¹ To cite only a few entries in the vast literature on Berlin's memory landscape, see: Jordan, Till, Julia Hell and Johannes Von Moltke, "1999: The Cultural Logics of the Berlin Republic," *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 80, no. 1 (2005); Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*.

¹⁰⁰² Regarding the latter, *Das Wort aus Stein*, can be seen on loop in the permanent exhibition of the Berlinische Galerie and at 'Mythos Germania' from the historical society Berliner Unterwelten.

been downplayed in the city's topography by the DDR's construction of prestige Plattenbauten apartment complexes in the late 1980s flanking Wilhelmstraße. The last remnant of the former ensemble at the heart of the governmental quarter, the facade of the Soviet extension onto the NS Propaganda Ministry, is now only visible down a side street, mostly concealed behind new construction. The square's re-christening has also been reversed, and Wilhelmplatz reduced to a median.¹⁰⁰³ Within this unrecognizable context—down the length of Voßstraße, across from the Mall of Berlin on Leipziger Platz, are a kindergarten, parking lot, the Singapore embassy, and a few modern, privately owned buildings—the New Chancellery's site is subtly mediated by the names of streets, which run parallel to the north: 'In den Ministergärten' and 'An der Kolonnade.'

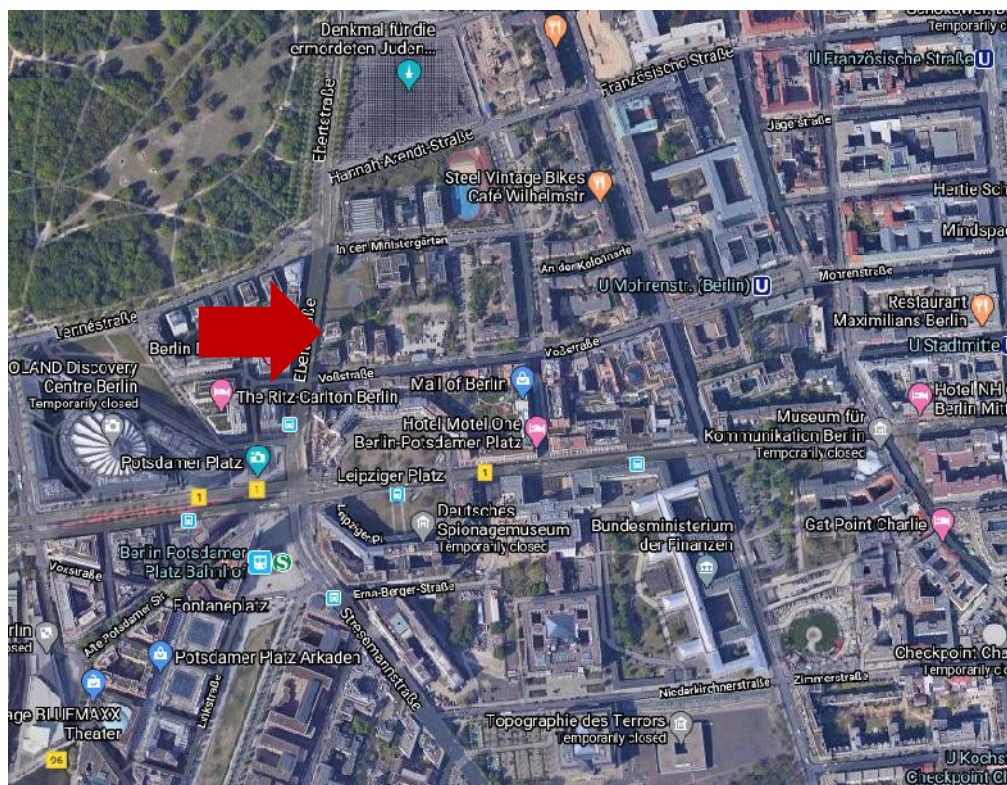


Figure VII-1 – Area surrounding the New Chancellery's former site on Voßstraße (marked with an arrow). Topography of Terror visible at bottom edge of frame, Sony Center at right, Eisenmann Holocaust Memorial at top. Source: google maps.

¹⁰⁰³ The bronze Prussian Generalfeldmarschall Leopold I, which formerly gazed at the Siedler building, now guards the entrance to the Thälmannplatz U-Bahn station, racially re-dubbed 'Mohrenstraße,' and famously tiled with marble from the Mosaic Room.

Otherwise, a sparing few photographs and histories of the building appear on isolated signs, installed as part of the Topography of Terror's 'Geschichtsmeile Wilhelmstraße,' and on a map outlining 'Berlin Voßstraße History,' directing tourists to the restaurant Peking Ente, which occupies the ground floor on the corner of Voß- and Wilhelmstraße, the former site of the Borsig Palace. An 'Infotafel' installed by the private historical society Berliner Unterwelten in 2006, with the city government's approval, marks the Führerbunker's location and shows a timeline of its construction and destruction—ending with its cinematic re-construction in Hirschbiegel's *Der Untergang*.¹⁰⁰⁴ On it, the New Chancellery goes unmentioned, though its outline is evident in the site-plan of its former bunker complex, superimposed onto a current map. Never free of tourists, individuals and groups with guides—an international lot, many Americans, who have not ceased to flock to the empty site—the anonymous area, two blocks south of Eisenmann's Holocaust Mahnmahl, nearby the reconstructed Adlon Hotel and Brandenburg Gate, fronting Pariser Platz, is a decided dead zone, a sharp with the rest of the city's central memorial district.¹⁰⁰⁵

In fact, the area is dominated by mediation of Berlin's Soviet history in the form of the missing Wall. A fragment of it stands on In den Ministergärten, nearby an outdoor exhibition of panoramic photographs installed by the Hessen government office, representative of memorialization favoring the city's more recent authoritarian past. Sites like this one, however, and the Soviet memorial in Treptower Park (also surfaced with marble from the Mosaic Room), receive a heightened symbolic, affective charge through the alleged presence of fragmented NS building materials.¹⁰⁰⁶ But the undeniable and more obvious continuity between the multiple,

¹⁰⁰⁴ Members of Berliner Unterwelten acted as consultants in the 1:1 reconstruction of the bunker as the film's set, as is noted on the sign. The film's reconstructed model of the North-South-Axis, described in the introduction, is on display at the exhibition 'Mythos Germania,' which is, itself, housed in a former NS bunker at Gesundbrunnen.

¹⁰⁰⁵ See: Till.

¹⁰⁰⁶ For the instrumentalization and overlapping of Berlin's Soviet and Nazi history in historical, museal mediation, regarding the establishment of the Sachsenhausen Gedenkstätte, see: Günter Morsch, "Wider Die Instrumentalisierung Der Geschichte: Die Neue

architectural layers of Berlin's past and present—the few remaining government buildings constructed by the Nazis, utilized by the DDR and, now, the Federal Republic—seems apparently too controversial to risk official recognition.¹⁰⁰⁷

The Berlin government's *laissez faire* disposition regarding its most 'toxic' NS sites, especially its bunkers, and the literal difficulty of their removal, resulted in a sell-off of these structures to private owners.¹⁰⁰⁸ Two of these, at the Gesundbrunnen U-Bahn and nearby the Anhalter Bahnhof, now play host to architectural exhibitions of the Nazi past: Berliner Unterwelten's 'Mythos: Germania,' and the private publishing company and historical society 'Berlin Story's' 'Dokumentation: Führerbunker.' The former, a targeted deconstruction of Speer's redevelopment plans, highlighting his involvement in the persecution, deportation, and exploitation of its Jewish population and use of concentration camp labor, hews to the ideological critical style of NS architectural remediation—and concludes with a display of fragments of the New Chancellery's facade before an oversized photograph of the ruined Mosaic Room from 1945. The latter, decidedly sensationalist, offers a docu-tainment style exhibition; its attractions include a miniature model of the Führerbunker, dissected to show its interior and a 1:1 mock-up of the set of Hitler's bunker-office from *Der Untergang*, both contained behind glass. Both exhibitions are popular with tourists and, one can assume, profitable (the latter charges 12 euro).

The New Chancellery's present-absence and after-effects on the contemporary topography are also more generally palpable in negative form: in the departure from traditional, historicist

Deutsche Erinnerungspolitik Seit 1990," *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* 60, no. 9 (2015). For the affective-architectural dimension of site-specific NS exhibitions, see: Heckner.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Down Wilhelmstraße, the former Luftfahrtministerium, designed by Ernst Sagebiel and constructed over 1935-6, was reoccupied by the DDR House of Ministries, and now houses the Federal Finance Ministry. Though it stands across Niederkirchnerstraße, opposite the Topography of Terror, the building is unmarked with regard to its NS history. Rather, the structure is framed at the outdoor installation by a fragment of the Wall and, on its forecourt on Leipzigerstraße, home to a memorial for the uprising of June 17, 1953.

¹⁰⁰⁸ This discourse of 'toxicity' surrounded the decision of what to do with the Führerbunker's remains in 1992 in the *Feuilleton*.

building styles for government and prestige architecture (though not for commercial construction). In West and ‘New’ Berlin, international modernist and postmodernist buildings reign, respectively. Around the corner from the much-maligned Sony center on Potsdamer Platz, the site cleared by demolition for Runder Platz is now occupied by the monumental, asymmetrical geometry of Hans Scharoun’s Staatsbibliothek and Philharmonie, the lackluster ensemble of the Kulturforum, and, on the Landwehr Kanal, the massive cantilevered roof and glass pavilion of Mies van der Rohe’s New National Gallery. The still tenuous status of representational state buildings is nowhere more apparent than at the planned site of Adolf-Hitler-Platz on the Spree-Bogen, where Helmut Kohl’s Bundeskanzleramt was constructed over 1997-2001. It forms the sole completed element of architects Axel Schultes’s and Charlotte Frank’s grander plan to heal the rift between East and West in a ‘Band des Bundes’: bisecting the spectral North-South orientation of Speer’s plan and the site of the Wall with an ensemble of new governmental center, stretching from Moabit to Friedrichstraße, incorporating the Reichstag, and surrounding a ‘people’s forum.’ The Bundeskanzleramt now stands alone on a largely empty plateau, as plans foundered, met with financial constraints, bureaucratic infighting, and public criticism of alleged ‘fascist monumentalism.’¹⁰⁰⁹ The building includes a modified honor court, flanked by fractured columns, and an enclosed rear garden, but otherwise shares little in common with Speer’s design or materials, utilizing exposed concrete painted white for its structural surfaces and a multi-floor glass curtain wall on its front and rear facade—with hardly a visual presence in Germany’s representational politics.¹⁰¹⁰

¹⁰⁰⁹ See: Wise, Wefing.

¹⁰¹⁰ Though diplomatic arrivals are still staged by car in the honor court, these are generally limited in their reproduction on television coverage. Press conferences held in the building appear before an anonymous blue screen set up in its interior. The building’s external appearance is, in fact, so poorly known among Germans today that a close friend, upon seeing a photo book of the structure in my office, asked me if it was a luxury hotel. The new presidential office, for its part, a slick, black modern structure, is literally concealed nearby in the trees of the Tiergarten

On the other hand, Paul Wallot's Reichstag building, famously wrapped by Christo in 1995, and topped with Sir Norman Foster's pedestrian-accessible glass dome overlooking the surrounding area in 1999, is a constant draw of tourists.¹⁰¹¹ It further evinces the integration of reunified Berlin's democratic (post-)modern architecture and its rehabilitation of its Prussian, imperial building styles.¹⁰¹² The collision of these inherited and adopted forms is also visible at I. M. Pei's expansion of the Deutsches Historisches Museum on Unter den Linden—which houses the globe and desk from Hitler's office in its permanent exhibition, displayed in vitrines that also show a photograph of Allied occupiers from 1945 and *Die neue Reichskanzlei*, respectively, for reference. But one wonders about the continued modesty and modernity of Berlin's new state buildings—the implicit rejection of the New Chancellery's pomp and circumstance, scattered about the city in fragments, ignored except by private interests—or their usefulness in sustaining democratic politics and social justice in the city or the nation (though Germany is faring better than some, at the moment, in that regard). The question is especially salient, as the city has taken further action to reclaim its imperial roots, architecturally, by reconstructing the Berlin City Palace on the Spree-Island, after demolishing the DDR Palast der Republik in 2006.¹⁰¹³ The veneration

¹⁰¹¹ See: Koepnick.

¹⁰¹² A phenomenon which began almost immediately following reunification. See, for example: J. J. Long, "Photography/Topography: Viewing Berlin, 1880/2000," *New German Critique* 39, no. 2 116 (2012).

¹⁰¹³ Carol Anne Costabile-Heming notes that the original public letter advocating the Cathedral's reconstruction was published in the *FAZ* under Fest's editorship and later supported by Wolf Jobst Siedler See: "The Reconstructed City Palace and Humboldt Forum in Berlin: Restoring Architectural Identity or Distorting the Memory of Historic Spaces?," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 25, no. 4 (2017): 446-7. The soon-to-be-finished Palace—a controversial undertaking from start to near-finish—will soon be home to the Humboldt Forum, in which the city's Asian and African art collections will be displayed, following their removal from the museums of Asian art and Ethnology in Dahlem. Central to the controversy over the Humboldt Forum are the hundreds of Benin Bronzes held by the Preussischer Kulturbesitz. These were looted from the Nigerian city of Edo by the British in 1894, during an invasion which also destroyed the medieval walled city, the largest architectural structure in the world at the time, later sold in the thousands to other European powers. The Berlin government and Humboldt Forum have refused for decades to return these items to their rightful owners, earning criticism from Nigerian and German advocacy groups and historian Jürgen Zimmerer. At present, many of the objects are set to be 'loaned' back to the Nigerian government for a renewable period of three years. As this discourse is still ongoing, see the articles: <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/wirtschaft/hehlerware-im-museum-wie-viel-raubkunst-zieht-ins-humboldt-forum-ein/25019710.html> <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/kunst/zur-herkunft-der-umstrittenen-benin-bronzen-16182906.html> <https://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/zurueckgeben-von-benedicte-savoy-und-felwine-sarr-umgang-mit-raubkunst-a-1269570.html>

Far from the Schloßplatz on the Spree, a recently-installed sign on Wilhelmstraße from the Afrika-Forum e.V. Berlin identifies Bismarck's Chancellery as the site of the Kongo-Konferenz in 1884, a turning point in colonial history that resulted in Africa's total division and invasion by Europe, enabling conditions for mass murder, later fulfilled (not only) by King Leopold II's

and re-establishment of Berlin's 'traditional' Prussian architectural image at this site has specifically been made possible only by architectural erasure and occlusion of another of the 20th century's authoritarian intervals.

Thus, within the debates over architecture, regarding styles of new buildings and the preservation of old ones, which still plague Berlin and draw publics interested in 'dark tourism' and new construction, it has fallen by the wayside that states are defined not only by what they build but also by what they *do* in and with those buildings and their mediated images, as historical sites of power and national identity. Of course, the construction and mediation of the Hitler-Mythos drew from exactly this architectural heritage, identified with *imperial* and *modern* Berlin, anchoring the New Chancellery to Bismarck's and the Weimar Republic's Chancelleries all the same. Would the failings of the Weimar state—rather than just the romanticization of Weimar (Babylon) Berlin—come to the fore if the Siedler building still stood? Would National Socialism and *its* continuities with Germany's past and present states be more critically (and officially) represented if another of its institutional center of perpetration—in addition to the abstracted presence of its victims—was visibly mediated in the city, beyond its relatively isolated representation at the Topography of Terror and Sachsenhausen—two sites which, likewise, superimpose NS and DDR history, obfuscating their uniqueness and historical complexity?¹⁰¹⁴

At a time when ostensibly democratic (but increasingly authoritarian) state regimes are turning to both 'classical' and radically modern styles of building to assert nationalist identity, and when inherited architectural and memorial sites pose serious questions about the remembrance (or

brutalization of the Congo and the genocide of the Herero and Nama in 'German Southwest Africa' (today Namibia). An atrocity photo of the latter event, along with a picture postcard of the old Chancellery's honor court and painting of the conference in its interior illustrate the sign's text.

¹⁰¹⁴ On a related note, would German colonialism be more visible, the popular resistance to the Humboldt Forum gain more traction, were the location of the Congo Congress still there to draw an explicit connection between past and present? (It might at the very least call into question the appropriateness and ethics of the name of 'Mohrenstraße,' somehow unremarked upon mere blocks from the city's international embassies and central shopping district)

repression) of state sponsored violence throughout the West, it's worth asking what the construction, destruction, and mediation of state buildings conceal, represent, or distract from in terms of state operations and national ideology.¹⁰¹⁵ How can the physical, representational architecture of national identity, its former sites, and archival images be used to institutionalize, legitimize, or *criticize* any state regime; to examine (and not just reproduce) forms of power, legacy and mythology, as each is situated within and remediated through space?

It has been the aim of this study to provide one such example; to both reconstruct and deconstruct the myths and memories (especially of Hitler) preserved and alive in the intermedial archive of the New Reich Chancellery, and to place its architecture back in conversation with the shifting framework and representational discourses of German history, memory, and national identity as they transformed over the 20th century. It likewise has been a goal throughout to make Hitler, Nazis, and the New Chancellery look bad, while also acknowledging how aesthetically adept, modern, mainstream and fascinating the NS architectural archive still proves. Hence, its artifacts are not less but, rather, *more* ethically suspect and still deserving of critical inquiry, since the toxic combination of poor taste, bad politics, and broad popular (populist?) appeal often go hand in hand. Indeed, I believe we *must* continue to deal with such 'bad objects' and 'böse Orte' because despite our best efforts to confront, evade, or dismantle their attraction, their memories will continue to haunt us long after their historical destruction, so we had better make the best of it. It is my hope that I have done my part to clarify and critique, not mythologize or disparage my object of study, and, that doing so has allowed me to bring back and make material (or at least visible) within this space of memory subjects outside of, more marginal, and more deserving of investigation and attention than Hitler alone.

¹⁰¹⁵ See, for example, the draft of President Trump's executive order from February 2020 to "Make Buildings Beautiful Again."

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