

**The "Jews" of the Antifascist Left:  
Homosexuality and Socialist Resistance to Nazism**

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**Abstract**

In the early 1930s, German Social Democrats and Communists seized upon the homosexual orientation of some Nazi leaders, especially Ernst Röhm, with the aim of discrediting the entire National Socialist movement. In Western Europe as well as the Soviet Union, there was a general tendency among socialists in the 1930s to identify homosexuality with Nazism. Antifascist leftists created the impression that homosexuality was widespread in Nazi organizations. Such socialist theorists as Wilhelm Reich tended to view homosexuality sociologically and psychologically as a typical rightist, nationalist, and above all fascist aberration. Leftist aversion to homosexuality was not only an expression of political opportunism. Prejudices against homosexuality were part and parcel of socialist thinking and became even more deep-rooted among leftists as a consequence of the ideological and moral confrontation with National Socialism. Against the presumed immorality and perversion of the Nazis, the antifascists stressed their own rationality and purity.

Prior to World War II, the attitudes of German Social Democrats and Communists toward (male) homosexuality were at best ambivalent.<sup>1</sup> This vacillation was particularly pronounced in the thirties, the decade in which the Nazi regime came to power and consolidated its hold in Germany. On the one hand, both the Social Democratic Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD) and Communist Party (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands, KPD) maintained their nominal support of the German homosexual-rights movement's campaign to repeal § 175 of the penal code, which punished "unnatural vice" with imprisonment. On the other hand, some party spokesmen and publicists constructed a highly pejorative stereotype of homosexuality by linking it with Nazism.

How can this Janus-faced outlook of the left be explained? How was it possible for leftist activists and intellectuals to compromise their parties' platforms in the domain of sexual politics? This essay will argue that political pragmatism in the struggle against Nazism as well as a more deep-seated sense of anxiety and aversion toward homosexual desire were responsible for the contradictory attitudes on the German left.

### ***THE RÖHM AFFAIR***

In the turbulent years 1930-34, which witnessed the Nazis' rise to power, Germany's Social Democrats and Communists displayed a general tendency to link homosexuality with National Socialism. The stereotype of homosexuality as a characteristic not just of individual Nazis but of the Nazi system as a whole was firmly established during three episodes: 1) the Röhm affair in 1931-32; 2) the Reichstag fire in 1933, when the destruction of the parliament building was followed by mass arrests of the Nazi regime's political opponents; and 3) the so-called "Night of the Long Knives" or "Röhm putsch" in 1934, when a large number of the leaders of the SA (Sturmabteilung), the paramilitary troops of the Nazi party, were liquidated for political reasons.

When Adolf Hitler appointed Ernst Röhm commander in chief of the SA in 1931, various leftwing politicians and journalists sought to discredit the National Socialist movement by seizing upon the homosexual preferences of Röhm and other SA leaders alleged to be homosexual.<sup>2</sup> In the spring of 1931, the *Münchener Post*, a Social Democratic daily, began publishing a series of articles that portrayed a clique of homosexual leaders playing key roles in an internal power struggle within the SA. The exposés in the *Münchener Post* were based on private correspondence bought from a disgruntled Nazi--letters later revealed to be forgeries. The *Münchener Post* further alleged that Röhm had been blackmailed by a male prostitute (which may well have been true) and had been prosecuted on charges of violating § 175. This campaign of calumny failed, however, to bring about Röhm's removal from a leadership position in the Nazi party. Indeed, he demonstrated considerable self-assurance when defending himself in public, and the Nazi daily *Völkischer Beobachter* rose to his defense.<sup>3</sup>

The campaign against Röhm was renewed when the SPD press agency released some of Röhm's authentic private correspondence surreptitiously acquired by Helmut Klotz, a renegade Nazi and former Reichstag delegate who had gone over to the side of the Social Democrats. Röhm had written these letters in Bolivia, where he had worked as a military adviser, to a Nazi friend in Germany, the homosexual physician Karl Günther Heimsoth; and they described in frank terms Röhm's sexual interest in young

men. The letters also revealed Röhm to be a rather forthright and even militant homosexual, one who favored the repeal of § 175 and was a member of the largest homosexual organization of the Weimar Republic, the League for Human Rights (Bund für Menschenrechte). Röhm had written that he was not at all unhappy about his orientation and that his comrades in the Nazi movement should get used to it.<sup>4</sup>

Röhm's correspondence was published just a few days before elections were to take place in Germany. Clearly, the SPD's intention was to discredit the Nazi movement, although the letters neither established any connection between Röhm's sexual orientation and his political outlook nor documented any recruitment of sexual partners among SA subordinates. Röhm's utterances were characterized by the leftist journalist Kurt Tucholsky as "not even unsympathetic,"<sup>5</sup> and one spokesman of the homosexual-rights movement averred that they conveyed a more positive than negative image of Röhm.<sup>6</sup> The SPD's decision to publish these revelations on Röhm's private life might conceivably have been defensible if the party had simply intended to prove that the Nazis were hypocrites, guilty of maintaining a double standard. For, at least publicly, Nazi spokesmen had vehemently demanded that homosexuality be severely punished because of the danger it posed for the German people. The *Völkischer Beobachter* characterized homosexuality as one of the "evil propensities of the Jewish soul," the "typically inferior aberrations of Syrians."<sup>7</sup> Yet at this very time homosexual men were affiliated with the Nazi party, especially the SA and the Hitler Youth (Hitlerjugend),<sup>8</sup> and even though Hitler knew of Röhm's homosexual propensities, he continued to protect him. Prior to 1934, Nazi policy toward homosexuality was indeed characterized by inconsistency, probably due to a lack of consensus among the Nazi leadership.<sup>9</sup>

Homosexual activists such as Adolf Brand, the leader of the Community of the Special (Gemeinschaft der Eigenen), and Kurt Hiller and Richard Linsert, officers of the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee (Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee), tried to expose this double standard, characterized by Hiller as "hypocrisy that stinks to high heaven."<sup>10</sup> But articles in the socialist press made it abundantly clear that this was not the central issue for the Social Democrats. Instead, the *Münchener Post* shrilly declared that "the most appalling harlotry in the sense of § 175 is making itself at home in the organizations of the Hitler party,"<sup>11</sup> while devoting scant attention to the Nazis' homophobic pronouncements. The Social Democrats attempted and to some extent succeeded in creating the impression that homosexuality was accepted and widespread in Nazi organisations. "This fish stinks from its head. Decay reaches deep into the ranks of the NSDAP," wrote the Social Democratic Reichstag delegate Helmut Klotz. If strong action were not taken, he warned, the German people would fall prey to a "poisoning of national life" and "the demoralization of ethical and moral powers."<sup>12</sup> Such all-male organizations as the SA and the Hitler Youth, he maintained, were exploited by homosexual leaders who abused their powers by forming coteries and practicing favoritism. Any boys and young men thinking of joining the Hitler Youth and the SA were urgently warned that they might become victims of the lusts of Röhm and other SA leaders. This picture of the Nazi movement--clearly a distortion of reality--led one journalist at the *Münchener Post* to conclude that "the moral and physical health of German youth is at risk." The goings-on in the SA, in which youths were at the mercy

of the voluptuary Röhm, ought to concern the entire German people, he continued, and it was the duty of the government to take legal steps.<sup>13</sup> The editors of the *Münchner Post* justified their methods by pointing to the dangers "to which the Hitler Youth is exposed, given such an abnormally oriented top leader as Herr Röhm. For youth must be protected from being delivered over to the lusts of such an abnormally oriented person. It is patently the duty of the press to point this out and to warn the public."<sup>14</sup>

The leading Social Democratic daily, *Vorwärts*, appealed to the "healthy sensibility of the people," thus invoking precisely the same terminology utilized by the Nazis. In a blatant ploy to heighten the anxiety of parents whose sons had joined the Nazi movement, the Social Democrats claimed that membership in the SA and the Hitler Youth implied compulsory homosexuality. *Vorwärts* reproached Hitler for extending his protection to "lustful perverts" such as Röhm; this proved "how closely interrelated the Nazi bureaucracy is." And in a thinly veiled reference to the decline of the "decadent" Roman Empire, the commentary continued: "Their system has been unmasked once again. It is the Röhman system that shrinks at nothing and is disgusted by nothing."<sup>15</sup> In another issue of *Vorwärts*, homosexuality was again labelled as an intrinsic part of the Nazi movement. "The conclusion is: Röhm, who lauds the youth of the Black Reichswehr as his sexual delicacy, can and is allowed with his orientation to remain Highest Leader of the similarly oriented Hitler army."<sup>16</sup>

The most important homosexual rights organization in Germany, the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee, which had always relied on the political support of the SPD, had good reason to protest the press campaign against Röhm. "The statements in the *Münchner Post*, hearkening back to the Apostle Paul and employing the entire vocabulary of our conservative-clerical persecutors, could have been printed without changing a word by the most strictly Catholic press."<sup>17</sup> The Committee even felt obliged to send a letter to the SPD executive, inquiring whether the party still supported the campaign against § 175.<sup>18</sup> The party answered in the affirmative but chose not to issue a public statement, because openly supporting homosexual rights would clash with the current tactics of the anti-Nazi campaign of the Social Democrats. For the moment, the party preferred posturing as the guardian of respectability and appealing to widespread prejudice against homosexuality. In fact, it had long since become clear that Social Democratic support for the homosexual movement was by no means inspired by any genuine tolerance toward homosexuality. As one member of parliament had explained at the end of the twenties, most Social Democratic politicians were of the opinion that § 175 should be abolished because punishment was not the proper way to deal with sick men suffering from a "constitutional abnormality."<sup>19</sup> Despite the party leadership's renewed pledge that it did not despise homosexuals, several SPD newspapers persisted in denouncing the fascist movement by exploiting the stereotyped image of Nazi leaders who molested young, innocent boys.<sup>20</sup> As a political tactic in the 1932 electoral struggle, however, the Social Democratic campaign against Röhm proved to be no guarantee of success: the NSDAP gained more votes that year than ever before. In the short term, the only result was that antagonism toward homosexuality was intensified within the Nazi party.<sup>21</sup>

Communist papers commented on the Röhm affair in a similar vein. In the Communist *Antifaschistische Aktion*, one could read that young "SA proletarians" were

being victimized by the unnatural lusts of Röhm and other SA leaders.<sup>22</sup> Headlines in the Communist daily *Welt am Abend* accused Röhm of abusing and corrupting unemployed, young workers. The paper flatly maintained that the Nazi party was founded on homosexuality and hypocrisy.<sup>23</sup> By characterizing the Nazis as hypocrites, it should be noted, the Communists were being somewhat more faithful to their principles than the Social Democrats. Although Communist journalists (writing, for example, in the daily *Die rote Fahne*) described homosexuality as fundamentally "unproletarian," they made some effort to clarify that their purpose was not to harm homosexuals but to expose the disparity between the Nazis' policies and practices.

A short time later, however, following the Reichstag fire and the imposition of Nazi dictatorship with the imprisonment of political opponents, the Communists adopted the same course of action as the Social Democrats. This is clearly evidenced by the *Braunbuch über Reichstagsbrand und Hitler-Terror* (Brown Book on the Reichstag Fire and Hitler Terrorism), written by a collective of leading German Communists in exile and published in 1933 by the Comintern's propaganda section in Paris. Translated into twenty languages and distributed on a large scale (some 500,000 copies in 26 countries), the *Braunbuch* aimed to refute Nazi accusations that the Reichstag had been torched by an international communist conspiracy. The arrested arsonist, the Dutchman Marinus van der Lubbe, was in fact a former member of the Dutch Communist Party, but he now called himself an anarchist and had single-handedly started the fire with the intention of motivating German workers to fight the Nazi regime.<sup>24</sup> The *Braunbuch* authors therefore rightly held that there had been no communist conspiracy. At the same time, however, they created a new myth, namely that there had been a conspiracy of homosexual Nazis.

The *Braunbuch* collective distanced itself from Van der Lubbe in a striking manner, focusing on his homosexuality to claim that that he had been never a loyal communist--more, that as a Trotskyist and anarchist he was even a traitor to the communist cause. "The task set this book demands that Van der Lubbe's life be illuminated to the final detail. Along with his drive to achieve fame, Van der Lubbe's homosexuality influenced his life decisively. This question is therefore more than a private matter."<sup>25</sup> Van der Lubbe's upbringing in his Dutch hometown Leiden was recounted to show that he had been extremely vulnerable to corrupting, bourgeois influences and that his homosexuality was therefore "unproletarian." The *Braunbuch* collective invented the story that he had developed contacts with Nazi circles while roaming about in Germany, had associated with homosexual SA leaders in Berlin, and had even been Röhm's sexual partner. Van der Lubbe had thereby become a pliable instrument in the hands of certain homosexual conspirators who, with the knowledge of the Nazi leadership, plotted to burn down the Reichstag in order to create a pretext for the arrest of leftist politicians. With this widely publicized account, linking a homosexual orientation with unreliability, betrayal, and violence, the KPD jettisoned even the half-hearted support for homosexual rights that had set it apart from the SPD during the Röhm scandal.<sup>26</sup>

The Communists continued on this course in 1934, when Hitler, with the support of the army, had Röhm and several other SA leaders liquidated--an operation followed by intensified persecution of homosexuals throughout the Third Reich. Hitler and other

party bosses covered up their true reasons for eliminating the SA leadership by accusing Röhm and his supporters of engaging in a "homosexual conspiracy."<sup>27</sup> The same Hitler who had once protected Röhm against homophobic attacks from the left was now posturing as a resolute opponent of immoral behavior. Two weeks after the so-called "Night of the Long Knives," Hitler solemnly proclaimed before the Reichstag that any leader in the Nazi Party, the SA, the SS, and the Hitler Youth guilty of homosexual practices would face severe punishment.<sup>28</sup> Röhm's position was assumed by SS Chief Heinrich Himmler, who emerged as the driving force behind the persecution of homosexuals in the Third Reich.

Although the Nazis now revealed their homophobic outlook unambiguously, this by no means led antifascists to discard the stereotype of homosexual fascism. Instead, in a rather self-congratulatory tone, they maintained that everything they had asserted about the sexual aberrations of Röhm and other SA leaders had simply been validated. In an introduction to Röhm's memoirs, published posthumously in France in 1934 to remind readers of his sexual orientation, one of these antifascists wrote: "Blame falls solely on those who knew everything, approved of it, covered it up, tolerated it. . . ."<sup>29</sup> And the author of the *Weißbuch über die Erschießungen des 30. Juni* (White Book on the Shootings of June 30th) on the Röhm putsch paid no attention at all to the persecution of homosexuals. Instead, he was at pains to explain that the NSDAP leadership had decided to eliminate Röhm and his coterie because it wanted to wipe out the homosexual perpetrators of and witnesses to the Reichstag fire.<sup>30</sup>

### **HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE SOVIET UNION**

The homophobia of German Communists was bolstered by developments in the Soviet Union, where "pederasty" (defined as anal intercourse between males) was criminalized in a new law, introduced in December 1933 and promulgated as penal code article 154-a in all Soviet republics in 1934--just a few months before the German "Night of the Long Knives." During the twenties, following the abolition of the tsarist moral laws, homosexual acts between consenting adults had been free of legal sanctions. This re-criminalization was part of the Stalinist regime's broad revocation of sexual reforms carried out by the Bolsheviks after the Revolution. Beyond homosexual men, all women were also affected: in 1936, abortion was recriminalized, and during World War II legal obstacles to divorce were introduced.

It remains open to question whether the Soviet government embraced a policy of genuine sexual liberation in the twenties. Sexual reforms affected mainly the social and legal emancipation of women, but is unclear whether--as some Soviet officials stated--the absence of legal sanctions against homosexuality in the Soviet penal codes of 1922 and 1928 reflected a bona fide state policy of non-interference in sexual matters so long as no minors were involved, nobody was injured, and no one's interests were encroached upon.<sup>31</sup> Several pronouncements of leading communists militate against such an interpretation. Lenin, for example, condemned free love (including homosexuality) as bourgeois and antisocial. In a 1920 conversation with the German Communist Clara Zetkin, Lenin said: "The absence of self-control in one's sexual life is a bourgeois phenomenon. The revolution requires the concentration of all one's forces, and wild sexual excesses are symptomatic of a reactionary outlook. We need minds

that are healthy."<sup>32</sup> For Lenin, sexuality was not merely a private affair: "More important than everything, however, is the social side. . . . Love requires two, and a third, a new life can arise. In this fact there is a social interest, a duty toward the collective."<sup>33</sup> Alexandra Kollontai, the leader of the women's section of the Communist Party, also contrasted individualistic, bourgeois morality with the collectivist virtues of a communist utopia. "Love is an important factor of the collective. Love is also part of a full person in a laboring society. But youth must be taught that the joy and sorrow of love can never be the chief content of life. . . . Bourgeois morality demanded: everything for one's beloved; communist morality proclaims: everything for the laboring collective."<sup>34</sup> This approach was shared by the renowned psychologist Aaron Borisovich Zalkind, who wrote in 1925: "If a particular sexual practice has the result of *isolating* an individual in relation to his own class, makes him less efficient in his work or less active in the struggle, it will become necessary to put an end to it. The only kind of sexual activity which can be tolerated is that which will contribute to the full flowering of the collectivist spirit."<sup>35</sup>

While homosexual acts were not punishable in the Soviet Union between 1917 and 1934, this does not mean that they were accepted and tolerated. To begin with, most communist ideologues and politicians were simply indifferent, for they regarded economic issues as more urgent than sexual matters; furthermore, several medical and educational experts viewed homosexuality as a perversion and illness that should be cured. Some of them even advocated legal measures. Finally, whereas homosexuality played an important role in the literature and fine arts of tsarist Russia, it was increasingly suppressed as an artistic theme in the Soviet Union.<sup>36</sup>

The Soviet law against homosexual intercourse was even more severe than the one that had prevailed in tsarist Russia: according to the penal code drafted in 1903, "pederasty" between consulting adults was to be punished with a prison sentence of at least three months; article 154-a of the Stalinist penal code entailed a prison sentence of three to five years.<sup>37</sup> This measure was accompanied by a press campaign decrying homosexuality as a symptom of the "degeneracy of the fascist bourgeoisie" and of "sexual orgies in fascist countries"; one journalist spoke of the "fairies of Goebbel's propaganda ministry."<sup>38</sup> The renowned Soviet writer Maxim Gorky placed homosexual activities on a par with alcoholism, hysteria, and venereal diseases--all typical expressions of bourgeois decadence and fascist perversion. In an article entitled "Against Fascism, for Proletarian Humanism," which appeared not just in the Soviet newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* but also in the leftist journal *Rundschau über Politik, Wirtschaft und Arbeiterbewegung* published in Basel, Gorky contrasted the purity and healthiness of socialist ethics with the moral corruption of Nazi Germany. While proletarian youths were protected against homosexual seduction in the Soviet Union, according to Gorky, this degenerate capitalist vice was hardly punished in Nazi Germany, where--far from being suppressed--it was thriving within the fascist movement itself. And therefore, Gorky added, a new slogan was appropriate: "Exterminate all homosexuals, and fascism will vanish."<sup>39</sup>

By linking counterrevolutionary activities, sabotage, and espionage with homosexuality, it was made into a grave political offense against the Soviet state and society. As the People's Commissar of Justice Krylenko explained in a 1936 speech,

homosexuals did not belong to the working class: "Are they working men? Of course not--they are either the dregs of society or remnants of the exploiting classes.

[Applause] They don't know what to do with themselves, so they take to pederasty.

[Laughter] And besides them, there is another kind of work that goes on in filthy little dens and hiding places, and that is the work of counterrevolution. That is why we take these disorganizers of our new social system, the system we are creating for men and women and working people--we put these gentlemen on trial and we give them sentences of up to five years."<sup>40</sup>

By exploiting the issue of homosexuality for political ends, Communists and other antifascist leftists implemented the same tactic as the Nazis. Both left and right aimed to mobilize public opinion against political adversaries by tarring them with the brush of sexual deviance--rhetoric that was in fact initiated by German Social Democrats and Communists. Later, after coming to power, the Nazis would adopt it on several occasions. Hitler primarily used this charge as a means of eliminating political opponents, both within the party and without: after the SA leadership had been removed, the regime also leveled accusations of homosexuality against Catholic clerics as well as military officers who would not comply with Nazi policies. The leftist stereotype resembled the Nazi image of homosexuality: it was yoked with seduction, clique-formation, intrigue, sabotage, and conspiracy. Rightists and leftists alike attributed the spread of homosexuality to contagion and unfavorable social conditions. The Nazis claimed that homosexuality thrived in the "decadent" democracy of the Weimar Republic, when it was protected by Jews as well as Marxists,<sup>41</sup> while the mouthpieces of the Soviet regime maintained that it was a widespread vice in capitalist and fascist countries.<sup>42</sup>

### **MALE BONDING AND HOMOSEXUALITY**

The examples of Social Democratic and Communist aversion to homosexuality in the thirties cited above might lead one to argue that leftist homophobic utterances were perhaps only careless, impulsive statements prompted by political opportunism. This thesis is at best dubious. I would submit that prejudice against homosexuality was part and parcel of socialist thinking on sexuality. Prior to the thirties, the socialists had frequently associated homosexuality with aristocratic and bourgeois decadence and with capitalist exploitation and abuse of power. They tended to regard homosexuality as something belonging to the antisocial domain of the unproductive, uncontrollable, and irrational; as such it had no future. The legal adviser of the KPD, Felix Halle, who advocated sexual reforms in his *Geschlechtsleben und Strafrecht* (Sexual Life and the Penal Law, 1931), exhibited a half-heartedness characteristic of both Communists and Social Democrats. According to Halle, the working class would free itself of bourgeois and Christian prejudices while keeping an open mind in sexual matters. But referring to the fecundity of the proletariat, Halle simultaneously suggested that homosexuality was foreign to its nature. "The working class, far removed . . . from cultivating same-sex inclinations and activities, takes a tolerant approach toward such manifestations of sexual life--insofar as this activity does not transgress the boundaries likewise imposed for social reasons on intercourse between man and woman--because the proletariat feels itself fertile and confident of the future as a collective, as a class. The class



struggle of the proletariat includes the effort to fight for and build a new and better world for the offspring slumbering in the gonads of the living generation."<sup>43</sup>

Uneasiness about homosexuality became even more deep-rooted among Social Democrats and Communists in the course of their ideological and moral clash with National Socialism. Some prominent socialist theorists tended to view homosexuality as a sociological and psychological aberration typical of rightwing, nationalistic, and above all fascist circles. The tone was set by the Marxist psychoanalyst and sexual reformer Wilhelm Reich, who, before he was expelled from the KPD in 1933 because of his sexual radicalism, headed the German Reich Association for Proletarian Sexual Politics (Deutscher Reichsverband für proletarische Sexualpolitik) or Sexpol in 1931-32. Reich's influential *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* (The Mass Psychology of Fascism) appeared in 1933. Here Reich argued that because fascism was authoritarian and patriarchal, it was largely caused by a distortion of "natural" sexuality. According to Reich, bourgeois morality dammed up sexual energy, which would eventually break through in the form of neuroses and sexual aberrations. In fascism, which was only an extension of capitalism, such distortions were exploited for political purposes. For Reich, natural sexuality could only be heterosexual: homosexuality was put on a pathological par with sadism, masochism, and misogyny.

Reich linked homosexuality with Nazism in two ways: he regarded homosexuality as an outcome as well as the breeding ground of fascism. To begin with, he maintained that fascist male bonding was a revival of Greek patriarchalism, which had reduced women to breeding stock and domestic drudges. This male supremacy, he emphasized, was entirely homosexual, and he added: "The same principle governs unconsciously the fascist ideology of the male stratum of leaders. . . ."<sup>44</sup> For Reich, the fascist state was unquestionably a male state founded on homosexuality. In the typically German *Männerbund* (all-male association), which combined male chauvinism, militarism, and contempt for women, homosexual perversion was inevitable. In Reich's view, Nazism clearly resulted in an increase of homosexuality, but he added that fascism was compatible with bourgeois society. Thus he went on to assert in *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* that the prudish suppression of heterosexuality in bourgeois society was responsible for the appeal of Nazism. Reich argued that in Germany, "natural sexual strivings toward the opposite sex, which seek gratification from childhood on, were replaced in the main by distorted and diverted homosexual feelings. . . ." And commenting on the sex life of youths in Nazi Labor Conscriptio Camps, he added: "*Sadism originates from ungratified orgasmic yearnings.* The facade is inscribed with such names as 'comradeship,' 'honor,' 'voluntary discipline.'" But behind this facade one could discern, according to Reich, a "development of homosexual tendencies and the forming of relationships between boys who had never thought of such things, severe annoyances from homosexual comrades," and an "increase of nervousness, irritability, physical complaints, and various psychic disturbances."<sup>45</sup> One of the most important causes of the spread of homosexuality in Germany, Reich claimed, was the authoritarian, sex-segregated upbringing of boys and girls both before and after 1933. Only socialist sex education could guarantee healthy, genital-oriented heterosexuality, he maintained, and it therefore would have prevented the growth of Nazism. Reich repeatedly linked homosexuality with right-wing political

sympathies, and he emphasized that healthy heterosexuality was a necessary condition for openness to socialist ideas.<sup>46</sup>

Even prior to his *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus*, Reich had voiced in a rather simplistic way the Freudian notion that homosexuality was a symptom of "sexual misidentification,"<sup>47</sup> of a psychological disorder and developmental disturbance pathological in nature.<sup>48</sup> In a 1932 brochure on sex education written for the KPD, Reich wrote that homosexual intercourse, which could never be as satisfying as heterosexual coitus, was often the result of unfavorable social conditions in sex-segregated institutions and could be prevented by introducing coeducation.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, Reich did criticize the contempt and prejudices under which homosexuals suffered, and he opposed the penalization of homosexual acts, including in the Soviet Union.<sup>50</sup> Thus he described in a critical tone the mass arrests of homosexual men in some cities of the Soviet Union and the introduction of article 154-a. But he quickly explained this change in communist policy, maintaining that it was a reaction to a dramatic increase in homosexuality, especially within the army and the navy, which in turn had been caused by the increasing suppression of heterosexuality under the Stalinist regime. According to Reich, the negative attitudes and repressive policies concerning homosexuality in the Soviet Union were also connected to developments in Germany, especially the Röhm affair. "People failed to distinguish the *Männerbund* homosexuality, which, in fact, was at the basis of Röhm's as well as other organizations, from the emergency homosexuality among soldiers, sailors, and prisoners which was due to the lack of heterosexual opportunities." Although the latter form of homosexuality was more easily excused than the former, Reich held both to be undesirable and suggested that they could be reduced "by establishing all necessary prerequisites for a natural love life among the masses."<sup>51</sup> The best way to deal with homosexuality was through social policies that would preclude such disturbances altogether.

Reich viewed homosexuality as a contagious social disease fostered by political and social evils: Christian ascetic morality, capitalism, bourgeois morality, and nationalism, including fascism. In doing so, he presupposed a pure, natural sexuality that was heterosexual and genitally oriented. Referring to the anthropological findings of Malinowski, who had written about the sexual life of the Trobrianders on New Guinea, Reich asserted that there was no "unnatural sexual activity" among these unspoiled people. "Such manifestations as sodomy, homosexuality, fetishism, exhibitionism, and masturbation are to the natives only miserable substitutes for the natural genital embrace and therefore bad and worthy only of a fool. The idea that he could be incapable of satisfying his drives pleasurably in a natural way would be particularly offensive to a Trobriander's pride. He despises perversions as he despises one who eats inferior or impure things instead of good clean food."<sup>52</sup> Reich added that any homosexual behavior that might occur among the Trobrianders would be attributable solely to the impact of Western Christian and capitalist civilization.<sup>53</sup>

Socialist thinking about sexuality appears to have been influenced more by Freud's psychological approach than by the biological approach of the sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld, the most prominent leader of the homosexual-rights movement in Wilhelminian and Weimar Germany.<sup>54</sup> Hirschfeld's activities as a sexual reformer were

disparaged as bourgeois and apolitical in the *Zeitschrift für politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie*, the journal of Reich's Sexpol movement. Based on a fusion of psychoanalysis and Marxism, Sexpol claimed not only to connect sexual reform with social revolution but also to hold out greater promise of curing and preventing homosexuality. Whereas Hirschfeld's biological theory implied a conciliatory acceptance of sexual perversions as natural variations, truly revolutionary sexual politics would shape the sexual education of children and youths in such a way that homosexuality would diminish and eventually disappear altogether.<sup>55</sup>

Reich's Sexpol movement spurned homosexuality even more vehemently than Freud, who refused to characterize it as a disease per se. "We are opposed to homosexuality," Sexpol adherents declared, "because 1) homosexual intercourse is never as satisfying and blissful as heterosexual intercourse; 2) the homosexual, without his '*Männerbund*,' is extraordinarily handicapped in modern society, and 3) because psychologically, homosexuality is deeply rooted in fascist ideology." And they emphasized that any such organisation as the SA would produce homosexuality: "Strict discipline and subordination under a 'Führer' along with the glorification of unconditional loyalty and devotion to him had to activate the unconscious stirrings toward homosexuality that many boys raised in a bourgeois manner have during puberty and postpuberty. Normally, this time of enthusiastic friendships among boys soon gives way to attraction to a girl. But if purely in terms of time this is encumbered by constant tours of duty, drilling, etc., the boys will be ideologically deformed by an ideology of chastity, by emphasis on the value of 'comradeship'--it therefore comes as no surprise if and when their natural drive takes the wrong direction for lack of a healthy outlet. It comes as no surprise when people who are homosexually oriented from the outset seek to exploit such an institution as the SA by attaining leadership positions and then abusing them for their inclinations. For it is an abuse whenever people capable of a healthy development are artificially pushed into homosexuality. It is even reported that the wives of married men complain about the bad influence coming from the other men."<sup>56</sup>

Reich's views were echoed by several leftist intellectuals in Germany and beyond. Although the editors of the *Internationales Ärztliches Bulletin* (International Medical Bulletin), the journal of the International Society of Socialist Physicians (Internationale Vereinigung Sozialistischer Ärzte), subscribed to Hirschfeld's view that homosexuality was inborn and that § 175 should be repealed, these exiled socialist doctors simultaneously stressed that homosexual men were a danger to society because they tended to organize *Männerbünde* and to use their leadership positions to seduce youths.<sup>57</sup> And in the sociological *Studien über Autorität und Familie* (Studies on Authority and the Family) published by the renowned Institute for Social Research (Institut für Sozialforschung) in 1936, Erich Fromm linked homosexuality with the sadomasochistic character. Here homosexuality among youths was explained not only by referring to unemployment and boredom, but also by analyzing the "non-revolutionary romanticism" of the bourgeois youth movement. Homoeroticism, widespread among the sons of the bourgeoisie according to these leftist social scientists, was rooted in unresolved conflicts between fathers and sons.<sup>58</sup>

Whereas the independent leftist journal *Die Weltbühne* had criticized the Social Democratic and Communist course of action in the Röhm affair, its successor in exile, the Communist-controlled *Die neue Weltbühne*, published a defense of the criminalization of homosexual acts in the Soviet Union. Justifying the rejection of same-sex behavior by the Russian people and Maxim Gorky, one author, Alexander Bessmerntny, argued that biological or psychological etiologies of homosexuality were totally irrelevant from a political viewpoint. "It is simply a fact that adult homosexuals have formed cliques, which became breeding grounds of active counterrevolution. . . . Whether it is inborn or acquired: homosexuality spawns the *Männerbund*, antisocial in its specific separatism and claim to preeminence, and the *Männerbund* spawns the *Männerbund* intrigue."<sup>59</sup> This reasoning can scarcely be distinguished from the way Hitler commented on the Röhm putsch.

In 1937, a top leader of the Nazi movement of the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia was arrested for a homosexual offense, once again embroiling the party in a scandal that resembled the Röhm affair. *Die neue Weltbühne* carried a series of articles claiming that this episode furnished evidence of the homosexual roots of Nazism. The author, Walther Bartz, referred extensively to the male-bonding theories of the right-winger Hans Blüher. Influenced by Freud, Blüher had caused a sensation in 1912 by publishing a history of the German youth movement, the *Wandervogel*, in which he asserted that homoerotic friendships, fostered by sex-segregated education in Wilhelmine Germany, were essential for the cohesion and popularity of the *Wandervogel*. In Weimar Germany, Blüher turned out to be one of the most important conservative ideologues of the *Männerbund*, propagating a purification of German society under the guidance of all-male brotherhoods, in which members would be bound to one another by homoeroticism and charismatic leadership.<sup>60</sup> Blüher's nationalist ideal of the *Männerbund* was both sexually and politically pathological, Bartz argued, and would inevitably result in a homosexual dictatorship; the Nazi movement provided the final proof.<sup>61</sup> An irony of no little poignance attaches to the coincidence that at the very time when leftists were citing Blüher to argue that the Nazi movement was homosexual to the core, Heinrich Himmler was also referring to Blüher's theories in a speech before SS officers. Warning that homosexuality could corrupt the National Socialist movement from the inside out, Himmler proposed severe countermeasures.<sup>62</sup>

Another very telling example of the impact of Reich on leftist thinkers is offered by the Dutch liberal anarchist Anton Constandse, renowned because of his radical calls for sexual freedom. During the thirties he authored two books on political aspects of sexuality, describing homosexuality as an unhealthy consequence of sexual segregation in schools, religious institutions, and above all the army. Constandse claimed that "because most National Socialist organizations are typically all-male societies, homosexuality was inevitable. . . . Everybody knows that the sexual abuse of youths was quite common in Röhm's SA."<sup>63</sup> From this he inferred that "the great danger of male bonding, especially in the military, is indeed homosexuality."<sup>64</sup> The antifascist journal *Het Fundament*, published in Holland, also characterized homosexuality as typical of fascism, although in a different way than Constandse: it was

claimed that homosexuals' strong narcissistic and antisocial propensities made them especially susceptible to Nazism.<sup>65</sup>

This sort of argument did not end with the 1930s; it handily survived World War II. In 1945, a Jewish émigré in England, Samuel Igra, published a book on "Germany's national vice" in which male bonding in German history was associated with homosexual vice and cruelty. Similar interpretations had been offered earlier by antifascist leftists, but Igra introduced a new element by positing a causal link between the Nazi persecution of Jews and the strong homosexual tendencies of the National Socialist movement. Igra argued that because Jewish religion and culture, like Christianity, had always denounced homosexuality uncompromisingly, the Jews were the natural enemies of homosexual Nazi leaders such as Hitler and Röhm. "I think it is reasonable," Igra concluded, ". . . to hold that the psychological forces that let loose the sadistic orgies of the concentration camps, the mass murders in Germany, . . . and the subsequent atrocities in the occupied countries may be attributed mainly to one source and that this source is the moral perversion which was rampant among the Nazi leaders and which had its typical embodiment in Hitler himself."<sup>66</sup>

Far from chronicling the persecution of homosexuals in the Third Reich and analyzing Nazi homophobia, several postwar historians of fascism preferred to speculate on the homosexual tendencies of Hitler and other Nazi leaders.<sup>67</sup> Translated into English, Reich's book on fascism was widely read in the sixties. Although Reich made some revisions, his statements on homosexuality remained unaltered, and this was also the case for reprints of his other books. The views of Reich and Fromm were also echoed in the sixties by Theodor W. Adorno, representing the Frankfurt School of critical theory, and the German sociologist Reimut Reiche, an activist critical of the Frankfurt School's ivory-tower academicism, both of whom suggested that homosexuality entailed a penchant for law and order, as well as for sadomasochism and misogyny.<sup>68</sup> Even more remarkably, the association of fascism and male homosexuality was still alive in the seventies and espoused by writers inspired by Reich. It is abundantly evident, for example, in a frequently cited book on women and fascism authored by the Italian communist and feminist Maria Antonietta Macciocchi. Her book bears the stamp of Reich's views, and more than once she recounts the suppression of women in fascism and in the same breath speaks of homosexuality. The subordination of women in the "capitalist-patriarchal" society, according to Macciocchi, reached a high point in the extreme misogyny of "the brotherhood of male chauvinist fascists and homosexual Nazis."<sup>69</sup> Writing on the erotic aestheticism of Nazism, Susan Sontag explained the popularity of sadomasochism in the gay subculture of the seventies simply as an "eroticizing of Nazism." According to her, "there is a natural link" between homosexual sadomasochism and fascism.<sup>70</sup> The stereotype was also made visible in such films as Luchino Visconti's *The Damned* (1969), Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Conformist* (1971), Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Salò or the 120 Days of Sodom* (1975), and Volker Schlöndorff's *The Tin Drum* (1978, based on the 1959 novel by Günter Grass). Pasolini in particular used clichés borrowed from psychoanalysis to connect masculinity, sadism, and homosexuality.<sup>71</sup>

### **LEFTIST MORALS**

To prevent misunderstandings, it must be emphasized that critical comments on these leftist authors are by no means a denial of the importance of the phenomenon of the *Männerbund* in any analysis of fascism and homosexuality. But the leftist arguments are one-sided and simplistic. The Nazi movement, especially before 1934, may have held an attraction for gay men because of its supposedly anti-bourgeois doctrines, the male comradeship in such organizations as the army, the SA, the SS, and the Hitler Youth, and the glorification of youth, masculinity, physical prowess, and beauty.<sup>72</sup> But this does not necessarily mean that the fascist *Männerbund* was founded on homosexual bonds: although they can overlap, the concepts of the "homosocial" and the "homosexual" cannot simply be conflated. Instead, one should argue the other way around: the homophobia of the Nazi regime and its persecution of homosexual men can largely be explained by peril of homosexual practices in all-male organizations perceived by some important Nazi leaders, especially SS Chief Heinrich Himmler. After the liquidation of Röhm, § 175 was tightened in 1935, the number of convictions rose sharply, a Central Reich Office to Combat Homosexuality and Abortion (Reichszentrale zur Bekämpfung der Homosexualität und Abtreibung) was established, and several measures designed to prevent homosexual contacts were introduced, especially in the army and Nazi organizations. Alongside a range of medical remedies, a variety of severe penalties (including concentration-camp detention) was introduced, mainly because the Nazis believed that homosexuality was a contagious social disease which could easily spread in all-male groups.<sup>73</sup> In light of these measures, the standpoint of leftist antifascist intellectuals in the thirties is disturbing, for they largely played down the persecution of homosexuals--or even ignored it completely.

Apart from the spokesmen of the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee,<sup>74</sup> only a few individuals raised their voices against the political use of homosexuality in the antifascist camp: deserving of mention are the journalist Kurt Tucholsky and some of his colleagues at *Die Weltbühne*,<sup>75</sup> the Dutch writer Jef Last,<sup>76</sup> and the German writer Klaus Mann. A 1934 essay by Klaus Mann entitled "Die Linke und das 'Laster'" ("Vice' and the Left") is particularly noteworthy.<sup>77</sup> Here Mann criticized the leftist ploy of automatically equating the fascist *Männerbund* with homosexuality. While acknowledging that male bonding played a significant role in the Nazi movement, Mann argued that it was not unique to fascism: the example of the American poet Walt Whitman provided evidence that the ideals of male bonding and friendship could also have a democratic character. He also referred to the German poet Stefan George, whose glorification of the *Männerbund* was aristocratic but definitely not fascist. Curiously, Mann did not refer to Blüher, although he had praised his work on the *Männerbund* in the twenties. Mann did not elaborate further on this issue, but I think he raised an important point, one that might further explain the negative opinions on male homosexuality in leftist circles.

It is significant that Klaus Mann's polemical essay, in which he characterized homosexuals as the "Jews of the antifascists," was ignored by the German exile community and sank into oblivion until the manuscript was rediscovered and reprinted, first under the title "Homosexuality and Fascism" in a 1969 collection of essays and again in the seventies as a pamphlet.<sup>78</sup> At the time of this article's 1934 publication, Klaus Mann--the openly homosexual son of Thomas Mann--was about to emerge as

one of the leading intellectuals of the German antifascist exiles in Europe. His essay on homosexuality and Nazism bears testimony to his courage. Broadly speaking, homosexuals were tolerated in the antifascist camp only if they remained in the closet. For most of them, criticizing the prejudices of their heterosexual comrades in the struggle against Nazism was inconceivable, which makes Klaus Mann's essay exceptional. Although by no means a profound analysis, Mann's article is important both as a document testifying to the homophobic atmosphere in leftist circles at that time and also because of Mann's attempt, however tentative, to critique it.

The leftist aversion to homosexuality (and in fact to all sexuality that was not conventional, i.e., monogamous and heterosexual) had dire consequences for those antifascist activists who were homosexuals themselves. Their only choices were to go back into the closet with a negative self-image or, even worse, to pay lip service to leftist morals. Studies by Jörn Meve and Manfred Herzer of literary works written by German writers in exile reveal that far from being restricted to heterosexuals, the stereotype of Nazi homosexuality was current even among some homosexual antifascists.<sup>79</sup> Such semidocumentary literary works as Ludwig Renn's *Vor grossen Wandlungen* (Before Great Transformations, 1936) and Hans Siemsen's *Hitler Youth* (1940), for example, depict perfidious homosexual Nazis who take advantage of their leadership positions to seduce innocent boys.<sup>80</sup> These homosexuals were polymorphously perverse and as such also violent, promiscuous, and hypersexual. Good homosexuals were ascetic or at least monogamous, were discreet about their sexual orientation, and were ready to sacrifice any personal life to the antifascist cause. Even Klaus Mann, who was courageous enough to expose the homophobia of his fellow antifascists, could not escape tormenting doubts about his own sexual proclivities. In his second autobiography, *Der Wendepunkt* (The Turning Point, 1949), he wrote rather guiltily about his sexual experiences in the Turkish baths during a 1937 visit to fascist Hungary: "To be sure, I know--and was not so frivolous as to forget it in frivolous Budapest--: it's not very far from the animalistic, which I like, to the bestial, which I abhor. Even if it's true that satisfying one's urges deflects from destructive impulses or transforms them into positive and libidinous ones, it cannot be denied that unfettered sexuality has a grievous tendency to degenerate into the sadistic and destructive. The mass orgy I enjoy in my half ironic-bitter, half sweet-vulgar way contains the seed of mass murder; every frenzy is a potential blood lust, a fact with which I would like not to revoke my paean to lust but at least to modify it a seemly way."<sup>81</sup>

As a homosexual and one of the leading intellectuals among the exiles, Klaus Mann knew how it felt to face moral pressure from his fellow antifascists. One of his political friends, for example, the writer Hermann Kesten, who gave him the idea for his famous novel *Mephisto* (1936), proposed to him that it should be a novel about "a homosexual careerist in the Third Reich, . . . a satire of certain homosexual figures."<sup>82</sup> Although the protagonist in *Mephisto* was modelled on the homosexual actor Gustaf Gründgens, Mann transformed him into a heterosexual masochist. As far as his own lifestyle was concerned, Klaus Mann was forced to go on the defensive. In the twenties, he had lightheartedly celebrated homoeroticism, decadence, and hedonism. In his first autobiography, *Kind dieser Zeit* (Child of These Times, 1930), he wrote that he preferred "extravagance and eccentricity to moderation, soberness, and temperance;

irrational intoxication to rational control and restraint."<sup>83</sup> When he turned to political activism after leaving Germany in 1933, his advocacy of hedonism was supplanted by a far more reticent, cautious attitude, as can be seen in the novels written in exile, such as *Symphonie pathétique* (1935) and *Der Vulkan* (The Volcano, 1939), as well as his essay on the Röhm affair.

It is striking, firstly, that he chose not to publish this essay in *Die Sammlung* (The Collection), the journal he himself edited in Amsterdam, but instead in a rather obscure Prague journal. According to Mann, *Die Sammlung* was to be a broad-based forum for antifascists, which also meant that prejudice against sexual orientation would not constitute grounds for refusing any article. However, he appears to have expressed to a German Communist his willingness not to stir up any disputes about this subject.<sup>84</sup> Secondly, in his essay he described homosexuality only as an innate phenomenon, not as an overtly practiced lifestyle. And by describing socialist humanism as an alternative to fascism, he defended homosexuality only in abstract political terms, emphasizing that it could be useful to the community and should therefore be integrated into a future socialist society. He had little to say, however, on how this integration could be implemented. Like other homosexual antifascist activists, he was ostracized on the grounds that he was predisposed to place a higher priority on his personal interests as a member of a sexual minority than on the resistance to Nazism.<sup>85</sup> In leftist circles, homosexual rights were scarcely acknowledged to be a valid political issue.

### **CONCLUSION**

Homophobia was as deeply ingrained among leftist antifascists as it was in Social Democratic and Communist policy. There was no place for homosexual emancipation in socialist politics of the thirties, for, on the whole, Social Democratic and Communist parties emphasized their moral superiority, i.e., conventionality. In the struggle against Nazism they did not hesitate to appeal to widely held prejudices against homosexuality. A few exceptions aside, a sound political analysis of sexuality was lacking in Marxist and Social Democratic thought. Socialists generally considered sexuality a minor issue subordinate to economic considerations, and if it was discussed at all, current ideas about natural and healthy sexuality were the norm; they did not break with bourgeois respectability. From a socialist perspective, the body was primarily a tool for labor and production; lust was suspect as an antisocial force, and sexual liberation as a cause in itself could only be viewed as a symptom of bourgeois decadence and selfish individualism. For mainstream communism, even Reich and his Sexpol movement were on the wrong track, because they held sexual revolution to be fully as important as economic revolution. To the extent that Communists and, to a lesser degree, Social Democrats criticized the liberal public/private dichotomy, their critique was counterproductive. Despite the good intentions of some individual Communists, rejection of the "bourgeois" separation of the personal from the political did not result in sexual liberation, but, on the contrary, as the Soviet Union demonstrated, in a total subordination of sexuality to collectivist politics. This leftist politicizing of sexuality was detrimental to the social position of homosexuals.

Especially during the struggle against Nazism, homosexual practices increasingly rankled many leftists. In their view, fascism proved how easily sexual instincts could be



distorted, manipulated, and employed for atrocious political ends. Using clichéd labels and simplistic explanations borrowed from psychiatry and especially from psychoanalysis, they sought to expose Nazism as a pathological and irrational political system, in which barbaric passions reigned and brutish lusts were satisfied by violence and destruction. For Reich and many other antifascists, it seemed easy to prove that fascism was a sign of perversion, sadism, and masochism, from which it was only a small step to homosexual vice. To counter the presumed sexual immorality of the Nazis, the antifascist left stressed its own enlightened rationality and moral purity, constructing an ethical system that rigorously excluded homosexuality.

## NOTES

The author is indebted to James Steakley for helpful comments on earlier drafts of this essay and bibliographical information.

1. See Wilfried U. Eissler, *Arbeiterparteien und Homosexuellenfrage: Zur Sexualpolitik von SPD und KPD in der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Rosa Winkel, 1980).
2. Two years earlier, Wilhelm Hillebrand's brochure *Herunter mit der Maske! Erlebnisse hinter den Kulissen der NSDAP* (Berlin: by the author, 1929) revealing the homosexual orientation of a number of prominent Nazis had already been circulated in Berlin. See *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 19 (1929): 161.
3. Herbert Heinersdorf (i.e., Richard Linsert), "Akten zum Falle Röhm (I. Teil)," *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 31 (1931): 349-68.
4. Quotations from Röhm's memoirs which were published posthumously in 1934: Ernst Röhm, *Die Memoiren des Stabschef Röhm* (Saarbrücken: Uranus-Verlag, 1934), pp. 163, 196, 200. Two years earlier, Röhm's letters were published in the Social Democratic newspaper *Welt am Montag* (March 7, 1932) and other periodicals as well as in a brochure widely distributed in Germany; see Helmut Klotz, *Der Fall Röhm* (Berlin-Tempelhof: by the author, 1932).
5. Ignaz Wrobel [i.e., Kurt Tucholsky], "Bemerkungen: Röhm," *Die Weltbühne*, no. 17 (1932): 641.
6. Herbert Heinersdorf (i.e., Richard Linsert), "Akten zum Falle Röhm (II. Teil)," *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 33 (1932): 395.
7. *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 28 (1930): 272, and Burkhard Jellonek, *Homosexuelle unter dem Hakenkreuz: Die Verfolgung von Homosexuellen im Dritten Reich* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1990), pp. 51-56.
8. \*\*\*, "Nationalsozialismus und Inversion," *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 32 (1932): 340-45; Adolf Brand, "Abwehr und Angriff," *Eros*, no. 3 (1930): 20-21; SS-Standartenführer X, "Warnung," *Die neue Weltbühne*, no. 9 (1936): 578-81; Manfred Herzer, "Hinweise auf das schwule Berlin in der Nazizeit," in *Eldorado: Homosexuelle Frauen und Männer in Berlin 1800-1950: Geschichte, Alltag und Kultur*, ed. Michael Bollé (Berlin: Frölich & Kaufmann, 1984), pp. 44-47; Jellonek, pp. 85-94.
9. Jellonek, pp. 68-72. In 1932, for example, NSDAP Reichstag delegates wrote to the League for Human Rights that they were unable at the moment to formulate their views on homosexuality and that they had to wait for directives of the party leadership; see Hans-Georg Stümke and Rudi Finkler, *Rosa Winkel, Rosa Listen: Homosexuelle und "Gesundes Volksempfinden" von Auschwitz bis heute* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1981), p. 141. Later that year, the NSDAP did publish its views on moral law but without broaching the issue of homosexuality; see Erhard Vismar, "Perversion und Verfolgung unter dem deutschen Faschismus," in *Seminar: Gesellschaft und Homosexualität*, ed. Rüdiger Lautmann (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1977), p. 309. Homosexual cafés closed early in 1933 once Hitler was appointed chancellor were reopened that summer, probably at the instigation of Röhm; see Rudolf Diels, *Lucifer ante portas . . . es spricht der erste Chef der Gestapo* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1950), p. 129. Although the library of Magnus Hirschfeld's Institut für Sexualwissenschaft (Institute for Sexology) was publicly burned and Hirschfeld himself escaped arrest only because he was abroad, such well-known advocates of same-sex love as Adolf Brand and Hans Blüher were not arrested (although their writings were suppressed). Brand's publishing house was raided by SA storm troopers, his journals, books, and photos confiscated. Even after 1934, some homosexual artists, among them the famous actor Gustaf Gründgens, enjoyed the protection of Nazi functionaries; see Herzer, pp. 44-47.
10. Kurt Hiller, "Antwort an \*\*\*, " *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 32 (1932): 348. See also Adolf Brand, "Politische Galgenvögel. Ein Wort zum Falle Röhm," *Eros*, no. 2 (1931): 1-3; "Homosexualität und Nationalsozialismus," *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 20 (1929): 161; and Kurt Hiller, "Ein anonym Brief," *Die neue Weltbühne*, no. 19 (1936):

581-86.

11. Cited in *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 31 (1931): 351.
12. Quoted by Jellonnek, p. 67.
13. Cited in *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 32 (1932): 351, 355.
14. *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 34 (1934): 419.
15. "Röhm bestätigt," *Vorwärts* 49.117 (March 10, 1932): 2.
16. "Die Röhm-Briefe echt!" *Vorwärts* 49.157 (April 4, 1932): 1-2.
17. "Kundgebung des Vorstandes des WHK an die deutsche Presse betr.: den Fall Röhm," *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 31 (1931): 316. See also "Der Fall Röhm," *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 32 (1932): 369-70.
18. *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 33 (1932): 372-75.
19. Eissler (see note 1), p. 75.
20. *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 33 (1932): 376-80.
21. Jellonnek, pp. 68-72.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
23. Quoted in *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 34 (1933): 423.
24. See Martin Schouten, *Rinus van der Lubbe 1909-1934* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1986).
25. *Braunbuch über Reichstagsbrand und Hitler-Terror* (Basel: Universum-Bücherei, 1933), p. 53. The English-language edition of this book toned down the language considerably: "Enquiries in Leyden have definitely established the fact that he [Van der Lubbe] was homosexual. This is of great importance for his later history. . . . Van der Lubbe's homosexual connections with the National Socialist leaders and his material dependence on them made him obedient and willing to carry out the incendiary's part." *Brown Book of the Hitler Terror and the Burning of the Reichstag*, prepared by the World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1933), pp. 46, 52.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-56. A second *Braunbuch* appeared the following year: *Braunbuch II: Dimitroff contra Göring: Enthüllungen über die wahren Brandstifter* (Paris: Éditions du Carrefour, 1934). Leftist political friends of Van der Lubbe founded an "International Van der Lubbe Committee" to defend him as a fighter for the socialist cause and published the *Roodboek Van der Lubbe en de Rijksdagbrand* (Amsterdam: Internationaal Uitgeversbedrijf, [1933]). Here Van der Lubbe's homosexuality as well as his involvement in "the muggy, pestilential atmosphere among Nazi homosexuals" (p. 69) were denied, but this did not dispel the image created by the first *Braunbuch*. See Martin Schouten, *Rinus van der Lubbe 1909-1934*. The *Roodboek* has also appeared in German as *Marinus van der Lubbe und der Reichstagsbrand*, trans. and ed. Josh van Soer (Hamburg: Edition Nautilus, 1983).
27. [Otto Strasser], *Weißbuch über die Erschießungen des 30. Juni* (Paris: Éditions du Carrefour, 1934), p. 9.

28. Franz Seidler, *Prostitution, Homosexualität, Selbstverstümmelung: Probleme der deutschen Sanitätsführung 1939-1945* (Neckargemünd: Kurt Vowinkel, 1977), p. 204.
29. *Die Memoiren des Stabschefs Röhms*, p. 18.
30. *Weißbuch über die Erschießungen des 30. Juni*, p. 105.
31. See *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 18 (1928): 146-47; John Lauritsen and David Thorstad, *The Early Homosexual Rights Movement, 1864-1935* (New York: Times Change, 1974), pp. 62-64. Following Wilhelm Reich, *The Sexual Revolution: Toward a Self-Governing Character Structure*, trans. Therese Pol (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1957), pp. 208-11, various authors have argued that toleration and even emancipation of homosexuality was part of Soviet sexual policy in the twenties. For example, see Joachim S. Hohmann, "Zum rechtlichen und sozialen Problem der Homosexualität," in *Sexualforschung und -politik in der Sowjetunion seit 1917*, ed. J. S. Hohmann (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1990), pp. 270-86; Gudrun Hauer, "Homosexualität in der Sowjetunion--Eine historische Analyse," *Rosa Liebe unterm roten Stern: Zur Lage der Lesben und Schwulen in Osteuropa*, ed. HOSI Wien/Auslandsgruppe (Vienna: Homosexuelle Initiative; Hamburg: Frühlings Erwachen, 1984), pp. 49-68; and David Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 440.
32. Quoted by Mikhail Stern and August Stern, *Sex in the USSR* (New York: Times Books, 1980), pp. 32-33.
33. Clara Zetkin, *Erinnerungen an Lenin* (1924-25), in C. Zetkin, *Ausgewählte Reden und Schriften*, vol. 3: *Auswahl aus den Jahren 1924 bis 1933* (Berlin: Dietz, 1960), p. 140.
34. Cited by R. Linsert, *ibid.*, p. 14.
35. Quoted by Stern and Stern, p. 34.
36. Charlotte Wolff, *Magnus Hirschfeld: A Portrait of a Pioneer in Sexology* (London: Hutchinson, 1986), p. 261; Hauer, p. 65; Simon Karlinsky, "Russia's Gay Literature and Culture: The Impact of the October Revolution," in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. Martin Bauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey, Jr. (New York: New American Library, 1989), pp. 347-64.
37. Hohmann, pp. 271, 278.
38. Wilhelm Reich, *The Sexual Revolution*, p. 210.
39. Maxim Gorki, "Gegen den Faschismus: Proletarischer Humanismus," *Rundschau über Politik, Wirtschaft und Arbeiterbewegung*, no. 34 (1934): 1298.
40. Quoted by Ben de Jong, "'An Intolerable Kind of Moral Degeneration': Homosexuality in the Soviet Union," *Review of Socialist Law*, no. 4 (1982): 342.
41. Cited in *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 20 (1929): 161.
42. The second edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, published in 1952, maintained that the occurrence of homosexuality was related to social conditions. "In capitalist society homosexuality is a widely spread phenomenon. . . . Drunkenness and also sexual impressions from early childhood are of great significance in the development of homosexuality. . . . The large majority of the people who practice homosexuality cease this perversion as soon as they find themselves in an environment which is socially beneficial. . . . In Soviet society, with its healthy moral climate, homosexuality is considered a

shameful and criminal perversion. . . . In bourgeois countries where homosexuality is a symptom of the moral dissolution of the ruling classes, it is in practice not punishable." Quoted by de Jong, p. 343.

43. *Mitteilungen des Wissenschaftlich-humanitären Komitees*, no. 30 (1931): 310-13.

44. Wilhelm Reich, *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* (Copenhagen: Verlag für Sexualpolitik, 1933), p. 139.

45. Cited in the English translation: *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1971), pp. 192, 194; in the German edition of 1933, pp. 259-60, 262.

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47. Wilhelm Reich, *Der triebhafte Charakter* (Leipzig: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1925), new edition 1975, p. 21. The German is "geschlechtliche Fehlidentifizierung."

48. Wilhelm Reich, *Der sexuelle Kampf der Jugend* (Copenhagen: Verlag für Sexualpolitik, 1932), p. 74.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 76. See also Julius Epstein, "Das neue Homosexuellen-Gesetz Sowjet-Rußlands," *Zeitschrift für politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie* 2.1 (1935): 50-51. A critique of Soviet sexual policy in the thirties was offered by Wilhelm Reich, "Der Kampf um die neue Moral: Die Bremsung der Sexualrevolution in der USSR," *Zeitschrift für politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie* 2.6 (1935): 145-59.

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52. Wilhelm Reich, *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1971), pp. 31-32; German-language edition: *Der Einbruch der Sexualmoral* (Copenhagen: Verlag für Sexualpolitik, 1935), p. 21.

53. Reich, *Der Einbruch der Sexualmoral*, p. 21.

54. Manfred Herzer, "Wilhelm Reich und Magnus Hirschfeld--gescheiterte Konzepte sozialistischer Sexualpolitik und Faschismus," *Mitteilungen der Magnus-Hirschfeld-Gesellschaft*, no. 2 (1983): 9-16.

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58. *Studien über Autorität und Familie*, ed. Institut für Sozialforschung (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1936), pp. 125-27, 429, 669-705.
59. Alexander Bessmerntny, "Sexualität im Kulturkampf," *Die neue Weltbühne*, no. 31 (1937): 970-73.
60. Hans Blüher, *Die deutsche Wandervogelbewegung als erotisches Phänomen: Ein Beitrag zur Erkenntnis der sexuellen Inversion* (Berlin: Weise, 1912); idem, *Die Rolle der Erotik in der männlichen Gesellschaft: Eine Theorie der menschlichen Staatsbildung nach Wesen und Wert*, 2 vols. (Jena: Diederichs, 1917-18).
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64. Anton L. Constandse, *Sexualiteit en levensleer: de sexuele en politieke psychologie van Dr. W. Reich* (Amsterdam: De ploeger, 1939), p. 33.
65. Editorial, "Soma-Paradijs of Socialisme," *Het Fundament* 10 (1935): 5.
66. Samuel Igra, *Germany's National Vice* (London: Quality Press, 1945), p. 71.
67. For examples, see Richard Plant, *The Pink Triangle: The Nazi War against Homosexuals* (New York: Henry Holt, 1986), pp. 13-19; Frank Rector, *The Nazi Extermination of Homosexuals* (New York: Stein and Day, 1981). After the war, even some well-known German homosexuals fostered the myth that many leading Nazis were homosexual. See Manfred Herzer, "Die schwarze Maria und der Männerbund: Ein Nazimärchen," *Capri: Zeitschrift für schwule Geschichte*, no. 2 (1987): 2-5; Hans Blüher, *Die Rede des Aristophanes: Prolegomena zu einer Soziologie des Menschengeschlechts* (Hamburg: Kala-Verlag, 1966), pp. 64-71.
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70. Susan Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism," *Under the Sign of Saturn* (New York: Vintage, 1981), p. 103.
71. See Gert Hekma, "De Sade in Salò of Pasoloni's laatste reis," in *Tegenlicht op Pasolini*, ed. Leo Dullaart et al. (Amsterdam: De Woelrat, 1984), pp. 41-54.

72. George L. Mosse, "Homosexualität und Faschismus in Frankreich," *Capri: Zeitschrift für schwule Geschichte*, no. 2 (1987): 15-21.
73. I have argued this in greater detail in "Male Bonding and the Persecution of Homosexual Men in Nazi Germany," *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift*, no. 4 (1991): 27-45, and in *Homosexuality and Male Bonding in Pre-Nazi Germany: The Youth Movement, the Gay Movement, and Male Bonding Before Hitler's Rise* (= *Journal of Homosexuality* 22.1-2) (New York: Harrington Park, 1991), pp. 247-58.
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83. Klaus Mann, *Kind dieser Zeit* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1982), pp. 179-80.
84. See Uwe Naumann, *Klaus Mann* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1984), p. 72.
85. See Gert Mattenklott, "Homosexualität und Politik bei Klaus Mann," *Sammlung: Jahrbuch für antifaschistische Literatur und Kunst* 2 (1979): 29-38.