Victor Noack was a cultural critic and social reformer who had characterized the new medium already in 1909 as "an orgy of tastelessness" and "a poisoning of the people [Volksergifzung]." Like many members of the Kinoform movement [see chapter 7], Noack approached the popularity of cinema as a question of public hygiene, as evidenced by the following description of a movie theater interior from his thirty-page polemical pamphlet from 1913. In "Early Silent Cinema: Whose Public Sphere?" (1983), film scholar Miriam Bratu Hansen would argue that such concerns over hygiene among cinema reformers were symptoms of a broader fear of the obfuscation of traditional social boundaries and roles, especially with regard to class and gender.

The rotation of cinema audiences takes place between 8:00 and 9:00 P.M. (just as people's "leisure time" begins). Without any intermission for ventilation, the next group of spectators, hungry for visual pleasures, is packed into the theater. Immediately, the projector begins to hum again, and the flickering shadows float ghost-like over the masses who can hardly breathe. With his small flashlight, the usher lights up a path for latecomers skipping and stumbling their way to a seat. Now the "sprayman" goes to work. From a large bottle, he sprays "ozone" (as they mockingly call this movie theater perfume) over the heads of the audience gasping for breath. Under this watery mist, the atmosphere in the cinema, already lacking in air, grows even more stifling. All of the audience members breathe as if asthmatic; nevertheless, they endure it. They would rather risk a temporary loss of consciousness than miss the show they've paid for (just as one does not wish to forego a drink one has bought in a bar). There they sit, eyes inflamed, staring vacantly at the screen. Feverish, dizzy, and trembling with agitation, they collapse. Their lungs are like deflated balloons. One can feel the throbbing of the heart and principal arteries. They allow themselves to be carried away to the point of crying out with terror and then grow terribly ashamed when the lights come on again. These brutal "film dramas" gain the official designation of "hits." How appropriate! They work precisely by hiring the nerves of the audience. As a result, the audience falls into a stupor. They come back to their senses only after 11:00 P.M., when they stagger out into the fresh air of the street—the same place where the inebriated tend to realize that they have had too much alcohol.

Note

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**EMILIE ALLENLOH**


First published as Zur Soziologie des Kino: Die Kino-Unternehmung und die sozialen Schichten ihrer Besucher [Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1914], here 76–9, 88–94. Translated by Sara Hall.

Emilie Allenloh's dissertation, written under Alfred Weber at the University of Heidelberg and published in 1914, was one of the first German doctoral theses in the humanities and social sciences on the topic of cinema and also among the first sociological studies of film production and spectatorship. Allenloh (1888–1985) surveyed the population of Mannheim regarding its movie-going habits and preferences and evaluated the data according to age, class, gender, and profession. The following excerpt focuses on...
Working Women

All the determinating factors that shape various types of working-class men—the enthusiastic theatergoer, the union member—are absent from women of the same class. Women constitute a far more unified picture than men because their interests lie primarily in two areas—the theater and the cinematograph. The latter, especially as a form of entertainment, is most significant. Visits to the theater are still on average a little more common among women than among men. Concerts and lectures trail far behind. The academic or party interests that take up a great deal of men's free time are lacking, so to speak, in women. To the extent that women belong to social-democratic organizations, they are enthusiastic party supporters. Occasionally, some women go to meetings and lectures. In general, however, the drive to acquire the solid knowledge that could serve as a basis for a political position is extremely weak. In this context it is understandable that the cinema plays an important role, especially for women who don't have a profession. Once they are done with their housework, there are relatively few convenient opportunities for enriching their free time. They go to the cinema more often out of boredom than out of any genuine interest in the program. While the men are attending political meetings, women visit the movie theater next door where they'll be met by their spouses when the screening is over. Gradually, however, this stopgap activity becomes an essential part of their existence. Before long, they are seized by a veritable passion for the cinema, and more than half of them try to gratify that passion at least once a week. During the screening they live in another world, in a world of luxury and extravagance that makes them forget the monotony of the everyday.

By comparison, all other attractions appear meaningless; the number of those who have been to the theater only on occasion and who otherwise go only to the cinema is relatively large.¹

At best, musical content comes to the fore here again, as one might infer from the operas frequently mentioned in the survey. In addition to Wagner, Bizet and Mozart (composers who were not mentioned by men) figure more prominently. Still, it cannot be first and foremost the music alone that motivates operagoing, for then concerts would also enjoy greater patronage. It appears rather that the simultaneous effect on the eye and ear, the musical interpretation of the plot, which opera and the cinematic drama have in common, appeals particularly to the taste of women. The same coincidence of a preference for opera and cinema music also repeats itself particularly often among salesgirls. […]

Female Shop Assistants

Just as among tradesmen, so it appears that among young women the appeal of going to the cinema chiefly corresponds to a certain age, after which it then gradually loses its importance. However, in those years of active cinema patronage, moviegoing never becomes in itself as important a part of their lives as it is for young men. Of all those surveyed, only 63 percent of women went to the movies, as compared to 79 percent of the male shop assistants.² The much-diminished interest shows up even more clearly when one compares the numbers of regular patrons. They stand at 1:21. The cause for this finding certainly lies in part in the greater dependency of young women. The daughter
is always more closely bound to the framework of the family, and parents have a lot to say about how she spends her free time. She will hardly ever undertake anything completely on her own. From time to time, she too goes to the cinematographic theater with her family, and in later years, she will go more frequently with her “boyfriend” or “acquaintance”—very rarely, though, with female friends. Notwithstanding this greater dependency that stands in the way of regular movie-going, it certainly appears that actual interest is not so great—otherwise, later, at times of higher earnings and correspondingly greater independence, an increased rate of movie-going would emerge, as is the case among male shop assistants. Quite to the contrary, the highest rate of visits occurs among fourteen-to-fifteen-year-olds, and from there it dwindles with each year.

Women almost exclusively patronize the better theaters. This is due to their programs rarely mentioning robber and detective dramas—as rarely as pieces in the vein of Asphalt, Pfanne oder Sündige Liebe. Young women also display only meager enthusiasm for Westerns and historical subjects. Already among fourteen-year-olds, love stories qualify as the main interest, and it is mainly the pieces that are closest in content to the lives of these girls or that reflect back to them an image of the outside world. The story is usually about the fate of a common woman; after much confusion it ends in either moral ruin or quiet happiness. Most dramas of this kind distinguish themselves with a strong sentimental bent already obvious in the string of characteristic titles, here taken from the answers of female shop assistants: Die Rose der Mutter (The rose of the mother), Prada (Miss Lady), Der Leidensweg einer Frau (A woman’s sufferings), Die Konstanz (The female clerk), Frauenklinik (Women’s clinics). All of these dramas center on conflicts within a woman’s heart. Accordingly, it is obvious that Asta Nielsen (in films by Urban Gad) should be extraordinarily pleasing and inspire tremendous adoration. The passionate temperament of the heroine, and the guilt and fate in which she thus becomes entangled, correspond to the image these women have of life, and they are able, therefore, to put themselves completely in her position.

Aside from the dramas, images of nature inspire an equally strong interest in women as in their male colleagues. But women's attitude toward them seems to differ from that of men. Young men more often cite footage of foreign countries and scientific images. An interest in content is absolutely fundamental. Young women answer more generally. Their preferences appear to be rooted primarily in aesthetic sensations. For example, they often mention images of water and the ocean such as “Italian waterfall” or simple “waterfalls and wave movement” and “drifting ice floes” without adding any more precise description.

Comic images are, by comparison, less popular among women than among their male colleagues. In general, the level of interest in distinct subjects of cinematographic presentations is equally divided for both, but among young women the division is less pronounced. The preference for dramas is more pronounced only among upper-class apprentices. A more active theater and concert attendance corresponds to lukewarm interest in moving pictures. Still, even in these areas, characteristically, taste is only marginally defined. Apparently, fourteen- and fifteen-year-old girls have seen on average more than boys of the same age. From the outset, girls’ taste develops strongly along musical lines. In this way, they take a different road in obtaining pleasures than boys. For the latter, at age fourteen, music means classical music. Hence, in addition to the musical experience, patriotic feelings are also released. Girls entirely lack this characteristic. From the outset, opera melodies appeal more to their taste. In addition to Wagner’s music, which is valued about the same degree by young male shop assistants, girls mention the romantic operas, such as Mignon, Martha, and Tosca, much more often than the boys. The soft music of the cinema ensemble is very popular among girls, to a still greater degree than for male apprentices, the ensemble constitutes the decisive factor.
Spectatorship and Sites of Exhibition

In a god's choice of cinematographic theater. However, this delight in music leads just as rarely to a deepening and development of their taste as it does among lower- and middle-class women. Concerts are patronized more often by women than by the men. But women rarely patronize specific musical pieces and favorite composers. Among women, a purely emotional experience—which has nothing to do with reason—appears to associate itself with music, so much so that even the titles remain an aside. Inasmuch as they grasp things through the intellect, all girls remain behind their male colleagues. This disposition, which is oriented less toward the real and concrete aspects of life, corresponds to their very limited interest in lectures and scientific film images. Only very few attend lectures.

In general, their taste doesn't tend either to the high and serious areas nor does it get lost in the lowlands of decidedly bad taste. Among them one finds neither those who show an interest in Bach, Beethoven, religious questions, and social problems—at least when these are not incorporated into film dramas—nor those who limit their standards to acrobats, marches, and detective dramas.

The Remaining Classes

Essentially the same goes for women of the upper classes—insofar as one is not dealing with a small intellectual elite here—as for the young female shop assistants (who have been considered separately above), except that upper-class women go to the cinema even more often, unless they, too, are limited in their free time by a job. It is particularly because of the Asta Nielsen dramas and historical pieces that they attend the shows. And the more uncomplicated and worry-free their own lives, the more they seek to integrate some extraordinary moments into them by empathizing with the individual films. Cinema brings to the small towns a reflection of the wider world, showing women how they dress in Paris, what kinds of hats they wear. With thrills, big and little, the cinema helps pass away the many empty hours of the day which, with the progressive simplification of household, are becoming ever more numerous. The cinematographic presentation must be especially easily accessible to the female sex, of whom it is generally said that they always take in an impression in its entirety, purely and emotionally. In contrast, it appears difficult for very educated, intellectual people to lose themselves in the separate, often disjunctive, successive plots. Repeatedly, people who are used to dealing with everything in a purely intellectual manner say that it is extraordinarily difficult for them to apprehend the coherence of a film plot.

With respect to cinematographic presentation, one can hardly speak of the taste of adult members of the upper class. They have none, save an attitude toward the cinema as a general phenomenon. Tellingly, the question about particularly popular pieces was rarely answered by regular moviegoers, who would seem to have precisely refined their opinions on this matter.

Upper classes generally reject film from an artistic perspective. And as to the nature of images, they can ascribe to them only a certain didactic value, "especially for the lower classes." But all the same, they go—and rather often—to see them. They go in the evening if nothing else is on the agenda, but they prefer to go to the movies in the afternoon after shopping. They relax there, rather than in a café, escaping the hustle of the department store. Of one hundred people, over eighty have gone to the cinema at least once under these circumstances, and sixty go regularly. The latter come exclusively from the class of officers and businessmen, while the academic professions (including students) show proportionally the lowest number of movie patrons overall, as well as of weekly patrons. Whether the need for light entertainment is less strong among these classes because of their other intellectual activities, or whether it is found in another form that replaces the cinema is difficult to determine. Perhaps the more abstract mode of thought
involved in these professions makes it easier to relax during free time, even while doing something more difficult. No greater exertion of concentration is required.

However, the members of those professions oriented more toward purely practical and tangible goals are capable of enjoying art only after adopting an absolutely new orientation in their way of thinking. Doing so, however, requires intellectual exertion. Therefore, they prefer to resort to very light entertainment in their leisure time in order to separate themselves from working patterns of thought. "At night I'm too tired to give myself over to such difficult things as theater and concerts," was a frequent answer, "and, therefore, I go to a cinematographic theater."

Next to professional exertion, hundreds of other things lay claim to people's time: community activities, social responsibilities, the desire to remain oriented in the latest offerings of theaters and art museums, and the wish to retain a command of politics and modern literature. All members of this class have responsibilities of this kind, and to the extent to which men's various interests pull them in different directions, the need grows for a counterbalancing activity that doesn't make any demands on the individual. Light forms of entertainment, from which there is nothing further to be gained, become a necessity. Others, on the other hand, who have much time and few interests for filling it, find in cinema an appropriate surrogate with which to distract themselves in order to experience sensations. Something must be out there to satisfy these diverse needs: the wish to distract oneself, to relax from the demands of modern life, to satisfy boredom and the hunger for sensation. And had the cinematograph not been invented, some other possibility would have had to take its place. Perhaps cafés with artists' troupes or variety shows would have experienced a still greater new development. But in cinema we have found the appropriate medium, one that has acquired power and meaning far beyond the framework of the entertainment apparatus of the moment. If it thereby infringes upon related areas and also keeps patrons from attending the theater and concerts—which appears already to be the case according to the complaints of theater directors about their worsening business ventures—then only those masses are to blame for whom the theater and concerts were nothing more than a temporary diversion. But it is precisely this that all members of the upper classes desire from the cinema—nothing more than occasional entertainment, the opportunity to laugh heartily for once; but, for them, it should in no way replace the theater or other forms of artistic experience. The cinema appeals on the whole to very different kinds of needs. Thus, when it ventures upon higher, more artistic projects, it appears to many people ill suited. From this perspective, they also view attempts to elevate the level of performance by bringing in famous artists as experimentation on an unsuitable object. Such an attempt would eliminate the pleasant naïveté and simplicity of cinematographic presentations, unless the reduction of artistic work to the flatness of the average achievement were its only success. Still, in no way does the average film correspond to the far-from-modern demands of the upper classes, and that which is aesthetically bearable for the cultivated city dweller is by no means equal to the standards of the average film. "The sentimental tendency of films, the exaggeration of gestures" and the often tasteless packaging insult many viewers. Others even experience the inherent character of cinema, with its w akly jarring sequences of happy and sad, as unbearable.

For the majority, the quality of films is not at all significant because their impression doesn't last for more than a moment. Instead, other interests determine whether they go to the cinematographic theater. Real interest in the presentations is most often still the true stimulus for businesspeople and women. But for very few is the joy found there strong enough to prompt them to go to the cinema alone; only a few bachelors reach for this emergency remedy out of boredom. Among married couples, the woman (and even often among young people) motivates the couple to go. For the accompanying man, "she is the object of more interest than the goings-on onscreen: "She is always moved to tears"
Doing a psychological study of the viewers, especially of female filmgoers, is far and away more amusing to many than the films themselves, and, for a lot of people, reason enough to spend an hour in the cinema once in a while.

Ask all these patrons why they really go to the cinema, and most will shrug their shoulders. “Faute de mieux,” a woman once answered. This “mieux,” however, has as many different faces as individual spectators. In any case, the cinema succeeds in addressing just enough of those individuals’ needs to provide a substitute for what would really be “better.” It has thus become a powerful force, in relation to which all questions as to whether the cinema is good or bad, or whether it should exist at all, are useless.

Notes

2. Original footnote (translated): This finding appears to contradict observations made during visits to the movie theater in which the audience was predominantly male. But it is at best further proof for both assertions made above:

(i) that with the increase in political interest the cinema recedes. In a certain sense, those surveyed here fit this description because they are organized in unions, and this circumstance explains their relatively few visits to the cinema. The main body of the male moviegoing public draws more from the younger generations and the politically indifferent; and

(ii) that unmarried, working women are not independent enough to go the cinema alone. If the percentage of moviegoers were as high in general as it is among married women, then women would dominate the cinema audience even more.

3. Original footnote (translated): Missing from these percentages is the heavy impact of those who live in the country. They produce the lower attendance average among business students who form the basis of this study—especially among the younger male classes and almost entirely in the female section. The majority of the students have resided in Mannheim for a while.

4. Der Asphaltflane was a 1931 Danish film (originally titled Hjælpe Kranken or Dyrehavets Glimmer) directed by Urban Gad. Sündige Liebe (Sinful love) was a 1911 German film directed by Emil Albers.

5. Die Rose der Mutter was a 1931 American film starring William Humphrey, originally titled A Message from Beyond; Frühzeit Frau was a 1932 German film directed by Emil Albers; Der Leidenweg einer Frau was a 1931 Italian film originally titled Caduta, directed by Ubaldo Maria Del Colle; Die Kontrariats was a 1932 British film produced by C-M Crick's Martin; Frauenzwickbleche could not be identified.

6. Altosalz here invokes opuses composed by Ambroise Thomas, Friedrich von Flotow, and Giacomo Puccini, respectively.

7. Original footnote (translated): Only here and there (mostly among younger people) does the opinion arise that noteworthy achievement in props and costumes and the expressiveness of famous film actors can still lead further to a new kind of interpretive art.

8. Original footnote (translated): The need for a counterweight of this kind that in no way places further demands on the individual but simply distracts is mostly apparent among businessmen, engineers, and officers. The active patronage of the cinema among the latter group is explained by the fact that their profession leaves them more free time than the two other groups.

RESI LANGER

From Berlin North and Thereabouts / In the Movie Houses of Berlin West

a theoretically unlimited, darkened white wall, in order to clearly emphasize the detailed contrasts of light and shadow in the image. [. . .]

The movie theater has its origins in markets and fairs. Makeshift booths, rows of wooden benches, a white towel, and a hand-cranked projector constituted the entire machinery of these "film theaters." It was unnecessary to darken the room all that much, as the screenings generally took place in the evenings. The films that were shown were either new or particularly protected. Even today, some remainders of these movie theaters turn up at fairs and markets; the films are usually so water-damaged that one can make out very little, but in the early days, people were not so spoiled. A music box or harmonium provided "musical illustration," and an "announcer" the entertainment.

Who has forgotten the countless little movie theaters around 1910, with their bad, stuffy air, shoddy films, and shabby screening facilities? Since then, we have seen a significant turnaround. The accommodations, the projectors, the music: everything has increasingly adjusted to accommodate aesthetic requirements. Only one thing stays the same, even in the new cinema: anyone can enter or leave the theater at any time. Individuals are at liberty to arrive in the middle of a performance or at its beginning or its end. This is doubtless an advantage over the theater, which assembles a rather pathetic crowd, decked out in festive attire, at a specific time for a particular aesthetic indulgence. One can enter the cinema more or less in passing, without any foreknowledge (unlike the opera) and without any considerations, unlike the live theater. All pomp and circumstance is absent. One film flows into the next. There is no applause, and no intermission during stage preparation artificially separates the individual acts, which today are even presented as a coherent entity one after the other.

Emile Altenloh, however, suggests that modern cinema—becoming in this way more like the theater—is moving toward a determined starting time and the presentation of single pieces. Heretofore, such films have only constituted an exception as special performances. It is questionable whether this kind of screening will be the right one in the long term, given film's pronounced and characteristic tendencies toward movement and change. [. . .]

As a mass art, film needs a collective space. This is created by the darkened screening room of the movie theater. The goal and purpose of these rooms is ostensibly the assembly of a possibly quite large, but limited, crowd of people, for shared aesthetic and artistic enjoyment.

The movie theater's task consists in helping to make sure that "sharpened attention" as well as "engaged behavior" can be directed exclusively toward the artistic object. This targets both the exclusion of the lower senses (sensations of pressure, touch, smell), as well as the exclusion of anything that could distract viewers from fully surrendering to the artwork.

Note

1. See Altenloh's text earlier in this chapter (no. 68).

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SIEGFRIED KRACAUER

The Cinema on Münzstraße

First published as "Kino in der Münzstraße," in Frankfurter Zeitung (April 2, 1932). Translated by Christopher M. Geissler.
While Siegfried Kracauer’s “Cult of Distraction” (1926) observed the gentrification of screening venues in Berlin, the following essay written six years later indicates that this was an uneven and incomplete process, with working-class cinemas maintaining the same raw, unrefined qualities that Alfred Döblin had emphasized in his text earlier in this chapter (no. 63). Writing in the midst of an economic depression, Kracauer also highlights an irony: the cinema now served a similar function for the unemployed masses and for the leisure class, “satisfying the need for entertainment among those people who don’t know what to do with their time.” This concern with the class dynamics of cinema in pre-Nazi Germany would arguably find its most famous expression in From Caligari to Hitler (1947), where Kracauer sharply criticized the false middle-class consciousness of a proletarianized notion. In “The Curious Realist” (1964), written on the occasion of Kracauer’s seventy-fifth birthday, Theodor W. Adorno would trace the film theorist’s sociological and mass-psychological interest in cinema back to his Weimar essays, suggesting that Kracauer often displaced his own spectatorial pleasure onto others: “He himself had something of the moviegoer’s naïve delight in viewing; he found an aspect of his own mode of response even in the little shopgirls who amused him.”

On Münzstraße, behind Alexanderplatz, there are several movie theaters with daytime hours, all of which are already open at eleven in the morning. Münzstraße is so full of pedestrians at this hour that one has to really push one’s way through to get anywhere. The crowd, composed of workers, women, petit bourgeois types, and especially young lads, is not in any hurry. As it slowly shoves along, one senses the weight of unemployment bearing down upon it. The languid river is bounded on one side by grocers’ carts and on the other by street vendors, shops, and restaurants. But by no means does the food on display in the restaurants’ windows seem to create as many illusions as the movie theaters’ screens do. They are akin to beautiful shorelines at which the public accumulates. Perhaps spiritual hunger really surpasses that of the body.

Looking at these movie theaters, I am reminded of the Paramount Theatre in Paris, located near the Opera and likewise in operation during the day. A grandiose palace bathed in light, which shows nothing but new titles interspersed with colorful ensemble scenes. Although the Paramount should not, in fact, be mentioned in the same breath as the establishments around Alexanderplatz, it does share one quality with them: satisfying the need for entertainment among those people who don’t know what to do with their time. The difference is that the groups who frequent the former have enough money to enjoy themselves already in the morning, whereas the audience on Münzstraße indulges in a forced idleness.

One notices it straightaway. The young lads loitering in front of the theater entrance and critically eyeing the photos all look sulky. For them, the pastime [Zeitvertreib] that presents itself here is less a form of pleasure than a remedy that dispels [verteibt] the specters of evil time [Zeit]. They use it like a medicine that one swallows in the event of illness. Their complexion is poor, and their gaze is tarnished by the awareness of their uselessness. At times, a couple hoping to disappear in the dark will linger in front of the images. Or a girl will consider whether there is nothing better she could be doing at the moment. The risk is indeed not small, since the jobless pay a full 50 pfennigs upon showing their ID, and box seats—or what passes for box seats here—one full mark.

Following the example of several people before me, I decided to go inside, despite the good weather. As in those forgotten times when films were still silent and more beautiful one has to pass by the lower part of the screen in order to make one’s way towards...
the back of the auditorium, which is an immensely long tube. It emits a smell that evidently took generations of effort to produce, and it teems with people. I don't see them, but I sense that they have conglomerated in clumps. The images on the screen are already a bit water-damaged, and the sound is so unclear that one hardly understands a syllable. Whispered sweet nothings sound like nagging, and simple words spoken by men morph into alarm signals. They are playing an older sound film with Hans Albers, who seems to be the general favorite on Münzstraße, since he appears in just about all of the cinemas. Distinctive for this audience are the parts of the film where they laugh. A particular cheer crops up during a short scene in which Albers blithely displays his physical strength. He jumps towards the landy Rühmann in the bathtub and plunges him under the water several times. It is the unemployed who laugh at this raw comedy, people who have been starved and from whom every practical joke elicits gratitude. Excluded from the work process, they gradually lose their ability to discriminate. One cannot blame them for even applauding the illustrious career that their beloved Albers is making in film.

The words "To be continued" appear onscreen, and the auditorium brightens. As I had correctly assumed, most of the rows are densely packed. Jackets and thin coats whisper to one another; an old man is sleeping. Later, when the noise up front begins again, his slumber comes to an end. In a small alcove on the right, there is a kind of buffet, which brands this space a waiting room. It has lost all its color and resembles the halls of employment agencies or public baths to a tee. If you assume that the cashier, who peddles peppermints, wafers, and chocolate marshmallows in a greasy apron, is superfluous, think again. His goods are in greater demand here than in the finer theaters, which are too fine, mind you, to have proper breaks. Dessert probably serves sometimes as a substitute for lunch.

Albers continues the car game right where he left off, speeding toward the summit of the happy end in a roundabout way. I don't wait for him to get there but leave the stable instead, passing in front of the screen again, on which he races by in massive form. The sun is shining, but what do these people care about the sun? In front of the entrance to the cinema, a woman in fake fur is standing and chewing. Silently she chews, looking neither to the right nor the left, and waits. She is middle-aged, an ordinary woman who has nothing to do and thus simply stands still somewhere on the side of the road. If no one comes and takes her along into the dark cinema, she will surely chew at that very spot well into the night, and the sun will slink away empty-handed.

Notes
2. Otto Pritzak had opened Berlin's first stationary cinema, the Abnormitäten- und Biographentheater, on Münzstraße on November 1, 1899; it remained in business until 1939. Other cinemas on Münzstraße included the Biograph-Theater (1906–43) and Münztheater (1910–46).
3. Paramount Pictures Corporation had acquired the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombin in Paris in 1927 and turned it into the Paramount Opéra, which today is called the Gaumont Opéra.
4. An actor and singer, Albers became one of the Germany film industry's foremost leading men in the early 1930s. The reference here is to Hans Schwarz's Bube auf Monte Carlo (Monte Carlo Madness, 1931), which costarred Heinz Rühmann, another popular German actor, who also appeared with Albers in later films. Kracauer had reviewed Bube auf Monte Carlo in the Frankfurter Zeitung on September 10, 1931. In From Caligari to Hitler, he would write: "From 1920 to 1933, the actor Hans Albers played the heroes of films in which typically bourgeois daydreams found outright fulfillment; his exploits gladdened the hearts of worker audiences." Siegfried Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, ed. Leonardo Querena (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 8–9.