

## CHAPTER 3

# The Growth of Urban Gay Scenes

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter describes the growth of Germany's gay scenes in Berlin, Hamburg, Cologne, and elsewhere, which had started in the nineteenth century but reached full bloom in the 1920s. By the Weimar era, these scenes included not only a variety of bars, restaurants, and other meeting places for gay men and lesbians, but also a growing network of social clubs and even a surprisingly successful publishing industry.

### OVERVIEW

The Weimar Republic—the name of the democratic government that was born in Germany after the disastrous First World War and the fall of the Kaiser's regime in late 1918—became famous for its experimental modernism and its relative openness with regard to sexuality. The gay scenes of Berlin, Hamburg, Cologne, and elsewhere contributed considerably to the country's reputation for permissiveness. These scenes included not only a variety of bars, restaurants, and other meeting places for gay men and lesbians, but also a growing network of social clubs and even a surprisingly successful publishing industry. These scenes were not born in 1919, however; in fact, they have a history stretching back into the nineteenth century. This chapter examines not only the various dimensions of Germany's gay scenes, but also the numerous social, economic, and cultural factors that contributed to their growth. Despite police efforts to watch and limit the areas that gay men and lesbians gradually made their own, Germany's gay scenes expanded steadily, offering opportunities to establish relationships, fashion identities, and pursue political projects. By the middle of the 1920s, many of the social clubs that had arisen from the social networks of the gay scenes were united in a new national organization, the Federation for Human Rights (BfM), under the leadership of the publisher Friedrich Radszuweit.

### KEY TERMS

Claire Waldoff; Weimar Republic; Friedrich Radszuweit; German homosexual magazines; homosexuality in Weimar Germany

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*Queer Identities and Politics in Germany: A History 1880–1945*  
[dx.doi.org/10.17312/harringtonparkpress/2016.08.qjgp.003](https://doi.org/10.17312/harringtonparkpress/2016.08.qjgp.003)

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### NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

- 1 For more on the Roland cabaret, see Peter Jelavich, *Berlin Cabaret* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 95–96.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 102.
- 3 Claudia Schoppmann, *The Days of Masquerade: Life Stories of Lesbians during the Third Reich* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 57.
- 4 Quoted in Jelavich, *Berlin Cabaret*, 102.
- 5 Quoted in Schoppmann, *Days of Masquerade*, 61.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 61–62.
- 7 Alan Lareau, “Lavender Songs: Undermining Gender in Weimar Cabaret and Beyond,” *Popular Music and Society* 28, no. 1 (February 2005): 22.
- 8 This is my translation. I make no attempt to keep the rhythm or rhyme of the song. Much thanks to Geoffrey Giles for some assistance with this translation.
- 9 Jelavich, *Berlin Cabaret*, 103.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 104.
- 11 Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 55–94; Hew Strachan, *The First World War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 59.
- 12 Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic*, 26–31.
- 13 Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*, 208–38.
- 14 Christopher Isherwood, *Christopher and His Kind, 1929–1939* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976), 2.
- 15 Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 787.

- 16 Quoted *ibid.*, 778.
- 17 Wilhelm Stieber, *Die Prostitution in Berlin und ihre Opfer*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Hofmann, 1846), 209.
- 18 Alexandra Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1998), 95.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 138–39.
- 20 Blackbourn, *History of Germany*, 72, 86–88.
- 21 Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 206–8.
- 22 David Clay Large, *Berlin* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 85–88.
- 23 Jelavich, *Berlin Cabaret*, 14.
- 24 Quoted in Large, *Berlin*, 93.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 94–95.
- 26 See Manfred Herzer's caption to the photo of the Panopticum in Magnus Hirschfeld, *Berlins Drittes Geschlecht: Schwule und Lesben um 1900* (Berlin: Rosa Winkel, 1991), 20.
- 27 Jelavich, *Berlin Cabaret*, esp. 10–35.
- 28 Richie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 181–87.
- 29 On the first report of such a costume ball in Germany, see Ulrichs, *The Riddle of "Man-Manly" Love*, 394. See also Jens Döbler, *Zwischen Duldungspolitik und Verbrechensbekämpfung: Homosexuellenverfolgung durch die Berliner Polizei von 1848 bis 1933* (Frankfurt: Polizeiwissenschaft, 2008), 350–51.
- 30 Döbler, *Zwischen Duldungspolitik und Verbrechensbekämpfung*, 360.
- 31 Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany*, 27.
- 32 Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Medizinalkollegium, IIP3, "Der erste Siegfriedsruf," Ausschnitt aus *Deutsch-Soziale Blätter*, no. 21.
- 33 Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany*, 27.
- 34 Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 802–3.
- 35 See, for example, Weeks, *Sex, Politics, and Society*, 13; Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*, 330–31.
- 36 Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975).
- 37 Jean-Ulrick Désert, "Queer Space," in *Queers in Space: Communities, Public Spaces, Sites of Resistance*, ed. Gordon Brent Ingram, Anne-Marie Bouthillette, and Yolanda Retter (Seattle: Bay Press, 1997), 21.
- 38 Lawrence Knopp, "Sexuality and Urban Space: A Framework for Analysis," in *Mapping Desire: Geographies of Sexualities*, ed. David Bell and Gill Valentine (New York: Routledge, 1995), 149.
- 39 Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 51–58.
- 40 Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, 20.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 90.
- 42 Eric Weitz, *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 285.
- 43 Dorothy Rowe, *Representing Berlin: Sexuality and the City in Imperial and Weimar Germany* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2003), 147–79; Maria Tatar, *Lustmord: Sexual Murder in Weimar Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).
- 44 Devin Fore, "Döblin's Epic: Sense, Document, and the Verbal World Picture," *New German Critique* 33, no. 3 (2006): 171–207.
- 45 Weitz, *Weimar Germany*, 170.

- 46 Large, *Berlin*, 211–12.
- 47 Weitz, *Weimar Germany*, 228.
- 48 Ibid., 302.
- 49 Atina Grossmann, *Reforming Sex: The German Movement for Birth Control and Abortion Reform, 1920–1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 15.
- 50 Ibid., especially chap. 3.
- 51 Cocks, *Psychotherapy in the Third Reich*.
- 52 Weitz, *Weimar Germany*, 297–301.
- 53 Curt Moreck, “We Will Show You Berlin,” in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, ed. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 564.
- 54 Weitz, *Weimar Germany*, 313.
- 55 Jelavich, *Berlin Cabaret*, 176.
- 56 Lareau, “Lavender Songs,” 18–24.
- 57 Hau, *The Cult of Health and Beauty in Germany*; Chad Ross, *Naked Germany: Health, Race and the Nation* (New York: Berg, 2005).
- 58 Houlbrook, *Queer London*, 9.
- 59 For a fascinating discussion of this sex tourism to the city, see Robert *Gay Berlin*, 187–219.
- 60 Theis and Sternweiler, “Alltag im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik,” 63.
- 61 Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, 70.
- 62 Ibid., 59.
- 63 Ibid., 61.
- 64 Ibid., 59.
- 65 Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 785.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Paul Nücke, “Ein Besuch bei den Homosexuellen in Berlin,” republished as an appendix to Hirschfeld, *Berlins Drittes Geschlecht*, 170. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.
- 68 Hirschfeld, *Berlins Drittes Geschlecht*, 90.
- 69 Nücke, “Ein Besuch bei den Homosexuellen in Berlin,” 171.
- 70 Ibid., 172.
- 71 Isherwood, *Christopher and His Kind*, 30.
- 72 Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 785–86.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe*, 1:51.
- 75 Theis and Sternweiler, “Alltag im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik,” 59.
- 76 Hirschfeld, *Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 785.
- 77 Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe*, 1:54.
- 78 Hirschfeld, *Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 787.
- 79 Ruth Margarete Röllig, quoted in Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe*, 1:54.
- 80 Hirschfeld, *Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 787.

- 81 Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe*, 1:55.
- 82 Ibid., 54.
- 83 Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation*, 156–57.
- 84 Ibid., 164.
- 85 Ibid., 167.
- 86 Oscar Méténier, *Vertus et Vices allemands, les Berlinois chez eux*, cited in Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 787.
- 87 Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 788.
- 88 “Miss R,” quoted in Hirschfeld, *Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 789.
- 89 For works on this topic in other national contexts, see Chauncey, *Gay New York*; Cook, *London and the Culture of Homosexuality*; Houlbrook, *Queer London*; Gert Hekma, “Queer Amsterdam 1945–2010,” in Cook and Evans, *Queer Cities, Queer Cultures*, 118–34.
- 90 Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 195–201; Houlbrook, *Queer London*, 61–62; Dan Healey, “Moscow,” in *Queer Sites: Gay Urban Histories since 1600*, ed. David Higgs (New York: Routledge, 1999), 51–52; Gert Hekma, “Amsterdam” in Higgs, *Queer Sites*, 67; David Higgs, “Lisbon,” in Higgs, *Queer Sites*, 134; Marc Stein, *City of Sisterly and Brotherly Loves: Lesbian and Gay Philadelphia, 1945–1972* (2000; repr., Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), 101–5.
- 91 Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 800.
- 92 Ibid.
- 93 Ibid. 795
- 94 Ibid., 792–93.
- 95 Theis and Sternweiler, “Alltag im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik,” 55.
- 96 Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 793.
- 97 Otto de Joux, quoted in Wolfgang Voigt, “Geschichte der Schwulen in Hamburg,” in *Hamburg ahoi! Der schwule Lotse durch die Hansestadt*, ed. Wolfgang Voigt and Klaus Weinrich (Berlin: Rosa Winkel, 1982), 14.
- 98 Abraham Flexner, *Prostitution in Europe* (New York: Century, 1914), 31.
- 99 Wolfgang Voigt, “Geschichte der Schwulen in Hamburg,” in *Hamburg ahoi! Der schwule Lotse durch die Hansestadt*, ed. Wolfgang Voigt and Klaus Weinrich (Berlin: Rosa Winkel, 1982), 27; Bernhard Rosenkranz and Gottfried Lorenz, *Hamburg auf anderen Wegen: Die Geschichte des schwulen Lebens in der Hansestadt*, 2nd ed. (Hamburg: Lambda, 2005), 20–26.
- 100 Stephen Spender, *The Temple: A Novel* (New York: Grove Press, 1988), 74.
- 101 Rainer Hoffschildt, *Olivia: Die bisher geheime Geschichte des Tabus Homosexualität und der Verfolgung der Homosexuellen in Hannover* (Hannover: Selbstverlag, 1992), 64–65.
- 102 Ibid., 65–66.
- 103 Theodor Lessing, *Haarmann: Die Geschichte eines Werwolfs* (Berlin: Schmeide, 1925), 15.
- 104 Hans Hyan, *Massenmörder Haarmann*, quoted in Hoffschildt, *Olivia*, 67.
- 105 Jürgen Müller and Helge Schneberger, “Schwules Leben in Köln,” in Limpricht et al., *Verführte Männer*.
- 106 Frank Sparing, *Wegen Vergehen nach §175 verhaftet: Die Verfolgung der Düsseldorfer Homosexuellen während des Nationalsozialismus* (Düsseldorf: Grupello, 1997), 15–25.
- 107 Laurie Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic*, 49–50.

- 108 Stephan Heiß and Albert Knoll, "Übrigens komme derlei im Hofbräuhaus fast jede Woche vor," in *München und Bayern von hinten*, ed. Ralf Waldau (Berlin: Bruno Gmünder, 1995), 15; Stephan Heiß, "Das Dritte Geschlecht und die Namenlose Liebe: Homosexuelle im München der Jahrhundertwende," in *MannBilder: Ein Lese- und Quellenbuch zur historischen Männerforschung*, ed. Wolfgang Schmale (Berlin: Arno Spitz, 1998), 189.
- 109 Dobler, *Zwischen Duldungspolitik und Verbrechensbekämpfung*, 308.
- 110 For a history of Hamburg's police department, see Wolfgang Schult, "Geschichte der Hamburger Polizei, 1814–1964" (Hamburg, 1964), manuscript in Staatsarchiv Hamburg.
- 111 For the modernization of Berlin's police procedures, see Dobler, *Zwischen Duldungspolitik und Verbrechensbekämpfung*, 145–76.
- 112 Ibid., 308–10.
- 113 Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, 54–59.
- 114 Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 786.
- 115 Dobler, *Zwischen Duldungspolitik und Verbrechensbekämpfung*, 527–43.
- 116 Sparing, *Wegen Vergehen nach §175 verhaftet*, 18–19.
- 117 Edward Ross Dickinson, "Policing Sex in Germany, 1882–1982: A Preliminary Analysis," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 16 (2007): 224–25.
- 118 Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe*, 2:328. Munich seems to have stood out as a major exception to this rule, which may at least partially explain how small the gay scene remained in Munich during the 1920s.
- 119 For some of the problems of equating the notion of *Rechtsstaat* with "rule of law," see Gustavo Gozzi, "Rechtsstaat and Individual Rights in German Constitutional History," in *The Rule of Law: History, Theory, and Criticism*, ed. Pietro Costa and Danilo Zolo (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 237–59.
- 120 Hirschfeld, *The Homosexuality of Men and Women*, 776, 780.
- 121 Ibid., 781.
- 122 Ibid.
- 123 Hirschfeld, *Berlins Drittes Geschlecht*, 80–81.
- 124 Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation*, 104–5.
- 125 Andreas Sternweiler, "Die Freundschaftsbünde—eine Massenbewegung," in *Schwules Museum, Goodbye to Berlin?* 97. See also Stümke, *Homosexuelle in Deutschland*, 54–55.
- 126 Rosenkranz and Lorenz, *Hamburg auf anderen Wegen*, 13–14.
- 127 Stefan Micheler, "Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale: Gleichgeschlechtlich gebehrender Menschen in der Weimarer Republik," August 1, 2008, [www.stefanmicheler.de/wissenschaft/stm\\_zvlggbm.pdf](http://www.stefanmicheler.de/wissenschaft/stm_zvlggbm.pdf), 26, accessed September 2, 2014.
- 128 Ibid., 26–27; Jens Dobler, *Von anderen Ufern: Geschichte der Berliner Lesben und Schwulen in Kreuzberg und Friedrichshain* (Berlin: Gmünder, 2003), 72–73.
- 129 Stefan Micheler, *Selbstbilder und Fremdbilder der "Anderen": Eine Geschichte Männer begehrender Männer in der Weimarer Republik und der NS-Zeit* (Konstanz: UVK, 2005), 195.
- 130 Micheler, "Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale," 58–59.
- 131 Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation*, 152.
- 132 Schader, *Virile, Vamps und wilde Veilchen*, 76.
- 133 Lybeck, *Desiring Emancipation*, 163–64.

- 134 Katharina Vogel, "Zum Selbstverständnis lesbischer Frauen in der Weimarer Republik: Eine Analyse der Zeitschrift 'Die Freundin' 1924–1933," in Bollé, *Eldorado*, 166.
- 135 Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic*, 62.
- 136 The *Lex Heinze* was inspired by the trial of the pimp Hermann Heinze and his prostitute wife, who were ultimately convicted of murdering a night guard during a robbery gone wrong. The trial attracted much press attention and ultimately raised a great deal of public concern about the moral and physical conditions that prostitutes lived in. The *Lex Heinze* both made pimping illegal and broadened the country's censorship laws. For the effect of the *Lex Heinze* on imperial censorship, see Gary D. Stark, "Pornography, Society, and the Law in Imperial Germany," *Central European History* 14, no. 3 (1981): 216–19.
- 137 Micheler, "Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale," 3–4.
- 138 *Ibid.*, 23.
- 139 *Ibid.*, 6–7.
- 140 Claus Nordbruch, *Sind Gedanken noch frei? Zensur in Deutschland* (Munich: Universitas, 1998), 31.
- 141 Micheler, "Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale," 11–14.
- 142 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 143 Sternweiler, "Die Freundschaftsbünde—eine Massenbewegung," 96.
- 144 Stümke, *Homosexuelle in Deutschland*, 53–54. This number is probably based on Radszuweit's own statement, which Micheler observes there is good reason to doubt. Unfortunately, coming up with a more reliable number is difficult. See Micheler, "Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale," 32.
- 145 There was an earlier version of *The Third Sex* published by Radszuweit in late 1928 and early 1929 that focused on sensational stories of (hetero)sexual crimes of various sort. It was shut down after only a few issues. Except for the title, it had nothing in common with the transvestite magazine that was published by Radszuweit during the early 1930s. See Micheler, "Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale," 32.
- 146 Andreas Sternweiler, "Die Freundschaftsbünde—eine Massenbewegung," 103.
- 147 Schader, *Virile, Vamps und wilde Veilchen*, 74–76; Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic*, 57.
- 148 Micheler, "Zeitschriften, Verbände und Lokale," 33.
- 149 Margaret Stieg, "The 1926 German Law to Protect Youth against Trash and Dirt: Moral Protectionism in a Democracy," *Central European History* 23, no. 1 (March 1990): 22–56.
- 150 Quoted in Schader, *Virile, Vamps, und wilde Veilchen*, 50.
- 151 *Ibid.*, 48–51, 142.
- 152 *Ibid.*, 54–60.
- 153 Micheler, "Zeitschriften, Verbände, und Lokale," 35–36.
- 154 Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), 65–124.
- 155 Martin Meeker, *Contacts Desired: Gay and Lesbian Communications and Community, 1940s–1970s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 12–13. See also Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic*, 65–71.
- 156 Matt Houlbrook makes a similar argument about the attraction that London had on British provincials. See Houlbrook, *Queer London*, 9.
- 157 Hirschfeld, *Berlins Drittes Geschlecht*, 74.
- 158 Kirsten Plötz, *Einsame Freundinnen? Lesbisches Leben während der zwanziger Jahre in der Provinz* (Hamburg: MännerschwarmScript, 1999).

- 159 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991), 9–36. The term *imagined community* was developed by Benedict Anderson as a model for understanding nationalism; however, the relationship it establishes between cultural material and social groups has proved very useful for thinking about the other kinds of social categories.
- 160 Micheler, *Selbstbilder und Fremdbilder*, 83–84.
- 161 Marhoefer, *Sex and the Weimar Republic*, 114.
- 162 Meeker, *Contacts Desired*, 16–29.