2. The Festivalisation of the Everyday

The previous chapter referred to historian William McNeill’s transhistorical concept of coordinated movement and sound making – as a “muscular bonding” – with the military drill, on the one hand, and community or village celebrations with dance, on the other (1995). In analysing the Schlageter myth and its commemorative festivals, I concentrated on the former category (military drill) for considering Nazi occupations of urban space in the 1920s and early 1930s. Following the Nazi takeover, as I pointed out, the national calendar was filled with a series of new events and appropriated public holidays. Such festivals, which took on increasingly elaborate forms after 1933, were specifically used to garner support and legitimisation for the National Socialist Party. Having considered examples of military-influenced events, I will now reflect on McNeill’s latter category of community festivals with folk dance, which I will link to the Rhineland carnival of the interwar period.

The trend towards a festivalisation of the everyday during the 1930s will be examined through a case study of carnival celebrations in Düsseldorf. Similar to the Schlageter memorial day, carnival involves a gathering of large crowds, ritual elements and event organisation. There are also comparable call-and-response elements, songs and singing, marching bands, processions and large crowds involved in the carnival parade. Moreover, the local orientation of the carnival festival and its characteristic sounds, as I will show, were also increasingly claimed for the Nazi Party’s nationalist project. Yet unlike the retrospective creation of Albert Leo Schlageter as a Nazi martyr, carnival was a pre-existing tradition that marked the changing seasons, similar to May Day or Harvest Day. Carnival also had its own historical repertoire of role-reversal, spectacle, excessive behaviour and rites of popular justice, with the election of a local prince used to stage an alternative representative of the people each year. The German carnival period suggests a different temporality, since it is commonly referred to as the “Fifth Season.” Carnival might be seen as a seasonal event, yet the developments around German carnival in the interwar period in fact illustrate how aspects of its practices spilled over the temporal boundaries of this “Fifth Season” into the rest of the year and into everyday life. The status of the “festival” under National Socialism, I will argue, provided a basis for establishing a certain continuum between carnival and violence as popular rites involving both self-affirmation and exclusion.

The specific sonic elements within carnival have been elaborated, most notably, in Mikhail Bakhtin’s account of carnival’s symbolic repertoire. In his study of François Rabelais’ early modern writings, Bakhtin (1968) places the role of
laughter as central to medieval folk culture and carnivalesque. For Bakhtin, folk culture was synonymous with “unofficial culture” and comprised ritual spectacle, oral expression and vernacular language. Carnival offered a space outside the everyday, with an alternate temporality that constituted the “second life” of the people. Bakhtin argues that carnival not only inverted elite values, but represented an independent philosophy and offered a utopian space for the potential emancipation of the lower classes. By contrast, official ritual was serious, dogmatic and reaffirmed the existing order.

Bakhtin criticises his predecessors for not being able to sufficiently hear the voices of the marketplace or the culture of laughter in Rabelais’ work (1968: 58, 133-4). By contrast, his own study explicitly refers to sonic phenomena, from musical instruments, bells and shouts to forms of speech, curses and bodily sounds (145-95, 213-5, 270-1, 411-7). The medieval city, as Bakhtin asserts, “rang” with these multiple voices:

Each food, wine, or other merchandise had its own words and melody and its special intonations, its distinct verbal and musical imagery. [...] Sound, the proclaimed word, played an immense role in everyday life as well as in the cultural field. It was even greater than in our days, in the time of the radio. [...] The culture of the common folk idiom was to a great extent a culture of the loud word spoken in the open, in the street and marketplace. (182)

Sound is acknowledged here as central to the medieval urban existence and its folk culture. Bakhtin asserts that the richness of the medieval soundscape exceeds the modern experience of mediated sound. Nonetheless, Bakhtin does not develop these observations on sound at length, and misses an opportunity to consider sound beyond its semantic registers. Bakhtin’s analysis of unofficial speech conventions opposes the “dual tone” of popular speech to the “official monotone” of the ruling elite (432-3). This dual vocal tone was also reflected in the ambivalence of carnival laughter, where praise and abuse were mingled on a continuum. Ambivalent abuse, in Bakhtin’s terms, enabled a “free familiar communication” that was only possible in the temporary power vacuum provided by carnival (16). Indeed, for many scholars, carnival ultimately performed a so-called “safety valve” function, by giving the license of one week for venting frustration so that everyone would follow the established order for the rest of the year (Burke 1978: 201-2).

Similar to Bakhtin, Jacques Attali’s Noise focuses on the struggle between official and unofficial culture. However, Attali theorises this tension in terms of historical contestation over sound, music and noise. Using Peter Breughel’s 1559 painting Carnival’s Quarrel with Lent as the frame for his analysis, Attali suggests that this painting offers an “archaeology of resonances” (1985: 22). He partially affirms Bakhtin’s remarks about medieval sounds as a site of communication, since this cultural conflict takes place in a soundscape involving “natural noises, noises of work and play, music, laughs, complaints, murmurs. Noises that today have virtually disappeared from our everyday life” (22). However, Bakhtin’s opposition is restated in sonic terms according to the tension between concepts
of the Festival (noise, dissonance, disorder) and the Norm (silence, harmony, order).\textsuperscript{5} In sum, the aim of Attali’s ambitious project is to investigate the role of noise in Western history and its relationship to religious and political power:

More than colors and forms, it is sounds and their arrangements that fashion societies. [...] In noise can be read the codes of life, the relations among men. Clamor, Melody, Dissonance, Harmony. [...] Everywhere codes analyze, mark, restrain, train, repress, and channel the primitive sounds of language, of the body, of tools, of objects, of the relations to self and others. All music, any organization of sounds is then a tool for the creation or consolidation of a community, of a totality. It is what links a power center to its subjects, and thus, more generally, it is an attribute of power in all of its forms. (1985: 6)

In other words, Attali urges scholars to investigate how music participates in social relations and reflects ideologies about the definition and organisation of noise. Music, too, involves the channelling of noise and violence. Unlike Bakhtin, moreover, Attali is careful not to treat sound as identical to language, but instead focuses on how music and sound take part in power and political struggles.

For Attali, power depends on the exclusion and repression of noise as a means of creating order and community. The use of music as the social organisation of noise can be found in many societies, including those of ancient China, Greece and Rome.\textsuperscript{6} However, totalitarian regimes are cited as having the most obvious expressions of music as social control, which is theorised in ideological writings about music. As Attali suggests, theorists of totalitarianism have all vouched that it is necessary to ban subversive noise because it betokens demands for cultural autonomy, support for differences or marginality: a concern for maintaining tonalism, the primacy of melody, a distrust of new languages, codes, or instruments, a refusal of the abnormal. (1985: 7)

Citing examples of Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany, Attali posits noise control and surveillance as central modes of cultural repression.\textsuperscript{7} Indeed, National Socialism is frequently associated with its solemn Christian-influenced mass rituals and appropriations of the German high music canon. Nazi-era theorists also privileged musical metaphors of harmony in their understanding of the national community (Potter 1998: 200-34). However, carnival under National Socialism offers a surprising counter-example to Attali’s theory of noise, since the noisy, disruptive sounds of carnival were, on the whole, affirmed in the public sphere. Granted, it was no longer a festival for everyone: the people at the brunt of carnival humour were those cast out from society under Nazi organisation. Yet, both the noise and music of carnival were appropriated in the staging of state power in the public sphere. The diverse carnival sounds in the street and on radio were co-opted in the Nazi festivalisation of everyday life, thereby encouraging the expansion of the “Festival” as part of the “Norm.”

In this context, the noisy Rose Monday street parades and various forms of carnival sound provide an opportunity to consider the encounter between a pre-
existing festival tradition and new political imperatives. Crucial to the staging of carnival rites was the growing influence of the radio institution for broadcasting carnival events and with it, the circulation of mediated sounds of collective cheerfulness (Pater 1998; Merziger 2010: 332-50). My contention here is that the renegotiation and appropriation of the carnival festival provides an important case for considering the intersections between sound, identity and exclusion during National Socialism.

In what follows, I will first establish the main historical attitudes towards carnival noise, and outline the National Socialist repositioning of Rheinland carnival from 1934 onwards. This requires a consideration of how the sounds and music of the festival were dispersed to new sites of reception following the introduction of radio. This section concentrates on a 1939 broadcast as a case in point for how local carnival sounds were resignified within a racist-nationalist framework, with “German humour” used to police the borders between self and other in the lead up to World War II. The third section focuses on the associations of 1920s carnival with Weimar modernity and new musical styles such as American jazz. I argue that the status of jazz in carnival is ambiguous and simultaneously linked to “colonial fantasies” in the wake of World War I and opposition to the French military occupation of the Ruhr and Rhineland with African soldiers. This articulation of otherness will lead me to focus more specifically on how carnival radio broadcasts were used to affirm regional identity, Heimat preservation and carnival’s status as a Volk festival during the 1920s and 1930s. This section is also concerned with the consequences of carnival being associated with local dialect, ethnicity and a restrictive notion of belonging. The main focus here is on how the sounds of otherness were staged in carnival events, marking Jews as physically and acoustically other. This will lead me, in the fourth and final section, to consider how carnival’s noise begins to overlap with anti-Semitic violence and how such exclusionary behaviour manifested itself in the urban soundscape. The festivalisation of the everyday under Nazism, as I term it, provides a broader framework for understanding the status of noise in relation to both the carnival festival and acts of racially-motivated violence.

A Festival for Everyone?

In Bakhtin’s historical chronology of carnival, he argued that laughter adapted to a private, individual rather than universal outlook during the 1700s. The resulting “reduced laughter” lives on in modern comedy, satire, popular novel, burlesque and theatre, which, as Bakhtin disapprovingly describes, is part of the “bourgeois line of development” (1968: 101-2, 120). This narrative is corroborated, to some degree, by the case of modern Rhenish carnival, which from the 1820s onwards involved an increased level of centralised organisation by members of the bourgeois and urban elite. As historian Lynn Abrams points out, even though carnival makes an appeal to community unity, modern festivals in the nineteenth century were increasingly organised on the basis of class and party affiliations (1992: 49). Elaine Glovka Spencer, too, argues that modern German
the festivalisation of the everyday carnival was an “adaptive practice,” which was not inherently political, religious or national, and successfully linked “local identity, tourism, and an annual spurt of consumption” (2003: 652). Following the establishment of a modern carnival season in the 1820s, there were various periods of repression by French administrators, and later by local authorities and the Prussian government. While carnival organisation was placed under suspicion for associations with the March 1838 revolution, there were numerous efforts to use carnival as a platform for staging the nation and its military power during the course of the nineteenth century (Euler-Schmidt and Schäfke 1991; Frohn 1999). In addition to the staging of nation within carnival, modern festivals and public rituals have been marked by an exclusion-inclusion dynamic since at least the French Revolution (Hunt 1984; Lucas 1988).

During the last decades of the 1800s, increased measures were taken to control the license of the urban masses, who were castigated for their indulgent and noisy behaviour during the carnival days. Various religious organisations chimed in with their concerns about carnival bawdiness and excess, with moral purity groups expressing concern that the celebrations would corrupt the young and poorly educated. Meanwhile, city authorities cracked down on masquerading, shouting, singing and playing out-of-tune instruments. Some of the more typical sounds described in the 1890s included horse whips, trumpets, crashes and the thuds of the goings-on (Strassentreiben), and rhythmic marching music led by three men with a harmonica, a triangle and a large drum (Czwoydzinski 1937: 38-47). Among others, the ritual of the “Geese March Run” (Gänsemarschlaufen), which involved playing of discordant sounds in the street, was banned in 1880 in Düsseldorf (Abrams 1992: 49). Nonetheless, German carnival still retained its status as a forum for venting frustration and critiquing authorities. In particular, the centrality of the “washtub speeches” (Büttenreden) during carnival sittings remained a symbol of honesty, used by performers for criticising and transgressing social and political norms. In the Rhineland, the speeches and songs of the Büttenreden were characterised by rhyming couplets followed by a sound effect or fanfare after the (usually risqué) punchline of each verse.

While carnival supporters have long vouched for the importance of “Narrenfreiheit” (carnival freedom or jester’s licence) and non-partisanship, its modern incarnation had ambiguous political allegiances. There is a clear tension between persistent rhetoric of “carnival for everyone” and the predominantly bourgeois-led organisation of Rhenish carnival in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indeed, the whole concept of carnival as needing “organisation” is suggestive of how bourgeois ideals influenced the modern revival of carnival. Even though some resemblance to the carnival traditions described by Bakhtin could be found in progressive workers and artist carnival celebrations, the licence of carnival rituals was ultimately curbed by officials and described in terms of “noise” disturbances. In the decades prior to 1914, street parades were only held intermittently due to further police orders and anti-noise complaints from those who perceived carnival as a disruption to productivity, traffic and their right to quiet.9

For all of carnival’s “noise” and lack of discipline, its ritual elements and appeal to tradition were identified as being useful or at least adaptable to the
National Socialist cultural programme, particularly for their efforts to build consensus between 1934 and 1939. To take a carnival song as a point of departure for these considerations, “Alles onger ene Hot” (All under one hat) was written especially for the 1934 carnival celebrations in Düsseldorf (Figure 7). The English translation of the lyrics read:

Just how difficult it used to be,
When everyone was here and there
It has now finally all come to an end
If someone doesn’t want it, they’ll have it coming
Also from us here in carnival.
So it went with a bang and a crash
Now there is again new courage
And everyone sings the song about the hat.

Refrain:
Everyone under one hat, such a nice hat
It suits everyone just fine!
Even when one’s head is too big
For such a large head it is especially chic.
[Linked arms for repetition]

And Griesche has been searching twenty years
A young man with black hair
He has to have some money on him
So that one can live from it.
Above all he has to be racially pure
And proud of his ancestry
Griet sings loudly in his need:
Oh if only I could be under one hat [with everyone as the same].

These lyrics address fellow carnival revellers and reflect on their shared struggle to establish a full carnival season, since street parades had only been possible on a handful of occasions in previous decades. The main reasons for the past difficulties in staging carnival events included an official ban during World War I, the subsequent French military occupation, funding problems and opposition from church figures and city administrators. By contrast, the “bang and crash” of this new era makes a connection between carnival’s noisy annual renewal and the Nazi takeover with its ambition to establish a new époque. In defending carnival against its traditional detractors, the “grumblers and grouches” (Muckertum und Griesgram), carnival’s fighting spirit is portrayed as somewhat analogous to that associated with the Nazi movement. Since it is a swaying song (Schunkellied), there is the expectation that the people will come together and link arms while singing the refrain, thus performing a “muscular bonding” as described by McNeill. It also implies that carnival involves a broad participation with the notion of “everyone under one hat.” This plea might appear to be inclusive, with the
call for different people to come together. Yet the conceptualisation of the Nazi policy of social reorganisation (Gleichschaltung) demands homogeneity and that everyone become the same (gleich). This policy of social organisation, moreover, involved the rejection of unwanted political and social groups from public life.

The song is thus not unlike other carnival songs of the early twentieth century, whose ditties usually referred to pretty girls, love, wine, local history and symbols, such as the Rhine River, and provided commentary on modern life, from telephone etiquette to new dance styles. The marked shift in carnival song-writing under National Socialism, however, is the explicit emphasis on the importance of racial purity, pride in one’s “Aryan” ancestry and “Heimat” (homeland or hometown). The love of Heimat is a common theme in modern carnival songs, yet until the Nazi era these affiliations were not couched in such obvious racial terms. In sum, this theme song exposes the politicisation of carnival and a rhetoric of group belonging that was based on a restrictive racial concept according to Nazi social engineering.

Indeed, the “Under One Hat” parade theme was chosen by the new steering committee for the centralised control of Düsseldorf’s forty guilds for the first carnival season under National Socialism (Czwowydżinski 1937: 46). Accordingly, the Rose Monday parade in February 1934 included parade floats with oversized models of bowler hats, which were also worn by parade marchers.11 In Mainz,
too, the reorganisation of carnival in 1934 was represented by the parade motto “Alles in einem Topf” (All in one pot), with a number of parade floats making reference to the French military occupation in the 1920s. One float protesting the demilitarisation of the Saar region also racialised this portrayal by depicting colonial forces in the French army with men in khaki uniforms and blackened faces. Meanwhile, a float titled “Peace and Demilitarisation” (Friede und Abrüstung) contrasted a statue of Mother Mary with a black French soldier with a rifle, accompanied by men on foot wearing oversized black head masks with large lips and teeth. Also appearing under the rubric of carnival “humour” in the 1934 parades was a float in Cologne using crude stereotypes and costumes depicting the emigration of Jews (which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter).

The day after the 1934 street parades, the front page of the Düsseldorfer Stadt-Nachrichten praised the full-scale return of carnival events, following a period of local funding problems and economic depression, as “Düsseldorf’s largest folk (Volk) festival” (“Karneval in Düsseldorf” 1934). The push to promote carnival as a “Heimat festival” was reinforced as the Düsseldorf City Museum began an archive to collect historical carnival artefacts in 1934 (Heister 1935: 48). While commentators in this period emphasise carnival in terms of tradition and Heimat preservation, the parade was also a platform for modernity and promotional culture, with references to current affairs, new technologies and commodity consumption. The tourist office also organised a photography competition and radio broadcasts from the parade were replayed outside the Düsseldorf train station, allowing the carnival crowds and passersby to acoustically relive the day’s events. Tourism, in particular, was already a key concern for carnival organisers, with an emphasis on the economic boost provided by visitors and new features such as funfairs and ticketed viewing stands to observe the parade.

From 1934 onwards, carnival events were increasingly attached to the National Socialist cultural organisation, “Kraft durch Freude” (KdF) where carnival was additionally promoted as part of their organised tourist and cultural events programme. In the southern German town of Hechingen, the KdF organisation noted that they had done a good job in taking over carnival relatively early, since they believed the ritual would help the people regain their strength for everyday life and work (Korff 1972: 58). The involvement of the organisation in Düsseldorf is demonstrated by a photo in an official publication from 1934, which depicts a KdF carnival float decorated with the national eagle symbol, swastikas and “make a sacrifice” (Opfert) signs. Men in historical costume on the parade float carried long sticks with collection plates, which were held out to carnival crowds to contribute their donations to the Winter Aid programmes (Winterhilfswerk or WHW) taken over by the Nazis after 1933.

Despite the high praise given to the first carnival organised under National Socialist, the event still posed certain risks or uncertainty, for at least one Düsseldorfer-Nachrichten reporter. As a platform for raucous, drunk and illicit behaviour, carnival still included elements such as cross-dressing, role-reversal and a day where women asserted their control over the city. Archival footage from 1934 also shows Düsseldorf police struggling to control the jostling crowds, who are seen standing in the way of floats, climbing into trees and standing on
shop awnings. Indeed, the newspaper article stresses the need for “even more discipline!” amongst crowd members, who were instructed to be more careful in following the instructions of the traffic police and parade organisers (“Karneval in Düsseldorf” 1934: 1). In other words, despite the assertion that carnival was a symbol of a community unity, with its “healthy laughter” and overriding of class differences, there is a clear desire for further discipline and a stress on the necessity for centralised control.

Indeed, there is a fundamental tension in the official position towards carnival from 1933. On the one hand, Adolf Hitler and other party leaders made special appearances at carnival parades and events, and Nazi organisations were keen to establish increasing centralised control over the carnival season and its promotion.\(^{15}\) Likewise, carnival guild sittings often began with the national anthems and a collective “Heil Hitler” greeting. On the other hand, there were bans on hanging Hitler’s photo on the walls of carnival venues and against wearing official party uniforms at carnival events and parades.\(^{16}\) Furthermore, expressions of the grotesque were strictly outcast as “alien” or “un-German” (volksfremd), terms often now used to described the Weimar carnival celebrations of the 1920s (see Spickhoff 1938: 93). The appropriation of carnival for the Nazi festivalisation of the everyday, moreover, comprises part of a broader attempt to counter the demotivation of the Weimar years and the Depression. In an article by Hans Heister, for instance, the Düsseldorf revival under National Socialism took place after many years of “bitter poverty and gruelling folk alienation [Volksentfremdung]” (1935: 34). Indeed, following 1933, there were various other efforts to rid the event of associations with the grotesque. The cross-dressing men involved in carnival parades and “washtub speeches” were deemed threatening to normative sexual mores.\(^{17}\) There were also attempts to monitor the scripts of washtub speeches after 1934 to ensure that the jokes and humorous ditties did not take too much political licence or contain grotesque illusions (Brog 2000: 221).\(^{18}\)

Nazi ideology appropriated the concept of an ethnic German “folk” identity and culture as one of its central doctrines for its nationalist programme. While lip service was frequently paid to carnival’s central premise – the world “turned upside down” – carnival under National Socialism employed a more restrictive notion of folk culture and the popular. Commentators also asserted that carnival had been re-established as a “folk festival” (Volksfestival) that involved the participation of all groups of society, including good-humoured police officers and SA troops. However, even though the police supposedly linked arms and swayed with the people, their function remained that of traffic and crowd control (see Es rauscht 1951; “Karneval in Düsseldorf” 1937). The stress on the necessity to ritually perform a sense of community among the German people (Volk) provided the impetus for the Nazi festivalisation of the everyday. Moreover, as my analyses of the Schlageter myth and the song “Alles onder ene Hot” have indicated, it was easier for the Nazi regime to adopt and adapt existing rituals than invent completely new rituals and customs. In what follows, I will examine how radio participated in the increasing festivalisation of everyday life by conveying the sounds of carnival as framed through the nation.
Radio and the Modern Festival

As mentioned above, Bakhtin’s analysis of medieval carnival insists on its relationship to urban topoi, identified as “the city marketplace, to the town fair and the carnival square” (1968: 146). In a predominantly oral culture, the street was the focus of the public sphere and it was employed by official powers to deliver announcements and orders. Street cries, in particular, are identified as a central site of sociability and oral communication. Part of this sociability was the temporal and spatial locatedness of the cry, which was heard only as far as the voice could carry over the din of sounds in the medieval city. According to Bakhtin, the world of the medieval carnival, moreover, involved all social groups as carnival does not know footlights, in the sense that it does not acknowledge any distinction between actors and spectators. Footlights would destroy a carnival, as the absence of footlights would destroy a theatrical performance. (7)

In this rendering, the collective is formed in the public sphere through the crowd’s face-to-face interaction and participation in carnival’s egalitarian world of laughter. Individual participants, as Bakhtin suggests, gained a sensory awareness of their body’s place within the collective.

To a certain degree, my analysis in Chapter One suggested the ongoing importance of the street as a site of political struggle and sociability in the period following World War I. Both the clash fighting and Schlageter festivals in the Weimar years involved a military-inspired “muscular bonding” for Nazi Party members in public space, whose acoustic and spatial occupation was amplified by the use of Lautsprecherwagen. In this case, a carnival-style “muscular bonding” can also be found in the collective dance, song and parade marching of crowds. Nonetheless, carnival in the late 1920s no longer took place solely in the marketplace, but was dispersed to other parts of the city and even beyond the bounds of the city. Broadcasting and sound reproduction technologies, in particular, enabled carnival sounds to be transported outside of the urban sites identified by Bakhtin, stretching the boundaries of the festival. Carnival’s public sphere, as such, came to include newspaper reports, gramophone records, radio broadcasts, newsreels and film. Radio, in particular, soon became the most influential medium in dispersing news and current affairs, as well as a forum for staging national events and festivals, thus bringing diverse sonic expressions of the nation together (Scannell 1996). Against this background, I will now consider how radio enabled the limited carnival season to be temporally prolonged and break through its localised boundaries to reach the entire nation and extend across the year.

In Germany, radio was given the task of spreading publicity for local events, songs and syndicating broadcasts from various carnival cities. The year 1927 marked the beginning of carnival broadcasts from the new west-German radio station, which had been forbidden to operate during the British, French and Belgian occupations between 1919 and 1925 (Schütte 1971: 37-8, 53-4; Bierbach...
The Rhineland carnival revival, as such, coincided with the first broadcasts from the new West-German Radio (Westdeutscher Rundfunk AG or Werag) in Cologne. On 28 February 1927, West-German Radio broadcast the Rose Monday parade for the first time, with station announcers standing at a first-floor window while commenting on the floats. The weekly programme magazine Die Werag observed that these announcers would communicate the visual spectacle via their verbal descriptions and location sound recordings, and thus try to convey:

how the incommunicable impressions of the parade floats are depicted and simultaneously the sounds, particularly the music, are recorded by the microphone. The result is a kind of acoustic film.\(^{20}\)

This claim for radio, made shortly before the introduction of sound film in Germany, maintains the value of this acoustic medium for capturing a sense of liveliness and the diversity of sounds involved. At the same time, the impression given is that it may be difficult to capture the many different and sometimes indistinguishable parade sounds, since outdoor broadcasting was still in its infancy. The radio speakers, too, are deemed in this description as necessary to guide the listeners through the radio experience of a noisy sonic event. Even though the Cologne transmitter Langenberg was praised as having the best technical set-up and programming within Germany, around half of the listeners in Rhineland and Westfalia were still listening with simple detector receivers in 1927 (Bierbach 1986: 199; Schütte 1971: 59). The carbon microphones used by German stations had sufficient capacity for speech but experienced difficulties with musical sound and outdoor settings, and had quite a high noise ratio (Warum 1997: 22).

The idea of radio allowing listeners to be imaginatively present elsewhere was a recurring trope, which encouraged a concept of carnival as extending to “earwitness” listeners across the entire country and even beyond Germany’s own borders. The Simplicissimus magazine published a cartoon in 1927 that satirised this new way of celebrating carnival, by depicting “Fasching im Radio” with an elderly couple with headsets, supposedly supplanting the experience of carnival events from the safety of their upper-class living room (Heine 1927). The Cologne station encouraged this concept of radio eventness in their descriptions of carnival noise and hilarity as an “acoustic film” that would bring carnival events to radio listeners. Accordingly, in fan letters to the station, listeners also asserted that carnival broadcasts allowed them to be there in Cologne “with our eyes and ears.” This comment was made by Austrian listeners who thanked the station for the syndicated broadcast of a Cologne carnival sitting in January 1928, noting that radio had facilitated their first proper encounter with Rhenish humour. Writing from what they described as a quiet and lonely village, they enthused: “We had heard of the Cologne carnival before, but had no idea that there would be so much humour, and we were […] there among you until the final applause.”\(^{21}\) While listeners in Germany and elsewhere may have heard of the Cologne carnival, they were now privy to the full range of its sounds for the first time, and could fancy themselves as participants in its rituals. This conception of partici-
pating in carnival at a distance in national events provided a key precedent for the trend towards a festivalisation of everyday life under Nazism.

In addition to defining the carnival festival in terms of experience and event-ness, radio broadcasts also imaginatively extended the temporal length of the carnival season for up to four or five months. The official beginning of carnival on 11 November, which was only moderately observed in the late 1920s, was marked on radio with an “Entertaining Evening” (Lustiger Abend) in the Werag programme on 9 November 1929. The experience of carnival via radio was emphasised by Die Werag magazine, which included reports and photo collages of its involvement in transmitting carnival events to its listeners. A caption asserted to its readership that “shared pleasure is double pleasure,” while the photo from January 1929 depicts a large group of carnival revellers in fancy dress sitting around a table in a salon booth. Listening to a broadcast from a guild sitting, each individual is shown holding headphones to their ears. The listeners, moreover, were participating in a group experience of listening, where their individual headphones partially separated them from each other and their immediate acoustic environment in the salon (Die Werag 10 Feb. 1929: 19). The contemporary enthusiasm for radio, in turn, is reflected by the fancy-dress costumes chosen for carnival balls and parades, and the Werag station became involved in carnival organisation, with some guild sittings even relocated to the station’s own broadcast studios.

The potential of radio, as Jacques Attali argues, was that elitist music performances were taken out of the concert hall (or, in this case, from ticketed carnival guild sittings) and transmitted to other locations and audiences (84). Photos reprinted in Die Werag magazine also highlight the presence of radio (in the form of cylinder Naumann microphones) on stage at large guild sittings. Accompanied by the caption “The microphone in front of the washtub,” a 1930 photo shows how a microphone is suspended from the ceiling. The washtub speaker (Büttenredner) leans forward to speak into it, marking his address to both the audience present and the radio listening public, which increasingly extended beyond Werag’s regional boundaries due to national programme syndication (“Bilder” 1930). Such programme magazines seem to aid the listeners’ imagination of carnival, and function as a visual aid for those not able to see the appearance and gestures of performers. Nonetheless, the strong emphasis on wordplay, witty songs, Büttenreden and an all-round convivial atmosphere attests to the strong sonic appeal of carnival guild sittings for radio broadcasts.

Radio was instrumental in publicising the carnival season and its songs for a geographically dispersed listening audience and linking the festival to modern culture more generally. However, with the onset of the severe economic crisis in Germany, there was significant pressure on the carnival committees to cancel Rose Monday parades in 1930 and 1931. The carnival festival in Düsseldorf and other cities had all but retreated indoors to guild sittings and radio broadcasts, which were rarely syndicated to other regional stations. Carnival parades themselves were initially banned for the 1930 Rose Monday due to an ordinance against all public processions, in response to the prevalent culture of street clashes and sonic brawling. An article in the Düsseldorf Tageblatt around the same time declared
the sorry state of the carnival festival with the title “The Dead Hoppeditz.” The author cynically notes that Prince Carnival is not swinging his sceptre as in past years because he has too much competition from the “Nazi-idiotic Hoppeditz behaviour of His royal craziness [Joseph] Goebbels.” This comment implies that the political chaos and violent agitation of the late Weimar years had all but supplanted the celebratory noise of carnival celebrations. Moreover, this assertion specifically aligns National Socialist parades and street battles, which I discussed in the previous chapter about Schlageter, with the carnivalesque. A certain continuity is thus made between carnival and the political practices of the Nazi Party, a comparison that satirical magazines like Simplicissimus also made with sketches, such as Hitler depicted as a carnival clown as late as mid-February 1933.

Rather than reinforce community unity, the Düsseldorf Tageblatt journalist suggests, only the wealthy could afford any real participation in carnival during a period of rife unemployment and hunger. He reports that some young men – who were still out after drunkenly celebrating on “Carnival Sunday” – were chased by the hordes of men waiting outside the employment office on Monday morning. In other words, at the end of the Weimar era, carnival’s existence was almost entirely confined to radio broadcasts and indoor locations. The city street was no longer deemed an appropriate site for noisy expressions of laughter or the excess of the carnival festival. The traditional end to carnival with the Catholic rite of fasting was not really necessary, the journalist concluded, because most Germans hadn’t had enough to eat in months, whether they were employed or unemployed. Carnival, in this context, was interpreted as exposing class differences – as an indulgence of the middle class and an insult to those suffering (“Der tote” 1931; Houben 1999: 89). It could thus be said that the period around the Depression resembled a de-festivalisation of everyday life. While this desperate period might be described as subdued – in terms of Attali’s strong opposition between the Festival (noise) and the Norm (silence) – it was marked by the intensification of the sonic brawling and political activity I discussed in Chapter One.

By 1932, it was also decided that carnival events would be kept “quiet” (leise) in Cologne and Düsseldorf, a mandate that was evident in the official carnival broadcasts and musical programming (“Düsseldorfs Karnevalssonntag” 1932). Instead of the usual Werag broadcast from Düsseldorf’s “Grosse” guild sitting under Eduard Czwoydzinski, the station invited carnivalists to hold a live event to raise money for the Cologne station’s “Winter Aid” (Winterhilfe) fundraiser for the poor (Czwoydzinski 1937: 42). The following day, 7 February 1932, a similar “musical medley” concert was held as a fundraiser in Düsseldorf’s Apollo Theatre. A newspaper critic praised the potpourri selection from classical pieces to the latest Willi Ostermann carnival hit song (Schlager) as appealing to the listener. However, he goes on to suggest that the programmers had played it too safe in their choice of traditional music and had not been daring or successful enough with a modern repertoire, as there was still too much dependence on trumpets and violins in the modern pieces played (“Düsseldorfs Karnevalssonntag” 1932). A 1930 issue of Simplicissimus made a similar observation that the music played during carnival had become too symphonic, with carnival event hosts becoming cautious about playing jazz or modern musical styles. Instead of the usual ban-
ter and cheers, carnival sounds were characterised by an atmosphere of caution and restraint, and given the primary function of raising money for the poor. The carnival season could potentially cause more societal tension in a divided public sphere, since it was a luxury that only the middle class and elite could afford.

For my consideration of radio’s public sphere as an expanded site for carnival celebrations, I will now analyse an example of a broadcast from a Düsseldorf carnival sitting, which was syndicated to all German stations in January 1939. What makes this thirty-minute recording particularly interesting to the study of carnival sounds on radio is that it was heralded as expanding the territory of the festival to the national level, as part of the second Bund Deutscher Karneval (German Carnival Federation) conference. As the last Düsseldorf carnival season prior to World War II, the recording is also a reflection of the heightened centralised control over carnival organisation. Further party control of carnival had already occurred in 1936, with the rapid establishment of a new umbrella organisation in each city, which ceded the ultimate control of carnival societies in 1937 to the national Bund Deutscher Karneval. The following analysis will consider how the carnival’s sounds of communal merriment were resignified within a Nazi festivalisation of everyday life that promoted nationalism and enabled “us”-“them” distinctions to be further ingrained.

The broadcast, recorded from the Düsseldorf city concert hall, begins with a washtub speech that affirms the opening of the season for balls and sittings (Track 4). On the one hand, carnival figures like the “grumblers” (Griesgram) are mentioned, while on the other, it employs ideological-inflected terms of struggle (kämpfen), joy (Freude) and the carnival motto as a slogan (Parole). As this speech is faded out, the radio announcer welcomes listeners to “West-German carnival,” yet at the same time observes that the broadcast is a part of the nationalised Bund Deutscher Karneval. This discourse reflects the insistence on placing Düsseldorf carnival both within a regional and national framework during the course of the 1930s. Musical sounds then emanate again from the stage, upon which Düsseldorf guild president Czwoydzinski welcomes the audience and introduces the second washtub speaker: “Jubilu Hilaru.” This speaker plays on the 1939 theme “Topsy-turvy” (Drunter und Drüber), taking binary pairs of the “natural” order and reversing them. The jokes thus play, in a very Bakhtinian way, between what is “forbidden” and “allowed,” whether men or women are in charge, and whether Düsseldorf or Cologne has a better carnival. This speaker, too, emphasises the setting as being within the national scope of the carnival federation. A third washtub speech involves a (presumably costumed) man performing a female character with outlandish social ambitions.

The sonic quality of the segments are characterised by a light banter (plaudern), which was characteristic of Nazi broadcasting’s encouragement of light entertainment in the late 1930s (Lacey 1997: 65-9, 89). Indeed, similar to popular variety shows like the Bunte Samstagnachmittag, it is as much the merry sounds of communal entertainment as the direct references in the songs, which contribute the sense of national community through radio (Horn 1984; Pater 1998). The broadcast itself explicitly stages the idea of national unification and provides the listener with the sense of sampling the regional varieties of carnival through
the speeches and musical performances. The 1939 events in Düsseldorf involved carnival representatives from across greater Germany: Munich, Mainz, Cologne, Aachen and also Vienna following the 1938 annexation of Austria. The announcer performs his role as an intermediary, assisted by new cross-fading technology employed to mix in the various (recorded) segments from the carnival sitting. Nonetheless, on several occasions, the reporter’s voice strains to be heard over the background sounds of group singing, which he uses to emphasise the “liveness” of the event. He maintains the tone of light banter with a presentation style that builds up anticipation for the listener at home (Track 4, 12:50):

This evening should demonstrate that Düsseldorf’s carnival is connected to the people (volksbunden). [...] That there are real roots in the people (Volk). And that this is the place for the beginning of the carnival season, which will soar so high. We will have a second part – and experience a selection (Ausschnitt) from the whole of German carnival, indeed the guests appearing for the congress in Düsseldorf have come from the entire Reich: from Munich, from Mainz, from Vienna, from Cologne, from Münster, from Aachen, they are all here. We will witness [miterleben] a colourful series of cheerful surprises in the second part.

In other words, the announcer tries to guide the interpretation of this event for the listeners, by emphasising the authentic and völkisch qualities of carnival.

On several occasions there are references to the production context, such as with the radio warning “Attention please – recording” (Achtung bitte – Aufnahme). Yet on the whole the male announcer’s vocal presentation seeks a smooth transition between the potpourri of elements, and thus to downplay the act of mediation involved (Track 4, 13:45):

Yes, dear listeners. As you can already tell from the music, this tour of the German carnival is only a fictitious one. This is the “Berliner Luft, Luft, Luft.” [...] The Berliners have brought their real Berlin humour to Düsseldorf, and they have brought their specialities: Berlin white beer, Berlin doughnuts. And now “In Mainz am schönen Rhein” can be heard. Before that the Viennese were our guest performers here in Düsseldorf. The song they just played was “Wien bleibt Wien.”

Each of the participating carnival cities is thus represented according to local particularities or produce, but more emphatically with stereotypical songs. Regional varieties are affirmed by the song titles, yet this selection is subsumed under a national concept of “German carnival.” Düsseldorf is thus situated as a setting for staging the convergence of various German carnival traditions.
The speaker introduces the fourth and final washtub speech by “Ermundo” from Mainz. The speech, mainly in rhyming AABB stanzas, begins with references to the “eternal struggle for tradition,” which is implied to be fulfilled under National Socialism. The strong, possibly close-miked, sounds of laughter from the audience can be heard for a punchline about the necessity for a woman to be a member of the people, as a “Volksfrau.” The speaker shifts to discussing current affairs by alluding to the mounting tension between European nations, with a punchline about the gas masks used by German civilians to rehearse air safety and nighttime blackouts. Observing that there are “radio wars” in Europe, the speaker asserts that Moscow’s only radio station transmits deceptive lies. The punchline is that the only truthful sound on Russian radio is the station’s signature tune (Pausenzeichen). The Mainz speaker not only directly refers to radio, but presents it as sonically mediating all the significant political events of the previous year. The speaker systematically makes jokes about how recent political events each had an accompanying radio soundtrack. When the Saarland region was remilitarised, listeners repeatedly heard the song “The Saar Is German” (Deutsch ist die Saar); when Austria was occupied by Germany in 1938, they heard Viennese waltzes; and, following the occupation of the German-speaking Böhm region, they heard the traditional “Egeländer” song. Thus, contemporary current affairs, international tensions and German military invasions are explained through the euphemistic metaphor of “radio wars” and the theme songs that were employed as part of the subsequent national celebrations on radio.

The nationalist inflections of the washtub speech are maintained, yet the jokes are soon placed within a frame of Heimat and the German colonial project. Ermundo’s subsequent joke concerns the former German colony of Cameroon (established in 1884), which was placed under French and English governance by the League of Nations following World War I (see Smith 1978). Delivered in an ironic tone, the speaker remarks (Track 4, 20:20):

And Africa and Cameroon,
They also have a radio station now,
Sing with Germany, black brothers:
“I too would like to go back to the Heimat.”

This punchline attracts significant laughter and is marked by a brass fanfare. It makes reference to the sentimental late-nineteenth-century folk song “Nach der Heimat möcht’ ich wieder,” which had been popularised in a 1929 sound film by tenor Richard Tauber and violinist Dajos Béla, both of whom left Germany due to persecution on the basis of their Jewish heritage (Jürgs 2000). In addition, the condescending observation that Cameroon now has radio is paired with the idea that radio programmes induce sentimentality for the German Heimat in former colonial subjects. This notion is deemed impossible by the laughing carnival audience, probably since black people absolutely did not belong to a restricted conception of belonging to the Heimat.

The jingoistic assertions of the washtub speech continue with a systematic criticism of Germany’s diplomatic rivals as hostile and insulting, making refer-
ence to Russia, England and France. The speaker then suggests that America is also always fighting and throwing around insults, before insinuating that for Jewish immigrants, America must be the “promised land.” The speaker continues to make discriminatory jokes by playing on several Jewish family names (Track 4, 22:45):

America: the New World.
It is a large “field of roses” [Rosenfeld]
There you can smell “flowers” [Blumen], “sweet” [süß] and “dulcet” [lind],
Which have long disappeared [verduftet] from Germany.37

The speaker takes the historical description of America as the New World and suggests that it is abundantly filled with things that have “disappeared” from Germany. This euphemism for the Jews living in forced exile overseas creates a double-entendre based on the linguistic similarity between the smell of flowers (duften) and their disappearance or eradication (verduften). Moreover, there is the play on surnames like Rosenthal that a German listening audience – well-versed in stereotypes – would recognise as typically Jewish. Since radio ownership for Jews was banned in 1938, the washtub speaker’s radio-listening audience is assumed to be entirely non-Jewish, with the audience present in the hall predominantly party members and high officials.38 This stanza, which received the largest applause of the whole broadcast, offers a clear indication of the shift in carnival under National Socialism, where racial and chauvinist attacks could be celebrated as carnival “humour.”

As the washtub speech draws to an end, the speaker concludes with a farewell, which blesses the audience and suggests that they are engaging in harmless fun (Track 4, 27:00):

And now I will end with a Helau
Greetings from Mainz Carnival Guild [Mainzer Carnivals Verein]
Link your arms with each other
May God protect our speech-making on the German Rhine,
We always want to be merry: Helau!39

The Düsseldorf carnival greeting “Helau” is employed here as a mark of commonality between carnival cities, particularly given the recent annexation of cities like Vienna. Yet this salute could also be interpreted as a carnival supplement for the Nazi “Heil” greeting, employed here in a context of national assembly, where the codes of military-style and festive bonding increasingly mixed and became almost indistinguishable. This congruence is supported by sources that suggest that the national anthems were used to open guild sittings under Nazism, with the reinforcement of the national unit particularly necessary during a tense political period. The speaker draws on religious imagery to affirm the “holy” principle of carnival freedom (Narrenfreiheit), a trope that is often used in asserting carnival as harmless, non-political and trans-historical.40 The audience members are invited to link their arms together, suggesting the suitability of carnival as an event
that invites participation through movements (swaying, salutes) and voice (singing, vocal responses), not unlike in my analysis of the Schlageter festival in the previous chapter. Ultimately, the stanza reflects the paradox of asserting carnival as an opportunity for carefree entertainment and participation, even when it is simultaneously used as a platform for exclusion. The broadcast fades out after this farewell, with no further commentary from the radio announcer to frame this washtub speech, an omission that implicitly confirms its position.

The 1939 event offers a case in point of the Nazis’ festivalisation of everyday life with carnival broadcasts that employed sound to perform ingrained patterns of identity and exclusion and make recourse to the nation. Where carnival was previously asserted primarily in terms of civic belonging, radio broadcasts now situated the festival within a framework that included diverse sonic expressions of the nation. However, if radio facilitated an expanded public sphere for carnival celebrations during the 1920s, these broadcasts also created a forum for attacks and abusive speech during National Socialism. The public sphere of radio, moreover, was limited to those with official radio ownership, which by definition excluded Jews. Carnival is conceived here as giving individuals a sense of their place in the national body politic. The use of politicised musical song, used to mark military invasions, is also placed under the bannerhead of harmless carnival fun. The broadcast, to paraphrase Attali, suggests the political uses of sound to: make people forget violence; make people believe in the harmony of the world; and create a silence through music that censors other human noises (1985: 19).\(^{41}\)

It is in this sense that the broadcast employs humour and song to affirm the Nazi worldview and self-image, while creating abstract conceptions of political and racial others.

It is the relationship between the national imagination and the sounds of self and other within the festival that I will explore in the following section: first, in terms of black people and jazz music in carnival, and second, in the influential concepts of Heimat and local dialect that influenced the self-identification of both carnival and regional radio in the 1920s and 1930s. In the following, I will reflect on carnival as a site of exclusion, in view of its role as a festival for reinforcing rather than challenging authority.

**Festive Exclusions: The Carnival Heimat**

The revival of carnival in the 1920s was increasingly typified by its relations to the so-called “Jazz Age.”\(^{42}\) In the Rhineland, progressive artist and worker groups organised costume parties and “Lumpenbälle” (rag balls) with jazz as the predominant form of musical inspiration (Zepter 1997). For other commentators, jazz was conceived as an expression of political freedom. As an article in Cologne’s main Social Democrat newspaper declared in 1929:

Jazz is revolution. Jazz is insurgency. Jazz is mocking the old. When […] old Schubert has his waltzes in “House of the Three Girls,” then this Nigger boy stands disrespectfully in the corner and has his drums ready to break it
all up. Jazz is revolt. [...] It drives things to the summit, makes the cowardly burst and smashes in pieces what’s left over! We greet you, Jazz! Pang-pang, Quinn-qui.43

Jazz music is offered here as marking a departure from earlier musical forms such as waltzes. Not only is jazz the bearer of change, but it is also synonymous with revolt: represented here by the figure of the black drummer, whose music is counter-cultural and anti-authoritarian. Listening to jazz, moreover, is presented as a liminal and nearly-explosive bodily experience. This enthusiastic portrayal closes with the crashing sounds of jazz approximated through onomatopoeic descriptions. According to this description, jazz has strong alliances with carnival as a symbol of revolt and renewal, with a similar potential for disrupting the status quo. By contrast, cultural conservatives and the Nazi Party were resolute about jazz music as seeming too anti-authoritative (as per Bakhtin’s understanding of carnival’s utopian potential). In the context of Nazism, as I will now indicate, the emphasis on carnival was not as an inclusive expression of the people, but as a nationalist festival that delimited the boundaries of belonging to the Volk.

The enthusiasm for carnival and its links to modern music were often expressed in *Simplicissimus*, a popular satirical magazine from Munich with a bourgeois-liberal outlook. Exemplary in this regard was the cover of its annual carnival issue in 1927, which depicted a semi-naked black woman with a modern figur. 8: Cover image of *Simplicissimus*. Image illustrated by Karl Arnold [24 Jan. 1927]. Courtesy of Simplicissimus Projekt (DFG) / Pictoright.
cropped hairstyle playing the saxophone (Figure 8). A champagne advertisement inside this issue similarly vouched for a sonic definition of carnival celebrations: “Banjos twang, saxophones cry — Jazz pulsates the tempo of the times. Forget about the worries of daily life.”44 Jazz is not only associated with carnival excess, but also presented as a sonic emblem for the 1920s. In the case of this magazine cover, a racialised and sexualised representation of carnival freedom is offered through its music. This reflects a somewhat exoticised fascination with African-American culture as the origin of jazz music and new dance styles (as in the description of the black drummer boy as a “Nigger Boy” in the previous quote).

By 1928 and 1929, it is striking that, in addition to the usual brass marching bands, a number of jazz bands played in Rose Monday parades. Düsseldorf cinema manager Fritz Genandt’s films of the street parades in these two years were also employed as footage for contemporary newsreels. Genandt’s footage from 1928 depicts a group of men playing banjos, saxophones and other instruments on an extravagantely decorated float, while a 1929 float has men on horseback playing saxophones with blackened faces. The float following behind features men in white suits, party hats and blackened faces performing in a jazz band orchestration (Es rauscht 1951). This footage makes clear that the Jazz Age and its associations with African-Americans were included as essential components for the 1929 parade motto “contemporary caricatures” (Karikadiz, short for Karikaturen der Zeit). It is not entirely clear whether these parade participants were revelling in the “Jazz Age” or ridiculing it, yet it would seem that even the more traditional carnival guilds were taking note of developments in contemporary popular music.45

Indeed, despite the popular appeal of African-American jazz and dance music in carnival, black people were also presented negatively in the parades of the late 1920s. The theme of peace and demilitarisation was frequently used in parade floats of the 1920s, with criticism of the League of Nations in Geneva already appearing in Cologne’s first street procession in 1927.46 More specifically, archival sources for both 1928 and 1929 suggests that several floats made direct reference to the children of French colonial soldiers involved in the occupation of the Rhineland in the early 1920s. A Düsseldorf parade float from 1928 featured a woman in a nurse’s costume with men dressed as babies waving from their cots. This float was accompanied by men on foot wearing baby-head masks, along with a man costumed in African dress. Likewise, the 1929 parade in Düsseldorf included a horse-drawn cart with the sign “city manger” (Stadtfutterkrippe), suggesting that the city has to pay for the “fodder” fed to orphanage children. The twist is that it is not animals being fed, but men seated in a row with painted black faces. The implication in both cases is that there are church- or state-funded orphanages looking after the so-called “Rhineland bastards.” These floats reflect the moral panic posed by the children born during the occupation of the Rhineland until 1925. Indeed, the French deployment of colonial soldiers had led to a large campaign concerned with the “Black horror on the Rhine” (Nelson 1970; van Galen Last 2006). In the Rhineland, between 600 to 800 mixed-race children were born during and following the French occupation, around half of whom were forcibly sterilised during National Socialism (Campt 2003: 324-5).
It is important to point out that this was not the first period in which black people were featured or imitated in Rose Monday parades. Carnival parades in the 1920s were not only a direct reaction to the military occupation of the Rhineland after World War I, but also refer back to Germany’s national and colonial history. In the period around Germany’s unification in 1871, carnival events were increasingly employed for staging the nation. In the decades after 1870, there was barely a carnival sitting that did not involve some tribute to the German emperor, with the national anthem frequently sung at the end of sittings. As Cornelia Brog observes, in the lead up to World War I, nationalist sentiments even led to a battle re-enactment in the Cologne streets with the cry “Heil Kaiser!” (2000: 198). This hail to the German emperor suggests that the (sonic) appropriation of carnival sittings for nationalist purposes during National Socialism was, to some degree, prefigured in the imperial era.

The use of carnival for asserting the nation was soon placed in direct relation to Germany’s colonial project. One year after state-sponsored colonialism began in 1884, the Cologne parade theme was “Prince Carnival as Coloniser” (Held Carneval als Kolonisator) (Frohn 1999: 168). Against the background of popular support for Germany asserting its military power, this theme conflated carnival’s central protagonist with the nation’s colonial project. Carnival in the 1890s and 1900s also endorsed Germany’s colonial project and sometimes featured “exotic” people from African and Asian regions on parade floats. The carnival parades are one example of how the desire to establish a national identity after unification was exercised through the colonial project, with the subjugated colonial other employed as a means of defining the self.

While the scope of German colonialism was perhaps not as prominent as in Britain, France or other European nations, colonialist thinking remained persistent in the popular imagination. Thus, even though Germany engaged in a so-called “late” or “belated” colonialism, scholars such as Susanne Zantop have documented the existence of “colonial fantasies” in Germany from the 1700s up to the present (1997). A paternalistic image of the German coloniser was not only offered in carnival, but developed in other festival-type events like circuses and annual markets, where displays of colonial and ethnic peoples situated the audience as potential colonialisers. The “colonial imagination” fostered in circus and exhibition genres also fed into carnival fantasies, with circus shows such as “Buffalo Bill” in 1890 influencing the popularity of cowboy and Indian costumes in carnival (Moser 1972: 95).

Carnival parades in the 1920s exposed the post-war indignation that these earlier power relations between Germany and its colonial subjects had been reversed. As historian Tina Campt (2003) observes, the perception of the “Black horror” on the Rhine is inseparable from the loss of Germany’s colonies and military power in 1919. In this period, discourses about race and fears of racial mixture were fused with a nationalist discourse of German victimhood. Thus, while there had been fears expressed about miscegenation in the colonial era, the presence of African and north-African troops policing the white populace was condemned as both an insult and a threat. Nonetheless, as carnival floats of the late 1920s indicated, it was children of mixed racial heritage rather than
the occupying troops themselves, who were posited as a danger to German racial purity (Campt 2003: 337). Such discourses of purity and pollution could be found in much völkisch thinking in this period. Hitler, writing in 1928, criticised the French occupation as leading to “the de-Germanization, Negrification, and Judaization of our people.”51 The ongoing appeal of colonialist themes could also be found in the Berlin Colonial Week and Exhibition of 1925, which featured the slogan “Volk ohne Raum” (A people without space), which was associated with Hans Grimm’s influential colonial novel of the same title in the 1920s. Meanwhile, the 1928 Colonial Exhibition in Stuttgart re-enacted colonial power relations by featuring a human zoo display (Friedrichsmeyer, Lennox and Zantop 1998: 16).

Carnival parades and songs in the interwar period were thus a forum for a number of key trends in the broader cultural sphere. On the one hand, there was a celebration of African-American cultural forms as synonymous with modernity, with the modern sounds of jazz a central source of this fascination. On the other hand, anxieties about the dissolution of Germany’s military power and the local experience of French occupation reflect a moral panic that was couched in racial terms. While philosopher Hannah Arendt (1951) famously suggested certain continuities between German imperialism and fascism, historian Pascal Grosse recalls that

nonetheless, the colonial imagination did persist during the Nazi era with heroic discourses about colonial history inhabiting a prominent place in films and popular novels. In Düsseldorf’s carnival, too, there is a consistent pattern of references to colonial subjects and the lost colonies until the last carnival celebrations of 1939. In the years leading up to World War II, parades regularly featured men in African dress with blackened faces or in colonial explorer costumes (Es rauscht 1951). The radio broadcast of the 1939 Mainz washtub speech discussed previously is a prominent expression of paternalistic colonialist sentiments, with a Düsseldorf carnival float in the same year declaring to carnival revellers “The Colonies Await You.”52 Particularly in the interwar period, these ongoing colonial fantasies constituted a kind of projection surface that allowed for the insertion of different, even conflicting desires and interests. They made possible the conceptualization of a preindustrial Germanness that preserved the traditional German values of patriarchal peasant families deeply connected to the land. [...] Such colonial fantasies could comfortably accommodate a Blut und Boden ideology and could also serve as a terrain onto which the need for more Lebensraum could be projected. (Friedrichsmeyer, Lennox and Zantop 1998: 23-4)
In other words, during this period colonial fantasies continued to facilitate concepts of German nationalism and identity. Moreover, the predominant sense of Germanness promoted, particularly in conservative and right-wing circles, was an idealised understanding of the homeland or *Heimat*.

The racial hierarchies perpetuated in colonial discourse also persisted in the Nazi critique of jazz and swing music as a “degenerate” threat to its perceived opposite: “German music” (Kater 1992). The “Entartete Musik” (Degenerate Music) exhibition held in Düsseldorf in 1938 provides a frame for these discourses, which appropriated the black “Jonny” character of Ernst Krenek’s 1927 musical *Jonny spielt auf* as its main symbol. This musical, about a black jazz violinist, had gained enormous popular success following its premiere in 1927. In reappropriating this figure, the promotional poster for the 1938 exhibition posed jazz and swing music as a conspiracy between Jews and African-Americans (Figure 9). The poster depicts a presumably African-American musician playing a saxophone with the Jewish star of David on his jacket lapel. This fusion of blacks and Jews, therefore, continued to have a sonic component. While the musician appears to be a performer, with a formal suit and top hat, his facial features are exaggerated with large lips, eyes and ears that appear almost animal-like. While jazz was posited in terms of the sounds of the other – created by groups outside the acceptable social order – historical documentation suggests that a sizeable number of visitors flocked to the exhibition because they were fans of this genre (Dümling 2007).

![Entartete Musik](image)

**FIG. 9**: *Entartete Musik*, promotional poster [1938]. Courtesy of BPK, Berlin.
The modern sounds of 1920s carnival were also contested in terms of their relationship to “German” tradition. Looking back at the transitional period of the late 1920s, Rhenish carnival historians such as Joseph Klersch (1961) lamented the influence of not only radio and jazz, but the entertainment industry more broadly for creating a “Hollywoodisation” of carnival. Indeed, Klersch suggests that the carnival societies were forced to take the pomp, tempo, styling and lighting effects from revues, which resulted in poorer songs and a “shallow eroticism” (172). Klersch’s concerns echo those voiced throughout the interwar period about the need to restore carnival to its status as a people’s festival (Volksfestival), a rhetorics that gained momentum during Nazism.53 For cultural reformers, carnival had lost its connection to the Heimat, with the implication that the event had become too tourist-oriented in the post-World War I era, attracting crowds from outside the local area and region.54 The importance of carnival song genres was often foregrounded, with Eduard Czwoydzinski – both a prominent Düsseldorf carnival and Heimat preservation figure – arguing that “the history of carnival songs is, in fact, the history of carnival itself.”55 His historical overview of carnival songs ends with the argument that the modern syncopated Schlager are unsuitable for carnival lyrics (1929: 19). Carnival songs themselves were considered an essential factor in cultivating Heimat sentiments. As psychologist Wolfgang Oelsner has observed, carnival

offers the chance, like no other festival, to sing about the Heimat, to idealise it. This is always on the edge of being embarrassing, as it can become immersed in sentimentality and it can degenerate into chauvinistic raucousness.56

By around 1930, calls for Heimat preservation became more insistent and the undertone of “blood-and-soil” (Blut und Boden) thinking becomes more prevalent in the articles. Writing a historical overview for the tourism magazine Düsseldorfer Woche in 1936, Czwoydzinski’s understanding of the carnival revival in the 1920s is situated in terms of mounting an opposition to the French occupation and the need to revive “the folk character (Volkscharakter) of the Rhineland.”57 While Czwoydzinski’s earlier arguments reflected the investment of preservationists in Volk and Heimat culture, it is only after 1933 that their discourse was situated within a more explicit ideological and nationalistic frame (see Spickhoff 1929a: 8; 1938).

Celia Applegate (1990) has shown that Heimat movements and the concept of Heimat were already inextricably intertwined with the idea of nation in the nineteenth century. During National Socialism, then, it is perhaps less significant that the Heimat concept and the carnival festival were appropriated for the purposes of national culture, but that we can observe an ideological turn with a racially restricted concept of the nation as Volksgemeinschaft. Historian Rudy Koshar has emphasised an important distinction: where bourgeois Heimat groups sought “spiritualization” with the Heimat concept, Nazis sought “racialization” (1998: 130). Koshar posits Heimat and historic preservation between 1933 and 1945 as having the status of privileged marginality:
Despite their contribution to the regime, most preservationists never tried to articulate their work fully within the cultural policies of Nazism. Their aim was to situate themselves securely in the political culture but also to establish a distance from it. [...] Nazism could be accommodated within the work of this particular association just as it could be sloughed off after 1945. No necessary connection existed between Heimat thinking and advocating Nazi goals. (177, 187)

Nonetheless, many Heimat preservation groups reinforced the trope about Nazism offering a decisive break in national history. A Düsseldorf official, Hans Apffelstadt, talking at a historic preservation meeting in 1933, enthused that National Socialist rule had allowed a new era to emerge: “Keenly listening for the voice of his own blood, the German man begins to get a sense of his own great past.” It is with such discourses, as Koshar emphasises, that Heimat groups began to participate in a concept of belonging based on race rather than national culture.

Heimat was not only asserted through images and an “optic identity,” as historians like Koshar or Alon Confino (1997) suggest, but also through spoken language. The preservation of regional dialect (Mundart) was identified by most Heimat preservationists and researchers as essential to maintaining local identity. However, it should be emphasised that the idealised understanding of German dialect was not always practised during Nazism, which usually took a pragmatic, nationalist approach to the issue of language. In the case of carnival, broadcasts made by Cologne and syndicated to other stations increasingly required a voice with inflection that was still easily understandable for all German listeners. While carnival continued to appeal to Heimat through its songs, dialect and radio broadcasts, it was thus increasingly typified by the use of High German. There is thus a persistent tension between carnival as a local event and its appropriation by the Nazis to bring the German Volk together in the sound of a national Heimat. Elite Heimat groups did not always concur with the official understanding of Heimat and Volk culture practised after 1933. Nor is the relationship between Heimat thinking and Nazism necessarily a given, since the Heimat concept has been used historically for different intents and purposes. Scholars like Koshar also warn against simplified readings of Heimat and Volk thinking as having an intrinsic relationship to anti-modern or premodern behaviour. More generally, the self-perception of “marginality” entertained by Heimat preservationists and researchers allowed for the use of Heimat language immediately after World War II to assert a distance from the Nazi regime and the beginning of a new era (von Saldern 2004: 345-6). The reopening of the Cologne radio station in 1945, for instance, was accompanied by official statements asserting the continuity of Heimat (Karst 1984).

We have seen how Germany’s status as a newly-fledged nation influenced nineteenth-century colonial fantasies and concepts of otherness presented in carnival, along with the role of Heimat thinking in establishing a regional and national self-definition through sound. The pervasiveness of Heimat thinking and concepts of folk culture in representing regional and national identity, as I have
argued, found particular expression in the exchange between carnival sounds and spoken dialect. Such appeals to *Heimat* were part of ongoing cultural anxieties about modernity, which identified commercialisation and foreign influences as threats to carnival’s status as a folk festival. A musical style like jazz was initially employed as an expression of modernity, yet its status remained ambiguous due to the concurrent associations with the French occupation of the 1920s and Germany’s lost African colonies. The implication of jazz as anti-authoritarian, moreover, made it even more of a target for those who sought to reaffirm conservative or racialist values with the carnival festival. This signals the overall reorientation of carnival as a means of establishing and reinforcing (racial) distinctions on the basis of belonging to the *Volksgemeinschaft* (national-racial community). The next section will consider more closely how carnival parades under National Socialism were used to stereotype Jews as radically other, with particular reference to spoken voice and appearance for defining this alterity.

**Anti-Semitic Violence as Festival**

Right-wing ideologues retrospectively described the Weimar era as defined by the political and social influence of Jews (Katz 1991). On this basis, the reorganisation of carnival after 1933 was also identified as an opportunity to suppress Jewish involvement in carnival guilds and committees. In 1935, the Nazi *Westdeutscher Beobachter* newspaper asserted that prior to the Nazi takeover, Jews had a “strong influence” in numerous carnival guilds and Düsseldorf events such as the Zoo balls (*Zoobälle*) and Red parties (*Fest in Rot*) (Brog 2000: 35). While this view is symptomatic of anti-Semitic paranoia about “Jewish influence” during the 1920s, there were some people with a Jewish background involved in carnival organisation and guilds, but only in relatively small numbers. For example, some Jewish artists from Düsseldorf’s progressive arts scene were also members of the Malkasten artist society and contributed to their annual carnival events (Baumeister and Kleinbongartz 1998: 37-9). The Malkasten society reflected a somewhat conservative stance with respect to artistic styles and its membership, but it did organise popular masked balls during the carnival season. Jewish artist Arthur Kaufmann, for instance, was involved in a carnival decoration design in 1931, which was rejected by the society’s board and led to a significant number of members leaving the society in protest. According to historians Annette Baumeister and Sigrid Kleinbongartz, the case was treated by the *Düsseldorfer Landeszeitung*, a newspaper for left-leaning liberals, as indicative of a “Nazi terror” conducted by the Malkasten board. Meanwhile, the Nazi *Volksparole* newspaper argued that it was the artists who were at fault for propagating a cultural bolshevism (*Kulturbolschewismus*) (1998: 30). Such complaints increased in subsequent years with attempts to distinguish carnival from Weimar culture and associations with so-called “degenerated” (*entartet*) art and music like jazz.

During the 1920s there was a “hardening of attitudes” towards Jews in Düsseldorf, with increasing attacks in the right-leaning press and political parties
(Kauders 1996: 80-2). At this time, several different Jewish groups lived in Düsseldorf, but these by no means represented a politically or religiously homogeneous faction (Benz 2001: 49). The “Ostjuden” living in Düsseldorf in the interwar period were mainly first-generation residents, following the first waves of immigration from Eastern Europe after 1870. Ostjuden was a term, also employed by Jews, to refer to Yiddish-speaking, mostly deeply-religious Polish and other eastern European Jews. While Ostjuden were the main focus of anti-Semitic stereotypes, such discourse did not distinguish between various groups in its attack on Jews. As I indicated in Chapter One, an increasing number of SA attacks on Jews occurred during the course of the 1920s, and led to a large number of Düsseldorf Jews leaving the city between 1933 and 1935 (Voigt and Wiesemann 1983: 3).

It was precisely this increased emigration that carnival floats during the first years of Nazi rule commented upon. There are over ten examples of anti-Semitic floats in the available literature and sources, but presumably there were many more instances. Many floats comment on Jews leaving Germany and the forced closure of Jewish businesses. For instance, a 1935 carnival float in Schwabach (near Nuremberg) named two local Jewish shopkeepers forced out of business with a shop front sign “change of ownership” (Firmenwechsel) (Hesse and Springer 2002: 84). After 1935, the loss of rights and racial segregation brought about by the Nuremberg racial laws was emphasised, for instance, in a Cologne parade float with the dialect title “They’ve trodden on his ties” (Däm han se op d’r Schlips getrodde!). This float, officially endorsed by the carnival organisation, depicted oversized black stormtrooper boots stamping on a man’s tie. The man’s appearance is stereotyped as Jewish with a hooked nose and big lips. In the lead up to World War II, as the representation of Jews became increasingly stereotyped, carnival floats included more references to Jews in terms of a supposed international conspiracy. Jewish politicians from Russia and America, who publicly criticised Nazism, were personally attacked in parade-float slogans and representations (Friess-Reimann 1978: 113; Brog 2000: 233-4). The conspiracy of Jewish influence, also emphasised in the 1939 carnival radio broadcast that I analysed earlier, concealed the destruction of Jews’ economic existence and livelihood in Germany during the 1930s.

Undoubtedly, it is the physical attributes of Jews that are exaggerated for the purposes of carnival humour. Almost all the parade costumes make reference to “Ostjuden” and orthodox dress to distinguish Jews as different and strange. The men on the 1934 float in Cologne wore costumes with top hats, dark hair, glasses and exaggerated facial features. Yet the floats also suggest a way of speaking, with the voice as central to anti-Semitic representation. The 1934 float in Cologne is titled “Die Letzten ziehen ab” (The last ones are leaving) and depicts a map of how the Jews are leaving for Western Europe and Palestine (Figure 10). Written on the board is “Mer mache nur e kleines Ausflügche nach Liechtenstein und Jaffa,” which refers roughly to the supposed decision of Jews to go on an “excursion” out of Germany. While the Low German dialect (plattdeutsch) was revered and privileged as an authentic local dialect, particularly in carnival, the implied inflection here is that of Yiddish. The exaggerated movements and whis-
pered exchanges of the men on the float combined with this use of Yiddish, stages a clichéd notion of Jewish behaviour.

The implication of this anti-Semitic representation is the speech of the Jew, with the sound of Jews suggested to be that of “mauscheln.” This word implies sneaky, whispering speech, and has been historically linked to Jews in Germany from the 1700s onwards. As linguist Hans Peter Althaus argues, while Jews could unselfconsciously employ the term mauscheln during the Weimar era, the connotations of the word were further politicised in the 1930s, as the new rulers and their followers imitated the Jewish tone of voice and quoted their use of foreign words, in order to exclude Jews even more decisively from their völkisch community. (2002: 172)

In other words, mauscheln was repeatedly employed as a marker of linguistic difference and thus a sign of alterity. Historian Sander Gilman (1991) has traced such examples of the representation of Jewish language and gesture from fin de siècle Europe to post-World War II America. As Gilman points out, the Jews’ language is employed as a signifier for their corrupt discourse and this projection occurs because the so-called “informed listener hears the Jew hidden within no matter whether this difference is overt or disguised” (1991: 19). Gilman identifies the definition of Jewish language as other and suspicious within German anti-Semitism as involving acts of projection:
Jews sound different because they are represented as being different. [..] Within the European tradition of seeing the Jew as different, there is a closely linked tradition of hearing the Jew’s language as marked by the corruption of being a Jew. (1991: 11-2, my emphasis)\textsuperscript{72}

The desire to detect and recognise Jewish speech – as an attuned act of listening – is closely linked to a broader process of representing the Jew as culturally and visually other. Moreover, \textit{mauscheln} is used to denote Jewish speech as a hidden, suspicious language or manner of speaking German.

Cultural theorists Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (2002) take these observations further by suggesting that anti-Semites produce a concept of the Jew that is almost imitative:

All the gesticulations devised by the \textit{Führer} and his followers are pretexts for giving way to the mimetic temptation without openly violating the reality principle. [...] They detest the Jews and imitate them constantly. There is no anti-Semite who does not feel an instinctive urge to ape what he takes to be Jewishness. The same mimetic codes are constantly used: the argumentative jerking of the hands, the singing tone of the voice, which vividly animates a situation or a feeling. (150)

In other words, the experience of hearing Jews is translated to the speech, tone and bodily movement of the anti-Semite, who mimics precisely that which he is seeking to cast out.\textsuperscript{73} This imitation of Jews is evident in carnival parades, where Jewish suffering became the target of carnival humour, with guild members dressing up as (Orthodox) Jews. In such costumes and float depictions, carnival’s traditional exaggeration of anatomy is appropriated for the purposes of delineating Jews as social pariahs. In this sense, the carnival parades during National Socialism cast out the grotesque, presenting stereotypes that posited Jews as enemies of the German people (\textit{Volksfeinde}).

In the Nazis’ rejection of Jews and the desire to expel them from society there are unconscious forms of imitation, which they identify in the physical gestures of the hands, body and the tone of voice. Adorno and Horkheimer’s description of anti-Semite mimetic behaviour is couched in acoustic terms, with its locus or medium being the body. Focusing on the facial expressions of Nazis, Adorno and Horkheimer observe that it is the fascist’s grimace in particular that is “the painful echo of overwhelming power, violence which finds utterance in complaint” (2002: 150). Sounds are therefore employed as part of vocal utterances and acts of (hate) speech, which contrast with the supposedly quiet and whispered \textit{mauscheln} of Jews. The excess of volume in anti-Semitic utterances is portrayed as intrinsic to the cry of terror:

Even the plaintive sounds of nature are appropriated as an element of technique. The bellowing of these orators is to the pogrom what its howling klaxon is to the German flying bomb: the cry of terror which announces terror is mechanically switched on. The screamers deliberately use the wail of the
victim, which first called violence by its name, and even the mere word which designates the victim – Frenchman, Negro, Jew – to induce in themselves the desperation of the persecuted who have to hit out. (150)

Indeed, in this understanding, it is the cry of the victim that is absorbed into the noisy din of the fascists’ screaming and intimidation. This is suggestive of the official “noise” of power described by Attali, whereby noise is not only “a source of power” but can even override the sounds of its victims (1985: 6). Adorno and Horkheimer note that the linguistic operation of hate speech depends on the designation of French, blacks and Jews, three particularly prominent targets in German carnival rituals during the 1930s, as other.

The pre-modern character of anti-Semitic expression is asserted by Adorno and Horkheimer, insofar as they see projection onto the other as an automatic reflex and defence mechanism associated with the origin of humans as hunters. In terms of mimetic behaviour, the speech acts and gestures of anti-Semites are linked to extreme emotions of rage and laughter. In other words, anti-Semites accused Jews of ancient mysticism, while fascists themselves invested heavily in cult-like rituals, symbols and behaviour (152). Once again, the acoustic qualities of these rituals are emphasised, from drumming to propaganda slogans and gestures. Meanwhile, the fascist orator is allowed certain flaws or freedoms not permitted to the general populace. Hitler’s furious physical and vocal expressions are described as clown-like, while Goebbels’ imitative behaviour shares similarities with the Jews he denigrates.

74 The carnivalesque of fascist oratory is emphasised in these descriptions. Adorno and Horkheimer are astute in their recognition of a continuum between rage and laughter, whereby those disliked or feared are targeted in jokes or laughter. However, describing this behaviour as entirely premodern is perhaps too simplistic. Historian Michael Wildt notes that there are similarities between Nazi rites of violence, such as “racial disgrace” (Rassenschande) processions and medieval popular justice practices like charivari. From 1933 onwards, there were incidents of Jews being forced to parade through streets in spectacles of humiliation.75 In 1935 and 1936, these processions occurred more frequently, following a series of court cases charging those in “mixed” relationships as “racial defilers” (Rassenschändler). In popular justice practices, those accused were usually forced to wear a placard, march through the streets and have their hair cut off in front of those watching, often accompanied by brass instruments or noise-making. These events usually involved the participation of a local community or passersby, including women, children and youth, those present often chanted, laughed, insulted or spat on victims (Wildt 2007: 241, 366). As Wildt maintains, the stress on sexual mores and honour in Nazi practices do resemble the early-modern use of the charivari to police community behaviour. However, those conducting such rites in the 1930s were enacting their participation in National Socialist society by mimicking its politics of violence: “The “people’s law” that the local National Socialist groups practised in their actions against Jewish civilians found – by way of mimicry – a popular (volkstümlich) form of jurisdiction.”76 Such examples do suggest a concept of “fun” or “amusement” during Nazism involving humiliation.
and denunciation, whereby the overall festivalisation of the everyday produced an overlapping between carnival and military-style rites of “muscular bonding.”

These practices of humiliation, moreover, were less about maintaining traditional or premodern values than establishing a racist anti-Semitic Volksgemeinschaft (ethnic community). In contrast to an early modern anti-Jewishness primarily motivated on religious grounds, Nazi anti-Semitism occurred within the framework of the modern nation state (see Benz 2001: 102, 44-6). Nonetheless, the fears of racial mixture behind Rassenschande trials and popular justice rituals do show a parallel to the threat posed by African Germans discussed earlier. Unlike colonial subjects, however, carnival’s depictions of the abstract idea of the Jew’s appearance and voices did not involve a fascination with the exotic, but sought more resolutely to cast Jews as inferior others. Carnival parades, as well as popular justice practices, used Jews as a way of projecting difference, which reinforced the sense of self as belonging to the Volk and Heimat (Jeggle 1972: 49).

The above examples suggest the potential for overlap between anti-Semitic repression and the representation of Jews in carnival. In fact, the carnival period came to provide a trigger or pretext for attacks on Jewish shops and property. For example, revellers returning home from carnival celebrations to the town of Moers-Meerbach near Düsseldorf attacked a number of Jewish shops and property in February 1936.77 The same year, Düsseldorf painter Albert Herzfeld noted in his diary that carnival celebrations had recently taken place, but his family “absolutely did not participate” (1982: 51). This statement, which is not elaborated on in the diary entries, hints at the fact that carnival had become a site for voicing exclusionary and anti-Semitic sentiments. Indeed, following the 1935 introduction of the Nuremberg race laws, the organisation of carnival was completely “Aryanised” (Brog 2000: 226). Rose Monday crowds were now imagined as such, with the carnival community (Narrengemeinschaft) rendered synonymous with the ethnic folk community (Volksgemeinschaft).

Despite post-1945 assertions that the German public was not supportive of anti-Semitic floats, archival photographs of Rose Monday parades show predominantly enthusiastic reactions and gestures in crowds. A photo of the 1936 parade in Marburg depicts the gleeful laughter of the crowd watching a float with men costumed as stereotypical Jews. “Off to Palestine,” the float’s banner declares, while another notes that Jews should pay taxes to the city treasury as soon as possible (Hesse and Springer 2002: 84). Following the increased repression of homosexuality from 1935 onwards, the policing of sexual mores was evident in carnival with bans introduced on male cross-dressing in carnival parades and washtub speeches.78 Carnival was thus confirmed as a site for the exclusion of Jews and all those unwelcome in the Volksgemeinschaft.

The increase in violence towards Jews in the late 1930s warrants further consideration of the “festival” under Nazism. For these purposes, Albert Herzfeld’s diaries, kept between 1935 and 1939, offer useful insights into the measures taken against Jews and “non-Aryans” in the lead up to the November 1938 pogrom. Herzfeld, born in 1865, came from an industrialist and well-connected Jewish family, and was also a World War I veteran and former military officer. After a period of intensified anti-Semitic attacks and discrimination, Herzfeld
observed that by 15 October 1938, all Jews had had to hand in their passports to
the police, which made overseas travel almost impossible (1982: 47).

On the outbreak of the so-called “Kristallnacht” (Crystal night) pogrom in
1938, Herzfeld recorded his experience of being an earwitness to this violence.
Lying in bed following an illness, Herzfeld noted how he heard the attacks on the
house of his Jewish neighbour Salomon Loeb opposite. As Herzfeld recounts,
their door was forced open around midnight and there were wails and pained
cries from Loeb, who received multiple stab wounds. All the other residents saw
the events from their windows, but no police officers came to give assistance.
Following the arrival of an ambulance for his neighbour, Herzfeld made specific
mentions of the sounds he heard:

After another half hour a second group of vandals arrived, walking in military
lock-step (I could hear everything exactly from bed) and I could distinctly
hear a rowdy scream “Who here made the telephone call?” before another
cry of pain arose. The word “Jew” could be heard many times in combination
with all types of swear words, which were audible across the entire street.
(1982: 115)

Herzfeld wrote that he listened to the noise of destruction from his bed until 2am,
when he heard a voice give the order “Attention. Now march to the next shop”
(116). In his diary, Herzfeld described his anguish at being privy to this pogrom,
reflecting the confusion of those unexpectedly at the brunt of what Adorno and
Horkheimer described as “limitless” terror (2002: 150).

That people were alerted to the pogrom by acoustic cues appears in much of
the Jewish testimonies about November 1938. The first signs that something
was happening were described in terms of hearing sounds in the street, including
that of furniture, art, pianos and breakables being smashed and thrown out of
windows onto the street. In some places, civilians were alerted to the pogrom not
only by the noise of fire and destruction, but also with alarms or fire sirens, which
led people to go to synagogues to find out what was happening (Wildt 2007:
344). Based on such recollections, it is clear that, for those people living without
the protection of the state against violence, street sounds were a vital source for
anticipating potential problems, a theme I will discuss further in Chapter Three.

The crossover between festival, carnival and anti-Semitic violence is further
revealed since the 1938 violence coincided with the period marking St Martin’s
Day on 10 November and the official opening to the carnival season on 11 No-

tember. Cologne historian Max-Leo Schwering recalls that on opening of the
1938 season, a KdF Winterhilfswerk coin collection took place around the Schil-
dergasse in Cologne, near the ruins of the city’s Great Synagogue. The three
Cologne carnival figures of the prince, the maiden and the farmer collected dona-
tions as if nothing had happened, despite walking over broken glass, with ash
and smoke still surrounding the destroyed synagogue. Schwering’s earwitness
testimony infers that the sound of walking over broken glass was not only ig-
nored, but masked by the jangling of coin boxes, which was intended for poor
racial comrades (Volksgenossen), rather than Jews persecuted in the pogrom.
Those who donated money were given lapel pins, to demonstrate their participation in helping fellow ethnic Germans. Schwering’s testimony emphasises the disregard of carnival participants for Jewish suffering, since this incident took place in close proximity to Cologne’s Neumarkt Square, which was a key location for carnival celebrations and Rose Monday parades.

Other “earwitness” testimony emphasises the role of sound in the city as a feature of exclusion or intimidation, along with the changed soundscape caused by the pogrom. In 1938, as Düsseldorf resident Karl Maria Spennrath observed, there was a marked absence of St Martin’s Day events in the inner city of Düsseldorf, with none of the usual merry sounds of singing in the streets. In fact, the recollection of these events evoked an acoustic memory for Spennrath, since the St Martin’s song “Lasst uns froh und munter sein” (Let us be happy and blithe) sung by children could not be heard in the streets:

“In this recollection, written in the late 1950s, Spennrath tries to express the acoustic contrast through the songs usually associated with St Martin’s Day and the beginning of carnival in the Rhineland. Instead of the usual happiness experienced with the start to the “Fifth Season,” Spennrath expresses disappointment that the central message of St Martin was lost during Nazism. The lyric he cites at the end of this quote refers to the legend that St Martin cut up his own coat to help a poor man in rags during winter. Few would have made such an act of generosity following the pogrom, Spennrath suggests, as people were afraid of being labelled “enemies of the state” and excluded from society.85 In response, it is difficult to ascertain to what degree Nazi terror can be blamed for the actions (or inaction) of Germans. Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman argues that, even though there were large numbers of Germans who disliked the violence of November 1938, they often still supported strategies that allowed for the “segregation, separation, and disempowering of the Jews” (2000b: 222).86 Spennrath’s comments do indicate that people did fear social exclusion and did not want to be cast out of the Volksgemeinschaft. In any case, the establishment of a Volksgemeinschaft was a political process that the whole of society took part in (Wildt 2007: 358). The rhetoric of those taking part in carnival was a part of this social transformation, with carnival being used to enact belonging in the Volksgemeinschaft. As such, carnival offered the possibility of smoothing over social differences and had quickly assured participants that they would not be the brunt of carnival jokes (Jeggle 1972: 47-8). The only people who were obvious targets for carnival humour were those outside the scope of the Volksgemeinschaft. To some degree, the event put people’s minds at ease by minimising ambiguity in its jokes and performing belonging with song, group participation and references to Heimat and Volk.
The radio segment I discussed earlier in this chapter indicated that by 1939, Jews were represented and discussed in an increasingly abstract manner. The forced removal of Jews from certain parts of city, if not from public life completely, was increasingly naturalised given that Jews were cast out of the German moral economy. Jews were marked as different and unable to be part of the German people and spirit, causing a sense of discomfort or Unheimlichkeit to those in their vicinity. Such sentiments, to some degree, explain the popularity of floats celebrating the emigration of Jews from the various carnival cities. Indeed, anti-metropolitan sentiments in Nazi ideology were also tied up with the notion that the modern city is a place of Jews (and Jewish influence). As Sander Gilman argues, this understanding of the city of Jews:

haunts Adolf Hitler’s image of Vienna, the city in which he first learns to “see” the Jew and, therefore, becomes aware of the “hidden” difference in this language of the Jew – even when he or she is speaking “good” German. (32)

In other words, the city itself was identified as a locus for the acoustic recognition of Jews, who are distinguished by their use of German, which is marked as “other.” Moreover, efforts to enforce the geographical movement and separation of Jews from other Germans were part of the broader attempt to depersonalise them and designate “the Jew” as an abstract figure. Indeed, amongst many examples, the diaries of Jewish linguist Victor Klemperer document the way that radio was used as a platform for imitating Jewish accents and voices. An entry in May 1943 noted that:

On the radio there is incessant hatred against Jews. In the most senseless and undignified manner. Yesterday particular animosity, because the Americans wanted to occupy the island of Martinique. [...] A whispered conversation of two Jews about it, about the kind of business they would make here and elsewhere, in the world, at the expense of the Goys [Goyim].

This example indicates how Jewish voices were imitated by radio-makers with the intention of portraying American military actions as irrevocably associated with Jews and capitalist greed. Indeed, similar tactics were used in reference to the British, who were also repeatedly accused of succumbing to Jewish influence. In a Berlin newspaper in 1942, it was noted that “Radio London mauschelt,” which associated British radio with a supposedly sneaky, Jewish-influenced speech. Intensified representations of the abstract or stereotyped Jew, therefore, were coupled with the reduced visual and sonic presence of Jews in everyday life.

This section has been mainly devoted to the ways that anti-Semitism figured in carnival during the 1930s. The notion of mauscheln was emphasised in Rose Monday parades, projecting Jewish otherness with stereotypes of their voice and language, as well as their physical appearance. Carnival also commented on the exclusion of Jews from public life, with civic organisations such as the carnival guilds providing an example of how Jews were denied participation in social
networks. Indeed, the pre-existence of civic structures like carnival guild organisations facilitated the Nazi takeover of the event.

By focusing on a “festivalisation” of the everyday, I have noted similarities between (popular) festivals of violence and carnival, which involved muscular forms of community bonding and restricted notions of belonging on the grounds of race and sexuality. Both violence and carnival involved a ritual quality, involving chants, laughter and humiliation, although carnival floats usually presented this exclusion in representational form. Nonetheless, the fluidity between these events suggests the role of violence for participating in a society based on racial principles. As historian Michael Wildt emphasises, there was a unifying aspect to the participation in violence, as an experience of self-affirmation. “Everyone can take part,” Wildt writes, “without taking any responsibility or leadership as an individual. Even the most cowardly person is allowed to take a punch and enact violence without fear of retaliation by the victim.”

Although anti-Semitic attacks also occurred during the Weimar era, at least there was still some possibility of opposing this violence with police intervention and the judicial system. During National Socialism, therefore, not only did violence become more festival-like, but the carnival festival, too, was confirmed as an expression of radical exclusion. Carnival humour directed at those outside the Volksgemeinschaft manifested this exclusion in its laughter and calls, musical songs, radio broadcasts and across the urban soundscape more generally.

Conclusion

Jacques Attali’s Noise, as I noted earlier, poses a binary between the Festival and the Norm. According to this understanding, the noisy Festival offers a distinct, yet temporary rupture from the official sanctions of the Norm (23). My analysis has shown that this opposition is not applicable to Nazi Germany, which featured what I have called the festivalisation of everyday life. The principle of the festival dominating the everyday – becoming the norm itself – is suggested by the many holiday events spread across the calendar year during Nazism. For all of these national holidays and special events, cities were visually and spatially occupied, as the previous chapter’s analysis of the Schlageter memorial festival also indicated, with the creation of a (mediated) experience of affirmative resonance. This proliferation of official events and celebrations within the everyday meant that carnival was officialised, while official events were festivalised. While costume parties and similar events continued to appeal to bourgeois fantasies, carnival under Nazism by no means offered a utopian space or a liberation from the status quo. Carnival maintained certain differences to the more solemn official rituals, yet it did not warrant the ongoing claims of guild organisers about carnival as a distinct event with its own temporality. Carnival’s associations as a popular tradition nonetheless contributed to the overall social legitimisation of the Nazi regime. In this sense, Attali is right when he emphasises that sound is “what links a power center to its subjects” (6). Attali argues that power depends on the exclusion and repression of noise as a means of creating order and com-
Noise, as dissonant sound, offers a useful metaphor for the ways that power excludes oppositional elements to create consensus. Carnival under Nazism, nonetheless, is a paradoxical example as it revels in its noisy parade sounds and music, which were simultaneously appropriated in the staging of state power in the public sphere.

In terms of humour, carnival after 1933 was marked by a significant reduction of ambiguity and satire in humour, both in carnival and the Nazi era more generally. Humour during Nazism has usually been articulated mainly in terms of “whispered jokes” (Flüstertwitze) told by German people, as a form of opposition or resistance to the regime. In fact, there has been a tendency for historical scholarship to categorise National Socialism as humourless, with party members as wary or incapable of humour (Gamm 1963). In fact, as historian Patrick Merziger emphasises, there was more humour than ever during Nazism and these whispered jokes were “welcomed by the regime, they were treated with goodwill and amusement, and they were understood as a token of affection from the people” (2007: 278). While official organs of the Nazi Party themselves employed satire, the main satirical magazines were forced to discontinue printing satirical jokes about social types due to public pressure.91 Merziger argues that satire was no longer popular with the public as it ultimately posed the risk of certain groups being ridiculed and thus cast out of the Volksgemeinschaft. Similar to the case of carnival humour, the most prevalent and preferred form of humour identified by Merziger was the all-embracing, harmonious, and non-contentious laughter. [...] This form, the “German Humour”, became the humour of National Socialism, through public pressure and not by coercion. People protested against humour that could be understood as protest. Everyone wanted to laugh together, and everyone laughed together, but only as long as one wanted or was allowed to toe the line. (2007: 277, 289)

In other words, there was a public demand for an inclusive humour that would affirm belonging for those within the scope of the Volksgemeinschaft. By affirming “German humour,” the risk of exclusion from society could be minimised. Even though Rhenish carnival events increasingly facilitated laughter about those who were clearly demarcated as other, there was an ongoing tendency towards light banter and skits in carnival broadcasts and Heimat programming.

The need to preserve one’s social status in a dictatorship thus seems to have been an influential factor in calls to reduce ambiguous humour after 1933. This trend also undermines the claims made in many post-war historical accounts written by carnival guilds, which suggested that jokes about the party were “deadly” during Nazism. To give an example, in the lead up to the official exhibition in Düsseldorf “Schaffendes Volk,” the 1937 carnival motto chosen was “Laughing People” (Lachendes Volk). Rather than mock the official party event, as some commentators have implied, this reference should be read as a form of cross-promotion linking these events, both of which fell under KdF tourist organisation.92 The people, according to this formulation, were affirmed as both productive and
the festivalisation of the everyday

hard-working, as well as having fun and a sense of humour. On the whole, then, the persistent notion of humour as a form of political resistance, also present in Bakhtin’s account, has been used misleadingly to affirm the German people as distinct from the Nazi Party, due to their supposed protest through jokes.93

In this chapter, I have posited carnival sounds as a case that testifies to the overall festivalisation of the everyday under Nazism. Carnival may seem an unusual ritual for this project, yet carnival’s noisy energy was compatible with National Socialism’s occupation of the urban environment. Carnival discourse during Nazism also called for a new type of person who was youthful and vigorous, which is in keeping with the militarist associations with Schlageter that I discussed in the previous chapter. Similar to the medieval carnival festival described by Bakhtin, a sense of belonging was enabled by the communal experience of being in the crowd and participating in vocal-corporal activities of “muscular bonding.” Radio, as I have shown, emphasised the experience of carnival as an acoustic event, with broadcasts publicising the event and dispersing its sounds to a regional and national listening audience. This shift enabled the festival to be expanded beyond the face-to-face interaction of the urban marketplace, as radio increasingly stretched the time-space coordinates of the festival and allowed for participation at a distance.

Despite the initial articulation of the carnival festival as an exuberant expression of the Jazz Age, carnival also became a platform for articulating opposition to the earlier presence of black French colonial troops during the occupation of the Rhineland. Central to this sharp delineation of belonging and otherness, as I have discussed here, was an assertion of carnival according to an ethnic definition of Germanness. The pre-existing concept of Heimat was a key tool in this process, whereby local or regional identification – often through dialect – was grounded in nationalist discourse. Carnival events were thus part of a broader attempt during National Socialist rule to establish a national sound of Heimat. This acoustic participation in the Volksgemeinschaft, as my analysis has suggested, is intertwined with an emphasis on the acoustic dimensions of otherness. With marked similarities emerging between carnival rites and anti-Semitic terror, carnival humour increasingly ridiculed Jewish speech, appearance and their fate during Nazism. In this sense, violence and hate speech comprised perhaps the most striking distinction from the utopian carnival described by Bakhtin: whereas carnival violence in the medieval era usually erupted as a challenge to authority, Nazism took carnival’s noisy impulses to affirm its racist concept of nationalism. The festivalisation of the everyday not only suggested that the festival can become part of the norm, but that rites of military bonding and festive bonding merged and shared a similar function of policing the boundaries of self and other.

In the following chapter, I will return to the expanded role attributed to radio for performing national events and celebrations in the context of World War II. Similar to the claims of the washtub speakers from January 1939, military successes were performed and celebrated on the radio with evocative songs, often based on existing national or religious repertoire or as new campaign themes. In what follows, the functions and uses of existing symbolic repertoire – like the sirens and church bells used in the Schlageter events and for nation elections – be-
came more differentiated. Among other dimensions to the soundscape of wartime German cities, I will explore how sirens were redefined as a mode of disciplinary control in wartime, while church bells continued to be appropriated for their religious symbolism and to justify Germany’s role in the war.