

Reimer

Cultural History through a National Socialist Lens

Essays on the Cinema of the Third Reich

This collection of essays offers a view of Nazi Germany through an analysis of twenty films. These represent a sampling of the period's directors and reflect the film medium's major genres. For in spite of the control that Goebbels's film industry exercised over all aspects of filmmaking in the Third Reich, the films reveal an individuality that belies subsuming them under any one rubric or containing them within any one theory. Films such as *Hitlerjunge Quex*, *Die große Liebe*, and *Auf Wiedersehen Franziska* represent the Nazi film industry's efforts to propagandize through entertainment. Others such as *Immensee*, *Kleider machen Leute*, and *Der Schimmelreiter* reveal an attempt to expropriate Germany's rich literary past for the regime. These literary adaptations and films like *Glückskinder*, *La Habanera*, and *Der Kaiser von Kalifornien* today seem void of Nazi ideology if viewed outside the context of Nazism. Yet another film, *Der ewige Jude*, shocks us with its virulent anti-Semitism and hateful propaganda almost sixty years after its release. All of the films treated, regardless of their fame or notoriety or the level of commitment of their directors to the Nazi cause, played an important role in a cinema that not only represents the dreams and lives of the citizens of the Third Reich, but influenced them as well. Robert C. Reimer is professor of German at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte.

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