

## **Summary of the Study:**

### **Cold War Showcase. New Research on the History of the Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) in the Alfred Bauer Era (1951-1976)**

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#### **Purpose of the Study**

Media interest in the history of the Berlinale beyond the stories about the stars or the contents of the programme peaked unexpectedly in 2020. The debate that has been going on since then pertaining to Alfred Bauer's role as long-time director of the Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale), but also the question of his political burden as a former member of the NSDAP as well as his work in the Reich Film Chamber arose by no means out of nowhere. Subsequent to an intensive historical examination of National Socialism and its personnel-oriented and intellectual continuities, for example in ministries and authorities, the public discussion about the influence and effects of the "Third Reich" on German history after 1945 has now increasingly reached the art and cultural-political realms. When drafting this study, we linked the existing multi-layered source situation with the expectation of being able to develop new insights which would be, upon examination and evaluation, valuable in terms of cultural policy. In view of the multiple personnel-oriented and intellectual continuities that connected the Nazi regime with the early Federal Republic, there is still a considerable need for research in the cultural sector.

Following the war, many functionaries and filmmakers made reference to an allegedly apolitical position in the Nazi dictatorship. Among them was Alfred Bauer, who, as the charismatic founder of the film festival, was paradigmatically one of the representatives of the National Socialist cultural elite who were able to regain a foothold in West Germany and West Berlin after 1945. Tobias Hof's study was able to demonstrate how Bauer disguised his

role as an important film functionary during the Nazi era.<sup>1</sup> In furtherance of this study, our investigation focusses on Alfred Bauer's career in the post-war period and on his importance for the emergence and, in particular, the continued development of the International Film Festival in Berlin (IFB) up to Bauer's retirement in 1976. Thereby, we address not only Bauer's handling of the past. Additionally, we inquire as to possible networks that enabled him to work successfully as a film official after 1945. This is because even in the film industry there was – as will be shown – no so-called "zero hour", i.e. a new beginning in terms of content and personnel after the end of the Second World War, allegedly detached from the crimes of the "Third Reich". Based on the person of Alfred Bauer and the early history of the Berlinale, one aspect of our investigation therefore is concerned with the people and the networks that shaped the face of film history in the early post-war period. We ask which personal connections from before 1945 continued to influence Bauer's film politics, which ones he was possibly able to reactivate and how these affected the film festival.

Up until now, Alfred Bauer was considered to be the ideal type of functionary who, despite initial scepticism from the Allies, managed to quickly re-enter the German film industry and establish himself there. But how did he manage to hold his own at the top of the International Film Festival for more than 25 years? As we want to show, this era was by no means set in stone, but was on the brink of crumbling more than once. We intend to utilise archival legacies to reveal how his pronounced will to assert himself and his diverse personal contacts as head of the Berlinale repeatedly prevented him from being replaced as head of the IFB, which at the same time also provide an insight into the working world of the film festival in the 1950s and 1960s.

Nevertheless, our study is not merely about tracing the networks that originated from the Nazi era and their continuity in the preparation and implementation of the International Film Festival in Berlin from 1951 to 1976. In addition thereto, there is also the unspoken suspicion that Bauer, in his capacity as director of the Berlinale, might have assisted in spreading certain aspects of National Socialist thought by virtue of the medium of film in the post-war period. What role did Bauer himself and the film festival he directed play in this? Against this background, the question should be answered as to whether political and ideological criteria were recognisable in the selection of the films to be invited and in the design of the programme of the Berlin International Film Festival. However, this does not only apply to the recourse to the time period prior to 1945. Rather, clarification must also be achieved as to how the

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<sup>1</sup> Tobias Hof, preliminary study regarding an historical portrait of Dr. Alfred Bauer (1911-1986). Commissioned by the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History (IfZ) 2020.

Berlinale management dealt with the film competition from the Eastern Bloc, whose productions were not allowed to be shown for a long time due to the political tensions and the special status of West Berlin. From Bauer's position on this difficult question, new perspectives on the West German film industry of the 1950s and 1960s can be gained.

Accordingly, the study also reveals the aspiration at the time to use the IFB to make Berlin a (Western) European film and art metropolis again. The three Western Allies, the West Berlin Senate and Mayor Ernst Reuter expressly wanted the festival to be seen as a political signal in the midst of the Cold War. Bauer, too, always saw the Berlinale as a “showcase of the West” during the Cold War, in which the cultural values of Western society were to be presented. However, this did not stand in the way of Bauer's ambition to increase the prestige of the IFB in competition with the festivals in Cannes and Venice through the participation of the Eastern bloc. In this respect, it is also appropriate to trace Bauer's decades-long efforts to invite Eastern European film countries to Berlin.

Film was also a significant medium in Germany after the war, and the cinema proved to be an essential place for establishing certain narratives about history, the present and the future, which then had a lasting effect. The political actors of the post-war period also believed in the great influence of the medium of film on public opinion. Last but not least, the belief in the manipulative power of the film medium was also a form of coming to terms with the past. The research questions mentioned here thus allow new insights into both the political and the social importance of the German film industry in the early Federal Republic. Furthermore, the study offers valuable starting points for conducting additional in-depth research on the cultural industry in West German history in general. In particular, this applies to personnel continuities and breaks in the transition from dictatorship to democracy.

Accordingly, the structure of the study is as follows:

1. Alfred Bauer and the founding history of the Berlin International Film Festival
2. Brown Berlinale? Alfred Bauer's networks and their importance for the film festival
3. Early allegations against Bauer
4. Bauer's conflicts with superiors and colleagues
5. Bauer's influence on film selection
6. Bauer's efforts to integrate the Eastern Bloc countries
7. Summary

## Sources

In the course of this study, we relied upon a variety of sources. The most important archive items included the holdings of the personal archive and the library of the Deutsche Kinemathek. Particularly, the estates of Oscar Martay and Hans Cürlis as well as the surviving documents of Alfred Bauer were evaluated here. Additional bequests and correspondence were studied in the archives of the German Film Institute & Film Museum (Frankfurt am Main) and the Spitzenorganisation der Filmwirtschaft (Wiesbaden), the umbrella organisation of the film industry.

The Berlinale holdings of the Landesarchiv Berlin were used as the primary source for this study. Moreover, it was possible to inspect the denazification files on Alfred Bauer in the Berlin State Archives. In addition thereto, documents from the Senate Department for Public Education and the Senate Department for Science and Art in the Berlin State Archive were viewed and evaluated. These encompass, among other things, minutes of meetings of the Berlin Senate, Senate resolutions and personnel matters of the Berlin International Film Festival.

Significant information on the biographies of the people who were important for the Berlinale in the period before 1945 could also be found in the documents of the former Berlin Document Center in the Federal Archives in Berlin. The personal documents available there on associations and memberships in Nazi organisations were just as valuable as the minutes, notes and briefs of the Reich Film Chamber, the Reich Commissioner for the Film Industry and UfA-Film GmbH.

The relevant documents from the holdings of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Chancellery and the Press and Information Service of the Federal Government were reviewed in the Federal Archives in Koblenz. The Federal Ministry of the Interior and its film department serves as the responsible technical supervisory bodies for film and television in the Federal Republic and also for West Berlin. These holdings contain, among other things, documents from the correspondence between Alfred Bauer and the responsible federal bodies.

In addition to the literary and journalistic evaluations, for example in the press archive of the Film University Babelsberg, an important part of the research also consisted in searching for and examining Alfred Bauer's personal estate. Various clues eventually led to a remarkable find. A quantitatively very important inventory from Bauer's personal estate was sold to the collector and film dealer Werner Bock from Hanover. The history of this sale is described in

more detail in our study. The sale at that time involved a total of around 14,000 banana crates, of which around 4,000 crates are in various storage rooms in Hanover. A personal visit by the two authors of this study to the mixed Winterberg/Bauer archive revealed, however, that a comprehensive evaluation of the entire inventory would have involved considerable personnel, logistical and time resources that were not available within the project period. Random evaluations of the documents stored in banana crates revealed not only thousands of film magazines from all over the world, but also correspondence and documents from Bauer's time at the Berlinale. Due to the volume of material, it cannot be predicted with certainty whether an extensive evaluation of the entire holdings could also produce biographical material by Bauer from before 1945 or his dissertation. At any rate, it does indeed comprise an important film-historical inventory, the scientific analysis and documentation of which would be desirable for further research purposes.

Another source that could provide information about Bauer's ideological standpoint during the Nazi regime is the dissertation he wrote in 1938. Both in his denazification proceedings and in his later CV, which he himself prepared, Bauer always spoke of a work on film law. There is no more information about this work today. According to Bauer, the Würzburg University Library was destroyed along with its holdings in the course of an air raid. However, research in contemporary film journals revealed the full title of Bauer's doctoral thesis. The *Film-Kurier* of June 28, 1938 contains a note on Bauer's work with a title and a brief description. Accordingly, Bauer did his doctorate under Wilhelm Laforet on the subject of "The leadership of the state in film". His supervisor Laforet was not a convinced National Socialist. Rather, Laforet, a later co-author of the Basic Law, got into a conflict with the National Socialists as early as 1933. In any case, his dissertation was "a treatise on the entire public film law of the National Socialist state," as the note claims. In contrast to Bauer's somewhat nebulous declaration after the war that he had done his doctorate on film law in general, in his dissertation he apparently dealt more intensively with the transformation of the film industry under National Socialism. The extent to which Bauer included ideological and regime-positive statements, cannot be clarified without a detailed analysis of the entire dissertation.

In the following, we summarise our research results according to the structure shown above.

## **1. Alfred Bauer and the founding history of the Berlin International Film Festival**

To this day, there are conflicting statements by those who were involved regarding the founding history of the Berlin Film Festival. As early as 1951, a dispute about authorship broke out, at the centre of which stood Alfred Bauer and the journalist Manfred Barthel. In the 1970s, Bauer increasingly publicly claimed responsibility for the Berlinale. This led to differences of opinion with the actual initiator, Oscar Martay, the film officer at the American military government in West Berlin at the time, who, according to his own statements, was first made aware of Bauer by his colleague George Brandes. What is undisputed is the arguably decisive role played by Oscar Martay in initiating the creation of the film festival. Bauer also conceded this in a much later letter to Martay, after another heated argument had broken out about the originator of the idea of holding a film festival in Berlin.

Whoever had the original idea for the film festival, Martay gratefully embraced the idea for this festival, especially against the backdrop of the looming Cold War, as it was intended to serve as a “showcase of western culture” oriented towards East Berlin and East Germany and at the same time demonstrate the superiority of western culture. On his initiative, a preparatory committee was formed in October 1950 to discuss the modalities of the festival, which was initially conceived as a one-off event and planned for June 1951.

At its first meeting on October 9, 1950, Oswald Cammann from the Association of Berlin Film Theatres presented the committee with an organisational plan that provided for the formation of two offices to prepare for the festival. He brought himself into play as the potential head of the office for the overall organisation, which was to be responsible for programme design, among other things. Cammann, who joined the NSDAP on May 1, 1931 and was an employee or member of the Reich Film Chamber until 1945, however, did not take up his position as festival director. The reason for his withdrawal was apparently a report in the "American Jewish World" of January 19, 1951 about his activities during the Nazi era. In it, Oswald Camman and Veit Harlan were named as former collaborators of Goebbels film industry who would seek a comeback in the film industry in post-war Germany. Cammann would probably have taken over the management of the festival if he had not been exposed in the English-language press as a former influential National Socialist. Under these circumstances, directing the festival was out of the question. However, Cammann remained in close contact with Bauer in his function as managing director of the Association of Berlin Film Theatres.

After Camman was forced to withdraw, Theodor Baensch, head of the film department of the Senate Department for Public Education, advocated Alfred Bauer as head of the festival. His plea for Bauer is all the more astonishing given that Baensch, unlike Bauer, was active in the resistance against National Socialism. In his talks with Baensch, Bauer referred to his work as an expert on film issues for the British military administration in West Berlin. While working for the Allies, he conveyed his view of film as an apolitical medium and claimed that apolitical films had also been produced during the Nazi era. In this sense, there could be no political reservations about his activities in post-war Germany. For himself, Bauer claimed an apolitical attitude towards the film. His activity in the film industry, he repeatedly claimed, arose mainly from his personal interest and was therefore non-political. There was one important reason for his commitment as an expert on film issues: in order to gain a respectable position in the film industry and especially in the German post-war administration in Berlin, he suggested that he continue his work as conducted before and after 1945.

In preparation for the 1951 Berlin International Film Festival, the Berlin Senate appointed Alfred Bauer as managing director on February 19, 1951. The Senator for Public Education, Joachim Tiburtius (CDU), chaired the preparatory working committee (founding committee), which convened for the first time in October 1950. As festival director, Bauer maintained close contact with Tiburtius, in whom he discovered an energetic supporter and sponsor of the festival in Berlin, despite many conflicts and his often arbitrary actions. Tiburtius shared Bauer's interest in re-establishing Berlin as Germany's intellectual film centre and accordingly attracting international attention to the city. From the very beginning, both of them considered institutionalising a third renowned festival with global appeal in Berlin, alongside the festivals in Cannes and Venice. Tiburtius additionally established the Berlin Festival within Berlin's cultural scene, which also took place in 1951 in western Berlin and which, like the film festival, was conceived as a "Showcase of the West" in terms of cultural policy.

## **2. Brown Berlinale? Alfred Bauer's networks and their importance for the film festival**

Given their impact on the Berlin International Film Festival and their importance for the organisational, artistic and international establishment of the Berlinale, three autobiographical sketches have been included. In Oswald Cammann, Bauer had a long-standing comrade-in-arms at his side, whom he had known at least since 1939 because he had taken part in various specialist group leader meetings in the Reich Film Chamber, and who himself supported



Bauer and the IFB on various occasions. In his function as managing director of the Association of Berlin Film Theatres, Cammann was one of the members of the founding committee of the IFB. Of all the film officials associated with the IFB, he was the only one who had joined the NSDAP prior to 1933 and who, even in the Weimar Republic, revealed an openly nationalist, if not right-wing extremist, attitude. It would probably have been Cammann who would have taken over the management of the festival if he hadn't been described as the "Nazi Movie Mogul" in the English-language magazine "The American Jewish World" of January 19, 1951. Cammann was a significant person for Bauer and the Berlin Film Festival. As a representative of the Berlin branch of the umbrella organisation of the German film industry (SPIO), he had good contacts with all film-making and film-exporting professional associations and thus enabled Bauer to use this network with regard to cinema use, contacts with film distribution companies and film producers, among other things. Ultimately, Cammann made sure that the IFB films actually ran in the movie theatres.

Another important confidant of Bauer from among the founding members of the Berlinale Committee proved to be Hans Cürlis. He is considered a pioneer of the so-called culture film. Cürlis' career as a filmmaker was also remarkable in that it had already commenced during the days of the German Empire. After the National Socialists had banned the Institute for Cultural Research founded by Cürlis as a non-profit association for commercial reasons, he established the Kulturfilm-Institut GmbH in 1934 for the production and distribution of his films. Following the war, Cürlis worked as an extremely successful producer of cultural films. In deliberately distorting the facts, he immediately made an effort to present himself as a victim of the "Third Reich", even though he had actually been a beneficiary of National Socialism, who was able to use his contacts to senior employees in the Reich Film Chamber again and again. With Hans Cürlis, Bauer was able to welcome an experienced film expert as a permanent guest at the Berlinale, whom he repeatedly asked to either submit contributions for the IFB himself or to publicise their submission.

Even beyond the realm of the founding committee, there were people with whom Bauer was in close contact. Günter Schwarz belonged to the people and the networks that shaped the face of film history in the early post-war period. In Schwarz, Bauer could count on another film expert who had already his career prior to 1945 and who was of particular importance for the development of the Berlin Film Festival, especially on the international stage.



From 1935 Schwarz, who had applied for membership in the NSDAP in May 1933 and had been a formal member of this party since 1937, experienced swift career advancement as a functionary in the cultural apparatus of the "Third Reich". In 1936, he became managing director of the General Association of Film Production and Distribution, in which production, distribution and export areas as well as studios were combined. In 1938, Schwarz became specialist group leader for film foreign trade in the Reich Film Chamber (this was equivalent to the position of a department head) and managing director of Deutsche Film-Export GmbH. As a specialist in film export issues, Schwarz finally switched to UFA Film GmbH (Ufi), a state holding company which was newly established in 1942 and was the largest film studio amongst those purchased by the state front company "Cautio Treuhandgesellschaft". Until the end of 1944, Schwarz was the influential figure on the international advisory board of the German film industry in his function as Ufi's foreign affairs officer. By virtue of his various functions in the state and in the film industry, Schwarz promoted the monopolisation, de-privatisation and finally the nationalisation of the film industry under National Socialism in order to sharpen its focus on Nazi ideology.

In November 1953, Schwarz ascended to the position of the first managing director of the Export Union of the German Film Industry e.V., and he also held various international positions, including as a German delegate to the international interest group for film producers FIAPF (Fédération Internationale des Associations des Producteurs de Films). On the local board of directors, Schwarz successfully campaigned for the Berlinale to be recognised and established as a top tier film festival (A-Festival). Moreover, he was able to benefit from his contacts dating from the (pre)war period through his numerous business trips to other European countries. As part of the IFB, Schwarz tried to bring in the interests and wishes of the export-driven German film industry. This meant that when selecting the films for the German contributions, films should be selected that promised the highest possible proceeds through exports abroad.

Schwarz' network activities were of enormous importance for the film festival in Berlin. The success of his commitment to the Berlinale can be measured by the fact that the FIAPF's initial strong negative attitude towards the establishment of film festivals in Berlin gradually receded and the Berlin Film Festival was granted the so-called A status at the FIAPF conference in Washington in 1955. As the German delegate of the FIAPF, Schwarz's contribution to the de facto equality with the festival cities of Cannes and Venice can hardly be overestimated.

### 3. Early allegations against Bauer

It is not only recently that there has been evidence of resistance to Bauer's appointment as head of the Berlinale, which was based on his work in the Reich Film Chamber or Reich Film Directorate. The film historian Wolfgang Becker had already referred to the assessment in Bauer's personnel file, which identified him as an "zealous SA man", in his 1973 study on the political economy of Nazi films. Much earlier, namely in 1953, the first allegations against Bauer had been made because of his work in the Nazi film industry. In the summer of 1953, the cultural filmmaker Theodor Blomberg apparently informed the Paris-based film historian and critic Lotte Eisner during a trip subsequent to the IFB that Bauer had been "the right hand" of SS Oberfuhrer Oswald Lehnich. When Bauer found out about this in a roundabout way, he turned to Blomberg personally and accused him of having made an attempt with his statements to make him contemptible and to disparage him in public opinion. In terms of content, Bauer was certainly not completely wrong in his letter. However, he did not serve as the "right hand" of Reich Film Chamber President Lehnich, but rather of the lesser-known Reich Film Director and SS Group Leader Hans Hinkel. The further correspondence between Blomberg and Bauer shows how energetically Bauer fought for the authority to interpret his professional career before 1945.

Evidently, it was also important for Bauer to become active with the Senate administration in this regard. In November 1953, for example, Bauer contacted Theodor Baensch, the film officer in the Senate Department for Public Education, about a "defamation matter" and sent him correspondence between him and Hanns-Wilhelm Lavies from the German Institute for Film Studies in Wiesbaden-Biebrich. In his letter to Lavies in November 1953, Bauer protested against false statements made about his activities prior to 1945, which Lavies allegedly had made about him. Bauer once again energetically rejected the allegation that he was the adjutant of the President of the Reich Film Chamber Lehnich, an SS leader. In this context, Bauer reiterated his story during his denazification process, namely that as a clerk for film production issues at Ufa-Film GmbH, he was able to protect numerous filmmakers from being drafted into the Wehrmacht and the Volkssturm by issuing work certificates. As in previous years, Bauer failed to mention his much more compromising activity in the Reich Film Directorate.

A few years later, allegations were again levelled against Bauer that involved his work as a film official during the Nazi era. In a note from April 1960, advisor Herbert Antoine from the

Senate Department for Public Education referred to a letter from the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation in Berlin from January 1960, which apparently referred to Bauer's earlier membership in the NSDAP. The letter from this society had not survived. Nevertheless, the allegations must have been so serious that Antoine went personally to the Berlin Document Center (BDC) in Berlin-Zehlendorf to obtain relevant documents about Bauer's NSDAP membership or his earlier work in the Reich Film Directorate. Since the BDC possesses the central membership index of the NSDAP with 12.7 million index cards, it can be considered quite probable that the documents submitted confirm Bauer's membership in the NSDAP. A subsequent meeting with Senator Tiburtius in April 1960 was intended to finally clarify the allegations against Bauer. However, the result of this meeting has not been preserved in the archives. From the point of view of the Senate administration, the documents from the BDC apparently did not appear to constitute a decisive burden weighing on Bauer. However, the entire process, which dragged on for several months following January 1960, proves that the Senate Department for Public Education was informed about Bauer's activities in the Reich Film Directorate and likely also about his membership in the NSDAP. Notwithstanding that, Senator Tiburtius did not draw any personal conclusions from the available information. It cannot be finally clarified whether he, as the responsible department head, and the speakers in the Senate Department for Public Education, who were involved in the process, passed on their knowledge to their successors in the Senate Department for Science and Art. At any rate, the revelations about Bauer's National Socialist past should not have come as a complete surprise to the later Senate administration.

Bauer no longer had to fear any consequences as the head of the Berlin Film Festival until the end of his term. Also in the Senate bill for the meeting of November 23, 1976, in which the award of the title Prof. e.h. was recommended as a non-academic honour for Bauer, there is no reference to his earlier work in the Reich Film Directorate or his NSDAP membership at all. In spite of the information that had become known to the Senate Administration by then about Bauer's activities before 1945, which were at least contradictory, the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Klaus Schütz, awarded him the title of Professor h.c. "for outstanding services to the Berlin International Film Festival and in the field of film studies and film history".

#### **4. Bauer's conflicts with superiors and colleagues**

Given the permanent institutional connection of the film festival to the Senate of West Berlin in 1954, points of friction and conflicts arose between Bauer and the Senate Department for Public Education, which primarily revolved around the budget for the film festival and the staffing of the organisational office and the festival management. In particular, Bauer repeatedly campaigned for better financial resources for the festival in the years to come. In the 1950s, in his persistent efforts to achieve the basis for a permanent, open-ended employment contract and to gain the corresponding recognition as festival director, Bauer repeatedly came into conflict with the responsible senate administrators. For a time, around the turn of the year 1953/54, he even resigned as director of the festival – a method he also used in later years.

From the outset, the Senate Department for Public Education, which is responsible for the film festival, endeavoured to make as many decisions as possible in the Senate itself and to keep Bauer's room for manoeuvre as small as possible. Bauer, in turn, not only claimed the last word in all artistic matters, housekeeping and film selection, but also in personnel decisions. This constellation resulted in a constant tension. Bauer's arbitrary decisions increasingly agitated the responsible employees in the Senate Department for Public Education. Senator Joachim Tiburtius, in contrast to his successor Werner Stein, tried not to let the emerging conflicts escalate and stuck to Bauer as festival director despite the repeated differences of opinion. Formally, Tiburtius was the superior of the festival director, but Bauer often addressed his demands and concerns directly to the governing mayor or the Federal Ministry of the Interior without even informing the senator. In the 1960s, therefore, Bauer was on the verge of being fired.

The Senate Department for Public Education was quite critical of Bauer's dominant role in the preparation and organisation of the festival, but was initially able to come to terms with it quite well. After Bauer had attempted to work as a colleague with the film consultant Theodor Baensch in the early years of the film festival, he no longer considered it necessary in the 1960s to coordinate IFB issues with his successor Frank Schwerin. In general, Bauer tended to view the film department as incompetent. Accordingly, upon occasion, he stubbornly resisted attempts to reform the film festival in terms of organisation and content.

After the formation of the Senate Department for Science and Art and the election of Werner Stein as Senator in April 1964, the differences between Bauer and the West Berlin

administration increased. The Senate Department for Science and Art, which is now responsible, no longer wanted to tolerate Bauer's arbitrary actions, in contrast to the former Senate Department for Public Education. In particular, Harald Ingensand was one of the festival director's fiercest critics. Ingensand saw Bauer's arbitrary way of working as a blatant violation of his requirement to obtain the decision of the Senate administration on all fundamental questions. Senator Stein also took Bauer's repeated arbitrary actions as an opportunity to threaten him to be released from his contract as festival director. Since Bauer knew how to utilise his international contacts as well as his advocates in the Federal Ministry of the Interior, he managed to remain at the head of the festival organisation in situations which were personally critical for him. But not only those contacts spoke for Alfred Bauer. The evaluated sources also show that he was repeatedly valued by his superiors for his services to the IFB and his skills as an organiser and networker. Alfred Bauer was a recognised film expert. However, his sometimes unorthodox methods, his high-handedness and his belligerence repeatedly posed challenges for the bureaucracy of the Senate administration.

## **5. Bauer's influence on film selection**

The extent to which Bauer's socialisation and his work in the Reich Film Directorate during the Nazi era affected his view of the world and his actions as director of the Berlin Film Festival can only be answered to a limited extent on the basis of the files viewed. The minutes of the meeting of the selection committees, in which decisions were made on the films that were to be invited to the festival and shown in the programme, could provide evidence supporting this. Bauer played a dominant role in these selection committees not only in the early years.

As festival director, Bauer propagated the narrative of an apolitical festival. He did everything in his power to arrange the film festival he directed in Berlin as a festival dedicated exclusively to art. Film, he repeatedly explained, was an artistic and not a political medium for him. Nonetheless, Bauer also saw the film as an "important cultural vehicle". In this sense, the festival's political function as a showcase for the West during the Cold War was always very important to him. Accordingly, films with clear or enigmatic political messages were also shown. In the early years, this concerned films that, against the background of the Cold War, highlighted the advantages of the western liberal way of life in contrast to the dictatorial tutelage in the east. In order to be able to fulfil the showcase function, however, both

artistically demanding and audience-effective films had to be shown. As a key player, Bauer tried to take both aspects into account when selecting the film.

Bauer's efforts to show a film directed by Karl Ritter, a prominent director of German war and propaganda films under National Socialism, during the first film festival in 1951 is worth mentioning. In this case, Bauer apparently lacked the sense for a thoughtful and sensitive approach to filmmakers who were particularly politically charged. It doesn't matter whether or not Bauer was aware of the explosive nature of his suggestion that Ritter's name be kept secret. Apparently, even at this early stage, even before the start of the first IFB, he saw no major problem in giving Karl Ritter, one of the most exposed Nazi propaganda filmmakers, a stage - and at an event whose purpose was to portray West Berlin as a showcase for a model of democracy based on Western standards, which was intended to free the city from the shackles of its nationalist past. The film officer at the Senate Department for Public Education, Theodor Baensch, resolutely and unequivocally rejected the proposal to show Ritter's film during the film festival. However, this process was unique in this form in the history of the Berlinale and cannot be used as evidence that Bauer tried to give a stage to directors of the Nazi regime who were generally politically charged.

The film "Dr. Holl" by Rolf Hansen cannot be taken as an indication that Bauer enabled former Nazi directors to continue their careers unhindered by participating in international film festivals. With Rolf Hansen, a director got the chance to re-establish himself as a "politically burdened" person in the film world after 1945. "Dr. Holl" was Hansen's fourth post-war film, so he was already established before the 1951 IFB. For Bauer, moreover, it was not the propaganda messages of the Nazi films that were decisive for inclusion in the programme, but Hansen's technical skills as a director, which he valued, and the involvement of well-known actors in post-war Germany. The aspect of using well-known film greats to lure the East Berlin audience to the festival in West Berlin, especially to the Waldbühne events, played a role for Bauer, particularly in the early years. He rejected films with tendencies toward violence, especially sexualised violence. On this point, he did not act independently of the great influence that the Christian churches, especially the Catholic Church, had in the public sphere in the Federal Republic in the 1950s and 1960s. No statements can be made here about the artistic aspects that were decisive for Bauer when evaluating the films to be invited. In the 1950s, however, Bauer was certainly trying to promote "good German film", just like the German ministry officials in the film department of the Ministry of the Interior. Consistent with this idea, which revolved around expectations

of custom, decency and morality, there were definitely similarities to film education in the "Third Reich". They corresponded to a common zeitgeist and show a certain moral continuity in film evaluation that lasted beyond the end of the war.

Bauer's attempt to invite Karl Ritter to the 1951 festival raises the question, which can only be answered speculatively, as to whether the first film festival would not have been afflicted with a scandal without the clear rejection by the Senate Department for Public Education, the effects of which on the later institutionalisation of the film festival could hardly have been foreseen. At the same time, however, this incident also shows that in the post-war public the appearance of heavily incriminated personalities from the Nazi cultural system was viewed quite critically. The exclusion from the post-war film industry of Nazi film greats who were supposedly overburdened was limited to a few people such as Karl Ritter, Veit Harlan and Werner Krauss and was more the exception than the rule. Because prominent actors of the NS feature film like Carl Raddatz, Viktor de Kowa and Heinz Rühmann were stars of the West German feature film in the 1950s and at the same time welcomed as guests at the IFB.

## **6. Bauer's attempts to integrate the Eastern Bloc countries**

In the 1950s and 1960s, Bauer made several attempts to invite representatives of the Soviet Union, the Eastern European countries and the GDR to the International Film Festival. For Bauer, the participation of Eastern European film countries in the festival was a prestige project to upgrade the Berlin Film Festival, since they were represented at other film festivals, such as Cannes and Venice. Films from Eastern European countries were also shown at the festivals in Oberhausen and Mannheim. Bauer therefore felt that the absence of Eastern European filmmakers was a devaluation of the Berlin festival.

A significant political hindrance was the dispute between the USSR and the western powers over the status of West Berlin. In addition, the invitation of Eastern European film countries failed due to their condition that representatives of DEFA should also be invited to West Berlin. The Federal Government always vetoed the involvement of DEFA. Since 1949, the view of the federal government under Konrad Adenauer determined the relationship to the GDR, according to which the Federal Republic was the only legitimate representative of the German people. So an invitation from the East German film company DEFA to the Berlin Film Festival was out of the question from the outset.



Ultimately, the role of the Berlin Film Festival as a showcase for the West in the system competition during the Cold War also played a not inconsiderable role. In 1957, the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany once again expressly referred to the "main task" of the Berlin Film Festival as a "documentation of the free world in relation to the East". The conflict between Bauer and the Bonn authorities on this issue illustrates the great influence that the Cold War also had on the cultural sector. First of all, it was the restrictive attitude of the Federal Government in the 1950s that prevented the Soviet Union and the GDR from participating in the Berlin Film Festival under the dictate of foreign policy principles. Then the Soviet Union itself boycotted the festival until 1974.

The initiative to invite film production from the East always came from Alfred Bauer as festival director. The responsible Senate administration was initially hesitant to negative, but very soon supported Bauer's request. For more than 24 years, Bauer persevered to achieve this goal. After many years of disputes about the participation of Eastern European film countries and DEFA, it was only a change in the "overall political climate" that made their participation in the festival possible. Ultimately, however, Bauer's persistence played a key role in the fact that not only the USSR, but also the GDR sent a film to the competition of the "Jubilee Berlinale" in 1975. With the inclusion of the Eastern Bloc countries in the 1975 film festival, Bauer's decades-long efforts to increase the prestige of the festival in competition with Cannes and Venice were finally crowned with success at the end of his tenure.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the person of Alfred Bauer and the early history of the Berlinale, one focus of our investigation was on the people and networks that shaped the face of film history in the early post-war period. The biographies of Oswald Cammann, Hans Cürlis and Günter Schwarz as well as the work of Alfred Bauer before 1945 show that the Berlin International Film Festival, especially in the early years, was defined by people who can certainly be regarded as having a Nazi connection. However, other key actors were by no means functionaries of National Socialism. From our point of view, the group of people mentioned does not represent an unbroken continuity of personnel in the preparation and implementation of the International Film Festival in Berlin, because several years had passed before the film industry was rebuilt, during which the influential figures from the period before 1945 were in denazification proceedings and alternative professions hoping for the chance to gain a foothold in the film

industry again. Additionally, in the Berlin Senate administration, enthusiastic National Socialists were by no means responsible for the film festival. Instead, positions were filled by people like Joachim Tiburtius, a member of the Confessing Church, and Theodor Baensch, a victim of the Nazi regime. The member of the founding committee of the first Berlinale, Max Büttner from the Association of Berlin Film Distributors, had also spent several years in a concentration camp because of his work for the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD). And last but not least, the management of the Berlinale was under the constant observation of the American and British occupying powers, each of whom had dispatched a representative to the founding committee of the IFB. In this regard, this central body was an institution in which former supporters and opponents of the Nazi regime and representatives of the victorious powers worked together to establish the film festival as a "showcase for the free world".

The events described in the study, as based on archive documents, demonstrate how problematic the relationship between Alfred Bauer and the administrative offices responsible for him sometimes was. In the Berlin Senate administration, Bauer's arbitrary actions, especially as head of the selection committee and the films he selected for the IFB in this capacity, were repeatedly criticised, and the question arose several times as to whether they wanted to continue working with Bauer. In this respect, he was a difficult and sometimes unpredictable employee. At the same time, Alfred Bauer was valued as an outstanding organiser of the film festival and a well-connected film official. It was precisely Bauer's willingness to use his numerous contacts to repeatedly find advocates who would exert influence in his favour at the political level that helped him to remain at the head of the festival organisation in critical situations. For Bauer, the 25-year tenure was ultimately characterised by the fight for appropriate financial and material resources - for himself as well as for the International Film Festival as a whole.

Berlin, in October 2022

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