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Nudism in Nazi Germany: Indecent Behaviour or Physical Culture for the Well-being of the Nation

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Britain – let’s confess it – is a land of canting hypocrisy. Its religion is a giant masquerade. The alleged righteous person regards nudity in the light of immorality. He thinks the Nudist camps are hotbeds of vice. He cannot think otherwise – his mentality will not allow him to. His idea is based on a long and false tradition.¹

Social nudism is the rule in Germany rather than the exception as in other countries.² Secretaries spend their lunch break in the nude in the nearest park in major cities like Munich or Berlin. Complete nakedness is accepted practice for men, women and children. Millions of people attend sexually mixed saunas which advertise themselves as something special, having hours or days reserved for single sexes. Monosexual saunas are often considered meeting places for gays or lesbians – rather than for more modest people. Holidays in the nude all over Europe are a billion *Deutschmark* business. Not even the police state of the GDR could control its nudists on the beaches of the Baltic Sea or around inland lakes.³

The history of social nudism in Germany has already been a focus of attention,⁴ showing that there were and still are differences in the German attitude toward the body and towards gender as compared with other countries.⁵ A complete history of German nudism has never been written,⁶ but six distinct streams of thought can be identified:

1. The German Beauty Movement [*Schönheitsbewegung*] included the propagation of nudism. A beautiful body could best express itself in the nude. As the *Jugendstil* (an ornamental art form at the beginning of the twentieth century) was particularly involved in nudism, its popularity after the turn of the century helped in spreading social nudism as part of modernity.⁷ During the Nazi period a distinct form of (nude) beauty was celebrated which had to be heroic, such as in the sculptures of Arno Breker.⁸

2. The German Youth Movement [*Jugendbewegung*] revolted against the lack of flexibility and the hierarchical structure of society – residues of a German brand of Victorianism. To demonstrate their liberty and shock their elders, young German men and women spent time together in the nude in camps, hostels or just in the local wood.⁹ During the Nazi period all German youth were first encouraged to join and later coerced to join the *Hitler Jugend* which followed many of the rules of the *Jugendbewegung* but for completely different reasons.
3. The natural healing movement [*Naturheilbewegung*] advocated nudism (mixed or not) for the benefit of exposing as much of the skin to the sun as possible.¹⁰ The Nazis did not temper any of the professions, so the paramedical and medical side of nudism was left alone.
4. The physical culture movement [*Körperkulturbewegung*] in traditional Germany to some extent followed the physical culture of the ancient Greeks and thus recommended nudism for the benefit of showing off one's muscularity. This was as much a male as a female affair in Germany.¹¹ With Surén gymnastics¹² the Nazi had their own nudist tradition in the military and paramilitary.
5. Several branches of *rhythmical gymnastics* and *dance* favoured dancing in the nude. This way, in contrast to the covered body, it was possible to see the motions of the body and to realize expression without inhibition.¹³ The teacher could also see muscular tension and relaxation more clearly and thus teach more effectively.¹⁴ As of 1941, dance and ballet companies faced tremendous difficulties as any use of the music of the enemy was no longer permitted, but rhythmic gymnastics were encouraged.¹⁵
6. Finally, there is an aspect of nudism and naturism,¹⁶ anti smoking, anti progress and vegetarians, that is often combined with special sectarian brands of teetotallers, a Rousseau-esque back to nature, and an early ecology movement. These *Lebensreform* [Reform of Life] movements demanded a reconstruction of all elements of life from their members – and that included a natural attitude towards one's body, that is, to walk around in the nude.¹⁷ Many Nazis considered Nazism itself a life reform movement, so at least some of the aims were similar.

Social nudism became common practice in Germany from the late nineteenth century onward. Even then, *Nacktgymnastik* [exercises in the nude] caused little opposition because of the subscription to the ideals of classical antiquity. Medical theory was partially in favour of gymnastics in the nude.¹⁸ Social nudity existed in the name of racial hygiene. It allowed better selection of marriage partners.¹⁹ Nudity served the purpose of creating beautiful bodies through exercise. In a very broad sense, therefore, nudism

in Germany with its emphasis on perfection of the body – through exercises and breeding – was part of physical culture and sport.²⁰

On the whole, in Germany it spread faster in the Protestant north than in the Catholic south, more in cities than in town and village. It was not all plain sailing. There were many legal cases, particularly in the early stages. Frequently, it was the court in Lüneburg which was involved, as in its district was the town and nudist camp of *Egestorf* which was sued. While most camps were organized as non-profit clubs, the camp here was private and commercial – and rented by the non-profit club.²¹ The club published propaganda material which was often considered pornographic and tested the limits of nudism to the advantage of the profits of the company owning the camp and the publishing business. As the Lüneburg court had (and still has) two decision-making levels, and judges who were generally held in high esteem, their decisions were not challenged nationally.²² In contrast to courts in other countries, it ruled that the state ought to be neutral, that a policeman, as a full time state officer, could therefore not take offence at nudism while on duty. As representative of the state, a policeman could be a witness, but not press charges against nudists himself. If you saw people in the nude you had to take offence immediately. As soon as you started *watching* naked people for any length of time and were offended, then the court ruled that you were a *Peeping Tom* who had no right to press charges.²³

As with all other forms of public expression, the time between 1919 and 1932 (Weimar Republic) in Germany was characterized by a great diversity of national organizations formed on political, social, racial and many more lines.²⁴ In 1932, there were many national nudist organizations which cannot all be mentioned here. While most were bourgeois,²⁵ some were socialist,²⁶ some were fascist,²⁷ some were just commercial trying to attain as big a market share as possible. These organizations comprised roughly 50,000 members, but the number of people practising casual nudism was at least twice as large.²⁸

Nazism

The National Socialist Party (NSDAP) was a relatively small political party after the First World War. The party gained popularity particularly through its charismatic leader Adolf Hitler. Hitler had set down much of his political credo in *Mein Kampf*, a 600-page book, written while he was in prison for attempting a Mussolini-like coup in Munich in 1923. To gain power, the Nazis organized a broad bourgeois, conservative coalition of discontented people, particularly after the Depression of 1929 when the liberal capitalist system seemed to have collapsed. Those groups which had suffered in the

Depression in particular were flocking to the Nazis in their thousands.

Politically, the Nazis stood for Law and Order; like many other conservative movements; they insisted on changing the rules of the Versailles Treaty which had sealed German defeat in the First World War; they blamed a world-wide Jewish conspiracy for everything that was not going well in Germany. Communism was run by a brand of Russian Jewry, US capitalism was dominated by Jews. The Nazis, therefore, initially insisted that the Jewish influence in Germany should be reduced to its proportion in the country. Eventually, however, they insisted that Germany should be for Germans only and that Jews had to leave. In addition, the Nazis were supported by the eugenic movement which insisted that non-Aryans in Germany, feeble-minded Germans, criminals, etcetera, ought to be prevented from reproducing in Germany (negative eugenics), while blond, blue eyed, physically and mentally strong Germans ought to be enabled and encouraged to reproduce more frequently (positive eugenics) so that eventually the German race would be upbred for the benefit of a brighter future.²⁹

Being such a broad coalition of special interest groups under the umbrella of *Hitlerism* also meant that the aims of Nazism were not properly defined in many areas. In some fields, the Nazis had political heavyweights who had the power to place themselves as leaders in the new coalition government after 31 January 1933 and particularly after the 3 March election of 1933 which increased the Nazi and allied nationalist percentage in the federal parliament from 42.5 per cent to 52.6 per cent.³⁰ Joseph Goebbels, the most prolific propaganda speaker and keen organizer who had turned the capital Berlin from a 'Red' stronghold into a devout Nazi capital, was a logical choice for head of propaganda. Hermann Goering, a highly decorated officer of the First World War, could fill any function in relation to the police or military. Baldur von Schirach, the Hitler Youth Chief, was to continue in that function. But there were many offices and functions without a clear-cut personality in charge.³¹

Another phenomenon should also not be overlooked: While the Nazi Party had about 800,000 members by January 1933, political opportunism had grown to such proportions that 1.6 million new members flooded to the Nazi Party in the following three months before the elections. This increase in membership reached such frightening levels for the old members of the Nazi Party that they prohibited new members from joining immediately after the April election, and insisted that political positions ought to be given to members with a low membership number and not to the opportunistic latecomers.³²

While much of Nazism was roughly defined in *Mein Kampf*, many areas were not. Nobody knew what position the Nazis would take on sport. There

had been no Nazi sport organization and many areas of the *Turner* and sport movements could well imagine that they would gain more prominence after the Nazi take-over.³³ In sport, as in many other fields, Nazism was basically a fascist movement. If the Nazis did not have a position and needed one fast, one of the ways to solve a problem was to see how Mussolini had handled the situation in Italy.³⁴ The fascist model was particularly strong in the very early phases of Nazi power in 1933. For sport, it meant strong state sport with emphasis on international success (to achieve a *culture of consent*),³⁵ on military preparedness, on improving the role of the physical education teacher in the school system.³⁶ It also meant outlawing socialist, communist and, eventually, Protestant and Catholic sports *organizations* – but not their members.³⁷ General encouragement to do sport went hand in hand with co-ordination of the various sports organizations under a unified and strong Nazi leadership.

The year 1933 is of particular interest, as it shows that within Nazism there was a certain open-mindedness in dealing with organizational problems. In the first years of Nazi rule, the situation was certainly still relatively unrestricted – at least in those fields where the Nazis had conflicting aims – such as sport or nudism.³⁸ In their own personal defence after 1945, many people accused of Nazi crimes insisted that they only followed orders, that they had no chance to influence the system. The opportunists of spring 1933 insisted that they had *had* to join the Nazi Party: in reality they had joined to gain personal advantage.³⁹

It should also not be overlooked that the situation locally was very distinct: the Nazis had local and regional strongholds just as much as there were plenty of areas which had refused to vote Nazi in the last more or less free elections of April 1933. Further, many rules made in Berlin or Munich did not immediately reach everyone unless they were locally executed. Although worker sports clubs were all officially closed in 1933, some were able to continue their sporting activity right up to 1945.⁴⁰ In the context of nudism, we will look locally at the Göttingen nudist camp. Göttingen was a Nazi stronghold in that part of Prussia that had previously been part of the Kingdom of Hanover.⁴¹ The old university town of Göttingen had a Nazi dominated city council from 1931.⁴² Yet many things were handled with consideration and polite language, and using the experience of a police force that was accustomed to a large number of university students.

Nudism in the Inter-war Years

With the help of a vast array of nudist journals the various nudist organizations can be roughly put into three distinct groups: 1. proto-fascist (*völkisch*); 2. bourgeois neutral; and 3. socialist. We will leave out here the question of private ownership of camps and publishing houses.

1. Although the *völkisch* groups, such as the *Loge des aufsteigenden Lebens* [Lodge for the Improvement of Life] were relatively small, they are among the oldest in Germany. Early propagandists such as Heinrich Pudor (1865–1943)⁴³ and Richard Ungewitter (1868–1958) were better at writing about nudism and practising it than at organizing large groups. The success of their publications shows, however, that their influence went far beyond the actual fascist nudist groups (Pudor was in favour of lynching people for public lewdness; Ungewitter used nakedness as a means of anti-Semitism and eugenics to encourage castration of alcoholics, homosexuals, criminals, the feeble minded, etcetera).⁴⁴ The *Bund der Lichtfreunde* [Union of the Friends of Light] split off under the leadership of Joseph Michael Seitz from the *Loge des aufsteigenden Lebens*, much to the dismay of Ungewitter in 1919. Although it disassociated itself from the more radical positions of Ungewitter, it can still be considered pro-fascist. While Ungewitter demanded a complete change of life in the sense of *Lebensreform*, Seitz was far less radical and was ready (just like the apolitical nudists) to confine the question of nudity to the private sphere. Seitz was, however, an anti-Semite and a eugenicist.⁴⁵

Finally, the literary work of Hans Surén, a military man and fascist, had an influence that extended far into the bourgeois centre of society. His many publications, in which he favoured strengthening the male body with medicine ball exercises, preferably in the nude, achieved a circulation of more than 1 million books overall. Hitler himself was a Surén fan.

2. The non-dogmatic bourgeois nudists consisted of many different groups which are impossible to demonstrate in their many links and spin-offs. Some were non-profit organizations, some legal companies, some a mixture of the two. Prior to the First World War, the *Freya Bund* [Club for the advancement of natural free body culture on a scientific, healthy and aesthetic basis], the *Monboddobund* [a fantasy name] and the *Deutsche Lichtbad Gesellschaft, Verein für Volksgesundheit und Nacktkultur* [German Sun-Light Bathing Society, Club for the Improvement of Public Health and Nude Culture] were all started in Berlin. The prime mover, Wilhelm Kästner, was evidently using the market he had created for selling his journal *Der Lichtfreund* [Friend of Light]. To be 'scientific, healthy and aesthetic' meant to be modern and legal, while some of the other journals of the time were frequently banned for touting pornography. Much of what was sold as healthy family living in the nude would have otherwise been banned as pornography involving children and minors.

What Kästner was for the Berlin market, Robert Laurer was for Hamburg. His publication house published a number of monographs and the journal *Licht-Land* [Sunlight Land] and he owned the Egestorf nudist camp,

just 15 miles south of Hamburg. With a solid market approach, he published the work of Magnus Weidemann, a Protestant pastor turned painter from the North Sea island of Sylt, who realized that he was also a splendid photographer of female nudes.⁴⁶ It was Weidemann's prominence in particular that made Sylt the most famous of all nudist holiday resorts up to the present day. Laurer was attempting to increase his market share and therefore tried to bring as many independent, non-dogmatic camps into line. First he started to publish lists of camps and contact addresses in his journal, so that a nudist travelling from one town to the next could contact the locals without getting caught up in a socialist or fascist organization. In 1927, Laurer brought these camps and clubs together in the *Liga für freie Lebensgestaltung* [League for Free Expression of Life]. Until 1933 this was the largest of all nudist federations. The advantage of being a member of an association of many clubs was the considerable savings one could make if one was travelling. The entrance to nudist camps was generally restricted to 'members only' for legal reasons. By uniting the clubs into an association, members of one club were automatically considered guest members in all. If you were keen on seeing different people in the nude this was your chance.

3. Finally, the socialist nudists based their work mainly on Adolf Koch. As a Berlin primary schoolteacher in the workers' suburb of Moabit, he taught children who scarcely saw the sun. In the afternoons he would take the children on extensive excursions to the woods around Berlin, having the children run around in the nude. On the one hand, this created some scandal concerning his alleged sexual abuse of children, but it did have positive health effects. In 1921, Koch founded his own clubs, and more and more children and their parents saw the advantages of sunbathing as health therapy. Koch was permitted to use the school gymnasiums in Moabit with his groups (nude, but sexually segregated where this was demanded) and in many parts of Germany his organizations became members of the local worker sport *Kartell*, the workers' sports co-ordination body set up to ensure fair access to sports grounds and local funds for all.⁴⁷

In late 1923 there were a number of court cases and disciplinary action against him for presenting nude children dancing on stage at a parents' meeting. Although he was acquitted, he left the city school system and concentrated on spreading his 'Adolf Koch private schools' nationwide. Eventually, 13 of these institutions helped children and their parents to gain more sunlight and thus develop a healthier way of life. In Berlin alone, his schools had 2,000 children with rapidly improving health – for example tuberculosis was eliminated from these schools. Some of Koch's activities had considerable success. His nude bathing in the Central Berlin City

Swimming Baths often had 700 participants (un/dressing and showering by separate sex, nude swimming by single sex). As his school had rented the baths, and was selling cheap tickets to so many people, he made a profit on these activities in spite of the low prices. He also presented many *Nacktmatinees* [Matinees in the Nude] advertising the activities of his clubs.

Apart from swimming, gymnastics, volleyball and tambourine ball in the nude, most activities of the three brands of German nudism were not really 'sports'. On the whole, Adolf Koch included more sports than any of the other organizations, and the Koch schools were also part of worker sport local organizations as they needed space normally allocated to the sports clubs, such as swimming baths and gymnasiums. Of course, conscious improvement of and showing off of the body can be considered part of physical culture. A journal *Nacktsport* [Nude Sport] existed from 1920 to 1927 and was the official review of several naturist groups. But this hardly makes nudism a sport.⁴⁸

In late 1932, Hermann Goering, Speaker of the House after the January elections of 1933 and after Hitler's swearing in as the Reich's Chancellor was acting Minister of the Interior of Prussia – and thus chief of police of the largest German state. In this capacity he passed and enforced the so called *Zwickelerlass*, a government order, ensuring that bathing costumes had at least double if not triple layers in parts that covered the genitals, so that, when wet, male and female genitals would not be emphasised. Implicitly this outlawed nudism. The order was heavily criticized by many nudists (and the police who found it difficult to enforce). For people with foresight it was obvious that the situation for nudists would become 'difficult' in the event of a Nazi take-over, to say the least. Since Adolf Koch insisted that for health reasons his schools would continue to practice nudism with children, the police closed his schools in Prussia on 1 November 1932. Whatever their political convictions, the nudist organizations started to co-operate in late 1932 to overcome state pressure together, to lobby MPs of all parties and prevent their situation from deteriorating.

Nudism in 1933

The Nazis had always presented themselves as the *Party of Law and Order*, of purity and decency. Among the first laws that the Nazi-led majority passed were those against venereal disease, public prostitution, gay bars and lewd advertisements. Many nudists were quite happy with these regulations, as they themselves had always pointed out the difference between healthy nudism and striptease bars, between their nudist journals and outright

pornography. Perhaps the nudists had not sufficiently made their point, for on 3 March 1933, the *Nudists' Black Friday*, nudism was outlawed in all of Germany.⁴⁹ Only the socialist clubs (like the Adolf Koch schools) were dissolved (like all other socialist organizations), while the apolitical and the fascist organizations were left untouched: only their nudist activities were no longer permitted.

Although it is part of nudist folklore that they were persecuted by the Nazis, that their organizations were dissolved (which made every nudist a freedom fighter against the Nazis in the Nazi trials after 1946),⁵⁰ not even Koch had to suffer. He opened a new 'institute' as a private enterprise, the *Institute für Eubiotik*, which he maintained until it was destroyed by the British-American bombing of Berlin. Our test case, the Göttingen *Freisonnland* [Free Sunland], was also not closed. It presented itself to the local authorities as a health related organization that was taking sexually segregated sun baths. The police who supervised the camp knew from informants that this was not true and that even nude photographs were taken in the camp (which was strictly prohibited under the anti-pornography rules).⁵¹ The local police kept this information on their files and reported the club's defence as the official version to their superiors, the district government in Hildesheim (some 60 miles north).

Nationally, Nazi members of nudist organizations took the initiative. Seven weeks after 'Black Friday', six prominent Nazi members of the boards of the apolitical *Reichsverband für Freikörperkultur* (RFK) [*Reichs Federation of Free Physical Culture*]⁵² and the pro-fascist nudist organizations⁵³ met in Berlin and were appointed commissioners of the nudist movement by the President of the RFK.⁵⁴ This was a time when the *Kommissare* [commissioners] ran riot in Germany and the 'National-Socialist Revolution' really was a revolution with beatings and bloodshed.⁵⁵ People with criminal energy took a chance in plundering the finances of their organizations – but also to ensure their own safe future. Some of the later court cases suggest that more of the former took place. The above-mentioned six took over the journal, sacked the non-Nazi members of the boards, and ensured that nudism at the periphery and the centre would speak with one voice. They were successful in combining the organizations they represented in the apolitical and fascist associations.⁵⁶ There were, however, many associations and single clubs they did not represent.

It is an open question why they decided to become a 'sport'. Apparently, there were discussions to join other Nazi groups, particularly on the part of the fascist groups. One of the *Kommissare*, Karl Almenroeder, had attempted to join sports organizations before⁵⁷ and Karl Bückmann, a Nazi member of the Reichstag and thus politically the most influential of the six,

was a personal friend of Hans von Tschammer und Osten⁵⁸ who was just becoming *Führer* of all sports.

What were the other options? The SS was pro-nudist, as we will see below; this option would have been very difficult for many nudists, as the SS had strict entry regulations, while the sports organizations had very lenient ones. It would have been possible to join organizations of eugenics and racial hygiene, such as the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Rassenhygiene* [German Society for Racial Hygiene], but this option, which would have been favoured by Ungewitter's followers, was politically difficult as, in the spring of 1933, this was in the midst of the political ferment itself.⁵⁹ Joining the *Rassenpolitisches Amt* [Office for Racial Policy] of the Nazi Party would also have been theoretically possible, but the entry ban on new members of the NSDAP in May 1933 ended any such an option.⁶⁰ Any of the other sub-groups such as the anti-alcoholics or vegetarians, involved the problem of focusing on a minor detail which was more likely to divide than to unite the organization.

The best choice would have been to bring everybody together and stay as a separate national association. As nudism had just been outlawed, this complete turn-around was apparently too much for the Nazi leadership to handle. In terms of internal politics of the NSDAP many decisions of the spring of 1933 were taken according to the model of fascist Italy. Organized nudism in Catholic Italy did not exist – so no model other than complete prohibition could come from there. It should also not be overlooked that the spring of 1933 was a time when 'national unity' was the word of the day, when big, united organizations were asked for, not small sects. It was, therefore, neither the time to continue as a bunch of small rival nudist organizations nor the time to maintain complete independence. To become a 'sport' also had the advantage that socialist nudists did not have to be fully excluded, so the unity of late 1932 might also have had its effect here.⁶¹

In spite of all of these efforts, the *Kommissare* were not as successful as they had planned in combining the various organizations with a sporting orientation. From the sources studied, it is difficult to judge why they were not successful. The clubs were sufficiently strong locally to be less interested in actions of far-away Berlin. All *Kommissare* were soon losing power in other areas of life too. With the end of the revolutionary phase of the Nazi take-over, the *Kommissare* had failed. But they had given a direction to resolving the dilemma.

Looking at attempts in other sporting fields, parallels to the national cycling federations come to mind. Cycling had the most national organizations, as many as 12 at times, which all tried to speak for all of cycling. It was as split in terms of different creeds as the nudists were and depended to a large extent on the owners of the velodromes or the camps

respectively. In cycling, too, the national organizations did not easily accept the newly- (self-) appointed Nazi president, as there were enough Nazi heads of other national cycling organizations who also wanted to take over. Hans von Tschammer und Osten withdrew his selection as boss of the cyclists, and did not appoint the leader of the 'rebel' Nazis either, but a neutral third. In 1933, this seemed to have been Nazi policy in many fields before the Nazis were certain of consolidating their power.⁶²

As the nudist *Kommissare* were unable to 'co-ordinate' the former organizations, they did what had been so typical of nudism: they founded a new organization – *Kampfring [-bund] für völkische Freikörperkultur* [Fighting Union for National Free Physical Culture]. It was founded by the same six, but they added two more prominent former chairpersons of nudist organizations to their steering group. Bückmann officially became the *Führer* – and this time it worked. The journal was once more renamed, this time *Deutsche Freikörperkultur: Zeitschrift für Rassenpflege, naturgemäße Lebensweise und Leibesübungen* [German Free Physical Culture: Journal for Racial Hygiene, Natural Living and Physical Education], thus showing that all directions were now included in the new national organization. For the time being this remained the only nudist journal not prohibited on *Black Friday*. By June 1933, the new organization contained 59 clubs and member organizations. All fascist organizations had joined and the major apolitical ones too.

Very few new clubs were founded in the spring of 1933, some were probably former workers' clubs that had to start as new organizations and find a prominent Nazi as local leader to get back into business. Even Ungewitter's *Treibund für aufsteigendes Leben*, which had not been a member of any national organization since 1925, joined the *Kampfbund*. The close connection between the *Kampfbund* and the Nazi Party was certainly helpful, giving the new nudist union a head start. Of course, the new union also looked at Hitler's *Mein Kampf* for help and made the *Führer* a revolutionary in the name of life reform.⁶³

If we look again at the consequences of the national endeavour on the example of the Göttingen club, we can see that the President had sent a newspaper article of *Deutscher Sport*, which explained in detail the first re-organization of national nudism to the local police.⁶⁴ He also informed the police that henceforth the club would only show the national flag and the Nazi flag at their centre, and that they had renamed themselves a 'national' nudist club. The local police insisted that only single sex nudism would be tolerated and that the club should either ensure the separation of the sexes by different opening hours for the two sexes, or have a two-metre high fence with no possibility of peeping through it so as to ensure privacy of the sexes. To the district authorities, the local police pointed out, however, that the

camp was under supervision, that it was relatively small and contained decent people who could be trusted.

When the *Kampfbund* was founded, the Göttingen camp joined immediately, assuming that it now belonged to the Nazi system and was safe – although new membership in the Nazi Party was not possible for any additional members personally. The whole style of correspondence with the local police changed immediately. Being a Nazi organization strengthened the self confidence of the camp's President. While prior correspondence had been more or less servile as they were, after all, asking for leniency in the application of the law, now it was letters from an equal asking for fair treatment – pointing out that a new law which would provide the national nudists with certain privileges was in preparation. Nudism, after all, was the best possible training to guarantee racial consciousness and racial hygiene, therefore strengthening the basis of the National-Socialist movement.

Co-ordinated Nudism

In March 1934, von Tschammer und Osten proclaimed a new stage in the unity of German sport. By June 1934, nudists used the opportunity for a greater degree of unification in their subsection of sport (they were put into the same category as hiking, camping and canoeing):

The name 'free physical culture' has smacks of the old system. We still have a vast array of colourful names for our clubs and organizations. It is impossible to demonstrate the new-found unity with such a diversity of names. It is impossible to show to the public that we have a new spirit, that we are an important part of those in our people who are willing and able to build the new society. The Führer of the *Kampfring* therefore demands that we have a new form of organization. We will take on the *Führer* principle with centralised administration. The purpose is to unify our strong organization to fight for the optimum strength of the German people.⁶⁵

The organization was therefore renamed as *Bund für Deutsche Leibesucht (BdL)* [Union for the Improvement of the German Body], the multitude of clubs also renamed themselves and became local sections of the *BdL*.⁶⁶ Bückmann strengthened his position as leader inasmuch as Hans Surén, who was far more prominent, insisted that he would only take over if he was appointed by the Minister Frick⁶⁷ himself, who had appointed von Tschammer. As Frick did not like the nudists and insisted as late as 1935 that they ought to be closely watched, eventually Surén had to look for different protection. He found it in the form of Walter Darré, the Führer of the farmers and Minister for Agriculture. Darré, who was known for his

'blood and soil' policy, had favoured nudism back in 1933⁶⁸ and made Surén an advisor to the farmers. Darré had argued against the *Zwickelerlass*, pointing out correctly that nude bathing was healthier than having your swimming costume dry on your skin and risking a cold.⁶⁹

Parallel to organizational co-ordination, the nudists moved away from an organization with many politically neutral elements to become – not just for self-protection, but by acts and national declarations – a Nazi organization. The whole situation started to change in April 1936. The SS, which had always latently favoured Surén gymnastics and liked to show off their bodies as being stronger than most of the public, spoke out in favour of treating nudism as something natural. It should neither be persecuted, nor should anybody be forced to run around in the nude.⁷⁰

The year 1938 can be seen as the turning point. With its 'Appeal for true and noble nudity' on 20 October, the nudist journal now dared to speak out, with SS support. On 21 December, the *Deutsche Reichsbund für Leibesübungen*, the national sports organization, of which the nudists had become a section, was made an association 'headed' by the NSDAP.⁷¹ In 1938, Richard Ungewitter, who had been one of the Nazi nudist fathers, was made an honorary member for his 'prophetic wisdom'.⁷²

The common enemy was people who sat at home, resenting the body and bodily activities.

The body has finally won and demands as much nudity as possible where this is reasonable, i.e. in pure nature ... Those who are not yet used to see the free, completely nude body have to become accustomed to such a view; if we really want to create a free, intellectually and physically harmonious generation and at the same time improve the racial side of our nation, beauty has to become a self evident necessity and at the same time a desirable aim ... For the selection of one's future spouse and the healthy upbringing of one's beautiful children, we must develop the notion of the perfect body of the opposite sex.⁷³

If we look again at the Göttingen club, we see that the activities fluctuated with the weather, but on the whole were decreasing over the years. From the membership list of May 1933, the only list throughout the Nazi era which the club had to present to the authorities, we find the average age of the 28 members to be about 40 and the membership can be described as middle class. When the police found men and women bathing jointly during a routine check in June 1935, the police asked for an explanation and did not really press charges; they were content with the excuses given. In the police archive we find notes on the dilemma: bi-sexual nude bathing was not permitted, but single sex nude bathing was. Single sex nude bathing

could, however, be an act facilitating illegal homosexual activities which carried much stronger punishment than bathing in the nude. The President of the local club (who happened to be librarian at the University library⁷⁴) kept informing the local police of important court cases that favoured nudism, but the police completely ignored this.⁷⁵

It is interesting to note that the police did not bother to record that nudism had become a sport or, as of 1938, a sub-organization of the NSDAP. The local police knew their citizens and kept a constantly affable tone, firm in protecting public morals, but liberal in letting nudists do whatever pleased them in their camp behind a high wooden fence. With the beginning of the war, the police ranks had diminished and those left on active duty also had more pressing things to do than watch two dozen middle aged nudists. From July 1940, the local police stopped supervising Göttingen nudists. In their files three reasons were important: members were sober adults who knew what they were doing, the fence was high enough to make the place private, the motivation of the users was 'health'.⁷⁶

From the characteristics of the Göttingen club's membership, it is highly unlikely that members were heroic in the sense of Arno Breker, 'lewd' as nudism was looked upon outside Germany. The nude male body in local reality was neither 'hard and lithe', nor 'poised for battle' as depicted in Nazi art.⁷⁷ Under the honorary presidency of a local university librarian, in a non-leadership position in his actual profession, these were very unheroic middle aged people who had no difficulty explaining that they sunbathed for health reasons – for many it was probably even true. The difference between local reality and the creation of the nude male body as an ideal and an icon of *Kraft* [strength and power] could not be greater.

Nudism and the Law

The legal side of nudism also changed. The first case in Nazi Germany was tried on 3 October 1935. At Whitsun 1935, ten members of the Stettin nudist club and their children had played in a meadow of the local wood. A farm hand had seen them, assumed that this was a 'communist gathering' (the local Koch club had been closed by the police), and informed the police. The police came, took their names and the men were made to pay 6RM (6 Engling shillings) each (or two days in prison), women 3RM (3 shillings) (or one day in prison) – since the meadow was closed on only three sides (and *not* all four) and readily accessible to people walking through the woods.⁷⁸ The local nudist club then appealed to the next higher court, which overruled the lower court (11 January 1936). According to the upper court, the 'ancient Germanic customary right for all people to bathe freely at lakes and rivers in the woods' was of higher legal force than the rights of the very

few people who would actually walk in that part of the wood, such as hunters, foresters, policemen or fishermen.⁷⁹

The judge took the opportunity to redefine the right for public nudity in stating that nudists were acting within the law 'if they choose remote places, have a towel or bathing trunks at hand to cover their genitals in case outsiders appear and if they check from time to time whether anybody was approaching. The latter was not necessary if the nudists knew from experience that the place was sufficiently remote that nobody would normally come by'. The judge also took the opportunity to explain that he thought it 'unreasonable' to demand that 'men and women who love nature should be locked in behind walls or high solid wooden fences ... so that nature would have to stay outside'.⁸⁰

One of the nudists, originally fined, was a social worker in Stettin. After the first trial, the city fired him without notice. He sued the city for reinstatement – and lost. He also appealed to the higher labour dispute court and lost again. The court accepted the position of the city that 'nudism on the whole was "safe" and "healthy" for people with a firm personality, as was the case with this particular youth worker'. But as his duty was to work with 'unstable' youth who might regard nudity only as a form of 'lust' and 'sexual stimulation', he had to be sacked all the same as his preferences were unsuitable for that particular job, and it was impossible to re-employ him as no other position was vacant. That seems to have been the only case in the Nazi period in which somebody lost a court case for public nudity.⁸¹

The *Union for Eugenics and Germanic Bodily Improvement* of Frankfurt/Main which was in the process of becoming the Frankfurt local club of the *BdL*, presented its new by-laws to the city. The city objected to § 2, which demanded physical exercises in the nude, as this was against the prohibition of 3 March 1933 which was still extant. The club went to court and sued the city on the ground that the prohibition of 3 March 1933 had not become law, but had remained a government order, which was now in conflict with the public statements of many prominent Nazi leaders. As the club's constitution was nothing but the local adaptation of the national club by-laws which von Tschammer – by then Under-Secretary of State for Sport – had demanded that clubs enact, the local court had in fact overruled a new government rule and insisted on an old one. When the district court of Wiesbaden ruled in favour of the city, the club went to the Prussian High Court. The High Court reversed the rulings of the two lower courts and ordered the city of Frankfurt to pay all the costs of the two cases. The High Court established that a hypothetical danger to the public was not enough to stop adoption of the by-laws of a club only *de facto* actual danger to an actual person.⁸²

Two more cases were reported by the press. On 23 July 1937, county workers doing repair work on the sand dunes of the North Sea island of Sylt called the local police when they noticed 38 nudists of both sexes doing their gymnastics exercises on the beach. The police pressed charges and each person had to pay a fine of 50RM (£2 10 Shillings); the medical doctor in charge of the gymnastics exercises had to pay 150RM (£7 10 Shillings). The group complained to the county commissioner who supported his police officer. The district court also supported the local police on the grounds that the part of the beach where the nude gymnastics had taken place was obviously not sufficiently remote; the county workers and the policeman would otherwise not have seen them in the nude. The nudists took their case to the Prussian High Court in Berlin which ruled in favour of the nudists. As the nudists had done exercise at a place that was sufficiently remote by any reasonable standard and at a time when there was no public bathing at the beach, their nudism was not offensive. They were not to expect any repair workers on the dunes.⁸³

The final case, which settled the question of nudism, took place in Königsberg. The local police charged a nude man bathing on the beach 20RM (£1). The man went to court, and the local judge, without referring to the *Zwickelerlass* or the government order of 3 March 1933 – although they were both still valid – and without referring to any laws that had previously made life difficult for nudists (such as those against public nuisance or loitering), ruled ‘that bathing in the nude was neither immoral, nor indecent, nor unaesthetical and therefore not illegal. If somebody wanted to bathe in the nude – so be it. If he or she undresses where other people present wear bathing costumes and he or she behaves in a provocative manner towards these people, it is unlawful and the person ought to be prosecuted. That was not the case in the incident tried. The district attorney for East Prussia asked the authorities in Berlin whether such a verdict was valid without referring to laws and government orders. And Berlin ruled that it was.’⁸⁴

From 1941 onward nudism outlawed in 1933 became fully legalized. This complete *volte face* in public policy was a continuation of the tradition that had been strong in Germany since the end of the nineteenth century – a tradition followed without reservation in East and West Germany alike after the War. The case of nudism also shows that, as much as Germany was a police state in the Nazi period in areas in which the Nazis had a firm position, things still followed traditional legal lines in those areas in which they had not, respecting local and regional preferences and traditions.

Finally, as soon as the SS had spoken out in favour of nudism and no more legal barriers had to be overcome, nudists began to split again. A *Deutscher Bund für Körperkultur* [German Union for Physical Culture] started to organize its own camps from 1939,⁸⁵ nudism was good business

for publishers and printers, and the SS encouraged their own members to go in for nudism:

We have to fight for honesty ... Therefore we have to fight for true and noble nudity for all natural occasions, and also for its open and true representation in the arts. There is nothing unusual in being naked. That way, man is in a state created by God; that is how God sent men and women to earth and in that state the Creator will one day call us back. Today, not everybody has accepted the moral value of nudity. There are still too many people who are ugly ... They cannot present themselves in the nude. And even if they were to do so, it would really be dreadful. But one day all men and women will be beautiful. That is when our country will reach its highest level of strength and beauty. Let us make sure that it will not take too long. We have to accustom those who are not yet used to seeing the beautiful nude body; if we really want to create a new generation that is free in its thinking, spiritually and physically beautiful and harmonious, and want to improve the racial qualities of our people, then beauty has to be the rule rather than the exception, and it has to be our constant aim.⁸⁶

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NOTES

1. C. Belfrage, 'Naturism Transforms a Nation', *Health & Efficiency*, N.S. IV, 2 (Feb. 1934), p.40.
2. We gratefully acknowledge use of the *Internationale FKK-Bibliothek* (International Free Physical Culture Library), Forsthaus am Brand, 34225 Baunatal. Jörg Damm, the owner/librarian, was most helpful in providing liberal access to this unique collection. This constantly enlarged library contains over 5,000 bibliographical units, the first 3,100 of which are in a printed catalogue cf. A. Kuntz-Stahl (ed.), *Vom Naturismus zum Nudismus – Internationale FKK-Bibliothek Kassel: Bestandsverzeichnis* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1985).
3. Both legal systems of East and West Germany were based on all the previous ones and therefore accepted, in fields such as nudism, the former court rulings and laws, cf. L. Wilhelm, 'Die Freikörperkultur in der deutschen Rechtsprechung', *Ziel und Weg der deutschen Freikörperkultur* (Hannover: Deutscher Verband für FKK, 1964), pp.118–28.
4. O. König, *Nacktheit, soziale Normierung und Moral* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990); recently three MA theses were written in our Department under the supervision of Dr W. Buss and myself. We are grateful for the archival work of S. Treptau, *Die Diskussion um die FKK-Bewegung als Teil der Körperkultur während der NS-Zeit* (Unpublished thesis, Göttingen, 1999), M. Hoffmann, *Die Entwicklung der naturistischen Bewegung während der Weimarer Republik in Niedersachsen* (Unpublished thesis, Göttingen, 1999), F. Krüger, *Die Lebensreform-Bewegung und Naturismus in Göttingen: Die wechselvolle Entwicklung der organisierten Freikörperkultur in der Weimarer Zeit und im Nationalsozialismus* (Unpublished thesis, Göttingen, 1999).
5. German nudism has often been the focus of attention, cf. e.g. A. Krüger, 'Zwischen Sex und Zuchtwahl: Nudismus und Naturismus in Deutschland und Amerika', in N. Finzsch and H. Wellenreuther (eds.), *Liberalitas: Eine Festschrift für Erich Angermann* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1992), pp.343–65; A. Krüger, 'There Goes This Art of Manliness: Naturism and Social Hygiene in Germany', *Journal of Sport History*, XVIII, 1 (1991), 135–58; the first were Francis and Mason Merrill, *Among the Nudists* (London: Douglas, 1931); G. Spitzer, *Der Deutsche*

- Naturismus: Idee und Entwicklung einer volkerzeiherischen Bewegung im Schnittfeld von Lebensreform, Sport und Politik* (Ahrensburg: Czwalina, 1983); G. Pfitzner, *Der Naturismus in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz* (Hamburg-Altona: Danehl, 1964); H.P. Dürr, *Nacktheit und Scham* (Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1988); M. Andritzky and T. Rautenberg (eds.), *'Wir sind nackt und nennen uns Du': Von Lichtfreunden und Sonnenkämpfern, Eine Geschichte der Freikörperkultur* (Giessen: Anabas, 1989); B. Wedermeyer, "'Zum Licht": Die Freikörperkultur in der wilhelminischen Ära und der Weimarer Republik zwischen Völkischer Bewegung, Okkultismus und Neuheidentum', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, LXXXI, 1 (1999), 173–97.
6. H. Bernett, 'Das Kraftpotential der Nation. Leibeserziehung im Dienst der politischen Macht', *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, Beiheft 22 (Weinheim: Beltz, 1988), pp.167–92 claims that nudism did not develop its own philosophy, in contrast to, e.g., rhythmic gymnastics. If you accept a monolithic philosophy, Bernett was right; if you accept one with many different facets which is really more a philosophy of action than of theory, he is wrong.
 7. D. Sternberger, 'Sinnlichkeit um die Jahrhundertwende', in J. Hermand (ed.), *Jugendstil* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche, 1971), pp.100–6; *Die Schönheit* [Beauty], I (1902/03) was the monthly journal bringing the various interests together.
 8. Cf. J.A. Mangan, 'Icon of Monumental Brutality: Art and the Aryan Man', in J.A. Mangan (ed.), *Shaping the Superman: Fascist Body as Political Icon – Aryan Fascism* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1999), pp.128–52.
 9. The archives of the German Youth movement are at Burg Ludwigstein, 37214 Witzenhausen. It is publishing a yearbook. For documentation cf. W. Kindt, *Dokumentation der Jugendbewegung* (Düsseldorf: Diederichs, 1963, 1974, 1986), 3 vols. In English cf. P.D. Stachura, *The German Youth Movement 1900–1945: An Interpretive and Documentary History* (London: Macmillan, 1981); for intersexual relations, cf. M. Musial, 'Jugendbewegung und Emanzipation der Frau' (Ph.D. thesis, Essen, 1982); I. Klönne, 'Mädchen, Mutter, Kameradin: Weiblichkeitsbilder der bürgerlichen Jugendbewegung', *Jahrbuch des Archivs der Deutschen Jugendbewegung*, XV (1984/85), pp.75–86; for their biggest section, the hiking related *Wandervogel* cf. W. Mogge, *Bilder aus dem Wandervogel-Leben* (Köln: Wissenschaft & Politik, 1986). For the relationship between the two movements cf. P.U. Hein, 'Kunst, Hedonismus und Jugendbewegung', *Jahrbuch des Archivs der Deutschen Jugendbewegung*, XIV (1982/83), pp.117–58.
 10. F.E. Bilz, *Das neue Naturheilverfahren. Lehr- und Nachschlagbuch der naturgemässen Heilweise und Gesundheitspflege* (Leipzig: Bilz, 1900, 100th Jubilee edition), 3 vols., 2,978 pp.; id., *Grosse illustrierte Hausbibliothek ... unentbehrliches Nachschlagbuch für jedermann zur Pflege des Geistes und Körpers ... ein Lehrbuch zur naturgemässen Heilweise und Gesundheitspflege* (Leipzig: Bilz, 1902); cf. in English id., *The Natural Method of Healing: A New and Complete Guide to Health, Translated from the latest German edition* (Leipzig: Bilz, 1901); Bilz also published a journal: F.E. Bilz, *Gesundheitsrat: Illustriertes Familienblatt der Naturheilkunde mit Unterhaltungs- und humoristischen Teilen* (Leipzig: Bilz, 1898), 1st vol.; A. Brauchle, *Die Geschichte der Naturheilkunde* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1951); in the context of other movement therapies, cf. A. Krüger, 'Geschichte der Bewegungstherapie', in *Präventivmedizin: Springer Loseblatt Sammlung*, VII (Heidelberg: Springer, 1999), 6, pp.1–22.
 11. Hans Surén, *Deutsche Gymnastik* (Oldenburg: Stalling, 1924, 40th edn; 1925 41st edn); id., *Gymnastik der Deutschen* (Stuttgart: Franckh, 1935, 2 vols., 45th edn); id., *Der Mensch und die Sonne* (Stuttgart: Franckh, 1924, 21st edn; 12th edn, 1941 Berlin); id., *Gymnastik am Endball* (Dresden: Scherl, 1932); id., *Surén-Atemgymnastik* (Stuttgart: Franckh, 1935, 47th edn); id., *Atemgymnastik im Bild* (Stuttgart: Franckh, 1922); id., *Schwunggymnastik* (Stuttgart: Franckh, 1935, 11th edn); id., *Kraftgymnastik* (Stuttgart: Dieck, 1935, 18th edn) id., *Gymnastik für Heim, Beruf und Sport* (Stuttgart: Dieck, 1929, 36th edn); B.M. Mensendieck, *Körperkultur des Weibes: Praktisch hygienische und praktisch ästhetische Winke* (München: Bruckmann, 1906). From the 5th edition (München: Bruckmann, 1912) it was called *Körperkultur der Frau*. Even in the 9th edition (München: Bruckmann, 1925) it still used the same photographs. Her motto, which shows through all her work was: *Don't work in a drill-like manner; link muscle action and the brain; look, absorb, compare by thinking, judge. Only the opinion which you have acquired yourself is of value*, cf. eadem, *Bewegungsprobleme: Die Gestaltung schöner Arme* (München: Bruckmann, 1927). For her positions on female body culture, cf. A. Krüger and C. Maimbresse, 'Bess M. Mensendieck', in K. Christensen, A. Guttmann and G. Pfister (eds.),

- International Encyclopedia of Women and Sport* (New York: Macmillan, 2001), Vol.2, pp.727–8.
12. Hans Surén was directing military physical training in the Wünsdorf Army Training Camp. His all-male exercises were done in the nude with the exception of the 'Surèn Schurtz', a string tanga, that covered the genitals but nothing else. The exercises made heavy use of medicine balls, logs and rocks for the development of strength and endurance, see note 11 for literature.
 13. For a recent overview see K. Toepfer, *Empire of Ecstasy: Nudity and Movement in German Body Culture, 1910–1935* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997).
 14. L. Scheller, *Schritte: Die Entwicklung des Frauenturnens im nordwestdeutschen Raum* (Celle: Pohl, 1980), pp.40–47. For some of the most prominent schools and their masters e.g., W. Bode, *Rudolf Bode – Leben und Werk* (München: Gymnastik & Rythms, 1972), H. Loges, *Freiheit und Form der menschlichen Bewegung: Carl Loges 1887–1987* (Duderstadt: Mecke, 1987). The same differentiation between the two approaches is made in music and rhythm with Musikunterricht (learning to play an instrument) and Musikerziehung (learning to express oneself musically), cf. E. Feudel, *Rhythmische Erziehung* (Braunschweig: Kallmeyer, 1939). For an overview of the various concepts of rhythm and rhythmicality cf. P. Röthig (ed.), *Beiträge zur Theorie und Lehre vom Rhythmus* (Schorndorf: Hofmann, 1966); H. Müller and H. Günther, '.....Jeder Mensch ein Tänzer' – *Ausdruckstanz in Deutschland zwischen 1900 und 1945* (Giessen: Anabas, 1993); K. Oberzaucher-Schüller (ed.), *Ausdruckstanz: Eine mitteleuropäische Bewegung der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Wilhelmshaven: Noetzel, 1992); V. Preston-Dunlop, *Practical Kinetography Laban* (London: Macdonald & Evans, 1969). For his more complete theory cf. Rudolf Laban, *The Mastery of Movement* (London: Macdonald & Evans, 1971 3rd revised edn by Lisa Ullmann); L. Diem, *Die Gymnastikbewegung* (St. Augustin: Richarz, 1991); F.H. Winter, *Lebendige Form: Rhythmus und Freiheit in Gymnastik, Sport und Tanz* (Karlsruhe: G. Braun, 1924); L. Pallat and F. Hilker (eds.), *Künstlerische Körperschulung* (Breslau: Hirt, 1923).
 15. L. Karina and M. Kant, *Tanz unterm Hakenkreuz* (Berlin: Henschel, 1996).
 16. U.E. Ziegler, *Nackt unter Nackten* (Berlin: Nishen, 1990); K. Dressen, *Geschichte des Naturismus: Von der Nacktheit über die Nacktkultur zum Naturismus* (Antwerpen: INF, 1995). He also has the most complete of all lists of member organizations, clubs and camps.
 17. The other life reform movements of the time were anti-alcoholism, land reform, gymnastics and sport, anti-vaccination, dress reform, physical culture, natural healing, reform of living conditions, vegetarianism, anti-vivisectionism, reform of city building, and many more, cf. W.R. Krabbe, *Gesellschaftsveränderung durch Lebensreform: Strukturmerkmale einer sozialre-formerischen Bewegung im Deutschland der Industrialisierungsperiode* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974).
 18. D. Brieger and M. Hirsch, 'Nacktgymnastik', in S. Weissbein (ed.), *Hygiene des Sports* (Leipzig: Grethlein, 1910), pp.37–49.
 19. J. Lanz-Liebenfels, *Nackt- und Rassenkultur im Kampf gegen Mucker- und Tschandalakultur* (Rodaun: Verlagder Ostara, 1913).
 20. M. Möhring, 'Wie erarbeitet man sich einen natürlichen Körper? Körpernationalisierung in der deutschen Nacktkulturbewegung um 1900', *Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. u. 21. Jh.*, XIV, 2 (1999), 86–109.
 21. The situation in many of the other clubs may have been similar, but were not exposed in the same detail as in the Egestorf court cases.
 22. As nudity was not a major offence, prosecution remained below the national courts, on the basis of one of the 35 state courts in the Weimar Republic which had a federal structure. Only when the Nazis created a centralised state, many (but not all) of the former state rights fell to the central government in Berlin.
 23. R. Laurer and W. Brauns (eds.), *Nacktheit als Verbrechen* (Egestorf: Laurer, 1927).
 24. For the sports organization with the same divisions, cf. A. Krüger, *Sport und Politik: Vom Turnvater Jahn zum Staatsamateur* (Hannover: Fackelstraeger, 1975).
 25. *Liga für Freie Lebensgestaltung, Bund froher Menschen für Freikörperkultur und Naturschutz, Freikörperkulturbund Sonnenland, Deutsche Luftbad Gesellschaft, Bund für FKK, Wanderer und Naturschutz, Sonnenfreunde, Reichsarbeitsgemeinschaft der Lichtkämpfer, Reichsverband für FKK, Reichsbund für FKK, European Union for Free Physical Culture German Section* and many more.

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26. Adolf Koch schools, *Bund freier Menschen*.
27. Particularly *Treibbund für aufsteigendes Leben, Bund der Lichtfreunde*.
28. After 1933, the numbers decreased. From 1 July 1936, all members under 18 were no longer counted as they became officially members of the Hitler Youth, even if they continued in their former activities.
29. A. Krüger, 'A Horse Breeder's Perspective: Scientific Racism in Germany, 1870–1933', in N. Finzsch and D. Schirmer (eds.), *Identity and Intolerance: Nationalism, Racism and Xenophobia in Germany and the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.371–96.
30. As the 81 elected communist Members of Parliament lost their seats (and many were imprisoned), the percentage of the majority rose to 60.1 per cent.
31. R.S. Wistrich, *Who's Who in Nazi Germany* (London: Routledge, 1995).
32. The entry ban lasted from May 1933 until 1935 when entry became possible after a two year trial period. As of 1939, membership was possible without the trial period. In 1943, the Nazi Party had roughly 6.5 million members, cf. E. Aleff, *Das Dritte Reich* (Hannover: Literatur & Zeitgeschehen, 1973), pp.64–8.
33. A. Krüger, 'Fasci e croci uncinata', *Lancillotto e Nausica: Critica e storia dello sport*, VIII, 1/2 (1991), 88–101.
34. A. Krüger, 'Strength through Joy: The Culture of Consent under Fascism, Nazism and Francoism', in J. Riordan and A. Krüger (eds.), *The International Politics of Sport in the 20th Century* (London: Spon, 1999), pp.67–89.
35. V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organization of Leisure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
36. A. Krüger, 'Breeding, Rearing and Preparing the Aryan Body: Creating the Complete Superman the Nazi Way', in Mangan (ed.), *Shaping the Superman*, pp.42–68.
37. A. Krüger, "'Sieg Heil" to the Most Glorious Era of German Sport: Continuity and Change in the Modern German Sports Movement', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, IV, 1 (1987), 5–20.
38. A. Krüger, "'Heute gehört uns Deutschland und morgen...'? Das Ringen um den Sinn der Gleichschaltung im Sport in der ersten Jahreshälfte 1933', in W. Buss and A. Krüger (eds.), *Sportgeschichte: Traditionspflege und Wertewandel* (Duderstadt: Mecke, 1985), pp.175–96.
39. D.J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1997), p.456, points out that the 'Nazi German revolution was, on the whole, consensual'. While many of the other Goldhagen theses are disputable, here he is quite correct.
40. For the difference between central rules and local application cf. A. Krüger, *Sport und Politik*.
41. As nudism was permitted much earlier in the States of Anhalt (Dessau), Hessen (Darmstadt) and Saxony (Leipzig), Göttingen seems to be typical for the Prussian provinces, cf. D. Pforte, 'Zur Freikörperkultur-Bewegung im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland', in Andritzky and Rautenberg (eds.), *Wir sind nackt*, pp.136–45.
42. Between the two Wars the population increased from about 40,000 to almost 50,000. It had its own administrative authority as a *Stadtkreis* (county). Göttingen had one of the earliest sections of the NSDAP in northern Germany (as of 1922). The elected student parliament had a Nazi majority from the winter of 1926/27. It was headed by Dr Walter Gross whom we see later as director of the NSDAP *Rassenpolitisches Amt* [Office of Racial Policy]. In that function he was pro-nudist, but he was apparently not a member of the Göttingen nudist camp. With 3,662 students in 1933, George-August University of Göttingen was the sixth largest in Germany and one of the most prominent. With such a high proportion of students in the population the local police were used to more trouble than was caused by the local nudists, cf. H.-J. Dahms, 'Einleitung', in H. Becker *et al.* (eds.), *Die Universität Göttingen unter dem Nationalsozialismus: Das verdrängte Kapitel ihrer 250jährigen Geschichte* (München: Saur, 1987), pp.15–60.
43. One of his first publications was H. Pudor, *Nackende Menschen – jauchzende Zukunft* (Dresden: Dresdner Wochenblätter, 1893); id., *Nackt-Kultur* (Berlin: Pudor, 1906).
44. R. Ungewitter, *Die Nacktheit in entwicklungsgeschichtlicher, gesundheitlicher, moralischer und künstlerischer Beleuchtung* (Stuttgart: Ungewitter, 1905); id., *Nackt: Eine kritische Studie* (Stuttgart: Ungewitter, 1909); id., *Kultur und Nacktheit* (Stuttgart: Ungewitter, 1911); id., *Nacktheit und Kultur: Neue Forderungen* (Stuttgart: Ungewitter, 1913); id., *Nacktheit und Aufstieg: Ziele zur Erneuerung des deutschen Volkes* (Stuttgart: Ungewitter, 1919); id., *Nacktheit*

- und Moral: Wege zur Rettung des deutschen Volkes* (Stuttgart: Ungewitter, 1925). He published some more brochures, cf. Pfitzner, *Der Naturismus*, pp.24–8.
45. J.M. Seitz, *Die Nacktkulturbewegung* (Dresden: Verlag der Schönheit, 1923).
 46. M. Weidemann, *Körper und Tanz* (Rudolfstadt: Greifenverlag, 1925).
 47. A. Krüger, 'The German Way of Worker Sports', in A. Krüger and J. Riordan (eds.), *The Story of Worker Sport* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1996), pp.1–25.
 48. Cf. the discussion about nudity in sports (including school physical education) in the journal of the physical education and sports teachers' association, *Die Leibesübungen* special edition on 'Nacktheit und Leibesübung' [Nudity and Physical Education], XIX (5 Oct. 1925), 457–78; B. Wedermeyer, "'Nacktkultur" oder "Nacktsport"? Die Freikörperkultur im Kontext von Sport, Turnen, Gymnastik und Körperkultur im ersten Drittel des 20. Jahrhunderts', in M. Grisko (ed.), *Freikörperkultur und Lebenswelt: Studien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte der Freikörperkultur in Deutschland* (Kassel: Kassel University Press, 1999), pp.115–40.
 49. König, *Nacktheit, soziale Normierung* (1990), p.187 assumes that this law was prepared by the same bureaucrats that had presented the *Zwickelerlass*. A. Sellmann, *50 Jahre Kampf für Volkssittlichkeit und Volkskraft: Die Geschichte des Westdeutschen Sittlichkeitsvereins von seinen Anfängen bis heute (1885–1935)* (Schwelm: Meiners, 1935), p.110, makes the point that the Protestant decency societies had a say in the moral politics of the Nazis and were responsible for the move.
 50. The discrepancy between the historical facts and the folklore is best visible in A. Krüger and H. Langenfeld (eds.), *Sport in Hannover – von der Stadtgründung bis heute* (Göttingen: Die Werkstatt, 1991) in which A. Krüger and K. Reinartz, 'Freikörperkultur in der Weimarer Republik', pp.134f. report that nudism continued in Hannover and was only disrupted in the Socialist clubs, while W. Risse, 'Freikörperkultur', pp.243f. insists that all nudism was persecuted throughout the Nazi era.
 51. F.F. Vogel, 'Die Scham im Auge. Die Zubereitung nackter Haut. Zum visuellen Verzehr. Zur populären Bildästhetik in der pornographischen Privatphotografie', *Fotogeschichte*, XVI, 1 (1996), 11–19.
 52. This politically neutral national body had been founded in 1926. In 1932 it had 30 camps (of which 25 belonged to its largest member organization, the *Liga für freie Lebensgestaltung*). According to A. Vossen, *Sonnenmenschen: Sechs Jahrzehnte Freikörperkultur in Deutschland* (Hamburg: Deutscher Verband für FKK, 1956), p.24 it had 10,000 fee-paying members then; according to G. Spitzer, *Der Deutsche Naturismus* (Ahrensburg, 1983), p.120, even 20,000.
 53. Charly Almenroeder (Sparta Berlin), Karl Bückmann, MdR (Kreis für freie Lebensgestaltung), Hans Gellenthin (Deutsche Luftbad Gesellschaft), Reichstein (a Berlin lawyer), Major Devens (Surén direction ?), Prof. von Bückmann (President of the RFK).
 54. The local study by F. Krüger on Göttingen (cf. note 4) shows the same tendency: To present oneself to the local authorities in as positive a light as possible, the three members of the bourgeois nudist group who were members of the NSDAP became president and vice-presidents in the ranking order of their Party membership number (identical with the entry date into the Nazi Party).
 55. Hans von Tschammer und Osten's merit to qualify as Reichs Sports Leader was that he had killed (as 'Kommissar' for the Sachsen-Anhalt region) with his SA gang worker sportsmen, women and children in the so called *Eisleben Bloody Sunday*, cf. K. Pätzold and K. Weissbecker, *Hakenkreuz und Totenkopf: Die Partei des Verbrechens* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1982), pp.210f.
 56. Locally, the Göttingen club received a provisional permit to continue the nudist camp for the benefit of national health four days before the Berlin meeting.
 57. C. Almenroeder, 'Sport und Freikörperkultur', *Freikörperkultur und Lebensreform* (Feb. 1933), p.31.
 58. D. Steinhöfer, *Hans von Tschammer und Osten – Reichssportführer im Dritten Reich* (Berlin: Bartels & Wernitz, 1973).
 59. Cf. P. Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism 1870–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp.499ff.
 60. Dr Walter Gross, as of 1934 head of this office, was an ardent supporter of nudism and had favoured such cooperation, cf. D. Pforte, 'Hans Surén – eine deutsche FKK-Karriere', in Andritzky and Rautenberg (eds.), *Wir sind nackt*, pp.130–35.

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61. C. Almenroeder, 'Was ist geschehen? Was wird?', *Freikörperkultur und Lebensreform* (May 1933), 82, argued the case for sport in their journal and claimed that the national authorities had already been contacted for acceptance of the new association.
62. Cf. Krüger, "'Heute gehört uns Deutschland und morgen...?'"
63. E. Kaiser, 'Hitler als Lebensreformer', *Freikörperkultur und Lebensreform*, IX (1933), No.4, 65; No.5, 84f.
64. 'Gleichschaltung auch in der Freikörperkultur', *Deutscher Sport* (28 April 1933).
65. K. Bückmann, in *Deutsche FKK* (1934), p.83.
66. It now had unified entry norms. A trial membership of six months was required. Members should be athletically active and holders of the *Reichssportabzeichen* (a national multi-sport badge), or the *SA-Sportabzeichen* (a badge which included paramilitary exercises) or the basic badge of the national life saving society (in case of married couples only one had to have the athletic skills). Members had to be 100 per cent Aryan at least at grandparents' level. Married or engaged couples are only taken as members as a couple and not separately. Bachelors should not be older than 32, cf. 'Der Bund für Leibesucht', in H. Wilke, *Dein 'Ja' zum Leibe!* (Berlin: Wernitz, 1939), pp.187ff.
67. G. Neliba, *Wilhelm Frick. Der Legalist des Unrechtstaates: Eine politische Biographie* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1992).
68. Describing the habits of the ancient Germanic people, he insisted that they were running around in the nude to learn to judge beauty and strength, cf. *Deutsche FKK* (1933), p.39.
69. *Deutsche FKK* (Aug. 1933), p.39.
70. Quoted in *Gesetz und Freiheit*, Vol.III (1936), p.134.
71. Cf. H. Bernett, *Der Weg des Sports in die nationalsozialistische Diktatur* (Schorndorf: Hofmann, 1983). Because of closeness to the Nazi Party all sports organizations and also the nudist clubs were dissolved by the Allied Occupation Forces of Germany as of 1 Jan. 1946.
72. *Deutsche Leibesucht* Vol.VI (1938), p.162.
73. *Ibid.*, p.445.
74. This makes the State and University Library in Göttingen a good place to research the history of nudism.
75. Vossen (1956), p.28, states that in all northern German states the development in Saxony was the slowest.
76. All information from the Göttingen club is taken from the city archives, Göttingen, Polizei Direktion, VIII H, F. 58 Nr.13.
77. H. Lehmann-Haupt, *Art under a Dictatorship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p.79, quoted by Mangan, 'Icon of Monumental Brutality: Art and the Aryan Man', p.139.
78. To compare the value of the 20 RM, the Göttingen nudists had reduced their annual membership fees from 18 RM to 12 RM in 1933 in consequence of the high unemployment rate. Food prices were roughly by comparison in 1933: 0.10 RM/egg, 3.00 RM/kg of butter, 0.24 RM/litre of milk. Cf. Aleff, *Das Dritte Reich*, pp.120ff.
79. B. Schulze, 'Das nordische Freibaden und die Stettiner Urteile', *Gesetz und Freiheit* (April 1936), pp.86–97.
80. *Ibidem*, p.91.
81. *Ibidem*, p.95.
82. B. Schulze, 'Was ist öffentliches Baden im Sinne der im Augenblick noch geltenden Preußischen Bade-Polizeiverordnung?', *Deutsche Leibesucht* (April 1939), pp.137–46.
83. B. Schulze, 'Kann unbedecktes Baden auf einem abgeschlossenen Gelände grober Unfug im Sinne von § 360 Ziffer 112 des Strafgesetzbuches sein?', *Deutsche Leibesucht* (April 1939), pp.133–6.
84. B. Schulze, 'Und zuguterletzt Königsberg', *Deutsche Leibesucht* (April 1941), pp.77–9.
85. In 1940 they had camps in Berlin, Motzen (near Berlin), Nürnberg, Augsburg, Stuttgart, Erfurt, Dresden, Bremen, Rostock and Tilsit, publishing their newly-founded journal *Geist und Schönheit*.
86. 'Für echte und edle Nacktheit', *Das Schwarze Korps* (20 Oct. 1938).