


FILM CULTURES UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION IN BRNO, BRUSSELS, KRAKOW AND THE HAGUE

From a comparative approach
to a comparative method



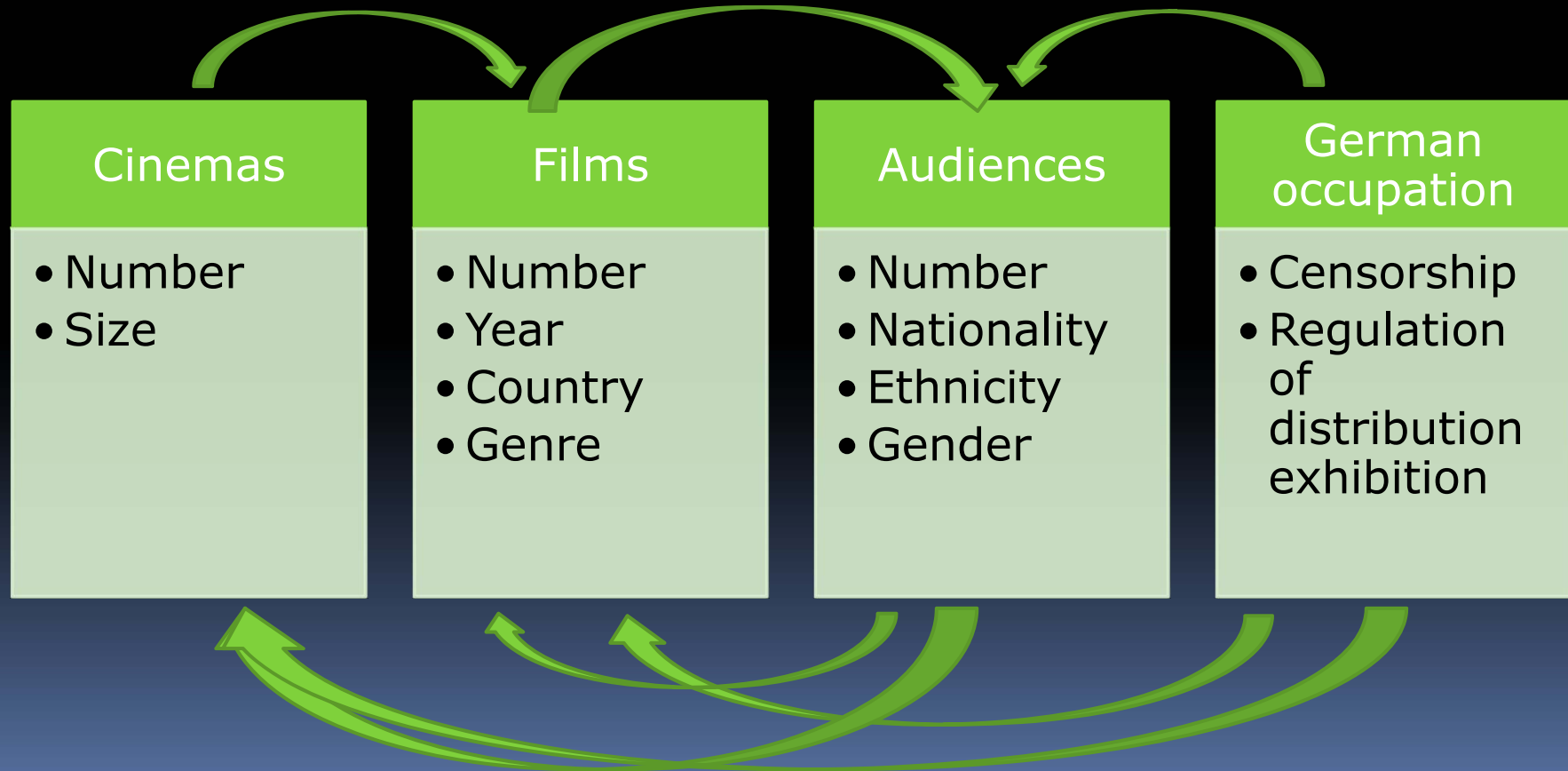
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Initial Research Question

- What were the film preferences of audiences in the cities Brno, Brussels, Krakow, and The Hague under German occupation during the Second World War?

Comparative approach

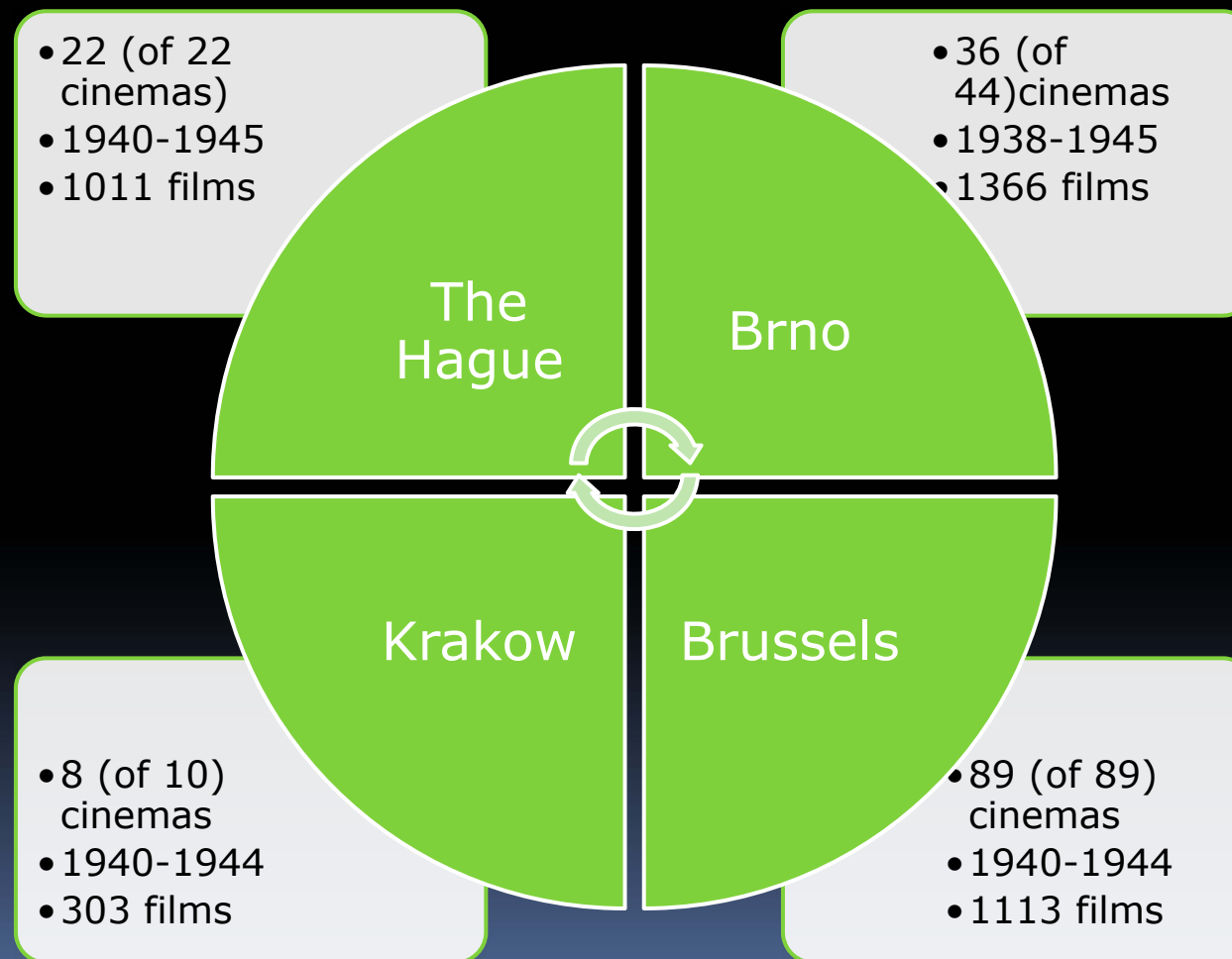
Common factors with different characteristics



Bottom-up start

- Programming = cinemas & films
 - Collecting data
 - Agree on the data format
 - Data cleaning—data cleaning—data cleaning—data cleaning
- Descriptive statistics
- Analytical statistics

Descriptive statistics

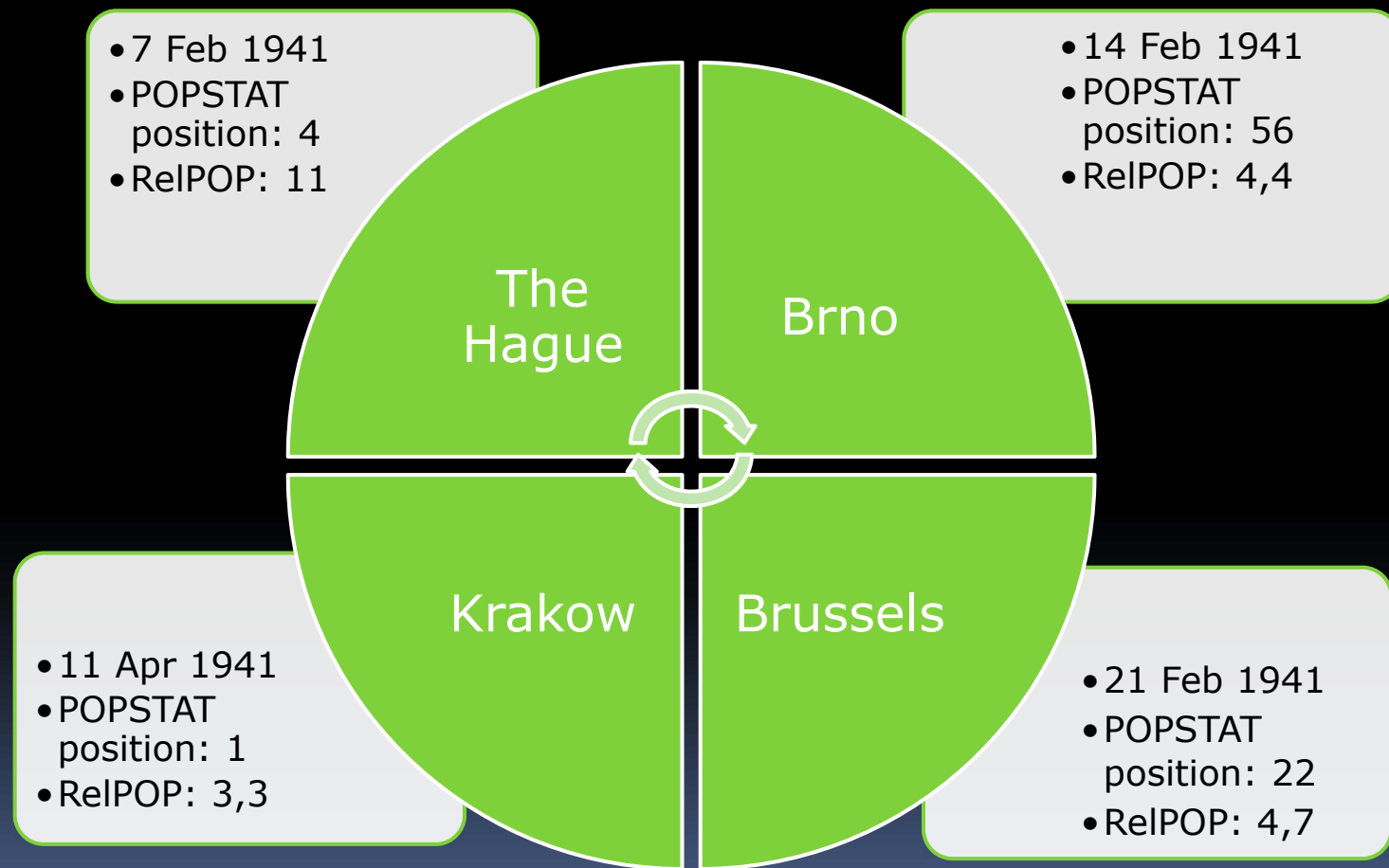


Analytical statistics

- Popstat
 - Per city
 - Dataset
- RelPopstat
 - Per city

What factors/variables can explain the differences we find?

Kora Terry (1940, Germany)



Country	1	2	3	4	Total
Germany	319	190	214	145	868
France	473	40	7		520
USA	395	57	10		462
Czechoslovakia	127	3			130
Italy	53	26	15	2	96
Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia	85	4	4		93
Austria	27	15	15	1	58
Poland	40	1			41
NL	31	2			33
Belgium	15	8			23
Great Britain	24	2			26
Sweden	11	2			13
Denmark	6	2			8
Hungary	4	1	1	1	7
Spain	1	2	2	1	6
Other	9	4	3	4	10
Coproductions	46	5	0	0	51
Total	1665	362	268	150	2445

Distribution of German films

Total number of films in dataset	2445
1 city	1665
2 cities	362
3 cities	268
4 cities	150

Austria	1
Germany	145
Hungary	1
Italy	2
Spain	1

From a comparative approach to a comparative method

Phenomenon:

presence and popularity of German
movies at four occupied cities/markets

Goal:

explanation of symmetries and
asymmetries between the top 20 lists

Method:

concomitant variations (the magnitude of
one variable varies with the magnitude of
a second variable)

Preliminary factors independent variables:

- Distribution regulations and preferential treatment of German movies
 - so called „screening orders“
- Specific distribution strategies applied at individual markets
 - tailoring the distribution offer of German movies
- Capacity of the local production
 - 31 Czech movies premieres in 1941
- Ethnical or language homogeneity of the city
 - share of Germans/German-speaking audiences

Preliminary Factors as independent variables:

- Traditional preferences of the local audiences
 - pre-war cultural preferences
- Cultural and political relationship to Nazi Germany
 - e.g., Munich agreement
- Change in the war situation
 - e.g., the battle of Stalingrad
- Rules of the occupation
 - strength of the everyday life control; e.g., closed theatres

Brno (Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia)

Top-20 (September 1940-August 1944):
17 Czech movies, 3 German movies

Implications and hypothesis:

- Strong slant towards the local production:
 - availability of new local production had the capacity to overcome German movies in attendance
 - exhibition regulations had very limited effect on the hit-list order

Brno (Protectorate of Bohemia & Moravia)

Only one movie in the list was premiered after 1942: *The White Dream* (*Der weiße Traum* /G/)

- The cumulative „four years top-20“ discriminates in favour of the movies premiered at earlier phase of the occupation (it blocks a chance to recognize changes in patterns *during* the war)



seasonal hit-list needs to be applied

Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

Only two of the Protectorate's top-20 movies appeared in another city's top-20: *Der weiße Traum* /G/, and *Es war eine rauschende Ballnacht* (G)

- were the preferences in Brno highly idiosyncratic?

or

- the preferences of the local production in the first half of the occupation distorts the results and we need to search for transnational patterns below the top-20 list?

Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

Only one film in the top-20 list was released in all of the three cities (*Operette* /G/), and three in two of the cities (*Der weiße Traum* /G/; *Es war eine rauschende Ballnacht* (G); *Night Mot* /CZ/)

- some of the hits were truly „regional“, with no capacity or ambition to address foreign audiences
- with three exceptions, Czech movies were *not allowed to travel* (despite the Czech producers' ambitions)
- some of the German movies with hit status in other cities/countries were *not allowed to be screened* in other cities/markets (in the case of the Protectorate, it holds true for *Die goldene Stadt*)

Occupied Brussels?

- Approx. 185.000 inhabitants
- Francophone audience
- Approx. 110 cinemas
 - approx. 45 in the city centre
 - partial programme details for 89 cinemas
- German films dubbed or subtitled

POPSTAT (scr*cap) Brussels	Ranking (scr*cap) Brussels	RelPOP Brussels (Popstat/ median Popstat)	Original title	Country	Year	Distributor	First screening occupied Brussels	Last screening occupied Brussels	Days of circulation
368629	1	7,852861	L'empreinte du dieu	France	1940	Emka	1942-03-26	1944-07-06	834
309367	2	6,590409	Monsieur Hector	France	1940	Abel-Films	1940-11-01	1944-07-07	1345
286655	3	6,106578	Fièvres	France	1942	Atlas-Films	1942-11-06	1944-09-07	672
277676	4	5,9153	Die Goldene Stadt	Germany	1942	Ufa	1943-03-05	1943-12-30	301
270377	5	5,75981	Cartacalha reine des gitans	France	1941	Atlas-Films	1942-07-10	1944-09-07	791
269920	6	5,750075	Ore 9, lezione di chimica	Italy	1941	Fama-Films	1943-02-05	1944-08-10	553
267398	7	5,696349	L'acrobate	France	1940	Fama-Films	1942-08-14	1944-08-31	749
262080	8	5,58306	Battement de cœur	France	1940	A.C.C.	1940-11-15	1944-07-27	1351
253159	9	5,393017	Premier bal	France	1941	Idéal Film	1942-10-09	1944-06-08	609
250398	10	5,3342	Mademoiselle Swing	France	1941	Atlas-Films	1942-11-20	1944-08-24	644
246477	11	5,250671	Paradis perdu	France	1940	Atlas-Films	1940-08-02	1944-09-07	1498
245809	12	5,236441	Les inconnus dans la maison	France	1942	Ufa	1942-09-18	1944-06-08	630
244382	13	5,206041	Elles étaient douze femmes	France	1940	Emka	1940-10-04	1943-07-15	1015
240088	14	5,114567	Le pavillon brûle	France	1941	Atlas-Films	1942-10-30	1944-09-07	679
237663	15	5,062907	Histoire de rire	France	1941	Idéal Film	1942-12-25	1944-07-06	560
233444	16	4,973031	Le diamant noir	France	1941	Idéal Film	1942-06-12	1944-08-17	798
232492	17	4,95275	Le Premier rendez-vous	France	1941	Ufa	1942-01-09	1944-07-13	917
228533	18	4,868412	Il Sogno di Butterfly / Premiere der Butterfly	Germany-Italy	1939	Fama-Films	1942-09-11	1944-06-08	637
227780	19	4,852371	La Corona di Ferro	Italy	1941	Atlas-Films	1943-06-04	1944-08-17	441
227589	20	4,848302	Luce nelle tenebre	Italy	1941	Idéal Film	1942-07-24	1944-09-07	777
220893	21	4,705658	Café du port	France	1940	Distributeurs réunis	1940-07-12	1944-09-07	1519
218834	22	4,661795	Kora Terry	Germany	1940	Ufa	1941-02-21	1944-07-27	1253
218323	23	4,65091	L'enfer des anges	France	1941	Osso	1941-01-24	1944-03-16	1148
218152	24	4,647267	Le Duel	France	1941	Idéal Film	1940-08-21	1944-05-18	1367
214679	25	4,573282	Marseille mes amours	France	1940	(unknown)	1940-11-29	1944-08-31	1372

The Hague-POPSTAT May 1940-March 1945

Rank	RelPOP	First screening	Delay	Title	Y_O_P	C_O_P
1	12,21	3-4-1942	-42	Quax, der Bruchpilot	1941	Germany
2	11,62	25-12-1942	0	Goldene Stadt, die	1942	Germany
3	10,86	8-11-1940	-84	Der Postmeister	1940	Germany
4	10,64	7-2-1941	0	Kora Terry	1940	Germany
5	10,59	30-8-1940	-112	Laila	1937	Sweden
6	9,44	28-8-1942	-112	Wiener Blut	1942	Germany
7	8,77	16-10-1942	-63	Die große Liebe	1942	Germany
8	8,03	11-4-1941	-56	Operette	1940	Germany
9	7,90	26-12-1941	-294	Sieben Jahre Pech	1940	Germany
10	7,40	20-12-1940	-49	Ein Leben lang	1940	Germany
11	7,39	20-12-1940	0	Herz der Königin, das	1940	Germany
12	7,34	27-9-1940	0	Trenck, der Pandur	1940	Germany
13	7,19	18-10-1940	-161	Nanette	1940	Germany
14	6,91	5-3-1943	-70	Hab mich lieb	1942	Germany
15	6,74	26-12-1941	-59	Immer nur Du	1941	Germany
16	6,42	25-12-1942	0	Re si diverte, il	1941	Italy
17	6,41	10-5-1940	0	Boefje	1939	Netherlands
18	6,39	22-10-1943	-35	Münchhausen	1943	Germany
19	6,39	17-1-1941	0	Jugend	1938	Germany
20	6,30	11-2-1944	-52	Der weiße Traum	1943	Germany

Some preliminary observations

- Utter dominance of German film on The Hague screens (17 out of 20 titles in the top 20)
- Remarkably, some titles are either absent in the Hague, *L'empreinte du Dieu* (1940), or low-scoring: *Stern von Rio* (1940) (ranked 64).
- On the other hand: *Quax, der Bruchpilot* (1941) ranks nr. 1 in The Hague, but ranks low in Brno (174), Brussels (157) and was not even screened in Krakow. To a lesser extent, we see the same with *Die große Liebe* (1942).
- Puzzling case of *Laila* (1937) was already discussed in Leuven 2018.

Some preliminary observations

- Perhaps too early to conclude, but the market in The Hague seems to be least culturally specific of the four cases. The top 5 films of the overall RelPOP scores all score in the top 10 of The Hague, in contrast with the other cities:

Title	BRNO	BRUSSELS	KRAKOW	THE HAGUE
Kora Terry	56	22	1	4
Goldene Stadt, die		4		2
Opereta	18	59	4	8
Der Postmeister	110	132	2	3
Vienna Blood	38	112	14	6

Cinemas in Kraków, the „Capital“ of the General Government

Andrzej Dębski
Karolina Pryt

- 01.09.1939 Germany invades Poland
- 06.09.1939 Wehrmacht marches into Kraków
- 17.09.1939 Soviet Union invades Poland
- 28.09.1939 Poland divided between Germany and Soviet Union.
- After that, German occupation authorities implemented an unprecedented exploitation, enslavement and extermination policy that was to cost the lives of over 5.5 million Poles, out of which more than a half were Jewish.



Cinemas and cinema programs

01.09.1940-31.08.1944

- 8 Cinemas (2 for Germans, 6 for Poles)
- for a population of 259.000 in 1939, 321.000 in 1941, 285.000 in 1943 (other sources 345.000)
- Number of films displayed: 303
- DE: 250, PL: 40 / AT: 4: ES: 4, IT: 4, HU: 1
- 29.01.1943 - 1.03.1943: in the repertoire (except for a few days in one cinema) there were only Polish films (not in German cinemas)
- 1/3 of DE-films were only shown in cinemas for Germans;
- about 2/3 of DE-films were played in cinemas of both categories.

POPSTAT (4 seasons):

- 4 Polish films in Top-20 , which proves their popularity (although played only for a short time)
- German films in the Top-20 (detachment from everyday life in war):
 - music films: Kora Terry (Marika Röck), Operette, Opernball, Wiener Blut, Eine Nacht an der Donau
 - Der Postmeister: according to a story by Pushkin
 - exotic: Brand im Ozean, Stern von Rio, Zentrale Rio
 - comedies (7 Jahre Pech, Die lustigen Vagabunden)
 - circus (Die drei Codonas)
 - love stories

