Tourist Aspects of the
German Autobahn Project 1933 to 1939 *)

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Nazi Autobahn Project</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Tourist Goals of the Autobahn Project</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bus Rides on the Autobahn</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Traffic Counts on the Autobahn</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Route Munich - Salzburg</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Introduction

This paper explores the tourist aspects of the German autobahn project from 1933 till 1939 and its relation to political propaganda. A short review of the preceding HAFRABA-planning of the autobahn introduces the subject. Before we focus on the propaganda, a short note on the research procedure is given. In sections 2 and 3 we show the relation of the autobahn project to the promotion of tourism in the context of political propaganda.

In the years between 1923 and 1933, a lively debate about the future of the road systems took place in Germany. Several proposals were launched to construct highways between Germany and Italy designated for automobiles only (in the following: autobahn). The shining example of the highway initiative of the entrepreneur Puricelli in Milan, who constructed privately-operated autobahns between Milan and northern Italy, stimulated the German debates. On 11\textsuperscript{th} of January 1927 a conference was held in Leipzig to discuss an autobahn route Berlin-Leipzig-Munich-Roma\textsuperscript{1}. Among other initiatives the association “HAFRABA” was most important\textsuperscript{2}, being founded in the town hall of Frankfurt(Main) on 6\textsuperscript{th} of November 1926\textsuperscript{3}. The abbreviation HAFRABA means Hamburg-Frankfurt-Basel and denotes the aim of the association: to promote an autobahn from the ports at the northern sea, i.e. Hamburg, via Frankfurt as an important place of commerce in western Germany to southern Germany at the border of Switzerland, i.e. Basel. From the beginning the association had the concept to extend the autobahn from Basel to the Italian port of Genoa. Picture 1 shows the projected course of the autobahn.\textsuperscript{4}

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\textsuperscript{2} Verein zur Vorbereitung der Autostrasse Hansestädtische-Frankfurt-Basel (The Society for the Promotion of the Autobahn Hansestädtische-Frankfurt-Basel)
\textsuperscript{3} Report of the first meeting of the board of Hafraba on 10\textsuperscript{th} of February 1927, Hanover 1927 (cf. Appendix 2)
\textsuperscript{4} Otzen, op.cit., p. 7
For our study we have explored the journal “Die Strasse” (The Road) of the years 1934 till 1939 in the library of the university of Karlsruhe. This journal was edited by Todt, the head of the German autobahn project, and was the leading one on the subject of road construction and motorized transport in the years 1934 till 1939. But this journal did not only present sound scientific papers on road building, traffic and transport history, but it also contained a curious mixture of obstrusive NS-propaganda. In addition, in the library of the university of Hanover we have evaluated the journal “Die Autobahn” preceding “Die Strasse”. Since 1932, the HAFRABA newsletter was entitled “Die Autobahn” with 12 issues each year. In 1933, the editors of the newsletter switched politically to Hitler as the most important promoter of the autobahn idea. The July edition of 1933 showed Hitler on the front page with the headline: “The Autobahn network is the path to the rebirth of Germany’s rise and glory”. In the year 1934, the number of issues nearly doubled from 12 to 22. When on 18th of August 1933 the

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5 An index of the contents of the issues of the journals “Die Strasse”, “Die Autobahn” and “Hafraba Mitteilungsblatt” can be found on my web site: www.ibwl.uni-kassel.de/vahrenkamp/history_mobility/history_mobility.htm.
HAFRABA association was compulsorily dissolved and incorporated into the autobahn project company GEZUVOR - *Gesellschaft zur Vorbereitung des Reichsautobahnbaus* (Company for the Preparation of Autobahn Construction)*6* the GEZUVOR became the editor of “Die Autobahn”. The chief editor of the newsletter, Kaftan, remained in his function until the end of the year 1934. *7* Then publishing was stopped and the head of the autobahn project, Todt, published his own journal “Die Strasse” with 24 issues per year and a reduced number of issues from 1940 until 1942. This journal started being published already in August 1934 so that for the residual months of 1934 both journals, “Die Strasse” and “Die Autobahn”, appeared simultaneously. Since the year 1935, the nomination “Die Autobahn” also appeared as a subtitle on the front pages of “Die Strasse” (cf. picture 2). The evaluation of the journals mentioned is supplemented by research in different archives.

The Hafraba made its objectives to: (1) the desire for roads adapted to the automobile as a modern mode of transport, (2) road construction as a means of reducing unemployment and a stimulus to the development of the backward German automobile industry (3) a road network as an incentive to expand the sales of automobiles and to support the needs of tourist excursions. These topics were published in the Hafraba newsletter several times, so that an analysis of this newsletter can illustrate the transport policy from the view of the Hafraba association. When the Nazi party settled its rule the German Autobahn project started to build the first route Frankfurt a.M. to Darmstadt in 1933 with the help of the blueprints of the HAFRABA association.*8*

### 2 The Nazi Autobahn Project

The subjects that were covered by the Hafraba newsletter (as shown above) also appeared in the journal “Die Strasse”. At the first glance, there was no difference between the Hafraba and the NS visions of the Autobahn. In addition, “Die Strasse” broadened the scope: the NS Autobahn project expanded the single Hafraba route from Hamburg to Basel to an entire

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*6* Die Autobahn, issue 9, 1933, p. 7-9  
*7* In Todt’s journal “Die Strasse” Kaftan had no influence furthermore. Only once, at the opening of the first autobahn route from Frankfurt(Main) to Darmstadt in May 1935, he was allowed to publish a retrospect: „Hafraba“ – Ein Rückblick, in: Die Strasse, issue 9, 1935, p. 321s. This was the only time when the HAFRABA project was mentioned in Todt’s journal. Kaftan published his memoirs about the autobahn project in 1955: Kaftan, K.: Der Kampf um die Autobahnen, Berlin 1955  
*8* See the file Autostrasse Hamburg – Frankfurt – Basel 1930-1934, MA6289, Institut für Stadtgeschichte Frankfurt(Main), and E. Schütz und E. Gruber, Mythos ReichsAutobahn, Berlin 1996, 2nd edition 2000
network and regarded the Autobahn as a monument of the NS policy that should last for hundreds of years.\(^9\) In 1934, the former member of the Hafraba execution board, Kurt Becker, provided some unintentional comedy when he compared the construction of the Autobahn with that of the pyramids in Egypt.\(^10\) Further, “Die Strasse” contained a curious mixture of obstrusive NS propaganda and degenerated since 1938 to reports on Hitler's expansionary foreign policy und “success” in the war.

In the past, research on Nazi autobahn construction in the years 1933 to 1939 has focused on topics such as the background, the decision-making process, the landscaping of the autobahn, the organization and financing of autobahn construction as well as the project's importance for job creation, the propaganda and the military policy. But the aspect of promoting tourism has not been investigated before.

Many interrelated goals were formulated in the NS Autobahn project so that it appeared as an ambivalent project. The lack of a democratic debate in public arenas, which should result in certain priorities, makes it difficult to assess the importance of the goals. However, one can observe some tensions between the Autobahn project and other fields of policy. The use of the resources labor and steel was in rivalry to the demand of the four year plan of rearmament since 1936.\(^11\) Second, the supply of a network of high performance roads was used for cargo transport only to a small extent, because the transport administration restricted the use of trucks and caused a transport crisis in 1938.\(^12\)

There are different approaches to analyze the rule of NS with a theoretical framework. After focusing on brutality and criminality until 1970 the later approaches analyze the daily life in the community of the folk (“Volksgemeinschaft”) and how the NS party tried to satisfy consumer needs under conditions of scarce resources and to provide some entertainment for the folk, as e.g. promotion of tourism and motorization, to stabilize their rule.\(^13\) Within the NS mass organizations the “union” Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF) was important because it

\(^10\) see Becker: “Von der HAFRABA zur ReichsAutobahn” in: Kasseler Post on 18 March 1934, p. 3 (Library university of Kassel).
\(^12\) Heidi Rohde: Transportmodernisierung oder Verkehrsbewirtschaftung?, Frankfurt 1999
substituted the compulsory dissolved socialist and liberal unions and united the industrial and the construction workers. The DAF ran the organization “Kraft durch Freude” KDF (Strength Through Joy) which provided programs for traveling, sports, education, and entertainment.\footnote{Thimothy W. Mason: Social Policy in the Third Reich: The Working Class and the 'National Community' 1918-1939, Berg Publishers, Oxford 1993.}
The KDF offered package tours at unrivaled low prices to various resorts, also to desirable resorts like Reit im Winkel in Bavaria, and tourist destinations, like Heidelberg, creating the traveling market of mass tourism and transformed it into industrial dimensions.\footnote{Hasso Spode: Ein Seebad für zwanzigtausend Volksgenossen – Zur Grammatik und Geschichte des fordistischen Urlaubs, in: Peter J. Brenner (Ed.): Reisekultur in Deutschland, Tübingen 1997, pp. 7-48} This policy field of KDF was supplemented by the NS Autobahn project although there is no indication of a joint planning of these two fields. Instead, both fields developed independently. The study of Keitz on the KDF tourism showed that the package tours and one day trips used the railway as a means of transportation and not coaches on the Autobahn.\footnote{Christine Keitz: Reisen als Leitbild – Die Entstehung des modernen Massentourismus in Deutschland, München 1997, pp. 223-232. For the labor camps at the Autobahn KDF provided theater entertainment once a month, see Kraft Durch Freude, Gau Kurhessen, Programm February 1937 till April 1937, Library of University of Marburg.} But there are some connections between the tourism activities of KDF and the NS Autobahn project when one refers to the term of “tourist gaze” which the British sociologist John Urry coined for the desire of tourists for rapid movement, the search for panoramic views, and spatial and temporal removal from their normal routine.\footnote{Shelley Baranowski: Tourism Industry and Modernity: Comments, in: Laurent Tissot (Ed.): Development of a Tourist Industry, Neuchâtel 2003, p. 25. John Urry: The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies, London 1990.} Like the KDF, which transformed landscape in a consumer good of package tours, the NS Autobahn project produced tourist gazes with its concepts to adapt the tracks to the landscape and to provide a sequence of striking views for the car driver (see below). If one considers that the construction of the Volkswagen plant in Wolfsburg in 1938 also was run under the responsibility of the DAF, it appears at the first glance as a coherent strategy. One could identify a nice trilogy of tourism: KDF, Volkswagen and the Autobahn. But as historical research revealed, the relation of the Volkswagen plant to the KDF was an outcome of an erratic process.\footnote{Hans Mommsen und M. Grieger: Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich, Düsseldorf 1996. Heidrun Edelmann: Der Traum vom “Volkswagen”, in: Hans-Liudger Dienel und Helmuth Trischler (Ed.): Geschichte der Zukunft des Verkehrs, Frankfurt 1997, pp. 280-289}

When one analyses the decision making process in the autobahn project, one finds the explicitly announced “hard” objectives of the autobahn project to create employment and promote motorized transport. The hidden goal of the autobahn project has been political
propaganda which used the topic autobahn and the promotion of tourism. We will explain this point in the following. The role of tourism as a domain for political propaganda is underlined by the consideration that the central organization of the travel agencies was part of Goebbels’s ministry of propaganda.19

From the start, the Autobahn project has been supported by strong propaganda in all media. Propaganda for the Autobahn project could combine diverse intentions such as concealing the backward-looking ideas and aggressive objectives of National Socialism – as racial, religious, and sexual discrimination, the glory of handicraft’s and framer’s work as a foundation of a “healthy folk”, and the desire of colonial expansion – with the modern transport concept of the Autobahn, while also providing a project to satisfy those parts of the Nazi movement that were pushing for modernization. For this combination of a backward ideology and modernization Herf coined the term “reactionary modernism”.20 Fritz Todt, the "General Inspector for German Roads," appointed by Hitler in 1933, can be considered as a representative of this modernizing segment of the movement. He already brought out a memorandum about the inadequacies of the German road network in December 1932.21 He was not only a road construction engineer but also a convinced National Socialist who had joined the party already in 1923. Therefore, he cannot be regarded as an apolitical technocrat. On the contrary, Hitler took pleasure in introducing him as an old comrade. It was he who conducted the forced recruitment of the unemployed for autobahn construction as a National Socialist political project and organized the labor camps for construction workers strictly in accordance with the principles of National Socialist ideology. Labor was compulsory and workers were unable to escape the strenuous physical labor which in the first year had to be carried out with no help from machinery.22 For that reason, autobahn labor camps had much in common with concentration camps. So the German autobahn project reflects many aspects of the National Socialist regime's policies, in particular its unbridled use of force.

Furthermore, autobahn construction enabled the propagandists to demonstrate the government's determination to push through new projects with an apparently endless concrete ribbon that was visible to all and to use the autobahn's claim to modernity to proclaim the
dawn of a new era.\textsuperscript{23} Regarding the propaganda aspect, it should be noted that Hitler assumed that the planning of this giant network of roads would have a psychological impact on the population and serve to build up trust\textsuperscript{24} - an important consideration for safeguarding Nazi rule in 1933.

The goals of job creation and propaganda received significantly greater weight because Hitler presented the autobahn concept as a network.\textsuperscript{25} This approach differed from the HAFRABA publications, having largely focused on the north-south route Hamburg-Hanover-Kassel-Frankfurt-Basel (cf. picture 1). Hitler recognized that autobahn construction could be presented as a primary measure to create jobs and as the dawning of a new age far more effectively in propaganda if a network could be extended over the entire Reich instead of merely a north-south route from Hamburg to Basel. Hitler also explained his preference for the network on the grounds that it would be easier to push through a large project than a road section against the opposition of particularistic interests.\textsuperscript{26} Furthermore, the network concept had the advantage that construction could be started simultaneously at many different places within the Reich (cf. footnote 58), thus providing a far greater number of propaganda opportunities than, for example, constructing two large hydroelectric power plants in order to create jobs.\textsuperscript{27}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{23} On this interpretation see also J. D. Shand: The Reichsautobahn: Symbol for the Third Reich, in: Journal of Contemporary History, 1984, vol. 19, p. 189-195
\item \textsuperscript{24} Akten der Reichskanzlei, Regierung Hitler 1933-1938, published by Konrad Repgen, part I: 1933/34, volume 2, edited by Karl-Heinz Minuth, p. 742, Boppard am Rhein 1983.
\item \textsuperscript{25} The picking up of the network idea is documented in an annotation by Ministerialrat Willuhn concerning a discussion between the Chancellor and the director of the HAFRABA e.V., Hof, about the planning and financing of autobahn construction on 6 of April 1933, in: Akten der Reichskanzlei, op. cit., volume 1, p. 305, and a report of the director of the HAFRABA e.V., Hof, about his discussion with the Chancellor about the planning and financing of autobahn construction on 6\textsuperscript{th} of April 1933, op. cit., p. 308. Also on the network idea, the Chancellor's discussion with leading industrialists on 29\textsuperscript{th} of May 1933, op. cit., p. 511.
\item \textsuperscript{26} See the discussion with the director of the HAFRABA, Hof, on 6\textsuperscript{th} of April 1933 and with the director general of the Deutsche Reichsbahngesellschaft, Dorpmüller, on 10\textsuperscript{th} of April 1933, in: Akten der Reichskanzlei, Regierung Hitler 1933-1938, op. cit., p. 305 and p. 331
\item \textsuperscript{27} Kaftan, K. op. cit., makes this comparison, p. 154.
\end{itemize}
3 The Tourist Goals of the Autobahn Project

Beside the “hard” goals, the propagandists shifted the discussion to a whole series of other “soft” aspects:

- The project would create a giant work for the future of transport.
- It would build a monument to National Socialism that would stand for centuries.
- "Adolf Hitler's roads" would be built.
- Principles of landscape aesthetics would be realized. The autobahn would be adapted to the landscape. At the same time, the landscape was to be cared for.
- An ideology was adopted in order to reconcile technology and nature.

We will focus on the aspect how the topics tourism and recreation have been part of the autobahn propaganda and how the people adopted the new opportunities for recreation. Already at the beginning of the autobahn project in 1933 proposals have been published how the autobahn could stimulate tourism in regions where tourism was less developed.28 These could be traced back to the publications in the 1920s, when the importance of tourism as a factor of economic development was recognized.29

For propaganda, the peculiar idea of "Autowandern" (road touring) was introduced. It was supposed to combine the enjoyment of the landscape with driving through the landscape on the autobahn. In his journal “Die Strasse”, the head of the German autobahn project, Todt, published numerous articles to promote road touring,30 which was connected with the proposal to make a picnic on the lawn strip besides the autobahn – an idea that has been popular in the Netherlands in the 1960s. Picture 2 shows a picnic scene as promoted by Todt’s autobahn propaganda.31 However, all these ideas were primarily propagandist because virtually no cars were ridden on the autobahn, due to the low car density in Germany.32 Only at holidays, as Easter or Whit Holiday, some excursion traffic could be observed as traffic counts in the years 1937, 1938 and 1939 revealed (see below).

29 Keitz, op. cit.
30 On "Autowandern" see Die Strasse, issues 3, 6, 11, 14, 1936
31 Front page of issue 6, 1936, of Die Strasse
32 In 1932 the car density per 1000 inhabitants only amounted to one quarter of that of France and one third of that of England, see Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich 1933, p. 84*.
In 1936, propaganda focused more on road touring with special issues of “Die Strasse” on this subject, e.g. issue 6. As a second topic, excursion traffic on weekends became more important in propaganda. Already in 1933, the Brandenburg section of the NS-troops SA counted the traffic on the arterial roads of Berlin from 23rd to 30th of August. They came to the conclusion that traffic doubled on Sunday compared with the average on the six working days. The number of cars and bicycles doubled and that of motorcycles even tripled depending on regional and social factors. The strongest traffic with bicycles originated from the workers

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33 Zahlen zum Ausflugsverkehr auf den Berliner Ausfallstrassen, in: Die Strasse, issue 6, 1936, p. 178
districts on the road to Grünau in the south-east direction. Traffic in the western direction Wannsee was dominated by cars from bourgeois districts. Although originated in 1933, these data have not been published in Todt’s journal before 1936. It is interesting that until the year 1936 no systematic traffic counts have been conducted in the whole Reich (see below). Only the Hansa section of the GEZUVOR made a traffic count in 1934 in the northern parts of Germany.\(^{34}\)

As another focus of propaganda, the **expected** excursion traffic has been dealt with in Todt’s journal. In 1936, an article showed the growth of the regions that the inhabitants of the four cities Berlin, Frankfurt a.M., Munich and Leipzig could reach in a weekend excursion for the three years 1880, 1912 and 1938, when the autobahn network would be rather complete. Associated regional maps were presented for the three years mentioned to support a comparison.\(^{35}\) The aim was to demonstrate the development of wide regions that could be visited for leisure purposes by the autobahn. A second article described how the inhabitants of the capital Berlin could reach the popular seaside resorts at the coast of the Baltic Sea and how the completion of the autobahn route to Stettin in 1937 will shorten the journey. Picture 3 shows a map of these resorts.\(^{36}\)


\(^{35}\) Ausflugsverkehr der Großstädte, in: Die Strasse, issue 6, 1936, p.163-167

\(^{36}\) Von Berlin in die Ostseebäder, in: Die Strasse, issue 6, 1936, p. 176-178
4 Bus Rides on the Autobahn

When in 1935 to 1938 parts of the autobahn network had been finished two developments could be observed. First, bus routes on the new segments were opened immediately after the opening of the new autobahn segments. These bus routes were run by the German railway company. As the operating company of the autobahn, the Reichsautobahngesellschaft, has been established as a daughter of the German railway company, the latter company took the responsibility for generating the urgently needed traffic on the autobahn which exhibited only minor traffic so far. And as an additional goal the bus routes supported tourist excursions. As a third goal, the buses provided tours on the autobahn for those people, who could not afford an own car. So, the busses served as an instrument of propaganda to show the people the giant roads. The right to run bus routes on the autobahn was exclusively given to the German railway company with the consequence that private entrepreneurs were excluded from a new

See the lecture of Rudolf Hoffmann, an official in Todt’s administration: Die Wirtschaftlichkeit von Autobahnen, in: Deutsche Bergwerkszeitung on 23rd of November 1938, Bavarian Economic
attractive segment of the growing service economy. This consideration fits to the Nazi economic policy to restrict the economic activities of the small business sector,\textsuperscript{38} as I have demonstrated on the example of truck entrepreneurs.\textsuperscript{39} This policy to crowd private enterprises out of the bus industry differed totally from the traffic policy in the United States.\textsuperscript{40}

The first bus route on the autobahn Frankfurt a.M. – Darmstadt started operation from main station Frankfurt a.M. to main station Darmstadt on 20\textsuperscript{th} May 1935, one day after the opening of this route.\textsuperscript{41} To stress the modernity of the new transport mode, special buses with streamlined design were procured. The bus ride took 38 minutes and lasted 17 minutes longer than a train passage. In addition the price of a ticket was above a train ticket in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} class. So, the bus route did not offer reasonable conditions and attracted not many passengers.\textsuperscript{42}

Other examples of bus routes on the autobahn can be found in the archives.\textsuperscript{43} The first example is the route Munich – lake Tegern, opened in 1935 (see below). The second example is the bus route Kassel – Frankfurt a.M. from main station to main station with two bus pairs each day. The duration of the bus ride amounted to 2 hours and 50 minutes and was comparable with a corresponding journey on a train with medium speed (Eilzug – local train). The bus route opened on 4\textsuperscript{th} of December 1938, one day after the opening of the entire autobahn route Munich – Salzburg. The discrimination of travel agencies is explored by Wolfgang König: Nazi Visions of Mass Tourism, cit. The discrimination of driving schools is shown by Dorothee Hochstetter: Motorisierung und Volksgemeinschaft, München 2005.
autobahn route Kassel – Frankfurt a.M. In a coverage of a bus ride in the NS-party press in January 1939, the reporter stressed the tourist highlights of this special route and the adoption of the route to the landscape.\textsuperscript{44} The following Picture 4 from this coverage depicts the bus running on an empty autobahn.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{picture4.png}
\caption{The Reichsbahn bus on the autobahn Kassel – Frankfurt in January 1939}
\end{figure}

It would be remarkable if one could compare the touring experiences. Were they qualitatively different when viewed from a car, bus, motorcycle or bicycle? But, there are not many sources on these topics. A coverage of a bus touring from Kassel to Frankfurt on the Autobahn stressed tourist highlights, as castles, and the intensity of experience when the passengers saw the beauty of the landscape,\textsuperscript{45} similar to the experience of car drivers on the Autobahn.\textsuperscript{46} The liberal journalist Walter Dirks reflected on his car touring on the Autobahn from Frankfurt a.M. to Kassel in 1938 and described his experience that the relation of the car

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{44} Rolf Mengel: Die schnellen Riesen der Reichsautobahn, in: Kurhessische Landeszeitung, 14\textsuperscript{th} of January 1939, p.3, town archive Kassel
\textsuperscript{45} Mengel, R.: Die schnellen Riesen der ReichsAutobahn, in: Kurhessische Landeszeitung, 14\textsuperscript{th} of January 1939, p.3, town archive Kassel
\end{flushright}
to the track turned round: Not the car drives on the track, but the track moves fast und smooth and draws in the car.\textsuperscript{47}

5 Traffic Counts on the Autobahn

As the second development one can observe how propaganda shifted to the resulting traffic on the routes that were counted in a systematic manner. There were traffic counts of the excursion traffic on Easter and Whit Holiday in 1936 that had been continued in 1937, in 1938 and in 1939 (Easter and Whit Holiday are more important in Germany than maybe in other nations because Monday is also holiday). For these traffic counts took Rudolf Hoffmann, an official in Todt’s administration, the responsibility. In 1938 at 29 points all over the Reich traffic was counted on the autobahn. In addition, there were 12 counting points on roads important for the excursion traffic.\textsuperscript{48} An example for the count of the excursion traffic on the route Munich – Salzburg is given below. The number of vehicles counted on Whit Holiday in 1938 on the 29 counting points ranged between the maximum of 55,170 close to Cologne and the minimum of 3,047 close to Königsberg in East Prussia with an average of 12,047. The counting took place from Saturday evening before Whit Holiday 0 hour till Tuesday after Whit Holiday 24 hour, both directions. The traffic close to Stettin resulted with 16,451 vehicles in less than 1.5 times the mean – a small number compared with the expected excursion traffic out of the capital Berlin to the Baltic Sea (see discussion above).

In general, the traffic on the autobahn was so weak, that the observed peaks on Easter and Whit Holiday have proudly been reported by the propaganda to justify the autobahn project. Even the head of the autobahn project, Todt, used these data for his success stories. In 1937 and in 1938, he gave performance reports about the goals that have been achieved in autobahn

\textsuperscript{47} Walter Dirks: Das Dreieck auf der Autobahn, in: Frankfurter Zeitung, 11 December 1938. I owe this source to my colleague Eberhard Schütz.

construction from the speaker's podium at the National Socialist party congress in Nuremberg, the Third Reich's center stage, also referring to the holiday traffic during Whit Holiday.\textsuperscript{49}

The tourist aspects of the autobahn project can be demonstrated very well with the route Munich – Salzburg via lake Chiem (actually the route was Munich – Bad reichenhall at the German side of the border). Not much research has been carried out on this topic until now.\footnote{See Claudia Windisch-Hojnacki: Die Reichsautobahn – Konzeption und Bau der RAB, ihre ästhetischen Aspekte, sowie ihre Illustration in Malerei, Literatur, Photographie und Plastik, Diss. University of Bonn, 1989} This route is the most famous example of adoption the autobahn to the landscape and of including tourist highlights – a topic about which numerous articles were published in the Nazi press.\footnote{Todt's journal "Die Strasse" reported 36 times between 1934 and 1938 on the autobahn Munich - Salzburg. The preceding journal "Die Autobahn" reported 7 times on this subject between 1933 and 1934. See also Reichsautobahn München - Salzburg, Berlin 1936, publisher Volk und Reich} To fit the autobahn into the landscape, Todt made special efforts for the route Munich – Salzburg. For the first time in the autobahn project, he engaged the landscape architect Alwin Seifert, who had a congenial view with Todt, already in 1933.\footnote{Seifert published 30 articles on landscaping in Todt's journal "Die Strasse" between 1934 and 1942} Both wanted to avoid the heavy distortion of landscape by building traffic artefacts as it has been done during the construction of railways 100 years before. Already in his first letter to Seifert, Todt formulated the principle that the road of the autobahn in the forest Hofolding close to Munich should not appear inside the landscape as the embankment of a railway.\footnote{Letter on 23\textsuperscript{th} of November 1933 , archive Deutsches Museum, Munich, Seifert Nachlass, NL 133/056} In his exemplary study Zeller has shown the influence of Seifert on the blueprint of the autobahn and how Todt had adopted his concept of landscape aesthetics from the parkways in the USA.\footnote{Zeller, T.: Straße, Bahn, Panorama – Verkehrswege und Landschaftsveränderung in Deutschland 1930 bis 1990, Diss. Munich, Campus publisher, Frankfurt 2002}

The context for the planning process of the route Munich – Salzburg is as follows: From the city of Munich originated high traffic of weekend trips in the environment which can be explained partly by the high density of motor vehicles in Munich. This city had with one motor vehicle (including motorcycles) per 24 inhabitants the highest vehicle density in Germany in 1932 (compared to Berlin with 38 inhabitants).\footnote{Statistisches Jahrbuch für das deutsche Reich, 1933, p. 159} In addition to the individual motor vehicles there were 13 routes of buses - run by the German Post Company - leading to the tourist destinations in the environment. In 1934, about 700,000 persons took a ride on these buses. The Post reported that the main streams of people on the weekends flowed to the destinations river Inn, Bad Tölz, Grünwald, Wolfrathshausen, lake Starnberg and lake
The following Picture 5 shows the destinations around Munich which could be reached by these bus routes. One can observe that the important destinations in the eastern region of Munich, as lake Tegern and lake Chiem (cf. Picture 6) were not covered by the bus routes. Woerner described the eastern region as hardly accessible. So from the tourist point of view there was a need to develop the eastern part with a high performance road system.

![Diagram of arterial bus routes from Bayer-Strasse in Munich (main station) in the environment of Munich in 1934](image)

**Picture 5: The arterial bus routes from Bayer-Strasse in Munich (main station) in the environment of Munich in 1934**

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And in fact, in Munich plans for the autobahn to lake Chiem were primarily based on the expected weekend traffic. According to Kaftan, too many visitors from Munich were placing an excessive burden on the destination lake Starnberg on weekends, and alternative tourist destinations were sought in consultation with the construction industry. However, with the train there have been long travel times from Munich to important tourist destinations in the eastern region of Munich. Woerner estimated that it would take 5 hours to travel from Munich to the famous ski region Reit im Winkl by rail compared to only 1.5 hours by car on the autobahn. Although a promoter of car transport, Woerner did not exaggerate the long travel time of 5 hours from Munich to Reit im Winkl by rail. A screening of the railway schedule of the year 1930 in the archive of the German Railway in Nuremberg got the following connections: From Munich main station the train ran to Traunstein (duration 1.5h). There the traveller had to take the train to Ruhpolding (duration 50 min) and finally he changed to the train to Reit im Winkl (Duration 70 min). In addition there were waiting times at the stations.

Woerner was the owner of the Munich-based building company Sager&Woerner - where Todt was employed as chief engineer - and he was head of the Bavarian section of the autobahn.

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59 Ausflugsverkehr der Großstädte, in: Die Strasse, issue 6, 1936, p.165
60 K. Kaftan, op. cit. , p. 153
61 Anton Woerner, op. cit., containing a personal record of Woerner and a portrait photo.
project company GEZUVOR. When on 23rd of May 1933 Alfons Woerner became member of the advisory board of the HAFRABA, a confident of Todt were placed in the association. Still in summer 1933, Sager&Woerner got an order from Todt for a draft of a blueprint of the route Munich – Salzburg which were sent as four copies to Todt und to the railway administration.

The close relation between the building company Sager&Woerner and the powerful Todt had induced the building company to a shaggy behaviour towards subcontractors and other business partners during the construction of the autobahn Munich – Salzburg, as many complaints in the files of the Bavarian state archive demonstrate.

In the plans of the route Munich – Salzburg, one can identify the strategy to combine the following tourist highlights:

- To make the recreational areas lake Tegern, lake Schlier, lake Seeham and Bayrisch Zell accessible, the southern route was chosen via Holzkirchen instead of the northern route via Grafing. So the length of section Munich – Salzburg increased by 20 km from 102 km to 122 km. As Woerner and the Munich press reported, this outline of the route were decided on by Hitler.

- The Munich-Salzburg autobahn runs over the bridge over the river Mangfall and provides a view of the church at Weyarn with the world famous Annunciation group by Ignaz Günther.

- Ascent from the valley Leizach on the hill Irschen giving a tremendous view on the Alps.

- On the hill Hüttenkirchen a wonderful panoramic view on lake Chiem.

- To bypass the moor in the south, the route is closely directed at the southern shore of lake Chiem resulting in panoramic views over the lake.

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62 Die Autobahn, issue 9, 1933, p. 8s., issue 10, 1933, p. 21
63 See the minutes of the member assembly on 23rd of May 1933, Die Autobahn, issue 6, 1933, p. 7
65 Letter on 17th of September 1935 of the construction office Rosenheim to the branch Munich of the autobahn project concerning the company Sager&Woerner, in: Bavarian State Archive Munich, op. cit., vol. 573
66 Woerner op. cit. and Münchener Neueste Nachrichten on 6th of September 1933, Bavarian Main State Archive, Munich, vol. MWi 8682.
• Nearby Salzburg the route is directed south to reach the tourist destination Bad Reichenhall.

An outline of this route were given as early as 24th of August 1933 as an official communication of Todt to the press.\textsuperscript{67} Then followed detailed descriptions of the route in the press and by Woerner in September 1933.\textsuperscript{68} On these highlights of this route the Munich press reported several times as the collection of press cuttings on the autobahn of the town archive Munich gives reference for.

Seifert described this autobahn route in the following enthusiastic words: “The increase of the beauty of the landscape on the route from Munich to lake Chiem, which seemingly could not be surpassed, is summarized in the view on the endless expanse, reminding of the pictures of Adalbert Stifter”.\textsuperscript{69} The following Picture 7 shows this panoramic view from the autobahn over the expanse to the Alps at Rosenheim.

\textsuperscript{67} Münchener Neueste Nachrichten on 25\textsuperscript{th} of August 1933, Town archive Munich, press cuttings collection ZA Autobahn, München-Salzburg 1933-1934. Short after the date 18th of August 1933, when the HAFRABA association had been dissolved, on 24\textsuperscript{th} of August 1933 Todt could announce a new route to be built discussed with Hitler, but without any discussion of the HAFRABA experts: the route Munich – Salzburg. This was after the route Frankfurt(Main) – Darmstadt the second route in the autobahn network which has been officially determined.

\textsuperscript{68} Bayerische Staatszeitung on 6\textsuperscript{th} of September 1933, op. cit., Woerner, Anton, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{69} Seifert, Alwin: Die landschaftliche Eingliederung der Strecke, in : Die Strasse, 1935, issue 12, p. 446s.
Because the GEZUVOR consisted of 12 regional sections with only regional responsibility, the closure of the HAFRABA platform on 18th of August 1933 (see above) led to an increase of Todt’s power. He kept the exclusive authority for planning the overall network. So short after the date 18th of August 1933, on 24th of August 1933, he could announce a new route to be built without any discussion of the HAFRABA experts: the route Munich – Salzburg. This was after the route Frankfurt(Main) – Darmstadt the second route in the autobahn network which was officially determined.

Hitler had a strong preference for the route Munich – Salzburg because he had his country seat “Haus Wachenfeld” in the county Berchtesgaden close to Salzburg. This country seat itself developed as an important point of mass tourism. 

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71 See the remark on Hitler's country seat, in: Reichsautobahn München - Salzburg, Berlin 1936, publisher Volk und Reich, p.20. The health resort Bad Reichenhall partly explained its popularity by the nearby country seat of Hitler, in: Die Strasse, vol. 1935, issue 12, appendix p.29. The NS-party press Völkischer Beobachter reported on 24th of August 1934 that each day several thousand people pass by the country seat (Deutsche Bücherei, Leipzig).
planning process, and - as the Bavarian section of the of the autobahn project company GEZUVOR communicated - he was the originator of the idea of the autobahn route Munich – Salzburg. As Windisch-Hojnacki has shown, he selected the models for bridges and service areas and together with Todt he often inspected the progress of construction. In the service area lake Chiem Hitler had a reserved room for a break on his journeys to the country Berchtesgaden. The high importance of this route for Hitler explains the intensive efforts to complete the work. After preparatory works in 1933, the construction of the route started officially on 21st of March 1934 at Unterhaching close to Munich as a great propaganda spectacle with Hitler as a speaker. Picture 8 shows forced recruitment of the unemployed for the autobahn construction on this date.

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72 This could be deduced from several letters of Todt who referred to the wish of Hitler that the construction should be pushed through rapidly, see letter of Todt to Doll on 5th of October 1933 and letter of Doll to Todt on 1st of June 1934, in: Bavarian State Archive Munich, Autobahndirektion Süd, vol. 248. Doll was the head of the construction project company of the route Munich – Salzburg.
73 Circular letter of the of Bavarian section of the autobahn project company GEZUVOR to construction companies and stone suppliers on 14th of September 1933, in: Thüringen State Archive Weimar, vol. C235, p. 21
74 Claudia Windisch-Hojnacki, op. cit., p. 97, 147
75 Hafen, Peter: Das Rasthaus am Chiemsee, in: Die Strasse, issue 22, 1938, p. 702-708
76 For propaganda reasons at this date the construction started at 22 points all over the Reich simultaneously, Die Autobahn, 1934, p. 168. This action was conducted by Goebbels, see the letter on 12th of February 1934 from the Thüringen section of the propaganda administration in Berlin to the President of the state Thüringen, in: Thüringen State Archive Weimar, vol. C234, p. 19. The speech of Hitler at Unterhachung was transmitted by radio to the workers of the other 21 starting points.
Roughly one year later, on 29th of June 1935, the route of 25 km length already reached Holzkirchen – an exit for the important tourist destination lake Tegern where also high-ranked Nazi leaders had their country seats. Only less than one year later, on 24th of May 1936, the route already reached the city of Rosenheim, close to the tourist area of lake Chiem. The following Table 1 summarises the openings of the first route segments from 1935 until 1936 in the Reich where the grey-coloured entries refer to the route Munich – Salzburg.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Length km</th>
<th>Date of Opening</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>19th of May 1935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>München - Holzkirchen</td>
<td>25,0</td>
<td>29th of June 1935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darmstadt - Mannheim (Heidelberg)</td>
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<td>3rd of October 1935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holzkirchen - Weyarn</td>
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<td>11th of January 1936</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leipzig - Halle</td>
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<td>25th of April 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Köln - Düsseldorf</td>
<td>24,5</td>
<td>21st of May 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weyarn - Rosenheim</td>
<td>33,0</td>
<td>24th of May 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenheim - Siegsdorf</td>
<td>35,0</td>
<td>17th of August 1936</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Opening of the first route segments of the autobahn from 1935 till 17th of August 1936

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78 Data from Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich, 1936, p. 198. On 17th of August 1936, altogether 5 sections were opened simultaneously at the end of the Olympic Games in Berlin, whereby propagandists were relying on the international press corps that had gathered in Berlin to cover the Olympic Games.
To support tourism, an attractive service area at the shore of lake Chiem was built. His service area was evaluated by Windisch-Hojnacki and others.\textsuperscript{79} It was built with great expense including a hotel, a restaurant both designed in the Bavarian country style with a terrace. Actually, the restaurant was built on piles in the water. The layout was supplemented with a swimming area at the lake.


\textsuperscript{80} Front page of issue 22 of Die Strasse, 1938
As the restaurant opened on 27th of August 1938, it attracted many visitors. On one of the first Saturdays nearly 6000 cups of coffee were sold.\textsuperscript{81} The Picture 9 gives an impression of the terrace promoted by Todt’s autobahn propaganda.

\textsuperscript{81} Anton Grüb: Reichsautobahn-Rasttätte am Chiemsee, in: Die Strasse, 1938, issue 7, p. 217 and Hafen, Peter, op. cit., containing photos and the ground plan. The restaurant is used by the US Army since 1945 and no present photos exist.
The construction of the route Munich – Salzburg was accompanied with various measures of political propaganda. Fritz Todt and Alwin Seifert hold lessons about the new route in Munich. The exhibition “Die Strasse” (The Road) was performed in Munich in 1934. The main section of the exhibition concerned the construction of the autobahn and a presentation
of the entire autobahn network which was presented under the headline: Make way for Motorization. The exhibition was linked with the 7th International Road Congress in Munich, where experts of road construction gathered. They could join excursions the construction sites of the autobahn and of the tourist road in the Alps (“Alpenquerstrasse”).

As another measure Fritz Todt integrated artists in the autobahn project. He appointed artists to paint the construction sites. The shows Picture 11 a painting by Vollbehr: the bridge with antirust painting crossing the river Prien. Vollbehr was a comrade of Todt during World War I and in 1933 was hired by him to follow the construction of the autobahn as a painter, whereby he understood autobahn construction as a battle in a war, as Vollbehr wrote in the introduction of his book. In 1936 Todt suggested a contest under artists for paintings of the autobahn project. The exhibition “The Roads of Adolf Hitler in the fine arts”, opened in September 1936 in Munich, showed 500 paintings out of the 1200 paintings the artists produced in the contest. In the Munich press numerous articles on the autobahn construction appeared and focused on the construction of bridges. They were praised as products of German engineering art. The Picture 10 shows of photo of the construction of the bridge crossing the river Mangfall. This photo was made in winter 1934/35 in an expressionistic style being rare in this time. It shows the bridge over a rural scene as a symbol of the new age of the NS rule. Pictures of Mangfall bridge were published several times in various media.

The bridges of the autobahn project are a special topic where the Nazis wished to express their power and their belief of a long lasting empire. Monumental autobahn bridges were embedded in the concept of landscape aesthetics and were supposed to stand out as symbols

83 Town archive Munich, press cuttings collection ZA Autobahn, München-Salzburg 1933-1934
85 Also in the USA bridges played a role in the parkways. See the ornaments of Jugendstil at the bridges of the Merrit Parkway, in: Bruce Radde: The Merrit Parkway, Yale University Press 1996
of eternity, thus increasing the prestige of the Third Reich.\textsuperscript{86} In Todt’s journal “Die Strasse” some special editions appeared focussing of bridges.\textsuperscript{87}

Just after the opening of the first section Munich – Holzkirchen of the autobahn on 29\textsuperscript{th} of June 1935, the bus routes Munich – lake Tegern and Munich – Lake Schlier via the autobahn exit Holzkirchen opened on 1\textsuperscript{st} of July. Each day there were three connections starting from the train station Starnberg in Munich according to the following time table:\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{86}The monument aspect was emphasised several times. In 1934 the GEZUVOR (society to prepare the autobahn) section head Becker provided some unintentional comedy when he compared the construction of the autobahns with that of the pyramids in Egypt, see Becker, "Von der HAFRABA zur Reichsautobahn" in: Kasseler Post on 18\textsuperscript{th} March 1934, p. 3 (Library University of Kassel). At the inaugural ceremony of a section near Dresden on 26\textsuperscript{th} June 1937, Hitler said that the autobahn would still be standing in a thousand years, see Kasseler Post, 27\textsuperscript{th} of June 1937, Town archive Kassel.

\textsuperscript{87}The numbers 8 and 23 volume 1935 focussed on autobahn bridges, as well as numbers from later years.

\textsuperscript{88}Ernst Vollbehr: Arbeitsschlacht – Fünf Jahre Malfahrten auf den Bauplätzen der „Strassen Adolf Hitlers”, Berlin, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Edition 1938

\textsuperscript{89}Münchener Zeitung on 28\textsuperscript{th} of June 1935, Town archive Munich, press cuttings collection ZA Autobahn, München-Salzburg 1935
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line to Lake Tegern:</th>
<th>First Bus</th>
<th>Second Bus</th>
<th>Third Bus</th>
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<tr>
<td>Munich start</td>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>17:50</td>
<td>23:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Tegern village arrival</td>
<td>11:15</td>
<td>19:05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Tegern village start</td>
<td>6:45</td>
<td>15:35</td>
<td>21:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Munich arrival</td>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>16:50</td>
<td>22:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line to Fischhausen:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munich start</td>
<td>9:50</td>
<td>18:00</td>
<td>23:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Schlier arrival</td>
<td>11:18</td>
<td>19:28</td>
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<td>Fischhausen arrival</td>
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<td>Lake Schlier start</td>
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<tr>
<td>Munich arrival</td>
<td>8:07</td>
<td>17:00</td>
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</table>

Table 2: Timetables of the Bus Routes Munich – Lake Tegern und Lake Schlier

The table 2 shows that a journey from Munich to lake Tegern village took 1 hour and 15 minutes. This travel time is competitive with that of the train. As the time table of the train in 1939 shows, the train from Munich to Schaflach took 1:02 hours and the local train to lake Tegern village 24 minutes.\textsuperscript{90}

When one assesses the development of Bavarian tourism in the 1930s, one not only has to take in account the construction of the Munich-Salzburg Autobahn, but also related factors. For instance, in 1933 the German government introduced a high penalty tax for German tourists visiting Austria, lasting from June 1933 to August 1936 (see below).\textsuperscript{91} This policy dramatically reduced the German tourist flows and probably turned the tourists to Bavaria instead. Bad Reichenhall reported that this factor led to an increase of tourists.\textsuperscript{92} Although there are excellent time series of overnight stays of tourists in small resorts, one does not get evidence how strong the influence of the Autobahn was to generate additional flows of tourists. The following table 2 gives data for some Bavarian resorts in the summer half years (SHY) of 1934 to 1939.\textsuperscript{93}

\textsuperscript{90} Siegfried Bufe et al.: Die Tegernsee Bahn, Egglisham 2001, p.24
\textsuperscript{91} Reichsgesetzblatt, I, 1933, p. 311. I owe this hint to my colleague Hasso Spode.
\textsuperscript{92} Die Strasse 1935, Supplement, p. 29
\textsuperscript{93} Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich, 1935 till 1939/1949, around p. 70.
In the table we see no reduction (or only a slight one) of the overnight stays in 1937 that could be induced by the stop of the tourist penalty tax for Austria in August 1936. This reduction only took place in 1938 and was probably due to the military and political tensions during the crisis of Czechoslovakia. The reduction in 1939 was caused by the war. Tourism was stopped since September 1939. 

For the resort Tegernsee we do not see an increase in 1936 as consequence to the opening of the Autobahn exit in July 1935. The increase of the numbers in Prien am Chiemsee amounts to 10,6% in 1936, which could be related with the opening of the exit Rosenheim in May 1936. The data of Reit im Winkl of 55,1% in 1936 could be explained with a better access via the exit Rosenheim. In general, the forecast can not be verified Alfons Woerner made already in 1933 that tourism would increase with the development of the eastern part of the Munich excursion region by an Autobahn. 

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Table 3: Overnight Stays of Tourists in Bavarian Resorts 1934 till 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SHY 1934</th>
<th>SHY 1935</th>
<th>SHY 1936</th>
<th>SHY 1937</th>
<th>SHY 1938</th>
<th>SHY 1939</th>
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<table>
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94 Keitz, op.cit., p. 246
95 Woerner, op. cit. p. 12
Traffic counts on the autobahn at Ramersdorf (the starting point of the autobahn in a suburb of Munich) exhibited the number of buses per month between 50 and 150 in 1937 and 1938. Most of them were occasional traffic for touristic excursions and not scheduled ones.\textsuperscript{96} The following chart depicts this development of bus traffic on the autobahn.

![Number of Buses at Ramersdorf Chart]

As the construction of the autobahn provided an easy access to the tourist destinations with automobiles and buses, an increase of the number of tourists could be observed. However, the increased traffic induced traffic congestion on the small roads leading to the destinations. So the need to extend the capacity of the roads developed. The major of the community of the lake Tegern complained on this problem, that the tourists are hampered to walk on the road at the shore of lake by the high traffic in a letter to the regional government in 1939.\textsuperscript{97} A conflict came with the construction works of broader roads not to touch the ground of the Nazi leader Himmler and Todt must ban the works.\textsuperscript{98}

Although built to support local excursion traffic from Munich, the autobahn from Munich to lake Chiem was officially named “Munich – Salzburg” to stress the long distance. But ironically, it was not possible for German tourists to visit Salzburg in Austria because from their start in 1933, the Nazi government provoked a deep conflict with Austria and had put heavy restrictions to travel to Austria in order to prevent that German currency would flow

\textsuperscript{96} Rudolf Hoffmann: Die Wirtschaftlichkeit von Autobahnen, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{97} Letter on 14\textsuperscript{th} of April 1939, in: Archive of the Federal Republic of Germany (Bundesarchiv), Berlin, vol. NS26-1187
\textsuperscript{98} Letter of Todt to the Bavarian Government on 1\textsuperscript{st} of March 1939, op. cit.
into Austria. Every German tourist had to pay 1000 Mark as a “charge” for leaving Germany. As a consequence of this policy the tourist travel from Germany broke down. The share of German tourists visiting Salzburg on the total number fell from 52% in 1930/31 to 6% in 1934/35. In summer 1933, German travel agencies had to switch rapidly from Austrian destinations to German sites in Bavaria in their offers of tourist packages including a train or a bus transport. In this new tourist market the tourist destination Ruhpolding – close to Salzburg – became a desirable destination accessible by train. In order not to remind of the embarrassing policy to prevent German tourists to visit Austria in the journal “Die Autobahn” and in Todt’s journal the nomination “Munich – Salzburg” had partly been substituted by the obscure term “Munich – border” during the years 1933 to 1936 like it had been done in the reports of the Munich press on the autobahn.

In 1937, a traffic count carried out on the autobahn to lake Chiem at the counting point Ramersdorf throughout the month June clearly showed peaks of about 100% above work days caused by excursion traffic on Sundays. So the peaks have the same characteristic as the peaks in the traffic count of Berlin in 1933 (see discussion above). The weekend traffic on Whit Holiday in 1938 (Saturday evening before Whit Holiday 0 hour till Tuesday after Whit Holiday 24 hour, both directions) resulted in the following figures of Table 4. The sum of 45071 vehicles at the counting point between Ramersdorf (Munich) and Hofolding represents the second highest traffic behind the route Cologne – Düsseldorf compared to the other 27 counting points in the autobahn network in Germany. When one assumes 1 person on a bike, 2 on a car, 20 on a bus and 1 on a truck, one derives the number of about 100,000 persons traveling in both directions at the counting point close to Ramersdorf. So one can estimate about 50,000 persons traveling on the autobahn out of Munich to make an excursion on Whit

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99 This restriction was valid between June 1933 and August 1936, see Gesetz über die Beschränkung der Reisen nach der Republik Österreich on 29th of May 1933, Reichsgesetzblatt, I, 1933, p. 311. I owe thanks to my colleague Hasso Spode for this hint.


102 The journal “Die Strasse” reported 18 times on the route “Munich – border” during 1935 and 1936

103 For the data see Hoffmann, Rudolf: Die Entwicklung des Kraftverkehrs auf Reichsautobahnen und Reichsstrassen, in: Forschungsgesellschaft für das Strassenwesen (publisher): Strassenbau-Jahrbuch 1937-1938, Berlin, Verlag Volk und Reich, 1938, p. 29-42, here p. 32s. From the dates the days of the week were computed with Microsoft Excel. Hoffmann reports that at the counting point Ramersdorf the traffic is counted continuously by a "special order", p. 31

104 Hoffmann, Rudolf: Der Kraftverkehr auf deutschen Strassen zu Pfingsten 1938, in: Die Strasse, 1938, issue 12, p. 388-392
Holiday in 1938, being equivalent to the remarkable figure of 6% of the population of Munich.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point of counting</th>
<th>Motorbikes</th>
<th>Automobiles</th>
<th>Buses</th>
<th>Trucks</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between Ramersdorf (Munich) and Hofoldung</td>
<td>13,217</td>
<td>29,984</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>1,035</td>
<td>45,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between Bergen and Siegsdorf</td>
<td>9,172</td>
<td>16,445</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>26,637</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Traffic on Whit Holiday 1938 of the autobahn Munich - Salzburg

Similar figures for Whit Holiday in 1939 have also been presented by Hoffmann.106

7 Conclusion

This paper explores the factors underlying the German Autobahn project and evaluated how political propaganda of the Autobahn project made use of the topics tourism and recreation. The author raises the question of a comprehensive tourism policy in the Third Reich where the tourism organization “Kraft durch Freude” and the Autobahn project are parts of. The access to destinations of the excursion traffic out of the great cities that is given by the Autobahn network is described. The Autobahn section Munich – Salzburg is explored as an example that the road is adapted to tourist expectations and views. The thesis that the Autobahn would develop tourism in the region Munich-Salzburg could not be supported with time series of overnight stays. Moreover the example of the excursion travel for leisure purposes out of Munich is evaluated. Besides other bus routes on the Autobahn the example of the route Munich – Salzburg shows a case where the bus route opened new opportunities for tourist excursions with noticeably shorter travel times than the railway schedule. These results show that the tourist function augments our picture, based so far on the existing literature, of the autobahn's functions.