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**The Communicative Construction of space-related identities.  
Hamburg and Leipzig between *the local* and *the global***



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# The Communicative Construction of space-related identities. Hamburg and Leipzig between *the local* and *the global*<sup>1</sup>

## 1 Introduction

‘Leipzig - not the gate to the world as Hamburg is’, claimed the authors of a broadcast celebrating the millennium jubilee of Leipzig on *Deutschlandradio* in 2015.<sup>2</sup> Their statement captured the common feeling in Leipzig, that it was not as famous as Paris or Hamburg, although the citizens of Leipzig have always been proud of their metropolitan traditions. This is true for Hamburg too: Both cities have frequently presented themselves as cosmopolitan, open to the world (Amenda/Grünen 2008; Rembold 2003a; Rembold 2003b). Therefore, both have been able to look back on a long tradition of highlighting their respective importance by stressing their global connections and declaring their specific locality as world territory, with responsibilities and privileges on a world scale. No wonder that both cities were constantly classified as open-minded metropolises in media discourses of the 1950s.

What we observe here is the communicative construction of space-related identities in mass media communication. Regarding the 1950s, our paper will focus on the on-going medial construction of space-related identities in Hamburg and Leipzig. Therefore, we ask how collective space-related identities were imagined, constructed and reconstructed, shaped and changed in a mediated communication process in the past. In particular, how were global reference points produced in mass media discourses? How were they connected to local characteristics? And how did they function as parts of changing processes of community building within the two cities?

Referring to Stuart Hall, we argue that people in Hamburg and Leipzig were confronted with multiple identities (Hall 1992): media communication in Hamburg and Leipzig in the 1950s comprehended different space-related identities - both in an interwoven and in a competitive way. Especially *the local* and *the global* closely interacted in the construction of particular urban space-related identities.

Analyzing the cities’ identity constructions as communicative figurations enables us to ask for the dynamic interrelation between the medial, political, and social contexts that shape these processes of communicative construction. As the concept stresses the significance of the media environment and different media ensembles, it helps us to research their significance for transformation, and, at the same time, to overcome the focus on one ‘leading medium’ that till today is characteristic for most of the media research (Marszolek/ Robel 2016, forthcoming). We try to establish which aspects are cru-

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.deutschlandradiokultur.de/eine-lange-nacht-ueber-eine-tausendjaehrige-stadt-mein.1024.de.html?dram:article\\_id=336721](http://www.deutschlandradiokultur.de/eine-lange-nacht-ueber-eine-tausendjaehrige-stadt-mein.1024.de.html?dram:article_id=336721) [03.03.2016].

cial for changes in or the persistence of Hamburg's and Leipzig's identity constructions, plus the framing of different political systems. In the sense of Norbert Elias, figurations can be found and should be investigated on the macro, meso and micro levels. Therefore, communicative figurations are a very flexible concept to investigate the construction of identities and their offers of collectivities as an intertwined process which is shaped by media and other political and social forces.

Thus, first, we will elaborate to what extent *the local* in Hamburg and Leipzig was stantly constructed by discourses on *the global*, and which regularities within the discourses can be found.<sup>3</sup> In a second step, we will use one visual example to show that media communication plays a decisive part in constructing multiple collective identities. As other cross-media examples in the following illustrate as well, *the global* not only was linked to territorial borders but also to gender and generation roles. Third, we will examine the historical, political and medial contexts that affect the construction of the cities' global self-images. In consequence, we argue that those constructions of global images are very stable umbrella notions, even though the changing media ensembles - which we analyse in a fourth step - and the intensifying Cold War during the 1950s had some impact on gradual new formations of space-related identities. Fifth, we will show that markers of mobility and modernity, in particular, played an important role in the mediated construction of the cities' cosmopolitanism, which besides all similarities were framed by special discourses in the East and the West. Because of these similarities and differences in Hamburg and Leipzig, we finally discuss the idea of an *entangled perspective*, which could enrich the historical view to communicative figurations in a special way.

## 2 Hamburg and Leipzig as ,global players'?

By researching the 'regularities' and 'predominant statements' (Foucault 2003) within medial discourses on the cities' images, we will inevitably be confronted with global references. Especially during the 1950s slogans like 'Hamburg, the gate to the world' and 'Leipzig, the showcase to the world' were omnipresent. They were produced and reproduced cross-medially, both as part of image strategies and unintended discourses. The main reason for both cities to enhance their claim to be part of the world in the 1950s, of course was that after the defeat of National Socialism both parts of Germany had to reinvent their positions in the Cold War divided world. In this sort of very dense cross-media communication the differences in the media ensembles were much lesser than in other periods.

Stressing the importance of the yearly trade fairs, Leipzig had a multiple image as a city that had a particular standing across the globe. This can be shown cross-medially by textual, visual and audio sources. For instance, the radio and TV programme guide *Unser Rundfunk* frequently announced reports of the trade fairs with titles like 'Leipzig - a global meeting point'<sup>4</sup>, 'Leipzig - in the spotlight of the world' or 'Leipzig - the global

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<sup>3</sup> Of course, we have to keep in mind that both notions have to be historized. We are dealing with images of the cities being part of the world, not as the ,global cities' of today.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Unser Rundfunk* 36/1953: 9-11. *ibid.* 37/1954: 16-17; *ibid.* 9/1955: 10-11.

showcase'<sup>5</sup>. In television the daily news 'Aktuelle Kamera' frequently confirmed Leipzig's significance as the 'biggest place of trade fair within the world'.<sup>6</sup> Around 1955 a 'corporate video' about the city, entitled 'Leipzig - the bridge to the world', was produced. The movie, commissioned by the district council, introduced Leipzig as the 'heart of the European continent' because of its importance as *the* global city of trade fairs.<sup>7</sup> In 1959 a book with the title 'Leipzig - the global showcase' was published as a guide for the trade fair (Hennig 1959) and repeated the slogan again. In 1960 the radio broadcast the song 'Leipzig - the gate(way) to the world', which was played by a marching band and praised the singularity of the Leipzig fair and its importance for the East and the West. It included the following text: 'Thousands of interested persons from all five continents are attracted by the trade fair city. The Leipzig fair sets the course for the East and the West. There is nothing comparable - concerning the dimension and profit. Leipzig - the gate to the world. Meeting point of all nations...'<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, Leipzig was not only seen as a global meeting point, but as a showcase, bridge or gate to the world.

However, Leipzig's image as a global showcase was deeply embedded in the city's narrative, although in the Weimar Republic, Leipzig had not been issued with the official title as a trade fair city because different urban actors highlighted the city's manifold traditions as the location for the book trade or fur trade and as a place of music, art and sciences. Only in 1937 was it recognized as a trade fair city of the German Reich,<sup>9</sup> and framed by the nationalist narrative and identity constructions in the Nazi period. After 1989 Leipzig did re-enhance its image as a meeting point between the transformed East and West and as a 'global player'.

For Hamburg a similar dominance of global references is apparent, even though they aren't connected to a single event like the trade fair in Leipzig. It is striking how consistently Hamburg has been called the 'gateway to the world' even right up to the present day. Lars Amenda has stressed how this slogan has become increasingly important for the image policy of the city since the Weimar Republic and that it was nationally framed and overemphasized during National Socialism and re-invented after the Second World War (Amenda/Grünen 2008). During the 1950s the metaphor of the worlds' gateway was omnipresent, especially within media discourses. We can find it as a visual signal within the logo of the *Hamburger Abendblatt*, the most important local newspaper: Since 1948 the logo has shown a gate between two towers, surrounded by the text: 'With the

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Unser Rundfunk 10/1957: 12-13; *ibid.* 36/1954: 14.

<sup>6</sup> DRA, Deutscher Fernsehfunk, Aktuelle Kamera, 03.03.1959.

<sup>7</sup> 'Leipzig - Brücke zur Welt', around 1955, 17 min, Staatsarchiv Leipzig, Best. 22043.

<sup>8</sup> DRA Potsdam, Tonträger, ZMV8349. „*Es sind Millionen Hände schon am Werken den Frieden zu stärken, zu ächten den Krieg. Zum Guten soll der Erdball sich verändern, Freundschaft mit allen Völkern und Ländern. In unserer Republik. (Refrain) Leipzig - Tor zur Welt. Treffpunkt aller Nationen. Hält man zum friedlichen Handel bestellt. Leipzig - das Tor zur Welt. Es zieht die vielen tausend Intressenten aus fünf Kontinenten zur Messestadt hin. Nach Osten und Westen stellt sie ihre Weichen, die Leipziger Messe hat nicht ihresgleichen, An Größe und Gewinn. (Refrain) Es ist die Messe großer Sensationen, An neuen Konstruktionen auf jedem Gebiet. Es schaut die Welt nach unsren Exponaten, Der neuen Technik gigantischen Taten. Ja unsre Wirtschaft blüht (Refrain)*“.

Recorded for the *Rundfunk der DDR* at the Leipzig broadcasting studio by the choir of the Karl-Marx-University Leipzig and the folk music group of the broadcasting station Leipzig.

<sup>9</sup> Stadtarchiv Leipzig, Kap. 66, Nr. 27.

home in your heart, embrace the world'.<sup>10</sup> It was used in 1951 as the title for a broadcast on schools radio (Schulfunk) of *Norddeutscher Rundfunk*.<sup>11</sup> In the same year a documentary film was entitled 'Germany's Gateway to the World', produced in German and English language versions, which showed the daily business of the Hamburg harbour (Landesmedienzentrum Hamburg 1999: 57-58).<sup>12</sup> Likewise, in 1953 and 1955 other movies were produced that used the slogan gateway to the world.<sup>13</sup> Another example is the book 'Hamburg - gateway to the world', which was published in various editions during the 1950s. On its cover central visual markers are combined (Amenda/Grünen 2008: 82), which are deeply connected to the metaphor of the gateway to the world: The Michel, the central church of the city, the harbour and the river Elbe. The harbour, in particular, functioned as *the* symbol for the interlinkage of *the local* and *the global* in Hamburg, as will be shown further down. One example can illustrate this significance of the harbour: In 1952 the TV programme guide *Hör zu!* announced the popular music show 'Großstadt-Serenade' with the following words: 'The Hamburg harbour is lying in the blue glow of the evening light. Silhouettes of the ships are rising into the misty horizon. Somewhere, out on the gentle gurgling waves, a cargo ship's siren is calling for a pilot boat. In this blue hour the loud and busy, gateway to the world' is transmuting into a place of romance, which one never forgets when one has experienced it once.'<sup>14</sup> Like Leipzig, Hamburg was not only thought of as the gateway to the world, but also as a global meeting point and bridge between different worlds.<sup>15</sup>

These metaphors are accompanied by their own connotations and open up a range of diverse associations. Whereas the meeting point and showcase metaphors, in particular, emphasize an integrative moment and the world in one's own home, the gateway to the world metaphor stresses ideas about leaving and departure. But in the Hamburg and Leipzig cross-medial material it is evident that these connotations seem to be interchangeable. Both were important ways of claiming the cities' significance for the world, and served as umbrella notions, which were rather stable in their significance. However, what we can certainly show is that 'places are also the moments through which the global is constituted, invented, co-ordinated, produced' (Massey 2004: 11) and vice versa. *The local* and *the global* are closely interlinked and interact. But which role do media play in this interaction? And how did this interlinkage construct collective identities?

<sup>10</sup> 'Mit der Heimat im Herzen die Welt umfassen'. Cf.: 'Anno Domini 1241', in: *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 14.10.1948: 3.

<sup>11</sup> Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Best. 621-1/144 Nr. 1759, 'Hamburg - Tor zur Welt'.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. also 'Film im Dienste Hamburgs', in: *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 18.10.1951: 3.

<sup>13</sup> Landesmedienzentrum Hamburg, 1999: 61-64/78: 'Hamburg im Blickpunkt der Welt', Bodo Menck, 1952, 16 min.; English version: 'Welcome in Hamburg' 1952; 'Am Tor zur Welt', Willy Beutler, 1953, 32 min.; 'Tor zur Welt', Adalbert Baltes, 1955, 13 min.

<sup>14</sup> 'Blaue Nacht am Hafen', in: *Hör zu!* 43/1952: 3. *Das Hamburger Hafengelände liegt im blauen Schimmer der Abenddämmerung. Die Silhouetten der Schiffe ragen in den dunstigen Horizont. Irgendwo, weil draußen auf den leise gluckenden Wellen, ruft noch eine Frachtersirene nach dem Lotsenboot, in dieser blauen Stunde verwandelt sich das laute und geschäftige 'Tor zur Welt' in eine Stätte der Romantik, die man nicht wieder vergißt, wenn man sie einmal erlebt hat.*

<sup>15</sup> Cf. 'Treffpunkt am Tor zur Welt', in: *Hör zu!* 27/1953: 24-25.

### 3 Researching space-related identities

Currently there is a widespread argument that space has to be thought of as ‘relational’, which means space isn’t deep-rooted or static but a mutable outcome of an on-going process of communication (cf. e.g. Geppert et al. 2005). This theoretical assumption also affects our view of identities, as Doreen Massey has pointed out: ‘if we make space through interactions at all levels, from the (so-called) local to the (so-called) global then those spatial identities such as places, regions, nations, and the local and the global, must be forged in this relational way too, as internally complex, (...) and inevitably historically changing’ (Massey 2004: 5). Research in social and cultural studies has underlined that collective identities aren’t genuine, essential and homogenous entities which we are born with (Niethammer 2000), but constructed and transformed permanently in relation to our socio-cultural surrounding (Hall 1992; Hall/ Du Gay 1996). Within this complex field *media* not only mirror changeable ideas of space and connected ideas of collective identities but play a decisive role within their construction (Stauff 2005).

Following up older traditions, during the 1950s the *visual* dimension, in particular, became more and more important for creating and communicating ideas of identity and collectivity. The visual repertoire not only became larger but also more manifold during this time. The appearance and implementation of television - in the West and the East starting with an experimental period in the early 1950s - strengthened the visualization processes. Thus, Leipzig and Hamburg were very often presented via visual markers, thus reinforcing the interlinkage between *the local* and *the global*. During the 1950s for Leipzig the most striking visual marker was the globe.

For example, look at the following cover of the radio programme guide in March 1955:



Fig. 1: Cover, *Unser Rundfunk*, 9/1955.

As an announcement of the spring trade fair, the picture relates Leipzig to the world in a particular way: In reminiscence of Charlie Chaplin's dance with the globe, the woman seems to play cheerfully with the globes. We can see two globes - possibly symbolizing the two political worlds, which appear to meet easily in Leipzig. By placing the one world in front of the woman and the other in the middle of her hand, the picture confirms Leipzig's location in the middle (or rather the heart) of Europe and the globe.

As other pictures illustrate, Leipzig was very often seen as the middle or heart of the world.<sup>16</sup> Without any doubt, one important spatial imagination during the 1950s deal with the difference between West and East. This was used as a reference point for that picture as well. The symbol of the globe was especially suitable to stress both Leipzig's and the GDR's openness to the world *and* the (dichotomic) territorial borders. The two globes symbolized this competitive situation with the West, while the reference to Charlie Chaplin strengthened the anti-Fascist narration and the new-invention of the GDR. As we know, photographs are not only influenced by culture and politics, they also help to create and stabilize them (Christmann 2008). In this sense they could formulate different and parallel existing space-related ideas of identity. On the one hand, the photograph of the woman dancing with the globes obviously goes hand in hand with gender constructions. On the other hand, it refers to older traditions of commercial photography, especially within a magazine like the programme guide, which was a well-known medium itself, being an all-German tradition before 1945. This dynamic use and interpretation of a picture like this can only be understood if one knows about the cities' special framings, and about the changes within both German media environments and within Hamburg's and Leipzig's media ensembles. Only with this in mind can we ask for a media-related transformation of the communicative construction of 'social reality' during the 1950s.

#### 4 Historical and medial context

To understand the cities' mediated self-images as 'global players' and connected identity constructions, we first have to take into consideration the historical role of Hamburg and Leipzig within both young German states during the 1950s.

Although West Berlin had an exceptional position within the Federal Republic of Germany, prestigious large cities like Hamburg, Frankfurt or Munich benefitted in a special way from the so-called 'economic miracle' - including an atmosphere of restarting and rebuilding after the war. Beyond doubt, in Hamburg primarily the harbour and its increasing industrialization were important for this economic revival. Being one of the biggest in Europe, the harbour not only functioned as a huge local workplace, but also as a national 'showpiece' of the young growing West German state. Additionally, Hamburg could take up its traditions as a significant university site and a place of trade fairs to strengthen its international image, and to maintain the city's leading position both in a national and transnational context. One peculiarity was Hamburg's administrative character as a city-state, which also affected the city's media ensemble and identity constructions. This is also true of its position in the Northern region, which was less densely populated than the South of Germany.

After the division of Germany in 1945, Leipzig was the second largest city within the Soviet occupied zone and later the GDR. Only East Berlin had more inhabitants. Following up its tradition as an important location for industry and trade, Leipzig played a fundamental role in the GDR. Especially the international trade fair, which was held twice a year, underlined the importance of the city - also for the public image of the young state as an 'imagined community' (Anderson 2006). In the 1950s the GDR developed its own particular kind of nationhood and patriotism. As Jan Palmowski in his study about 'Inventing a socialist nation' has noted, 'the party could, and did, develop a socialist ideal of nationhood that defined itself through class, local affinities, and the local and regional traditions that were specific to the GDR' (Palmowski 2009: 3). Leipzig with its traditions as a place of trade and culture, had a special importance for this invention. But it wasn't only *the local* and *regional* that was integrated into the national storyboard. We argue that stressing Leipzig's *global* connection and *cosmopolitan* character was especially important for the invention of the (socialist) nation and representation of the new political power.

These contexts and the cities' importance as 'media cities' framed the media conditions for the communicative construction of space-related identities. Traditionally Hamburg and Leipzig were places of particularly dense communication and as prominent media locations allocated highly diversified media ensembles (for Hamburg e.g. Führer 2008; Rüden/Wagner 2005; Schildt 2012; Wagner 2008; for Leipzig e.g. Höpel 2007; 2011; Meyen 1996; Schlimper 1997; Steinmetz/Viehoff 2008).

Accordingly, Hamburg within the newly founded Federal Republic of Germany could build on its traditions as a media location, especially with respect to audio media. After 1945, *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* (NWDR), based in Hamburg and Köln, broadcast within the British occupation zone (Rüden/ Wagner 2005). In 1956 it was separated into *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* (NDR) and *Westdeutscher Rundfunk* (WDR). The former has remained in Hamburg. The city had a pioneer role in the development of television as well, since the *Nordwestdeutscher Fernsehdienst* in Hamburg started its experimental broadcasts as early as 1950 (Wagner 2008). Even after the West German public television broadcasting service (ARD) was founded in the same year, Hamburg didn't lose its significance, as can be seen from the fact that the daily news has been produced in Hamburg since 1952. It later became the popular 'Tagesschau'. Although Hamburg wasn't a big location for magazines during the Weimar Republic, in the 1950s, in particular, the magazine market expanded immediately (Führer 2008: 246-269). The most successful magazine, not only in the north, was the TV programme guide *Hör zu!*, which has been published since 1946 (Seegers 2001). In addition, the *Hamburger Abendblatt*, which was first published in 1948, has been the highest circulating and most-read daily newspaper in Hamburg from as early as 1950 (Führer 2008: 515). The trans-local daily newspaper *Die Welt*, the illustrated magazine *Stern*, the political magazine *Der Spiegel* and the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*, as well as the tabloid *Bild*, all of which have been produced in Hamburg since the beginning of the 1950s, clearly transformed the city into the 'centre of the west German press' (Führer 2008: 261).

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<sup>16</sup> This can be connected to very persistent construction of 'Mitteldeutschland', which even existed in the GDR. Cf. John 2001.

Although Leipzig lost its international importance as a distinguished location for press and publishing houses (which was especially the case before and at the beginning of the Weimar Republic), the city still continued to be important for media in GDR. From July 1945 onwards the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* has been published and later became one of the big regional organs of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED). In 1946 the radio station *Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk, Sender Leipzig* started to broadcast regularly. From 1949 to 1952 the popular regional radio programme guide *Der Rundfunk. Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk Leipzig* was published. And it was Leipzig, which - because of the trade fair in autumn 1953 - opened the so-called Fernsehstuben (locations for public TV-viewing) as one of the first cities in the GDR (Meyen 1999: 120). Last but not least, debates that discussed the possibility of establishing a central television and radio studio in Leipzig in the late 1950s (Hoff 2002; Hoff 2003) underline the (in this case: imagined) importance of Leipzig as a location of media-production - although they never were realised.

It is important to know that both Hamburg and Leipzig were pioneers in enforcing the professionalization of post-war journalism. As early as 1947 the NWDR, instructed by the British occupying power, opened a so-called Rundfunkschule (broadcasting school), where participants not only learned how to do radio journalism but also were to be 're-educated' in democratic values (Schwarzkopf 2007). That was important since during de-Nazification in Hamburg, only the political editorial staff was exchanged, whereas many positions in broadcasting and in the print press were still occupied by men who had served in the propaganda units of the Wehrmacht. But in Hamburg, as in West Germany in general, a younger generation of well-trained critical journalists, women included, worked in the media from the end of the 1950s onwards (Hodenberg 2006). Leipzig started its professionalization in 1954 with the founding of the Faculty for Journalism at the Karl Marx University of Leipzig, which later became a centre for the vocational training of GDR journalists (Conley 2012: 33-46). After 1945 the Communist party and later the SED tried to secure their influence through a strict policy of employing only loyal media staff. Thus, in Leipzig too, it was beneficial to have a worker's background, socialization within the communist party (KPD), and to comply to the ideology. But as there were not many journalists available who fulfilled these criteria, pragmatic decisions had to be made, and some former journalists from the Nazi period were integrated as well (Meyen/Fiedler 2013). As a result, professionalization not only helped produce a wider range of well-trained (male and female) journalists from the younger generation, but, of course, also aimed to promote the Marxist-Leninist political standpoint and thereby evoke a more 'homogenous' media coverage. To sum up: The re-establishment of the media and the development of the single media organization in both cities shows some similarities due to the same starting point after the Nazi period and the lost war. However, the different systems had various impacts on the (ideological) alignments of the media ensemble, the professionalization of the journalists etc. Even though there was no direct competition between the cities, the media ensembles were active players in the rivalry between the systems in the Cold War.

Besides this, the cities had their own media ensembles that were changing within the generally altering media environments. As Axel Schildt (2012: 250) pointed out, the task for historical media research is to overcome the idea of an analogue ensemble of mass media that remains largely unchanged over a longer time, as there were different deep

changes even before the ‘digital revolution’. In Hamburg and Leipzig these changes were framed by the historical context of the 1950s in a special way.

## 5 Changing media ensembles and their impact on identity constructions

Both German media environments after 1945 were characterized by the reorganization of media institutions after the war, the initially strong influence of the occupying powers, the continuing and increasing importance of radio, and finally by the (second) beginning of TV during the 1950s. In both Germany’s, including Hamburg and Leipzig, media ensembles were re-established after a very short time. While continuity of the Weimar Republic was prominent, the British and Soviet media landscapes exercised strong influence.

With the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany (BRD) in 1949 in the West, a federal political system was established that particularly affected media organization. Whereas after 1945 the broadcasting system in Hamburg was restricted by the borders of the British occupation zone, during the 1950s a regional media structure developed. Owing to Hamburg’s character as a city state, *the regional* and *local* were difficult to keep apart from each other. Already in 1950 the NWDR devised special programmes for the north and the south within the VHF transmission area; since then Hamburg has broadcast the so-called ‘Welle der Freude’ (‘wave of joy’) for the Northern area. The separation into NDR and WDR in 1956 led to the regional broadcasting structure of the Weimar republic to be re-established for good (Führer 2008: 129-131).

Television, still a young medium, picked up the growing regional and local trend within the programmes on offer (Schildt 2012: 259), and Hamburg was one of the first cities to start a regional television magazine in 1957. The so-called ‘Nordschau’ included political and cultural reports from the four Northern federal states Hamburg, Bremen, Schleswig-Holstein, and Lower Saxony, special reports on rural areas, as well as series on the East German state (‘Jenseits der Zonengrenze’/ ‘Beyond the border’).<sup>17</sup> The ‘Aktuelle Schaubude’, an entertainment show produced in a glass box in the city centre, thus enabling urban dwellers to watch the live production every Saturday became particularly popular. Walter Hilpert, general director of the NDR, opened the first ‘Nordschau’ with the following words: ‘Our aim: The Nordschau should watch and listen to the diverse topics in north Germany; especially to the persons and characters who are working there. This programme will live *out* of the space which we are broadcasting to. At the same time it is to be made *for* a northern Germany without any provincial narrowness.’<sup>18</sup> Again, it seemed important to claim Hamburg’s and Northern Germany’s trans-local open-mindedness.

In the German Democratic Republic (GDR), at the latest from 1952 onwards, well-established older *regional* references for the construction of identities were officially undesirable. When enforcing the administrative reform of 1952, the party replaced the

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<sup>17</sup> NDR, Unternehmensarchiv (Company Archive), Nachlass Proske.

<sup>18</sup> Nordschau, 01.12.1957, 2.04-2.31 min. NDR, TV Archive, No 0001009705. „*Unser Ziel: Die Nordschau soll die Themen des Norddeutschen Raums in ihrer Vielfalt sehen und hören und natürlich vor allem die dabei wirkenden Menschen und Persönlichkeiten. Dieses Programm wird aus dem Raum leben, in dem wir ausstrahlen. Es wird aber zugleich für Norddeutschland gedacht sein, in dem keinerlei provinzielle Enge herrschen soll.*“

five states - created after 1945 - with fourteen newly formed districts and 217 completely new counties. Accordingly, media were directly influenced by the reform of 1952: The diffusion rates of regional pages in newspapers were adapted to the newly formed districts. Accordingly, until 1952 readers in Leipzig received the edition for north west Saxony, and from 1952 the edition for the district of Leipzig. Presumably that changed the reports in their spatial range. Regional radio stations like *Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk* were abolished. Although this doesn't mean constructions of regional identities didn't exist anymore, this step did further strengthen the interconnection between Leipzig's local characteristics and global references.

An important role for the permanent construction of local identity was played by *Leipziger Stadtfunk*. It was produced by a little studio located in the town hall and could be listened to through loudspeakers in the city centre, in different urban quarters and in some factories in town. The airtime could be from an hour a day to the whole day (especially during the trade fairs). In addition to official statements from the government or local leisure time recommendations, distributed correspondents (so-called Funkkorrespondenten<sup>19</sup>) provided reports from local factories or about leisure time activities with their co-workers.<sup>20</sup> *Stadtfunk* can be seen as a special part of the urban soundscape of Leipzig's past - understood as an acoustic whole which surrounds people in a particular place at a particular time (Birdsall 2012). Leipzig *Stadtfunk*, in a way a child of the Cold War,<sup>21</sup> existed from 1950 till 1995. It couldn't be switched off and replaced by another broadcast as radio or television programmes could be, but belonged to daily (acoustic) life - for example, while people were waiting at the tram station. In this way *Stadtfunk* immediately impacted on the communicative construction of social reality in Leipzig.

Not only through *Stadtfunk* could people in the performative sense listen to their Saxon speaking 'neighbours'. Even after abolition of *Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk*, the radio reported from urban quarters, from factories and from the streets of Leipzig.<sup>22</sup>

While *Stadtfunk* primarily strengthened the local space, locally labelled music shows like the 'Leipziger Allerlei' ('Leipzig Potpourri')<sup>23</sup> or the 'Hamburger Hafenkonzert' ('Hamburg harbour concert') (Tiews 2014; Vollberg 2008: 254-255), permanently reinforced the global importance of the respective cities. The interlinkage between *the local* and *the global*,

<sup>19</sup> The Funkkorrespondenten as one active group within Leipzigs' communicative figuration were a special mixture of semi-professional and non-professional journalists. Reaching back to older socialist traditions, in the GDR they were part of the ideology of a 'democratic' radio (and mass media in general). For similar ideas in the press see Richter 1993.

<sup>20</sup> For the institutional details see: Stadtarchiv Leipzig, StVuR Nr. 22020. For a first research on Stadtfunk including interviews with former staff member see: Rohr 2011.

<sup>21</sup> Especially after the construction of the Berlin wall in 1961 loudspeakers played an important role for the (listenable) demarcation from each other. Some research talks about a war via loudspeaker, Stratenschulte 2013. Both German states therefore could take up older traditions of using loudspeakers as an important part of daily communication (Epping-Jäger 2013).

<sup>22</sup> From the second half of the 1950s at the latest local and regional programmes were being promoted again. The 'Sender Leipzig' then regularly broadcast once or twice a day its own programmes, including the 'Stadtreporter'. At first these programmes of the district broadcasting stations (Bezirksstudios) were part of the schedules of Berliner Rundfunk; after 1956 they became part of Radio DDR.

<sup>23</sup> 'Hörerstimmen zu Leipziger allerlei', in: Der Rundfunk 2/1951: 4; 'Nicht zerstreuen, sondern erfreuen!', in: Unser Rundfunk 18/1958: 7.

especially in Hamburg, became obvious in special broadcasting formats which connected the city to global travel. The best-known example was the weekly radio programme ‘Zwischen Hamburg und Haiti’ (‘Between Hamburg and Haiti’), which was broadcast from 1951.<sup>24</sup> Even today, every Sunday listeners can ‘accompany’ reporters on their travels around the world. In the 1950s Hamburg has acted as the location of departure; the world ‘outside’ was shown as manifold and exotic (cf. Klamroth 1956). Certainly, ‘the faraway’ always referred to spaces of proximity and the home as well. In the broadcast programme guide *Hör zu!* in 1955 one could read for example: ‘It is so comfortable: The Sunday morning coffee left behind, waiting for the lunch, you switch on the radio - and promptly you are a foreign peoples’ guest.’<sup>25</sup> In a way, this statement illustrated the increasing retreat into the private sphere, as was characteristic for the 1950s.

The examples of Hamburg and Leipzig both show that the historical context not only affected the cities’ media ensembles, but also the programme on offer and the content alignments. Within the local or regional programme selections linked to Hamburg or Leipzig, *the global* was a very often-used reference. Markers of mobility and modernity for the cities’ presentation reinforced these trends.

## 6 Modernity and mobility as common signs for the cities’ cosmopolitanism

Looking at the visual representation of Leipzig, we find some typical and repeated visual markers for the city: First, there is the town hall, which symbolizes the new local and national ‘democracy’.<sup>26</sup> Together with Leipzig’s re-built ‘modern’ central train station, it also emblemizes the reconstruction after 1945. Furthermore, the globe, functioning as a logo for the trade fair as well, stands for the international importance of Leipzig. Cityscapes include street signs point in different directions and suggest that Leipzig is a part of a large-scale network.<sup>27</sup> Such intentional images, in this case created by professionals, played a key role in the construction of a cosmopolitan urban identity (cf. Stoetzer 2006). In particular, in association with the trade fairs, pictures very often showed a crowd of people carrying suitcases (sometimes in front of the central train station) or a line of cars between narrow rows of houses.<sup>28</sup> Thus, in 1956 the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* announced the spring trade fair saying: ‘From hour to hour the fair city with its international vehicle traffic develops the character of a cosmopolitan city.’<sup>29</sup> All together these visual markers stressed the mobility, hence the modernity, of Leipzig. They show a vivid city, open-minded, with its gates always open for visitors from all over the

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<sup>24</sup> In Hamburg’s Staatsarchiv there are text scripts of the programmes broadcast from 1956 to 1960. Staatsarchiv Hamburg, Best. 621-1/144, Nr. 1201.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Zwischen Hamburg und Haiti’, in: *Hör zu!* 46/1955: 3. „*Es ist so schön bequem: Man hat den Sonntagmorgenkaffee hinter sich, wartet auf das Mittagessen, stellt das Rundfunk-Gerät ein - und schon ist man zu Gast bei fremden Völkern*“

<sup>26</sup> Cf. ‘Das Neue Rathaus. Heute Sinnbild des sich selbst regierenden Volkes’, in: *LVZ*, 22.10.1961.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Leipziger Messe 1952 - Erste Messe im Aufbau des Sozialismus’, in: *LVZ* 07.09.1952, p. 1; ‘Messe des Friedens - Messe der Erfolge’, in: *Der Rundfunk* 38/1951: 2-3; ‘Die Leipziger Messe 1952’, in: *Der Rundfunk* 37/1952: Cover; ‘Leipzig - ein großes schönes Erlebnis’, in: *Unser Rundfunk* 40/1954: 4-5.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. ‘MM Spiegel des Aufbaus’, in: *Unser Rundfunk* 36/1953: 7.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Leipzig Treffpunkt der Welt’, in: *LVZ* 25.02.1956: 1. „*Von Stunde zu Stunde nimmt die Messestadt mit ihrem internationalen Fahrzeugverkehr immer mehr den Charakter einer Weltstadt an.*“

world. This image was later reinforced, when the trade fair office invented the well-known mascot named 'Messemännchen' (1964) (Tippach-Schneider 2002: 203). With his head like a globe, a suitcase in his hand and a modern bourgeois hat on his head the little trade fair man combined most of the signs of mobility. Only the pipe in his mouth referred to his home as a background story and confirmed the masculinity of that mobility.

'Mecki' - a fictional hedgehog designed to create a feeling of identification with *Hör zu!* in West Germany - functioned in a similar way. Existing since 1949, Mecki's most conspicuous attribute was his role as a globetrotter,<sup>30</sup> who on the one hand permanently crossed boundaries, but on the other was deeply entrenched in his hometown, Hamburg. Hence, he was the well-known globetrotter with familial background in his prime age. The world he was living in was a very cozy one, free from social or political conflicts. Mecki's 'personal life' (he got engaged to Micki in 1952) was shaped by traditional civic values and morals. To some extent, he stood symbolically for the cosmopolitan and bourgeois part of 'the Hanseatic' that was re-invented during the 1950s (Seegers 2015).

However, the most dominant signs for Hamburg's mobility and its global mindset are still the harbour and its water. Thus, the visual representation of the city during the 1950s was accompanied by pictures of industrial docks, cranes, tugboats or sailing boats, ship's ropes, and, of course, the Elbe river with its renowned landing stages.<sup>31</sup> Sometimes it was reduced to several maritime signs, like the anchor or seagulls.<sup>32</sup> Sometimes male actors represented it, for example, the dockers or the more romantic figure of the sailor setting out as a young man from Hamburg into the world.<sup>33</sup> These pictures and the combination of visual markers give an impression of an industrious city set in relaxing surroundings. The view along the river to the north was used to signal an auspicious departure into the world.<sup>34</sup> In a way, the general social and economic departure of the 1950s was represented in those pictures. Moreover, the harbour, in particular, was very often seen as a mysterious and shady space that had its own special atmosphere. It is striking how often the Hamburg harbour is pictured during the night in romantic light. For instance, the *Hamburger Abendblatt* captioned a picture taken at night in 1953 with the following words: 'Heavy and dark the huge cubes of the Kontorhäuser rest in front of the free port's bridge, their ten-storey trade lodges, window upon bright window rising up under the roof, powerfully pulse to the harbour's heartbeat - a marvellous night-time panorama of the old cosmopolitan city whose windows glow brightly over the seas, across to its trading partners on distant continents: signals of its determination to live and of its energy that has stood the test of the ups and downs of history.'<sup>35</sup> From these romantic night-time

<sup>30</sup> Symptomatically, *Hör zu!* several times reported on Meckis' voyages under the heading 'Look out into the world' ('Blick in die Welt'). Cf. *Hör zu!* 10/1951: 5; 10/1952: 4.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. 'Menschen im Hafen', in: *Hör zu!* 44/1957: 12-13.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. 'La Paloma' in: *Hör zu!* 29/1950: Cover.

<sup>33</sup> Concerning the last cf. 'Kapitäne von morgen', in: *Hör zu!* 18/1954: 8; 'Vorzimmer der weiten Welt', in: *Hör zu!* 48/1956: 20.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. 'Um die Ecke geht es nach Amerika' in: *Hör zu!* 01/1957: 3.

<sup>35</sup> 'Tausende Kontorhauslichter am Tor zur Welt: Signale der alten Hansestadt Hamburg über Land und Meer', in: *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 23.02.1953: 3. "Schwer und dunkel liegen vor der Freihafenbrücke die massigen Kuben der Kontorhäuser, zehnstöckige Burgen des Handels, hell erleuchtet Fenster an Fenster bis unter das Dach, kräftig durchpulst von den Herzschlägen des Hafens - ein großartiges Nachtpanorama der alten Weltstadt, deren Fenster weit über die Meere leuchten, hinüber zu den Handelspartnern auf fernen Kontinenten: Signale ihre Lebenswillens und ihrer im Auf und Ab der Geschichte immer neue sich bewährenden Kraft."

representations it was only a short step to stories of a wild night-life within the city. No wonder that pictures and stories of the Hamburg harbour very often were linked to the nearby and famous entertainment district St. Pauli (cf. Amenda/Grünen 2008). This link has been reaffirmed by the very famous movies ‘Auf der Reeperbahn nachts um halb eins’/ ‘On the Reeperbahn at one in the night’ (1954) or ‘Herz von St. Pauli’/ ‘The heart of St. Pauli’ (1957) with Hans Albers playing the leading part.

Both in Hamburg and Leipzig especially these visual constructions of mobility contributed to an image representation of the cities as having a cosmopolitan spirit. Therefore, both produced the imagination of a city with its doors open to the world. But, whereas Hamburg stressed the metaphor of departure into the outside world, Leipzig (imaginarily) opened its doors to invite the world into the city. Beneath the superficial similarities we have to deal with the underlying differences in ascribing the medial constructions of Hamburg and Leipzig as cosmopolitan cities. Of course, these differing understandings of cosmopolitanism depended on the historical context of the divided world. Thus, discourses on *the global* and imagined transnational spaces did confirm very realistic territorial political borders.

The prominent role of *visual* media for the imagination of those ‘modern’ and ‘mobile’ global spaces within national borders is remarkable. According to approaches of visual history (Paul 2006), images aren’t only representations of a reality which is formed ‘somewhere else’, but have to be seen as an important part of the construction of social sense and values. Harald Welzer et al. (2002) clearly have shown how visual and audio-visual media produce people’s ideas of ‘reality’, and even form their ‘own personal’ memories and identities. During the 1950s in Hamburg and Leipzig programme guides or movies, in particular, dealt with global references, much more so than daily newspapers. Moreover, it is striking that visual metaphors like ‘showcase into the world’ or ‘global viewpoint’ were used progressively after 1953 - while the experimental time of TV broadcasting in both German states fascinated large parts of society.<sup>36</sup> However, the growing differentiation within the cities’ media ensembles did strengthen the spread and popularization of the modern, mobile and open-minded images of Hamburg and Leipzig during this decade.

## 7 A plea for an entangled and cross-medial historical approach

The 1950s in Germany were characterized by the growing impact of the Cold War: The workers revolts in the German Democratic Republic in 1953 and in Hungary in 1956, both suppressed by military forces, triggered fears on both sides of the so-called Iron Curtain. At the same time these years are linked to economic growth in the West and the East, which stabilized both German societies and states. Discourses on space-related identities were framed by this context, as media in East and West always reacted to each other and to the dynamics of the Cold War. Dominant discourses on the ‘economic miracle’ in the West and the ‘building of socialism’ in the East stressed the differences between the systems. Nevertheless, the link between *the local*, *the national* and *the global* was variable, as can be shown by an example from Leipzig: In the early 1950s the Leipzig trade

fair was presented as a symbol of German unity and a perfect example of border crossing.<sup>37</sup> As an all-German event, it was considered to be part of the fight for the reunification of the German ‘fatherland’.<sup>38</sup> Yet, from 1952 onwards it was to demonstrate the economic growth of the young GDR and the growth of socialism in a divided world.<sup>39</sup> As such, the trade fair’s logo changed from one world in 1952 to two worlds placed next to each other in 1953. At the same time the trade fair’s significance was seen from an increasingly international perspective. Appropriately, the ‘Leipziger Stadtreporter’ of *Berliner Rundfunk* explained: ‘Particularly from the licence plates and the cars manufacturers’ logos [within the city] one can see which role Leipzig has to fulfil as a city of trade fairs and as a connection between two global markets. Yes, because of this, there are the two globes and the traditional MM within the emblem of the trade fair.’<sup>40</sup> And again, those sentences bring us back to the picture of the woman juggling with two globes. The programme guide also wrote about the meeting of two global markets and called it a ‘rendezvous of the continents’.<sup>41</sup> By the second half of the 1950s at the latest the Leipzig trade fair acted definitely as a symbol of strength of the GDR in the increasingly competitive situation with the West.<sup>42</sup>

In the West, likewise, even the ‘unpolitical’ character of Mecki, not without reason, again and again travelled to the United States of America.<sup>43</sup> But how can we highlight the historic political context for identity constructions and at the same time overcome the problem that comparisons between totalitarian and democratic systems often tend to grow too dichotomic and normative? To investigate communicative figurations means to enhance the comparative perspective. For historians one of the main problems with comparison is to identify the different levels of transformations, since in the past this has often led to neglecting the similarities of two political systems. As a result, for our comparative investigation on Hamburg and Leipzig ideas of entanglement or ‘histoire croisée’ (Middell 2000; Werner/Zimmermann 2006) are also useful. With the shift to global or transnational history, those approaches have been developed to focus on mutual influences and entanglement beyond relatively plain comparisons. The interrelation of space plays an important role in these studies, as scholars enhance the entanglement between *the national*, *the regional* and *the local*, as well as in *transnational* relations (ibid.). These ideas of entanglement not only help to shed light on the interrelations between the East and the West in the context of the Cold War, but take into account that in Germany, in particular, experiences, mentalities as well as (mediated) routines and expectations have been deeply shaped by a common past (Bösch 2015; Wierling 2015).

<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the television itself were entitled as the ‘showcase into the world’. Cf. ‘Fernsehstart’, in: Hör zu! 52/1952: 6-7; Diercks 2000.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. ‘Messe der Erfolge. Leipziger Herbstmesse 1950’, in: Der Rundfunk 35/1950: 3; ‘Messegäste grüßen aus Leipzig’, in: Der Rundfunk 10/1951: 16. DRA, Hörfunk, Nr. 2025527, MDR, ‘Zeitgeschehen vom Funk gesehen’, broadcasting from 10.09.1951.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Die Messe hat eine wichtige Friedensmission zu erfüllen’, in: LVZ 05.09.1952: 1.

<sup>39</sup> ‘Leipziger Messe 1952 - Erste Messe im Aufbau des Sozialismus’, in: LVZ 07.09.1952: 1; ‘Größte Gebrauchsgütermesse eröffnet’, in: LVZ 07.09.1958: 1.

<sup>40</sup> DRA, Schriftgut, F094-01-00/0054, p. 0072-0075, undated broadcasting, presumably March 1954.

<sup>41</sup> ‘Rendezvous der Kontinente’, in: Unser Rundfunk 8/1955: 2.

<sup>42</sup> ‘Die Herbstmesse 1958 - ein Schlag in Erhards Wirtschaftswunder’, in: LVZ 17.09.1958: 2; ‘Treffpunkt Leipzig’, in: Unser Rundfunk 37/1958: 2. The change from interpreting the trade fair first as an all-German event and later as a sign of strength within the competitive Cold War situation can also be illustrated by the manuscripts of the *Stadtfunk* in Leipzig’s city archive.

<sup>43</sup> E.g. ‘Mecki in Amerika’ in: Hör zu! 33/1951: 32-33.

This could explain why the global metaphors in Hamburg and Leipzig in a way functioned as open umbrella notions, interchangeable and overlapping. However, these entanglements were far away from being on the same level: Our thesis here is to speak of the asymmetry of entanglement. The young GDR had to struggle far more to position itself in the divided world of that time. The state (and Leipzig) had to invent new traditions or interpreted old metaphors by embedding them in a new narrative, whereas Hamburg enhanced more or less the continuities of the story of the harbour overlapping those ‘dark years’ of the Nazi-regime.

Furthermore, space-related identity constructions in Hamburg and Leipzig have to be analyzed in an entangled perspective because people in the East often participated in Western media and vice versa. Having this in mind, media also reported on the cities beyond the border, for example, when the programme guide *Der Rundfunk* announced a radio broadcasting entitled ‘Beautiful German Heimat’, reporting on Hamburg as the ‘gateway to the world’.<sup>44</sup> The other way around, the print press in Hamburg frequently reported on the Leipzig trade fair, amongst other things asking whether Leipzig should be seen as the ‘gateway to the East’.<sup>45</sup> Thus, we can understand both cities as communicative figurations whose borders permanently blurred. Then again, the research on entangled communicative figurations highlights the cross-medial character of the identity constructions and, at the same time, observes the dynamics of a changing media environment, as is apparent in the special role given to the visual within both cities’ image building. Moreover, by asking for the thematic framings, the actor constellations and communication practices within the communicative figurations, we can describe how these figurations are sometimes variable, and are sometimes more stable - besides the differences between a dictatorship and a democracy and connected to different political, social and medial frame conditions.

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<sup>44</sup> ‘Schöne deutsche Heimat’, in: *Der Rundfunk* 39/1952: 7.

<sup>45</sup> ‘Leipziger Messe - Tor zum Osten?’, in: *Die Zeit* 37/1954: 9.

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