AMERICAN STUDIES – A MONOGRAPH SERIES
Volume 258

Edited on behalf
of the German Association
for American Studies by
ALFRED HORNUNG
ANKE ORTLEPP
HEIKE PAUL

Poetics of Politics

Textuality and Social Relevance in Contemporary American Literature and Culture

Edited by
SEBASTIAN M. HERRMANN
CAROLIN ALICE HOFMANN
KATJA KANZLER
STEFAN SCHUBERT
FRANK USBECK

Universitätsverlag
WINTER
Heidelberg

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation
in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie;
detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet
über *http://dnb.d-nb.de* abrufbar.

This book is part of the Joint Dresden-Leipzig Research Initiative
»Selbst-Bewusste Erzählungen«.
For more information, please cf.
www.narrativeculture.de/poetics-of-politics.

Funding for this volume was contributed in part
by American Space Leipzig
www.americanspace-leipzig.de.

ISBN 978-3-8253-6447-2

Dieses Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt. Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlages unzulässig und strafbar. Das gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen.

© 2015 Universitätsverlag Winter GmbH Heidelberg

Imprimé en Allemagne · Printed in Germany
Druck: Memminger MedienCentrum, 87700 Memmingen

Gedruckt auf umweltfreundlichem, chlorfrei gebleichtem
und alterungsbeständigem Papier

Den Verlag erreichen Sie im Internet unter:
www.winter-verlag.de

Table of Contents

Sebastian M. Herrmann, Katja Kanzler, Stefan Schubert
Introduction: The Poetics of Politics 7

Film and Television

Andrew Hoberek
Thinking Institutionally: *Argo*, *Zero Dark Thirty*, and the Politics of Contemporary Historical Films 29

Felix Brinker
On the Formal Politics of Narratively Complex Television Series: Operational Self-Reflexivity and Audience Management in *Fringe* and *Homeland* 41

Eleonora Ravizza
The Politics of Melodrama: Nostalgia, Performance, and Gender Roles in *Revolutionary Road* 63

Michael Butter
American Basterds: The Deconstruction of World War II Myths in Steven Soderbergh's *The Good German* and Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* 81

Dorothea Gail, Ray Canoy
The Last Days of American Civilization: The Poetics of Righteous Violence in Bob Goldthwait's Black Comedy *God Bless America* 101

Nonfiction

Bruno Arich-Gerz
Poetics of Disaster: Filmic Elements and Traces of Fiction Literature in the *9/11 Commission Report*: Frames and Functions of a Generic Hybrid 121

Sebastian M. Herrmann
Foggy Realisms? Fiction, Nonfiction, and Political Affect in Larry Beinhart's *Fog Facts* and *The Librarian* 133

Carolin Alice Hofmann
Testifying by Proxy: A Trauma Studies Approach to *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* 153

'Literature'

Katja Kanzler
Post-Race Ideology and the Poetics of Genre in David Mamet's *Race* 175

Hans Frese
The Great American Novel and Beyond: Jonathan Franzen and the Legacy of the Culture Wars 195

Ilka Saal
"Just as Good as the Real Thing": *Historiopoiesis* in Third-Generation Narratives on Slavery 215

Olesya Bondarenko
"Inherently Political": Rancièrian Philosophy and Language Writing 235

Sabrina Hüttner
Politics of Dissent: Reconsidering 'the Political' in Tony Kushner's *Homebody/Kabul* 249

New Media

Stefan Schubert
Objectivism, Narrative Agency, and the Politics of Choice in the Video Game *BioShock* 271

Sophie Spieler
"Our Everyday Is Better Than Your Best Day": Spectacle and the Politics of Ambiguity on the *Tumblr* Blog *Rich Kids of Instagram* 291

Frank Usbeck
"The Power of the Story": 'Popular Narratology' in Pentagon Reports on Social Media Use in the Military 313

Notes on Contributors 335

MICHAEL BUTTER

American Basterds: The Deconstruction of World War II Myths in Steven Soderbergh's *The Good German* and Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*

Abstract: This article contends that both Steven Soderbergh's *The Good German* and Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* are political films in a dual sense. They engage with the political effects of filmic representations by way of referring to and rewriting earlier films about World War II. *The Good German* does this by staging an intertextual dialogue with *Casablanca*, *Inglourious Basterds* by taking on the 'dirty war films' of the 1960s and 1970s. Both films, albeit by different means, deconstruct the clear binary of good Americans and evil Nazis that those earlier films projected. They do this in order to comment critically on how the memory of World War II, decisively shaped by the films they refer to, has been used after 9/11 to justify torture, the violation of human rights, and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. As they complicate the image of World War II, they implicitly critique contemporary American politics.

Introduction

When Steven Soderbergh's *The Good German* (2006) was released, no reviewer from either side of the Atlantic failed to mention the film's indebtedness to classical Hollywood cinema. This is hardly surprising, as Soderbergh stressed in all promotional interviews that his aim had been to "make a film that looked and sounded like an old studio picture, but without the old studio prohibitions" (Dargis, "Spies"). *The Good German* contains explicit representations of sex and violence, but it is shot in black-and-white and in a screen ratio that approximates the academy format used during the 1940s. Moreover, Soderbergh used camera lenses and lighting techniques from that decade and boom instead of body mics (cf. deWaard 112). The result, though, did not fare well with audiences and critics. The former largely ignored the film and the latter almost unanimously agreed that it was a failure both formally and narratively. J. Hoberman called it "as much simulation as movie" and therefore "fatally insipid," and Manohla Dargis concluded that "they don't make them like they used to even when they try" ("Spies").

However, what these critics overlook is that *The Good German* is not simply a "genre pastiche" (Dargis, "Spies"); it is not merely, as Fredric Jameson has famously defined "pastiche," a "blank parody" devoid of critical impetus (17). While obviously an homage to the Hollywood cinema of the 1940s in general and to Michael Curtiz's *Casablanca* (1942) more specifically, the film engages critically with the still prevalent image of World War II in American culture as 'the best war ever' (cf. Adams). As I argue in the first part of this article, the film challenges the idea of American moral superiority and unselfishness that films like *Casablanca* helped produce and firmly anchored in collective memory. In fact, *The Good German* performs this cultural work by constantly quoting *Casablanca* and deconstructing its clear distinction between good and evil and its agenda of personal sacrifice for the greater good. Hence, the intertextual relationship between the two films, which I explore in detail, is characterized by a considerable ideological tension, a high degree of what Manfred Pfister calls "dialogicity" ("Dialogizität"; 29) in his theory of intertextuality. *The Good German*'s dialogue with its major pre-text, I wish to argue, exposes the politicality of *Casablanca* and other 1940s Hollywood films that was apparent to contemporaries but is frequently forgotten today. Soderbergh's film effectively disrupts these films' straightforward and clear-cut poetics of politics and replaces it with one that is more self-reflexive and—with regard to both form and morality—more complicated.

Accordingly, *The Good German* has a lot in common with Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*, a film that—apart from the fact that it is also about World War II—may at first sight appear to be completely different in terms of both aesthetics and politics. However, as I argue in the second part of this article, *Inglourious Basterds* performs the same cultural work. Like *The Good German*, Tarantino's film self-consciously engages with the rich history of cinematic representations that uphold a clear distinction between good and evil, ironically driving their agendas over the top by its eventual counterfactual turn when Adolf Hitler and other Nazi grandees are killed by the Basterds in a Parisian cinema. It differs from *The Good German* in that the films it alludes to and rewrites are not the propaganda films of classical Hollywood but the 'dirty war films' of the 1960s and 1970s. Whereas the audience of these films still sympathizes with the American protagonists no matter what they do to their Nazi enemies, *Inglourious Basterds* complicates this spectatorial stance by persistently blurring the lines between Americans and Nazis. As I will demonstrate, it almost constantly reminds the audience of American crimes against humanity—most notably slavery and the genocide of Native Americans. Thus, the film deconstructs the self-congratulatory image of the United States and its role in world history that the dirty war films project just as much as the films *The Good German* engages with. Both *The Good German* and *Inglourious Basterds*, then, I contend, must be considered political films that "[explore] in great depth the reality of images" (Brown 265), that is, their power to shape our perception of history. Both are highly aware of the fact that the way in which World War II is remembered in the United States has

been decisively shaped by cinematic representations that celebrate America's heroic rescue of liberty and democracy.

The United States obviously fought for the greater good in World War II, but ever since the end of the war, and especially since the late 1960s, the idealized image of this conflict has served to justify involvement in new and often morally far more ambiguous conflicts. Hence, it is surely no coincidence that *The Good German* and *Inglourious Basterds* engage with the politicality of different films about World War II in the decade after the attacks of September 11, 2001. References to the fight against Hitler and the Nazis abounded in the first years after 9/11 and worked to legitimize the 'war on terror' by casting the new conflict as a repetition or continuation of World War II.[1] By deconstructing the clear distinction between good and evil with regard to World War II and its aftermath, *The Good German* and *Inglourious Basterds* undermine the argument that Americans can legitimately resort to torture and other questionable methods and behavior because they employ them for the greater good. As post-9/11 critiques of American politics, *The Good German* and *Inglourious Basterds* disrupt simplistic trajectories that contend that because America was on the right side in World War II, it is so in the new conflict as well and must do whatever necessary to defeat the enemy.

"You Can Never Really Get out of Berlin": *The Good German*'s Intertextual Dialogue with *Casablanca*

An adaptation of Joseph Kanon's 2001 novel of the same name, Soderbergh's *The Good German* tells the story of American journalist Jacob Geismar (George Clooney), who returns to Berlin in July 1945, from where he reported as a foreign correspondent until 1941.[2] Jacob is to cover the Potsdam Conference, but his real goal is to find his former employee and lover, the Jew Lena Brandt (Cate Blanchett). Lena is now a prostitute, and her best customer is Tully (Toby McGuire), whom the US Army assigns to Jacob as a driver. Tully uses his privileges of moving relatively freely through the city's four zones to make a fortune on the black market. When he is killed, Jacob begins to investigate his murder because neither the Russian authorities (in whose zone the body is found) nor the American ones show any interest in solving the case. During his investigation, Jacob finds not only Lena but also her husband Emil, and he uncovers a number of dark secrets.

---

[1] For a discussion of how American culture projected the 'war on terror' and other conflicts as the repetition or continuation of World War II, cf. Butter 173-74.

[2] Since not all readers might be familiar with the film, I provide a relatively extensive plot summary here.

During the war, Emil Brandt worked in the concentration camp Dora, where V2 rockets were constructed. A meticulous scientist, Emil calculated how many calories per day inmates needed to be able to work for three months and then die. Even more importantly, however, he has evidence that his superior, the physicist Franz Bettmann, a fictional Wernher von Braun, knew this. Emil wants to surrender himself to the American authorities and testify against Bettmann. The American military governor intends to prevent this by having Emil killed because the Americans need Bettmann to help with their rocket program in the US. Aware that he is in danger, Emil hides in the sewers, aided only by Lena, who, as Jacob learns two thirds into the film, killed Tully to cover her tracks.

Lena, though, does not wholeheartedly support her husband but has an agenda of her own. While Emil hopes that his testimony will win him immunity and a passage to the US together with her, she wants to save his life but then go separate ways. Thus, during a meeting with the American criminal prosecutor Bernie Teitel, she agrees to set up an interview between Bernie and Emil and in exchange is promised that she can leave the country alone. While Lena and Emil wait for Bernie, they are attacked by a member of the military governor's staff. Jacob, who has secretly followed Lena, saves Emil, but only moments later one of Bernie's men kills Emil. Bernie, it turns out, has made a deal with the military governor: For killing Emil and letting Bettmann go free, he can demand the death penalty for several other Nazi war criminals. Lena is allowed to go to America at the end of the film—but only because Jacob makes a deal with Bernie. He hands over evidence that incriminates Bettmann, and in exchange, Bernie drops all charges against Lena. It is only at the airport when she is leaving for the US that Jacob learns what Lena has done during the war in order to survive. A Jew herself, she worked as a so-called *Greifer* for the Gestapo, identifying Jews who had gone into hiding in the streets and cafés of Berlin so that they could be arrested and sent to the death camps.[3]

As this plot summary already indicates, *The Good German* severely challenges "the 'good war' myth emphasizing American altruism during and after the Second World War" (Sprengler 169). All characters, no matter where they are from, are at best morally compromised and at worst utterly selfish; nobody sacrifices their personal goals for the greater good—not

---

[3] The film version considerably intensifies the novel's critique of World War II myths by increasing the ambiguity of the characters. In the novel, the *Greifer* is not Lena, who is not Jewish, but another female employee of Jacob's newspaper; Jacob does not cut a deal but the evidence is forcibly taken from him; and Bernie is a morally upright figure who simply lacks the power to see justice done. Moreover, whereas in the novel, Emil is an unrelenting villain who wants to save his own skin and does not care about his wife—there is no Bettmann and it is Emil whom the Americans want—he deeply cares about Lena and is haunted by his crimes during the war in the film. For readings of the novel, cf. Buhrmann or Ó Dochartaigh. The latter touches on the film version but misses this intensification entirely (213).

even Jacob. The most likely candidate for the role of the flawless American throughout most of the film, he eventually buys Lena's freedom against his better knowledge and conviction. The perversion of morality that permeates the world of the film is most pointedly brought to the fore by the meaning of 'good' in the phrase 'the good German.' From a moral point of view, Emil comes closest to being a 'good German,' as he regrets his deeds and wants "the world [...] to hear the truth." For the Americans, however, this makes him a liability, as they define 'good' in a purely utilitarian fashion as 'useful.' From their perspective, Bettmann, a Nazi war criminal far worse than Emil, is the 'good German' because he has strategic value for them. By highlighting the indifference of virtually all American authority figures —from the military governor to a senator from New York—to war crimes, the film dismisses any idea of American moral superiority.

Moreover, the film also contends that this blurring of good and evil is not merely an effect of the chaos that followed the war. Apart from Lena, who openly admits that she was "a Nazi and a Jew" during the war and thus perpetrator and victim at once, most other characters nostalgically remember what Congressman Breimer in a pivotal scene refers to as "the good old days. When you could tell who the bad guy was by who was shooting at you." The narrative, though, implies that this odd sense of security was merely an illusion, as alliances during the war were just as strategic as they are now that the fighting is at least officially over. Not only is, as Bernie observes once, "[n]obody around here [...] acting like the war's over." In addition, the speed at which the Germans become America's allies and the Soviets its enemies highlights that during (just as after) the war, all alliances are of a purely strategic nature motivated by national self-interest and do not reflect moral positions in any way. In fact, by way of its form—black-and-white images that are often almost seamlessly intercut with archival images of Berlin in the summer of 1945—the film strongly suggests that its vision of the past is far more accurate than that of films that project notions of the 'good war' (cf. Müller 89, 95).

Accordingly, *The Good German*'s deconstruction of World War II myths ultimately hinges on its intertextual dialogue with *Casablanca*, one of the first films that helped produce these myths.[4] Released in December 1942, Michael Curtiz's classic, starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, was a conscious attempt to support the war effort, and Bogart's Rick Blaine is, at least on one level, a personification of America, whose gradual shift from self-interest to sacrifice reflects the country's move from isolationism to commitment in World War II.[5] Heeding the Office of Wartime Information's demand to produce "properly directed hatred" (qtd. in Doherty 136), *Casablanca* draws a clear line between good and evil. The evil Nazis are opposed by an unambiguously positive multinational alliance of characters —including 'good Germans,' that is, refugees and resistance fighters—that synecdochically represent their nations. Whereas all initially positive characters in *The Good German* become at least ambivalent as the film progresses, the initially ambivalent characters of Rick and Captain Renault eventually join the fight against the Nazis, thus proving Victor Lazlo, the film's moral authority, right, who declares in a pivotal scene that "[e]ach of us has a destiny, for good or for evil."

---

[4] No critic has yet explored the dialogicity between *The Good German* and *Casablanca* in any detail. Cf. Baker, "Remade" 138-39 and Fuchs for short comments on the ideological tensions between the two films.

[5] Rick's personal attitude and his country's foreign policy doctrines are obviously synchronized in the film. Whereas the US fought in World War I but then turned isolationist—a move often seen as motivated by disappointment about the postwar

Beginning with the film poster, which almost exactly copies that of the earlier film, *The Good German* constantly refers to *Casablanca*. As the similar posters suggest, the later film copies the character constellation of the earlier one, and there are also parallels on the plot level. Moreover, *The Good German* quotes various lines from *Casablanca* almost literally and copies the latter's mise-en-scène and even single shots at various significant moments. To name just a few parallels: Both films revolve around a love triangle; in both films, the protagonists—Rick and Ilsa, Jacob and Lena—have an extramarital affair; in both films, one character—Victor Laszlo and Emil Brandt—is assumed to be dead temporarily; in both films, the married couple has a secret: that they are married in *Casablanca* and that the husband is still alive in *The Good German*; in both films, the third member of the triangle eventually decides to help the couple escape and is left at the airport in the end; in both films, the woman at one point threatens her former lover at gunpoint but kisses him only moments later; and in both films, the former lovers meet again in a bar.

Invariably, however, *The Good German* performs what Linda Hutcheon calls "repetition with difference" (*Theory of Parody* 32), creating the effect of an "oscillation between a past image and a present one" for the viewers (*Theory of Adaptation* 172). They are reminded of the characters, events, scenes, shots, and lines from *Casablanca*, but at the same time, they are made aware of the differences between the two films. Like all parodies (in the broad sense in which Hutcheon uses this concept), then, *The Good German* requires a knowledgeable audience, that is, one that remembers *Casablanca* quite well. For audiences unfamiliar with the pretext, Soderbergh's film—and this most probably explains its failure at the box office —is not incomprehensible but unsatisfying. All they see is an extremely

---

world order brought about by the Treaty of Versailles—Rick was a political idealist throughout the 1930s, fighting against the fascists in Ethiopia and Spain and opposing the Nazis prior to the occupation of Paris. By the beginning of the film, however, embittered by Ilsa's seeming betrayal, he is cynical and selfish. "I stick my neck out for nobody," he declares twice in the first third of the film, once receiving the answer, "A wise foreign policy," and once being admonished that "[i]solationism is no longer a practical policy." On *Casablanca* as a World War II propaganda film, cf. Brabazon; Nachbar; Ray 89-112; and Tunc.

bleak vision of human nature that the film's marketing as an homage to classical Hollywood has left them unprepared for. By contrast, an audience sufficiently familiar with *Casablanca* to understand where *The Good German* quotes it and where it departs from it is likely to derive a considerably higher viewing pleasure from the film. Most importantly, only such an audience can appreciate how *The Good German* critically engages with the politics of *Casablanca*.

After all, there are numerous differences between the two films. For example, *The Good German* complicates *Casablanca*'s love triangle, since both Tully and Emil Brandt occupy the place of Victor Laszlo for a while and since only one character genuinely loves another one. Jacob never says "I stick my neck out for nobody," as Rick does twice, but instead tells Brandt: "I'm the one sticking my neck out." That Brandt is disguised as a French soldier at this moment makes the allusion to *Casablanca* all the more explicit, because Rick says it once to Captain Renault. More importantly, though, *The Good German* subverts *Casablanca*'s treatment of the male lead's star persona. Whereas Curtiz's film established Bogart as an outlaw hero whose characters usually start out as selfish cynics and then assume responsibility for others—for example, in *To Have and Have Not* (1944) or in *The African Queen* (1951)—Soderbergh's film sets up the expectation that George Clooney will, as in many previous films, once again perform the role of the outlaw hero but then has his character develop into the opposite direction.[6]

Rather than listing all of these intertextual references, though, I will focus here on the dialogue between the films' final scenes, where the dialogicity—that is, the ideological tension between the two—comes to the fore most pointedly. The ending of *Casablanca* is melodramatic but ultimately uplifting, as Rick manages to convince Ilsa to board the plane together with Laszlo, who shakes his hand and welcomes him "back to the fight." Rick thus gives up the love of his life, but he is fully aware of the fact that his personal sacrifice is necessary for the greater good. Moreover, he is not alone at the end and, after shooting Major Strasser, walks off into the fog together with Captain Renault, whose dropping of a bottle of Vichy mineral water and covering for Rick indicates that he, too, has finally joined the fight against the Nazis, famously declaring that "this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship."

The final scene of *The Good German* is also set in an airport. As in *Casablanca*, the prop airliner is waiting in the background throughout, Cate Blanchett wears a hat that closely resembles that of Ingrid Bergman, and she and Clooney are blocked and shot exactly as Bergman and Bogart are in *Casablanca*—with the one exception that they have swapped places. Yet whereas Rick and Ilsa are with other people, Jacob and Lena are alone on the airfield, and when Lena boards the plane, there is no Louis around to walk off into the fog with—Jacob is utterly deserted. Most importantly, while in *Casablanca* the couple's final conversation confirms their relationship despite the separation and makes the time they have shared even more valuable, the final conversation in *The Good German* destroys the romantic past that Jacob has been striving to relive throughout the story, as he realizes that he never really knew Lena.

---

[6] For a thorough discussion of the complex fashion in which Soderbergh exploits Clooney's star persona in *The Good German* and other films, cf. Baker, *Steven Soderbergh* 28-42.

In this regard, it is significant that *The Good German*'s final moments quote not only the ending of *Casablanca* but also the scene set in the train station in Paris where Rick is waiting for Ilsa in order to flee with her before the Nazis occupy the city. Both at the train station in Paris and at the airport in Berlin it is raining heavily, and Lena's final look back before she enters the plane evokes Rick's look from the already moving train to the platform where Ilsa has not appeared. In *The Good German*, Lena's and Jacob's eyes meet one last time, but the effect is the same in both cases. The shared past loses its value because Rick thinks that Ilsa has betrayed him and Jacob knows that Lena has used him. In *Casablanca*, this impression is later corrected, but in *The Good German*, it is final. Accordingly, the film ends with an extreme long shot that shows that Jacob has already turned away, although the plane is still on the ground. That we never see the plane actually depart is of symbolic significance, as it confirms Lena's earlier words that "[y]ou can never really get out of Berlin." It is possible to leave Berlin physically, but it can never be left behind, because there is no escaping the guilt, the selfishness, and the blurring of the lines between good and evil that postwar Berlin prototypically represents in the film.

The Good German also expresses this moral confusion stylistically by employing the tropes of film noir. Morally ambivalent characters, among them the manipulative femme fatale Lena, whose character recalls that of Marlene Dietrich in Billy Wilder's *A Foreign Affair* (cf. deWaard 113), populate an urban jungle in which, because of the specifics of the noir aesthetics, the outlines of objects and people become as blurry as the latter's ethical categories. Thus, both the plot and the visual style of *The Good German* are much darker than those of *Casablanca*. As far as style is concerned, the most important influences on *The Good German* are the chiaroscuro lighting and the enormous shadows of Carol Reed's *The Third Man* (1949). That *The Good German* takes its cues from this film is quite appropriate, as *The Third Man* also tells of the disillusionment of an American in a divided city, in this case postwar Vienna, and one of its central characters is presumed dead and hides in the sewers. Indeed, when the camera finally follows Lena to Brandt's hideout in the Berlin sewers, some shots copy *The Third Man* as closely as the final scene quotes *Casablanca*.[7]

There are two reasons why using the noir style is both fitting and effective with regard to *The Good German*'s agenda of criticizing the dominant American image of World War II and postwar order. First, the classic films noirs of the late 1940s and 1950s can themselves be seen as critical engagements with the overly positive self-image of the United States after World War II. As William Luhr puts it, "[*f*]*ilm noir* depicted the contrarian underbelly of American popular culture's heroic image of itself" (33). Second, *Casablanca* itself already contains elements of film noir. In a number of scenes, the lighting approximates that of *The Third Man*, and the city of Casablanca is a place where the rich exploit the poor and the law can be bought. Moreover, Rick regards Ilsa for a while as a femme fatale willing to do whatever it takes to get the transit visas. Additionally, at least when watching the film for the first time, Rick appears for quite some time to be the typical noir protagonist who turns criminal to reach his selfish goals. Only at the end does the first-time viewer realize that he deceives Ilsa and Laszlo to help them escape. By making Lena a real femme fatale and having Jacob eventually betray his initially high principles because of her, then, *The Good German* highlights the plot possibilities that *Casablanca* suggests but does not follow through with.

Accordingly, the film's engagement with its pre-text amounts to a veritable 'rewriting' of the original that makes it appear in a different light.[8] In the terminology of Pfister, it is a "post-text [that functions as] a meta-text for the pre-text" ("Folgetext zum Metatext des Prätexts"; 26). By reimagining *Casablanca* as a film noir, Soderbergh's film draws attention to meanings that are latent already in the original but ultimately contained by its optimistic politics. It highlights that the sacrifice of personal interests and happiness for the greater good that *Casablanca* dramatizes and the benevolent role of the United States in world affairs that it allegorically stages are not adequate reflections of historical reality but ideological visions that veil what the plot of *The Good German* brings to the fore: Even in World War II, when the Americans fought on the right side, they were motivated not only by humanitarian reasons but (at least) just as much by personal greed and the protection of their national interests. Obviously, such a bleak evaluation of America's actions in and after World War II—articulated while American troops were fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq in a

---

[7] On the influence of *The Third Man* on *The Good German*, cf. also deWaard 114. As Andrew deWaard (115) and Aaron Baker ("Remade" 139) have pointed out, Soderbergh's film also refers back to the by now classic neo-noir films of the 1970s, most notably Roman Polanski's *Chinatown* (1974). Not only is Jacob's nickname Jake, which is also the name of the protagonist of that film, but both suffer a facial wound and do not understand what the woman they deal with really intends until it is too late.

[8] On the concept of rewriting, cf. Innes.

'war on terror' whose legitimacy was increasingly being questioned at the time—cannot but speak to the present moment. By challenging myths about American behavior in World War II and replacing them with, as the film suggests by its frequent inclusion of documentary footage, more accurate depictions, *The Good German* offers, as Cynthia Fuchs put it in an early review, an "effective critique of U.S. mucking about in world affairs." Its critique is so effective because the film not only suggests that the occupations of Berlin in 1945 and Baghdad and Kabul in 2006 have a lot in common but also because it deconstructs the cultural narratives about World War II that still served to legitimize the contemporary occupations of the time when the film was released.

"Am I the Story of the Negro in America?" *Inglourious Basterds*'s Juxtaposition of German and American History

Unlike *The Good German*, Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* was a critical and commercial success. There are, however, also dissenting voices. Film critic Manohla Dargis, for example, suggests that the high degree of intertextuality—like all Tarantino films, *Inglourious Basterds* is "a movie about movies" (Woisnitza 259) in which every shot, line of dialogue, gesture, or character name, so it seems at least, quotes an earlier film or body of films[9]—works to marginalize the film's serious subject matter: World War II and the Holocaust. Tarantino, she claims, is "really only serious about his own films, not history" (Dargis, "Tarantino"). By contrast, in his interpretation of the film, Michael Richardson argues that *Inglourious Basterds* takes history seriously but criticizes it for articulating a conservative agenda: "The film's message of justified torture and its Manichean worldview is not very far afield from other post-9/11 glorifications of sadism and brutality in the name of a greater good" (108).

To my mind, both of these readings are mistaken. Tarantino is certainly serious about film, but—in the case of *Inglourious Basterds* at least—that is because he is aware of how fundamentally filmic representations shape our views on conflicts past and present. The film certainly speaks to its historical context—as Eric Kligerman observes, "[w]e cannot [...] overlook the relevance of *Inglourious Basterds* in relation to America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; the film was released the same week as the C.I.A. report on the torture of prisoners in Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib was made public" (147)—but in a fashion diametrically opposed to what Richardson assumes. The excessive intertextuality of *Inglourious Basterds*, I contend, performs a critical function very similar to that of the dialogue with *Casablanca* in *The Good German*. It self-reflexively comments on and critiques how earlier films have cemented the notion of American exceptionalism and moral superiority by perpetuating the dichotomy of good Americans and evil Nazis. Additionally, as it persistently juxtaposes German and American atrocities, *Inglourious Basterds* also exposes how the glorified image of the United States derived from World War II has served to bypass the more problematic chapters of American history and worked to legitimize interventions in later conflicts.[10]

Inglourious Basterds most obviously engages in a dialogue with the so-called dirty war films of the 1960s and 1970s, like Robert Aldrich's *The Dirty Dozen* (1967), which inspired the Italian *Inglorious Bastards* (1978), from which Tarantino adopted the title of his film alongside some plot elements.[11] Like these films, Tarantino's movie is about the secret mission of a small group of American soldiers behind enemy lines. Initially, the small group of Jewish American GIs, commanded by Lt. Aldo Raine (Brad Pitt), simply tries to kill as many German soldiers as they can in order to undermine the morale of the Nazi troops occupying France. Halfway through the film, though, they become involved in Operation Kino, a plot to assassinate Hitler and other Nazi leaders at a film premiere in Paris. Thus, the Basterds' mission coincides with the plans of the French Jew Shosanna, who earlier escaped Col. Hans Landa (Christoph Waltz), the film's most important Nazi villain; Shosanna now runs the cinema where the premiere is to take place. She also intends to assassinate the Nazis attending the screening of the propaganda film *Stolz der Nation*, and eventually her and the Basterds' plans succeed—but only because Landa, who knows that the war is lost and wants to save himself, switches sides and helps the Basterds.

In its final minutes, then, *Inglourious Basterds*, which at no moment pretends to adequately represent historical reality, takes a more explicit counterfactual turn. Yet the film is, as Todd Herzog correctly observes (275), not a typical counterfactual or alternate history, as it is not interested in the effects that the death of Hitler has on subsequent events. Rather, it reenacts on a larger scale what the older dirty war films did in small: It brings the conflict with the Nazis to a satisfying end. Films like *The Dirty Dozen* did this by having their American heroes successfully complete a mission cast as crucial for winning the war; *Inglourious Basterds* does it by having Hitler suffer the execution that he escaped in real life through his suicide.

As Georg Seeßlen argues, even though the protagonists in dirty war films are often extremely brutal, employ torture, or kill enemies that have already surrendered, the audience nevertheless sympathizes with them because they ultimately fight for a just cause (cf. 106). Richardson adds to this the observation that the protagonists' disregard for the rules of 'civilized' warfare is justified by the fact that, first, they are usually criminals

---

[9] Cf. Hake 175-81 and Seeßlen 99-138 for thorough discussions of these manifold allusions.

[10] For readings of the film similar to mine, cf. Barlow; Brown; and McGee.

[11] On dirty war films, cf. Seeßlen 99-112.

who have chosen to participate in the mission in order to avoid prison or execution, and second, "nearly all of them fail to survive." Their transgressions of the rules might be necessary for "the greater good," but "to give such soldiers a pardon or other military honors [...] would undermine the legitimacy of the Allied cause" (100). With regard to *Inglourious Basterds*, Richardson argues that ethnicity replaces the criminal background: It is the Basterds' "Jewish heritage [...] that functions to temper the brutality of their actions" (102). To a certain degree, this is of course correct. On one level, *Inglourious Basterds* is, as various critics have observed, a Jewish revenge fantasy that the audience can enjoy because the Nazis get what they deserve—and from representatives of the group that suffered most from them.[12] This, of course, is something that happens frequently in American popular cultural representations of the fight against Hitler and the Nazis. The use of excessive violence and outright cruelty is justified by the fact that, as I have argued elsewhere, against an enemy considered to be the incarnation of evil, everything is allowed (cf. Butter 132).

However, in *Inglourious Basterds*, the matter is more complicated. To begin with, the Holocaust is generally not a topic in dirty war films or the World War II combat film more generally,[13] and alternate histories of Jewish revenge are usually not played out in any of these genres. By having the Jewish protagonists of a dirty war film kill Hitler, Tarantino's movie ironically drives over the top and thus exposes "the greatest fantasy of all, that World War II was fought to defend European Jews against Nazi atrocities" (McGee 189-90). Even more importantly, the film consistently aligns its American protagonists, both the Jews and the Gentile Aldo Raine, with the Nazis. It does so by the specific way in which it represents the violence the Basterds employ and by highlighting that the United States shares with Nazi Germany a history of genocide, racial violence, and discrimination.

The excessive brutality of the Basterds is most powerfully problematized in the scene in which Sgt. Donny Dorowitz, the 'Bear Jew' (Eli Roth), clubs a German soldier to death with a baseball bat. Not only is the German soldier a prisoner of war and thus, in theory, entitled to be treated according to the Geneva Convention; he is killed for "not doing what would be considered shameful for any American soldier to do, supplying the enemy with information that will put his fellow soldiers at risk" (McGee 188-89). That the audience learns about his motivation for keeping silent and that the reason is one it can hardly disapprove of already distinguishes the scene from similar ones in earlier dirty war movies, where the victims of American violence are usually not individualized and their refusal to cooperate is not justified. Moreover, whereas the victims of American violence often remain anonymous in other films, first this German soldier is individualized by a number of close shots and then the audience shares his point of view as he waits for his executioner to appear. Accordingly, Aaron Barlow is mistaken when he suggests that the scene dramatizes what "might be called the Dick Cheney Fantasy, the belief that torture is effective" because the next German soldier the Basterds question tells them what they want to hear (153). After all, it is an integral part of the "Dick Cheney Fantasy" that the act of torture is justified because American lives are in the balance. This is why the many post-9/11 representations that approve of torture, most notably maybe the early seasons of the TV series *24* (2001-10), usually employ a ticking bomb scenario. In fact, *Inglourious Basterds* reverses and thus implicitly critiques this scenario, as the torture in this scene does not serve the purpose of saving Americans but of killing more enemies.[14]

The 'Bear Jew,' however, is not the monster his name suggests but an average, even rather good-looking, young American man. Thus, by making neither victim nor perpetrator, neither the German nor the American, a monster, the film "blasts open the binary logic of othering – good and evil, us and them, human and monster – that is adhered to by Landa and Raine alike" (Boswell 176) and that dominates American representations of the conflict until today. This is made almost explicit by Raine's metareferential comment: "Quite frankly, watching Donny beat Nazis to death is the closest we ever get to goin' to the movies." On the one hand, it reminds the audience that they are sitting in front of a screen themselves and thus disrupts their consuming of representations of violence as entertainment. On the other hand, it foregrounds that such representations of violence have a long tradition in American cinema (as already the Basterds are aware of it), where the usually firm grounding in a clear-cut dichotomy of good and evil has often worked to justify the violence employed by the 'good guys' against the 'bad guys.' Hence, Raine's comment ultimately also draws attention to the fact how the film subverts both the strict binary of good and evil and the justification of violence tied to it.

Shosanna is also presented as an ambiguous character, a point that Michael Richardson overlooks when he argues that Shosanna's suffering "lends an air of moral credibility and legitimates the actions of the Basterds beyond their stated project of spreading terror" (102). To begin with, the plotline that revolves around her features a scene that bears a certain similarity to the clubbing of the German soldier. In order to facilitate their revenge plot, Shosanna and her employee and friend Marcel put enormous pressure on the Frenchman who develops their film and even threaten to hurt his family. If this already "complicates our ability to identify with her" (Woisnitza 271), her exploitation of Marcel pushes things even further. She does not care about what will happen to him—an escape plan is never discussed—but "uses [his] love for her to put him into a situation that will most likely bring about his death" (McGee 186). In fact, as Patrick McGee suggests, her whole behavior throughout the second part of the film echoes "Israeli violence against Palestinians and other Arab nations" (186). For example, 'her' cinema is called 'Le Gamaar' and thus not only evokes "a possible transliteration of an Arabic word, *ghamaar*" but can be regarded as an Arab space she has occupied just as the Israelis occupied Palestinian territory during the *nakba* (184). That the cinema comes with a black servant, Marcel, who is clearly originally from a French colony, supports the reading that Shosanna, like Lena in *The Good German*, is thus victim of persecution and colonizing perpetrator at the same time. In addition, aligning the Jewish victim Shosanna with the Israeli violence of later decades that was often justified by references to the Holocaust makes perfect sense, as the film also problematizes how the Holocaust has been strategically employed in the United States.

---

[12] On *Inglourious Basterds* as a revenge fantasy, cf. Marzoni; Goldberg; Peretz; and Seeßlen 140.

[13] On the World War II combat film, cf. Basinger.

[14] Cf. Kligerman 152 for a similar reading of this scene.

If the Shosanna plotline evokes Middle Eastern history after 1945, the Basterds plotline repeatedly recalls the more problematic chapters of American history since the beginning of European colonization. The Basterds' guerilla tactics and especially their habit of scalping their victims is obviously reminiscent of behavior stereotypically associated with Native American resistance against white settlers, and this link is further enforced by the fact that their leader, Aldo Raine, claims to be partly Apache. That a group of American Jews mimics Native Americans in their fight against the Nazis further complicates any notion of American moral superiority, as it implicitly "equat[es] the Nazi treatment of Jews with the settlers' treatment of Native Americans" (Brown 256). *Inglourious Basterds* thus suggests that the Native American genocide was a crime comparable to the Holocaust and highlights how the Americanization of the Holocaust has functioned to erase the memory of this American crime (cf. Novick 15; Stannard 150-53).

The blurring of the line between good and evil that results from this parallelization is strengthened by the fact that both the Americans and the Germans symbolically perform the parts of Native Americans and white settlers at different moments in the film. Whereas Raine casts the Basterds as Apaches in the film's second chapter, in the first chapter, Landa and his helpers are associated not only with the white outlaws of the spaghetti western but also with Native Americans who attack a remote farm. This effect is mostly achieved by way of mise-en-scène. The extreme long shots employed at the beginning of the scene show how isolated the small, simple farm is, which consists only of a little house, and thus evoke notions of the frontier. The eyeline matches—we see the wood-chopping farmer and his daughter and then what they are looking at, namely the Germans approaching in the distance—strengthen this effect, as they echo a scene familiar from countless westerns: The peaceful inhabitants of a farm in the wilderness watch the Indian enemy slowly approach. Yet one of the last shots of the scene, showing Landa's back framed by the door from inside the house, suddenly evokes the iconic shot of John Wayne repeated several times in John Ford's *The Searchers* (1956), thus aligning Landa with this morally compromised enemy of all Native Americans. In later scenes, then, it is again the Basterds who are cast as Native Americans, with the German soldiers playing the parts of their white and frequently scalped victims. Finally, in the scene set in the cinema, the black-and-white images of the young German soldier (played by Daniel Brühl) taking a last stand in a church tower and killing countless Allied soldiers in the Nazi propaganda film *Stolz der Nation* echo images of whites fighting off Native Americans in classical Hollywood westerns, exposing and deconstructing the problematic ideology underlying both sets of images.

Moreover, the history of slavery and the continued discrimination of African Americans—the major topic of Tarantino's subsequent film, *Django Unchained* (2012), which suggests parallels between the plantation and the concentration camp—surfaces at various moments throughout the film. Both when he first addresses the Basterds and at various moments later on, Aldo Raine's neck scar is clearly visible. Looking like a lynching mark, the scar reminds the audience of the United States' own history of racial violence exerted by whites against nonwhites, most frequently blacks. However, in line with the film's overall logic of dynamizing usually fixed binaries of good and evil, Native Americans and whites, or lyncher and lynched, it makes perfect sense that Raine, who is not black, displays the scar. Later on, when parts of the Basterds play the game Identity with a German officer in a bar outside of Paris, the officer's questions—he is supposed to find out that he impersonates King Kong—and his conclusion —"Am I the story of the Negro in America?"—turn the story of King Kong into "an allegory of slavery in the USA" (Brown 256). In fact, the parallels are obvious: Both the first slaves and King Kong were captured, sold, and forcibly brought to America in order to be economically exploited, and, in the case of male slaves and the ape, severely punished whenever they appeared to come too close to white women. The German's remarks thus highlight what the US and Nazi Germany "have in common: an imperialist racist tendency" (Brown 257). This parallel is even further developed toward the end of the movie, when Joseph Goebbels personally advises Shosanna that she should not leave the projection of *Stolz der Nation* to Marcel because he is black and cannot be trusted with such an important task. Accordingly, Marcel functions as what William Brown calls "a signifier [...] of American slavery" (262) and, I would add, of its aftermath. He has to hide in a backroom during the premiere, constituting a spatial arrangement that recalls the American policy of 'separate but equal' still in place at that time. Additionally, Shosanna and Marcel of course have to keep their affair—abhorred by the Nazis but considered a crime in many American states back then—a secret, as the Nazis would respond by moving the premiere elsewhere and thus foil the revenge plan.

As Seeßlen argues, the fact that the killing of Hitler and the other Nazis takes place in a cinema and that film is literally a medium of their destruction must be understood as a critical engagement with Nazi propaganda, which relied heavily on film (161-72). I would suggest, however, that given *Inglourious Basterds*'s engagement with American film throughout, the scene speaks even more generally to the power of the medium as such to shape our understanding of history and thus to also motivate and legitimize violence. Yet Seeßlen is surely correct that the scene in the cinema "lures the audience into a [...] trap" ("Das Publikum wird in eine [...] Falle gelockt"; 142). The slaughtering of the Nazis by the Basterds in front of the screen replicates the slaughtering of the Allied soldiers on the screen in *Stolz der Nation*. *Inglourious Basterds* here, then, brings its deconstructionist work to a climax, as the juxtaposition reveals for the final time that both American culture and Nazi culture habitually represent(ed) the conflict in exactly the same fashion of relying on a strict dichotomy of good and evil. Thus, the film comments both on Nazi propaganda and on the countless American wartime and postwar films that project World War II as a series of heroic and morally unquestionable accomplishments by American soldiers. Not only do the American and the Nazi characters have more in common than is usually acknowledged but both Nazi and Hollywood cinema, *Inglourious Basterds* suggests, rely "on simplistic binary structures" (Meyer 20).

In this regard, the ending of the film is of importance in a sense that has not yet been commented upon by critics and that strongly links *Inglourious Basterds* to *The Good German*. The critical impetus of Tarantino's film does not merely hinge on the juxtaposition of what happens on and in front of the screen but also on the contrast of what happens inside the cinema and outside of it. Inside, the Basterds kill Hitler and the others; outside, Raine and his superiors make a deal with Landa. This suggests that in the cinema, that is, on film, the Nazis are relentlessly punished for their crimes, while morality is never compromised; outside, that is, in real life, obviously guilty Nazis went unpunished because of their strategic value for the national interests of the United States: "U.S. agencies [...], as we now know, really did find a postwar use for former Nazis like Landa" (McGee 191). Of course, unlike Bettmann in *The Good German*, or von Braun and many others in real life, Landa eventually does not get what he wanted, because Raine double-crosses him and carves a swastika into his forehead to mark him as a Nazi for life.[15] *Inglourious Basterds* is cinema after all.

Conclusion

Steven Soderbergh's *The Good German* and Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*, I have argued here, are political films in a dual sense. They engage with the political effects of filmic representations by way of referring to and rewriting earlier films about World War II, and they do this in order to comment critically on how the memory of World War II, decisively shaped by the films they refer to, has been used after 9/11 to justify torture, the violation of human rights, and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Why, then, one might ask, do they not make this critique more explicit by directly commenting on the 'war on terror'? Christine Sprengler, who suggests that *The Good German* "expos[es] parallels between American involvement in each of the two conflicts [World War II and the 'war on terror']" (169), thinks that it does so only "allegorically" (170) because Soderbergh wanted to avoid pressure and indirect censorship from neoconservatives (171). As my reading has shown, however, *The Good German*'s critique—and the same goes for *Inglourious Basterds*—is all the more powerful because it does not get caught up in the politics of the day but, by working through older World War II films, tackles the mythical narrative of American moral superiority that legitimizes unlawful and immoral acts until today at the root.

---

[15] Personally, though, I suspect that the clever and eloquent Landa will have no trouble coming up with an elegant excuse for this later in life.

Works Cited

Adams, Michael C. C. *The Best War Ever: America and World War II*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1994. Print.

The African Queen. Dir. John Huston. United Artists, 1951. Film.

Baker, Aaron. "Remade by Steven Soderbergh." Palmer and Sanders 121-42.

---. *Steven Soderbergh*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2011. Print.

Barlow, Aaron. *Quentin Tarantino: Life at the Extremes*. Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010. Print.

Basinger, Jeanine. *The World War II Combat Film: Anatomy of a Genre*. Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 2003. Print.

Boswell, Matthew. *Holocaust Impiety in Literature, Popular Music and Film*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012. Print.

Brabazon, Tara. "We'll *Always* Have Paris? Fighting the People's War in Popular Memory." *Senses of Cinema* 2 (2000): n. pag. Web. 25 Mar. 2014.

Brown, William. "Counterfactuals, Quantum Physics, and Cruel Monsters in Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*." Dassanowsky 247-70.

Buhrman, William D. "Nostalgia and Redemption in Joseph Kanon's *The Good German*." *Literature and Theology* 22.4 (2008): 475-90. Print.

Butter, Michael. *The Epitome of Evil: Hitler in American Fiction, 1939-2002*. New York: Macmillan, 2009. Print.

Casablanca. Dir. Michael Curtis. Warner, 1942. Film.

Chinatown. Dir. Roman Polanski. Paramount, 1974. Film.

Dargis, Manohla. "Spies, Lies and Noir in Berlin." *New York Times*. New York Times, 15 Dec. 2006. Web. 4 July 2012.

---. "Tarantino Avengers in Nazi Movieland." *New York Times*. New York Times, 20 Aug. 2009. Web. 24 Mar. 2014.

Dassanowsky, Robert von, ed. *Quentin Tarantino's* Inglourious Basterds*: A Manipulation of Metacinema*. New York: Continuum, 2012. Print.

deWaard, Andrew. "Intertextuality, Broken Mirrors, and *The Good German*." Palmer and Sanders 107-19.

The Dirty Dozen. Dir. Robert Aldrich. MGM, 1967. Film.

Django Unchained. Dir. Quentin Tarantino. Weinstein, 2012. Film.

Doherty, Thomas. *Projections of War: Hollywood, American Culture, and World War II*. New York: Columbia UP, 1993. Print.

A Foreign Affair. Dir. Billy Wilder. Paramount, 1948. Film.

Fuchs, Cynthia. "*The Good German* (2006)." *PopMatters*. PopMatters, 18 Dec. 2006. Web. 28 Feb. 2014.

Goldberg, Jeffrey. "Hollywood's Jewish Avenger." *The Atlantic* Sept. 2009: 74-77. Print.

The Good German. Dir. Steven Soderbergh. Warner, 2006. Film.

Hake, Sabine. *Screen Nazis: Cinema, History, and Democracy*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 2012. Print.

Herzog, Todd. "'What Shall the History Books Read?' The Debate over *Inglourious Basterds* and the Limits of Representation." Dassanowsky 271-96.

Hoberman, J. "*The Good German*." *East Bay Express*. East Bay Express, n.d. Web. 18 Mar. 2014. <http://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/the-good-german/Film?oid=1433541>.

Hutcheon, Linda. *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York: Routledge, 2006. Print.

---. *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms*. New York: Methuen, 1985. Print.

The Inglorious Bastards [*Quel maledetto treno blindato*]. Dir. Enzo G. Castellari. Capitol, 1978. Film.

Inglourious Basterds. Dir. Quentin Tarantino. Weinstein, 2009. Film.

Innes, C. L. "The Politics of Rewriting." *A Concise Companion to Postcolonial Literature*. Ed. Shirley Crew and David Richards. Chichester: Wiley, 2010. 56-77. Print.

Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke UP, 1991. Print.

Kanon, Joseph. *The Good German*. New York: Picador, 2001. Print.

Kligerman, Eric. "Reels of Justice: *Inglourious Basterds*, *The Sorrow and the Pity*, and Jewish Revenge Fantasies." Dassanowsky 135-62.

Luhr, William. *Film Noir*. Malden: Wiley, 2012. Print.

Marzoni, Andrew. "'The Villany You Teach Me, I Will Execute': Vengeance and Imitation in Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the Jewish Revenge Film." *Locating Shakespeare in the Twenty-First Century*. Ed. Gabrielle Malcom and Kelli Marshall. Newcastle: Cambridge, 2012. 161-73. Print.

McGee, Patrick. *Bad History and the Logics of Blockbuster Cinema:* Titanic, Gangs of New York, Australia, Inglourious Basterds. New York: Macmillan, 2012. Print.

Meyer, Imke. "Exploding Cinema, Exploding Hollywood: *Inglourious Basterds* and the Limits of Cinema." Dassanowsky 15-36.

Müller, Anett. *Formen des Archivbildes: Historisches Bewusstsein im zeitgenössischen Spielfilm*. Darmstadt: Büchner, 2010. Print.

Nachbar, Jack. "Doing the Thinking for All of Us: *Casablanca* and the Home Front." *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 27.4 (2000): 5-15. Print.

Novick, Peter. *The Holocaust in American Life*. Boston: Houghton, 1999. Print.

Ó Dochartaigh, Pól. "Shades of Gray: The Beginnings of the Postwar Moral Compromise in Joseph Kanon's *The Good German*." *Representing the 'Good German' in Literature and Culture After 1945: Altruism and Moral Ambiguity*. Ed. Pól Ó Dochartaigh and Christiane Schönfeld. Rochester: Camden, 2013. 212-26. Print.

Palmer, R. Barton, and Steven M. Sanders, eds. *The Philosophy of Steven Soderbergh*. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 2011. Print.

Peretz, Eyal: "What Is a Cinema of Jewish Vengeance? Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*." *Yearbook of Comparative Literature* 56 (2010): 64-74. Print.

Pfister, Manfred. "Konzepte der Interaktivität." *Intertextualität: Formen, Funktionen, anglistische Fallstudien*. Ed. Ulrich Broich and Manfred Pfister. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1985. 1-30. Print.

Ray, Robert B. *A Certain Tendency of the Hollywood Cinema, 1930-1980*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1985. Print.

Richardson, Michael D. "Vengeful Violence: *Inglourious Basterds*, Allohistory, and the Inversion of Victims and Perpetrators." Dassanowsky 93-112.

The Searchers. Dir. John Ford. Warner, 1956. Film.

Seeßlen, Georg. *Quentin Tarantino gegen die Nazis: Alles über* Inglourious Basterds. Berlin: Bertz, 2009. Print.

Sprengler, Christine. *Screening Nostalgia: Populuxe Props and Technicolor Aesthetics in Contemporary American Film*. New York: Berghahn, 2009. Print.

Stannard, David E. *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*. New York: Oxford UP, 1993. Print.

The Third Man. Dir. Carol Reed. British Lion, 1949. Film.

To Have and Have Not. Dir. Howard Hawks. Warner, 1944. Film.

Tunc, Tanfer Emin. "*Casablanca*: The Romance of Propaganda." *Bright Lights Film Journal* 55 (2007): n. pag. Web. 25 Mar. 2014.

Woisnitza, Mimmi. "Messing Up World War II-Exploitation: The Challenges of Role-Play in Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*." *Nazisploitation! The Nazi Image in Low-Brow Cinema and Culture*. Ed. Daniel H. Magilow, Elizabeth Bridges, and Kristin T. Vander Lugt. New York: Continuum, 2012. 258-78. Print.