National Identity in Crisis: Post-1990 Holocaust Cinema in Israel, Germany, and Hollywood

Gary Jenkins

Abstract

Taking a comparative approach, my PhD thesis investigates the relationship between recent cinematic representations of the Holocaust in Israel, Germany, and Hollywood, and formations of national identity. Focusing on the ways in which specific political and cultural factors shape dominant discourses surrounding the Nazis' attempt to destroy the European Jewry, I argue that the Holocaust is central to a crisis in national identity in all three countries. Whereas Holocaust films have traditionally reinforced the socio-political ideals informing the context of their production, however, the analysis of my central corpus demonstrates that this cinema can also be seen to challenge dominant discourses expressing the values that maintain established notions of national identity. Central to this challenge is the positioning of the nation as either a victim or perpetrator with regards to the Holocaust. The presentation of opposing narratives in my central corpus of films suggests a heterogeneity that undermines the tendency in dominant discourses to present victim and perpetrator positions as mutually exclusive. The trajectory from one position to its opposite is itself informed by generational shifts. As a consequence, I also discuss the perspectives offered by members of the second and third generations whose focus on particular aspects of the Holocaust challenge the discourses established by the previous one. By way of conclusion, I focus on the transnational aspect of Holocaust film. In highlighting a number of commonalities across the three cinemas discussed in my thesis, I argue that in addition to expressing themes that relate to the issue of national identity, these films also suggest the construction of 'identity communities' that exist beyond state borders.

Dedication

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For Ava Rose and James Willis.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Taking a comparative approach, my thesis investigates the relationship between recent cinematic representations of the Holocaust in Israel, Germany, and Hollywood, and formations of national identity. Discussing Holocaust cinema in the wider contexts of Israel's conflict with Palestine, the reunification of Germany, and post-9/11 America respectively, I argue that depictions of the Nazis' attempt to destroy the European Jewry express a crisis in the collective identity in each of these three countries. This focus on the political functionality of the Holocaust film approaches the filmic text as a cultural object that is able to provide an insight in to the specific socio-political concerns informing each of the three national contexts being discussed. In reading the Holocaust film in terms of its functionalisation for post-1990 political discourses, my methodological approach is based on the close textual analysis of a cultural object that is embedded in a specific context determined by a particular set of ideological values at that moment in history. In locating cinematic representations of the Holocaust in their specific national contexts, my thesis is therefore concerned with answering a number of questions. How do cinematic representations of the Holocaust relate to recent political events in Israel, Germany, and the United States? What do they reveal about the political and social values informing these three national contexts? What does the Holocaust film tell us about the social milieu at a particular moment in history? And finally, what political concerns and anxieties do these films expose?

1.1 Literature Review

In focusing on the specific cultural context in which the Holocaust film was produced, my thesis attempts to move beyond a debate that

characterises a large amount of scholarly work on this subject. Predicated on Theodor Adorno's dictum that to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric, there is a school of thought that argues that the traumatic rupture caused by the Holocaust renders our established models of understanding and representation obsolete. Any attempt to represent the Nazi genocide is subsequently deemed at best futile, and, at worst, immoral in light of the historical events to which such representations refer. With regards to cinematic depictions of the Holocaust, the question of morality continues to inform contemporary scholarship. This ranges from the familiar argument that cinema is unable to adequately express the magnitude of the Nazi genocide, to anxieties about the medium's contribution to the process of keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive (Frodon, 2010; Bayer and Kobrynskyy, 2015) – a concern that is becoming ever more pressing with the gradual loss of those who survived.

One of the ways in which this impasse is negotiated is through a radical break with cinematic convention (Baron, 2005, p. 5). For example, Alain Resnais's innovative use of imagery, editing techniques, and filmic language in his film *Night and Fog* (*Nuit et brouillard*, 1955) enables him to avoid the trap of being aesthetically pleasing (Avisar, 1988, p. 17), whilst Claude Lanzmann's rejection of documentary imagery and dramatization in favour of a focus on witness testimony in *Shoah* (1985) embodies an alternative approach that acknowledges the apparent limitations with regards to representing the Holocaust. In addition, this prominent use of archival material and witness testimony points to another way in which the impasse of the Holocaust's apparent ineffability is negotiated – through an adherence to historical fact in the form of the documentary film. Whereas both Lawrence Baron (2005, p. 4) and Matthew Boswell (2012, p. 131) highlight the reliance on the documentary film with regards to cinematic representations of the Holocaust, two pioneering studies on the subject, Annette Insdorf's *Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust* (1983) and Ilan Avisar's *Screening the Holocaust: Cinema's Images of the Unimaginable* (1988), reinforce the dichotomy

that exists between popular and more innovative approaches through a reproach of the former for its failure to adhere to the historical record. Although not starting from the philosophical position of the Holocaust's ineffability, Insdorf (1983, p.4) argues that the repeated use of elements such as dramatic music and the English language in Hollywood productions trivialise the Holocaust through a simplification resulting from the employment of the dynamics of 'entertainment' rather than an engagement with the complexities that inform these historical events. Similarly, for Avisar (1988, p.162), the visual pleasure that informs artistic and cinematic representations of the Holocaust work to foreground a 'discourse of art' that subsequently obscures the horrors of Nazi genocide.

Prejudices based on an adherence to historical fact continue to inform contemporary scholarship on Holocaust cinema. For example, although Aaron Kerner (2011, p. 16) states that an adherence to historical authenticity is detrimental to both the artistic approaches employed in filmmaking and our criticism in *receiving* these films, he subsequently reinforces a number of predispositions that underpin criticisms of the Holocaust feature film. Stating that in the majority of Holocaust films the Nazi genocide provides a backdrop to a conventional dramatic trajectory in which the protagonist undergoes a transformation following the negotiation of conflict, Kerner (2011, p. 31-32) argues that the Jew typically occupies the role of 'victim'. Furthermore, Kerner's (2011, p. 65-6) praise for Tim Blake Nelson's film *The Grey Zone* (2001) based on both its "unrelenting insistence on depicting the actual mechanisms of mass murder at work" and restraint in its use of sentimentality and melodrama contrasts with his (2011, p. 6) earlier lamentation that the use of allegory in Holocaust cinema is prohibited based on a traditional approach that insists on realism.

The prioritisation of a select number of films on the basis of their aesthetic choices runs the risk of producing a canon against which all others are judged. With regards to Holocaust cinema, the focus on those films that either break with the conventions of cinematic

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representation or adhere to the facts of the historical account results in the construction of an ideal that is subsequently used to reject the majority of cinematic productions on the basis that they fail to meet its criteria. As Libby Saxton (2008, p. 24) argues with regards to *Shoah*, the monumental status attained by Lanzmann's film on the basis of its eschewing of established cinematic codes of representation promotes the idea that this is the proper way in which to depict the Nazi genocide. As a consequence of the production of what Saxton terms a "prohibition on representation" (2008, p. 23) mainstream films such as *Schindler's List* (1993) are castigated for their adoption of a conventional approach. Indeed, as Saxton (2008, p.26-7) highlights, Lanzmann's own objection towards Spielberg's film is based on an apparent trivialisation of the Holocaust resulting from its belief that it can access the reality of these historical events.

Conversely, Boswell argues that the rejection of cinematic representations of the Holocaust on the basis of a conflation of their aesthetic approach and ethical considerations represents a "peculiar logic" (2012, p. 6). Rebuking conservative attitudes towards instances of provocative Holocaust fiction such as the Sex Pistols' song 'Belsen Was a Gas' (1993) and Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), Boswell (2012, p. 3-4) states that such representations are driven by a desire to reveal knowledge about our own lives and societies, as opposed to providing details about the events they portray. Rather than being directed at those who lost their lives, therefore, works of impiety such as these represent an affront to those who see no connection between Nazi atrocities and the values and political systems that inform their everyday lives, (Boswell, 2012, p. 4). For Boswell:

> Holocaust piety admits only to the clarities of the courthouse: to guilt and innocence, to crime and punishment. It does not seek to address the human continuities between then and now, meaning that for all its value as a document of Nazi crimes and the experiences and attitudes that shape those crimes, you do not watch *Shoah*

and, following Gillian Rose's formulation, 'emerge shaking in horror at yourself, with yourself in question' (Boswell, 2012, p. 158).

In attempting to move beyond the debate surrounding the moral legitimacy of Holocaust representations through a focus on the connections between cinematic depictions of these events and the socio-political contexts of their production, my thesis somewhat adopts Boswell's position. Although not reflecting Boswell's (2012, p. 8) hyperbole with regards to the role played by cultural criticism in the policing of the creative imagination on the basis of a moralistic discourse of sanctity and transgression, my examination of the relationship between the Holocaust film and notions of national identity concurs with his contention that representations of the Nazi genocide are intrinsically linked to the societies that produce them. Furthermore, I would argue that discussions about the moral implications of representing the Holocaust largely ignore important questions regarding what these films reveal about the socio-political concerns of the particular national context in which they were produced. The denunciation of popular film on the basis of an aesthetic approach therefore has the potential to hinder a thorough engagement with a genre of cinema whose production has increased exponentially since the end of the Second World War.

My focus on the wider socio-political context from which Holocaust cinema emerges offers an explanation as to why both the documentary and feature film are seen as equally important. Although, as discussed above, the former has traditionally occupied a more prominent position with regard to cinematic representations of the Holocaust, these two forms present an interpretation of historical events that are shaped by the ideological values of the specific nation and culture from which they emerge. As Alan Mintz (2001, p. 36-7) has argued, despite the philosophical contention that the Holocaust represents a "paradigm-shattering tragedy", the conservative nature of cultures results in these events being incorporated on the terms of that culture rather than any prompting of a reconfiguration of an

established cultural dynamic. Mintz's contention that an engagement with the Holocaust is determined by a particular set of cultural values can be seen in Chapter Two, which is entitled, 'Cinematic Encounters with the Holocaust: Films in Context'. Surveying the history of films produced in Israel, Germany, and Hollywood, this chapter discusses relevant trends, cycles, and movements in order to highlight the ways in which the Nazi genocide has traditionally been harnessed in order to support contemporary political needs. Although providing a wider cinematic context from which the arguments presented in the main chapters of my thesis can emerge, this interpretation of Holocaust cinema contrasts with my analysis in the subsequent chapters. In highlighting a number of homologies that exist between the filmic text and the wider context in which it is produced, I demonstrate that Holocaust cinema can also offer a critique of the values and ideals that inform such contexts.

This focus on the political functionality of the Holocaust film aligns my thesis with two recent surveys on the subject. In a similar vein to Boswell, both Lawrence Baron (2005) and Sabine Hake (2012) discuss cinematic representations of the Holocaust with regards to the wider concerns that inform their context of production. Baron's (2005, p. 4) rejection of the notion that popular cinema is incapable of conveying the Jewish catastrophe is supported by his contention that "a growing number of cultural and media scholars have challenged the injunctions against either representing the Holocaust in feature films or restricting its depictions to documentaries and meticulously accurate docudramas". Taking particular issue with both Insdorf and Avisar's dismissal of Hollywood cinema as a form of serious engagement, Baron (2005, p. 8-9) situates the Holocaust feature film within both the cinematic history of those that proceed it and the context of the remembrance culture that informs the country in which it was produced. For example, Baron (2005, p. 14) argues that the optimism and universalism expressed in Hollywood films such as *The Search* (1948) and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959) are reflective of the post-war politics that inform the period in which they were made.

Consequently, for Baron (2005, p.11), the global recognition of the Holocaust as a symbol of evil does not detract from the specificity of its nationalistic meanings.

Hake (2012, p. 4), on the other hand, calls for a closer look at the fascist imagery informing cinematic depictions of the Third Reich, arguing that they represent a signifying system that relates to present concerns about democratic subjectivity. Stating that a shift from referentiality (that films are "about" Third Reich) to indexicality (that films refer to something else) reflects fundamental changes in the basic terms of filmic, historical, and political representation since the end of the Second World War, Hake outlines her position as follows:

> Rather than define this heterogeneous corpus of films through normative definitions that assume a stable relationship between signifier and signified, I propose to use the significatory excess associated with Nazism/fascism to examine how democracy acquires an emotional vocabulary or affective habitus through confrontation with its enemy (Hake, 2012, p. 7).

For Hake (2012, p. 7), scholars have not considered in greater detail either the ways in which history offers a conduit to the political in the broadest sense (i.e. its institutions, procedures, conventions, identifications, and forms of engagement) or the affective dimensions of the historical film and its contribution to the aestheticisation and medialisation of politics. As a consequence, Hake's (2012, p. 24) study looks at how cinema articulates, transforms, and produces political mentalities via cognitive, affective, and aesthetic dimensions of what she terms "political affects". In discussing the interrelatedness of fascist past and post-fascist present through a focus on the historical contexts in which these films were produced and received, Hake (2012, p. 5) highlights the role of film affect in her analysis of an antagonistic structure that contrasts fascist and democratic imaginaries with both terms understood as a competing set of feelings, attitudes, and beliefs about government, society, community, nation,

and, most importantly, "the individual as the founding site of democratic subjectivity".

Cinematic representations of the Third Reich are therefore inseparable from the political conflicts and debates informing the imaginary relationship between fascism and democracy at a particular time and place (Hake, 2012, p. 6). Therefore, only a sufficient consideration of the broader aesthetic trends that inform post-war cinema and specific political issues in individual countries can account for the ways in which films about the Third Reich reproduce dominant discourses of the political in, for example, 1940s America or 1950s West Germany (Hake, 2012, p. 26). Although her study focuses on cinematic depictions of Nazism and fascism, Hake's (2012, p. 5) argument that European and American post-war films about the Third Reich have provided a projection screen for the issues facing post-war democracies and the contested status of ideology throughout the post-fascist period mirrors my focus on the political functionalisation of Holocaust cinema. Hake's (2012, p. 22) statement that "the fascist imaginary establishes homologies between the emotions represented in the diegesis and the affects produced by the films [in] the world in which the films are produced and consumed" constitutes a link between filmic text and wider socio-political concerns that is central to the way in which I approach the Holocaust film. Furthermore, Hake's (2012, p. 10) contention that democracy's foundational narratives are often presented via more familiar and highly codified narratives of nation, with the nation-state positioned as originator and protector of democratic rights and freedoms, points to my relating of the connection between the text and context to issues surrounding the question of national identity. As discussed above, however, my analysis of my central corpus of films demonstrates that Holocaust cinema can also undermine the dominant political discourses that underpin established notions of collective identity, rather than reinforcing the ideological values of the specific national contexts from which they emerge.

1.2 Outline of Central Chapters

In addition to these two wide-ranging surveys of cinematic representations of the Nazi period, there are a number of studies that discuss the Holocaust film in the context of a particular national cinema (see, for example, Haltof, 2012; Marcus, 2007; and Banaji, 2012). The discussion below focuses on a number of studies that locate cinematic representations of the Holocaust in the three national contexts that constitute the central chapters of my thesis. With regards to Israel, both Ella Shohat (2010) and Yosefa Loshitzky (2001) locate their discussion of the various cycles and trends that define the history of cinematic production in the country in the wider context of a society that is described in terms of a series of oppositions between the various cultural identities constantly vying for a position of dominance. For Shohat (2010, p. 1), the marginalisation of both the Mizrahi Jew and the Palestinian is the result of an Israeli imaginary that is inclined towards the West. Politically, Israel is at once a product of a liberation struggle similar to that of the Third World against colonialism, whilst also being aligned with the West against the East in light of the fact that the Jewish state was one founded on both the marginalisation of Jews arriving from the "Orient" and the suppression of the Palestinian struggle for nationhood (Shohat, 1989, p. 1). This description of Israeli society is reinforced in Loshitzky's later study. Loshitzky's (2001, p. xiii-xiv) contention that the Holocaust represents one of three major sites in the formation of an Israeli collective identity, with the question of the 'Orient' and the Palestinian issue providing the other two, represents a foregrounding of the Nazi genocide that develops the focus of Shohat's description of identity formations in terms of Israel's location between the polarising ideals of East and West.

The marginalisation of particular ethnic groups with regards to collective Israeli identity is addressed in Chapter Three, which is entitled, 'Challenging the Ashkenazi Perspective: National Identity in Recent Israeli Cinema'. This chapter argues that the eventual

accommodation of Holocaust suffering in the official discourse following the Eichmann trial in 1961 fails to extend to that endured by Palestinians at the hands of Israel itself. The continued focus on the Ashkenazi experience in the post-Eichmann era continues to function as a unifying factor with regards to an Israeli national identity that is based on the marginalisation of other ethnic groups. This exclusion is challenged in Asher Tlalim's *Don't Touch My Holocaust* (*Al Tigu Le B'Shoah*, 1994). Tlalim's experimental film foregrounds the Palestinian perspective (as well as that of the Sephardi and Mizrahi Jew) in its exploration of Israel's Holocaust memory, which is disrupted as a result. Although the narratives of Eytan Fox's *Walk on Water* (2004) and Udi Aloni's *Forgiveness* (*Mechilot*, 2006) focus on pro-Israel idealists combating Arab extremism, both films foreground the marginalisation of the Palestinian through a presentation of the link between the country's traumatic Holocaust past and its contemporary relationship with Palestine. Whereas the conclusion of Fox's film problematically circumvents the Israel-Palestine conflict in favour of a reconciliation in relations between Germany and Israel, however, Aloni's concludes with its protagonist confronting the suffering experienced by Palestinians as a result of his actions. In various ways, all three films in this chapter therefore engage with both the question of collective identity in Israel, and, more importantly, the role the Holocaust continues to play in its formation.

Despite both David Clarke's (2006, p. 2-3) reservations regarding an apparent negation of politics in favour of a "cinema of consensus", and Hake's (2008, p. 199) definition of it as a hedonistic celebration of fun, pleasure, and entertainment that broke from the legacies of 1960s and 70s, post-reunification German cinema continues to engage with the socio-political issues that inform wider society. Axel Bangert (2014, p. 2) argues that questions about German wartime experiences have shaped the country's cinematic output since 1990. Creating a sense of intimacy with the Nazi period through immersing the viewer in the private lives of those who lived under the Third Reich, this cinema has made it possible for German audiences

to emotionally partake in stories about ordinary Germans during the Second World War – to share in both their grief at the loss of family members, and their shame as a consequence of hidden legacies of participation (Bangert, 2014, p. 2-3). Countering the argument that post-reunification German cinema negates contemporary political concerns, Bangert states that:

> [T]hese films illustrate how a demand for entertainment and spectacle in a recently liberalized media industry met with a renewed interest in individual and collective experiences of the Third Reich (Bangert, 2014, p. 2).

Bangert's contention that post-reunification depictions of the Third Reich are concerned with questions surrounding German wartime experiences are reflective of wider concerns about how reunified Germany will remember the Nazi period.

Indeed, Bangert's (2014, p. 3) discussion of the moral implications involved in moving the issue of the Holocaust from the centre to the periphery, a result of a focus on such German experiences, mirrors wider concerns that inform debates surrounding the memory of the Nazi period in contemporary Germany. In Chapter Four, which is entitled, 'Perpetrator and Victim: Pluralising the Wartime Experience in Recent German Documentary Film', I argue that this memory is defined by an oscillation between the position of victim and perpetrator with regards to German behaviour during Hitler's reign. Here, the tendency in public discourse to interpret the German wartime experience as a singularity based on the mutual exclusivity positions of victim and perpetrator is undermined by the suggestion of heterogeneity through the presentation of the individual testimonies in André Heller and Othmar Schmiderer's *Blind Spot: Hitler's Secretary* (*Im toten Winkel: Hitlers Sekretärin*, 2002), Stefan Roloff's *The Red Orchestra* (*Die Rote Kapelle*, 2004), and Michael Verhoeven's *The Unknown Soldier* (*Der unbekannte Soldat*, 2006). With regards to *Blind Spot* and *The Red Orchestra*, personal accounts expressing both

conformity and nonconformity in the face of the daily pressures exerted by National Socialism indicates the existence of both positions with regards to individual behaviour. On the other hand, *The Unknown Soldier* suggests plurality regarding the German wartime experience through the simultaneous onscreen presence of both evidence pertaining to the participation of Germany's regular army in crimes committed on the eastern front, and narratives from members of the public that express the contrary. In their presentation of numerous witness testimonies, the three films discussed in Chapter Four posit the idea that the binary positions of victim and perpetrator mark the extremities of a scale along which various German wartime experiences are located.

In her book *The Holocaust in American Film* (2002), Judith Doneson investigates the ways in which the annihilation of European Jewry has entered into the American imaginary. Citing cinema as a powerful influence on what she terms the "collective mind", one that helps to shape and reflect popular, social, political, and cultural attitudes, Doneson (2002, p.4) argues that an examination of how Hollywood depictions of National Socialism and the Holocaust signify meaning for Americans therefore enables us to understand one important element of this process. In reflecting wider societal issues, cinematic representations of the Holocaust must be read on the basis of what they reveal about the period in which they were made (Doneson, 2002, p. 7-8). For Doneson (2002, p. 8), the depiction of Nazism and the persecution of the Jews in these films on a salient level function as a metaphor for a social discourse taking place at a latent level. As a consequence, Doneson's (2002, p. 10-11) study considers how the Holocaust, as a metaphor for varying aspects of contemporary history, is altered and distorted accordingly.

The notion that the Holocaust functions as a metaphor is central to my discussion of cinematic representations of the Nazi genocide in the post-9/11 era in Chapter Five, which is entitled, 'Escape to History? The Jewish Revenge Film in Post-9/11 America'. In this chapter I argue that recent Hollywood representations of the Holocaust

permeate American anxieties in light of both the 9/11 attacks, and, more specifically, the stories of abuse and torture that emerged during the so-called War on Terror. The depiction of the harrowing work performed by the *Sonderkommando* in the Auschwitz crematoria in the aforementioned *The Grey Zone*, the tensions between the desire for revenge and the need to rebuild the decimated Jewish communities of western Belorussia that inform Edward Zwick's *Defiance* (2008), and the subversion of the historical roles of Nazi and Jew in Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* complicate the distinction between victim and perpetrator through the blurring of the moral boundaries underpinning these positions. In locating this moral ambiguity in the wider context of the counter-terrorism measures taken by the American government in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, which resulted in the abuse of detainees at institutions such as Guantanamo Bay detention camp and Abu Ghraib prison by US forces, I argue that these three films function as metaphors expressing a crisis facing America and the values that underpin its notion of collective identity.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The overview of my central chapters above highlights a number of themes – the victim/perpetrator binary, hegemonic discourse, and generational shifts – that will inform the various discussions throughout my thesis. Depictions of the Holocaust in Israel, Germany, and Hollywood express wider concerns about the positioning of each individual country in the role of either victim or perpetrator. Furthermore, this process is determined by a dominant Holocaust discourse that expresses (and thus reinforces) the ideological premise upon which the political hegemony of each nation is predicated. For example, in discussing the impact of Israel's Holocaust legacy on its relationship with Palestine, Chapter Three highlights the hegemonic position of an Ashkenazi perspective that continues to foreground the country's victim status in light of the Nazi genocide. The link between

Israel's Holocaust trauma and its aggression towards Palestine is a prominent theme in both *Walk on Water* and *Forgiveness* where the victimhood of the former subsequently obscures its responsibility for the suffering endured by the latter. Conversely, in bringing the Palestinian perspective to bear on Israel's Holocaust memory, *Don't Touch My Holocaust* challenges the continued exclusivity of the Ashkenazi perspective – thus exposing the dominance of the Israeli victimhood discourse through undermining it.

As discussed above, the presentation of individual testimonies in *Blind Spot*, *The Red Orchestra*, and *The Unknown Soldier* in Chapter Four challenges a public memory of the Nazi period in Germany that is based on the notion that the positions of victim and perpetrator are mutually exclusive. In the context of a post-reunification shift from a focus on acts of perpetration to examples of Germany's own suffering and loss during the Second World War, my analysis of these three documentary films suggests that the German wartime experience should be defined by its very complexity rather than a hegemonic discourse that excludes narratives expressing the opposite. With regards to Chapter Five, the blurring of victim and perpetrator positions in *The Grey Zone*, *Defiance*, and *Inglourious Basterds*, permeate anxieties about stories of abuse and torture that emerged during America's response to the 9/11 attacks. As in the Israeli context, a dominant discourse of victimhood based on the original act of perpetration is subsequently undermined by acts of aggression by the victim.

In addition, the undermining of dominant discourses that reinforce victim and perpetrator positions can itself be seen as an effect of generational shifts. In the contexts of both Israel and Germany, perspectives offered by members of the second (and, indeed, third) generation challenge the discourses established by the previous one. For example, descriptions of the suffering endured by family members during the Second World War in *Don't Touch My Holocaust* represent the continuation of a trope established by a small cycle of films made by members of Israel's second generation during

the 1980s. More problematically in the context of Israel, both *Walk on Water* and *Forgiveness* link the transposition of this traumatic experience from one generation to the next to the country's aggression towards Palestine. With regards to German cinema, the presentation of the country's own suffering and loss in *Blind Spot*, *The Red Orchestra*, and *The Unknown Soldier* challenges the second generation's belief that their parents and grandparents were complicit in the crimes committed by Hitler's regime. Furthermore, testimonies from members of Germany's second generation that express the suffering endured by members of the previous one undermine perceptions that define the former as a homogenous mass. With regards to America, although generational shifts do not produce clearly discernible tensions with regards to the country's engagement with the Holocaust, the presentation of Jews as active agents in *The Grey Zone*, *Defiance*, and *Inglourious Basterds* represents a break with traditional Hollywood depictions of the Nazi genocide in which they tend to be portrayed as passive victims.

In addition to the themes of the victim/perpetrator binary, hegemonic discourses, and generational shifts, Benedict Anderson's (2006) 'imagined community' and Michael Rothberg's (2009) 'multidirectional memory' provide overarching theoretical concepts that inform my thesis. Following Ernst Renan (2003), Anderson (2006, p. 5-6) defines the modern nation as an "imagined political community" that is "imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign". The Nation-space therefore exists in the collective imagination – a psychological premise that creates a unity between social subjects who, despite the probability of never knowing one another individually, are able to imagine their overall communion (Anderson, 2006, p. 6). Anderson (2006, p. 25) argues that in eighteenth century Europe, the novel and the newspaper provided the technical means for re-presenting the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation. Whereas the novel's presentation of unacquainted characters functioning within its fictional society is analogous to the idea that the nation is based on a connection created through simultaneous activity rather than meeting

in person, similarities between places and events in literature and those in reality confirm the solidity of a single community (Anderson, 2006, p. 25-27). With regards to the newspaper, furthermore, Anderson (2006, p. 33) argues that the arbitrary stories it contains are linked due to their presence within imagined community. This "calendrical coincidence" provides an essential connection – its obsolescence creating an extraordinary mass ceremony of almost simultaneous consumption (Anderson, 2006, p. 33). Although reading the daily newspaper takes place in private, Anderson states (2006, p. 35) that the individual reader is comfortable in the knowledge that the same practice is taking place within homes across nation-space.

For Anderson (2006, p. 34-35), then, the emergence, reinforcement, and maintenance of the modern nation is linked to the novel and newspaper, the almost simultaneous reading of which contributes to the formation of the imagined community. Print capitalism provided the possibility of simultaneity, meaning that "horizontal-secular, transverse-time" communities became possible (Anderson, 2006, p. 37). With no possibility of humankind's general linguistic unification, print capitalism created monoglot mass reading publics – a unifying of an intra-diverse vernacular language through an adherence to its universalisation in written media that subsequently raised individual consciousness of others existing within their language-field (Anderson, 2006, p. 43-44). The potential for the formation of imagined communities on the basis of simultaneous practices is mirrored in cinema. The mass consumption of films can be seen to contribute to the construction of the psychological premise upon which the nation-space is formed. As with the novel and the newspaper, cinema therefore facilitates a unity between social subjects who are able to imagine their overall communion despite never meeting one another. Furthermore, Anderson (2006, p. 164) argues that although language forms the basis for the imagined community, the census, map, museum, and nationalistic ideology disseminated by mass media and education, are central to imagining the nation (and thus its legitimisation). In addition to contributing to a

simultaneity that reinforces and maintains the imagined community, the cinematic output of a particular nation is therefore reflective of the values and ideals underpinning existing notions of national identity. As discussed above, however, my analysis of my central corpus demonstrates that the Holocaust film can also be seen to undermine such ideological values through a questioning of the dominant discourses that both reflect and reinforce the political status quo.

Challenging the idea that the collective memory of multicultural society is based on the competition between different "social groups" vying for a limited public space, Rothberg (2009, p. 2-3) suggests that memory is multidirectional and subject to an on-going negotiation through a process of cross-referencing and borrowing. Here, the histories and memories of one particular social group inform the articulations of histories and memories of another within the public sphere (Rothberg, 2009, p. 3). An alternative to collective memory as "competitive memory", Rothberg (2009, p. 3-4) argues that "multidirectional memory" is based on the idea that memory is subject to interventions by individual "social actors" who bring numerous traumatic pasts to bear on the changing post-Second World War present. Although there are examples of cross-referencing and borrowing throughout my thesis, most notably in the challenging of the Wehrmacht's involvement in Nazi crimes that is central to my discussion of *The Unknown Soldier* in Chapter Four, I repeatedly argue that this process is undertaken in order to establish or reinforce the identity of particular social groups in the public sphere. Indeed, the defending of soldiers on the eastern front by members of the general public in Verhoeven's film, an opposition that is predicated on the re-evaluation of the evidence presented in two exhibitions organised by the Hamburg Institute for Social Research that state the contrary, represents a case in point. Verhoeven's interviews with members of the public outside the first exhibition in Munich literally illustrate a process in which alternative narratives regarding the behaviour of Germany's regular army on the eastern front vie for a position of dominance on the public stage.

Conversely, Rothberg's promotion of collective memory's multidirectionality, and, more importantly, his idea that this memory underpins the formation of identity groups, central to the concluding chapter of my thesis. As a counterbalance to the focus on the national dimension in the central chapters of my thesis, Chapter Six, which is entitled, 'Conclusion: From National Discourse to Transnational Connections', focuses on the transnational aspects of Holocaust cinema. In highlighting a number of commonalities that exist across the three national cinemas discussed in these central chapters, I argue that in addition to expressing the ideological values that underpin the collective identity of a particular nation, cinematic representations of the Holocaust also engage with themes that provide the basis for 'identity communities' whose formation intersects state borders. Indeed, Rothberg's (2009, p. 6) argument that the globalisation of Holocaust memory provides the basis for an articulation of numerous other histories is expressed in this transnationality. In highlighting commonalities between communities, therefore, I contend that the formation of such 'imagined communities' through the shared consumption of Holocaust cinema represents a move beyond the notion of national identity.

Chapter 2. Cinematic Encounters with the Holocaust: Films in Context

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide an historical overview of the Holocaust film in Israel, Germany (both East and West), and Hollywood up until 1990. In discussing the changing relationship between cinematic depictions of the Nazi genocide and the contemporary social, political, and cultural conditions that inform the context of their production, my intention, here, is to construct a basis from which the themes and arguments presented in the main chapters of my thesis can emerge. The process of constructing this basis requires me to refer to a large number of films. However, I will discuss several productions in more detail with the intention of expanding upon the themes of national identity, hegemonic discourse, and generation shifts.

In order to facilitate these aims, this chapter is structured chronologically and consists of three sections. The opening section, which is entitled 'Initial Responses: National Concerns in Early Holocaust Cinema', focuses on depictions of the Nazi genocide in Hollywood, Israel, and Germany, that were produced during both the Second World War and its immediate aftermath. With regards to Hollywood cinema, the foregrounding of core values such as liberty and freedom express anxieties in light of the perceived threat posed by National Socialism to the American way of life. The employment of the cinematic medium to reinforce national ideals is mirrored in a number of early films produced in Israel. Here, dominant images of settlers defending the new Jewish state against attacks from groups of marauding Arabs are both reflective of, and contribute to, the Zionist enterprise in Palestine. Zionism's desire to create a utopia was also a central concern in Germany following the fall of the Third Reich. As a

consequence, the few German films that were made in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War repeatedly express the movement from the oppression of National Socialism towards a better future is predicated on the bringing of former Nazis to justice – a separation of 'normal' Germans from Hitler and his inner circle that subsequently locates the former in the position of victim.

The second section of this chapter, which is 'East and West German Cinema: the Continuation of Victimhood in Divided Germany', focuses on cinematic depictions of the Holocaust following Germany's separation in 1949. Although both of these national cinemas continued to foreground the theme of German victimhood, they did so in different ways, and, more importantly, for very different ideological reasons. Whereas the promotion of the country's victim status in East German cinema is based on the oppression of communism at the hands of National Socialism, thus evoking the foundational myth in which the struggle between these two ideological positions was used in order to bolster the Democratic Republic's guilt-free approach to the Nazi past, films produced in West Germany continued to separate 'normal' Germans from the Nazi elite through contrasting the humanistic aspects of the former with the tyrannical aims of the latter. The final section, which is entitled 'The Emergence of the Jewish Perspective: Post-Eichmann Depictions of the Holocaust in Hollywood and Israeli Cinema', focuses primarily on representations of the Holocaust in these two national contexts following the disclosure of details pertaining to the suffering endured by survivors during the trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961. Despite the continued promotion of core American values, a number of Hollywood films made after Eichmann's trial depict the Jewish experience through not only a focus on the Holocaust survivor, but also Jewish life before and after the Second World War. This alteration is reflected in Israeli cinema, where traditional perceptions of the Holocaust survivor as a passive victim were replaced by a more sympathetic engagement with the suffering they endured. This shift is most overtly illustrated in the films made by members of Israel's second generation during the 1980s.

2.2 Initial Responses: National Concerns in Early Holocaust Cinema

The politicisation of the Holocaust in early Hollywood depictions is evidenced through the tendency to omit a number of aspects that define the Nazi genocide. For example, the avoidance of mentioning the Jewish race as the specific target of Nazi persecution can be seen as a result of social and economic factors such as protecting American business interests in Nazi Germany and its occupied territories, the active support for Hitler's regime amongst America's large German community, and the prevalence of anti-Semitic sentiments in the country at the time (Avisar, 1988; Krohn, 2010; Hake, 2012).[1] Furthermore, the tendency in these films to abstain from mentioning specific geographical locations or historically important figures is illustrative of America's initial noninterventionist stance (Rostron, 2002). Frank Borzage's *The Mortal Storm* (1940) represents a case in point. Set in a 'University' town somewhere in Germany, Borzage's film does not use the word 'Jew' once (preferring the term 'non-Aryan') despite portraying themes such as racial segregation, social exclusion, and even the concentration camps themselves. Instead, the film locates the persecution of the Jews within a universalizing context that enables Jewish suffering to apply to all humankind. This message is overtly stated during the film's opening and concluding scenes, in which a voiceover laments the eternal suffering of mankind at the hands of his fellow human beings.

In addition to such social and economic factors, the omission of such defining aspects of the Holocaust represents an attempt to present events in Europe in a way that was both palatable and

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[1] The avoidance of mentioning the Jews as the specific target of Nazi persecution is also evident in the post-war cinema of some European countries. In France, for example, Alain Resnais' pioneering documentary film *Night and Fog* (*Nuit et brouillard*, 1956) never uses the words 'Jew' or 'Jewish' in its examination of the Final Solution.

recognisable to its intended American audience. Indeed, in discussing a number of Holocaust films that were produced during the period 1945 until 1959, Lawrence Baron concludes that:

> These movies accustomed Americans to the idea of the "Final Solution" by keeping its savagery offscreen or within existing conventions of movie violence. They portrayed acculturated Jewish characters whose appearance and actions did not seem foreign to Americans (Baron, 2010, p. 113)

The image of the acculturated Jew is overtly presented in Elia Kazan's *Gentleman's Agreement* (1947), in which the American actor Gregory Peck plays a journalist who poses as a Jew for eight weeks in order to gain an insight in to the anti-Semitism that continued to be prevalent in post-war American society. The focus of this investigation is not those who openly express anti-Semitic sentiments, but those whose polite smiles and inactivity works to facilitate its continuation through an adherence to social decorum – an unspoken 'agreement' between members of the American community from which Kazan's film takes its name. Although the subject of anti-Semitism is timely given the influx of Jewish refugees following the end of hostilities in Europe, in locating this issue in a wider American context Kazan's film can be seen as an example of what Judith Doneson (2002, p. 7) has termed "the Americanization of the Holocaust". The process of 'Americanization' is overtly expressed during a scene towards the end of the film in which the journalist is heard telling his inquisitive young son that "a Jew is not just a Jew, but also an American".

The foregrounding of tolerance in *Gentleman's Agreement* indicates another aspect of this process – the reinforcement of fundamental American ideals. Discussing the "anti-Nazi film", a series of Hollywood productions that circulated from 1939 until 1946, Sabine Hake (2012, p. 43) argues that the presentation of totalitarianism in these films affirm freedom and democracy as core American values worthy of defence in both public and private life. The affirmation of

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American ideals can be seen in Anatole Litvak's *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* (1939), in which the Second World War and the perceived threat posed by National Socialism offer an explanation for the film's focus on the potential corrosion of the American democratic system. Litvak's film depicts a Nazi spy-ring's attempt to infiltrate the United States in order to both obtain its military secrets, and, more importantly, with regards to the current argument, disseminate Nazi propaganda throughout American society. Whilst offering a somewhat paranoid picture of an impending Nazi invasion in an attempt to 'prick' the American conscience and question the country's isolationist stance, in *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* the fear of Nazi Germany is ultimately based on the threat that National Socialism poses to the fundamental American values.[2]

By the end of Litvak's film, the plot is uncovered and the threat nullified as the culprits are captured and imprisoned. America's freedom and liberty are protected, and, subsequently, its way of life remains intact. The film's final scene depicts FBI agent, Ed Renard (Edward G. Robinson), and prosecuting lawyer, U.S. Attorney Kellogg (Henry O'Neill), discussing the court case in a café. In the background, a waiter and some other customers can be heard expressing their satisfaction at the verdict. American democracy has been upheld by its system of law, and justice is seen to be done – a defiant message underlined by the film's final words as the waiter exclaims, "this ain't Europe, this is America!". Needless to say, there is no room for the values and ideals belonging to other cultures in films such as Litvak's. Despite a few exceptions – *The Wandering Jew* (1933), *Victims of Persecution* (1933), *Inside Nazi Germany* (1938), and, most notably, Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* (1940) – the events surrounding the Second World War provided Hollywood with an opportunity to restate, and, thus, reinforce, American values.

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[2] Allen Rostron (2002, p. 88) highlights the fact that Warner Bros. Studios used the contrasting of authoritarianism and American democracy as the basis for its marketing of the film – an approach to publicising that contrasted with the ambiguity surrounding the promotion of other Hollywood anti-fascist films during this period.

The process of rendering the Holocaust relevant for the American viewer was also facilitated by an adherence to the established criteria of various cinematic genres. Whereas films such as *House on 92nd Street* (1945), *13 Rue Madeleine* (1946), *Five Fingers* (1952), and *Clipped Wings* (1953) represent the continued use of the spy-thriller theme that informed *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, both Alfred Hitchcock's *Foreign Correspondent* (1940) and Michael Curtiz's *Casablanca* (1942) embody the generic conventions associated with the Hollywood romance. In addition, *All Through the Night* (1942) and *Once Upon a Honeymoon* (1942) are comedies, whilst the depiction of a Polish theatre troupe and its espionage activities following the outbreak of war in Ernst Lubitsch's *To Be or Not To Be* (1942) offers a satirical perspective on Hitler and the Third Reich. *The Desert Fox: The Story of Rommel* (1951), on the other hand, offers a biographical account of one of Nazi Germany's most skilled military commanders. The dramatic arc of *The Mortal Storm* also evokes a number of cinematic genres. The film's plot surrounds Freya Roth's (Margaret Sullavan) attempt to escape Nazi persecution by fleeing to Austria with help of her love interest Martin Breitner (James Stewart). To achieve their goal, they must take a difficult pass through a mountainous route that could result in death. In the end, the couple do make it through, but with Austria and safety in sight, Freya is killed by pursuing SA troops. Borzage's film can therefore be seen to embody a number of themes associated with genre cinema, including adventure, romance, and, of course, tragedy.

Although the structures of genre cinema enable individual films to repeat what came before, thus reassuring the audience through a process of recognisable repetition, the films discussed above illustrate the ways in which these familiar cinematic forms can be invested with new elements in order to perform a different function. Despite the emergence of details about Jewish suffering – through both the dissemination of liberation footage and the evidence presented during the Nuremburg Trials – in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Hollywood's adherence to generic convention continued to

facilitate the promotion of fundamental American ideals. This continuation can be seen in Orson Welles' *The Stranger* (1946). Using a thematic and aesthetic approach commonly associated with film noir, Welles' film tells the story of former Nazi commander Franz Kindler (who is played by Welles himself) who has attained a new identity and is now living in suburban America with his American wife, Mary (Loretta Young). As with *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, *The Stranger* centres on the threat posed by National Socialism to American values such as freedom, liberty, and democracy. The film's use of noir aesthetics, such as the contrasting of light and shadows, suggests the continued presence of subversive ideals, and their subsequent potential to undermine those belonging to America. Again, mirroring *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, *The Stranger* concludes with this threat being tracked down and nullified with Mr Wilson (Edward G. Robinson), a detective working for the Allied War Crimes Commission, exposing Kindler for who he really is. However, whereas in Litvak's film the threat posed by Nazism is nullified through an appeal to the American justice system, in Welles' it is eliminated via the act of revenge.[3] Despite suggesting – through the presentation of judicial figures such as Mary's father, Judge Adam Longstreet (Philip Merivale), and, of course, Mr Wilson of the War Crimes Commission – that Kindler and the threat he represents would be dealt with by due process, the film concludes with Mary shooting her husband, before Mr Wilson helps him to plunge to his death from the top of a clock tower following a confrontation with the former commander.

It was also during the immediate post-war period that a spate of American made films engaging with developments in Palestine began to emerge. In addition to the confrontation of anti-Semitism in *Gentleman's Agreement*, a number of films, such as *Assignment: Tel Aviv* (1947), *My Father's House* (1947), *We Must Not Forget* (1947),

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[3] The act of revenge is central to Chapter Five, which, in discussing a number of films made in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, questions the moral basis of an American response that resulted in the committing of abuses at institutions such as Bagram Airbase, Abu Ghraib Prison, and Guantanamo Bay.

and *The Illegals* (1948), were produced with the specific aim of supporting the establishment of the Israeli state. With regards to Kazan's film, the very fact that the journalist has to confront anti-Semitism in America offers a further comment on the need for a Jewish state – if prejudice towards the Jewish race can survive and, more importantly in the context of the post-war climate and defeat of fascism, prosper in the 'land of the free', then it can do so anywhere.

The process of securing a safe haven for the Jewish race was something that dominated Israeli life during its formative years. The termination of the British Mandate for Palestine on May 14th 1948, combined with Israel's immediate declaration of independence, triggered an attack from neighbouring Arab countries. Israel's War of Independence lasted for a year, and marked a deterioration in Jewish-Arab relations that would, of course, lead to further armed conflict. As a consequence of this instability, Israel's initial cinematic output expresses the immediate concerns and requirements of a state fighting for its survival. Films such as *Heritage* (1948), *Tomorrow's a Wonderful Day* (*Adamah*, 1948), *Faithful City* (*Kirya Ne'emana*, 1952), and *Pillar of Fire* (*Amud Ha-Esh*, 1959) present the preparation for war as a necessity step in establishing Israel's sovereignty. *Heritage*, for example, depicts members of a kibbutz interrupting their daily routine of working the land in order to defend it against periodic attacks from the Arab-enemy. Released against the backdrop of Israel's War of Independence, films such as *Heritage* functioned as a propaganda tool that facilitated the promotion of Zionist ideals as part of its nation-building project. In addition to a focus on the need for Jewish resistance, the constant stream of images depicting activities such as collective farming, communal life, and an adherence to Judaic religious doctrine in these films offer a glimpse of the utopian dream that was the aim of the Zionist project in Palestine.[4]

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[4] In his survey of Israeli cinema, Judd Ne'eman (2001, p. 223) argues that these films continue the work done by earlier filmmakers in the region, who turned their cameras on Israel's "agricultural pioneers" in an attempt to document the Zionist programme.

Furthermore, this combination of farming, religious practice, and active resistance constituted the basis for an attempt to create collective cohesion through the construction of a national identity predicated on the preservation of some traditional practices and the rejection of others. This desire for national cohesion was seen as an urgent requirement during a period in which the emerging Israeli state was experiencing both a massive influx of the Jewish diaspora from Europe and on-going hostilities with surrounding Arab nations. An important aspect of this desired cohesion was the redefinition of the traditional image of the Jew based on the act of Jewish resistance during the Second World War. Gone was centuries of perceived passivity, to be replaced by the Zionist image of the 'New Jew' – one who is prepared not only to work the land with the plough, but also to defend it with the gun.

Ensuring the future safety of the Jewish race therefore required not only the possession of a sovereign geographical space in which to live, but also an alteration of the ways in which the Jew had been traditionally perceived. This, of course, is overtly illustrated by the actions of the kibbutz members *Heritage*. The contrasting of resistance with the perceived passivity of those who were apparently "led like lambs to the slaughter" during the Holocaust in this film is symbolic of the Zionist movement's attempt to redefine perceptions of the Jew. Indeed, the suffering endured during the Holocaust remains off-screen. In its place is a focus on 'tomorrow', and the chance to build a new Jewish home – an ideological message that is overtly stated by the film's opening shot of the dawn sun. The immediate concerns of both defending Israel's sovereignty and ensuring its long-term survival through the construction of a coherent national identity can therefore be seen to dictate the country's relationship with the Holocaust during the period of its emergence. The subsequent production of the "Zionist master narrative", to use Ariel Schweitzer's (2010, p. 183) term, transforms the Holocaust into an event that not only justifies the existence of an autonomous Jewish state, but also something that provides the motivation to take up arms and defend it.

For the Holocaust survivor, this meant the incorporation of his or her experiences into a narrative in which the resolution of any traumatic effects was secondary to the contribution that could be made to the Zionist project. This marginalisation of the trauma experienced during the Holocaust is illustrated in Helmar Lerski's short film, *Tomorrow's a Wonderful Day*. Lerski's film focuses on a young Holocaust survivor called Benjamin following his arrival in Israel under the Youth Aliyah.[5] Benjamin's traumatised experience of the Holocaust is central to the film. Indeed, it is the lasting traumatic effects of the Nazi genocide that are presented as the cause of Benjamin's initial rejection of the kibbutz, as daily tasks and practices are interpreted through the lens of his trauma. For example, farming represents the forced labour experienced in the camps, the barbed wire fencing surrounding the fields is interpreted as his entrapment, whilst the lack of shoes among other members of the kibbutz represents the oppressive conditions of camp life. These scenes of daily activity therefore induce flashbacks for Benjamin, whilst the vestiges of Holocaust survival are further illustrated by his stealing of bread for survival.

By the film's conclusion, however, Benjamin learns to see that the activities of the kibbutz are part of a network of support, rather than one of oppression. Farming provides food for the collective (thus, there is no need to steal), the barbed wire fence provides protection, and people choose not to wear shoes rather than none being available. Furthermore, the manual labour of kibbutz life is presented as a positive contribution to the building of the new Jewish state. *Tomorrow's a Wonderful Day* presents numerous images of dry stony ground that is to be cultivated in order to provide food to support the Israeli population. During one scene, this process is aligned with heaven as the Benjamin declares, "a man only has as much Heaven

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[5] The Youth Aliyah is an organisation that helps to integrate members of the Jewish diaspora into Israeli society. During the Second World War it saved thousands of Jewish children from Nazi persecution, and relocated them on kibbutzim throughout Palestine.

over his head as he has land under his feet". This allusion to Heaven highlights the film's presentation of another important aspect of the integration of the European Jewish diaspora – Judaism. In the opening scenes of Lerski's film, Benjamin denounces God, asking where He was during his internment in the camps. Like the other tasks on the kibbutz, religious practice has been tainted by his Holocaust experience. As with the therapeutic qualities of collective farming, however, by the film's conclusion religion is seen to represent another solution to the individual's trauma. The final scene of *Tomorrow's a Wonderful Day* depicts Benjamin carrying a torch to light the final candle of the nine-branched menorah during Hanukah. The 'Festival of Lights' comes to signify the movement of the European Jewish Diaspora from the darkness of the Holocaust into the light of Israel. Benjamin's final words – "Never again can it be dark for me" – confirm the ability of Judaism, as a central part of the Zionist decree, to relieve the Holocaust survivor of its traumatic effects.

Of course, Benjamin's final words evoke that other Zionist mantra, "Never again!". Whilst defiantly expressing the essence of the 'New Jew', and his or her determination to fight and resist any threat posed to the Zionist cause, this slogan also evokes the passivity of those who apparently accepted their fate during the Holocaust. This willingness to defend the emerging Jewish state is, furthermore, grounded by Benjamin's fascination with the story of the Macabees, the Jewish rebel army that took control of Judea and expanded the Land of Israel's borders. In addition to his acceptance of both collective farming and the practice of Judaism as central components of the new Jewish state, his study of these ancient Jewish pioneers reinforces the need to fight and defend Israel from attacks by neighbouring Arab nations. The paralleling of the rebel Macabees and those attempting to establish the Israeli state in Lerski's film also suggests the latter's legitimacy through the presence of a Jewish

heritage in the region.[6] In a similar vein to other films made during this period, the presence of children in *Tomorrow's a Wonderful Day* reinforces Israel's presence in the region. The marriage of Benjamin and a female member therefore suggests the subsequent birth of additional Sabras that, consequently, reinforces Israel's presence in the region. Furthermore, Benjamin's marriage to a (native) Sabra signifies the completion of his integration into Israeli society.

Whereas Holocaust suffering remains off-screen in *Heritage*, *Tomorrow's a Wonderful Day* presents a process in which the survivor's traumatic experience is subsumed beneath the ideological aims of the Zionist project in Palestine. Despite acknowledging the continuation of its traumatic effects – a subject that would remain largely absent from Israeli cinema until the late 1970s – Lerski's film asserts that a contribution to the process of establishing the Israeli state represents an antidote to any psychological issues experienced by the Holocaust survivor. The Israeli kibbutz subsequently becomes the 'cure' for the vestiges of the Final Solution, as Judd Ne'eman argues:

> Post-war documentaries and dramas focused on the plight of Holocaust survivors arriving in Palestine to join the ranks in the Jewish settlements with the pioneers. These films portrayed the process by which emotionally broken survivors were made well again through agricultural training in a kibbutz or, for young immigrants, special boarding school... As if resurrected from the ashes, the survivors are reborn to become pioneers in the Zionist enterprise (Ne'eman, 2001, p. 224-5).

During Israel's first decade or so of independence, this process was both reflected, and, thus, reinforced, by its national cinema. In Lerski's film, indeed, Benjamin is joined in the classroom by Jews from France,

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[6] The notion of a Jewish heritage in the Middle East prior to the events surrounding the Holocaust and its aftermath is also suggested in the film *Tevye and His Seven Daughters* (*Tuvia Vesheva Benotav*, 1968), which depicts a Jewish family fleeing Russian during the pogroms of 1905 in order to seek shelter in Palestine.

Germany, Britain, Holland, and Italy, in being taught the values and ideals of the new Jewish state – a pedagogical exercise in which different nationalities are moulded into a cohesive whole. For Ne'eman (2001, p. 225), the direct link between the Holocaust and Jewish state in the films produced in the immediate post-war period is reflective of a Zionist worldview in which the only acceptable compensation for the Nazis' attempt to destroy the European Jewry was the subsequent establishment of Israel. However, the attempt to incorporate the Nazi genocide into the process of constructing a collective Israeli identity resulted in the creation of a myth that promoted a desired ideological message through the foregrounding of particular aspects of the Holocaust experience. Focusing on stories of resistance – most notably the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto – this narrative failed to encompass the experiences of the vast majority of survivors who were entering Israel during this period. As a consequence, the experiences of the latter were marginalised.

As Amy Kronish and Costel Safirman (2003, p. 2) have argued, Israeli cinema continued to promote images of heroic pioneers, fighters, and Holocaust survivors prepared to defend the new nation in times of conflict beyond the initial stage of the state's establishment. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, for example, the 'Heroic Nationalist' genre was prominent in reinforcing the heroic imagery associated with the process of defending Israel through war. Set against the backdrop of Israel's War of Independence, the depiction of Holocaust survivors gradually accepting Israeli values to the point of taking up arms in order to defend the new state continued in films such as *Faithful City*, *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* (*Giva 24 Aina Onah*, 1954), and *Pillar of Fire*. As a consequence of the instability surrounding Israel during the country's first decades of existence, the 'Heroic Nationalist' genre continued to be prevalent beyond Israel's conception, which included the production of a second wave of films following the euphoria surrounding victories during the 1967 Six Day War (Kronish and Safirman, 2003, p. 3). Indeed, the Six Day War, as well as both the Yom Kippur War in 1973 and the invasions of Lebanon in 1978, and

again in 1982, provide the backdrop for this continuation. Films such as *Clouds Over Israel* (*Sinaia*, 1966), *Sayarim* (1967), *Kommando Sinai* (1968), *Operation Thunderbolt* (*Mivtsa Yonatan*, 1977), *Attack at Dawn* (1970), and *Girls* (*Banot*, 1985), present a steady stream of images representing values such as the heroic act of self-sacrifice, active resistance, the efficiency of the Israel Defence Force, as well as other positive aspects of a militarised society.

In presenting idealised images of transformed and resistant Holocaust survivors, the 'Heroic Nationalist' genre therefore continued to promote the ideological message that was central to those films produced during the 1930s and 1940s. For Ella Shohat (2010, p. 53), these post-independence films continued to be shaped by the same Zionist ideals that informed pre-state Israeli cinema, despite both the elapsing of almost three decades and the evolution of the political situation. Likewise, Ne'eman (2001, p. 226) argues that although these films enjoyed more artistic freedom as a result of the development of two film studios in Israel, which allowed them to move "beyond the aesthetics of Zionist realism", the 'Heroic Nationalist' genre "complied ideologically with the constraints of the 'Zionist master narrative'. The continued linking of the Holocaust to the subsequent need to defend the new Jewish state is overtly illustrated in Thorold Dickenson's, *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer*. During one scene midway through the film an Israeli soldier, fighting Egyptian forces during the War of Independence, drags a wounded member of the enemy into a cave. As the former removes the latter's shirt in order to administer first aid, he finds an SS insignia tattooed on his enemy's chest. Here, the threat to the Jewish race posed by the Third Reich and that by Israel's Arab neighbour is conflated. The confrontation between the Israeli and Arab/Nazi soldier in Dickenson's film therefore offers another example of how the Holocaust was utilised to support the Zionist ideals being promoted.

The use of cinema to promote ideological values is also evident in post-war Germany where it played an important role in the de-Nazification programme that was implemented by the Allied powers

following the defeat of Nazism. In an attempt to re-educate the German population following twelve years of exposure to ideals of National Socialism, films such as the US Army documentary *Death Mills* (*Todesmühlen*, 1945) were shown to thousands of people in various towns and cities across Germany. At once a depiction of, and contribution to, the de-Nazification process, the images of thousands of corpses strewn across the ground of numerous camps in this film confronted the German people with the scale and horror of the crimes committed in their name, whilst its portrayal of people being shown around former camps or attending screenings of footage captured by liberating forces shows the re-education of the German population in action. Discussing the importance of *Death Mills* with regards to constructing the case against those responsible for these war crimes (the film was used as evidence during the Nuremberg trials), Kay Gladstone (2005, p. 65) argues that "moving images are an indispensable part of establishing the validity of events habitually denied by their perpetrators". The indexical properties of the documentary film therefore made it an effective tool in the process of both ideological re-education and bringing war criminals to justice.

Despite the importance of the Nuremburg trials with regards to the judicial process and bringing the crimes committed by the Third Reich to the attention of both the wider German public and the rest of the world, however, the focus on a number of prominent Nazis during these trials served only to reinforce the belief that it was Hitler and his inner circle who were responsible for the act of genocide. The separation of the Nazi elite from 'normal' Germans presented an opportunity for the latter to both draw a clear line between themselves and the actual perpetrators. From this position, Germany could move towards a better future with the destruction wrought by the Nazis left behind. This sentiment is expressed in the few fictional films made during the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. In addition to focusing on both the notion of collective guilt and the Holocaust, themes that inform productions such as *In Those Days* (*In jenen Tagen*, 1947), *Morituri* (Eugen York, 1948), and *Long Is the Road*

(*Lang ist der Weg*, 1948), the genre of the 'rubble film' (*Trümmerfilme*) also presents the theme of hope for the future following years of living under the oppressive Nazi regime. In *Somewhere in Berlin* (*Irgendwo in Berlin*, 1946), for example, a former prisoner of war, who returns to the city a broken man, is given hope for the future by his son. Furthermore, *Berliner Ballade* (1948) concludes with a German solider falling in love with the woman of his dreams following his initial struggle to find food, shelter, and work upon his return to the German capital, whilst Wolfgang Liebeneiner's *Love '47* (*Liebe 47*, 1949) depicts the transformation of its male and female protagonists who at the beginning of the film want to commit suicide. Following their recounting of their struggles during both the Second World War and its immediate aftermath, however, they convince each other that the future is worth living for.

The desire of the protagonists in these films to rid themselves of the vestiges of the Nazi regime, and move on from the destruction of the present to the possibility of a better future, is reinforced by the ruined post-war Berlin landscape that provides the backdrop for the narrative action of the 'rubble film'. In foregrounding the devastating effects of the hostilities on the wider population, therefore, this short lived cycle of films promoted the notion that the German citizenry were the victims of not only Hitler's despotic reign, but also a war that resulted in the destruction of Germany itself. These sentiments are central to Wolfgang Staudte's, *The Murderers are Among Us* (*Die Mörder sind unter uns*, 1946). The first film to be made in post-war Germany (Mückenberger, 1999, p. 59), this DEFA production presents a series of relationships between various characters that combine to construct a narrative that is reflective of both Germany's victim status with regards to the actions of the Third Reich and the country's subsequent desire to move towards a better future. Most prominent of these relationships is that between former Wehrmacht medic Dr Hans Mertens (Ernst Wilhelm Borchert), and concentration camp survivor Susanne Wallner (Hildegard Knef). Mertens, who spends his time drinking and womanising in an attempt to escape his experiences

during the war, embodies the despair and desperation of a country on its knees in defeat. For him, there is no hope for a human race that "lurches from one war to the next, with peace merely providing respite from the destruction". This pessimism is in stark contrast to the optimism expressed by Susanne. Despite returning home to a destroyed Berlin, she retains a sense of hope based on both the fall of Nazism and her subsequent liberation from the camps. The film's images of destruction and deprivation therefore come to symbolise these conflicting emotions. Whereas for Mertens the ruins of Berlin are symbolic of the consequences of humankind's intent to destroy itself, for Susanne they represent the destruction of all that was wrong in Germany, thus, providing a foundation upon which a better society can be built.

The second relationship involves Mertens and his former commanding officer, Captain Brückner (Arno Paulson). Like Mertens, Brückner has returned to Berlin after the war, where he now runs a successful business. For Mertens, news of his former captain's presence in the city prompts the traumatic resurfacing of an event in which a group of Polish civilians were rounded up and shot. Mertens' flashback depicts Brückner giving the order to execute the civilians, and the medic's subsequent refusal to do so. He then confronts his superior, who, in turn, pulls rank and demands that the order be followed. In the final scenes of *The Murderers are Among Us*, Mertens once again confronts his former commanding officer, this time with the intention of killing him. This revenge not only represents a form of justice for those executed at Brückner's command, it is also representative of a desire to remove the vestiges of an oppressive past in order to progress towards a better future. Mirroring the de-Nazification process of weeding out those who were deemed directly responsible for the crimes committed by the Third Reich, the relationship between Mertens and Brückner suggests that this procedure is central to the realisation of this new beginning. As the Nuremberg trials indicate, however, Germany's future is to be built on the values of a democratic system where justice, and not revenge,

prevails. During the final scene of Staudte's film, Susanne convinces Mertens not to kill his former comrade, stating that "we cannot pass sentence". Mertens' reply, "you're right Susanne. But we have to bring charges", is significant with regards to the realisation of that better future.

In his transformation from the image of a desperate person desiring revenge, to the embodiment of hope for a future built on the democratic process of justice Mertens is therefore symbolic of Germany at its zero hour. Whereas Brückner and Susanne represent the respective polarities of the Nazi past and the possibility of a new beginning, it is Mertens who must negotiate this binary in order to fulfil this hope. However, in positioning Mertens as a symbol of Germany's movement from the Nazi past towards the possibility of a better future, *The Murderers are Among Us* raises a number of questions with regards to Germany's relationship with National Socialism. From the point of view of the film's narrative, the foregrounding of the positive aspect of Mertens' transformation negates questions surrounding his involvement in the killing of the Polish civilians. As David Bathrick has highlighted:

> The montage editing, fuzzy images and hazy lighting of the brief execution scene [...] make it difficult if not impossible to establish the nature of either perpetrators or victims. Did Mertens himself actually commit a crime, or was he just a bystander? (Bathrick, 2007, p. 115).

Having raised the question of German participation in Nazi crimes, the film subsequently sidesteps the complexity of this issue in favour of a resolution based on the separation of the real perpetrator, Captain Brückner, from Mertens. As a consequence, the latter is positioned as yet another victim of Hitler's regime. In reinforcing the belief that those responsible are easily distinguishable from those who were not, a notion that was propagated by the judicial process of the Nuremberg

Trials, Staudte's film avoids the complex issue of the role played by the individual German citizen in such crimes.[7]

Furthermore, this focus on Mertens' victim status comes at the price of Susanne's. In its depiction of the Wehrmacht medic's psychological transformation, *The Murderers are Among Us* circumvents the subject of the trauma experienced by the camp survivor in favour of foregrounding the suffering of the 'normal' German at the hands of those in positions of authority. As Bathrick states:

> Susanne has been effaced of her history,
> character, ethnicity – certainly her psyche;
> neither do we learn, nor does the tortured
> narcissist Mertens have any interest in knowing,
> about her past in a concentration camp, for here
> she is a vehicle for something else (Bathrick,
> 2007, p. 115).

Whereas the depiction of German victimhood in the film undermines the alleged silence regarding the country's victim status in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, its theme of a Germany wanting to move towards a better future following the fall of National Socialism expresses the desire to reconstruct its national identity. Stating that national identity is the result of a collective adherence to some version of collectivity, one that becomes a social reality when it is embodied in (and, thus, transmitted through) the practices, values, and laws that constitute society, Mary Fulbrook (2007, p. 1-2) argues that one of the overarching problems informing German national identity in aftermath of Nazi period is fact that nationalism informed the extremist political policies of the Third Reich, and, furthermore, ideas such as racial purity that ultimately supported the act of genocide. In Staudte's film this problem is negotiated through the separation of 'normal' Germans from the actual

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[7] The issue of the individual's conformity to the demands of Nazi society, and the subsequent questions this act raises with regards to the legitimisation of the political aims of National Socialism, is discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis.

perpetrators of Nazi crimes, who, subsequently, must be rooted out in order for Germany to begin anew. Furthermore, the tensions between the foregrounding of German victimhood in *The Murderers are Among Us* and German guilt in those 'rubble films' that engage with issues such as collective guilt and the Holocaust is representative of Germany's engagement with the Nazi period. As Chapter Four will discuss, these tensions continued to inform Germany's public memory of the Nazi period following the country's reunification in 1990.

2.3 East and West German Cinema: The Continuation of Victimhood in Divided Germany

Fulbrook (2007, p. 2) argues that the question of national identity was further complicated by the division of Germany in 1949. For Fulbrook (2007, p. 233), Benedict Anderson's contention that the 'imagined community' is partly predicated on a sense of both a shared past and future is problematic in a post-war German context where the past points towards Hitler and the present is defined by division. Arguing that the shifting nature of national identity should be seen in context of political and social change, Fulbrook states that:

> National identity is – always and everywhere – a social, cultural, and most of all a political construction, and as such is essentially contested. It should not be reified as a reality floating somehow above the maelstrom of political debate and struggle, or the clash of competing moral values. Collective identities are malleable and constantly changing according to experience and circumstance (Fulbrook, 2007, p. 238).

The presentist approach to the remembrance of the past meant that although East and West Germany shared a history, their respective remembrance of the Nazi period was very different (Fulbrook, 2007, p. 84). In the context of a political situation in which the ideological

positions of communism and capitalism were competing for a position of dominance, the process of basing national identity on shared myths about a collective past – which is periodically re-enacted in order to reinforce social bonds – therefore does not occur in Germany where the nation could not agree on a common past (Fulbrook, 2007, p. 79).

One thing the two Germanys did have in common was the use of the Holocaust to construct a national identity based on the victim status of the German people. Indeed, in another challenge to the myth of silence regarding German victimhood in the early post-war period, both East and West Germany devoted considerable energy to assessing the country's losses and incorporating its victim status into public memory (Robert G. Moeller, 2006). Fulbrook (2007, p. 27) argues that in reshaping the physical traces of the Nazi period, both Germanys turned to the process of memorialisation and commemoration as the focal-point for the rebuilding of a collective identity. However, this process of commemoration resulted in an "anti-memory" of Holocaust as the new German states used the Nazi genocide as a contrast to what they now represented (Fulbrook, 2007, p. 27).

Following its official declaration on the 7th October 1949, East Germany used the Holocaust as the basis for the construction of a foundational myth in which communism's struggle with Nazism was to bolster its claim to be the right and proper answer to the questions raised by National Socialism (Fulbrook, 2007; Bathrick, 2007). The fact that communists had actively resisted, and, indeed, suffered at the hands of Hitler's regime, provided the basis for a "guilt-free" approach to the past in which the Democratic Republic could celebrate its martyrs and their achievements (Fulbrook, 2007, p. 35). As a consequence, the cinematic output of the new German state could be seen to display an overtly political agenda (Mückenberger, 1999, p. 68-9). As a result of close ties between the state-owned studio DEFA and the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED), a relationship that had been established shortly after the studio's creation in 1946 (Allan, 1999, p.

4), the films made during the forty years of East Germany's existence largely mirror its wider political concerns.

For example, the focus on the plight of noble Indians in westerns such as *The Sons of Great Bear* (*Die Söhne der großen Bärin*, Josef Mach, 1966) represents an anti-American hyperbole in the form of references to the inhumanity of the capitalist system (Brockmann, 2010, p. 228-30) that can be seen to reinforce the Democratic Republic's claim to be the proper answer to the questions raised by National Socialism, whilst the depiction of German and Soviet miners working in the uranium mines of the Erzgebirge Mountain range in Konrad Wolf's *Sun Seekers* (*Sonnensucher*, 1958) expresses concerns about the need to reconfigure the relationship between former adversaries. In addition, a number of East German films also present the myth of communist resistance towards Nazism. Cinematic representations of this myth tend to exaggerate the scale of this resistance. For example, in Falk Harnack's *The Axe of Wandsbeck* (*Das Beil von Wandsbek*, 1951) the entire community of the small town in which the film is set express communist sensibilities, and, consequently, an aversion towards the ideals of National Socialism. Harnack's film tells the story of a struggling butcher who stands in for a Nazi executioner in the trial of four members of the communist resistance in exchange for money to save his ailing business. However, after an initial boom in takings thanks to the installation of modern fridge freezers and tiled walls, his business begins to falter once again. Having found out the identity of the executor, his customers begin to boycott his shop *en masse*. In addition, these political sentiments extend to the bureaucratic arm of the Nazi regime when, during one scene, two doctors, who work at the prison where the four communists are initially being held, are heard both expressing sympathy for their cause and casually admitting to previous membership "of the left". In presenting a German society in which communist sentiments simmer just below the surface, Harnack's film suggests that resistance towards Nazism was widespread during Hitler's reign. A further connotation of the presence of communist

values throughout German society is that it works to vindicate those that were part of the Third Reich's social machinery – obviously an important step for a communist regime that sought to use the same personnel to build a communist state.

The presence of these values just beneath the surface of Nazi society is a theme repeated in Kurt Maetzig's *The Council of the Gods* (*Der Rat der Götter*, 1950). Set against the backdrop of the pro-Nazi political manoeuvres of the chemical giant I. G. Farben during Hitler's rise to power, the film's narrative focuses on Dr. Scholz, a scientist who initially represses his communist sensibilities in order to continue a line of research that will lead to the production of the compound used to develop Zyklon B. Rather than question the involvement of the chemical giant in the mass murder of Jews, however, Maetzig's film reinforces fundamental communist values through the foregrounding of both the inhumanity of capitalism and collective resistance towards National Socialism. The film's final sequence depicts Dr. Scholz, who is joined by an angry crowd, confronting the head of the company following an explosion in which a number of workers are killed. As with the masses that boycott the butcher's shop in *The Axe of Wandsbeck*, the crowd in *The Council of the Gods* represent the idea that German society is at its heart communist. This is overly indicated by the nature of the complaints shouted by various members of the crowd, which are based on the ill treatment of workers and an insistence that those who own the company are held responsible.

The theme of communist resistance is also central to Frank Beyer's later film, *Naked Among Wolves* (*Nackt Unter Wölfen*, 1963). Set in Buchenwald concentration camp, Beyer's film presents the story of a recently arrived Jewish boy who is hidden from the SS command by a group of inmates. The narrative device of hiding a Jewish boy, which invests the film with dramatic tension and its characters with their motivation, is based on the belief that children and women were killed upon their arrival at the camps because they were both deemed less useful for forced labour and represented a threat towards the Nazi ideal of racial purity. The inmates' concealment of the Jewish boy

presents an aspect of the Holocaust that signifies its Jewish specificity. As with the theme of gassing in *The Council of the Gods*, however, this is suppressed in favour of foregrounding the myth of communist resistance towards Nazism. Both the expression of communist ideals by the vast majority of inmates and the direct involvement of others in underground resistance movement in Beyer's film results in Buchenwald being presented as a camp that is effectively run by communists. This is something that is reinforced by the film's *mise en scène*, which juxtaposes repeated images of inmates in large groups with shots of individual members of the SS command. The ideal of communist unity is therefore promoted in Beyer's film through its contrast with the image of a fractured fascism.

The setting of *Naked Among* Wolves is of crucial importance with regard to its reinforcement of the myth of communist resistance. As Fulbrook (2007, p. 29) argues, the process of re-evaluating the Nazi past in East Germany involved the recasting of Buchenwald concentration camp as the symbol of communism's heroic struggle against fascism based on the uprising in the camp in 1945. For Fulbrook (2007, p. 31), Buchenwald embodies the Democratic Republic's approach to Nazi past – whereas the camp accentuated the continued struggle of communism against the extremity of National Socialist ideals, it ignored the racial implications of those who were killed as a result.[8] This suppression of racial identity is illustrated at one point in Beyer's film when an inmate replies to a questioning of his sympathy towards a child of which he is not the father with the sharp retort, "a child's a child the world over". In removing the child's Jewish identity and all that this entails with regards to his presence in the camp, the risk of concealing him is subsequently placed into a wider political context. As a consequence, the Jewish specificity of the

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[8] Parallels can be drawn with the Zionist project in Palestine, here. As discussed in the opening section of this chapter, the 'Zionist master narrative' based its interpretation of events in Europe on both the foregrounding of the relatively few acts of Jewish resistance and the suppression of the suffering endured by the majority during the Holocaust in order to redefine the image of the Jew as an active resister.

Holocaust is lost and the victim status shifted to the (East German) communist.

Although *Naked Among Wolves* is illustrative of East German cinema's tendency to use the Holocaust as a backdrop for the promotion of communist ideals, there are a few films that present the contrary. For example, the focus on the lives of various Jews housed in a ghetto awaiting transportation in Beyer's *Jacob the Liar* (*Jakob der Lügner,* 1974) foregrounds the fact that Europe's Jews were the specific target of Nazi genocide. Whereas the depiction of forced labour, cramped living conditions, scarcity of food, and enforced curfews, expresses the hopelessness of their present situation, periodical flashbacks indicate the vibrancy of a pre-war Jewish community whose members are now imprisoned. Although the narrative is one of hope in the face of despair, in which the central protagonist (the 'Jacob' of the film's title) attempts to give those imprisoned hope of liberation by relaying fabricated reports about the Russian advancement on the eastern front, his actions are shown to represent a temporary reprieve. Indeed, the film's concluding scene depicts Jacob and the others from the ghetto in a box cart being transported to the camps. In contrast to a positivity based on communist ideals such as unity and collective resistance in the East Germany films discussed above, *Jacob the Liar* unflinchingly presents the final stage of the liquidation process as ghettoization is followed by transportation and death. Indeed, resistance in Beyer's film is reduced to hopelessness – a futile attempt by Jacob to comfort the other occupants of the ghetto in the face of their impending annihilation.

In West Germany, the television broadcast of *Holocaust: The Story of the Family Weiss* in January 1979 marked a watershed with regards to the country's engagement with its Nazi past. This impact is indicated by Mark Wolfgram (2002, p. 24) who, in surveying cinematic representations of the Holocaust in West Germany, states that there was a significant increase in the production of such films following the

broadcast of this NBC mini-series.[9] In addition to representing a pivotal point regarding not only an increase in representations of the Nazi genocide, Wolfgram (2002, p. 24) argues that the transmission of *Holocaust: The Story of the Family Weiss* also saw a shift in focus towards a representation of the Jewish perspective in these films. Its broadcast opened up a space that was filled by a flood of stories – both fictional and those based on real events – focusing on Jewish experiences that continued into the 1980s (Wolfgram, 2002, p. 30-1).[10] For Wolfgram (2002, p. 31), this signalled the end of a thirty year absence of a focus on the Jewish perspective in German cinema that can be traced back to the production of *Long is the Road*.[11]

Prior to the broadcast of this mini-series, therefore, the Jewish perspective was largely absent from West German screens. As with its counterpart in the East, West German films utilised the events surrounding the persecution of the Jews as a backdrop to promote the positive aspects of the German people. As Wolfgram states:

> While there was never an absolute silence on the persecution of the Jews, there was a peculiar silence that attempted to engage with the Holocaust but often in an indirect manner. [...] German cinema has rarely captured a Jewish

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[9] In addition, Helmut Schmitz (2007, p. 2-4) argues that the broadcast of *Holocaust: The Story of the Family Weiss* resulted in a steady increase in representations of German wartime suffering, which, consequently, lead to an alteration in the focus of a public memory previously concerned with the question of German guilt to one predicated on private memories that expressed hardship, suffering, as well as heroism. The shift in focus from German perpetration to victimhood is discussed in a post-reunification context in Chapter Four.

[10] Wolfgram's (2002, p. 31) contention that German cinema reverted back to an avoidance of the Jewish specificity of the Holocaust following the country's reunification is also illustrated in Chapter Four, which argues that contemporary representations of the Nazi period in the Berlin Republic express presentist concerns relating to wider perceptions of Germany as either perpetrator or victim.

[11] For Wolfgram (2002, p. 24), *Long is the Road* is an example of West German cinema's potential to represent the Final Solution in a way that centralises the Jewish perspective. Despite both its lack of popularity and eventual suppression, Wolfgram (2002, p. 25) argues that Herbert B. Fredersdorf and Marek Goldstein's film challenges the accepted notion that German cinema failed to represent this period, stating that "the very existence of the film confronts the widely held belief that domestic German productions were all but wholly silent on the matter of the Holocaust until the late 1970s". However, the very position of *Long is the Road* as unique is confirmation of the fact that West German cinema's engagement with the Holocaust was largely based on the negation of this perspective.

> perspective which would allow the audience to empathize with the Jewish situation rather than maintaining the Jew as an object to prove the humanity of a potential German savior (Wolfgram, 2002, p. 24).

Again, mirroring films produced in East Germany, the promotion of German humanity amounted to the depiction of Germans as victims of Hitler's regime. In a series of films made during the 1950s, the foregrounding of this victimhood was facilitated by a focus on the plight of the Wehrmacht soldier. Films such as Paul May's *08/15* (1954), Geza von Radvany's *The Stalingrad Doctor* (*Der Arzt von Stalingrad*, 1958), and Frank Wisbar's *Stalingrad: Dogs, Do You Want to Live Forever?* (*Hunde, wollt ihr ewig leben*, 1959) locate the German soldier in the hopeless situation trapped between the ruthless Soviets on one side and the barbarous Nazis on the other. In Wisbar's film, for example, the events surrounding the doomed 6th Army during the Battle of Stalingrad provides the basis for a conflict between the common soldiery and the Army's high command. When the former becomes trapped behind enemy lines, the latter fails to provide necessary support in the form of military reinforcement, ammunition, and food. Faced with the death and suffering of his regiment, Oberleutnant Wisse (Joachim Hansen) becomes increasingly disillusioned with not only the army's high command, but also National Socialism itself.

Rather than embodying the enforcer of a brutal Nazi ideology, an image that is enhanced via accusations of involvement in the crimes committed by the Third Reich, the Wehrmacht soldier is presented as the hapless victim of wider political forces that remain out of his control. Furthermore, Wisse's disillusionment with both his superiors and the Nazi cause itself represents the familiar trope of separating 'normal' Germans from those deemed responsible for acts of perpetration. This separation is overly illustrated in the portrayal of Hitler as a despot in *Stalingrad: Dogs, Do You Want to Live Forever?*. Concerned only with victory, the Führer's cold utilitarianism is

expressed in the riposte he offers to his military advisor upon hearing about the 6th Army's desperate situation, "forget the pathos, Zeisler. It's only an army. Recruit a new one." Wisbar's Hitler is indicative of the demonic caricature that Wolfgram (2002, p. 25) associates with representations of the Nazi period in West Germany during the 1950s. In addition, the derogatory tone of the film's title, a barked command that expresses contempt for the common German soldiery, is also illustrative of the separation of soldier and commander, whilst the opening sequence undermines the pomp and pride of the military parade by juxtaposing its depiction of such events with documentary images of soldiers lying dead in the snow around Stalingrad. This trope is repeated during the film's final scenes when footage of Hermann Göring's address to members of the Nazi party gathered to mark the 10th anniversary of Hitler's coming to power is cut with a scene depicting starving and dying soldiers cowering in the cellars of the destroyed buildings of the besieged city. Göring's speech, which is laden with platitudes about the Führer's greatness, is subsequently exposed as meaningless in the wider context of the loss of life.

The separation and opposition of soldier and commander is also a central theme in Bernard Wicki's *The Bridge* (*Die Brücke*, 1959). Set in an unnamed German village, the film depicts a group of young boys who are drafted into the army during the closing stages of the Second World War. Their first assignment is to secure a bridge into the village over which the retreating German army can escape the advancing American forces. In a similar vein to *Dogs, Do You Want to Live Forever?*, Wicki's film encourages empathy for the common foot-soldier through locating him within a hopeless situation created by a callous Nazi command. As with Göring's speech in Wisbar's film, images of soldiers suffering and being killed (only one member of the group of boys survives the American military advance) are juxtaposed with the inhumanity of high ranking military officials who repeatedly spout the virtues of Führer, Volk, and Fatherland. This contrast is illustrated in an early scene, which depicts a Wehrmacht general offering such platitudes to those departing for the front. Whilst his mad

dash to and from his waiting car expresses the immediacy of the situation, it also renders his words vacuous, thus, exposing their cynical function. Crucially, during this scene, it is the sergeant – whose functional battlefield attire jars with the dark opulence of the general's long trench coat and peaked cap – who spares the boys' deployment to the front.

The distinction between German victims and Nazi perpetrators in *The Bridge* is further illustrated through the way in which the village itself functions within the narrative. Mirroring the popular *Heimatfilm* genre, Wicki's film foregrounds the beauty of the German landscape, as well as the moral integrity of its inhabitants. The film's depiction of an idealised image of traditional German life, one that harks back to the pre-Nazi period, is subsequently disturbed by the arrival of military conflict – its beauty scarred by the heavy exchanges between the retreating German army and advancing American soldiers who turn the village into a battlefield.[12] This corruption of the German landscape therefore represents a visual metaphor for the country's youth being thrown into the situation of impending Nazi defeat. Like the village itself, the group of boys are presented as the victim of external political developments that remain beyond their control.

In presenting the opposition between the Wehrmacht soldier and the Nazi high command, both *The Bridge* and *Dogs, Do You Want to Live Forever?* can therefore be seen to tap into a wider discourse that positions the wider German population as another victim of Hitler's regime. In addition to the country's victim status being associated with other sections of society during the Second World War – such as the mass rape of German woman by Soviet forces, the daily struggle of its citizens to survive in the aftermath of sustained allied bombing campaigns (a quest for survival that, as discussed above, is visually illustrated in the *mise en scène* of the 'rubble film'), and the expulsion of German settlers from former territories in the east – the losses

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[12] The positioning of the lost homeland as a symbol of German victimisation continued beyond 1950s cinema, most famously in Edgar Reitz's television series *Heimat: A Chronicle of Germany* (*Heimat: Eine deutsche Chronik*, 1984).

suffered by Germany's regular armed forces on the battlefield represent another aspect of the country's victim status.[13] This shifting of responsibility for Nazi crimes to a select group of individuals therefore continues the scapegoating that informed responses to the Holocaust in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. Indeed, discussing the ways in which West Germany confronted the Nazi period, Fulbrook (2007, p. 59-60) argues that those responsible for Nazi crimes were arranged hierarchically with Hitler and his "henchmen", deemed the actual perpetrators of the atrocities, positioned at the top. For Fulbrook:

> This is not to suggest that vast swathes of post-war West German elites were died-in-the-wool former Nazis, let alone erstwhile vicious war criminals. It is, however, to suggest that many people who held prominent positions in the early decades of the Federal Republic's history had been at least passive accomplices in sustaining the Nazi regime, and were less than enthusiastic about picking over its entrails. They had a vested interest, at the very least, in portraying Hitler as an evil madman who had nearly single-handedly taken over an innocent country and had done dark things which only a tiny circle of close henchmen had known about. Perhaps the most insidious response was a downplaying of their role in Hitler's state, combined with bitter criticism of those who had even raised these embarrassing vestiges of a tainted past (Fulbrook, 2007, p. 64-5).

In presenting various aspects of German victimhood, the films discussed above offer a particular perspective on the Second World War that, as Wolfgram (2002, p. 26) argues, represents a re-

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[13] As I discuss in more detail in Chapter Four, the association of Germany's victim status with it's regular armed force continues to inform the country's cinematic output following reunification. Whereas films such as Joseph Vilsmair's *Stalingrad* (1993) continue the tradition of presenting the Wehrmacht soldier as a victim of a situation that remains out of his control, the portrayal of suffering Berlin citizens abandoned by the Nazi authorities during the final days of the war in Oliver Hirschbiegel's *Downfall* (*Der Untergang*, 2004) reinforces the notion that a select few were responsible for the events surrounding the Second World War.

evaluation of the Nazi past in which Jewish victims of National Socialism are relegated to the background. In relocating responsibility (and, therefore, guilt) within the context of a select group of the Third Reich's high command, West German cinema of the 1950s and 1960s is subsequently accused of avoidance (Wolfgram, 2002, p. 26).

Indeed, when West German films are seen to engage with the Holocaust, they do so in a way that is removed from the context of the Second World War itself. For example, Bernhard Wicki's later film *The Visit* (*Der Besuch*, 1964) presents a number of themes that indirectly evoke the persecution of the Jews. Set in an unnamed European town, Wicki's film tells the story of Karla (Ingrid Bergman), a millionaire who returns after twenty five years following her expulsion from the community as a result of her falling pregnant to her lover, Serge (Anthony Quinn). Karla's promise to turn around the fortunes of the town and inhabitants via the injection of two million dollars is on condition that the town alter its law on capital punishment, and tries and executes her former lover in response to his use of underhand tactics in order to 'prove' he was not the father of their illegitimate child. Despite an initial refusal to cooperate, the community yields and condemns Serge to death. *The Visit* can therefore be read as an allegory of the Nazi period in which laws were passed in order to facilitate the extermination of Europe's Jews, who, like Serge, were members of the pre-war community. Furthermore, the resurfacing of repressed guilt amongst the town's community following Karla's reappearance points to issues surrounding the role played by ordinary Germans in the persecution of the Jews. Films such as *The Visit* are therefore representative of Wolfgram's term "a peculiar silence" (2002, p. 24). The indirect reference to the persecution of the Jews during the Second World War in Wicki's film is illustrative of a West German cinema that, in its limited acknowledgment of the Nazi genocide during the 1950s and 1960s, presented these events "without broaching the true extent of the horrors perpetrated under the Nazi regime" (Wolfgram, 2002, p. 27).

The accusation of indirectness with regards to depictions of the Holocaust is something that Wolfgram also levels at New German Cinema, stating that:

> Although the New German Cinema movement produced a number of award winning films and some of the films, especially by Rainer Werner Fassbinder, became the darlings of international film festivals, the movement's attention to Germany's Nazi past was occasional at best. The directors were on an aesthetic quest which occasionally led them back into the past, but this was not the primary goal (Wolfgram, 2002, p. 29).

In Volker Schlöndorff's *Young Törless* (*Der junge Törless,* 1966), for example, the exploration of humanity's behaviour within a social context that facilitates the manifestation of inhumane practices usually controlled by wider social mechanisms raises questions with regards to the actions of ordinary Germans under National Socialism. This questioning of German behaviour is further indicated by the observations of the main protagonist who concludes that both the concept of good and evil coexist, and, more importantly, that in certain situations evil can be performed by otherwise morally stable people. In locating such themes in the context of a boarding school during the Austro-Hungarian Empire, however, the issues of Jewish persecution, and, more specifically, the role of the wider German population, are subsequently negated. Therefore, like *The Visit*, Schlöndorff's film represents another example of Wolfgram's "peculiar silence" (2002, p. 24) with regards to West German's cinema's representation of the Nazi period.

As Fulbrook (2007, p. 171) highlights, encounters with the Nazi past in 1960s West Germany were defined by a generational confrontation with regards to both the atrocities committed by the Third Reich and the subsequent inactivity of the war generation. In its demand for an artistic turn that would simultaneously move beyond the established practices of German filmmaking, reject the Hollywood

studio format, and return to the director as author approach –
Autorenkino – that was the basis of the artistic integrity associated with
Weimar Cinema, the counter practices of the New German Cinema
movement have been interpreted as an expression of this generational
conflict. For Stephen Brockmann:

> In a nation where the older generation could
> easily be seen as synonymous with the Nazis,
> this self-stylization was rhetorically powerful,
> giving younger filmmakers the moral authority of
> a supposedly unblemished youth (Brockmann,
> 2010, p. 292).

This sense of moral superiority was reinforced by the fact that the
majority of personnel working in the post-war West German film
industry enjoyed active careers under National Socialism (Brockmann,
2010, p. 286). Although this rejection of established cinematic
practices mirrors the wider discontent with the West German
establishment during the 1960s, which, while symptomatic of the
sentiments that resulted in political and social unrest across Europe
during this decade, was refracted through the legacy of National
Socialism in West Germany (Fulbrook, 2007, p. 171), the avoidance of
issues surrounding the Nazi past readily associates the work produced
by members of the New German Cinema movement with the
tendencies of their parents' generation. As Thomas Elsaesser states:

> One could be forgiven for fearing that the most
> gifted generation of filmmakers since the 1920s
> has been guilty, if not of complicity, then at very
> least, had sinned by omission not breaking the
> silence: surrounding the Jewish victims, among
> the clamor and violence with which the "sons"
> accused the "fathers" of their Nazi past
> (Elaesser, 2008, p. 107).

By the 1970s this unrest led to increasing leftist terrorist activity in
West Germany in reaction to the perceived failure of Willy Brandt's

SPD government to transform social relations (Brockmann, 2010, p. 295).

The issues that dominated 1960s and 1970s West German society are also reflected in films not associated with the New German Cinema movement. Maximillian Schell's *The Pedestrian* (*Der Fußgänger*, 1973), for example, presents themes such as repressed guilt, a generational conflict that stems from the resentment of the second generation having to shoulder the burden of a Nazi legacy associated with the first, and the continued presence of former perpetrators in wider society. The narrative depicts a newspaper's attempts to expose the Nazi past of a prominent industrialist, Elke Giese (Dagmar Hirtz). Focusing on Giese's relationship to both his family, particularly his deceased son (who was killed in a car accident) and grandson, and a secretive past that he renounces with the sharp retort "I don't want to be German", the film links the repressed guilt of the war generation to the expectation that succeeding generations will inherit this legacy. Indeed, Giese's attempts to keep his past away from public view is mirrored in private where only his surviving son appears to know anything about his personal history.

In addition to this presentation of a difficult relationship between father and son, the theme of generational conflict between the war generation and their children is reinforced by the former attempting to justify their actions during the Second World War. In one scene a group of elderly women employ a number of platitudes in discussing the Nazi past, whilst also referring to various aspects of personal suffering. In contrast to members of the second generation, the first are presented as being in denial. However, this position, which they occupy behind the safety of a barrier formed by the repetition of clichés and the avoidance of taboo subjects, is undermined by both the resentment of the second generation and members of the first who actively resisted Nazi policies in their various roles of employment during the Nazi period. During an interview with Giese, a reporter responds to the industrialist's accusing question of what the reporter did during the war by pointing out that as a correspondent he was

relieved of his duties because of his insistence on reporting objectively, rather than bending to the will of Nazi propaganda. This act of resistance by a member of Nazi society contrasts sharply with that of Giese who is shown in flashback to have participated in the liquidation of an entire Greek village in 1943. Towards the end of the film, whilst arguing with Giese's lawyer, the newspaper reporter turns to the industrialist and contends that in a desperate attempt to save his own name he has forgotten about the millions of victims.

The Pedestrian can therefore be seen to engage with various aspects of the Third Reich and how its legacy continues to affect contemporary German society. Raising similar themes to Michael Verhoeven's later film *The Nasty Girl* (*Das schreckliche Mädchen*, 1990), Schell's film presents a West German society in which various social mechanisms are erected in order to obstruct direct access to the past. In addition to both the first generation's avoidance of responsibility and the subsequent hiding behind clichéd remarks, the newspaper is presented as yet another obstacle to be overcome. It is not simply held up as a purveyor of truth and decency that fulfils German society's right to know about individual actions under the Third Reich, rather, those working for the paper are presented as opportunistic headline grabbers who play fast and loose with the past. Despite its failure to mention the Jewish specificity of the Holocaust, Schell's film provides a rare example of an acknowledgement of wider German involvement in the crimes of the past prior to the explosion of interest that followed the broadcast of *Holocaust: The Story of the Family Weiss*.

2.4 The Emergence of the Jewish Perspective: Post-Eichmann Depictions of the Holocaust in Hollywood and Israeli Cinema

Although Hollywood films made during the 1950s continued to use the events surrounding the Holocaust as a basis for the reinforcement of fundamental American values – most notably George Stevens' *The*

Diary of Anne Frank (1959), which, in locating its message of hope for the Jewish race in the face of impending annihilation expresses the turn in America towards a more liberal social attitude at this time (Doneson, 2002, p. 59-60) – from the 1960s onwards a number of productions address the Nazi genocide from the perspective of the Jew. Whereas Otto Preminger's *Exodus* (1960) depicts the violent birth of Israel, many of these films focus on Jewish life before and after the Second World War. For example, Harold Mayer's documentary film *L'chaim: To Life* (1974) focuses on more than a century of Jewish life in Russia. Similarly, Arnold Schwartzman's *Genocide* (1982) presents the various stages of a trajectory in which the European Jewry moved from a flourishing pre-war community to its annihilation in the camps of southern Poland, whilst films such as *Kristallnacht* (1979) and *Lodz Ghetto* (1984) also offer an insight into the various stages of extermination process.

The foregrounding of the Jewish experience is something that continued in films that focused on the survivor. This can be seen in both the continued interest in Anne Frank's diary, in documentaries such as *The Attic: The Hiding of Anne Frank* (1988) and *Voices from the Attic* (1988), and a focus on Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, in Harold Becker's *Sighet, Sighet* (1964) and Erwin Leiser's *A Conversation with Elie Wiesel: In the Shadow of the Flames* (1989). In addition, a number of fictional films depict the long-term psychological effects of the Holocaust. Both Sidney Lumet's *The Pawnbroker* (1964) and Arthur Hiller's *The Man in the Glass Booth* (1975) focus on the continuing traumatic effects of the Nazi genocide. Whereas in Lumet's film the loss of other family members results in a lack of empathy towards others, the protagonist of Hiller's is consumed by his Holocaust experience to the extent that he acquires the persona of one of his oppressors. Furthermore, films such *The Legacy: Children of Survivors* (1980), *Breaking the Silence: The Generation after the Holocaust* (1984), and *A Generation Apart* (1983) explore the traumatic legacy of the Nazi genocide on members of the 'second generation'.

In a similar vein to the shifts in perspective that inform Israeli cinema (which is discussed in more detail below), this interest in the survivor's perspective was initiated by the prominence of witness testimony during the Eichmann trial in 1961 and the subsequent permeation of personal narratives of suffering and loss into the wider public sphere. Hollywood cinema from the 1960s can also be seen to focus on the legal proceedings in the aftermath of the Holocaust. As with earlier films such as *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, however, these films tend to use the post-war trials of prominent Nazi figures as a backdrop in the reinforcement of fundamental American values such as freedom and liberty, which are preserved through an adherence to the judicial system. In Stanley Kramer's *Judgement at Nuremberg* (1961), for example, the attempt by Chief Judge Dan Haywood (Spencer Tracy) to understand how the German people could ignore the crimes committed by the Nazi regime implies the superiority of American democracy through its contrast with fascism. A product of the democratic system, Haywood is unable to comprehend the actions of German judge Ernst Janning (Burt Lancaster) in condemning a Jewish man to death despite a lack of evidence in the trial against him. The conclusion of Kramer's film, during which Janning's argument that he was unaware that his actions would result in the mass murder of millions is rejected by Haywood who states that the process of annihilation began with the German judge's condemning of the Jewish man, reinforces the American ideal of individualism through reducing the process of Nazi genocide to the issue of personal responsibility.

The notion of (self) autonomy also informs a number of films that depict the act of revenge during the 1960s and 1970s. This theme, which, with regards to Hollywood depictions of the Holocaust and the Second World War, first emerged in Orson Welles' *The Stranger*, once again engage with issues surrounding the Nazi genocide from a Jewish perspective. For example, Robert Springsteen's *Operation Eichmann* (1961) presents an attempt by two camp survivors to capture Eichmann and bring him to Israel for trial before a secret Nazi organisation can assassinate him. In the *The Boys from Brazil* a

Holocaust survivor foils the plans of a Nazi scientist to initiate the return of Hitler through the process of cloning Hitler-children and placing them in families throughout the United States. As with *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, the threat of Nazism is shown to be in close proximity – this time infiltrating the American value of the family unit. However, unlike the appeal to the American judicial system in the earlier film, this time the threat is nullified through the scientist's mutilation by a pack of dogs.

The threat posed by Nazism in John Schlesinger's *Marathon Man* (1976), on the other hand, is directed towards the Jewish race itself. An adaptation of William Goldman's novel, Schlesinger's film depicts an attempt by Dr. Christian Szell (Laurence Olivier), a former Nazi dentist, to smuggle diamonds he acquired through his trading of gold teeth taken from Jewish prisoners in Auschwitz out of America. In order to secure a safe passage from the New York City bank vaults (where the diamonds are stored) back to his hideout in Uruguay, Szell kills secret agent Doc (Roy Schneider), and tortures his brother Babe (Dustin Hoffman) in an attempt to ascertain whether he knows anything about plans to deny him his escape route. The film's central theme of Jewish revenge, which is introduced during an opening sequence in which two elderly men – one German, the other Jewish – die in a collision with an oil tanker following a high speed chase through the city after the former makes an anti-Semitic remark during a traffic jam, is presented through its focus on the relationship between Szell and Babe. This relationship is representative of the hierarchical position of Nazi and Jew during the Second World War, as Szell continues to express his superiority over the Jewish race. In addition to anti-Semitic comments made upon his arrival at JFK airport, Szell demands a straight answer from a Jewish jeweller who is haggling for a better price when the former Nazi is attempting to sell his diamonds towards the end of the film. Szell's sense of superiority is overtly suggested via his torturing of Babe – the resumption of his role as torturer that is this time performed in an attempt to extract information rather than wealth. Szell's sense of superiority contrasts with the

depiction of Babe whose initial inability to grasp the meaning of the situation in which he finds himself results in his being portrayed as the stereotypical passive Jewish victim.

The contrasting positions of victim and perpetrator are visually reinforced by the film's *mise en scène*. Whereas the blue and white striped pyjama bottoms that Babe wears as he runs through the streets of New York following his escape from Szell resemble the uniform worn by Jewish inmates in the camps, the former Nazi's position as a perpetrator is suggested during an early scene in which he is seen stalking through a pile of suitcases upon his arrival at JFK Airport – an image that evokes the deportation of Jews during the Second World War. However, the hierarchy of the relationship between both characters is subverted during the final sequence of Schlesinger's film. As Szell wanders around Manhattan's 'Diamond District' trying to sell his collection to numerous Jewish jewellers, he is confronted twice by Holocaust survivors who, upon recognising him, attempt to expose his true identity. In the film's final scene, Szell is taken at gunpoint by Babe to one of the pump rooms by the Central Park reservoir and forced to eat the diamonds. In the ensuing struggle between the two men, the former Nazi, desperate to salvage some of the treasures which Babe has thrown into the water, falls and impales himself on a knife blade he had hidden up his sleeve. Although Babe does not kill Szell himself, his death during the concluding scene of *Marathon Man* represents a utilitarian act in which justice is achieved through the act of revenge. In Goldman's novel this message is explicit, as the final confrontation between Babe and Szell ends with the former shooting the latter.

For Amy Kronish and Costel Safirman (2003, p. 3), although the 'Heroic Nationalist' film continued beyond the 1970s, the disappearance of the "invincible heroic Israeli" from the screen following the Yom Kippur War in 1973 signifies a maturing of this genre to depict "a sense of loss, and an understanding of the dangers involved in wartime". However, this questioning of the Zionist value of defending the Jewish state can be traced back to the 1960s. For

example, both *He Walked Through the Fields* (*Hu Halach Be'Sadot*, 1967) and *Siege* (*Matzor*, 1969) challenge the ideal of self-sacrifice in the name of the defending and securing the sovereignty of Israeli state through a focus on the personal loss endured by those left behind. This theme continues to inform later films such as *The Vulture* (*Ha-Ayit*, 1981) and *Passover Fever* (*Leylasede*, 1995), both of which focus on the effects of war from the perspective of parents of soldiers. *Late Summer Blues* (1987), on the other hand, laments the loss of innocence through a focus on a group of teenagers in their last summer before national service, whilst this theme is also central to *In 72 there was no war* (*B'Shivim Ushtayim Lo Hayta Milhama*, 1995), which depicts a young boy forced by his parents to attend military school. A more uncompromising criticism of military service and its effects on wider society is offered by both Dan Woolman's *Night Soldier* (*Hayal Halayla*, 1984) and Eli Cohen's *Two Fingers from Sidon* (*Shtei Etzbaot Mi'Tzidon*, 1986). Whereas in Woolman's film the murder of an Israeli soldier by a civilian is presented as the result of a militarised society, Cohen's film questions the process of drawing moral positions from an act of military conflict in which innocent people are killed.[14]

The emergence of a discourse challenging the accepted values underpinning the Zionist movement's construction of a militarised society represents one of the many forms of social critique that can be seen in Israeli cinema following the initial years of the country's independence. In addition to issues surrounding both Jewish-Arab relations and the assimilation of a culturally diverse Jewish diaspora into existing Israeli society, the numerous witness accounts of suffering presented during the very public trial of Adolf Eichmann challenged established perceptions of the Holocaust and those who

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[14] The question of Israeli responsibility, which is raised in *Two Fingers from Sidon*, is a theme that continues to inform recent Israeli cinema. For example, Tamar Yarom's documentary film *To See If I'm Smiling* (2007), which presents the experiences of six female soldiers who served in the occupied territories during the first Palestinian uprising, focuses on the morally questionable actions of the Israeli Defence Force. Furthermore, Ari Folman's *Waltz with Bashir* (*Vals Im Bashir*, 2008) presents an autobiographical account of the role played by Israel's army during the massacres at the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in 1982.

survived. This displaced a dominant Zionist discourse that prioritised examples of Jewish resistance at the expense of acknowledging the suffering that was experienced by the vast majority. Whereas the curing of the traumatised Holocaust survivor through an adherence to Zionist values in *Tomorrow's a Wonderful Day* locates the Jewish catastrophe within the wider context of concerns about the establishment of the Israel state, the focus on various aspects of personal suffering in films made after Eichmann's trial represents an attempt to move beyond this practice of subsuming the Nazi genocide experience beneath nationalistic anxieties. In *The Glass Cage* (*Ha-kluv Hazehuhit*, 1965), for example, the central protagonist's guilt at having survived the Holocaust at the expense of a fellow inmate is not subjected to the imposition of Zionist ideals as Benjamin's trauma is in Lerski's film. Furthermore, Zionist propaganda is also absent from the presentation of survivor suffering in the documentary films *The Eighty-first Blow* (*Hamakah Hashmonim Ve'Echad*, 1974), *Memories of the Eichmann Trial* (*Zichronot Mishpat*, 1979), and *Flames in the Ashes* (*Pnei Hamered*, 1987).[15]

This foregrounding of survivor suffering is overtly expressed in a cycle of films made by members of Israel's second generation. In films such as Ilan Moshenson's *The Wooden Gun* (*Roveh Huliot*, 1979), Eli Cohen's *The Summer of Aviya* (*Ha-Kayitz Shel Aviya*, 1988), and *Choice and Destiny* (*Ha-behirah V'hagoral*, 1993), the focus on experiences of Holocaust survivors undermines their traditional position on the periphery of Israeli society. In addition to foregrounding the suffering endured during the Holocaust, however, films made by children of survivors also challenge the marginalisation of their parents by depicting the latter's experiences in attempting to adjust to Israeli

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[15] Focusing on the relationship between Israel and Palestine, a number of politically orientated films produced during the 1980s sought to critique the dominant 'Zionist master narrative'. These films succeeded the earlier Bourekas and 'sensibility films', which also challenged Zionist values (Ne'eman, p. 231). Whislt not referring to the Holocaust directly, the Bourekas genre expresses reservations about both the Zionist enterprise in Palestine and subsequent exclusion in Israeli society. These two filmic cycles therefore represent an important link in the development of Israeli cinema from its initial use as a tool of propaganda that expressed Zionist ideals to one that actively sought to challenge them.

society. For example, the focus on a group of children engaged in the child-games of war and gang rivalry in *The Wooden Gun* offers a criticism of an Israeli society that has foregone humanistic values in favour of militarised aggression. Displaying both hostility and prejudice towards Jewish immigrants arriving from Europe, the main protagonist, Yoni (Arik Rosen) sees himself as an Israeli hero who, like his father who fought in the War of Independence, is prepared to defend the Jewish state at any cost.[16] As a consequence, and despite the fact that his own mother suffered during the Holocaust, Yoni joins his fellow gang members in repeatedly tormenting Palistina, a traumatised survivor who lives in a corrugated iron shack on the beach front. However, when Yoni escapes to the beach following his shooting of a rival gang member with a wooden 'sling-gun', Palistina takes him into her home in order to tend to his wounded knee. The inside of Palistina's shack is adorned with photos of family members who were killed during the Holocaust, and as Yoni looks at the iconic image of a boy leaving the Warsaw Ghetto with his hands raised in the surrender he recalls the screaming words of encouragement from his fellow gang members to shoot his rival. Yoni's subsequent aligning of himself with the act of Nazi perpetration positions Palistina's shack as the catalyst for a transformation which sees him reject the aggression displayed by his fellow gang members. No longer aspiring to become an Israeli war hero, the final scene of Moshenson's film depicts Yoni climbing a rock face in rejection of both his gang members (who are stood on the shoreline) and the war games they play.

The marginalisation of the Holocaust survivor in Israeli society is a theme that also informs *The Summer of Aviya*. Depicting the difficulties encountered by Aviya (Kaipu Cohen) and her survivor

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[16] Whereas the war games played by the children in Moshenson's film are illustrative of the effects of a militarised society in which the next generation are conditioned for future conflict, with the 'battles' that take place between rival gangs representing a space in which the children begin their initiation into military life, Yoni's prejudice towards European immigrants expresses an ignorance with regards to Israel's function as a safe haven for the Jewish race in the aftermath of the Holocaust. This contrast suggests that the significance of the Israeli state is therefore subsumed beneath a frenzied desire to protect it.

mother (Gila Almagor) as they attempt to adapt to Israeli society, the former's desire for a 'normal' life is one that is constantly thwarted by the erratic behaviour of the latter. Seen as mentally unstable, Aviya's mother is both rejected by the adults and ridiculed by the children of the village in which they live. Furthermore, this fate is extended to Avyia, who, through association, is repeatedly mistreated by her peers. In Cohen's film, it is Israeli society itself that is held accountable for the further victimisation of the Holocaust survivor.

The relationship between parent and child in *The Summer of Aviya* foregrounds the transposition of the Holocaust's traumatic effects from one generation to the next. Whereas in Orna Ben-Dor Niv's documentary *Because of that War* (*Biglal Ha'milchama Ha'hi*, 1988) the creative drive of two musicians is linked to their exposure to suffering endured by their parents in the camps, in Cohen's film the transposition of trauma is illustrated through actions such as Aviya's mother cutting off all of her daughter's hair upon finding that she has lice. This act represents a traumatic vestige of the camps where lice were said to spread diseases such as typhoid. Furthermore, both the use of excessive force by Aviya's mother in performing the action and the sparse interior of the room in which her daughter's hair is cut underline this connection through evoking the camp experience. Psychotherapist Dina Wardi (1992, p. 17) locates the process of transferring trauma from one generation to the next within the context of the psychological alterations that were required in order to adapt to the conditions within the camp. In the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, survivors subsequently struggled with the recognition of wholesale loss of family, communities, and indeed their very places of origin – a situation that required the continued employment of the defensive mechanisms that had been developed in order to protect them during their stay in the camps (Wardi, 1992, p. 20). As a consequence, Wardi (1992, p. 185) argues, fragments of the survivor's Holocaust knowledge become part of the second generation's psyche to the point of constituting their own experience. Exposed to the trauma experienced by members of the previous generation, the

children of survivors were subsequently imbued with the responsibility to rebuild the pre-war social context of their parents (Wardi, 1992, p. 31). For Wardi (1992, p. 27), the second generation came to symbolise all that was lost, whilst, simultaneously, representing a new content of their parents' shattered lives. It falls to the 'memorial candle' to not only rebuild the pre-war social context of family, community, and even nation, but also to preserve the legacy of the Holocaust and to guarantee its transmission to future generations – a position that has arisen from the need to fill the void that has been left by this event (Wardi, 1992, p. 6). As a consequence, Yosefa Loshitzky (2001, p. 63) argues, it is the second generation's voice that is heard in these films rather than the Holocaust survivor's.

In personalising the Holocaust, furthermore, second generation artists attempt to fragment the nationalistic perspective of the Nazi genocide (Loshitzky, 2001, p. 63). Indeed, the focus on the individual rather than the collective in films such as *The Summer of Aviya* expresses a concern with the effects of a process that constructs the national-body through the repression of the traumatic experience. Ben-Dor Niv's later film, *Newland* (*Aretz Hadasha*, 1994) seeks to undermine a mythology that emerged as a result of the Zionist movement's continued promotion of nationalist ideals. Set in a transit camp during the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Ben-Dor Niv's film raises issues relating to the oppressive structures involved in the construction of the Israeli 'nation'. The film's focus on the activities within the transit camp allows it to explore how such structures impact on the social relations of the disparate diaspora groups within this space. In challenging the nationalistic narratives that have traditionally informed the relationship between Israel and the Holocaust, *Newland* critiques the Zionist process of constructing a myth that informs the country's collective memory of the Nazi genocide through offering an alternative narrative that seeks to undermine and destabilise those that support the ideological aims of Zionism. In doing so, the film not only highlights Zionism's nationalistic agenda, one that has produced a selective, and, therefore, distorted, view of the

Holocaust, but also how this reductive perception of these events has proven detrimental to both the development of the cohesion that informs wider Israeli society and the citizen's ability to engage with these events as part of the process of remembrance.

2.5 Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, cinematic representations of the Holocaust in Israel, Germany, and America became a vehicle for conveying fundamental national ideals at times when these were seen to be under threat. With regards to Israel, the cinematic output following the declaration of independence reflected the Zionist concern with defending and securing the new state's borders. As a consequence, depictions of Holocaust survivors both cultivating the land and actively defending it in these early films reflect two important aspects that form the basis of a 'Zionist master narrative' that sought to construct a collective cohesion amongst the increasing Jewish diaspora through the redefinition of the Jew as active resistor. The subsequent marginalisation of Holocaust suffering as a consequence of the prioritisation of Zionist values resulted in a hierarchal relationship that was to remain in place until the Eichmann trial in 1961 when the emergence of testimonies describing personal suffering began to question wider society's perception of the survivor. Although Israeli cinema began to represent this suffering during the mid-1960s, it was not until the 1980s that this theme came to prominence through the work of the second generation. As the next chapter will argue, however, the eventual accommodation of Holocaust suffering following the Eichmann trial fails to extend to that experienced by the Palestinians at the hands of Israel itself.

Initial cinematic depictions of the Holocaust in post-war Germany express a concern with building a German utopia following the defeat of the oppressive Nazi regime. Indeed, the *mise en scène* of the 'rubble film' visually illustrates the desire to move from the ruins of

National Socialism towards a better future, which was to be constructed on the bringing of those deemed responsible for the crimes committed to justice. The subsequent separation of 'normal' Germans from the 'actual' perpetrators locates the former in the position of victim. Following the country's division in 1948, German victimhood continued to be foregrounded. In the Democratic Republic, the suffering endured by the German population during the Second World War underpinned the state's foundational myth of the liberation of workers from the tyranny of fascism. In the vast majority of East German films, the Jewish perspective is subsequently lost within the communist collective. This neglect is mirrored in West Germany where cinematic representations of the war also focused on the issue of German suffering. The position of Wehrmacht soldiers as victims of a callous Nazi high command in a series of films made throughout the 1950s separates 'normal' Germans from the 'actual' perpetrators of the atrocities – a trope that, as I will discuss in Chapter Four, continues to be employed today. Although West Germany's 'era of silence' was broken following both Eichmann's trial in Israel in 1961 and the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials in 1963, the shift in focus from German suffering to that experienced by the Jews in discourses surrounding the Second World War Two gathered momentum following the broadcast of *Holocaust: The Story of the Family Weiss* in January 1979. Consequently, films made after this date began to represent the previously neglected Jewish perspective. As I discuss in Chapter Four, this concern with German guilt and victimhood remain prominent in the country's engagement with the Nazi period.

Whereas Israeli cinema contributed to the redefinition of the Jew through the promotion of fundamental ideals of the new state, Hollywood's response to the events surrounding the Second World War was based on a reinforcement of core American values. A number of films made both during, and in the aftermath of, the war position the threat of National Socialism in relation to the potential corrosion of ideals such as democracy and justice. Although this Americanization of the Holocaust continued to define Hollywood

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depictions of the Nazi genocide throughout the post-war period, the theme of revenge, which emerged in a number of films made during the 1970s, appeared to undermine such values. Foreshadowed by Orson Welles' *The Stranger* however, the depiction of retribution is films such as *Nazi Hunter: The Beate Klarsfeld Story* (1986), *Murderers Among Us: The Simon Wiesenthal Story* (1989), *Marathon Man*, and *The Boys from Brazil*, can be seen to reinforce the American value of individualism. Conversely, I argue in Chapter Five that the act of revenge raises moral questions with regards to the use of torture by military personnel during America's response to the 9/11 attacks.

Chapter 3. Challenging the Ashkenazi Perspective: National Identity in Recent Israeli Cinema

3.1 Introduction

In her exploration of identity formations in Israel, Ella Shohat (2010, p. 1) argues that despite its geographical location, the Israeli imaginary inclines towards the West. As mentioned in the introductory chapter of my thesis, Shohat states (2010, p.1) that, politically, Israel is at once a product of a liberation struggle similar to that of the Third World against colonialism, whilst also being aligned with the West against the East. Located at the intersection of East/West and First World/Third World, Israel's desire to both free itself from the historical position as "Europe's internal "other"" and occupy a position of dominance that mirrors the colonial enterprise of the West results in both the Jewish Mizrahim[1] and the Palestinian Arab being denied their right to self-representation (Shohat, 2010, p. 3). For Shohat (2010, p. 1), Israel is therefore a state founded both on the marginalisation of Jews arriving from the "Orient"[2], and the suppression of Palestine's struggle for nationhood. As a consequence of the exclusion of these two ethnic identities, the hegemonic voice of Jewish state belongs to the European Ashkenazi[3] (Shohat, 2010, p. 3).

However, in arguing that the power relations that inform Israeli society are based on the hegemonic position of the European Ashkenazi, Shohat fails to account for the complex power relations that exist within this group itself. As discussed in Chapter Two, the suffering experienced by the vast majority of European Jews who

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[1] This term refers to Jews who are descends of Jewish communities from in the Middle East.

[2] Shohat's (2010, p. 2) use of this term refers to Edward Said's concept of 'Orientalism', which is central to her contention that Israel's position in the Middle East represents that of the coloniser.

[3] This term refers to Jews who are descends of Jewish communities from in Central and Eastern Europe.

survived the Holocaust was initially excluded from a national identity that was predicated on Zionism's redefinition of the Jew as an active defender of the new Jewish state. This image, which prioritised the few that resisted at the expense of the many who suffered, continued to inform Israel's memory of the Holocaust until the Eichmann trial in 1961 when the emergence of personal suffering began to undermine established perceptions of the Nazi genocide that were primarily based on the act of resistance. In defining the subsequent alteration in Israeli perceptions of Holocaust as a shift in focus from heroism to victimhood, Yosefa Loshitzky (2001, p. 62-63) argues that the recognition of Holocaust suffering paradoxically fails to incorporate the victim status of Palestine. In failing to extend to the suffering endure by the Palestinian at the hands of Israel, this chapter will argue that the eventual accommodation of the vast majority of Holocaust experiences therefore reinforces Ashkenazi hegemony at the expense of other ethnicities. Despite the alterations following Eichmann's trial, Israel's memory of the Holocaust is therefore symbolic of a continued Ashkenazi dominance with regards to formations of collective identity in the country. This represents a vestige of the so-called 'Zionist master narrative', in which the position of the Holocaust as a unifying factor for Israeli national identity facilitated the exclusion of the non-Ashkenazi perspective. Indeed, for Loshitzky (2001, p. xiii-xiv), formations of national identity in Israel are based on both a perceived and real victimhood resulting from the imposition of Zionist ideology, with the Holocaust representing one of three major sites where this process occurs (with the question of the 'Orient' and the Palestinian conflict providing the other two).

Although this chapter will follow Loshitzky in her contention that the Holocaust represents a site upon which Israel's collective identity is formed, in focusing on the perspective of the various ethnic identities that constitute Israeli society, I will also argue that the legacy of the Nazi genocide provides a space in which these identities are able to question and challenge the existing power relations that underpin such formations. Here, the exclusion and, in the case of the Palestinian,

suffering, that result from the continued dominance of the Ashkenazi perspective in Israeli society are highlighted in order to undermine the hegemonic position of this identity group. The process of bringing exclusion and suffering to bear on the issue of Ashkenazi dominance is central to Asher Tlalim's experimental film, *Don't Touch My Holocaust* (*Al Tigu Le B'Shoah*, 1994), which is discussed in the opening section of this chapter, 'Centring Israel's Ethnic 'Other': Undermining Ashkenazi Hegemony in *Don't Touch My Holocaust*'. Combining sequences from the Acre Theatre Company's controversial play *Arbeit Macht Frei* and interviews with members of the cast, whose differing ethnicities dictate their alternate positions vis-à-vis Israel's Holocaust memory, Tlalim's film in an attempt to locate Sephardi, Mizrahi, and, Palestinian identity at the centre of the memorialisation process. The second section, which is entitled 'Traumatic Vestiges: Israel's Holocaust Legacy in *Walk on Water* and *Forgiveness*', discusses two films that focus more specifically on the relationship between Israel's Holocaust past and the Israel-Palestine conflict. Eytan Fox's *Walk on Water* (2004) portrays the transformation of a Mossad agent from an uncompromising combatant of Palestinian extremism into someone who is unable to kill a Nazi war criminal residing in Berlin. In locating the Holocaust at the centre of this transformation, the film problematically suggests that Israel's ongoing conflict with Palestine is the consequence of the enduring traumatic effects of this past. Similarly, Udi Aloni's *Forgiveness* (*Mechilot*, 2006) focuses on a pro-Israel idealist combating Palestinian threats to Israel's sovereignty, this time in the shape of an Israeli Defence Force (IDF) soldier. Sent to a mental institution following the death of a Palestinian girl in the West Bank, the soldier's pro-Israeli stance is challenged as a consequence of being exposed to the suffering that results from Israel's occupation of Palestine. In presenting the Holocaust as a defining factor in the Israel-Palestine conflict, both films therefore contrast with Shohat's negation of the Nazi genocide in her discussion of collective identity formations in Israel.

3.2 Centring Israel's Ethnic 'Other': Undermining Ashkenazi Hegemony in *Don't Touch My Holocaust*

As discussed in Chapter Two, the central aim of films made by Israel's second generation was to bring the suffering experienced by survivors of the Holocaust to the attention of the wider Israeli public. Indeed, the interaction between survivors and their children in films such as *The Summer of Aviya* (*Ha-Kayitz Shel Aviya*, Eli Cohen, 1988), *Choice and Destiny* (*Ha-Behirah V'Hagoral*, Tsipi Reibenbach, 1993), and *Daddy, Come to the Fair* (*Abbaleh, Bo L'Luna Park*, Nitza Gonen, 1994) is illustrative of the former's active role played by members of the second generation in exposing the suffering of their parents. This approach process can also be seen in *Don't Touch My Holocaust*. In describing her father's experiences during both the Holocaust and later in Israel, the Acre Theatre Company's lead actor Smadar (Madi) Yalon-Maayan is illustrative of the second generation's familiar role of foregrounding the previously marginalised survivor experience.

However, despite this alignment with the concerns that inform second generation cinema, the focus on Madi in *Don't Touch My Holocaust* is representative of the film's aim of challenging an Israeli Holocaust memory that ultimately reinforces the hegemonic position of the Ashkenazi. Although both Madi's tattooing of the date of her father's death on her forearm and her starving of herself in an effort to better understand the camp entity of the *Muselmann*[4] can be interpreted as an overt statement on the transposition of trauma from the Holocaust survivor to members of the next generation, this use of prominent symbols of the dehumanising process represents an attempt to move beyond the state-implemented Memorial Day activities that the film shows to be ineffective with regards to engaging the wider Israeli public in the process of remembrance. This

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[4] In his book, *The Drowned and the Saved*, Primo Levi (2013, p. 96) describes the *Muselmann* as those inmates whose inability to adapt the harsh conditions of life in the camp meant that they were "doomed to selection".

ineffectiveness is indicated during a performance of *Arbeit Macht Frei* early in Tlalim's film, when a female member of the audience responds to the question "where did the Holocaust begin for you" by drawing comparisons between her childhood memories of her encounters with survivors and her participation in Memorial Day activities at school. Whereas the former continues to have a profound effect, the latter is described as a mechanical process that fails to reflect the enormity of the events that it is designed to mark. Furthermore, this failure is visually reinforced through the film's use of images depicting uninterested schoolchildren during Memorial Day activities as the female audience member describes her participation in these events.

For Loshitzky:

> The significance of Tlalim's documentary is that it is not a simple documentation of the theater performance, but a film on memory and identity. [...] In *Don't Touch My Holocaust* he confronts the question of how Israelis deal with memory: how they remember and how they forget (Loshitzky, 2001, p. 38-39)

Tlalim's exploration of Israel's Holocaust memory continues through the film's focus on Madi's stage persona, Zelma. As a Holocaust survivor who, as Loshitzky (2001, p. 41) argues, represents the victim from over "there" whose memory has been excluded from the process of memorialisation, Zelma's reintroduction of her repressed Yiddish identity disrupts a process of exclusion through the foregrounding of a marginalised ethic identity.[5] Whereas both Zelma's playing traditional songs on the piano and recollections of her country of origin form the basis of this disruption, this process is overtly illustrated during one scene early in the film she repeatedly interrupts a screening of the Holocaust film *Ambulans* (1961) by positioning herself between the

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[5] Yiddish is an aspect of European identity that Loshitzky (2001, p. 52) raises again with regards Tzipi Reibenach's documentary film *Choice and Destiny* (1994), in which the filmmaker expresses shame at her parents' use of this language because in Israeli society it signifies their location outside a national identity based on a Zionist ideology that is itself signified through the use of Hebrew. Loshitzky's analysis of Reibenach's film therefore highlights the continuation of division across generations in Israel as a result of the ideological factors defining the country's national identity.

film projector and the screen itself. Although Régine Mihal Friedman (2002, p. 209) has interpreted this intrusion into the cinematic frame as Zelma's engulfment in the Holocaust past, this interruption overtly illustrates the character's role in disrupting an official memorialisation that reinforces the social exclusion of Israel's ethnic 'other'.

The disruption of established Holocaust narratives is repeated in Zelma's interpretation of the various exhibits housed at the Ghetto Fighters' House museum in Western Galilee. During a scene in which Zelma shows an audience of *Arbeit Macht Frei* around the museum, she discusses the ghettoization of Jews in the context of contemporary Israel, prompting one member to compare events in 1940s Europe with those in present-day Gaza. Although Loshitzky (2001, p .41) links Zelma's reinterpretation of the exhibits to her marginalised position, which, she argues, reveals new and provoking insights with regards to Israel's conflict with Palestine, this process offers an alternative narrative that disrupts the museum's intended aim of promoting the act of Jewish resistance. In undermining this ideological cornerstone of the Zionist project in Palestine through the linking of Nazi oppression to Israel's conflict with Palestine, this scene is therefore illustrative of the film's questioning of an Israeli national identity that is based on a memory of the Holocaust whose eventual accommodation of the survivor experience actually reinforces Ashkenazi hegemony through a failure to recognise the marginalisation of other ethnic groups. Whereas descriptions of the survivor's experience by both Madi and the female audience member (in the scene discussed above) are representative of the second generation's challenging of Zionist formations of collective identity based on a selective interpretation of the Holocaust, Zelma's disruption of established narratives highlights the continued exclusion of Israel's ethnic 'other' despite this accommodation. As a consequence, *Don't Touch My Holocaust* departs from the vast majority of second generation films that relate

issues surrounding Israeli national identity exclusively to concerns of the dominant Ashkenazi.[6]

The continued exclusion of non-Ashkenazi identities is overtly expressed through Zelma's relationship with the stage personas of the other actors who perform in *Arbeit Macht Frei*. Representative of the lazy Arab stereotype, Sephardi Jews Didi Maayan, Mizrahi Jew Moni Yoshef, and the Palestinian actor Khaled Abu Ali, are subjected to Zelma's racist rants based on their appearance and behaviour. Whereas Khaled is chastised when he attempts to sing a patriotic Palestinian song, Maayan is checked for throwing away food because "they don't know what real hunger is like". Zelma's attempts to 'civilise' Mayaan, Yoshef, and Khaled, in these scenes therefore not only illustrates the continued marginalisation of Israel's ethnic 'other', but, more importantly, it also suggests the role played by the once excluded Holocaust survivor in this process.

The critique of social exclusion in *Don't Touch My Holocaust* is developed through a focus on the non-Ashkenazi members of the theatre troupe and their personal exposure to Israel's Holocaust memory. The negative effects of Ashkenazi hegemony are overtly stated during a section of the film entitled "'what does a Moroccan have to do with the Holocaust?'". Here, both the director of *Arbeit Macht Frei*, Maayan, and Tlalim himself discuss their respective encounters with Israel's Holocaust legacy in the context of their Moroccan heritage.[7] Indeed, the title of this section itself, which is

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[6] Another exception to this tendency is Orna Ben-Dor Niv's *Newland* (1994). As discussed in Chapter Two, the film's focus on a transit camp during pre-state Israel enables it to base its criticism of the 'Zionist master narrative' on the presentation of numerous cultural and religious Jewish identities that constituted the camp's population.

[7] It is interesting that the film begins with the Sephardi perspective, rather than Palestinian, in its challenging of Ashkenazi dominance. This focus on the Sephardi Jew can be seen as a gradual approach to this issue that somewhat displaces contentious questions regarding Israel's relationship with the Arab world in general, and Palestine in particular. Countries such as Morocco and Iraq, whose heritage is a factor in Yoshef's engagement with the Holocaust and its legacy, are a safe distance from Israel and its more immediate conflict with Palestine. However, rather than representing a deferral of the Palestinian question onto the perceived 'safer' issue of the Sephardi position in Israeli society – a focus that is at once Arabic yet not Palestinian, Jewish but not Ashkenazi – *Don't Touch My Holocaust*'s presentation of the various non-Ashkenazi perspectives and relationships to the Nazi genocide is one

taken from a rebuke Tlalim received when he asked Israeli television producers for funding for his film, is illustrative of this hegemonic position. In addition to expressing ignorance of the fact that the Nazi threat was an immediate one given the presence of the Axis powers in a number of North African countries, including Morocco itself, this retort exposes the exclusivity of a Holocaust memory based on the exclusion of particular ethnic groups. The lasting effects of this exclusion are illustrated by Tlalim's juxtaposing of images from his home city of Casablanca with famous scenes from the Michael Curtiz's *Casablanca* (1942) that adorn the inside of the city's bars and hotels. The suggestion, here, is that Morocco will forever be equated with Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman rather than any memory of the Holocaust. Established in the collective imagination through the circulation of such cinematic imagery, this connection obscures the historical and cultural links between Morocco and the Holocaust. With regards to the critique being offered in *Don't Touch My Holocaust*, the rebuke "what does a Moroccan have to do with the Holocaust?" becomes a rhetorical question that not only exposes the selectivity and repression involved in the process of constructing Israel's Holocaust memory, but also the continued exclusivity that this memory underpins in contemporary Israeli society.

In addition, the film's critique of social exclusion is reinforced by the suggestion that the exposure of the non-Ashkenazi to Israel's Holocaust legacy results in similar traumatic effects to those experienced by members of its dominant ethnic group. Maayan's exposure to Israel's Holocaust memory as a result of living in the city of Acre for a number of years produces a sense of anxiety during the theatre company's performance of *Arbeit Macht Frei* in Berlin. His description of contemporary Germany is shot through the prism of Israel's traumatic connection to the Nazi era resulting in an interpretation of the daily activities of Germans that accentuates a

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that illustrates the fragmented and complex structure of a society in which the memory of these events express the domination of one particular ethnic group.

conflation between past and present. For example, women wearing long black boots allude to goose-stepping Nazis, a man hailing a taxi mimics the raised hand salute to Hitler, and the Berlin metro system suggests the transportation of Jews to the camps. Avraham Burg has argued that this anxiety is central to the internal and external divisions that have come to define contemporary Israeli society as a result of a continued importance placed on the Holocaust, stating that Israel has:

> [A]dopted this legacy of insecurity characteristic of trauma victims. Since then, we live under constant pressure and in the contradiction of unceasing armament to compensate and atone for built-in impotence and existential anxiety. We have become a nation of victims, and our state religion is the worship and tending of traumas, as if Israel forever walks down its last path (Berg, 2008, p. 76).

Encouraged to engage with the Holocaust on such terms, the Israeli citizen adopts the 'present-ness' of the ghetto fighter and the camp inmate. For Moni Yoshef, a Mizrahi Jew of Iraqi descent who was raised in Mazor, an Israeli settlement founded by Hungarian Holocaust survivors, the traumatic effects of his exposure to these events presents itself in the form of his repeatedly asking the question "where were they in 1942?". The paranoia of an Israel under siege culminates in both Yoshef and Maayan performing the defiant act of urinating on the site of the *Führerbunker*, whilst singing patriotic Israeli military songs. Despite the ethnic identity of both men being excluded from official memorialisation, their exposure to Israel's Holocaust legacy results in the acquisition of anxiety – and subsequent aggression – traditionally reserved for the (Jewish) Ashkenazi.

As discussed in Chapter Two, these traumatic effects mirror the emotional development of the second generation that psychotherapist Dina Wardi (1992) argues is the result of their exposure to the psychological alterations experienced by survivors adapting to the conditions within the camp. As Wardi (1992, p. 17-20) explains, survivors continued to employ these defensive mechanisms following

their liberation as they struggled with the recognition of wholesale loss of family, communities, and indeed their very places of origin. These were the circumstances into which members of the second generation were born (Wardi, 1992, p. 31). In foregrounding similar psychological responses from both the non-Ashkenazi Jew and members of Israel's second generation, *Don't Touch My Holocaust* therefore undermines an Ashkenazi exclusivity that is based on the continued location of the effects and memory of the Holocaust in an ethnically singular context.

The film's challenge towards one of the established assumptions that underpins this exclusivity is overtly stated in its juxtaposing of Yoshef's Iraqi heritage and his upbringing in Mazor. This contrast raises questions with regards to not only who the Holocaust effects in Israeli society, but, more specifically, how this legacy impacts upon people from various ethnic backgrounds. In addition to expressing empathy towards survivors on his return to the settlement, Yoshef's assertion that certain memories of the Holocaust existed just beneath the surface – "secrets that people didn't talk about" – evokes Wardi's (1992, p. 9) description of what she terms the "intergenerational transposition of trauma". As a consequence of growing up in Mazor, Yoshef's exposure to the private and sometimes unspoken memories of those who survived the Holocaust align him with the trauma experienced by their children despite his Iraqi descent. The parallel between the Mizrahi Jew and the second generation is illustrated during an interview with the daughter of a survivor, in which her description of childhood nightmares that evoked her mother's experience of the camps mirror the effect Holocaust testimony had on Yoshef during his own upbringing.

In addition to offering an explanation of the anxiety resulting from Yoshef's exposure to Israel's Holocaust legacy, an experience that is different to that of Maayan and Tlalim whose encounter with the cultural memory of these events is based on official memorialisation, these environmental factors are presented as determining the ways in which people experience the Holocaust past regardless of their ethnic background. Rather than questioning the trauma experienced by

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members of the second generation, however, *Don't Touch My Holocaust* seeks to undermine a process by which their subsequent position is utilised to reinforce Ashkenazi exclusivity with regards to Holocaust memory, and, more specifically, its hegemonic position in Israeli society. As a consequence, the function of the non-Ashkenazi identities in Tlalim's film is to open up established notions of an Israeli national identity that are based on a Holocaust memory that continues to reinforce Ashkenazi hegemony. Again, this is an example of how the film departs from other second generation films that, although disrupting traditional Zionist narratives that locate Holocaust suffering on the periphery of Israeli society, continue to exclude the non-Ashkenazi perspective.

The focus on the relationship between Palestinian actor Khaled and Israel's Holocaust legacy in *Don't Touch My Holocaust* offers a further critique of social exclusion through bringing the country's on-going conflict with Palestine to bear on the role the Nazi genocide plays in the marginalisation of the non-Ashkenazi 'other'. In a similar vein to both Yoshef and Maayan, Khaled's onscreen presence opens up the hermetically sealed Holocaust narrative that is denied Israel's enemy and co-occupant (Loshitzky, 2001, p. 38). Whereas the foregrounding of Sephardic and Mizrahi perspectives exposes the use of Holocaust memory in reinforcing the dominant Ashkenazi position, however, Khaled's presence questions Israel's victim status – something that is taken for granted by the other members of the theatre troupe. Indeed, as Loshitzky (2001, p. 40) argues, the process of admitting outsiders into the sacred memory of the Holocaust is another way of maintaining the construction of an Israeli identity at the expense of the Palestine.[8] As stated above, although Loshitzky (2001, p. 62) interprets a number of second generation films as evidence of Israel's changing attitudes towards the Holocaust and its surviving

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[8] Loshitzky's (2001, p. 40) highlighting of Tlalim's own contention that Israel's Holocaust memory fails to acknowledge the suffering resulting from its conflict with Palestine, which results in Palestinian citizens of Israel being excluded from the memory of the Holocaust, reinforces this contention.

victims, she argues that this sentiment does not extend to the Palestinian – a dynamic she terms "[a] contemporary Israeli dialectic of victimhood". Khaled's presence therefore compromises Israel's victim status through foregrounding Palestinian suffering at the hands of Israel.

The consequences of this dialectic are presented in one sequence halfway through the film in which Khaled guides a group of Palestinians around Yad Vashem. During the tour various members of the group compare the oppression of the Jews under Hitler's regime to the situation in contemporary Palestine. Whereas a number of the group argue that Israel's treatment of Palestinians is comparable to the persecution of the Jews during the Second World War, one member takes this a step further and suggests that the daily loss of Palestinian life in the West Bank is more terrible than the Holocaust based on a comparison between the efficiency of the latter and the protracted process of the former.

Although comparisons between the Holocaust and Israel's presence in Palestine relativizes the former through the alignment of two historical periods that were informed by different ideological aims, this sequence offers a further critique of the structures informing Israel's memory of these events by suggesting that the narrative presented at Yad Vashem fails to import the meaning of the Nazi genocide to a level that the Palestinian visitors are able to differentiate between their own oppression and that of the Jews at the hands of the Third Reich. As a consequence, one of the cornerstones for the justification of a sovereign Jewish state is used to support opposition to its existence rather than providing an understanding of why it was necessary.

The alignment of these two historical periods enables the Palestinian to construct a collective identity via access to the memories of another group[9]. This is an example of Michael Rothberg's

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[9] Another example of the conflation between two these two historical periods can be seen in the 'International Holocaust Cartoon Competition' launched by the Iranian newspaper, *Hamshahri*, in 2006. Responding to the publication of cartoon images of

(2009) concept of 'multidirectional memory'. Building on the work of sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1992), Rothberg (2009, p. 3) argues that the memories constituting the basis for the formation of particular "social groups" are constructed through an interaction with the memories of other groups in the public sphere. In challenging the exclusivity of what he terms the "competitive model", which states that the histories of various ethnic groups compete for recognition within the limited space on the public stage, Rothberg argues that alternative memories can not only co-exist, but, more importantly, this co-existence means that such memories are able to productively interact with one another in order to construct disparate positions of their own, as he states:

> Against the framework that understands collective memory as *competitive* memory – as a zero-sum struggle over scarce resources – I suggest that we consider memory as *multidirectional*: as subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing; as productive and not privative (Rothberg, 2009, p. 3).

With regards to the destruction of Europe's Jews during the Second World War, Rothberg (2009, p. 6) goes on to argue that far from denying the opportunity for recognising other social groups and their numerous histories, the globalisation of Holocaust memory has provided the basis for their articulation.

The formation of a Palestinian collective identity via reference to the Nazis' oppression of the Jews in *Don't Touch My Holocaust* therefore provides the basis for the former to reposition itself on the public stage. More importantly, because of the importance placed on the Holocaust and its memory in Israeli society, comparisons between the Jewish and Palestinian suffering are effective in highlighting the situation of the latter. Rather than simply representing an example of

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the prophet Mohammad in the Danish daily *Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten*, which were meant as a satirical comment on the reasoning behind freedom of speech, a number of participants in the competition presented images of the Holocaust that were combined with those depicting Palestinian oppression at the hands of Israel.

what Rothberg sees as the productive process of borrowing and referencing, however, comparisons between the Jewish and Palestinian suffering during the visit to Yad Vashem represent a utilitarian move that uses the prominence of the Holocaust in order to foreground the Palestinian situation in Israeli society. This represents an example of *realpolitik* that is closer to a competitive memory model than Rothberg's liberal ideal of apolitical sharing. Although this process of apolitical sharing contrasts with Loshitzky's description of collective identity formations in Israel as a series of dialectical oppositions, the foregrounding of the Palestinian perspective through access to the memory of the Holocaust concurs with her description of this process as an amalgamation of disparate cultural identities ceaselessly vying for positions of dominance.

Palestinian opposition to Israel's presence in the country is overtly illustrated towards the end of the sequence discussed above when the film depicts Khaled's participation in a pro-Palestine protest during his visit to the Israeli city of Sakhnin. Despite his empathy with regards to Jewish suffering during the Second World War, something that is underlined by his statement that the comparisons made between Holocaust and Palestinian suffering at Yad Vashem are based on an ignorance regarding the meaning of the former[10], Khaled's participation in the protest is, as he states, "against all the soldiers who murder". This ability to distinguish between those who murder in Gaza and the West Bank from those who survived the Holocaust not only contrasts with the conclusions drawn by the group of Palestinians he guided around Yad Vashem, but also the failure of both Yoshef and Maayan to recognise his own oppressed position during the scene in which all three visit the site of Hitler's former bunker. As Loshitzky (2001, p. 40) argues, the urinating and singing of patriotic Israeli songs by Jewish members of the theatre group results in Khaled feeling persecuted. This feeling of persecution is underlined

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[10] This accusation of ignorance in one that Khaled also levels at himself when he states that he was unaware of the Holocaust until he was twenty seven years old and only gained knowledge of these events through his work as a guide at Yad Vashem.

by the aesthetic approach of this scene, which concludes with the camera panning from Yoshef and Maayan, who sing patriotic Israeli songs and urinate on Hitler's bunker, to Khaled, who is standing separate from the group refusing to join in. The isolated position of the latter, which is further accentuated via the use of a freeze frame depicting his sullen facial expression, represents a microcosm of Israel's relationship to Palestine where the Holocaust is concerned (Loshitzky, 2001, p. 40). As the actions of the theatre group insinuate, the Nazi genocide is central to an Israeli sense of defiance – "never again" – that ultimately informs its relations with Palestine (Loshitzky, 2001, p. 40). Although, as discussed above, it is the paranoia and resulting anxiety of an Israel under siege that provides the motivation for this act of defiance, the actions of both Yoshef and Mayaan express a nationalist position that, in the presence of a Palestinian, parallels the Ashkenazi dominance overtly expressed by Zelma's earlier chastisement of Khaled for singing Palestinian songs.

The introduction of Khaled in *Don't Touch My Holocaust* therefore further exposes the continued exclusion of Israel's ethnic 'other'. Furthermore, whereas the film's focus on the other members of the theatre troupe utilises a range of encounters with Israel's Holocaust legacy in order to expose the exclusion of Sephardic and Mizrahim Jews from the Ashkenazi mainstream, the addition of the Palestinian to this dynamic reveals the ways in which the country's relationship with the Holocaust also informs its relations with Palestine in that the actions of Jewish members of the troupe imply an Israeli defiance that ultimately constitutes the basis of this relationship. In challenging its exclusion of the non-Ashkenazi perspective, Israel's Holocaust memory therefore represents a site upon which the various ethnic identities constituting Israeli society are able to question and challenge the existing power relations that underpin formations of collective identity. This depiction of Israel as an amalgamation of disparate cultural identities ceaselessly vying for positions of dominance concurs with Loshitzky who surmises that:

> In an immigrant society aspiring to be a Jewish
> state rather than a state of its citizens, the issue
> of collective identity becomes all the more
> important for its members, and questions of
> identity related to the dialectics democratic
> versus theocratic, Western versus Oriental,
> collectivist versus liberal capitalist, or Jewish
> versus civil are constantly raised in an
> atmosphere of heated public debate verging –
> some would claim – on a culture war (Loshitzky,
> 2001, p. xi).

As a consequence, for Loshitzky (2001, p. xiv), the search for a collective identity in contemporary Israel represents a situation in which different identities clash, negotiate, and exist in a continuous play of history, culture, and power. In Tlalim's film, this process takes place amongst the deliberations of how Israel remembers the Jewish catastrophe.

3.3 Traumatic Vestiges: Israel's Holocaust Legacy in *Walk on Water* and *Forgiveness*

The relationship between Israel's Holocaust legacy and the power relations that inform Israeli society are also explored in Eytan Fox's *Walk on Water* and Udi Aloni's *Forgiveness*. The narrative trajectory of both films depict the transformation of their respective protagonists from active combatants of Palestinian extremism to individuals who eventually confront the continuing traumatic effects of their own Holocaust legacy. Fox's film focuses on Mossad agent, Eyal (Lior Ashkenazi), whose commitment to securing Israel's sovereignty is illustrated during the film's pre-credit sequence. Having followed a suspected Hamas terrorist to Istanbul, Eyal injects him with a poisonous fluid and leaves him to die in the street, despite the presence of the suspect's wife and child. Upon his subsequent return to Israel, Eyal's display of cold pragmatism is met with celebration and acclamation both amongst his Mossad colleagues and in the national press.

Against the backdrop of terrorist activity, Eyal is therefore introduced as the embodiment of the Zionist 'new Jew' – dedicated to protecting Israel at any cost.[11] This dedication is reinforced by the *mise en scène* of the pre-credit. Whereas the establishing shot of the Istanbul skyline indicates that Eyal is prepared to go 'behind enemy lines' in order to defend Israel's sovereignty, his commitment is further illustrated through his encounter with the terrorist's son. As the Mossad agent sits in close proximity to the suspect and his family during a boat tour, medium close-ups depict an exchange of smiles between Eyal and the child. When the boat docks and the passengers alight, a slow motion shot shows the child running with a red balloon – a clichéd motif that suggests his innocence with regards to the actions, and ultimately, the death, of his father. It is whilst the terrorist suspect is tending to his son that Eyal injects him with the syringe. The sequence concludes with a camera zoom showing a close-up of the boy's tearful face.

Collectively referring to them as "animals", Eyal's contempt towards all Palestinians is overtly expressed later in the film when he confronts a Palestinian shopkeeper and accuses him of overcharging for a jacket. Both this scene and the pre-credit sequence described above therefore illustrate the power relations that inform Israeli society. Whereas the celebration of Eyal's return from Istanbul in the national press indicates the centrality of the Israeli Jew and marginalisation of the Palestinian Arab at a national level, his confrontation with the shopkeeper is an example of how this hierarchy informs everyday interactions between these two ethnic groups. Indeed, the shopkeeper's obedient return of Eyal's money underlines Israel's position of dominance.

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[11] In presenting the image of the 'new Jew', *Walk on Water* can be seen to mirror a number of films that were produced during the period in which Israel was attempting to establish its independence. As discussed in Chapter Two, films such as *Heritage* (1948) and *Tomorrow's a Wonderful Day* (*Adamah*, 1948) present images of collective farming, communal life, and, more importantly, the need to defend the emerging Jewish state against constant attacks from its Arab neighbours. Fox's film therefore presents a central Zionist ideal that was to inform its project in Palestine.

Eyal's inflexible stance towards Palestine begins to soften following a series of events that culminate in his travelling to Germany in pursuit of the Nazi war criminal, Alfred Himmelmann (Ernest Lenart). Shortly after arriving back in Israel, Eyal returns to his apartment to discover that his wife has committed suicide – a note accusing him of killing everything that comes near him firmly laying the blame for her death at her husband's feet. Coming immediately after Eyal's assassination of the Hamas terrorist, this personal loss results in the emergence of a repressed guilt relating to his work as a Mossad agent. As he re-reads his wife's suicide note later in the film, Eyal falls asleep and the subsequent dream sequence depicts her sitting on a deserted beach beneath a brooding sky with the waves crashing against the shore. As a point of view shot depicts Eyal approaching his wife, she turns to reveal a tearful face that matches the gloominess of her surroundings. The final shot of this dream sequence is a fade that gradually replaces the tearful face of Eyal's wife with that of the child mourning the loss of his father in Istanbul. This conflation of the pain suffered by Eyal following his personal loss, and that inflicted by him upon the family of the terrorist, suggests a comprehension of the suffering experienced by the Palestinian as a consequence of his work. Although the link between Israeli and Palestinian victimhood in *Walk on Water* is problematic – in that the former is the result of Israel's aggression towards Palestine, whilst the latter is a consequence of this aggression – this sequence signifies the awakening of Eyal's empathy towards the Arab 'other' that jars with his existing worldview. A close-up of his startled expression as he wakes from the dream visually reinforces this awakening.

However, whilst the death of Eyal's wife as a result of his work suggests a cycle of destruction in which the combating of Palestinian terrorism ultimately leads to the suffering of all involved, his acknowledgement of Israeli oppression reveals a deeper traumatic connection to the Holocaust. Upon returning to work following the death of his wife, Eyal reluctantly agrees to spy on Himmelmann's grandchildren – Axel (Knut Berger) and Pia (Caroline Peters) – in

order to locate the whereabouts of the former Nazi. Although both Eyal's early return to work and his reluctance to infiltrate the Himmelmann family appear to reinforce his commitment to combating Palestinian terrorism, which, he argues, poses more immediate threat to Israel's security than the country's historical ties with the Nazi period, the subsequent emergence of details about the death of his parents during the Holocaust suggests that this expression of pragmatism masks the repressed traumatic effects of this past. Indeed, the resurfacing of this trauma is indicated when he contemptuously questions the empathy both Axel and Pia express towards the shopkeeper he accuses of overcharging for a jacket.[12] When Axel and Pia point out that the shopkeeper is simply trying to earn a living, Eyal confronts the siblings with the accusatory retort, "the poor Palestinian shopkeepers. I forgot how kind you Germans are! Always moved by suffering!".

In addition to acknowledging his personal connection to the Holocaust, Eyal's sharp retort also suggests a connection between Israeli aggression towards Palestine and the continuing traumatic effects of the Nazi past. This scene is therefore illustrative of the tendency in *Walk on Water* to counterbalance Israeli aggression towards Palestine with Jewish victimisation at the hands of the Nazis. The latter is foregrounded in the second half of Fox's film when Eyal travels to Germany in pursuit of Himmelmann. Arriving in Berlin under the pretence of visiting Axel, Eyal locates the former Nazi at a villa belonging to the siblings' parents in the suburb of Wannsee. Upon confirming Himmelmann's presence at the villa, Eyal requests that the Nazi war criminal be smuggled out of Germany and taken to Israel in order to face trial. In addition to alluding to Eichmann's extradition from Argentina in 1960 by Mossad agents in order to be brought to Israel to

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[12] As with the opening scene in Istanbul, the exchange between Eyal and the shopkeeper expresses Israeli power in a space that is again defined as Arab – a Palestinian market complete with narrow streets and tightly packed stores overflowing with merchandise. This time, however, Eyal's unflinching commitment to Israel's security has transformed into contempt.

stand trial nine months later[13], Eyal's desire to extradite Himmelmann
is significant in that it is illustrative of his trajectory from his previous
uncompromising commitment to defending Israel at any cost to the
position of non-aggression that he will occupy by the film's conclusion.
However, Eyal's request is rejected by his Mossad superior,
Menachem (Gideon Shemer). It is at this point that the latter reveals
that he is a Holocaust survivor and a former acquaintance of Eyal's
parents – it was their village that was purged by Himmelmann during
the Second World War. Having secretly followed Eyal to Berlin,
Menachem wants to kill the former Nazi in the Wannsee villa. The
location is, of course, significant. Menachem's desire to kill the former
Nazi at the place where the plans for the so-called Final Solution were
implemented not only represents a form of Jewish revenge, it is also
symbolic of Israel reasserting its position of power via a demonstration
of its agency at a location where over half a century earlier the fate of
Europe's Jews was in someone else's hands.[14]

The connection between the Holocaust and Israel's conflict with
Palestine in *Walk on Water* represents another instance of what
Rothberg terms "*competitive* memory" (2009, p.3). In reinforcing
Israel's hegemonic position through the evocation of Jewish
victimhood, this connection is illustrative of a memory model in which
one ethnic identity is prioritised at the expense of another. As with the
Palestinian group visiting Yad Vashem in *Don't Touch My Holocaust*,
whose articulation of their collective identity via a reference to Nazi
oppression of the Jews disrupts the existing power relations that
inform Israeli society, in Fox's film there is no 'sharing'. Rather than
productively interacting with one another in order to construct
disparate positions of their own (Rothberg, 2009, p. 3), the histories of

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[13] As discussed in Chapter Two, the Eichmann trial occupies a central place in the
Israeli imaginary, which is reflected in the country's cinematic output. Films such as
Memories of the Eichmann Trial (*Zichronot Mishpat Eichmann*, David Perlov, 1979),
The State of Israel vs. John Ivan Demjanuk (Naomi Ben Natan-Schory, 1988), Eyal
Sivan's *The Specialist* (1999), and *The Debt* (Assaf Bernstein, 2007) illustrate a
continuing interest in the judicial process of holding former Nazis to account.
[14] This reassertion of Jewish agency with regards to Germany's Nazi past is
foreshadowed when Eyal defends a group of Axel's friends against an attack from neo-
Nazi skinheads on the Berlin underground.

these two ethnic groups are again presented as competing for recognition on the public stage.

Eyal and Menachem's relationship represents another aspect of the link between Israel's Holocaust past and its Palestinian present. In his pursuit of Himmelmann, Holocaust survivor Menachem chooses a member of the second generation for the assignment based not only on Eyal's proven ability to be efficient in removing threats to Israel's security, but also because he assumes that the Mossad agent's familial connection to the Nazi genocide will guarantee unquestioning commitment. Indeed, the timing of Eyal's assignment to the Himmelmann case reveals Menachem's exploitation of the Mossad agent, occurring as it does during a discussion between the two about the traumatic effect resulting from the death of the former's wife. Manipulating the fallout from the suicide of Eyal's wife for his personal desire to avenge the purging of his home village during the Second World War, Menachem constructs a bond between the two in which the repressed trauma of the former's familial connection to the Holocaust facilitates his commitment to fighting Palestinian extremism. However, Eyal's refusal to kill Himmelmann shatters this bond. This rejection of revenge represents his acknowledgement of both the trauma he harbours as a consequence of his position as a member of the second generation, and, more importantly, its influencing of his aggression towards Palestine. Eyal's refusal to kill again and fulfil his role as the Zionist ideal of the 'new Jew' therefore signifies this alteration in his commitment to removing the Palestinian threat.

Although Eyal's equation of his wife's death with the Palestinian child during the pre-credit sequence of *Walk on Water* signifies a comprehension of the suffering experienced by others as a consequence of his work as a Mossad agent, the displacement of Israeli responsibility and agency onto the country's traumatic Holocaust past renders the film's already limited consideration of the Palestinian question (a subject that is almost absent from the second half of Fox's film) more problematic. It is only when the trauma of the Holocaust is confronted and 'worked through' that aggression towards

Palestine is alleviated. This shifting of responsibility represents a cinematic trope that can be seen to inform other recent Israeli films that engage with the issues surrounding the country's conflict with Palestine. For example, Ari Folman's animated autobiographical account of his role as an IDF soldier during the massacre of Palestinians at Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in 1982 in his film *Waltz with Bashir* (*Vals Im Bashir*, 2008) suggests that the repression of the trauma resulting from his proximity to the events is the consequence of his position as a member of the second generation. For Claire Launchbury (2013), Folman's film locates the Holocaust at the centre of a trajectory in which the Jewish race moves from the position of victim to that of perpetrator, whilst Raya Morag (2012) takes this a step further in stating that Folman displaces responsibility for his part in the Shatila and Sabra massacre onto both the Holocaust and the Israeli authorities. Similarly, Tamar Yarom's documentary film *To See If I'm Smiling* (2007) locates the questionable actions of women who served in the occupied territories in the context of compulsory conscription, whilst the focus on six former heads of Israeli intelligence in Dror Moreh's *The Gatekeepers* (*Shomrei HaSaf*, 2012) provides the basis for a shifting of responsibility for individual actions (or rather inaction) onto those in positions of power.[15]

In addition, the recognition of Palestinian suffering is another theme that continues to circulate in recent Israeli cinema. Films such as Joseph Cedar's *Beaufort* (2007) and Samuel Maoz's *Lebanon* (2009) present a questioning of Israel's militarised society through a focus on the Israeli Defence Force's operations in neighbouring Arab countries. Whereas Maoz's film confronts its audience with Arab suffering through locating the viewer in the claustrophobic space of an

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[15] As discussed in Chapter Two, the exoneration of individuals through the locating of blame at the feet of those in positions of authority is a trope that has informed cinematic representations of the Nazi period in Germany since the end of the Second World War. Whereas films made in the immediate aftermath of Hitler's defeat suggest a potential for a German utopia based on the bringing of the 'actual' perpetrators to justice, both East and West German productions depict a world in which 'normal' Germans are the victims of a callous Nazi regime. As Chapter Four will demonstrate, this separation continues to inform contemporary German cinema.

IDF tank that manoeuvres through the streets of Lebanon killing both enemy soldiers and Lebanese civilians, Palestinian loss at the hands of Israel is something that is merely suggested in Cedar's depiction of an IDF unit's last stand at the fabled army base from which the film takes its title. This recognition is something that is missing from earlier critiques of Israeli aggression. Although the foregrounding of the traumatic effects of warfare undermined the ideal of the heroic martyr which was perpetuated by the Heroic-nationalist genre during the 1950s, films such as *He Walked Through the Fields* (*Hu Halach Be'Sadot*, 1967), *The Vulture* (1981), and *In 72 There Was No War* (*B'Shivim Ushtayim Lo Hayta Milhama*, 1995) fail to incorporate the perspective of Israel's Palestinian victims. Furthermore, the issue of Israeli responsibility raised in both *Beaufort* and *Lebanon* are foreshadowed in Eli Cohen's *Two Fingers from Sidon* (1986), a film that, as Chapter Two discusses, questions the drawing of moral positions through presenting the complexities of military conflict in which both guilty and innocent people are killed.

The linking of Holocaust and Palestinian suffering in Fox's film culminates in a different outcome to that which informs *Waltz with Bashir*. In Folman's film, the devastation he experiences as he realises that he was positioned at the gates of the refugee camps is in stark contrast to the sense of catharsis that informs the conclusion of *Walk on Water*. Having left the room refusing to inject a sleeping Himmelmann with the same poison he used to kill the Hamas terrorist at the beginning of the film, Eyal's mission is completed by Axel who turns off the machine that provides oxygen to his ailing grandfather. With the 'obstacle' of Germany's Nazi past now removed, the path that lies ahead is that of a reconciliation of German and Jewish relations. As members of both second and third generations respectively (Axel and Pia reject their parents on the basis of the latter's harbouring of their Nazi grandfather[16]), the relationship between the three represents

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[16] Throughout *Walk on Water*, both Pia and Axel search for reconciliation with regards to the crimes committed by previous generations. This search is symbolised not only by the siblings'' rejection of both a grandfather who is responsible for war crimes

a resolution with regards to the suffering caused by the Holocaust. This resolution is illustrated during the final scene of the film, in which Eyal is seen to have married Pia and fathered her child. This idyllic image is visually reinforced by both the *mise en scène*, which depicts a family home complete with nursery and paddling pool in the garden, and Eyal's tending to his son during the night. Close-up shots of the baby's hand gripping Eyal's arm, who reciprocates by gently stroking son's back, overtly illustrate the former Mossad agent's new commitment.

Eyal's relationship with Pia and Axel is therefore central to film's negotiation of the traumatic Holocaust past. Both aid Eyal in the process of ridding himself of his repressed Holocaust trauma – whilst Axel kills Himmelmann, an act that Eyal was supposed to perform, his marriage to Pia and fathering her child completes his transformation. It is also during the film's concluding scene that Eyal explains to Axel that he dreamt that the two of them had walked over the Sea of Galilee. This is in reference to Axel's failed attempt to do so earlier in the film, after which he explained to Eyal that this can only be achieved once you have completely purified your soul. Transformed from 'new Jew' zealot to family-man following his confrontation of a repressed Holocaust trauma, Eyal, cleansed of the burdens of the past, is able to walk on water, whilst Axel's killing of his Nazi grandfather mirrors this process, thus enabling him to do the same. The film's final image is a long shot of both men performing this act – the calm sea and clear skies above in sharp contrast to Eyal's earlier dream about his wife.

However, this reconciliation between Israel and Germany is not mirrored with regards to the former's relationship with Palestine. *Walk on Water*'s final image of Eyal and Axel fades to black – an apt comment of the film's inability to shed any light on the issue of Palestine. With regards to the central argument of this chapter, the negation of the Israel-Palestine conflict in favour of a focus on Israel's

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committed during the Nazi period, and parents who conceal the whereabouts of the former Nazi, but also by their embracement of Israeli culture. Whereas Pia works on a kibbutz, Axel repeatedly expresses an interest in various aspects of Israel's history.

Holocaust past is illustrative of my contention that the eventual accommodation of survivor suffering following the Eichmann trial in 1961 failed to extend to that experienced by the Palestinian as a result of Israeli aggression. To quote Loshitzky (2001, p. 155), "the Palestinians remain in the realm of fantasy as a repressed and disavowed memory of past existence". Rather than representing a site upon which the hegemonic status of the Ashkenazi perspective can be contested (as Tlalim's *Don't Touch My Holocaust* attempts to do), the exploration of Israel's Holocaust memory in Fox's film reinforces the power relations that inform both Israeli society, and, furthermore, formations of collective identity in the country.

If *Walk on Water*'s engagement with the subject of Palestine is ultimately compromised through the prioritising of Israel's relationship with its Holocaust past, the interrogation of the intricacies that inform the connection between the continuing trauma of the Jewish catastrophe and Palestinian oppression in Udi Aloni's *Forgiveness* is testament to its refusal to separate the two. Aloni's film tells the story of David (Itay Tiran), an American Jew who moves to Israel in order to join the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) and fight Palestinian terrorism. In his desire to protect the Israeli State from Arab aggression, David parallels Eyal as the embodiment of the Zionist ideal of the 'new Jew'. This parallel is underlined by the fact that David will also be transformed from an uncompromising Zionist ideologue to someone possessing an empathetic understanding with regards to Palestinian suffering by the conclusion of Aloni's film.

This transformation is initiated by David's accidental shooting of a Palestinian girl whilst on patrol in the West Bank. Following this incident, David is sent to a mental institution that is built on the ruins of Deir Yassin, a Palestinian village whose inhabitants were killed by Jewish militia in 1948. In addition to introducing information about Deir Yassin, the pre-credit sequence of *Forgiveness* also states that the first patients to be committed to the institution were Holocaust survivors, who, legend has it, are able to communicate with the ghosts of the village's former inhabitants. The institution therefore connects a

series of important binary oppositions, such as Holocaust past/Palestinian present, Israel/Palestine, and coloniser/colonised, which continue to inform discussions about collective identity in Israel. These binaries can be seen to map onto Ella Shohat's (2010, p.1) formulation of Israeli identity outlined at the beginning of this chapter, in which she states that Israel is at once a product of a liberation struggle similar to that of the Third World against colonialism and aligned with the West against the East. Located at the intersection of East/West and First World/Third World, Shohat (2010, p. 3) goes on to argue, Israel's desire to both free itself from the position of "Europe's internal "other"" and occupy a position of dominance mirroring that of the West's colonial enterprise results in both the right to self-representation being denied the Jewish Mizrahim and the Palestinian, and, as a consequence of this exclusion, the occupation of a hegemonic position by the European Ashkenazi. Although the very presence of Holocaust survivors on the site of a Palestinian village erased by militia during the establishment of the Jewish State suggests the foregrounding of one history at the expense of another (a perspective that is supported by the staggered release of information during the film's pre-credit sequence), the presence of memories of both Holocaust and Palestinian suffering at the mental institution position it as a site upon which the various ethnic identities constituting Israeli society are able to question and challenge the existing power relations that underpin formations of collective identity.

Foregrounding the issue of Israeli agency and responsibility with regards to its conflict with Palestine, the exploration of Israel's Holocaust legacy in *Forgiveness* refuses to see the former as a consequent of the latter. Whereas in *Walk on Water* Israeli aggression towards Palestine is alleviated as a result of Eyal's 'working through' the trauma of his Holocaust past, in Aloni's film IDF soldier David confronts the consequences of his actions directly. The film's opening scene introduces a traumatised David at the mental institution, thus establishing its narrative function as the central point from which the story of David's past and future is articulated. Accordingly, a number of

flashbacks describe the incident that led to his killing of the Palestinian child in the West Bank. David's presence in Palestine represents Israeli dominance. He is patrolling the West Bank in search of a suspected terrorist, whilst a scene in which IDF soldiers sort through the possessions of a Palestinian family at a checkpoint visually reinforces Israel's position of authority. In addition, David's attempt to seduce the Palestinian cleaner, Nawal (Ruba Blal), at a nightclub represents another example of Israeli dominance. His spiking of Nawal's drink in order to "get the bitch high" (as David's friend states) expresses a cold pragmatism, in which no 'tactic' is ruled out in order to achieve the desired aims. However, the plan fails. Following the consumption of the spiked drink, Nawal sings a song about a mother's love for her daughter before she and David embrace.

Loshitzky (2001, p. 113) argues that the recurring theme of interracial romances and subsequent mixing of 'blood' in Israeli society exposes anxieties about the co-reliance of coloniser and colonised. For Loshitzky:

> The displacement [...] of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the territory of forbidden love makes it easier for the Israeli audience [...] to encounter the conflict whose roots are complex and painful. Furthermore, the transfer of the conflict to the intimacy of the private space "loosens", and sometimes even disarms, the defense mechanism erected by many Israelis when confronted with "*the* conflict" (Loshitzky, 2001, p. 113).

Conversely, in *Forgiveness*, David's encounter with Nawal in the nightclub is representative of the former's acknowledgement of the latter's subjugated position, and, more importantly, his role in maintaining such power relations. Indeed, their embrace following the latter's song is a gesture that suggests a mutual desire for peace rather than any sense of eroticism – a plea for an end of hostilities between Israel and Palestine that is underlined by the contrasting of the thumping electronic music in the nightclub with Nawal's a cappella solo.

However, this desire for peace is shattered by David's killing of the Palestinian child, who happens to be Nawal's daughter. Rather than simply emanating from the killing itself, the suggestion, here, is that David's trauma is the result of the subsequent breakdown of possible peace between Israel and Palestine. This interpretation of the onscreen action is supported by the fact that David's eventual cure is based on his confrontation of the ghost of the child, which symbolises his acceptance of guilt. The treatment of David's trauma is the subject of debate at the institution, as the usual course of treatment administered by Dr. Shemesh (Makram Khoury) is challenged by an alternative offered by a blind patient known as Muselmann (Moni Moshonov). In opposition to Shemesh's injection of a chemo-technological drug in an attempt to build a bridge over the trauma zone, thus enabling the patient to lead a normal life, Muselmann insists that any solution can only be achieved through David's confrontation of the traumatic event itself and a subsequent acknowledgement of personal responsibility. As his name indicates, the character of Muselmann is a direct reference to the figure in the camps that, as discussed above, Primo Levi (2013, p. 96) describes as "those doomed to selection". In occupying this position between this world and the next, Muselmann acts as a conduit who is able to communicate with the dead Palestinian villagers, and, subsequently, advise David to "listen to the ghosts that are haunting him".

However, Shemesh's drug is eventually injected, and, despite Muselmann's desperate pleas for him to remain at the institution, David's father, Henry (Michael Sarne), who is also a Holocaust survivor, arrives to take his son back to New York. Upon his return to America David immediately becomes involved with another Palestinian woman, Lila (Clara Khoury). This relationship mirrors the one he had with Nawal earlier in the film – a connection that is overtly stated when Lila sings the song sung by the Palestinian cleaner in the nightclub. Furthermore, the intercutting of images depicting both women singing during this scene reinforces the link between the two. As a consequence, David's traumatic memories of killing Nawal's daughter

begin to resurface. In an attempt to counteract the re-emergence of his trauma, he injects himself with more of the chemo-technological drug from a syringe given to him by Dr. Shemesh. The resulting return to normality does not last however, and, whilst, watching a news report of a suicide bomb attack in Israel carried out by Nawal in response to the killing of her daughter, the trauma returns. David's subsequent refusal to take the drug results in a period of emotional instability during which he threatens to shoot his father, as well as Lila and her daughter.

The sequence described above raises a number of issues regarding both the relationship between Israel and Palestine, and, more importantly, the role of Israel's Holocaust past in the conflict between the two. David's involvement with both Nawal and Lila represents a mirroring that extends to his threat to kill the latter and her daughter. David's reversion to the pro-Zionist aggressor suggests that his past trauma continues to dictate his actions in the present. Here, he is representative of the tit-for-tat stance adopted by both Israel and Palestine throughout the conflict – an inability to break the cyclical return of violence enacted by one side upon the other in response to the 'original' crime. Furthermore, the notion that past crimes ultimately result in the committing of new ones is mirrored in David's threat to kill his survivor father as he sleeps. For David, Henry's Holocaust past is intertwined with a Zionist ideology of Israeli aggression that informed his decision to return to Israel and join the IDF. As a member of the second generation, he is exposed to the trauma of a Holocaust legacy that, due to his father's participation in the establishment of the Jewish State following his release from the camps, has been rendered in support of the Zionist enterprise in Palestine[17]. As a consequence of this exposure, David's desire to kill his father is mistakenly based on the elimination of a Holocaust legacy that ultimately led to the traumatic event of his killing the Palestinian

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[17] Here, *Forgiveness* offers an alternative representation of the second generation to films such as *The Summer of Aviya* and *Daddy, Come to the Fair*. The focus of Aloni's film on the corrosive effects of a Holocaust legacy hijacked for political means contrasts with the majority of the earlier second generation films and their empathetic presentation of the suffering endured by their survivor parents.

child. As with his confrontation of Lila and her daughter, David, here, reverts to the position of the Israeli aggressor. Interestingly, his use of his father's German Luger pistol (which was used during the fight for Israel's independence) is not only symbolic of the oppression of Zionist nationalism, it also indicates the link between Nazi oppression and that enacted by Israel. In the end, David shoots neither his father nor Lila and her daughter, choosing instead to turn the gun on himself having seemingly come to the conclusion that as it was he who committed the murder – it is he who should be punished, not others.

However, this form of accepting responsibility is rejected as the narrative rewinds to the moment when David and his father are confronted by Muselmann before they are about to leave the mental institution. Henry's lust for life and desire for normality, meaning that he lives in denial of the past, represents an approach that, as we have just seen, fails to work for David who restlessly searches for the truth. Consequently, an alternative narrative strand depicts David remaining at the institution having rejected the treatment from Dr. Shemesh in favour of that offered by Muselmann. During the film's final scene, Muselmann performs a ritual that enables David to both confront the moment of his trauma in the West Bank, and, more importantly, experience empathy with those that suffered as a consequence of his actions. This acceptance of responsibility contrasts with the film's original ending. Here, the cycle of violence, which the original ending suggests is set to continue through David's reversion to his previous aggressive state, is broken by his recognition of his previous actions which prompts his empathetic alignment with those who suffered. Muselmann's psychoanalytic approach of leading the patient back to the source of his trauma indicates that, as the alternative narrative illustrates, Israel is not ready to move into the future and has to remain in the present and confront the origins of its trauma. Shemesh's chemo-technological drug merely represents further avoidance, whilst Muselmann's approach represents a confrontation of Israeli atrocity and responsibility. By contrast, Muselmann knows that the truth does

not hold redemption, and this is why he never tried to reconstruct his life after the camps.

3.4 Conclusion

Although approaching the issues surrounding both the Holocaust and Palestine from an Israeli perspective, the three films discussed in this chapter attempt to confront the political and social ramifications that arise from the relationship between both. The central concern of *Don't Touch My Holocaust* is how the Holocaust is engaged with by those who follow in its wake, as Régine Mihal Friedman states:

> For the theater [*sic.*] group as well as for the film
> director, the essential question is the response
> among the generations of the aftermath to an
> inescapable legacy: How is this past felt into the
> present? How does memory beget memory?
> (Friedman, 2002, p. 201).

Tlalim's film presents Israel's Holocaust memory as a hermetically sealed narrative that, in excluding certain sections of the country's multi-ethnic society, reinforces Ashkenazi dominance. In bringing the marginalised Sephardi, Mizrahi, and Palestinian identities to bear on this memory, however, the film exposes its contribution to the reinforcement of Ashkenazi hegemony. As a consequence, Israel's Holocaust memory becomes a locus for a questioning of the very premise of collective Israeli identity through a fragmentation of a desired cohesion based on Zionism's promotion of the totalising image of the 'new Jew'.

In contrast, both *Walk on Water* and *Forgiveness* focus directly on the Israel-Palestine conflict, and how this relationship is informed by Israel's Holocaust legacy. Whilst both films locate the Holocaust at the centre of this conflict, *Walk on Water* negates an exploration of the continuing traumatic effects of the Nazi genocide. Indeed, the initial aligning of Israel and Palestine on the basis of a shared suffering in

Fox's film implies that Israeli victimhood somewhat obscures its responsibility with regards to the victim status of the Palestinian. It is only when Israel's Holocaust trauma is confronted and 'worked through' that aggression towards Palestine is alleviated. However, the film's conclusion, in which Eyal marries Pia and fathers her child following the death of Himmelmann, suggests a reconciliation in relations between Germany and Israel rather than Israel and Palestine.

Despite similarities with regards to the theme of Israel's traumatic memory of the Holocaust and its connection to the country's conflict with Palestine, Udi Aloni's *Forgiveness* contrasts with Fox's film in its refusal to allow the events surrounding the Second World War to facilitate the avoidance of Israeli responsibility for Palestinian suffering. Whereas David's transformation from 'new Jew' Zionist ideal to an empathy towards the Palestinian position is reflective of Eyal's trajectory, the former's confrontation of the suffering that his actions have caused foregrounds a recognition of responsibility and agency that is displaced onto the Nazi past in Fox's film. This process is overtly stated through the film's alternative conclusion, where both David's rejection of the chemo-technological drug and subsequent confrontation of his past contrasts with his adverse reaction to this treatment in the film's original ending, in which he repeats the cycle of violence by threatening to kill another Palestinian women and her daughter. The alternative conclusion represents a confrontation with Israeli responsibility that, ultimately, questions the country's use of the continuing traumatic effects of the Holocaust as a reason for its aggression toward Palestine. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the subsequent shift of Israel from the position of victim to that of perpetrator is also something that informs Germany's engagement with its legacy of the Nazi period.

Chapter 4. Perpetrators and Victims: Pluralising the Wartime Experience in Recent German Documentary Film

4.1 Introduction

> [W]e may identify certain features of the contemporary situation of memory in Germany. The first is to recognise that that which is being reconstructed as social memory is not a fixed stable entity. It develops dynamically as it evolves, it is staged and contested in its expressions. We should not think of it as too static or homogenous. Secondly, social memory exists as a plurality in the midst of varied and competing forces (Assmann, 2006, p. 199).

Aleida Assmann's description of Germany's memory of the Nazi period as an evolving plurality that incorporates a variety of competing narratives represents an attempt to move beyond a post-reunification tendency to foreground one aspect of the German wartime experience at the expense of others. A number of critics (Nolan, 2001; Niven, 2006; Schmitz, 2007) have described the *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (the word commonly used to refer to the process of Germany's engagement with the Nazi past) in terms of a shift from a recognition and acceptance of the country's involvement in the crimes committed by the Third Reich during the 1990s to a post-millennium re-emergence of narratives expressing Germany's own suffering and loss. Both Bill Niven (2006) and Helmut Schmitz (2007), for example, express surprise at the resurgence of narratives about wartime suffering following a decade in which the Holocaust, and, more importantly, Germany's role in the Nazi genocide, were the primary object of focus. For Niven (2006, p. 2), throughout the 1990s Germans seemed increasingly committed to making the memory of German

shame both a central point for reflection on the past and a point of orientation for conduct in the present and for the future. This argument is echoed by Schmitz (2007, p. 3) who states that the Nazi past and the Holocaust appeared to be institutionalised at the heart of the Berlin Republic's cultural memory during this decade. However, whereas Niven (2006, p. 2-5) situates the subsequent re-emergence of German victimhood in the wider political context of Gerhard Schröder's succession of Helmut Kohl as Chancellor in 1998, Schmitz (2007, p. 5) argues that the shift to a focus on Germany's victim status was the result of a renewed interest in family legacies prompted by both the passing away of witnesses and the "emotionalisation" of history in historiographical and popular discourse. In addition, for Schmitz (2007, p. 5), this focus on personal memories of suffering is accompanied by the idea that the German wartime experience had not yet been sufficiently commemorated, communicated, or represented, due to its displacement by both the atrocities committed by the Third Reich and the subsequent 'taboo' on speaking about Germans as victims.

Representative of Michael Rothberg's notion of "*competitive memory*" (2009, p. 3), the shifting from a focus on Germany's role in acts of perpetration to examples of the country's own suffering and loss results in the construction of a homogenous discourse in which the wartime experiences of an entire population are defined on the basis of either position.[1] The resulting "memory contests" (2006, p. 2), to use Anne Fuchs, Mary Cosgrove, and Georg Grote's term, are testament to the entrenchment of both perpetrator and victim narratives with regards to Germany's memory of the Nazi period. As a consequence, the idea of reconciliation between these opposing positions is met with pessimism. For Mary Nolan (2001, p. 114-5), the

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[1] Schmitz (2007, p.15) highlights the anxieties that inform this 'either/or' tendency, stating that, as a consequence of suffering Germans being perceived as simultaneously members of the perpetrator group, representing German victimhood opens up an empathetic minefield based on the question of how to adequately represent the German wartime experience without either suppressing their status as members of Nazi community or having to repeatedly refer to Nazi crimes in order to avoid accusations of a levelling of German responsibility. For Schmitz (2007, p.15), representations of German suffering therefore turn on a perceived inequality and competition with Jewish suffering since 1945.

various memorials and museums that dominate the contemporary Berlin cityscape result in the German capital being "indelibly marked by the presence of the past as well as by the impossibility of reconciling the memories of perpetrators and victims". For Schmitz (2007, p. 3-4), the incompatibility of a homogeneous public memory dominated by narratives of German guilt, and a heterogeneous familial memory that tends to communicate suffering, hardship, and heroism results in tension. Sounding a more optimistic note, this chapter will argue that the presentation of plurality with regards to the German wartime experience in three recent documentary films challenges this post-reunification tendency to promote a homogeneous narrative that alternates between the positions of victim and perpetrator. The presentation of numerous individual testimonies in the documentary films *Blind Spot: Hitler's Secretary* (*Im toten Winkel: Hitlers Sekretärin*, André Heller and Othmar Schmiderer, 2002), *The Red Orchestra* (*Die Rote Kapelle*, Stefan Roloff, 2004), and *The Unknown Soldier* (*Der unbekannte Soldat*, Michael Verhoeven, 2006) foregrounds a variety of personal histories that suggest the German wartime experience is one that should be defined by its heterogeneity.

The foregrounding of personal testimony in these three films constitutes a basis for the redefinition of the German wartime experience as diverse and plural. Undermining an engagement with the Nazi past that is based on a reductive dualism between victimhood and perpetration, this focus on personal testimony situates my argument in the context of a wider discourse surrounding the increasing influence of private narratives on Germany's public memory of the Nazi period. In challenging the homogeneity that informs this memory through a focus on a variety of German wartime experiences, my argument therefore mirrors Fuchs, Cosgrove, and Grote's (2006, p. 2) contention that the entrance of rediscovered family memories into the public domain exposes the limits of an official memory culture that for decades ignored the private memories of individuals. The films discussed in this chapter present a plurality with regards to the German wartime experience in two distinct ways. First, the behaviour

of the individual German citizen living under National Socialism can be seen to involve actions that can be interpreted as both perpetration and victimisation. The opening section of this chapter, which is entitled 'The Persistence of Victimhood? The German as Victim in *Blind Spot: Hitler's Secretary* and *The Red Orchestra*', therefore locates the testimonies presented in both these films within the wider context of discussions about acts of conformity and resistance under National Socialism. Whereas Traudl Junge's description of a multifaceted wartime experience in Heller and Schmiderer's film points to the need to conform to Nazi ideals in order to survive, the focus on the testimonies of those involved in resistance activities against Hitler's regime in *The Red Orchestra* presents an image of fundamental opposition that requires a level of conformity in order to succeed. This focus on the everyday experiences of the individual is illustrative of the "bottom-up experience of history" that informs Fuchs, Cosgrove, and Grote's (2006, p. 6) concept of "memory contests", which, in setting the personal and the historical, the private and the public, fact and imagination, in dialogue with one another, also relates to the second way in which the pluralisation of the German wartime experience is presented in this chapter. Here, the positions of victim and perpetrator are presented as distinctly separate positions but occupy the same screen-space. Entitled 'The Wehrmacht as a Battleground: The Contested Past in *The Unknown Soldier*', the second part of this chapter focuses on the juxtaposition in Verhoeven's film of evidence pertaining to the participation of Germany's regular army in crimes committed on the eastern front presented in two exhibitions organised by the Hamburg Institute for Social Research and public opposition to such findings. Although the presentation of this evidence is illustrative of a recognition and acceptance of wider German involvement in Nazi crimes during the first decade following reunification, the plurality of the German wartime experience is indicated by the presence of narratives expressing the contrary.

In bringing a number of personal testimonies to bear on a public memory of the Nazi period that defines the German wartime

experience on the basis of either perpetration or victimhood, these three films are representative of Assmann's definition of this memory as a non-fixed entity that evolves through the contestation between its various competing memories. This offers an explanation as to why I focus exclusively on the documentary film in this chapter. Although the indexical link between the documentary image and the reality it depicts is compromised by an approach that involves a level of mediation at various of the filmmaking process, the presentation of numerous testimonial accounts in the three films discussed in this chapter offer a plurality of perspectives that contest the homogeneity that informs Germany's memory of the Nazi period. The individuals who provide these testimonies are, to some degree, constituent parts of a German wartime experience that is defined as plural. In contrast to the feature film, the depiction of a multi-faceted reality through the presentation of numerous testimonial accounts therefore offers a more diverse take on the past that, consequently, challenges an articulation of the Nazi period on the reductive basis of victim or perpetrator narratives.

4.2 The Persistence of Victimhood? The German as Victim in *Blind Spot: Hitler's Secretary* and *The Red Orchestra*

The contention that the German wartime experience involved individual behaviour that can be defined on the basis of both perpetration and victimhood contrasts with traditional cinematic depictions of the Nazi period in which these positions are presented as mutually exclusive. As discussed in Chapter Two, German films produced in both East and West Germany repeatedly presented a shifting of responsibility for the crimes committed by the Third Reich from 'normal' Germans to Hitler and his henchmen. Furthermore, the subsequent separation is underlined by the latter's suffering as a consequence of actions undertaken by the former. Reflective of the post-millennium shift towards German suffering described above, these tropes subsequently re-emerge in a number of films made since

the turn of the century. For example, Oliver Hirschbiegel's *Downfall* (*Der Untergang*, 2004) presents both Berlin's citizenry and Germany's regular armed forces as victims of Hitler's increasingly desperate and delusional attempts to defend the city against the approaching Soviet army. In addition, the romance between a British pilot and a German nurse in Roland Suso Richter's *Dresden* (2006) is played out against the backdrop of the intensive bombing of the city carried out by Allied forces towards the end of the Second World War, whilst Wolfgang Panzer's remake of Bernard Wicki's *The Bridge* (*Die Brücke*, 2008) preserves the theme of children recruited as soldiers by a callous Nazi leadership and left to defend a bridge against the advancing American army.[2]

In focusing on a member of Hitler's personal staff who was with him during his final days in the *Führerbunker*, *Blind Spot* promises to offer an insight into both the administrative function of the Nazi regime, and, more importantly with regards to the question of a wider involvement in Nazi crimes, the behaviour of the individual German citizen under National Socialism. Brought to public attention by Eichmann's trial in 1961, the prominence of bureaucratic organisation and the Nazi careerist who played a key role in the persecution of the Jews raised questions about previously marginalised individuals and their participation in the extermination process. In moving beyond the laying of blame for the crimes committed by the Third Reich at the feet of Hitler and the Nazi elite, the focus on Hitler's secretary in Heller and Schmiderer's film contributes to the broadening of the traditional remit of those portrayed as Nazi perpetrators. As a consequence, Traudl

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[2] The theme of children as victims is central to a number of other German films produced during this decade. In addition to the presentation of a misguided member of the Hitler Youth attempting to defend Berlin against the Russians in Hirschbiegel's *Downfall*, Dennis Gansel's *Before the Fall* (*Napola - Elite für den Führer*, 2004) tells the story of a young German boy who is seduced by the promise of a career in boxing at an elite Nazi school, whilst his later film, *The Wave* (*Die Welle*, 2008), depicts a group of college students who fall victim to the appeal of fascist ideals during a class experiment.

Junge's previously peripheral position as Hitler's secretary[3] is re-evaluated. The re-evaluation of individuals previously thought to be peripheral with regards to Nazi crimes represents a significant shift from the hierarchical structure of blame described by Mary Fulbrook (2007, p. 60), which locates Hitler and his henchmen at the top, and civil servants at bottom. Devised in West Germany in order to support the rebuilding process, the exoneration of the vast majority of the German population resulted in a hierarchy that continued to have currency throughout the post-war period.

The expectation that Junge's testimony will offer a greater understanding of the role played by members of the wider public in Nazi crimes is informed by the post-1990s recognition and acceptance of Germany's guilt discussed above. In a similar vein to the exhibitions organised by the Hamburg Institute for Social Research, which sought to demonstrate the participation of Wehrmacht soldiers in crimes committed on the eastern front, *Blind Spot*'s examination of Junge's role within the Nazi administrative system therefore has the potential to reinforce this focus on the wider involvement of the German population in Nazi crimes. This potential is underlined by the film's aesthetic approach. Composed entirely of a series of talking-head interviews, all of which focus on Junge herself, *Blind Spot* contrasts the use of medium shots during scenes in which she describes mundane details such as her early family life and arrival in Berlin, with the close-ups used as she discusses Hitler's political aims and her time with him the *Führerbunker*. During the film's opening sequence, for example, the camera switches from extreme close-ups of Junge expressing guilt at her apparent ignorance regarding the plight of the Jewish people, to medium shots of her describing her apolitical upbringing, before switching back to a tighter frame as she describes her later life in Berlin and early exchanges with Hitler. Furthermore, the creation of a confessional tone through a combination of static camera and the

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[3] During the film's final sequence, an inter-title states that after the war Junge was exonerated as a so-called "juvenile fellow traveller" and subsequently granted juvenile amnesty by Germany's denazification commission.

omission of the interviewer's questions and prompts, underlines the film's potential to offer an insight into wider German involvement in Nazi crimes. Lending her account a spontaneity that suggests a frankness and honesty, the authenticity of Junge's testimony is therefore reinforced via an editing process that closes the gap between the filmic text and the reality it seeks to represent.

However, this potential is nullified by Junge's positioning of herself as another casualty of Hitler's regime.[4] In addition to the description of her upbringing as apolitical, Junge's contention that she originally moved to Berlin to become a dancer, and only took the job as Hitler's secretary out of curiosity, works to distance herself from not only the Third Reich, but politics in general. Furthermore, despite believing her position as secretary would allow her to be privy to sensitive information, Junge argues that she was shielded from details regarding the political aims of National Socialism. Her close proximity to Hitler is therefore presented as the central component separating herself from the Nazi elite – the 'blind spot' of the film's title thus referring to the denial of access to information regarding the political manoeuvrings of the regime. Junge's separation from the Nazi elite is underlined by her framing of the personal relationship between Hitler and herself with the argument that he influenced the very conscience of German society. This sentiment, which is expressed during the film's pre-credit sequence, is repeated towards its conclusion when she describes those left in the bunker following Hitler's suicide as "lifeless puppets". The suggestion that the German people were unable to function without the controlling hand of the 'puppet master' Hitler is again reinforced through the film's aesthetics. Whereas the employment of a static camera suggests Junge's inability to move without Hitler's guiding hand, the tight framing conveys her entrapment within the Nazi regime itself.

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[4] In its dramatization of Junge's testimony, *Downfall* elevates the victim status of the individual to a national level through the foregrounding of the German public as victims of Hitler's despotic war.

Junge's foregrounding of personal victimhood is reinforced by the overall structure of *Blind Spot.* The main body of Junge's testimonial account is framed by both an opening close-up depicting her watching an earlier VHS recording of herself explaining the reasons for her decision to work for the Nazi administration, a technique that is used again during the film's final scene in which she retrospectively acknowledges her personal responsibility. This construction of a 'film within a film' locates Junge at a temporal distance from the historical events she describes during her testimony. Aligned with the film's audience (as opposed to its onscreen narrator) whose knowledge of the crimes committed by Hitler's regime was acquired during the post-war years, Junge's subsequent separation from the historical events she describes negates the issue of her own agency and, thus, the responsibility for her actions. This distancing is emphasised by an alteration in the film's visual and audio aspects. As the film cuts from the main body of Junge's testimonial account to the framing scenes at the beginning and conclusion of the film, there is a change in both audio levels and the visual media used to capture onscreen events, whilst Junge's switch from the red cardigan to a white jumper overtly indicates this transition.

Whereas the description of Junge's distancing of herself from Hitler and his inner-circle signifies her separation from the actual perpetrators of Nazi genocide, the construction of a 'film within a film' suggests her separation from the historical period itself. Indeed, Junge describes her reception of information pertaining to the persecution of the Jews as a shock, stating that it led her to retrospectively question her association with Hitler and his regime. This examination of her previous actions is compounded by her description towards the end of *Blind Spot* of her encounter with the memorial dedicated to Sophie Scholl during the post-war years. Faced with a symbol of active resistance who was born in the same year as she was, Junge concedes that she could no longer blame her association with the Nazi regime on the naivety of her youth. Rather than offering any form of chastisement, however, this retrospective act of repentance serves to

reinforce her separation from Hitler and his inner circle. In basing her eventual acknowledgement of guilt on the acquisition of information during the post-war years, her contemporary position of knowledge is thus presented as something separate from the ignorant young woman she describes in the main body of her testimony. As with other contemporary films such as *Downfall* and *The Bridge*, *Blind Spot* is therefore illustrative of the continued employment of the familiar trope of separating the 'actual' perpetrators from 'normal' Germans.

With regards to Germany's public memory of the Nazi period, Junge's foregrounding of her victim status locates Heller and Schmiderer's film in the context of the post-millennial re-emergence of narratives expressing the country's suffering and loss during the Second World War. Furthermore, the interpretation of Junge's testimonial account as a negation of personal responsibility is the result of a post-1990s focus on Germany's participation in the crimes committed by the Third Reich. With regards to the latter, Junge's testimonial account mirrors the avoidance of those in prominent positions during the early decades of West Germany's existence, who, as Mary Fulbrook argues:

> [H]ad a vested interest, at the very least, in portraying Hitler as an evil madman who had nearly single-handedly taken over an innocent country and had done dark things which only a tiny circle of close henchmen had known about. Perhaps the most insidious response was a downplaying of their role in Hitler's state, combined with bitter criticism of those who had even raised these embarrassing vestiges of a tainted past (2007, p. 64-5).

Illustrative of the shifts in focus that define Germany's engagement with the Nazi period since reunification, the contrasting interpretations of Junge's testimony above therefore indicate the pervasive influence of the victim/perpetrator binary in public discourses surrounding this historical period.

Acting as a counterweight to the choices she made during the Nazi period, Junge's encounter with the monument dedicated to

Sophie Scholl raises questions about not only her involvement in the Nazi regime, but also the role of the wider German population in general. How many German citizens were involved in the Nazi regime, and to what degree? Were they aware that their actions contributed to the death of millions? Did they avoid displays of support for Hitler, and, if so, how? How many actively resisted and how many conformed? More importantly, what was involved in these two activities – how can they be defined? These questions are also raised in Stefan Roloff's documentary film, *The Red Orchestra*, which focuses on the various clandestine activities of a resistance group from which the film takes its title. Through a series of talking-head interviews with both surviving members and the families of those who were executed by the Nazis for their involvement in political resistance, Roloff's film traces a trajectory from the group's inception through to the events that led to their capture and imprisonment. In addition to charting the brutal oppression of this resistance group, a process supported by the use of photographs of the deceased that are accompanied by captions stating their names and the dates on which they were executed, the main aim of the film is to bring first-hand accounts to bear on the discrediting of the Red Orchestra as communist sympathisers and spies. Initiated by the Nazi regime to conceal the killing of ordinary people who opposed Hitler's rule, this myth, which, as the pre-credit intertitles state, has been upheld by the historical record, is challenged during the film's opening scenes. Testimonial accounts describe the group as a socially and politically diverse collective united by the common aim of overthrowing the Nazi regime. Furthermore, testimony recounting the group's link to the American – as well as Soviet – embassy reinforces the film's aim.

The Red Orchestra's attempt to overthrow the Third Reich is illustrative of a traditional focus in Germany on examples of wholesale challenges towards the Nazi regime in the discourses about the act of resistance. In surveying the memory of resistance in post-war Germany, Niven (2002, p. 63) states that in their search for a positive legacy of the Nazi past East and West German states focused on

examples of communist and military resistance respectively. With regards to the German Democratic Republic, the desire to inflate the importance of communist resistance during the Nazi era resulted in the continued misrepresentation of organisations such as the Red Orchestra (Niven, 2002, p. 65). The portrayal of this resistance group as Soviet agents represents a perpetuation of the Nazi myth linking its activities with communism[5] – a link between socialist ideals and communist resistance that, Niven (2002, p. 69) argues, was maintained until the fall of the Berlin Wall. The politicisation of resistance discourse can also be seen in West Germany where, despite increasing criticism regarding collaboration with the Nazi regime, Claus von Stauffenberg and the so-called 20th July conspirators represented the ultimate expression of resistance (Niven, 2002, p. 72-3).

These descriptions of wholesale challenges towards Hitler's regime represent an, to quote historian Martin Broszat (1991, p. 25), "exclusive definition of resistance focusing only upon exceptional cases of fundamental and active opposition [that] has produced an idealized and undifferentiated picture of German resistance". As a consequence of celebrating rare acts of heroism performed by resistance groups such as the 20th July conspirators and the Red Orchestra, this definition fails to account for the oppressive social conditions that pervaded German life under National Socialism. For historian Detlev Peukert, the everyday demand placed upon the German citizen to demonstrate an adherence to Nazi ideals was such that:

> The need for self-control, for caution vis-à-vis
> one's surroundings and for a calculated weighing
> of simulated loyalty and sincere aversion
> remained strong that even in the ultimate refuges
> of private life a truly autonomous realm, in which
> one could still be oneself, was not achievable
> (Peukert, 1987, p. 239).

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[5] The continued use of this fabricated link for propaganda purposes during the Cold War also applies to West Germany, where, as Roloff's film explains, the Red Orchestra were seen as a potential threat to western security.

Although the resistance activities of the Red Orchestra conform to Brozat's definition of "fundamental and active opposition", the testimonial accounts presented in Roloff's film also express examples of what the historian has termed '*Resistenz*'. Introduced as an attempt to understand the effects of nonconformity on the Nazi regime's ability to penetrate and control German society in its entirety, this term emerged from Broszat's 'Bavaria Project' (Kershaw, 2000 p, 192-4).[6] Focusing on the history of everyday life in the Bavaria during the Nazi era, historians from the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich attempted to refine the act of German resistance through shifting the emphasis from the traditional focus on ethical motivation and organisational framework to various acts of nonconformity as a reaction to the impact of the Nazi regime on every aspect of daily life (Kershaw, 2000 p, 192). Representative of a historiographical approach known as *Alltagsgeschichte* (or, the history of everyday life) the 'Bavaria Project' posited a definition of opposition towards Hitler's regime that moved beyond that defined by fundamental resistance, as historian Ian Kershaw describes:

> Instead of dealing in images of black and white, resistance was portrayed in shades of grey; as a part of the everyday reality of trying to adjust to, and cope with, life in a regime impinging on practically all aspects of daily existence, posing a total claim on society, but – as a direct consequence – meeting numerous blockages and restrictions in its attempt to make good on this claim (Kershaw, 2000, p. 192-3).

Despite criticism that it both trivialises active opposition and expands the act of resistance to anything short of positive enthusiasm for the Nazi regime (Kershaw, 2000, p. 205), the concept of *Resistenz* is a useful tool in attempting to comprehend the complex relationship

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[6] For Kershaw (2000, p. 196), the act of resistance as defined by the 'Bavaria Project' incorporates members of the wider German public whose various forms of social behaviour were politicised and criminalised because of the perceived threat they posed to the Nazi state.

between the individual and the Nazi state. Indeed, Brozat's concept highlights the necessity for the individual to conform in order to function in the face of the oppressive social structures implemented by the Third Reich. The balance between conforming to the pressures of life under National Socialism and resisting its invasive structures are implied in the testimonial accounts presented in *The Red Orchestra*. It is this façade of conformity that provides the cover for a range of oppositional strategies undertaken by this resistance group. For example, testimony describing activities such as the distribution of politically subversive pamphlets, the disruption of Nazi events, and correspondences with French prisoners of war all required a level of conformity due to the fact that such acts took place under the cover of daily life. The idea that conformity provided a cover for clandestine activities is further suggested though descriptions of founding member Harro Schulze-Boysen's status as a Wehrmacht officer who grew disillusioned with the ideals of Hitler's regime.[7]

In addition, the conformity of the wider German population is depicted through the use of archival footage of various Nazi rallies. During the film's pre-credit sequence, for example, a long-shot captures a mass of people displaying adulation towards a figure out of shot in the upper left corner of the frame. This short piece of footage is played forward and then reversed in order to create a continuous loop that subsequently allows the camera to zoom in and emphasise the adulation being expressed by various individuals in the crowd.[8] Although Roloff's manipulation of this propaganda footage draws attention to the fact that meaning is produced as a result of various choices made during the filmmaking process, a distortion of the facts

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[7] Roloff's film draws parallels with the 20th July conspirators, here. Whilst Wehrmacht officer Schulze-Boysen's disenfranchisement with the Nazi regime mirrors Claus Von Stauffenberg, both conformed to the demands of the Nazi regime in order to execute their respective resistance activities. As Niven (2002, p. 72) highlights in his discussion of the centrality of Stauffenberg in the memory of German resistance in West Germany, it took this group until 1944 to make an attempt on Hitler's life – a fact that implies a certain adherence to the ideals of National Socialism.

[8] The superimposition of further footage depicting a burning Synagogue over the fading images of the rally during the conclusion of the pre-credit sequence suggests a link from displays of mass support for the Nazi party to its persecution of the Jews.

that points to the film's central aim of challenging the fabricated link between the Red Orchestra and communism, this sequence also suggests a conformity that informed the daily life under National Socialism. Whereas close-ups of individual figures displaying adulation for an out of frame figure presumed to be Hitler draw attention to the mediation involved in mass displays of conformity, the film's manipulation of this archival footage suggests that the act of conformity is a performance through drawing attention to the performative aspect of its representation.

The depiction of children performing the Nazi salute in *The Red Orchestra* is particularly effective in expressing the performative aspect of such representations. During an early sequence in the film, for example, propaganda footage depicting a throng of people enthusiastically responding to one of Hitler's public speeches is followed by a photograph of children in their Hitler Youth uniform performing the Nazi salute. Subsequent close-ups of each child's salute and a photograph of Hitler's outstretched arm in reciprocation suggests the apparent agreement between Führer and Germans of all ages. However, such acts of conformity are subsequently undermined by a surviving member of the Red Orchestra, Helmut Roloff, who concludes this sequence by describing the Nazi salute as a meaningless gesture that failed to offer any insight into the political motivations of the individual who performed it. The juxtaposing of imagery depicting an acknowledgement of Hitler's position of power with testimony expressing the contrary therefore challenges the original intent of propaganda footage through draining the Nazi salute of its significance.

For Peukert (1987, p. 188), mass rituals and organisations, such as those depicted in *The Red Orchestra*, gave National Socialism a dynamic thrust that generated manic and intoxicated moods for shorter and shorter periods before the reality of everyday life reasserted itself. The only way to compensate for the lack of substance that informed *Volksgemeinschaft* – the concept of a "people's community" that was central to the Nazi racial ideal of a pure

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Germanic race – was to produce passive loyalty, which, subsequently, was secured by a mass media that offered entertainment and distraction (Peukert, 1987, p. 188). Behind these images lay the requirement to conform to the demands of Nazi society in order to survive. Testimony from Hartmut Schulze-Boysen (Harro's brother), in which he states that the majority of Germans acted out of fear towards the regime following purges of those who opposed its authority, therefore highlights the central motivating factor behind the performance of conformity. Schulze-Boysen's account of the paranoia within German society – which is supported by a photograph of a busy street in which a Gestapo officer can be seen loitering in the background – reinforces this pervading sense of oppression. In addition, descriptions of the torture and psychological tricks employed by the Gestapo during the interrogation of members of the Red Orchestra towards the conclusion of the film further illustrates the brutality of Hitler's regime. As Peukert argues, Nazi terror made it dangerous for people not to greet public displays by the regime with anything less than adulation (1987, p. 49).[9]

With regards to the shifts that inform Germany's public memory of the Nazi period since its reunification, the idea that it was necessary to conform to the ideals of National Socialism in order to survive – and, in the case of organisations such as the Red Orchestra, resist – foregrounds a complex image of life under National Socialism that challenges a homogenous discourse in which the German wartime experience is defined exclusively in terms of either guilt or victimhood. The presentation of a variety of personal histories in *The Red Orchestra* therefore foregrounds a plurality with regards to this wartime experience via descriptions of individual behaviour that incorporates actions that can be interpreted on the basis of either of these opposing positions. Whereas conformity to Nazi ideals can be construed as support for Hitler's regime and all that was done in its name, both the

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[9] Conversely, the inability of Germans to publically express opposition towards Hitler offers (at least indirectly) an exoneration of those who chose to conform but did nothing to contest the aims of the Third Reich.

acts of resistance carried out by the Red Orchestra, and, more importantly, the subsequent torture and murder of its members by the Gestapo, are illustrative of victimhood. In highlighting the presence of an involvement in the crimes committed by the Third Reich (albeit indirectly) and rejection of its ideals in the daily actions of the German citizen, Roloff's film undermines the traditional use of the victim/perpetrator binary through positing the idea that the individual's wartime experience incorporated a number of actions that fell between these two extremes.

In presenting examples of Brozsat's concept of *Resistenz*, most notably in its call for German citizens to resist Nazi rule by simply doing "the opposite of that which the current regime demands" in its first pamphlet[10], the suggestion that it is necessary to conform in order to survive in *The Red Orchestra* prompts a re-evaluation of Traudl Junge's testimony. Although raising questions about the involvement of the wider public in Nazi crimes, Junge's decision to accept the position of Hitler's secretary can be seen as an act of conformity in the context of the invasive and totalitarian structures that informed German society described above. Junge's description of a multifaceted wartime experience therefore points to the contradictions that informed life under the National Socialism. Despite presenting herself as yet another casualty of Hitler's regime, Junge's testimony is representative of the passivity and co-operation in the face of oppression that, as Kershaw (2000, p. 208) states "were the most human of responses in such a situation".

The deliberations relating to both resistance and conformity therefore allow for another interpretation of *Blind Spot*. Illustrative of a memory culture informed by a desire to either locate the crimes of the

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[10] Surviving member Eva Roloff's aside that in response to the enquiry about the whereabouts of her brother during a Gestapo raid on her family home she should have replied "am I my brother's keeper?" in an interview towards the end of the film is a further example of *Resistenz*. Furthermore, the fact that her sarcastic remark brings a smile to the face of her husband and fellow member, Helmut, who, as a camera pan from right to left reveals, is also present during the interview, offers a pertinent insight into the importance of everyday acts of opposition such as simply sharing a joke at the regime's expense.

Third Reich at the heart of the Berlin Republic or foreground German victimhood, the latter interprets Junge's testimony on the basis of guilt or innocence. This interpretation forces Junge's account of her wartime experience to conform to a pre-established framework based on a perpetrator/victim binary that expresses a tendency to see those who lived under National Socialism as at best complicit, and, at worst, guilty of participation in Nazi crimes.[11] Consequently, it ignores the possibility that in its expression of conformity, Junge's testimonial account is representative of one of a number of German wartime experiences rather than attempting to diminish her involvement in a criminal organisation responsible for the murder of millions.

Invariably, literature on the debates surrounding German memory sees the position of the (German) 'victim' as applicable to those involved in historical events such as carpet bombings, expulsions from former Nazi territories in the east, and military conflict. They ignore the victim status of those who had to conform to social conditions informed by an invasive regime in order to survive. In discussing the tension between public and private discourse, and how a focus on the former leads to a perception of the past based on anguish and shame that ultimately denies issues of personal loss a space within the public sphere of West Germany, Fulbrook states that "[w]henever the sufferings of Germans themselves were raised, it was difficult for them to be respected as genuine without retort that Germans had, after all, brought it upon themselves" (2007, p. 167). Nowhere is this sentiment more applicable than in relation to those who conformed to the ideals and values of National Socialism in order to survive. With regards to *Blind Spot*, the film's title therefore not only refers to the ignorance of Junge regarding Nazi crimes despite her

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[11] This represents an overemphasis of Nazi power and its ability to penetrate every aspect of social behaviour. Mirroring the Nazi regime's desire for complete control of its citizenry, such interpretations parallel the continued tendency to interpret imagery of rallies, public speeches, and other mass events as an illustration of absolute support within the Third Reich. The work of historians such as Ian Kershaw has done much to dispel this myth through exposing the arbitrary functioning of Hitler's regime. Therefore, footage such as that from the Nuremberg rallies is exposed and seen for its original propaganda purposes – an intent that continues to inform contemporary interpretations.

position as Hitler's secretary, it also suggests a blind spot in a contemporary public memory that ignores the experiences of the individual trying to adapt to the demands of life under the Nazi regime. If, as Assmann (2006, p.190) argues, the suffering of Germans who experienced bombings, expulsion, battlefield conflict, etc. have only recently gained recognition in public memory, then those forced to conform to the demands of National Socialism will have to wait longer for wider acknowledgment of their experiences.

As with *The Red Orchestra*, the presentation of individual witness testimony in Heller and Schmiderer's film therefore illustrates the simultaneous existence of conformity and nonconformity in Nazi society. Although the responses of Junge and members of the resistance group to the pressures exerted by National Socialism are very different – whilst Junge's conformity includes examples of her questioning certain aspects of Nazi ideology (both during the Second World War and retrospectively), the resistance activities of the Red Orchestra incorporates a level of conformity on a daily basis in order to resist – the testimonies presented in both films illustrate the complexity of the German wartime experience that an adherence to the victim/perpetrator binary fails to account for. With regards to Germany's public memory of the Nazi period, therefore, Broszat's concept of *Resistenz* offers a more nuanced explanation of this wartime experience than one that is exclusively based on one of these traditional binary positions. The simultaneous onscreen presence of conformity and nonconformity in both films illustrates a plurality that indicates the fact that both perpetrator and victim positions are constitutive of the individual wartime experience.

4.3 The Wehrmacht as a Battleground: The Contested Past in *The Unknown Soldier*

Whereas the contradictions and complexities informing German wartime experiences are indicated in both *Blind Spot* and *The Red*

Orchestra via an understanding of the pressures exerted by Hitler's regime upon the individual, the juxtaposition of evidence pertaining to the Wehrmacht's involvement Nazi crimes with public narratives expressing the contrary in Michael Verhoeven's *The Unknown Soldier* suggests that the positions of both perpetrator and victim should be accommodated within Germany's public memory of the Nazi period. Although the presentation of perpetrator and victim narratives in Verhoeven's film may be seen as illustrative of the memory contests described during the opening paragraphs of this chapter, their simultaneous onscreen presence indicates the importance of acknowledging both.

Focusing on the two exhibitions organised by the Hamburg Institute for Social Research, Verhoeven's film presents a combination of evidence of Wehrmacht participation in crimes committed on the eastern front, news reports about the opening of the first exhibition, and interviews with both various historians and members of the general public, in an attempt to portray the controversy that greeted their opening. Entitled 'War of Annihilation. Crimes of the Wehrmacht 1941 to 1944', the original exhibition toured Germany from 1995 until 1999. The first exhibition's focus on the treatment of partisans in Serbia, the conduct of the 6th Army as it headed towards Moscow, and the three-year occupation of Ukraine, attempted to show that the war in the Balkans and the Soviet Union was one of annihilation that resulted in the deaths of millions, rather than a conventional conflict between two enemy armies (Niven, 2002, p.144-5). Following a short hiatus, during which some of its content was altered in light of criticisms regarding the incorrect attribution and captioning of some of its imagery, the exhibition resumed its tour of Germany from 2001 till 2004 before moving permanently to the German Historical Museum in Berlin. Under the revised title 'Crimes of the German Wehrmacht: Dimensions of a War of Annihilation 1941-1944', this second exhibition documented six dimensions of the Nazis' military campaign in the east – the genocide perpetrated against Soviet Jews, the mass death of Soviet prisoners of war, starvation as a strategy of war, the war

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against the partisans, and reprisals and executions of hostages – in order to provide evidence of the Wehrmacht's involvement in such crimes (Bradish, 2004, Introduction). Furthermore, in documenting the behaviour of individuals, the second exhibition also sought to demonstrate that the process of annihilation was "characterised by various levels of decision-making and individual responsibility" (Bradish, 2004, Introduction).

The *Wehrmachtsausstellung* – the term commonly used to refer to both exhibitions – is seen as a landmark event with regards to facilitating the German public's acknowledgement and acceptance of responsibility for the Holocaust (Niven, 2006, p. 1-2). Indeed, it is this important contribution that appears to have been the motivation for Verhoeven to make *The Unknown Soldier*. During an interview with Hans-Bernhard Moeller, the filmmaker (2010, p. 6) states that the first exhibition was "too important to be limited to the small audience of the exhibition. Because an exhibition is always in a particular place; then when it ends, it goes on to another town". Furthermore, Verhoeven also states during this interview that only five per cent of the imagery used in his film was taken directly from the exhibitions themselves, with the vast majority resulting from his own research (Moeller, 2010, p. 6). In addition to attempting to expand the findings of the exhibitions beyond their temporal and geographical limits, the inclusion of Verhoeven's own research therefore represents a contribution of further evidence that aligns his film with the central aims of the *Wehrmachtsausstellung*.[12]

This commitment is further illustrated through the inclusion of talking-head interviews with a number of historians whose elaboration of the role played by the Wehrmacht in Nazi crimes provides a wider

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[12] This approach conforms to Verhoeven's unstinting examination of Germany's relationship with the Nazi past that has informed a number of his previous films. For example, the female protagonist of *The Nasty Girl* (*Das schreckliche Mädchen*, 1990) has to overcome a number of social and institutional obstacles to uncover the uncomfortable truth about her Bavarian village during the Nazi period. Furthermore, his later documentary film *Human Failure* (*Menschliches Versagen*, 2008) mirrors the historiographical approach used in *The Unknown Soldier* to present both historical documentation and personal accounts that implicate the wider German population in the expropriation of Jewish property.

context for the re-presentation of photographic and testimonial evidence from the exhibitions themselves. For example, during the film's opening scenes, photographs depicting German soldiers both watching the wider population of Lemberg, Dubno, and Tarnopol herding Jews in town squares with excessive force, and, subsequently, standing next to piles of corpses, are supplemented with descriptions of the Wehrmacht instigating pogroms in order to facilitate the liquidation of the Jewish population in these Ukrainian cities. Rather than being directly responsible for the murder of Jews as photographs of soldiers standing over corpses suggests, explanations from various historians implicate the Wehrmacht through presenting them as overseers who control a series of events that results in the murder of Jews supposedly under the protection of the occupying German Army. This deliberate facilitation of genocide is reinforced by further descriptions of both the Wehrmacht's signing of an agreement with the SS Einsatzgruppen (specialised paramilitary squads responsible for the execution of Jews in Nazi-occupied territories) to support its plans to eliminate the Jewish-Bolshevist ruling class months before 'Operation Barbarossa' commenced, and historian Hannes Heer's (director of the first exhibition) contention that staff officers operating in the field carried detailed demographic information that enabled soldiers to specifically target the Jewish populations of the various locations they encountered.

In addition to further implicating the Wehrmacht through contextualising photographic evidence, Verhoeven undermines claims of the regular army's non-involvement in Nazi crimes through contrasting public opposition to the findings of the exhibitions with contrary explanations provided by historians. For example, during the opening scene of *The Unknown Soldier* the filmmaker interviews various people outside the first exhibition in Munich who attempt to qualify acts of perpetration by stating that soldiers were shot for refusing to carry out orders. This well-worn defence of Wehrmacht behaviour is contradicted by Heer who is depicted explaining to a group of visitors that soldiers who refused to follow order to kill Jews

were not punished, and that this task was simply passed onto another soldier or unit. Similarly, Heer's description of staff officers carrying detailed demographic information in order to specifically target Jewish populations is refuted by prominent right-wing nationalist, Christian Worch, who argues that more civilians would have died if the German armed forces were ordered to kill the wider population of various locations on the eastern front – thus missing the point that soldiers were able to specifically target Jews because of information they had at their disposal. In addition to the employment of editing techniques to contrast these opposing narratives, this juxtaposing of public resistance and evidence to the contrary is reinforced by the film's camerawork. For example, the repeated use of close-ups in the interviews with various historians contrasts with the long-shots used to depict large groups of people expressing opposing points of view. Whereas the tight framing of the historians endows the evidence they present with gravity, the use of wider angled shots in public spaces such as Munich's Marienplatz suggests the subjective fervour of the 'mob' – thus resulting in a hierarchy that locates the historiographical knowledge presented by the former above the passionate resistance of the latter. Indeed, the only member of the public who is afforded the same aesthetic as the historians is a women attending the first exhibition in Munich, who acknowledges her father's participation in the persecution of Jews during his military service.[13] Furthermore, this aesthetic approach is repeated during an interview with former Wehrmacht soldier, Rudolf Mössnerin, who admits to his part in the crimes committed on the eastern front.

The aligning of *The Unknown Soldier* with the narrative of Wehrmacht involvement in Nazi crimes presented by the exhibitions

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[13] During one interview at the beginning of Verhoeven's film, Heer explains that confessions of guilt from former soldiers were an important aspect to the success of the first exhibition. Furthermore, he also states that the donation of family photographs to the second exhibition represented a breaking of the practice of repressing personal memories of the crimes committed. A crucial part of the evidence pertaining to the involvement of Germany's regular army in the crimes committed by the Third Reich, these interviews further align Verhoeven's film with the perpetrator narrative of *Wehrmachtsausstellung*.

therefore locate the film in the context of a discourse that foregrounds the notion of German guilt. In moving beyond a perception of the Holocaust commonly associated with the SS and the camps, Verhoeven's film mirrors the *Wehrmachtsausstellung* in challenging the myth of the Wehrmacht's 'clean hands'. Wolfram Wette (2006, p. 206) states that, unlike the SS who are traditionally perceived as the real culprits for the murder of the Jews, the Wehrmacht's war was one of territorial conquest, and thus the same as many other nations before them.[14] For Wette (2006, p. 195-6), this myth, which was "[d]eveloped and disseminated in the last phase of the war and the immediate post-war period by the Wehrmacht leaders themselves", owes its lasting influence to public perceptions of the Second World War and a history of Germany's engagement with the Nazi period in which a "politics of amnesty" played a central role in the Federal Republic. The subsequent need for a rebuilding of West Germany's armed forces was facilitated by public declarations from both General Eisenhower and Chancellor Konrad Adenauer in 1951, in which both men absolved the Wehrmacht of responsibility with regards to the crimes committed by the Third Reich (Wette, 2006, p. 236). The inclusion of both Adenauer's 1951 statement to the lower house of the West German parliament during the opening sequence of *The Unknown Soldier*, in which he argued that Wehrmacht involvement took place on such an insignificant scale that it does not "tarnish the honour of the former German Armed Forces", and television news items reporting on the political divisions that greeted the opening of the first exhibition in Munich, illustrates the enduring influence of this myth with regards to post-war German society.

In addition to Allied bombing raids[15], the rape of German women by Soviet forces, and expulsions from former Nazi territories in

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[14] The prominent position of Wehrmacht officer Claus von Stauffenberg and the other 20th July conspirators in Germany's public memory of the Nazi period in the Federal Republic can be seen to contribute to the continuing influence of this myth.

[15] For Bill Niven (2006, p. 13-15), a focus on the memory of German suffering and loss as a result of such acts enhances a claim to shared victimhood that implies that the fate of Germans at hands of the Allies was as terrible as that of Jews at hands of Nazis – thus erasing the essential differences between these two groups.

Eastern Europe, the massive losses suffered by Germany on the eastern front[16] have traditionally been evoked in discourses surrounding the country's suffering and loss during the Second World War. It is this traditional position that is undermined by the presentation – and re-presentation – of evidence pertaining to Wehrmacht involvement in *The Unknown Soldier*. In constituting a focal point for the debate surrounding perceptions of German behaviour during the Nazi period, the traditional status of Germany's regular army as a symbol of German suffering during the Second World War[17] subsequently shifts in light of this perpetrator narrative. However, the inclusion of public opposition in Verhoeven's film can be seen to destabilise this narrative. During the filmmaker's interviews with members of the public outside the first exhibition at the beginning of the film, a former Infantryman states that the common foot soldier did not partake in crimes committed on the eastern front.

Despite being employed as a foil to the reinforcing of evidence pertaining to the Wehrmacht's involvement in Nazi crimes, the expression of nonparticipation in Verhoeven's film therefore undermines the sweeping perpetrator narrative being posited by the *Wehrmachtsausstellung*. This challenge is reinforced by Verhoeven's inclusion of a number of qualifications by the organisers of the exhibitions themselves. During the opening of the first exhibition at Munich's City Hall, for example, Heer qualifies the evidence of Wehrmacht involvement with the statement:

> If a former Third Reich soldier claims he knew
> nothing about Jews being executed, and is asked
> when he arrived on the eastern front, and he
> says: "In November 43" it can be assumed he
> saw no Jews. They were gone.

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[16] Although the exact figures are disputed, estimates regarding Germany's military dead during the Second World War range from 4.3 million to 5.3 million.

[17] As discussed above, this separation is central to the theme of German victimhood presented in the film *Downfall*. Furthermore, the survey of German cinema undertaken in Chapter Two highlights the presence of this trope in a number of films produced in the Federal Republic during the 1950s, which foreshadow the use of the Wehrmacht as a symbol of German victimhood in contemporary cinema.

As an expression of the efficiency and devastation wrought by Wehrmacht soldiers on the Jewish populations of the various locations they encountered during their march towards Moscow, this statement implicates those fighting on the eastern front before 1943 in such crimes. However, it also suggests that those soldiers who arrived on the front after this date were not involved in crimes committed against Jews. Whilst not absolving them of involvement in crimes against Russian soldiers and non-Jewish civilians, this qualification subsequently undermines the narrative of Wehrmacht participation that is foregrounded by the exhibitions. This suggestion of non-participation is of course also implied in Heer's rebuff to the well-worn narrative that soldiers refusing to carry out orders to kill Jews were subsequently shot as punishment. If those who refused to shoot were simply replaced by more willing individuals, then the nonparticipation of the former means that they are innocent. The former Infantryman's statement that the common foot soldier was not involved in crimes committed on the eastern front therefore represents a qualification of the narrative of involvement provided by both exhibitions rather than a reinforcement of the Wehrmacht myth.

Verhoeven's former school friend, Martin Jordan, mentions the reluctant conscripted soldier in his emotional defence of his father's memory during a section of *The Unknown Soldier* entitled 'Encounter with a Schoolmate', which represents another qualification that undermines the sweeping perpetrator narrative presented by the exhibitions. Jordan argues that the first exhibition dishonours the name of those soldiers who fought and died on the eastern front. Describing the memory of his father, who lost his life during the military campaign, Jordan states that the former was not a Nazi who volunteered for military service, but was conscripted to fight against his will. The emotion of Jordan's defence is reinforced by the switch in location during his interview with Verhoeven. This section opens with a depiction of Jordan in a public setting amongst far-right protesters who prevent their members from speaking to the filmmaker (thus the engagement between the two former school friends contrasts with this

censorship). The move to an empty café in the subsequent scene indicates a managing of the emotional situation through the removal of the subject from the public arena. Furthermore, this emotion is foregrounded through the use of both close-ups and extreme close-ups to capture Jordan's glazed eyes and quivering lip as he denounces the exhibition's apparent indiscrimination against those soldiers who lost their lives during the Second Wold War. In addition, Jordan's presentation of photographs depicting his father both before and during the war, and his reading of a letter sent from the front to his mother expressing a concern for his son and condemnation of the Nazi regime for bringing war to Germany, mirrors the use of both imagery as evidence of Wehrmacht perpetration in the exhibitions and the documentation provided by various historians to support accusations of involvement.

The emotional defence of former comrades and lost family members in light of the perpetrator narrative presented by the *Wehrmachtsausstellung* demonstrates that the established perception of the Wehrmacht as honourable and innocent remains embedded in the German consciousness. For Wette, the enduring presence of this perception is related to the large number of German citizens who served in the regular forces during the Nazi period:

> [a]nyone trying to assess how impressions of the Wehrmacht could have been formed in the war years must be aware that in the decade between 1935 and 1945, approximately 20 million people served in its ranks. […] one must recognise that sheer numbers had given it the character of a "people's army". A father or son from virtually every German family had been drafted into the Wehrmacht and become a cog in its machinery, and this fact was significant in psychological terms. (2006, p. 202)

Furthermore, Wette argues (2006, p. 222), the subsequent psychological connection was not compromised by the outcomes of the Nuremburg trials during the immediate post-war years. As a consequence, evidence presented in the exhibitions of the regular

army's involvement in Nazi crimes therefore not only undermines the myth of the Wehrmacht's 'clean hands', it also questions the wider German population's involvement. Arguing that a central aim of the first exhibition was to challenge this myth, Aleida Assmann (2006, p. 195) states that its director, Hannes Heer, wanted to demonstrate that Germany's regular armed forces – and, by extension, the wider male population involved in it – were responsible for crimes committed on the eastern front.[18] Rejecting discourses that seek to diminish this responsibility by locating such crimes in contexts of either Hitler's inner circle or modern industrial and administrative structures, Heer's attempt to implicate Germany's regular army in events surrounding the Holocaust represents an indiscriminate expansion of involvement, and, therefore, responsibility. This expansion incorporates the wider German public, who are subsequently held responsible, to some degree, for their participation in Nazi crimes – whether they were directly involved, as on the eastern front, or having witnessed acts of persecution and both failed to intervene at the time or subsequently denied all knowledge.

In juxtaposing both qualifications and denials of participation with narratives of Wehrmacht involvement, Verhoeven's film suggests that whilst crimes against Jews were undoubtedly committed by Germany's regular army, not everyone was involved. Rather than acting as a foil to the film's re-presentation of the exhibitions' perpetrator narrative, the counter-narratives offered by members of the general public are subsequently given more weight. Public opposition to the findings of the exhibitions therefore does not equate to a denial of the documental and photographic evidence on show. Rather, it expresses both a concern about an exclusive focus on acts of perpetration, and, more importantly, the wider impact of the exhibitions' findings on perceptions of the German population during

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[18] The introduction of the brochure for the revised second exhibition reiterates this aim through stating that one of the six dimensions of the Wehrmacht's war of annihilation the exhibition documents is the "genocide perpetrated against Soviet Jews" (Bradish, 2004, p. 3).

the Second World War. This contributes further to the general tendency toward a more complex and pluralised representation of roles played by Germans during the Nazi period. The focus on both the treatment of those under Wehrmacht control during the occupation in order to show that the war in the east was one of annihilation in 'War of Annihilation. Crimes of the Wehrmacht 1941 to 1944' and personal responsibility in 'Crimes of the German Wehrmacht: Dimensions of a War of Annihilation 1941-1944' can therefore be seen to constitute a perpetrator narrative that has the potential to become representational with regards to the German wartime experience, rather than simply one narrative amongst the many. Accusations of perpetration by the Wehrmacht are subsequently rendered too general – as the elderly man at the beginning of Verhoeven's film states, the title of the first exhibition should read "Parts of the German Army", not *the* German army.

With regards to the debates surrounding Germany's public memory of the Nazi period, narratives of nonparticipation in *The Unknown Soldier* indicate the continued use of the Wehrmacht myth in contemporary narratives of German victimhood. However, the presentation of both narratives pertaining to Wehrmacht perpetration and subsequent public opposition indicates the diversity and complexity that informs the German wartime experience. With regards to Germany's public memory of the Second World War, the simultaneous onscreen presence of these opposing narratives can be seen to indicate the continued existence of both. Consequently, in Verhoeven's film the perpetrator narrative becomes one among many – thus suggesting a shift from the homogeneity of a grand narrative based on either perpetration or victimhood to a heterogeneous perspective that incorporates both.

A number of scholars see Martin Walser's acceptance speech following his award of the 1998 Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in Frankfurt as a turning point with regards to the recognition of German suffering during the Second World War. Bill Niven (2006, p. 10-11) argues that Walser's speech, which, as an expression of the

need to scale down a focus on Nazism that informed the recognition and acceptance of German involvement in crimes against Jews throughout the 1990s, sought to cast today's Germans as victims of constant reminders of German historical guilt by left-wing or liberal intellectuals determined to check shifts towards nationalism rather than past events themselves. For many Germans, this triggered the feeling that they were victims of a memory politics that barred them from recalling their own victim status (Niven, 2006, p. 11). Likewise, for Helmut Schmitz (2007, p. 4), public support for Walser's objection to what he saw as politically correct forms of commemoration is illustrative of the fact that many Germans felt excluded from an official memory culture that failed to account for their personal experiences.

Aleida Assmann (2006, p. 196) argues that this exclusion is the result of a shift towards the public sphere. Although divergent memories and group experiences in any society exist side by side without creating conflict, their elevation to the level of public discourse raises questions of how to integrate divergent and thus contradictory memories (Assmann, 2006, p. 196). For Assmann (2006, p. 197), this impasse can be overcome through a more complex understanding of the structure of memory in which a number of memories can coexist within a normative frame of generally accepted validity. This would involve a hierarchical ordering of heterogeneous memories, which is integrated within a normative framework that is itself based on a recognition and acceptance of responsibility for atrocities committed by the Nazi regime, as Assmann explains:

> German national memory, as established in the 1960s and reconfirmed in the 1980s, is the Holocaust, the recognition and working-through of German guilt, involving the assumption of historical responsibility for the atrocities of the Nazi-regime. This is the normative framework into which all the other memories have to be integrated [...] One memory does not have to challenge and eliminate the other, as long [as] they are not in a competition for the master-narrative (Assmann, 2006, p. 198).

Heterogeneous memories that exist side by side at an individual and familial level can therefore do so at the national level if they are integrated and contained within a normative framework that enables suffering and guilt to co-exist whilst also resulting in greater flexibility with regards to memory at a social level (Assmann, 2006, p. 197-9).

This accommodation of divergent memories is illustrated through the simultaneous on-screen presence of victim and perpetrator narratives in *The Unknown Soldier*. Whereas the film's re-presentation of the exhibitions' evidence pertaining to Wehrmacht involvement in Nazi crimes is representative of a public narrative that foregrounds German perpetration, the various testimonies expressing nonparticipation bring private memories of victimhood to bear on the discourse surrounding Germany's public memory of the Second World War. The entry of the private into the public sphere is most overtly illustrated through the film's focus on Martin Jordan. His defence of his father's memory in the face of what he describes as the "slanderous accusations" made by the first exhibition results in a further pluralisation of the Wehrmacht soldier's experience. For Assmann (2006, p.200), as long as the normative framework remains in place, memory contests subsequently contribute to a greater diversification and complexity with regards to German memory. Therefore, although the switch from public place to quiet cafe during Verhoeven's interview with his former school friend appears to reinforce the division between public and private, the linking of these two settings indicates the co-existence of both in discussions surrounding Germany's public memory of the Second World War.[19] Despite Niven's (2006, p. 20) lamentation that post-millennium explosion of the memory of German victimhood on the public stage represents a victory of an uncritical family memory usually associated with German loss and suffering over state efforts to inform and educate the wider population about acts of perpetration, therefore, Verhoeven's film suggests that the presence of

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[19] This insight can be extended to Verhoeven's film itself, which, in the process of its viewing, brings the idea of a greater diversification and complexity with regards to German memory to the fore of public debate.

both is necessary to avoid a homogeneous master-narrative that excludes contrary experiences.

As a consequence, in *The Unknown Soldier*, the Wehrmacht comes to symbolise plurality with regards to Germany's memory of the Second World War. Having been relocated from its traditional position as a symbol of German decency and honour during the post-war period to become part of the wider narrative of perpetration in light of evidence of involvement in Nazi crimes provided by the exhibitions, narratives of nonparticipation in Verhoeven's film imply that one is not favoured over the other with regards to Germany's engagement with the legacy of National Socialism. Indeed, the onscreen presence of Martin Jordan highlights the fact that this plurality was present even earlier. Jordan's defence of his father's memory contrasts with the position of two other members of this generation, Hannes Heer, director of the first exhibition, and Verhoeven himself, thus challenging the notion that Germany's post-war generation – the so-called 68ers – were a group that exclusively foregrounded German guilt and the wider involvement of the country's population in Nazi crimes. Narratives expressing German victimhood have therefore always been present (although the vast majority remained private) – it is simply the focus of public memory that shifts. Rather than attempting to relocate the Wehrmacht in its traditional position as a symbol of German victimhood, or becoming a battleground upon which narratives of perpetration and innocence vie for a position of dominance, in reflecting the shifts between narratives of perpetrator and innocence the Wehrmacht therefore comes to represent the importance of recognising and including both in the country's public memory. The recognition of both narratives in *The Unknown Soldier* therefore exemplifies Schmitz's (2007, p. 4) contention that despite the apparent incompatibility of a homogenising public memory dominated by Nazi crimes, and a heterogeneous private one that communicates suffering, Germany witnessed a pluralisation of divergent memories of National Socialism during the first decade of the millennium.

4.4 Conclusion

The three films discussed in this chapter posit the idea that the traditional victim and perpetrator binary marks the opposite ends of a spectrum of experiences that the German people could have undergone during the Second World War. The post-millennium shift from a concern with questions surrounding the scale of German involvement in acts of perpetration during the previous decade to a focus on the country's own suffering and loss subsequently reflects the need to incorporate a nuanced understanding of a wartime experience that is informed by both. Although failing to account for the nuances that inform these experiences, this shift can therefore be see to highlight the importance of acknowledging these two positions. Furthermore, whilst highlighting the fact that a consensus regarding Germany's public memory of the Nazi period is never achieved, the shift from a focus on perpetration to victimhood also suggests the simultaneous presence of both positions with regards to the German wartime experience. It is the focus of public memory that shifts, not the memories themselves.

The intention of this chapter has not been to justify one side of the debate over the other, but to explore the dynamics at the centre of Germany's public memory of the Nazi period in which perpetration and loss need to be acknowledged in order to be an accurate reflection of German wartime experiences. The importance of the simultaneous presence of perpetrator and victim narratives in Germany's public memory is overtly presented in *The Unknown Soldier*. Whilst its re-presentation of evidence pertaining to the wider involvement of Germany's regular army in crimes committed on the eastern front can be seen to align the film with the aims of the exhibitions organised by the Hamburg Institute for Social Research, the juxtaposing of this perpetrator narrative with those expressing Wehrmacht innocence posits the notion of plurality. Offering a more nuanced perspective of German behaviour during the Second World War than the polemical

approach Verhoven employs in films such as *The Nasty Girl* and *Human Failure* (*Menschliches Versagen*, 2008), *The Unknown Soldier* foregoes the apparent certainties regarding German guilt in favour of broadening the perspective of the country's wartime experiences. In this film it is the plurality of experience that is central.

Although obscured by the respective focus on German involvement and the country's own suffering and loss, the pluralisation of the German wartime experience is present in both *Blind Spot* and *The Red Orchestra*. As discussed in the first section of this chapter, the experiences of the wider German population involved acts of both conformity and non-conformity. An example of Broszat's concept of *Resistenz*, the presentation of Junge's experiences in André Heller and Othmar Schmiderer's film similarly diversifies this experience. Rather than constituting an example of either the country's guilt based on her work for the administrative arm of the Third Reich, or, conversely, German victimhood on the basis of her claim that despite her close proximity to a number of prominent party members, Junge's role as personal secretary to Hitler represents a level of conformity to the demands of National Socialism that subsequently offers another facet of the German wartime experience. Although the responses of the Red Orchestra to such demands was very different, the clandestine activities of this resistance group can also be seen to incorporate a level of conformity. Indeed, it is this daily adherence to Nazi ideology that forms the basis for this group's attempt to overthrow Hitler's regime. Interpreting *Blind Spot* and *The Red Orchestra* as examples of either German perpetration or victimhood is therefore too sweeping. The presence of conformity and non-conformity – or resistance, as in the case of Roloff's film – illustrates the importance of both with regards to Germany's public memory of the Nazi period.

Chapter 5. Escape to History? The Jewish Revenge Film in Post-9/11 America

5.1 Introduction

In the final paragraphs of her essay '*Schindler's List* Is Not *Shoah*: The Second Commandment, Popular Modernism, and Public Memory', Miriam Hansen (1996, p. 311) argues that America's continuing fascination with the Holocaust suggests an avoidance of more immediate traumas through their displacement onto previous traumatic events. Utilising Freud's concept of 'screen memories', Hansen states that this enduring interest in the Nazi genocide represents:

> More than just an ideological displacement
> (which it is no doubt as well), the fascination with
> the Holocaust could be read as a kind of screen
> allegory behind/through which the nation is
> struggling to find a proper mode of memorializing
> traumata closer to home (Hansen, 1996, p. 311).

For Hansen (1996, p. 311), furthermore, this displacement may extend to trauma resulting from other events in America's history such as the genocide of the indigenous American people[1] and the Vietnam War. The idea that previous traumas find an outlet in the recalling of apparently insignificant events in the present is one that is central to Freud's original concept of the 'screen memory'. Situating childhood experiences as the source of trauma, Freud (1950, p. 51) argues that only select elements of these experiences are retained, whilst those deemed traumatic are omitted, thus producing a 'screen memory' that is predicated on a compromise between the drive to retain a particular event in the form of memory, and a rejection of it on the basis of its

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[1] Yosefa Loshitzky (2001, p. 62-3) echoes Hansen's argument in drawing parallels between Israel's failure to acknowledge Palestinian suffering despite the alteration in perceptions of the Holocaust survivor following Eichmann's trial and America's centralising of the Holocaust as a master moral paradigm that ultimately acts as a substitute for its confrontation with its own history of genocide and the resulting victims.

emotional effects. The result is the construction of a memory that is not recalled as the actual experience, but recorded as something closely associated with an experience deemed objectionable (Freud, 1950, p. 51-2).

What is of interest in this chapter is Freud's (1950, p. 66) contention that "a 'screen memory' owes its value as a memory not to its own subject-matter but to the existing relationship between that subject-matter and some other, suppressed psychical material". The processes of repression and displacement – in which the timing of events, places where they occurred, and people involved have shifted – can be seen to inform a number of Holocaust films released during the post-9/11 period. With a focus on Tim Blake Nelson's *The Grey Zone* (2001), Edward Zwick's *Defiance* (2008), and Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), this chapter will argue that Hollywood depictions of the Nazi genocide are permeated by anxieties resulting from both the attacks that took place on September 11th 2001, and, more importantly, America's subsequent response. Discussing the moral issues that emerge as a result of Jewish revenge, an act that relocates the Jew from the position of victim to that of perpetrator, these three films can be seen to mirror the questions surrounding the so-called 'War on Terror' in light of the abuses that were committed by US forces at institutions such as Bagram Air Base, Abu Ghraib prison, and Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

The first section of this chapter, which is entitled 'Preservation and Revenge: Methods of Jewish Resistance in *The Grey Zone* and *Defiance*', discusses the blurring of the moral boundaries separating the acts of resistance and perpetration. In depicting the harrowing work performed by the *Sonderkommando*[2] in the Auschwitz crematoria, *The Grey Zone* complicates the distinction between victim and perpetrator through the representation of a situation in which Jews

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[2] *Sonderkommando* were special squads comprising of Jewish prisoners who were selected to facilitate the process of extermination.

were faced with a moral crisis as a result of their forced participation in the act of genocide. Here, collaboration between Jews and Nazis raise questions with regards to the victim status of Jewish inmates. This blurring of moral boundaries is also central to Zwick's dramatic account of a small group of Jewish partisans who fought German armed forces in the forests of western Belorussia in his film *Defiance*. The compromise suggested at the conclusion of Zwick's film, in which the reformation of a Jewish community following mass executions is based on the accommodation of active resistance within a societal framework informed by the morals of modern society, is somewhat complicated by the depiction of unfettered violence. The second section of this chapter, which is entitled 'Whose Revenge is it Anyway? *Inglourious Basterds* and America's War on Terror', discusses this moral ambiguity with regards to the use of torture during the country's response to the 9/11 attacks. Utilising the history of cinematic representations of the Holocaust, Tarantino's film constructs a viewing position in which Jewish revenge is deemed acceptable in light of the historical events to which they refer. However, in shifting attention from the diegetic space of the film's narrative to the socio-political context in which the film is received, this acceptance of onscreen violence is questioned with regards to the ethical justification of America's response to the original act of perpetration. Any pleasure in watching history's archetypical villains being butchered by history's archetypical victims is called into question as a result. In reconsidering these three films in the context of the counter-terrorism measures taken by the American government in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, they can be seen to constitute a critique of the moral basis for America's 'War on Terror' following the emergence of abuses.

5.2 Preservation and Revenge: Methods of Jewish Resistance in
The Grey Zone* and *Defiance

The Grey Zone's focus on the moral crisis confronting those selected
to work in the crematoria at Auschwitz utilises the extremity of this
situation in order to interrogate accepted notions of ethical behaviour.
As a consequence, despite Hungarian physician Miklos Nyiszli's book
Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account (2011) providing the basis
for the film's historical details, Primo Levi's essay 'The Grey Zone', and
in particular his interrogation of morality within what he terms the
"concentrationary system" (2003, p. 24), is central to its challenging of
established perceptions of moral behaviour. Both Levi's text and
Nelson's film present this system as ultimately responsible for the
questionable actions of those Jews involved in the extermination
process. Both present a situation in which collaboration is necessary in
order to survive. As Levi (2003, p. 26) argues, once the Auschwitz
inmate has survived the initial 'selection', the only way to avoid death
within months of arriving at the camp was to acquire extra food
through the attainment of a "privileged" position. Although stating that
his concept of the 'grey zone' is one that arises in a number of
situations that constitute power relations between Nazi Germany and
its enemies (from the Vichy regime to the Warsaw Judenrat), Levi
(2003, p. 27-8) argues that it is those collaborators originating in the
camps who embody the meaning of a term held together by a desire to
preserve a position of privilege *vis-à-vis* those without.

The concept of the 'grey zone is especially pertinent with
regards to the *Sonderkommando* squads, which, for Levi (2003, p. 34),
represent an extreme case of collaboration. Levi (2003, p. 37) argues
that the conception and organisation of these squads are "National
Socialism's most demonic crime", whilst the pragmatic economising of
sparing more "able" men through the shifting of the most horrendous
tasks onto the Jews themselves is an attempt to relocate guilt onto
others. As Levi states:

> [T]he existence of the squads had a meaning, contained a message: 'We, the master race, are your destroyers, but you are no better than we are; if we so wish and we do so wish, we can destroy not only your bodies but also your souls, just as we have destroyed ours' (Levi, 2003, p. 37).

As a consequence, Levi (2003, p. 27) calls for a reservation of judgement with regards to the actions of this "hybrid class of the prisoner-functionary" whose "ill-defined outlines" simultaneously separate and join the two groups of masters and servants.[3] The collapse of the space between the positions of victim and perpetrator is one that remains a product of a system whose "incredibly complicated internal structure [...] contains within itself enough to confuse our need to judge" (Levi, 2003, p. 27). Whilst these individuals are the "rightful owners of a quota of guilt", they are also "vectors and instruments of the system's guilt" (Levi, 2003, p. 33).

Nelson's film utilises a number of cinematic techniques in order to convey the moral issues that result from the act of collaboration. For example, individual characters are located within a myriad of possible outcomes, each of which is dependent on their relationship with one another. The relationship between Dr Nyiszli (Allan Corduner) and members of the *Sonderkommado* is informed by a series of possible outcomes that combine to produce a situation in which information becomes essential to the preservation of life itself. Both parties see each other as morally suspect based on the work each performs in the camp. Whereas the *Sonderkommando* are directly involved in the process of extermination, Nyiszli works for Josef Mengele (Henry Stram) performing experiments on the resulting corpses. When

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[3] Levi's defending of the actions of the *Sonderkommando* is contextualised by Tom Lawson (2010, p. 246), who argues that narratives describing the forced participation of Jews in the extermination process circulated in a wider context that also contained both stories of collaboration by the Jewish ghetto police and the influential image of Jews going to their deaths like lambs to slaughter. As a consequence, post-war European Jewish communities immediately setup 'honour courts' in order to try those accused of collaboration – a process that continued in Israel where the 'Nazis and Nazi Collaborators Law' led to a series of trials of former Jewish Policemen and *Kapos* in the newly-founded Jewish state from 1951 to 1964 (Lawson, 2010, p. 246).

Nyiszli's duties are questioned by *Sonderkommando* member Simon (Daniel Benzali) during a scene midway through the film, Nyiszli reminds him that his work is performed on the dead and not the living. In response, Simon states that Nyiszli does not perform his experiments at gun point, unlike those who work in the crematoria. This mistrust is reinforced by the film's aesthetical approach. Whilst Nyiszli's smart attire contrasts with Simon's dirty vest and ash-covered arms, the combined use of shot-reverse-shot and close-ups throughout this bitter exchange visually expresses their separation. The mistrust that informs this relationship is heightened by the respective positions of the *Sonderkommando* and Nyiszli with regards to the impending armed revolt that is been organised by the former. In an effort to guarantee the safety of his wife and daughter, who are also imprisoned in Auschwitz, Nyiszli agrees to leak information about the uprising to SS-Oberscharführer Erich Mußfeldt (Harvey Keitel). Providing the film's narrative with its dramatic motivation, the armed revolt therefore leads to another act of collaboration that further complicates the network of human relations within the camp.

 With regards to the post-9/11 context in which *The Grey Zone* was received, the film's collapsing of the boundaries separating the positions of victim and perpetrator as a result of collaboration between Jews and Nazis is reflective of the moral questions facing America in light of questionable actions during the War on Terror. The compromised victimhood of those working in the Auschwitz crematoria parallels that of America whose initial status as victim following 9/11 was undermined through its use of so-called 'advanced interrogation techniques' in order to acquire information that would lead to the capture of those responsible for the attacks. Seen as a necessary step in protecting the US and its citizens from further acts of terrorism, the use of techniques such as sleep deprivation and waterboarding are evidence of a revision of accepted moral codes. Indeed, this process underpinned America's case for war itself. Whereas the Bush administration's foregrounding of the country's victim status in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks meant that the subsequent

deployment of military personnel to both Afghanistan (in search of Osama bin Laden) and to Iraq (in order to locate the 'Weapons of Mass Destruction' the US believed were being developed by the Saddam Hussein regime) was deemed morally just, alterations made to the American Constitution, which was accepted by the wider public, represent the reprisal of such codes at a legal level.

In addition to an examination of accepted moral codes, the narrative structure of *The Grey Zone* can also be seen to reflect concerns that inform the post-9/11 context of the film's reception. Predicated on the controlled release of information pertaining to the motivations of its central characters, the film invites, and subsequently undermines, the viewer's moral judgement of their behaviour. For example, the opening scene depicts the suffocation of an inmate by the other members of the *Sonderkommando* despite Nyiszli's attempts to intervene. Towards the end of the film, however, another *Sonderkommando* member, Hoffman (David Arquette), reveals that this prisoner attempted suicide after being forced to burn his entire family in the crematorium. Whereas the carrying of his wish to its conclusion raises moral questions relating to guilt, agency, and responsibility, the film's later presentation of new information prompts its audience to re-evaluate their initial judgement.

This narrative technique is repeated in a later scene when another *Sonderkommando* member, Max (David Chandler), expresses a desire for an increase in the speed of the extermination process to SS-Oberscharführer Mußfeldt. Rather than representing an attempt to save his own life in the face of the impending liquidation of the entire *Sonderkommando* squad as it approaches the critical point of four months in operation, after which it is to be executed and replaced, it is revealed later in the narrative that this request is actually a ploy to buy time so that they can achieve their plan to destroy the Auschwitz crematoria. Max's motivations are absolved of any doubt when he later responds to Abramowics' (Steve Buscemi) suggestion that the increase in arms and explosives acquired through a delay in the plan's implementation be used to support an alternative plan to escape with

the retort that any increase in arsenal should be used to destroy further crematoria. Having already accepted his own death, Max's intentions remain focused on disabling the machinery of destruction.

In prompting the viewer to re-evaluate his or her initial moral judgements in light of new information, the non-linear narrative structure of *The Grey Zone* draws attention to the public's initial support for America's War on Terror. Against the backdrop of political rhetoric employed by the Bush administration in the months following the 9/11 attacks, which, as discussed above, foregrounded America's position as victim, the subsequent attainment of a consensus meant that the country's retaliatory actions were deemed morally acceptable in light of the events that preceded them. The ethical legitimisation of particular actions via consensual agreement is central to Tom Scanlon's understanding of morality. For Scanlon (1998, p. 3), judgments of right and wrong are essentially claims about reasons, or, more specifically, "about the adequacy of reasons for accepting or rejecting principles under certain conditions". An action is therefore rejected (judged as 'wrong') if it cannot be accepted by others on the grounds that one could expect them to accept it, as Scanlon surmises:

> [J]udgments about what would be permitted by principles that could not reasonably be rejected, by people who were moved to find principles for the general regulation of behavior that others, similarly motivated, could not reasonable reject. In particular, an act is wrong if and only if any principle that permitted it would be one that could reasonably be rejected by people with the motivation just described (or, equivalently, if and only if it would be disallowed by any principle that such people could not reasonably reject) (Scanlon, 1998, p. 4).

Referring to this process as "contractualism", a term that evokes the 'social contract' tradition of French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (2008), Scanlon's (1998, p. 5) description of what constitutes 'right' and 'wrong' is subject to the shifting socio-political circumstances of the community from which such moral choices

emerge. In being determined by the gaining of consensus, the process of acquiring moral legitimacy amongst the wider public is therefore open to manipulation – particularly by those in positions of authority.

However, the emergence of abuses committed by American soldiers at Bagram Air Base, Abu Ghraib prison, and Guantanamo Bay detention camp compromised the moral basis of this consensus. Despite falling within the boundaries of the Geneva Convention, the use of so-called 'advanced interrogation techniques' led to both the widespread condemnation of America's War on Terror and accusations of war crimes against Bush and his government. The repositioning of the viewer in Nelson's film through the controlled release of information therefore reflects a process in which an initial moral judgement is re-evaluated in light of new information. This repositioning is overtly depicted through the film's contrasting of Hoffman's brutal killing of a Jewish man in the changing room adjacent to the gas chamber with his saving of a girl belonging to the same convoy who survives the liquidation process. Although these two scenes can be seen as a further example of *The Grey Zone*'s interrogation of the moral basis that informs the victim and perpetrator binary, Hoffman's initial location in the position of perpetrator following his killing the man in the changing room is re-evaluated when he subsequently saves the girl.

Furthermore, Hoffman's actions suggest that the opposing positions of victim and perpetrator coexist at the level of the individual. Indeed, the actual historical event of the *Sonderkommando* rescuing of a girl who had survived the gas chamber caused Levi (2003, p. 39) to react with astonishment because this act is symbolic of this coexistence. For Levi (2003, p. 23), the network of human relationships in the camps cannot be reduced to the mutually exclusive categories of victims and perpetrators. The shock experienced by new arrivals in the camps was one based on not only its terribleness, but also indecipherability based on the fact that the camps:

> [D]id not conform to any model, the enemy was
> all around but also inside, the 'we' lost its limits,
> the contenders were not two, one could not
> discern a single frontier but rather many
> confused, perhaps innumerable frontiers, which
> stretched between each of us. (Levi, 2003, p. 23)

Rather than representing a form of redemption following his killing of the Jewish man in the changing room, therefore, Hoffmann's rescuing of the girl is illustrative of Levi's interpretation of the warped moral code that informed life in the camps. With regards to the re-evaluation of America's response to the 9/11 attacks following the emergence of abuses committed by military personnel, the co-existence of the apparently contrary positions of victim and perpetrator in *The Grey Zone* illustrates the capacity of the individual to both support and criticise the War on Terror depending on the information available.

In addition to discussing the moral issues that inform the forced participation of Jews in the extermination process, the depiction of the *Sonderkommando*'s uprising in Nelson's film also explores the subject of Jewish resistance. This revolt can be seen to conform to Raul Hilberg's definition of resistance as armed insurrection, which, as Tom Lawson observes (2010, p. 248-9), is based on the former's contention that there was very little significant Jewish resistance in a response towards Nazi persecution that can be largely defined by its passivity.[4] At the other end of the spectrum, the non-involvement of Dr Nyiszli in the uprising is illustrative of Emmanuel Ringelblum's concept of *symbolic* resistance, which is based on the documentation of all that the Nazis sought to destroy (Lawson, 2010, p. 1). Nyiszli's decision to cower beneath a white ceramic slab as fighting between inmates and the SS rages outside enables him to survive, and subsequently document the unfolding of events. The fact that Nyiszli's testimonial

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[4] As discussed in Chapter Two, events such as the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising were central to a 'Zionist master narrative' that foregrounded the act of armed resistance for the ideological purposes of defending Israel against attacks from its Arab neighbours. As Lawson (2010, p. 247) argues, the celebration of ghetto fighters became the cultural norm in Israel, and were incorporated into the state's founding myths alongside the *Yishuv* who had earlier resisted British forces in an attempt to secure Israel's independence.

account provides the historical basis for *The Grey Zone* is testament to this process of *symbolic* resistance. The act of surviving itself therefore becomes a positive contribution based on the fact that survivors are able to bear witness to the atrocities committed by the Third Reich.[5] For Lawson (2010, p. 247), the contrast between the ousting of collaborators in the immediate post-war period and the joyous reception of those who had actively resisted produced a Manichean picture of Jewish behaviour during Holocaust based on a split between the easy condemnation of the former and an even easier celebration of the latter. As a consequence, there remained little consideration of the moral complexities that informed these opposing positions, nor was there any space for individual memories of those who might fit neither or both of these categories (Lawson, 2010, p. 247).

Ringelblum's concept of *symbolic* resistance can also be seen to inform other Holocaust films. Whereas *The Pawnbroker* (1964) foregrounds the extremity of the Nazi genocide through a focus on the continuing traumatic effects on a Holocaust survivor, Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985) offers a more nuanced example of Ringelblum's concept. In contrasting contemporary images of former extermination camps in rural Poland with testimonial accounts describing the historical events that took place at these sites, Lanzmann's film reinvests the now empty spaces with horrors of their former function. This dialectical approach contributes to Lanzmann's message of Jewish defiance (which is overtly expressed in his covert interviews with Unterscharführer, Franz Suchomel) in response to the Nazis attempt to not only annihilate the European Jewry, but also their desire to destroy any trace of the extermination process.[6]

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[5] Organisations such as the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University and the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, which Steven Spielberg established after he made *Schindler's List* (1993), are testament to the enduring importance of survivor testimony.

[6] Conversely, Lanzmann focuses on an example of armed resistance in his later film, *Sobibor* (*Sobibór, 14 octobre 1943, 16 heures*, 2001), which presents testimony from those involved in the uprising at the camp. Furthermore, depictions of active resistance are presented in Chapter Two in feature films such as *Marathon Man* and *The Boys from Brazil*, as well as the documentaries *Nazi Hunter: The Beate Klarsfeld Story* (1986) and *Murderers Among Us: The Simon Wiesenthal Story* (1989).

The preservation of Jewish life as an act of resistance is also central the film, *Defiance*. Based on Nechama Tec's (2009) testimonial account, Zwick's film tells the story of the Bielski Otraid, a small band of Jewish resistance fighters who established a community in the forests of western Belorussia following Nazi purges on the eastern front. As with *The Grey Zone*, the definition of Jewish resistance based on survival exists in opposition to armed insurgence. Located in the communal context, the subsequent tension between these two definitions is central to the development of a moral framework that will underpin the community's purpose. The opposing positions of preservation and insurrection are embodied in the film's two central characters. Following his shooting of a local police chief accused of murdering his parents, Tuvia Bielski (Daniel Craig) rejects further acts of retribution in favour of rescuing Jews. This rejection is in contrast to his brother, Zus (Liev Schreiber), who believes that the main aim of the Otraid should be to carry the fight to the Nazis – a difference of opinion that results in Zus eventually leaving the forest community to join the Soviet army in its fight against the Nazis. These opposing definitions of resistance are overtly stated during a scene midway through the film in which images of the celebrations surrounding Tuvia's younger brother Asael's (Jamie Bell) marriage in a snow-filled forest are juxtaposed with those depicting Zus ambushing a Nazi convoy. Here, the celebratory music and dancing that accompany the wedding ceremony contrasts with the sound of gun fire and the dead falling to the ground during the ambush. The use of parallel editing during this scene, which enables the camera to switch between the two locations in the forest, suggests that the former is the consequence of the latter. Whereas the breaking of glass at the end of the wedding ceremony signals the opening of fire on the convoy, shouts of "Mazel tov" and scenes of celebratory dancing are preceded by the killing of Nazi soldiers.

With regards to the post-9/11 context in which *Defiance* was produced, Zus' revenge for the attack on his home mirrors America's military response to the attacks on New York City and the Pentagon. Indeed, the suggestion in the scene described above that this act is

met with approval from the wider Jewish community is reflective of the initial gaining of a wider public consensus that supported the so-called War on Terror. Furthermore, the use of parallel editing during this scene also suggests the accommodation of armed resistance in the formation of a community predicated on the preservation of Jewish life. This accommodation is also indicated through the use of both sound-bridges, which link the two locations through the continuous sound of the celebratory music throughout this scene, whilst the overall *mise en scène* of a snow covered forest reinforces the connection between the two. In its focus on the complex relationship between the formation of both a forest community and the moral codes that will provide its basis, *Defiance* locates the acceptance of acts of retribution as part of a process that works to redefine the boundaries within this framework. This redefinition is confirmed by Zus' eventual return to the community during the film's climactic scene, in which he and a number of other Jews come to the rescue of Tuvia's community who have been cornered by Nazi forces. Zus' killing of the soldiers at this late stage in the narrative is symbolic of his continued desire to carry the fight to the enemy, whilst his reincorporation into Tuvia's community represents a compromise by his brother with regards to its moral position. Providing the film with more than its dramatic arc, the theme of sibling rivalry therefore expresses the necessity of both preservation and insurgence in the process of constructing the forest community. As a consequence, the ethical position of the community moves between these binaries – shifting in order to compensate for alterations in circumstance with the aim of ensuring survival.

The co-existence of preservation and armed resistance is something that is expressed in James Glass' (2004, p. 58-59) interviews with surviving members of the Bielski Otraid. Stating that Tuvia's approach to survival was based on the belief that a larger group stood a better chance of surviving than a smaller one, Glass states that:

This is not to say that Tuvia avoided violent missions. They were as essential to his group as to the other partisan brigades; and if he believed he had to fight, he never refused to engage in combat. Yet, Tuvia, in spite of differences with his brothers, saw the community's ability to sustain fighting and remain intact as a *Jewish* brigade to be tied up with its role as a place of rescue and refuge (Glass, 2004, p. 60).

Rather than presenting a simple choice between Tuvia's preservation of Jewish life and Zus' desire to directly confront the Nazis through armed insurrection, *Defiance* therefore requires the viewer to contemplate the moral implications of a situation in which survival is dependent on the presence of both forms of resistance. The reprisal of accepted moral codes as the community alternates between preservation and insurrection again refers to America's response to the 9/11 attacks in that it reflects the acceptance of redemptive actions by the wider public on the basis of an alteration of an established moral framework resulting from the Bush administration's foregrounding of American victimhood. In addition, the moral questions that arise from the collapse of the boundaries separating these two forms of resistance mirror the issues that confronted America following the emergence of details of abuse.

The depiction of Jewish revenge during a scene towards the end of Zwick's film is particularly pertinent with regards to the moral issues that faced American in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. Having ambushed a Nazi convoy, several members of the Bielski Otraid return to the forest community with a captured SS soldier (Klemens Becker). Throwing him to the ground, other members of the community surround the soldier and scream various accusations relating to the loss of loved ones. The rapid cuts between point of view shots from the soldiers' perspective, and close-ups of both his fearful facial expression and the contrasting anger of the surrounding Jews, express the emotional instability that eventually leads to members of the community beating the Nazi to death with rifle butts and clubs. The fact that the ensuing violence is an act of revenge is underlined

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through the use of medium close-ups that depict two members of the forest community describing their murdered son and brother respectively before plunging the butts of their rifles into the captured soldier's head. Despite being prompted to intervene, Tuvia turns his back and allows the gathered crowd to exact their vengeance – a final crane shot depicts him leaving the rest of the community as they continue to beat the Nazi to death.

In addition to killing both Nazis and collaborators who represent a potential obstacle to survival – acts that Glass (2004, p. 68) argues were perceived as positive within the community, as opposed to the immorality of remaining prey to the aims of the enemy – Zwick's film, here, presents another aspect of the survivor experience based on an emotional investment in the killing of Nazis and their collaborators. As Glass' (2004, p. 72) interview with Sonia O reveals, the killing of Nazi soldiers by members of the Bielski Otraid not only represents an act of utilitarianism based on the aim of survival, but one that is also invested with the emotional consequences of loss. Pragmatic decisions taken in order to survive are therefore mixed with an emotionally charged desire to avenge the loss of family, friends, and home. In highlighting the important fact that it was members of the wider forest community who committed these killings, and not the "fighters" designated to carry out such actions, Glass (2004, p. 72) argues that this act was a form of retribution through which members of the community reclaimed a sense of self by avenging their loss. The subsequent expression of joy was one based on each individual's encounter with those responsible for the murder of family and the loss of home – the killing of a collaborator is therefore experienced as retribution for suffering caused to all members of the community (Glass, 2004, p. 74).

Here, resistance is based on both a reclaiming of the self and the continuation of Jewish life beyond the fate imposed upon them by the Nazis (Glass, 2004, p. 4-5). It is this form of resistance that provides the context for the re-evaluation of the moral framework, as Glass observes:

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No guilt is expressed at having killed
sympathizers; no guilt about taking whatever
food they needed. These men and women
became the surviving remnant for whom revenge
meant saving identity and doing whatever it took
to resist the oppressor's efforts to take it away
(Glass, 2004, p. 3).

In expressing the strengthening of communal bonds through an act that alleviates a shared sense of injustice, the depiction of retribution in *Defiance* therefore represents another parallel with the post-9/11 context from which the film emerged. Whereas the accommodation of armed resistance in order to aid the preservation of Jewish life in western Belorussia parallels America's response to the 9/11 attacks as a protection of the country and its way of life, the strengthening of communal bonds through avenging the murder of loved ones mirrors the legitimisation of 'advanced interrogation techniques' used by military personnel in the process of achieving this aim. Furthermore, retribution in Zwick's film also reflects a post-9/11 climate in which the massive loss of American life fuelled the initial support for Bush's response. Describing her experiences on streets of Manhattan during immediate aftermath of the attacks, E. Ann Kaplan (2005, p. 136) argues that New York's inability to work through the trauma of 9/11 was mixed with fantasies of revenge. Indeed, for Kaplan (2005, p. 140), subsequent suggestions that the towers be rebuilt as a memorial at ground zero are aligned with sentiments of pride and revenge.

In linking the act of revenge to wider concerns about the formation and maintenance of the values that underpin the community, *Defiance* can be seen to function as a screen memory through which, as Hansen (1996, p. 311) states at the beginning of this chapter, "the nation is struggling to find a proper mode of memorializing traumata closer to home". In addition to the continuing traumatic effects of events such as the genocide of the indigenous American people and the Vietnam War (Hansen, 1996, p. 311), the trauma resulting from the 9/11 attacks finds an expression through the cinematic depictions of the Holocaust. As with *The Grey Zone*, it is the political context in

which Zwick's film is received that is important rather than the historical events that provide it narrative focus. To paraphrase Freud's (1950, p. 66) definition of a 'screen memory', both films owe their value to the relationship between their respective depiction of the Holocaust and some other repressed traumatic experience. As 'screen memories' expressing the moral issues facing America following its response to the 9/11 attacks, furthermore, both films offer a subversive comment on the employment of utilitarian tactics during the War on Terror.

5.3 Whose Revenge is it Anyway? *Inglourious Basterds* and America's War on Terror

In reconsidering *Inglourious Basterds* in the context of the counter-terrorism measures taken by the American government in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, this section argues that Tarantino's film similarly constitutes a critique of the moral basis for America's 'War on Terror' following the emergence of abuses at institutions such as Guantanamo Bay detention camp and Abu Ghraib prison. As discussed above, Tarantino utilises the history of cinematic representations of the Holocaust in order to construct a viewing position in which Jewish revenge is deemed acceptable in light of the historical events to which they refer, before questioning this acceptance through shifting the viewer's attention from the diegetic space of the film's narrative to the socio-political context in which the film is received. The audience's relationship to the cinematic text is therefore central to *Inglourious Basterds*' function as a critique of America's response to the 9/11 attacks. As a consequence, this section will discuss the various ways in which Tarantino positions, and, more importantly, repositions, the viewer in order to influence his or her interpretation of the onscreen action. First, I will discuss the ways in which the film positions the viewer to accept Jewish revenge. Here, the moral agenda that is central to the accusations of 'trivialisation' that tend to inform criticisms of Tarantino's film can be seen to facilitate the

viewer's initial acceptance of Jewish revenge. Second, I discuss both the numerous references to the Hollywood Western in *Inglourious Basterds* and the film's utilisation by the Bush administration in presenting the case for its 'War on Terror', arguing that such references reposition the viewer through an alteration of the historical context in which the act of retribution is interpreted. In focusing on the moral ambiguities that inform the genre's stress on action and uncompromising search for justice, this focus on such themes in Tarantino's film foregrounds ethical questions that were prominent following the emergence of prisoner abuse. Third, and finally, I will discuss the colonial politics of the Hollywood Western with regards to the 'advanced interrogation techniques' employed by the US military. In comparing the power relations that inform both the images of prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib and the depictions of Nazis being tortured in Tarantino's film, I will argue that the employment of cinematic techniques such as the Point of View shot in the latter positions the audience in the role of the Nazi – an alignment that subverts his or her initial identification with the Basterds.

Set in Nazi-occupied France, Tarantino's film consists of two parallel narratives that depict Jews exacting brutal retribution against their Nazi oppressors. In the first, Shosanna Dreyfus (Mélanie Laurent) avenges the murder of her entire family by setting fire to a provincial Paris picture house in which a number of Nazi dignitaries (including Hitler himself) are attending the premier of Goebbels' latest propaganda film. In the second, a group of Jewish American soldiers – the 'Basterds' of the film's title – are parachuted behind enemy lines on a mission to undermine the Nazi war effort by torturing and killing members of the elite SS. It is this second narrative that I will primarily focus on. Typical of Tarantino's cinema, characters are broadly drawn and scenes of violence are graphically depicted. For example, SS Colonel Hans Landa (Christoph Waltz) represents the cinematic archetype of a sadist who takes pleasure in executing his duty of ridding France of its Jewish population, whilst both the scalping of dead SS officers and the carving of the swastika onto the foreheads of

those whose lives are spared is frequently shown in uncompromising close-up. A signature of Tarantino's cinema, this approach is central to the film's function as a Jewish revenge text. In being able to easily discern between Jewish victim and Nazi perpetrator, the viewer is encouraged to accept onscreen acts of retribution by the former on the basis of the injustices committed during the historical period to which the film's narrative refers.

However, it is this subversion of historically established victim and perpetrator positions that forms the basis for the majority of criticism directed towards Tarantino's film. In an article for *The New Yorker*, for example, David Denby (2009) dismisses *Inglourious Basterds* as a "nutbrain fable" that is "mucking about with a tragic moment of history", whilst, similarly, Daniel Mendelsohn (2009) accuses Tarantino of insensitivity with regards to the Holocaust. This position is taken a step further by Jeffery Goldberg (2009) who argues that the film's "unapologetic depiction of an alternative reality in which Jews torture and murder Nazis" represents a subversion of historical events that creates the potential for a relativizing of Nazi crimes and unwarranted sympathy towards the perpetrators that could prove detrimental to memory of the Holocaust – an allusion to Tarantino's apparent lack of concern regarding conventional understandings of morality that is overly stated by Andrew O'Hehir's (2009) review of the film.

Although such criticisms express concerns relating to the potential disruption of the power relations that underpin our understanding of the Holocaust,[7] they can be seen to conform to the moral strictures that inform wider discourses surrounding popular representations of the Nazi genocide. Based on what Gillian Rose

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[7] For Goldberg (2009), it is the way in which Jewish retribution is represented (and the potential outcome of this representation) that is the issue rather than the act itself. In order to illustrate his point, Goldberg uses *Defiance* as a counterpoint arguing that the depiction of Jewish violence in Zwick's film is presented as both self-defence, and, more importantly with regards to his focus of morality, an act that is periodically interjected with discussions debating the merits of killing Nazis. However, he fails to consider scenes of revenge in *Defiance* such as discussed above, preferring instead to interpret the film as an uncomplicated representation of ethical Jewish behaviour in the face of Nazi persecution that sharply contrasts with Tarantino's film.

terms, "Holocaust piety" (1997, p. 43), artistic and cultural responses to the destruction of Europe's Jews are restricted by an apparent ineffability in which "'Auschwitz' or 'the Holocaust' are emblems for the breakdown in divine and/or human history. The uniqueness of this break delegitimises names and narratives as such, and hence all aesthetic or apprehensive representation" (Rose, 1997, p. 43). With their value measured against the hierarchical binary of 'high' art and mass culture, films such as *Inglourious Basterds* are subsequently accused of trivialising the Holocaust. For Gary Weissman (2004, p. 11-12), such representations are rejected on the basis that they are divested of historical specificity, and, more specifically, popular culture's apparent negation of an educational or memorial function in favour of entertainment, thus attaining value as a mere archetype or symbol. However, this trivialisation is central to Tarantino's initial locating of his audience in a position in which acts of revenge are deemed acceptable. In its presentation of 'good' Jews exacting revenge upon their 'evil' Nazi oppressors, Tarantino's film utilises the viewer's repeated exposure to Hollywood's tendency to depict the Holocaust in morally unambiguous terms in order to stimulate desires for revenge. From *The Great Dictator* (1940) and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (George Stevens, 1959), to *Sophie's Choice* (1982) and *Schindler's List* (1993), as well as contemporary productions such as *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2008), the line between Jewish victim and Nazi perpetrator has remained clearly discernible. Indeed, in those films that represent an exception to this tradition – *The Stranger* (1946), *The Boys from Brazil* (1978), and, more recently, *The Grey Zone* (2001) and *Defiance* (2008) – Manichean understandings of morality are central to their subversion of the victim and perpetrator binary.

In addition to representing an example of his intertextual approach,[8] Tarantino's appeal to this filmmaking tradition represents a

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[8] As a number of critics have commented (Willis, 2012; Kligerman, 2012), Tarantino's intertextual approach is central to his ability to engage with his audience. Willis, for example, sees the filmmaker as a cinephile whose obsession with the medium invites

recycling of Hollywood moral conventions that enables him to harness audience expectations. Although *Inglourious Basterds* does not depict the various locations that have come to symbolise the process of genocide (ghettos, railway cars, concentration camps, etc.), the film's effectiveness as a Jewish revenge text is reliant on the audience's prior knowledge of the Holocaust. As a consequence of the historiographical and cultural exposure to these events, the motivation of the Jewish avengers in Tarantino's film does not need to be explained. What is important in locating the viewer in the initial position of acceptance is that, as Weissman states, "Americans need not know much about the when, where, and why of the Holocaust in order to grasp its significance as a moral paradigm" (2004, p. 13). Contrary to Eric Kligerman's (2012, p. 139) contention that the aim of Tarantino's approach to filmmaking "is to break the narrative paradigms and components that are constitutive of Holocaust cinema", *Inglourious Basterds* is therefore illustrative of the filmmaker's reliance on such conventions in order to construct a critique of America's response to the 9/11 attacks.

In its appeal to the Holocaust's symbolic status as the ultimate act of evil, this reinforcing of Manichean moral perspectives also provides the basis for a challenging of the audience's acceptance of Jewish revenge. The indication of an alternative American – and, more importantly, post-9/11 – context requires the viewer to re-evaluate the pleasure experienced in watching Jews exert brutal retribution against their Nazi oppressors in light of the abuses committed during America's War on Terror. This alternative context is indicated through the film's use of number of symbols commonly associated with the United States. For example, Sergeant Donny Donowitz's (Eli Roth) use a 'St Louis Slugger' to dispatch captured Nazi soldiers refers to the quintessential American sport of baseball. During an early scene, in

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the viewer to partake in his play with film history. Referring specifically to *Inglourious Basterds* itself, Kligerman argues that this intertextuality is central to a Talmudic approach in which his audience are positioned as investigators assigned to unravel the film's intricacies.

which the Basterds capture an SS regiment, this particular signifier is overtly presented as we see Donowitz emerge from the 'players' tunnel before battering SS Sergeant Rachtman (Richard Sammel) to death. Donowitz's subsequent mimicking of an American sports commentator enthusiastically describing the skill and accuracy of a batsman who has just hit a home run adds further emphasis to this reference.

Likewise, in recruiting the Basterds Lieutenant Aldo Raine (Brad Pitt) states the specific requirement of "eight Jewish-American soldiers" to infiltrate the SS, whilst his southern drawl and disclosure of the fact that he is a descendent of the mountain man Jim Bridger underline the American context being suggested, here. Rather than representing a cipher that facilitates the interest of a predominantly non-Jewish audience in the Holocaust – a technique that relates to Weissman's (2004, p. 10-11) discussion of the practicalities of representing these events in a way that both depicts its horror, whilst not alienating the vast majority of American viewers – Raine's characterisation as part 'hillbilly' and part Native American signifies the United States.

Raine's demand that each of his troops bring him one hundred scalps (a penchant resulting from the fact that he has a little "Injun" in him) signifies that other quintessential American pastime – the Classical Hollywood Western. Despite the fact that a number of people have discussed *Inglourious Basterds* in relation to its numerous references to the Italian Westerns of filmmakers such as Sergio Leone,[9] Tarantino's film also utilises recognisable iconography and

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[9] Tarantino's film is loaded with recognisable iconography and tropes from this sub-genre. For example, the film's opening sequence, in which Landa arrives at the home of a French farmer in his search for an unaccounted for Jewish family, is a bricolage that references the work of Leone. The introductory inter-title "Once upon a time in occupied France", which has been interpreted as a technique that locates the subsequent narrative in the world of fiction thus enabling it to circumvent accusations of revisionism and criticisms over its use of violence (Richardson, 2012, p. 103), can be seen as an overt reference to Leone's *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968). The introduction of the Nazis is accompanied by the opening piano notes of Beethoven's Für Elise which gradually yields to the strumming of the Vihuela, the recognisable sound of a guitar that again refers to the arrival of Mexican bandits in Leone's films, whilst the claustrophobic space of LaPadite's farmhouse where he speaks with Landa

tropes from the Classical Hollywood genre. In addition to the act of scalping, the shootout in a French tavern between the Basterds and a number of Nazi soldiers mirrors the staple of cowboys fighting in saloons in numerous Hollywood Westerns. Both the Basterds' drinking of whiskey and the barkeeper's rifle under the counter (which he places his hand on when he senses the imminent danger of the shootout) represent further examples of the film's use of Hollywood Western iconography. However, it is the allusion to a series of structural oppositions associated with this genre during the opening scene of *Inglourious Basterds* that is important with regards to the film's critique of America's War on Terror. Although Colonel Landa's arrival at the house of the French farmer Perrier LaPadite (Denis Ménochet) in search for an unaccounted for Jewish family can be seen as another reference to Leone's work – the contrasting of foreground and background in the composition of certain shots, the strumming of a Mexican Vihuela to indicate the arrival of the Nazis, and the long tense conversation between Landa and the farmer in the claustrophobic space of the farmhouse – the long shot with which the film opens depicts the isolated farmhouse set against the rural landscape, thus suggesting oppositions such as wilderness versus civilisation, nature versus culture, and agrarianism versus industrialism that can be seen to inform the work of Hollywood filmmakers such as John Ford.

For Jim Kitses (2004, p. 13), these structural oppositions represent the cornerstone of the Hollywood Western that grounds the genre in questions about American identity. In both Kitses's exploration of the genre and its relationship to American identity, and

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as well as the slow pace of this scene invoke Leone's *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (1966). Indeed, *Inglourious Basters*'s central theme of revenge is one that is also central to *For a Few Dollars More* (1965) as well as the aforementioned *Once Upon a Time in the West*. In addition, Ben Walters (2009) sees Tarantino's film as a World War Two mission-movie containing Spaghetti Western tropes. Goldberg (2009) uses both Sergio Leone and what he terms "spaghetti-Western justice" in his condemnation of Tarantino's film. Lisa Coulthard (2012, p. 57-70) not only notes the influence of long-time Leone collaborator Ennio Morricone on the music used in Tarantino's film, but also the parallels between the Italian Western and *Inglourious Basterds* in terms of how their respective scores relate to the narrative action.

Peter Wollen's (1998, p. 94-101) original structuralist reading of Ford's work, these oppositions are illustrative of the colonialist ideology that underpinned the territorial acquisitions made by the United States from the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, discussing the transmission of dominant ideology to wider society through the symbolic narratives of mythology from folklore and ritual to literature and historiography, Richard Slotkin (1998, p. 10) highlights the centrality of the Frontier to an American national identity predicated on notions of democracy, economic expansion, and the idea of America as a progressive society. Referring to the process of westward expansion in particular, Slotkin argues that:

> In each stage of its development, the Myth of the Frontier relates the achievement of "progress" to a particular form or scenario of violent action. "Progress" itself was defined in different ways: the Puritan colonists emphasized the achievements of spiritual regeneration through frontier adventure; Jeffersonians [...] saw the frontier settlement as a re-enactment and democratic renewal of the original "social contract"; while Jacksonian Americans saw the conquest of the Frontier as a means to the regeneration of personal fortune and/or of patriotic vigor and virtue. But in each case, the Myth represented the redemption of American spirit or fortune as something to be achieved by playing through a scenario of separation, temporary regression in to a more primitive or "natural" state, and *regeneration through violence* (Slotkin, 1998, p. 11-12).

Originally employed to justify the violent subjugation and displacement of the indigenous population, the Myth of the Frontier has continued to be called upon to validate America's expansion, modernisation, and its emergence as a superpower on the world stage (Slotkin, 1998, p. 10). During the Cold War era, for example, the Kennedy administration used it to justify America's fight against global Communism – a process that included the gaining of public support for the country's participation in counterinsurgency missions in the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, and Vietnam (Slotkin, 1998, p. 3). With regards to the

aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, Kitses refers to Slotkin's concept of *regeneration through violence* in overtly making the connection between the frontier myth and America's War on Terror, arguing that the former:

> [R]ehearses a foundational violence necessary to the frontier's resolution of problems, a promise of rebirth and redemption through conquest. The result of the frontier myth [...] is a 'gunfighter nation' that has grown by destroying the Other, that demonises adversaries and authorises a regenerative violence. As in the attack on Saddam Hussein's Iraq, the process allows a righteous America to see itself as virtuous even as it initiates an invasive violence (Kitses, 2004, p. 21).

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the sentiments of America as having a "righteous" and "virtuous" position were central to the political rhetoric used by the Bush administration in order to locate the country in the position of victim.

This acquisition of this victim status was aided by a number of discourses in the American media that constructed an image of a country under siege. In her survey of the post-9/11 media coverage, Susan Faludi (2007, p. 3-4) highlights a number of parallels drawn between the 9/11 attacks and other events in the country's recent history to invoke the sense of anxiety pervading the country during this period. Faludi (2007, p. 3-5) describes the American media's shift from initial analogies with Pearl Harbor (in an attempt to reignite World War Two sentiments of national unity and sacrifice) to comparisons with both the Cold War, and the myth of the frontier in order to create the sense of a country under siege from external forces. For Faludi (2007, p. 204), this image of American under siege is embodied in the media's paralleling of Jessica Lynch's capturing by Iraqi forces during the Battle of Nasiriyah and Cynthia Ann Parker's abduction by Comanche Indians in the 1800s.

Reference to the societal shame experienced by American settlers as a result of their inability to protect the frontier community

appropriately evoked the protectionist fantasies indicating the apparent need for a strong male figure in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. Faludi (2007, p. 3-4) states that during this period the media presented the American male as uncompromising in his search for justice, with the figure of John Wayne regularly used as illustration. This idea was extended to the Bush administration, where the need to show America's leaders as superhuman was based on the myth of the pragmatic and ruthless frontiersman associated with the old west (Faludi, 2007, p. 148). Indeed, the pragmatism demonstrated by the frontiersman can be seen in the legal changes undertaken by the Bush administration that granted the President discretionary powers to protect America from further terrorist attacks. As Derek Gregory (2006, p. 408) highlights, in resuscitating the "doctrine of the unitary executive, in which the President's actions as commander-in-chief are supposedly above the law... the Constitution hold that the executive can override both the judiciary and the legislature".

This ability to operate outside the law mirrors the way in which a number of protagonists function in a number of Ford's Westerns. For example, Tom Doniphon's (John Wayne) killing of the outlaw Liberty Valance (Lee Marvin) in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962) removes a vestige of the old West that clears the way for societal progression embodied in the lawyer Ransom Stoddard (James Stewart). Although Stoddard's advocacy for the judicial system conflicts with Doniphon's sense of 'frontier justice', the latter's actions are presented as a pragmatic step ensuring this progress. Civil War veteran Ethan Edwards (another character played by Wayne) in Ford's earlier film *The Searchers* (1956) functions in much the same way. Following a raid by Comanche Indians in which his brother's home is burned to ground and the rest of the family are killed, Edwards spends years in the wilderness searching for his niece who has been abducted. At the end of the film, he eventually returns to a rebuilt homestead having rescued his niece. Crucially though, he also returns with the scalp of the Comanche Chief, Scar (Henry Brandon). Simultaneously embodying the values of ordered society, yet prepared

to transcend such values in order to ensure its progression, these nomadic characters act as a buffer between civilisation and savagery.[10] Their position in the liminal space between the civilised and the savage is one that is embodied in the final scene of *The Searchers*. Having committed the 'necessary' act of scalping Scar, Edwards stands in the doorway of homestead refusing to enter the domestic space that he had previously made his temporary abode. No longer a part of ordered society, Edwards turns his back and returns to the wilderness.

References to the Hollywood Western in *Inglourious Basterds* therefore foreground issues that resonate with the post-9/11 socio-political climate. The alignment of unitary executive Bush with the dubious actions of frontiersman such as Ethan Edwards and Tom Doniphon foregrounds the pragmatic steps taken to protect the interests of the society it underpins, thus mirroring the ambiguity central to the Western's classical narrative structure in which the eventual triumph of good over evil is achieved via the transgression of established moral codes. Furthermore, the genre's stress on individual action and utilitarian sense of justice are reproduced in Tarantino's depiction of the Basterds as a rogue unit whose torturing and killing of Nazi soldiers represents a blatant violation of the rules of engagement during war. This violation is explicitly illustrated in the final scene of the film when Raine and Utivich shoot and scalp Herrman (Michael Kranz), whilst also carving a swastika onto Landa's forehead despite the latter having agreed the terms of his surrender with Raine's superiors.

Rather than perpetuate America's victim status, references to the Hollywood Western in *Inglourious Basterds* foreground a moral ambiguity that questions the utilitarian use of violence central to the

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[10] Characters such as Doniphon and Edwards continue to have currency in contemporary Hollywood films. Comic book adaptations such as *The Dark Knight* (Christopher Nolan, 2008) and *Captain America: The First Avenger* (Joe Johnston, 2011), for example, present individuals who are prepared to operate outside of accepted moral codes and structures of authority in order to guarantee the continuation of the social status quo. In Nolan's film the hero's approach to defeating those who challenge the American way of life is one that incorporates a utilitarianism that involves a bending or breaking of the moral rules that form the basis of this society.

counterterrorist measures implemented by the Bush administration in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. In addition to drawing parallels between the President and frontiersman such as Tom Doniphon and Ethan Edwards, references to the excessive means employed by the latter in protecting frontier settlers from marauding Indians denotes an aspect of the colonial process that can be seen to inform the actions of American soldiers at military prisons such as Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib. Whilst the gaining of both strategic military positions in the Middle East and access to Iraq's oil reserves offer overt examples of such colonial practices, the use of so-called 'advanced interrogation techniques' by United States military at these institutions are the result of a political climate in which the mistreatment of detainees is deemed a necessity in the protection of America and its interests.

Coming to public attention in 2004, the images of abuse at Abu Ghraib represent the apex of an exercise in *realpolitik* in which the use of torture was seen as a necessary step in the removal of a threat to society and its progression. As Neil Macmaster argues (2004, p. 2), the first step to the mistreatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib was the passing of The Patriot Act by the American Congress, which enabled the government to detain those suspected of the committing atrocities on American soil for unspecified periods of time without formal charges being brought or access to lawyers. Furthermore, in being denied legal status as Prisoners of War, detainees held beyond US jurisdiction fell outside the protection of the Geneva Convention (Macmaster, 2004, p. 6). Operating beyond both nation and international law, this laid the foundation for further violation of basic human rights via the American military's use of draconian interrogation techniques.

As discussed above, the public's acceptance of the alterations made to the American Constitution was largely informed by the post-9/11 political rhetoric employed by the Bush administration. Whilst some queried the effectiveness of the campaigns in Afghanistan and

Iraq in removing the potential for further acts of terrorism,[11] the images of abuse at Abu Ghraib questioned the moral basis of the Bush administration's use of colonial power structures in America's search for the perpetrators. More importantly with regards to the present argument, however, the public's confrontation with these images also questioned the acceptance of the political steps that led to prisoner abuse.[12] It is this confrontation that the images of torture in *Inglourious Basterds* recreate. Representations of the dehumanising techniques employed by the American military are plentiful. For example, the bounding and hooding of both Lieutenant Raine and Private Utivich (B.J. Novak) when they are captured by the Nazis suggest the images of shackled detainees arriving at Guantanamo. In addition, Raine's desire (expressed during his speech to his troops at the beginning of the film) to make the Nazis fearful of the Basterds through the use of cruelty and torture mirrors the aggressive interrogation procedures used at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay. The scalping of dead Nazis is also interesting in this regard. The Basterds' use of primitive forms of warfare – which contrasts with the efficiency employed by the Nazis in annihilating Europe's Jews – mirrors the hands-on approach adopted by American forces in their examination of detainees, whilst the gloating and humiliating of SS Sergeant Rachtman and his unit during the baseball bat scene discussed above reinforces the position of power occupied by Raine and his men.

These power relations are further suggested in various ways through the cinematography used during this scene. A crane shot early on in the scene shows the Basterds positioned on an embankment observing the captured Nazi soldiers in the ditch below, whilst the high-angle shot of Hugo Stiglitz (Til Schweiger) looking down at the

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[11] In her newspaper article, Shirley Williams (2003) contends that the policies of the US and British occupation created further resentment amongst the Iraqi people, thus providing the stimulus for further violence.

[12] Stephen Eiseman (2008, p. 8) has argued that the fact that the decline in President Bush's popularity from 2005 to 2006 is largely attributed to Hurricane Katrina, high gasoline prices, and a failed war effort, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of the American public were not concerned about the use of torture at military institutions such as Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib.

kneeling Rachtman repeats this overt indication of hierarchy. This use of the high-angle shot continues during the scene inside the blazing Paris picture house where both Donowitz and Private Ulmer (Omar Doom) are positioned in a theatre box shooting Nazi dignitaries as they run for their lives. Furthermore, a combination of a high-angle shot, close-up, and slow motion depict Donowitz's emptying his machinegun magazine into the body of Hitler himself.

Although the depiction of Nazis being tortured and killed in Tarantino's film does not reflect the sexualised images of abuse at Abu Ghraib, it does reproduce the expression of total dominance and control that is central to the forcing of Muslim prisoners to strip naked, masturbate, and perform (or simulate) fellatio on one another. For Stephan Eisenman (2007, p. 17), the photographs of torture at Abu Ghraib, "are the expression of a malevolent vision in which military victors are not just powerful, but omnipotent, and the conquered are not just subordinate, but abject and even inhuman". The carving of a swastika on the foreheads of captured Nazis, which is again shown in close-up, therefore illustrates the complete power the Basterds have over their prisoners – as with the perpetrators of abuse at the Iraqi prison, it is the Basterds that will determine the status of those in American custody.

Although the audience's acceptance of the retrospective righting of historical wrongs is further enhanced by this cinematographic approach, it is also central to the film's undermining of this approval. In addition to asking the viewer to identify with the revenge enacted by Lieutenant Raine and his Jewish soldiers, Tarantino's film simultaneously locates the audience in a position in which they question the apparent legitimacy of violence in response to the original act of atrocity. For Eric Kligerman (2012, p. 144-5), this manipulation of the audience's interpretation of the onscreen action represents a development of the Talmudic relationship between Tarantino and his audience. Kligerman (2012, p. 140) argues that any satisfaction gained from the filmmaker's turning the tables on the Nazis – an act of revenge that satisfies the frustration born of the inadequate

punishment meted out in relation to the crimes they committed – raises challenging questions surrounding the idea of justice with regards to our own specular relation with violence in contemporary history. Insisting that *Inglourious Basterds* must be interpreted in the context of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, Kligerman argues that Tarantino turns the resulting moral complexities back on the spectator, stating that:

> While the film may appeal to a desire for
> revenge, to satisfy one's juridical frustration
> through fantasies of inversion, Tarantino situates
> the spectator in a position from which to reflect
> on his/her ethical relation to the intersection
> between historical and cinematic violence,
> holding up other scenes of political violence that
> resonate within our own cultural imaginary
> (Kligerman, 2012, p. 157).

As a consequence of linking cinematic violence to historical violence, the pleasure in watching the graphic depiction of Donowitz beating Sargent Rachtman to death with a baseball bat is counterbalanced by both the fear etched on the face of the other prisoners and the uncomfortable whooping and howling expressed by the watching Basterds in encouragement – fictional reactions to the witnessing of torture that are reconsidered in light of the abuses committed at Abu Ghraib.

The relocation of the audience in a position in which they question their initial acceptance of a response to the 9/11 attacks in which further acts of brutality take place is most effectively achieved by the film's use of the Point of View (POV) shot. This use of the POV shot throughout *Inglourious Basterds* maintains the hierarchical positioning of the film's characters through the use of low-angle shots – which are juxtaposed with the high-angle shots described above – showing the faces of the Basterds as they torture and kill Nazis. For example, a low-angle shot depicts Rachtman looking up at the Basterds on the embankment as he is summoned by Raine, whilst this is repeated during the scene inside the blazing Paris picture house to

show Donowitz and Ulmer firing on the screaming crowd below. Indeed, there is even a POV shot from the perspective of Hitler as his body is being perforated with bullets.

This identification with the Nazi as perpetrator is a position that the audience occupies at the beginning of *Inglourious Basterds.* During the conclusion of the film's opening scene the viewer is located inside the farmhouse with Landa as he watches Shosanna escape across the French landscape. The camera's position behind the Nazi as he draws his gun to shoot Shosanna reinforces the viewer's identification with Landa as a perpetrator, thus prompting empathy towards his Jewish victim. This scene is of course a direct reference to the conclusion of *The Searchers.* As in Ford's film, the viewer is positioned in the darkness of the farm house looking out. The positioning of Shosanna outside of the interior space suggests a parallel between her and Edwards with regards to the act of revenge. In their elimination of those responsible for the original act of atrocity, both are representative of a utilitarian attitude that is deemed equally acceptable in the contexts of the American frontier and a post-Holocaust world.

However, with regards to *Inglourious Basterds'* critique of America's War on Terror, this scene has two functions. First, the introduction of the sadist Landa, who throughout the film's opening scene toys with Shosanna and her family hiding under the floorboards of LaPadite's farmhouse, provides a gauge by which the subsequent sadism of the Basterds can be measured. The role of the Nazi as the signifier of moral evil in Tarantino's film therefore exposes the questionable actions of the Basterds. Second, the POV of Landa pointing his pistol at Shosanna not only signals the beginning of the viewer's identification with the Nazi, but, more importantly, an association that is maintained as the latter moves from an initial position as perpetrator to that of victim. This trajectory is reflective of the position occupied by the detainees at Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib – presumed guilty, they become victims of torture used as part of the pre-emptive measures taken in the aftermath of the 9/11

attacks. With regards to Tarantino's film, the Nazi is therefore aligned with those accused of perpetrating atrocities against the United States. The use of the POV shot overtly locates the viewer in the shoes of those who both committed the original act of atrocity, as well as with those on the receiving end of retaliatory abuse.

The audience's switch from an identification with the perpetrator to that of the victim is something that Matthew Boswell observes when he argues that:

> The point of the film, which opens with a harrowing scene in a French farmhouse in which a Jewish family in hiding are massacred, is that we precisely empathise with Raine's rage and 'put our hands on the trigger with him' as he sets out on a campaign to slaughter the Nazi occupiers. But by the end of the film the roles have been reversed and we find ourselves positioned beneath Raine's knife, about to have a swastika inscribed on our own foreheads. The Jewish victim has turned executioner, and the viewer looks out onto the world through the eyes of the petrified Nazi: a pointed position from which to re-evaluate our earlier exultancy and 'vicarious enjoyment of violence (Boswell, 2012, p. 12).

In locating the viewer in a situation that requires this dual ethical response, the film raises the question of whether these two acts of retribution are defined by absolute or relative moral standards, and, furthermore, whether the revenging subject position – be it the remnants of a devastated European Jewry or a terrorised United States – affects the legitimacy of this act. The film's conclusion, which is a repetition of an earlier scene that depicts a low-angle POV shot of Raine and Donowitz carving a swastika on the forehead of the prisoner whose life they spare so he can inform others of what he witnessed, shows the Lieutenant marking Landa in the same way before transferring him to the American authorities for relocation as reward for his non-intervention in the plot to assassinate Hitler and other members of the Nazi high command in the Paris picture house. The final image shows Raine, knife in hand and accompanied by Private

Utivich, looking directly at the audience having just finished what he calls his "masterpiece". Although this act represents another example of Jewish revenge, in that a marked former Nazis would find it more difficult to avoid detection – and therefore prosecution – in the post-war world,[13] it represents the final chastisement of the audience's accommodation of torture. It is the viewer, here, who is being branded with the mark of Cain, and it is with this that they leave the cinema auditorium. If the carving of a swastika on the forehead of captured Nazis illustrates the complete power the Basterds have over their prisoners, and, as a consequence, their ability to determine the status of those in American custody, then this final shot represents the film's ability to do the same with its captive audience.

5.4 Conclusion

Rather than functioning as a screen behind which America can avoid present trauma, as Hansen states above, the three films discussed in this chapter confront the viewer with the question of morality in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. Consequently, I would argue that the focus on the traumatic events surrounding the Holocaust becomes a way of engaging with present traumas. The articulation of repressed issues regarding the moral integrity of the United States in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks through their displacement onto the Holocaust conforms to Freud's original concept of a 'screen memory'. Reliant on a "memory-trace" of the original traumatic event, it is this trace that provides the screen memory with "points of contact" enabling it to remodel the memory of the original event, thus highlighting the connection between repressed trauma and its expression in another form (Freud, 1950, p. 64). Both the challenging of a Manichean perception of morality in *The Grey Zone* and *Defiance*, and, more importantly, the parallels drawn in *Inglourious Basterds*

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[13] The parallel with the tattoo on the arms of those who survived the camps is central to the film's function as a retrospective Jewish revenge fantasy.

between the atrocities committed by the Nazis in the camps and those exacted by America in the aftermath of 9/11, gesture towards a reality in which core American values are brought into question. Although they are shown to interrogate traditional perceptions of morality in alternative ways – *The Grey Zone* denies its audience a secure position from which to judge the actions of the *Sonderkommando* squad, *Defiance* locating the subversion of moral codes in the context of community formation which is depicted as containing both the binaries that inform traditional perceptions of morality – both films locate the binaries of this moral framework within a singular 'body'. Nelson remains true to his main literary source in seeking to recreate for his audience the astonishment Levi experienced upon learning that compassion and brutality can coexist in the same individual at the same moment. In Zwick's film, on the other hand, it is the body of the community that is host to these apparently conflicting moral positions. Both *The Grey Zone* and *Defiance* therefore challenge a Manichean perspective of morality through the presentation of immoral acts in the context of a wider good.

Whereas both *The Grey Zone* and *Defiance* subvert the audience's expectations regarding the behaviour of Jewish characters in order to disrupt a widely accepted moral framework that is predicated on an apparent clear division between good and evil, *Inglourious Basterds* reinforces a Manichean sense of morality in order to draw the viewer's attention to his or her acceptance of violence in certain situations. Rather than simply representing a hallmark of Tarantino's cinema of excess as some have argued,[14] the graphic depiction of scalping, marking, and beating to death captured Nazi soldiers is therefore a further illustration of the film's locating its audience in a position that encourages them to question the apparent legitimacy of violence in response to the original act of atrocity. In foregrounding the moral ambiguity surrounding the steps taken in the

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[14] Michael Richardson (2012, p. 105) argues that, as in all Tarantino films, the use of graphic violence in *Inglourious Basterds* is merely formal and aesthetic, and does not engage the viewer on any other level than this.

name of protecting America from further terrorist attacks, Tarantino's film prompts its audience to not only reconsider the ethical basis of American actions in response to the 9/11 attacks, but, more importantly, their own acceptance of such actions. Initially encouraged to accept the Jewish revenge enacted by the Basterds via the film's use of archetypical characterisation and appeal to a Hollywood filmmaking tradition that presents the Holocaust in Manichean moral terms, Tarantino uses of a number of cinematic techniques to relocate the viewer in a position in which this acceptance is questioned. This repositioning is overtly suggested through the film's repeated use of the POV shot. In locating the viewer in the shoes of those on the receiving end of retribution, the validity of a response in which further acts of brutality take place is questioned with regards to the moral justification of the use of torture. Jewish revenge is seen to mask America's desire for retribution in the post-9/11 era, and any gratification in seeing Nazis killed by those they brutally oppressed is questioned on the basis of the abuses committed as a result of the counter-terrorism measures implemented by the Bush administration.

Chapter 6. Conclusion: From National Discourse to Transnational Connections

6.1 Introduction

In focusing on post-1990 cinematic representations of the Holocaust in Israel, Germany, and Hollywood, my thesis has explored how the Nazis' attempt to destroy the European Jewry has played a central role in cultural formations of national identity. At times of a crisis in collective identity, depictions of the Holocaust have been used to reinforce the ideological values of the specific national contexts from which they emerge. Indeed, in surveying the history of Holocaust cinema in these three countries, Chapter Two demonstrates that this has traditionally been the case – whether harnessed in support of the emerging Israeli state, contributing to the formation and maintenance of the foundational myth in the German Democratic Republic, or reiterating core American values in light of the perceived threat posed by National Socialism. Conversely, in discussing a number of recent Holocaust films in the alternative contexts of Israel's conflict with Palestine, the reunification of Germany, and post-9/11 America, the films discussed in the central chapters of my thesis, show that this cinema can also be seen to critique the values and political ideals informing such national contexts. For example, films such as *Inglourious Basterds* (2009) foreground a number of moral issues that mirror those that emerged as a result of America's response to the 9/11 attacks. Parallels between onscreen acts of Jewish revenge and the abuses committed by American military personnel during the so-called 'War on Terror' raise a number of ethical questions regarding the moral legitimacy of America's response.

Although my central filmic corpus challenges (rather than reinforces) the socio-political ideals that underpin the national contexts in which they were produced, their focus on the ideological concerns of

a particular nation represents a continuation of a traditional Holocaust cinema that utilised these events in order to reinforce core national values. In the context of post-9/11 America, the ethical questions surrounding the use of torture during the 'War on Terror' relates to the subversion of core American values such as freedom and justice. Whether reinforcing or challenging the political values of a specific nation, therefore, the Holocaust represents a malleable point of reference through which the national community can re-imagine itself. However, the comparison between the various ideological functions of Holocaust cinema across the three national contexts discussed during my thesis also present a number of commonalities that intersect the borders of the nation-state. I will therefore conclude by exploring the transnational aspects of my thesis, arguing that, in addition to expressing the specific national values, my central corpus of films foreground a number of issues that underpin the collective identity of transnational communities. The opening section of this concluding chapter, which is entitled, 'A Transnational Victimology', focuses on the challenging of established victim discourses that inform debates about the Holocaust in the three national contexts discussed in my thesis. Whereas in both Israel and the United States, morally suspect actions taken by the government undermine the nation's victim status, thus repositioning America in the role of perpetrator, in Germany, the tensions between these two positions define the public memory of the Holocaust. The second section, which is entitled, 'Transgenerational Shifts', will discuss the fact that the challenging of dominant discourses is usually informed by generational shifts. In the contexts of both Israel and Germany, for example, perspectives offered by members of the second generation undermine the discourses established by the previous one. Focusing on the Holocaust film as a cinematic genre, the third section, which is entitled, 'Trans-genre Developments', highlights a series of thematic and aesthetic commonalities across my central corpus that intersect not only individual national contexts, but also the fictional and documentary formats of cinema. The intention of exploring the transnational aspects of the Holocaust film is to highlight

the potential for future projects based on this methodological approach. In drawing comparisons between other national cinemas, the final section of this chapter, which is entitled, 'Transnational Holocaust Cinema: Potential Connections', will therefore suggests a number of possible avenues of further research.

6.2 A Transnational Victimology

In all three national contexts discussed in my thesis the challenging of established political values is based on the presentation of a contrary narrative that undermines the political ideals that locate the nation in the position of either victim or perpetrator with regards to the Holocaust. For example, the undermining of America's victim status following the 9/11 attacks is suggested by the act of Jewish revenge in Tim Blake Nelson's *The Grey Zone* (2001), Edward Zwick's *Defiance* (2008), and Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009). The accommodation of armed insurgence in the reformation of a Jewish community that prioritises the value of preservation in Zwick's film collapses the moral boundaries that separate victim from perpetrator. This is mirrored by the depiction of collaboration between Jews and Nazis in Nelson's film. With regards to Tarantino's film, the brutal retribution exacted against the Nazis by the Basterds (and Shosanna) represents an act of revenge that suggests America's transition from the position of victim to that of perpetrator. In locating the act of revenge in the alternative post-9/11 context of their production, the acceptance of onscreen violence in all three films is therefore questioned in light of the abuses committed by American soldiers at institutions such as Bagram Air Base, Abu Ghraib prison, and Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

The theme of avenging historical wrongs can also be seen to inform the Israeli films *Walk on Water* (2004) and *Forgiveness* (2006). In a similar vein to the post-9/11 context in America, the pragmatic measures undertaken by the protagonists of both films in their desire

to protect Israel against Palestinian extremism illustrates Israel's transition from the position of victim to that of perpetrator. In focusing on Palestinian oppression at the hands of Israel, these two films question the latter's status as victim as a result of the ongoing conflict with its Arab neighbour. Although the onscreen presence of Palestinian actor Khaled in *Don't Touch My Holocaust* (1994) embodies the depiction of Israeli aggression in these two films, the foregrounding of various marginalised ethnic identities in Tlalim's film challenges an official Holocaust discourse that, in its exclusion of the non-Ashkenazi perspective, reinforces a social hierarchy that was established during the formation of the Jewish state. Consequently, in all three films, the Holocaust becomes a site upon which various ethnic groups are able to question and challenge their respective positions of power – thus reinforcing Loshitzky's (2001) description of Israel as an amalgamation of disparate cultural identities ceaselessly vying for positions of dominance.

The foregrounding of a plurality of perspectives in order to undermine the singularity of a dominant discourse also informs the discussion about Germany's collective memory of the Nazi period in Chapter Four. The presentation of numerous testimonial accounts in André Heller and Othmar Schmiderer's *Blind Spot: Hitler's Secretary* (2002), Stefan Roloff's *The Red Orchestra* (2004), and Michael Verhoeven's *The Unknown Soldier* (2006) foregrounds a variety of individual wartime experiences that undermines a German public memory of the Nazi past that has exclusively focused on narratives of guilt or victimhood since the country's reunification in 1990. Rather than being seen as a denial of any involvement in a criminal organisation responsible for the murder of millions, Traudl Junge's role as Hitler's personal secretary represents another facet of the German wartime experience based on the conformity of the individual in response to the pressures exerted by an invasive and totalitarian regime. This blurring of the boundary between victim and perpetrator positions is also suggested in *The Red Orchestra*. Although their responses to the pressures of the Nazi regime differ from Junge's, the

presentation of testimonies recounting the clandestine activities of this resistance group implies a level of conformity that provided the basis for both survival, and, subsequently, active opposition. The simultaneous onscreen presence of perpetrator and victim positions as separate narratives competing for a position of dominance in *The Unknown Soldier* also suggests the continued existence of both in discourses on the Nazi period. Readdressing an imbalance created by an exclusive focus on acts of perpetration in the *Wehrmachtsausstellung*, the juxtaposing of evidence pertaining to the Wehrmacht's involvement in Nazi crimes with opposition to the findings of the exhibitions indicates that the perpetrator narrative of the latter amounts to one amongst many that constitute the German wartime experience. Challenging the tendency to define German wartime experiences on the basis of the victim/perpetrator binary, the presentation of numerous testimonial accounts in the three films discussed in Chapter Four posits the idea that these experiences are located at various points between these two extremes.

6.3 Transgenerational Shifts

This challenging of dominant Holocaust discourses tends to coincide with shifts from one generation to the next. Whereas the first generation constructs and establishes a particular version of the events surrounding the Second World War, their children challenge this narrative through questioning its ideological function. This process is overtly present in the contexts of Israel and Germany. The small cycle of films made by members of Israel's second generation during the 1980s disrupted a 'Zionist master narrative' that prioritised examples of Jewish resistance towards Nazism in support of its redefinition of the Jew as the active defender of the new state. The focus on the suffering endured by their parents in films such as *The Summer of Aviya* (1988), *Choice and Destiny* (1993) and *Daddy, Come to the Fair* (1994), foregrounds the previously marginalised

majority of survivor experiences. This process is repeated in Tlalim's *Don't Touch My Holocaust*, where both Madi's description of her father's experience in the camps and Moni Yoshef's account of a childhood spent in a village largely populated by Holocaust survivors represents another example of foregrounding survivor suffering. In focusing on the relationship between parent survivors and their children, these second generation films also highlight the transposition of the traumatic Holocaust experience from one generation to the next. Exposed to the suffering of the previous generation, both Madi's tattooing of a number on her forearm and starving of herself in an attempt to experience the suffering of the camp entity of the *muselmann*, and Yoshef's defiant singing of Israeli war songs whilst urinating on the site of Hitler's bunker illustrates the continued traumatic effect of the Holocaust on members of Israel's second generation. The transposition of trauma is also a theme in *Walk on Water* and *Forgiveness.* Indeed, it is the exposure to their parents' suffering during the Holocaust that underpins Eyal and David's decision to defend Israel's sovereignty. Whereas the continued presence of Holocaust trauma is linked to Israel's aggression towards Palestine in these two films, in *Don't Touch My Holocaust* the memory of the Nazi genocide is questioned on the basis of its role in maintaining the power relations that inform wider Israeli society. Rather than questioning the trauma experienced by members of Israel's second generation, therefore, these three films seek to undermine a process by which their subsequent position is utilised to reinforce both Ashkenazi exclusivity with regards to Israel's Holocaust discourse, and, consequently, its hegemonic position.

In the context of West Germany, the second generation is of course defined by its reaction against the supposed complicity of their parents and grandparents with the crimes committed during the Nazi period. Disaffected by the continued presence of former Nazis in wider society, and not wanting to shoulder the burden of Germany's Holocaust legacy, student groups protested (sometimes violently) against the German authorities. This unrest continued throughout the

1970s, during which the activities of the so-called Red Army Faction resulted in the death of a number of prominent West German officials. The presentation of testimonies of German suffering and loss in both *The Red Orchestra* and *The Unknown Soldier* challenge the equation of this generation with complicity. In describing the suffering experienced by their fathers during the Second World War, both Stefan Roloff and Verhoeven's former school friend, Martin Jordan, undermine the perception of the war generation as a homogenous mass complying with the Nazis and their murderous aims. Although generational shifts in Germany are commonly associated with changing attitudes towards the Nazi period, the intra-generational differences presented in *The Red Orchestra* and *The Unknown Soldier* suggest that tensions concerning German guilt and victimhood do not simply occur *between* generations. In doing so, these two films can be seen to mirror the aim of *Don't Touch My Holocaust*. For example, parallels can be drawn between Roloff's presentation of his father's story as an attempt to address the myth linking the Red Orchestra with communism, and the foregrounding of their parents' suffering by members of Israel's second generation in order to challenge a dominant narrative that defines the Holocaust experience on the basis of Jewish resistance. Furthermore, Madi's questioning of the role played by Israel's memory of the Holocaust in maintaining the power relations that inform Israeli society undermines the association of the second generation with the foregrounding of their parents' suffering.

Whilst generational shifts in America may not be associated with alterations in the focus of discourses surrounding the Holocaust, there is a notable change in the way in which Jews are depicted in all three films discussed in Chapter Five. Breaking with a Hollywood tradition that either marginalises the Jewish perspective or portrays the Jew as a passive victim, *The Grey Zone*, *Defiance*, and *Inglourious Basterds* present Jews as active agents influencing the historical events in which they are involved. Both the *Sonderkommando*'s destruction of the Auschwitz crematoria in Nelson's film, and the use of armed insurgency in Zwick's, present factual events in which Jews can

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be seen to actively alter the course of history. Although depicting a fictional account of events surrounding the Second World War, as opposed to the dramatization of historical actuality in both Nelson's and Zwick's films, the act of revenge in Tarantino's film appeared to chime with a number of people from America's Jewish community. Filmmaker Eli Roth, who plays the part of Sergeant Donny Donowitz, said that his character's beating Nazis to death was an "almost a deep sexual satisfaction ... an orgasmic feeling", whilst Tarantino's producer, Lawrence Bender, described *Inglourious Basterds* as a "Jewish wet dream" (Goldberg, 2009). These sentiments are echoed by Zwick, who, in the preface of Nechama Tec's biography of the Bielski Otraid, states that *Defiance* is a response to the "iconography of passivity and victimization" imposed upon America's Jewish children as an illustration of the Holocaust (Tec, 2008, p. ix).

6.4 Trans-genre Developments

The depiction of Jewish revenge in *The Grey* Zone, *Defiance*, and *Inglourious Basterds* raises questions with regards to the perception of the Holocaust film as a cinematic genre. In questioning America's response to the 9/11 attacks, these films contrast with traditional Hollywood representations of the Holocaust that reinforced the political values and aims of the national context from which they emerged. Echoing earlier Hollywood films such as *Marathon Man* and *The Boys of Brazil*, this represents a break with a cinematic genre that utilised the events surrounding the genocide of the Jews in order to highlight the perceived threat posed by National Socialism to American democracy. Furthermore, the depiction of Jewish agency in the films discussed in Chapter Five mirrors Israeli cinema. Despite the alteration in political message from reinforcing to challenging the 'Zionist master narrative', *Don't Touch My Holocaust*, *Walk on Water*, and *Forgiveness* continue the tradition in Israeli cinema of presenting the Jew as an active agent able to influence historical events.

However, in linking the traumatic effects of the Nazi genocide to Palestinian suffering, *Don't Touch My Holocaust* represents a development in cinematic depictions of the Holocaust that moves beyond the prioritisation of the survivor experienced and its lasting effects on their children. Although, as discussed in the previous section, parallels can be drawn between Madi's tattooing of a number on her forearm and starving herself, and other second generation films on the basis of the transposition of trauma from one generation to the next, the foregrounding of similar psychological responses from Sephardi Jews Moni Yoshef and Didi Mayaan suggests that Holocaust trauma affects Israel's second generation in general rather than exclusively the children of survivors. As I have argued in Chapter Three, it is this insight that forms the basis of the film's critique of the continued use of the Holocaust for political purposes.

In challenging traditional cinematic representations of the Nazi period in both West and East German cinema, the films discussed in Chapter Four also represent a development with regards to the Holocaust film in Germany. Although the theme of German victimhood in *Blind Spot*, *The Red Orchestra*, and *The Unknown Soldier* conforms to traditional depictions of Germany as another casualty of Hitler's regime, the juxtaposition of the country's victim status with narratives of perpetration and conformity in these films represents a complexity that challenges the notion of a wartime experience that is based on either 'victim' or 'perpetrator' positions. Whereas the complexity of the German wartime experience is overtly presented through the juxtaposition of these opposing positions in *The Unknown Soldier*, it is implied in both *Blind Spot* and *The Red Orchestra*. Although Heller and Schmiderer's focus on Junge's role as Hitler's secretary can be seen as another attempt by Germany's second generation to highlight the complicity of the previous one, the discussion in Chapter Four regarding the pressures exerted by the Nazi regime on the individual raises questions with regards to this supposed collusion. As a consequence, Junge's work for the administrative arm of the Third Reich is located in this necessity to conform in order to survive. This is

an issue that is particularly pertinent in Roloff's film. In detailing the resistance activities of the Red Orchestra, the numerous testimonial accounts presented in the film express a level of conformity that underpinned this opposition.

As a post-Holocaust phenomenon, commonalities across national boundaries with regards to the issues surrounding the 'second generation' are to be expected. However, in their cinematic representation of this group, my central filmic corpus also displays commonalities with regards to the use of cinematography. For example, the parallels drawn between Martin Jordan and Madi on the basis of both their description of the suffering endured by their fathers and their respective expression of secondary trauma is reinforced by the use of both a static camera and close-ups. This aesthetic approach subsequently enables Verhoeven and Tlalim to present the onscreen manifestation of the transposition of Holocaust trauma from one generation to the next. Indeed, the emotion expressed by Jordan in speaking about his father is a trope commonly employed in second generation Israeli cinema (see, for example, *Choice and Destiny* and *Will My Mother Go Back to Berlin?* (1993), and *Daddy Come to the Fair* (1994)). This focus on Holocaust suffering and its traumatic effects on the succeeding generation can also be seen to cut across cinematic boundaries as well as national ones. In addition to documentary films such as *The Unknown Soldier* and *Don't Touch My Holocaust*, *Walk on Water* and *Forgiveness* present protagonists traumatically affected by the Holocaust. Again, this transposition is expressed through the predominant use of close-ups and static camera.

6.5 Transnational Holocaust Cinema: Potential Connections

The presence of common themes, tropes, and cinematographic approaches across these films supports my hypothesis of their transnational connection, whilst also suggesting another aspect with

regards to the ways in which Holocaust cinema relates to the specific issues arising from the national context of its production. For rather than being seen exclusively in terms of the construction of nation, Holocaust cinema contributes to the formation of 'identity communities' that cut across national boundaries. Here, Anderson's concept of the 'imagined community' need not simply apply to formations of national identity. Indeed, the engagement with the Holocaust film highlights the existence of a common ground that constitute communities from various nations. This suggests the potential to draw further comparisons between other national cinemas and the issues that arise from their specific contexts. Although the preceding chapters have not provided the space to discuss further avenues of research, I would like to conclude by outlining a number of possible connections between groups of nations whose relationship to the Holocaust has the potential to raise a number of commonalities that exist across national boundaries. As a consequence, my aim is to promote the transnational aspect of Holocaust cinema as an approach to further research on this subject.

A focus on former Nazi-occupied countries such as France, Poland, and Holland, could explore questions of resistance and collaboration. As an extension of the discussion of victim and perpetrator narratives in my thesis, an exploration of cinematic representations of the Holocaust in national cinemas of these three countries would highlight the ideological function of resistance narratives during the post-war period. This would also apply to eastern European countries such as Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, where the question of collaboration is still a contentious issue. Furthermore, the question of victimhood is also prominent in these three national contexts. Whereas the portrayal of the role played by Hungarian civilians in the deportation of the country's Jewish population in the film *Fateless* (2005) represents a recognition of responsibility that was missing in earlier films such as *The Shop on Main Street* (1965), productions such as *Katyn* (2007) and *In Darkness* (2011) continue to foreground Poland's victim status. Continuing the

focus on these three eastern European countries, comparing depictions of the Second World War both during the communist era and following the end of the Cold War would not only highlight the altering political functionality of the Nazi period, but also the changing perceptions of Soviet rule. Away from the Holocaust, finally, there is the potential to compare cinematic depictions of different genocides. Comparisons between films dealing with acts of perpetration in Soviet Russian, Rwanda, and Indonesia, for example, could reveal a number of transnational commonalities that would provide an insight into acts of political mass violence.

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Attack at Dawn (1970) Directed by Menahem Golan [DVD]. La Crosse:
Platinum Disc, 1998.

Beaufort (2007) Directed by Joseph Cedar [DVD]. London: Trinity Filmed
Entertainment, 2009.

Because of that War (*B'Glal Hamilhamah Hahi*, 1988) Directed by Orna
Ben-Dor Niv [VHS]. Teaneck: Ergo Media, 2003.

Before the Fall (*Napola - Elite für den Führer*, 2004) Dennis Gansel
[DVD]. New York: Palisades Pictures, 2005.

Blind Spot: Hitler's Secretary (*Im toten Winkel: Hitlers Sekretärin*, 2002)
Directed André Heller and Othmar Schmiderer [DVD]. New York:
Sony Pictures Classics, 2003.

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Film, 2007.

Captain America: The First Avenger (2011) Directed by Joe Johnston
[DVD]. California: Paramount Home Entertainment.

Casablanca (1942) Directed by Michael Curtiz [DVD]. California: Warner
Home Video, 2006.

Choice and Destiny (*Ha-Behirah V'Hagoral*, 1993) Directed by Tsipi
Reibenbach [DVD]. Illinoi: Tsipi Productions, 1993.

Clipped Wings (1953) Directed by Edward L. Bernds [VHS]. California:
Warner Home Video, 1998.

Clouds Over Israel (*Sinaia*, 1966) Directed by Ivan Longyel [VHS]. United
States: Harold Cornsweet Films.

Confessions of a Nazi Spy (1939) Directed by Anatole Litvak [DVD].
California: Warner Brothers Burbank Studios.

Daddy, Come to the Fair (*Abbaleh, Bo L'Luna Park*, 1994) Directed by
  Nitza Gonen [FILM]. Israel: Fatherland Productions.

Death Mills (*Todesmühlen*, 1945). Directed by Billy Wilder. London: BFI
  Video, 2014.

Defiance (2008) Directed by Edward Zwick [DVD]. Los Angeles:
  Paramount Home Entertainment, 2009.

Don't Touch My Holocaust (*Al Tigu Le B'Shoah*, 1994). Directed by Asher
  Tlalim. [No further reference details available].

Downfall (*Der Untergang*, 2004) Directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel [DVD].
  London: Momentum Pictures, 2005.

Dresden (2006) Directed by Roland Suso Richter [DVD]. Port
  Washington: Koch Vision, 2008.

Exodus (1960) Directed by Otto Preminger [VHS]. Burbank: Warner
  Home Video, 1996.

Faithful City (*Kirya Ne'emana*, 1952) Directed by Joseph Leytes [Film].
  Santa Monica: RKO Radio Pictures.

Fateless (2005) Directed by Lajos Koltai [DVD]. London: Dogwoof
  Pictures, 2006).

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Flames in the Ashes (*Pnei Hamered*, 1987) Directed by Haim Gouri and
  Jacques Enrlich [VHS]. Teaneck: Ergo Media, 1989.

For a Few Dollars More (1965) Directed by Sergio Leone [DVD]. Los
  Angeles: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, 2007.

Foreign Correspondent (1940) Directed by Alfred Hitchcock [DVD].
  London: Universal Pictures UK, 2003.

Forgiveness (*Mechilot*, 2006) Directed by Udi Aloni [Film]. New York:
  International Film Circuit, 2008.

Genocide (1982) Directed by Arnold Schwartzman [DVD]. Munich: Polyband, 2009.

Gentleman's Agreement (1947) Directed by Elia Kazan [DVD]. Los Angeles: Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, 2012.

Girls (*Banot*, 1985) Directed by Nadav Levitan [FILM]. Israel: Nachshon Films.

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Heimat: A Chronicle of Germany (*Heimat: Eine deutsche Chronik*, 1984) Directed by Edgar Reitz [DVD]. Chicago: Facets Multimedia Distribution, 2004.

Heritage (1948) Directed by Yoel Lotan. [No further reference details available].

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer (*Giva 24 Aina Onah*, 1954) Directed by Thorold Dickenson [VHS]. Teaneck: Ergo Media Incorporated, 1987.

Holocaust: The Story of the Family Weiss (1979) Directed by Marvin J. Chomsky [DVD]. London: Revelation Films, 2008.

House on 92nd Street (1945) Directed by Henry Hathaway [DVD]. Los Angeles: Twentieth Century Fox, 2007.

Human Failure (*Menschliches Versagen*, 2008) Directed by Michael Verhoeven [DVD]. Leipzig: Kinowelt Home Entertainment, 2009.

In 72 There Was No War (*B'Shivim Ushtayim Lo Hayta Milhama*, 1995)
  Directed by Dudu Krainer [DVD]. Chicago: Facets Multimedia
  Distribution, 2006.

In Darkness (2011) Directed by Agnieszka Holland [DVD]. Toronto:
  Mongrel Media, 2012.

Inglourious Basterds (2009) Directed by Quentin Tarantino [DVD].
  London: Universal Home Entertainment, 2009.

Inside Nazi Germany (1938) Directed by Jack Glenn [Film]. Santa
  Monica: RKO Radio Pictures.

In Those Days (*In jenen Tagen*, 1947) Directed by Helmut Käutner [DVD].
  Leipzig: Kinowelt Home Entertainment, 2006.

Jacob the Liar (*Jakob der Lügner*, 1974) Directed by Frank Beyer [DVD].
  Fort Wayne: Hen's Tooth Video, 2004.

Judgement at Nuremberg (1961) Directed by Stanley Kramer [DVD].
  California: MGM Home Entertainment, 2007.

Katyn (2007). Directed by Andrzej Wajda [DVD]. London: Artificial Eye,
  2009.

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  Rex Films Home Video, 1986.

Kristallnacht (1979) Directed by Chick Strand [FILM]. United States:
  Canyon Cinema.

Late Summer Blues (*Blues Lahofesh Hagadol*, 1987) Directed by Renen
  Schorr [VHS]. New York: Kino International, 1988.

L'chaim: To Life (1974) Directed by Harold Mayer [DVD]. Waltham:
  National Center for Jewish Film, 2007.

Lebanon (2009) Directed by Samuel Maoz [DVD]. London: Metrodome
  Distribution, 2010.

Lodz Ghetto (1984) Directed by Alan Adelson and Kathryn Taverna
[DVD]. Thorigné-Fouillard: Filmédia, 2013.

Long Is the Road (*Lang ist der Weg*, 1948) Directed by Herbert B.
Fredersdorf and Marek Goldstein [DVD]. Waltham: National Center
for Jewish Film, 1995.

Love '47 (*Liebe 47*, 1949) Directed by Wolfgang Liebeneiner. Germany:
Panorama-Film.

Marathon Man (1976) Directed by John Schlesinger [DVD]. Los Angeles:
Paramount Home Video, 2002.

Memories of the Eichmann Trial (*Zichronot Mishpat*, 1979) Directed by
David Perlov. [No further reference details available].

Morituri (1948) Directed by Eugen York [DVD]. Saarbrücken: Pidax Film,
2014.

Murderers Among Us: The Simon Wiesenthal Story (1989) Directed by
Brian Gibson [VHS]. New York: Home Box Office Home Video,
1998.

Naked Among Wolves (*Nackt unter Wölfen*, 1963) Directed by Frank
Beyer [DVD]. New York: First Run Features, 2005.

Nazi Hunter: The Beate Klarsfeld Story (1986) Directed by Michael
Lindsay-Hogg [DVD]. Klagenfurt: Schröder Media, 2014.

Newland (Aretz Hadasha,1994) Directed by Orna Ben-Dor Niv [VHS].
Chicago: Facets Multimedia Distribution, 2003.

Night and Fog (*Nuit et brouillard*, 1955) Directed by Alain Resnais [DVD].
New York: The Criterion Collection, 2004.

Night Soldier (*Hayal Halayla*, 1985) Directed by Dan Woolman [FILM].
United States: Cannon Film Distributors.

Once Upon a Honeymoon (1942) Directed by Leo McCarey [DVD].
Burbank: Warner Home Video, 2009.

Once Upon a Time in the West (1968) Directed by Sergio Leone [DVD].
Los Angeles: Paramount Pictures, 2010.

Operation Eichmann (1961) Directed by Robert G. Springsteen [FILM]. Glendale: Allied Artists Pictures.

Operation Thunderbolt (*Mivtsa Yonatan*, 1977) Directed by Menahem Golan [VHS]. Los Angeles: MGM/UA Home Entertainment, 2003.

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Passover Fever (Leylasede, 1995) Directed by Shemi Zarhin [DVD]. Toronto: Mongrel Media, 1995.

Pillar of Fire (*Amud Ha'Esh*, 1959). Directed by Larry Frisch [FILM]. New York: Hoffberg Company.

Sayarim (1967) Directed by Micha Shagrir [FILM]. Israel: Castel Company.

Schindler's List (1993) Directed by Steven Spielberg [DVD]. London: Universal Pictures, 2004.

Shoah (1985) Directed by Claude Lanzmann [DVD]. London: Eureka Entertainment, 2007.

Siege (*Matzor*, 1969) Directed by Gilberto Tofano [DVD]. Teaneck: Ergo Media, 2003.

Sobibor (*Sobibór, 14 octobre 1943, 16 heures*, 2001) Directed by Claude Lanzmann [DVD]. Berlin: absolut MEDIEN, 2016.

Somewhere in Berlin (*Irgendwo in Berlin*, 1946) Directed by Gerhard Lamprecht [DVD]. Berlin: Icestorm Entertainment, 2006.

Sophie's Choice (1982) Directed by Alan Pakula [DVD]. Santa Monica: Lions Gate, 1998.

Stalingrad (1993) Directed by Joseph Vilsmair [DVD]. London: Entertainment in Video, 2001.

Stalingrad: Dogs, Do You Want to Live Forever? (*Hunde, wollt ihr ewig leben*, 1959) Directed by, Frank Wisbar [DVD]. Leipzig: Kinowelt Home Entertainment, 2001.

Sun Seekers (*Sonnensucher*, 1958) Directed by Konrad Wolf [DVD]. New York: First Run Features, 2005.

Tevye and His Seven Daughters (*Tuvia Vesheva Benotav*, 1968) Directed by Menahem Golan [FILM]. Israel: Noah Films.

The Attic: The Hiding of Anne Frank (1988) Directed by John Erman [VHS]. Chatsworth: Image Entertainment, 1994.

The Axe of Wandsbeck (*Das Beil von Wandsbek*, 1951) Directed by Falk Harnack [DVD]. New York: First Run Feature, 2009.

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas (2008) Directed by Mark Herman [DVD]. Santa Monica: Miramax, 2009.

The Boys from Brazil (1978) Directed by Franklin J. Schaffner [DVD]. London: ITV Studios Home Entertainment, 2003.

The Bridge (*Die Brücke*, 1959) Directed by Bernard Wicki [DVD]. New York: Criterion Collection, 2015.

The Bridge (*Die Brücke*, 2008) Directed by Wolfgang Panzer [DVD]. Hilversum: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2009.

The Council of the Gods (*Der Rat der Götter*, 1950) Directed by Kurt Maetzig [DVD]. New York: First Run Features, 2007.

The Dark Knight (2008) Directed by Christopher Nolan [DVD]. Burbank: Warner Home Video, 2008.

The Debt (2007) Directed by Assaf Bernstein [DVD]. Culver City: TriCoast Worldwide, 2008.

The Desert Fox: The Story of Rommel (1951) Directed by Henry Hathaway [DVD]. Los Angeles: Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, 2012.

The Diary of Anne Frank (1959) Directed by George Stevens [DVD]. Los Angeles: Twentieth Century Fox, 2005.

The Eighty-first Blow (*Hamakah Hashmonim Ve'Echad*, 1974) Directed by David Bergman, Jacques Ehrlich, and Haim Gouri [TV]. Arlington: Public Broadcasting Service, 1977.

The Gatekeepers (2012) Directed by Dror Moreh [DVD]. Culver City: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2013.

The Glass Cage (*Ha-kluv Hazehuhit*, 1965) Directed by Philippe Arthuys and Jean-Louis Levi-Alvarés [FILM]. Israel: Noy Films.

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly (1966) Directed by Sergio Leone [DVD]. Culver City: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2006.

The Great Dictator (2010) Directed by Charlie Chaplin 1940 [DVD]. London: Artificial Eye, 2015.

The Grey Zone (2001) Directed by Tim Blake Nelson [DVD]. Santa Monica: Lions Gate Films Home Entertainment, 2003.

The Legacy: Children of Survivors (1980) Directed by Miriam Strilky Rosenbush. [No further reference details available].

The Man in the Glass Booth (1975) Directed by Arthur Hiller [DVD]. New York: Kino Video, 2003.

The Mortal Storm (1940) Directed by Frank Borzage [DVD]. Burbank: Warner Home Video, 2009.

The Murderers are Among Us (*Die Mörder sind unter-uns*, 1946) Directed by Wolfgang Staudte [DVD]. New York: First Run Features, 2002.

The Nasty Girl (*Das schreckliche Mädchen*, 1990) Directed by Michael Verhoeven [DVD]. Shenley: Arrow Films, 2005.

The Pawnbroker (1964) Directed by Sidney Lumet [DVD]. Chicago: Olive Films, 2012.

The Pedestrian (*Der Fußgänger*, 1973) Directed by Maximillian Schell [DVD]. Ismaning: EuroVideo, 2005.

The Red Orchestra (*Die Rote Kapelle*, 2003) Directed by Stefan Roloff [DVD]. New York: When is 6 9 Productions, 2010.

The Search (1948) Directed by Fred Zinnemann. Burbank: Warner Home Video, 2009.

The Searchers (1956) Directed by John Ford [DVD]. Burbank: Warner Home Video, 2007.

The Shop on Main Street (1965) Directed by Ján Kadár and Elmar Klos [DVD]. New York, The Criterion Collection, 2001.

The Sons of Great Bear (*Die Söhne der großen Bärin*, 1966) Directed by Josef Mach [DVD]. Berlin: Icestorm Entertainment, 2015.

The Specialist (1999) Directed by Eyal Sivan [DVD]. New York: Kino International, 2000.

The Stalingrad Doctor (*Der Arzt von Stalingrad*, 1958) Directed by Geza von Radvany [DVD]. Leipzig: Kinowelt Home Entertainment, 2006.

The State of Israel vs. John Ivan Demjanuk (1988) Directed by Naomi Ben Natan-Schory. [No further reference details available].

The Stranger (1946) Directed by Orson Welles [DVD]. Tarzana: Passport International Entertainment, 2006.

The Summer of Aviya (*Ha-Kayitz Shel Aviya*, 1988) Directed by Eli Cohen [VHS]. Teaneck: Ergo Media, 2005.

The Unknown Soldier (*Der unbekannte Soldat*, 2006) Directed by Michael Verhoeven [DVD]. New York: First Run Features, 2006.

The University of Chicago (2013) *A Conversation with Elie Wiesel: In the Shadow of the Flames*. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IABEgWaYm-k (Accessed 25 June 2014).

The Visit (*Der Besuch*, 1964) Directed by Bernhard Wicki [DVD]. Koln: Alive Vertrieb und Marketing, 2011.

The Vulture (*Ha-Ayit*, 1981) Directed by Yaky Yosha [VHS]. New York: New Yorker Films, 1982.

The Wandering Jew (1933) Directed by George Roland [DVD]. Waltham: National Center for Jewish Film, 1999.

The Wave (*Die Welle*, 2008) Directed by Dennis Gansel [DVD]. Los Angeles: Paramount Home Entertainment, 2008.

The Wooden Gun (*Roveh Huliot*, 1979) Directed by Ilan Moshenson [VHS]. Teaneck: Ergo Media, 1989.

To Be or Not To Be (1942) Directed by Ernst Lubitsch [DVD]. New York: The Criterion Collection, 2013.

To See If I'm Smiling (2007) Directed by Tamar Yarom [DVD]. Berlin: First Hand Films, 2007.

Two Fingers from Sidon (*Shtei Etzbaot Mi'Tzidon*, 1986) Directed by Eli Cohen [FILM]. Israel: IDF Film and Photography Unit.

Victims of Persecution (1933) Directed by Bud Pollard [FILM]. New York: Bud Pollard Productions.

Voices from the Attic (1988) Directed by Debbie Goodstein [DVD]. Santa Monic: Direct Cinema Limited, 2007.

Walk on Water (2004). Directed by Eytan Fox [DVD]. Culver City: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2005.

Waltz with Bashir (*Vals Im Bashir*, 2008) Directed by Ari Folman [DVD]. Culver City: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2009.

Will My Mother Go Back to Berlin? (1993) Directed by Micha Peled. [No further reference details available].

Young Törless (*Der junge Törless, 1966*) Directed by Volker Schlöndorff [DVD]. New York: The Criterion Collection, 2005.