

Syllabus: Revisionism and Antisemitism in Contemporary Movies.

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My specialty as a scholar is History and Cinema and my field of research is the Critical Theory of the Imaginary. I dedicated my academic life studying the Anti-Semite Propaganda under the supervision of the great historian Anita Novinsky.

In my studies I was influenced by authors like Siegfried Kracauer, Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Walther Benjamin, Elias Canetti, Hannah Arendt, Susan Sontag, Thomas Szasz, Erving Goffman, Simone de Beauvoir, Jean-Paul Sartre, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Michel Foucault, Jean Delumeau, Marc Ferro.

Living two years in Germany with a scholarship from CAPES, I could see in *Deutsche Kinemathek* in Berlin and other film archives 300 of the 1.300 feature films produced by Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels.

Since the classic works *Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik* (1969) by Gerd Albrecht and *Antisemitische Filmpropaganda: die Darstellung des Juden im nationalsozialistischen Spielfilm* (1970) by Dorothea Hollstein, the historians considered only 22 of the 1.300 feature films as anti-Semitic propaganda.

They also accepted the idea of the filmmaker Arthur Maria Rabenalt in *Film im Zwielicht - Über den unpolitischen Film des Dritten Reiches und die Begrenzung des totalitären Anspruches* (1978) that the majority of filmic production in Third Reich was apolitical, innocent entertainment. But there is no such thing in a totalitarian society.

According to Marc Ferro, who created in his classic studies *Analyse de film*, *analyse de sociétés: Une source nouvelle pour l'histoire (Pedagogies pour notre temps)* (1975) and *Cinema and History (Contemporary Approaches to Film and Media Series)* (1977) a new field of knowledge, we can “read” a movie as counter-analyses of the society. Made by many agents, the cinematic image acquires several layers of information and can reveal much more than the producers have intended to show.

Analyzing the Nazi movies I could observe the destruction of the Jews presented in several different ways in the so called *Unterhaltungsfilme* (feature films). The big error of the historiography was to ignore that Goebbels developed a smart strategy to put anti-Semitic propaganda in the movies.

Fanatic cinephile, Goebbels used to see two films every night and his intention was to write as his *magnus opus* a *tractatus* about the language of the movies. He didn't have time for this, but remains the producer of the second cultural industry of his epoch, only behind the American one.

The Nazi cultural industry is the legacy of Goebbels. His heritage still operates the minds, once the Nazi movies are daily exhibited in television, home theaters, film festivals, cultural events and so on.

Goebbels knew how to camouflage anti-Semitism in entertainment films. He explored to maximum the possibilities of the moving talking images to create negative and positive feelings in the audience, stimulating love for Arian heroes and hate against Semitic villains.

The historians were not prepared to understand the tridimensionality of the moving talking image. For this reason they saw only 22 anti-Semitic films in 1.300 feature films produced by Goebbels.

I was shocked with the blindness of the historians. They hadn't understood the creation of cinetypes of Villains that was not necessary to name as Jews.

It was enough to the German audience - indoctrinated by all other media - to see the bad characters been like they think the Jews were: banker, rich,

ambitious, tyrant, egoist, avid for money and power, spy, foreigner, corrupt, sick, etc.

Goebbels created the cinetype of the Jew, tided with jewels, money, diseases. They were capitalists, tyrants and spread the pest, like in *Gold* (1935), *La Habanera* (1936), *Titanic* (1943) – films that the historians never described as anti-Semitic.

Films that are screened daily in Germany: on television, home theaters, film festivals etc. Above all, we can say that the entire Nazi Cinema was Anti-Semitic, because the first measure took by the Regime was to wipe out all the Jews of the film industry.

The German film from 1938 to 1945 is a *Judenfrei* cinema, an anti-Semitic cinema since the biological basis of its production.

The discipline *Contemporary antisemitism and revisionism in the movies* will be open to all students of the campus and offer in the Post-Graduate Program of Arts at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, which is one of the best in Brazil.

It will take place in the first semester of 2020, based on some classes of the ISGAP Summer Course 2019, specially by Deborah Lipstadt, Joël Kotek and Bassam Tibi, an in my Doctorate Thesis *Imaginaries of the Destruction: The role of the Images on the Preparation of the Holocaust* (1994).

A stereotype is a bidimensional caricature: an illustration, a drowning, a cartoon, a poster. A movie has many other elements a filmmaker can use to stereotype a character: the art direction, the cinematography, the scenography, the lightening, the sounds, the music, the voices, the intonation, the angles of camera etc.

A talking moving image is much more complex than a silent one. The anti-Semitic propaganda operated in Nazi talking movies in a new language, with stereotypes that weren't bidimensional anymore, but three-dimensional: what I called a cinetype.

Since the nineties, I identified a Revisionist cinema who spreads in contemporary societies the same cinetypes created by Goebbels in his movies. Some of them have been produced in Hollywood by German filmmakers, like Robert Emmerich and Wolfgang Petersen. Examples of Revisionist movies:

Outbreak (1995), by Wolfgang Petersen: The civilization is threatened by an African monkey carrying a lethal airborne virus smuggled into the U.S. as an illegal immigrant. To control the spread of the disease, the Army wants to explode an atomic bomb. Good doctors fight against the clock to save a city in quarantine, converted in a concentration camp.

Get on the Bus (1996) by Spike Lee: a group of African-American men takes a cross-country bus trip to participate in the Million Man March. During the trip some Anti-Semite remarks are openly made.

Life is Beautiful (1997), by Roberto Benigni: The Holocaust is transformed on a fairy tale plenty of sentimentalism and comedy.

The Patriot (2000), by Roland Emmerich: People are murdered in a church in flame like in a gas chamber. With this metaphor of the Holocaust the German director Roland Emmerich tries to relief the “German guilty”.

Knight Without a Horse (2002): Egyptian TV series in 30 episodes based on the *Protocols*.

The Merchant of Venice (2004), by Michael Radford: the first full-length sound film in English of Shakespeare's play tries to modernize the plot with a gay sensibility, but only created a new cinetype of the secular stereotype of the Jew (Al Pacino) as the rich, manipulator cruel villain.

The Passion of the Christ (2004), by Mel Gibson: A gospel of the ultraviolence where the Jews are demonized as the killers of the Messiah, associated with a living female representation of the Evil.

Zahra's Blue Eyes / For You Palestine (2004): TV series created by Ali Derakhshi, former Minister of Education of Iran. Israeli doctors harvest organs from Palestinian children.

Inside Man (2006), by Spike Lee: The villain (Christopher Plummer) made a fortune collaborating with Nazis and founded a bank in 1947. He hides the proof of his crimes in the bank's safe. He could easily have destroyed it instead of keep it safe. But this would destroy the artificial plot and its subtle association between Evil, Banker, Nazis and the year the Jewish State was born.

Valley of the Wolves (2006), by Mark Beall: A zealous Christian CIA agent captures Muslim children to send their organs to America for Jewish children.

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas (2008), by Mark Helman: During World War II, the son of a SS commandant lives a forbidden friendship with a prisoner of his age. The plot leads the audience to care about the Nazi family. A Jewish boy who dies in a camp is something normal. A German one is terrifying.

Good (2008), by Vicente Amorim: A German literature professor in the 1930s, reluctant to accept the ideas of the Nazi Party, finish to become by “kindness” a SS that slaughters Jews in a camp.

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