UNIWERSYTET JAGIELLOŃSKI

WYDZIAŁ FILOLOGICZNY
RADA DYSCYPLINY LITERATUROZNAWSTWO

mgr Magdalena Wąsowicz-Miszczyńska

WORLD WAR II IN AMERICAN ALTERNATE HISTORY IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF MEMORY STUDIES

Druga wojna światowa w amerykańskich historiach alternatywnych w perspektywie studiów nad pamięcią

Rozprawa doktorska

napisana pod kierunkiem

Prof. dr hab. Zygmunta Mazura

Kraków 2023

Table of contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation explores selected novels that depict history as it might have happened in consequence of some hypothetical change in the past. While it is virtually impossible to determine beyond all doubt the alternate course of world history, I am convinced that on a smaller scale, it can be done. Therefore, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the people without whom this doctoral dissertation would have never been written.

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, prof. dr hab. Zygmunt Mazur from the Institute of English Studies of the Jagiellonian University for his support, patience, and encouragement throughout my doctoral journey. I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to prof. dr hab. Ryszard Nycz from the Faculty of Polish Studies of the Jagiellonian University, who encouraged me to research alternate history for my Master's Thesis. I am deeply grateful to Mrs. Katherine P. Kubala for funding my research stay at the University at Buffalo and Professor David Schmid from the UB Department of English for supervising my stay at UB. My stay at the University at Buffalo was one of the most exciting experiences in my doctoral journey, and I am forever grateful for it. Finally, I would like to thank my family for their unwavering love and support throughout my academic journey. My parents have always supported and believed in me, even when I did not believe in myself. I am also profoundly grateful to my husband for his encouragement, understanding, and patience.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, memory studies have become one of the most influential areas of interdisciplinary scholarship, attracting the attention of researchers from a variety of fields. This trend has been especially pronounced in literary studies, which is perhaps not surprising given that literature is one of the most effective means of disseminating memory. However, despite the proliferation of scholarly studies on the representation of individual and collective memory in literature, researchers working on memory have not given equal attention to all literature genres. One area that memory studies typically neglect is the alternate history genre, which has traditionally been regarded as a subgenre of science fiction, which may partly explain its lack of popularity among literary scholars.

"Alternate history" is an umbrella term encompassing novels, stories, movies, and other cultural texts that depict worlds in which one or more historical events unfold differently than in reality. The fact that this genre remains a largely unexplored research area among memory scholars is highly surprising, since alternate history and memory studies are strikingly similar in their conceptualization of the past; both are interested in the affective power of historical events, rather than the events themselves, and explore the past to draw conclusions about the present.

This affinity between alternate history and memory becomes particularly evident in the context of World War II, which, as many scholars have noted, remains one of the most popular historical backgrounds for alternate history narratives (Hardesty; Winthrop-Young; Butter; Schneider-Mayerson; see also Morgan). Just like collective and cultural memories of contemporary societies cluster around sites of memory of World War II, alternate history narratives tend to gravitate toward major events connected to it, speculating about the consequences of the possible but unrealized Axis victory. By depicting dystopian

realities where the Third Reich controls the world and completes the Holocaust, alternate histories point out how lucky we are that history turned out as it did. In this manner, the events that merely could have happened, but never did, shape our understanding of what really took place and how it has become an integral part of our understanding of the present.

This dissertation aims to contribute to the growing research on collective and cultural memory by exploring how the memory of World War II is reflected and transmuted in alternate histories and how this relates to extra-literary developments. It is my conviction that the analysis of alternate histories of World War II in the context of memory studies can provide a fresh perspective on the collective and cultural memory of the period between 1939 and 1945 and advance our understanding of its meaning for contemporary American society. At the same time, it opens up an opportunity to gain new insights into the alternate history genre. In the United States, World War II and the Holocaust are treated as a moral benchmark and remain one of the few things on which (almost) all Americans agree (Stratton 234–42; Novick 13). It is, therefore, interesting that alternate history often disrupts this narrative by reversing the course of history and turning the winners into the defeated.

While far too little attention has been paid to the relationship between alternate history and memory, it does not mean that no efforts have been made to advance the genre as a potentially interesting research area for memory studies. In 2005, Gavriel D. Rosenfeld published his pioneering book *The World Hitler Never Made: Alternate History and the Memory of Nazism*. In the study, Rosenfeld examines the representation of the Third Reich in one hundred sixteen American, German, and British alternate history narratives. However, despite this impressive research material, *The World Hitler Never Made* is problematic. First of all, Rosenfeld fails to fully define what he means by memory and does

not take into account pre-existing studies on memory[1]. Secondly, the analyses offered in the study consist mainly of summaries of chosen works and brief, oversimplified interpretations[2]. Nevertheless, the book's main weakness is the bias visible in the author's evaluation of his research material. Rosenfeld gauges alternate history narratives from a moral standpoint and presumes that they should uphold the belief that the Third Reich was evil and that the Holocaust was a unique event in the history of humankind. Consequently, Rosenfeld frequently misreads[3] and criticizes those works that, as he believes, universalize the memory of Nazism because he is convinced that cultural texts should preserve the memory of the Third Reich "for its own sake" (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 128, 201, 343, 382) instead of utilizing it as a metaphor for something else. As Michael Butter (2009) pointedly observes, Rosenfeld neglects the fact that social groups construct the past according to their current needs, and nothing is ever remembered for its own sake (9). Therefore, *The World Hitler Never Made* not only fails to remain objective, but also exhibits a competitive memory− a situation in which one group imposes its perception of memory on the other. When Rosenfeld praises alternate histories that uphold the image of Adolf Hitler as an epitome of evil and criticizes the ones that compare the Holocaust to other historical atrocities, he not only promotes a clearly defined perception of the past but also implies that

[1] By contrast, Magdalena Górecka (2014) provides an interesting theoretical background for an analysis of alternate history in the context of memory studies. However, her methodological article "Narodowe imaginarium. Historie alternatywne jako obszar artykułowania pamięci kulturowej (szkic metodologiczny)" remained unnoticed.

[2] For instance, the analysis of Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* has three hundred eighty-two words, and most of this space is taken up by the summary of the novel.

[3] For example, Rosenfeld's conclusion that alternate history novels about the Holocaust challenge "the widely accepted belief in the basic necessity or remembrance" (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 372) is entirely misguided.

the suffering of Jews is more important than the suffering of other ethnic groups. While it is interesting to see how memory wars manifest themselves in Rosenfeld's work, the resulting bias is without doubt a major flaw of *The World Hitler Never Made*. A scholarly analysis of alternate history should be free of such biases and strive for an objective point of view.What is more, the work was published over fifteen years ago, which means that the mnemonic context of some of the novels it mentions has changed.

The dissertation focuses on American alternate history because of two reasons. Firstly, alternate history is, as Schneider-Mayerson points out, a primarily American genre (65); it evolved in the United States and is inextricably connected to American culture. Secondly, cultural memory is inherently connected to the group that shaped it[4], which means that the analysis of the memory of World War II in alternate history should take the national context into account. While it would be possible to examine the manifestations of cultural memory in alternate histories of various nations, focusing on American alternate history allows a more in-depth study of the genre's entanglement in cultural memory and provides thematic coherence.

In turn, the decision to focus on World War II was motivated by four reasons. Firstly, World War II remains one of the most important historical events of the twentieth century, and it still reverberates through contemporary societies. Even though the war formally ended in 1945, Western culture still rediscovers it, trying to weigh its meaning and make sense of its origins and outcomes (Frost 31). It still defines national identity, politics, and historical imagination. Therefore, concentrating on the memory of World War II may yield new

[4] Typically, cultural memory is specific to a nation because it focuses on groundbreaking events from the nation's past to create a sense of identity and of a shared past. It does not mean that cultural memory is unified and unchangeable. On the contrary, it is malleable and changes in response to the competition between various versions of memory. Still, in most cases there is a hegemonic memory promoted by the authorites and accepted by the majority of the nation.

insights into its significance for contemporary American society. Secondly, as has been mentioned above, World War II is the most common historical background for alternate history fiction and thus works dealing with this topic provide an abundance of research material. Thirdly, concentrating on World War II provides thematic coherence and allows for a more thorough analysis which would not be possible had the dissertation dealt with alternate histories depicting a variety of historical periods. Lastly, the existing research on WWII in alternate history is scarce and not entirely satisfactory, as well as outdated, which warrants a new investigation of this topic. The present dissertation features an up-to-date selection of sources, including references to the recent adaptations of Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America.*

Memory studies is a transdisciplinary and centerless field that has produced various methodological traditions. In this dissertation, I focus mainly on Astrid Erll's broad theoretical model of memory in culture as well as on the crucial concepts of memory studies: collective memory, cultural memory, sites of memory, politics of memory, and, in some cases, multidirectional memory, in order to demonstrate how alternate history can serve as both representation and intervention into memory cultures as well as a tool for ratifying or upturning dominant narratives.

To gauge the relationship between alternate history and mnemonic discourses regarding World War II, this dissertation focuses on five questions:

1) Which World War II sites of memory are depicted in American alternate history?
2) How do alternate history narratives utilize World War II sites of memory?
3) What politics of memory do alternate histories promote?
4) Do alternate histories support the hegemonic memory or subvert it?
5) How do alternate history narratives contribute to our understanding of American memory culture?

To address these questions, I refer to a selection of alternate history novels and a broad socio-cultural context. The dissertation follows an interpretative pattern inspired by the methods used in memory studies that involves: 1) the summary of the novel, 2) the biographical and historical background, 3) the analysis of sites of memory the novel refers to, 4) the politics of memory promoted by the novel, and, if possible, 5) the literary afterlives of the novel[5]. Hence, the analysis considers the novel itself, its author, the socio-cultural context, and the novel's reception, which, as all contemporary theories of memory prove, is an integral part of cultural memory.

The dissertation is divided into two parts. The first part is concerned with defining what alternate history is and providing an explanation of how it can be analyzed in the context of memory studies. The first chapter focuses on defining the genre. In the first subchapter, I differentiate between alternate history and counterfactual history. The second subchapter addresses the problem of defining alternate history. I begin by aggregating the existing definitions to extract four defining features of the genre: 1) history, 2) point of divergence, 3) ramifications, and 4) probability. On the basis of the abovementioned thematic concerns, a single comprehensive definition is created.

The second chapter begins by laying out the methodological dimensions of the research. Firstly, I provide an overview of the history of the most influential theories of memory studies, such as Maurice Halbwach's collective memory, Jan Assmann's cultural and communicative memory, Michael Rothberg's multidirectional memory, Pierre Nora's sites of memory, and the broadly understood politics of memory. Since memory studies encompass many diverse approaches, I do not explain all the intricacies involved in theorizing memory; instead, I recapitulate the theories that are essential for this dissertation.

[5] The concept of "literary afterlives" is drawn from Astrid Erll's study on cultural memory and its relationship to literature, see Astrid Erll, *Memory in Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2011), pp. 163-171.

Next, I proceed to describe the usefulness of memory studies for literary analysis and discuss the intersections between alternate history and memory. There, I demonstrate how collective and cultural memory are founded on the same mechanisms as alternate history and explain in detail how the key concepts of memory studies can be used as a toolkit for interpreting alternate history narratives. In this section, I also propose a scheme of analysis of alternate history narratives which hinges on the concepts of sites of memory and politics of memory.

The second part of the dissertation is concerned with the analysis of the memory of World War II in chosen American alternate history novels. It begins with a general overview of the memory of World War II in the United States, where the war is usually conceptualized as a clash between good and evil. This chapter also recapitulates the development of the memory of the Holocaust in the United States. What follows is an analysis of the selected alternate history novels pertaining to World War II.

The novels analyzed in the second part of the dissertation are *The Man in the High Castle* (1962) by Philip K. Dick, *After Dachau* (2001) by Daniel Quinn, *The Plot Against America* (2004) by Philip Roth, *Amerikan Eagle* (2011) by Brendan DuBois, *Wolf by Wolf* (2015) and *Blood for Blood* (2016) by Ryan Graudin, and *Rocket's Red Glare* (2020) by Cy Stein. Three of these novels, namely *The Man in the High Castle*, *After Dachau*, and *The Plot Against America*, are mentioned in Rosenfeld's study, but their analysis leaves much to be desired. This dissertation attempts to do them justice through close reading and a careful examination of their mnemonic purport. *Amerikan Eagle*, *Wolf by Wolf*, *Blood for Blood*, and *Rocket's Red Glare* have, to the best of my knowledge, not been given any scholarly attention to date. The novels have been consciously selected to account for the diversity of the genre. While all the selected alternate histories depict dystopian scenarios, they differ in terms of their intended audiences and the genres they employ. Philip K. Dick's *Man in the High Castle*, apart from being an alternate history, is

one of the classics of science fiction. Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* belongs to mainstream fiction and employs the characteristics of a parable and a philosophical novel. Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* is a mainstream realistic novel, while Brendan DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle* is a murder mystery. Ryan Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* are young adult novels. In turn, Cy Stein's *Rocket's Red Glare* is a political satire and a political thriller.

With the exception of Philip K. Dick's *Man in the High Castle,* which was published in 1962 and remains the model for all alternate history fiction, I have chosen novels published in the twenty-first century to make the dissertation relevant for the contemporary reader, as well as to account for the latest developments in American cultural memory and alternate history fiction. The analysis of some of the chosen works and their reception reveals how the recent upheavals caused by the Trump administration influenced the alternate history genre and enlivened the memory of World War II.

The reader should bear in mind that even though this dissertation attempts to provide a broader overview of the connections between alternate history and memory of World War II, it is not comprehensive in its review. Due to practical constraints, this study cannot encompass all alternate histories revolving around World War II. Unlike Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, who attempted to include all available alternate history narratives at the cost of the quality of his analysis, I have chosen to provide a close reading of the most representative examples because only close reading through the lenses of memory studies can contribute to our understanding of alternate history and its complicated relationship with the memory of World War II.

PART I: ALTERNATE HISTORY AND MEMORY

1. WHAT IS ALTERNATE HISTORY?

At some point in their lives, most people find themselves wondering what if, at some point in the past, they had chosen a different path. Research on counterfactual thinking suggests that the ability to conceive such imaginal possibilities is a hallmark of our mental landscape (Sternberg and Gastel; Van Hoeck et al.). In most cases, counterfactual speculations focus on a momentous past event which serves as a point of departure that prompts a search for alternatives and the assessment of what really happened (Roese and Olson 1; Roese and Morrison, "Psychology" 16–17; Van Hoeck et al.). According to psychologists, counterfactual thinking may serve as a coping mechanism, but it may also provoke a negative response when a person recognizes the contrast between the current state of affairs and the desired, imagined situation (Roese and Morrison, "Psychology" 17; Kahneman and Miller 137; Roese and Olson 37; Van Hoeck et al.). Just as we tend to indulge in speculations about the alternatives to our individual life choices, we often wonder about the possible yet unrealized paths that history might have taken. This counterfactual impulse has resulted in the emergence of a genre called "alternate history".

The term "alternate history", often abbreviated "althist" or simply AH, refers to a narrative that depicts a fictional world in which one or more historical events unfold differently than in reality. Just like counterfactual speculations regarding everyday life, musings on alternatives to historical events are expressed as conditional sentences in which we ask what would have happened had one or more historical events occurred differently than in reality. Hence, we produce questions such as "What if the South had won the Civil War?", "What if Hitler had never been born?", "What if the Third Reich had won World War

II?"[6]. Over the past three decades, alternate history has become a worldwide phenomenon, appearing across different nations and cultures in a wide array of forms. The most typical form for an alternate history is a book, although many alternate history movies[7], television series[8], games[9], and comic books[10] have been released in recent years. However, the genre's

[6] Such speculations appear also in the field of history. However, they are often criticized by professional historians who believe them to be idle speculations and wishful thinking. For instance, Edward H. Carr (1990) famously called counterfactuals "a parlour game with the might-have-been of history" (97). However, as Alexander Maar (2014) observes, counterfactual scenarios are in fact presumed in historical explanation: "When we say that the bursting of the housing bubble in the United States … combined with complex and high risk financial products caused the 2008 recession … we are... stating that without this bursting, the crisis would not have happened" (87). Similarily, Alexander Demandt (1993) argues that there is no historiography without counterfactual history and that fantasy is an inextricable part of historical hypotheses (9–68). Hence, counterfactual thinking can be perceived as an inherent part of the study of history.

[7] For instance, Quentin Tarantino's *Inglorious Basterds* (2009), *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood* (2019), Danny Boyle's *Yesterday* (2019), Lee Si-myung *Lost Memories* (2009), Amit Gupta's *Resistance* (2011). Countless other movies make use of counterfactual speculations, e.g. Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946), Kevin Brownlow and Andrew Mollo's *It Happened Here* (1964), Don Taylor's *The Final Countdown* (1980), Nicolas Roeg's *Insignificance* (1985), Simon Wells' *The Time Machine* (2002), Wolfgang Becker's *Good Bye, Lenin* (2003), Timo Vuorensola's *Iron Sky* (2012).

[8] For instance, Frank Spotnitz's *The Man in the High Castle* (2015) based on Philip K. Dick's novel, Joshua Long's *1983* (2018) or Ronald D. Moore, Ben Nedivi, and Matt Wolpert's *For All Mankind* (2019). To some extent, Chris van Dusen's period drama *Bridgerton* (2020) can also be classified as alternate history.

[9] For instance *Wolfenstein*, *Fallout* and *S.T.A.L.K.E.R.*game series, as well as: *BioShock* (2007), *War Front: Turning* Point (2007), *Necrovision* (2009), *Iron Sky: Invasion* (2012), *Timelines: Assault on America* (2014), *Iron Harvest* (2020), *Paradise Lost* (2020).

[10] For instance: Will Shetterly and Vince Stone's *Captain Confederacy* (1986), Alan Moore's *Watchmen* (1986), Alan Brennert's *Batman: Holy Terror* (1991), William Messner-Loebs' *Wonder Woman: Amazonia* (1997), Warren Ellis' *Ministry of* Space (2001), Mark Millar's *Superman: Red* Son (2003), Bryan Talbot's *Grandville*, Vincent Brugeas' *Block 109* (2010).

popularity and tendency to combine with other forms of speculative fiction gave rise to various misconceptions concerning its form and character. The fact that, as Kathleen Singles points out, alternate history scholars rarely build on one another's work (15) further exacerbated the problem. Therefore, before proceeding to an analysis of alternate history novels in the context of memory studies, it needs to be established what alternate history is. Consequently, this chapter is concerned with the definition of the genre. In the first subchapter, I distinguish between counterfactual history produced by historians and alternate history as a literary genre. In the second subchapter, I examine the existing definitions of alternate history to identify and evaluate several proposed defining features of the genre: 1) history, 2) point of divergence, 3) ramifications, and 4) probability. On the basis of the distinguished thematic concerns, I provide a comprehensive definition of alternate history, briefly describe some key terms used by alternate history scholars and fans before summing up the findings.

1.1. Counterfactual History versus Alternate History

Overall, there are two types of books that depict a world in which history unfolds differently than in reality. The ones involving more or less realistic speculations about various paths that history might have taken and written by professional historians are usually called "counterfactual history". By contrast, the ones that involve a narrative, a plot, a first or third-person narrator as well as fictional characters are referred to as "alternate history" and are usually treated as a subgenre of science fiction. Sometimes, these two distinct types of writing are treated as one; however, they are so different in character that they should be treated separately.

Counterfactual history can be situated at the intersection of historiography and historical nonfiction[11]. As Gallagher (2007) and Singles (2013) pointedly note, counterfactual history often gives an impression of a scientific study and emulates the historian's explanatory style (Gallagher, "War" 58; Singles 94). It is published in various forms, such as books, newspaper articles, essays, legal opinions, and historical conjectures. The imagined course of history is explained through references to historical sources and analysis of various possibilities and choices that emerged at a particular historical moment. For instance, Andrew Robert's *Hitler's England: What if Germany had invaded Britain in May 1940?* (1999) analyzes different actions Great Britain might have taken in response to Adolf Hitler's politics in the late 1930s, such as standing up to the Third Reich earlier or seeking peace with Nazi Germany in 1939. Thus, in most cases, the authors of counterfactual history do not focus on one particular change in history but consider multiple unrealized historical developments. The moment of divergence from the historical record is clearly defined and evident from the very beginning (Gallagher, "War" 63). Moreover, counterfactual history draws characters from historical records (Gallagher, *Telling It Like It Wasn't* 3), and typically does not introduce fictional characters. Finally, it is usually probable and does not involve fantastic elements.

In contrast, alternate history is a work of fiction. As Gallagher (2018) observes, it is characterized by its narrative quality and provides detailed descriptions of the alteration of history (Gallagher, *Telling It* 3). It uses narrative features of fiction, such as third- or first-person narrators who manipulate points of view and is characterized by literary language.

[11] Examples of American counterfactual history books include, for instance, Peter Tsouras's *Disaster at D-Day: The Germans Defeat the Allies* (1994), Niall Ferguson's *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (2001), Robert Cowley's (ed.) *What If? The World's Foremost Historians Imagine What Might Have Been* (2001), or Richard J. Evans' *Altered Pasts: Counterfactuals in History* (2013).

Alternate history depicts a complex alternate reality, considering psychological, geographical, social, cultural, and technological results of the alteration of history (Gallagher, "War" 58; Gallagher, *Telling It* 3). As Singles points out, it promotes immersion into the narrative, while counterfactual history situates its reader outside the text (95). Moreover, while counterfactual history never conceals the reasons for the divergence from history, alternate history often postpones the revelation of the point of divergence; it is not uncommon for an alternate history to disclose it in the middle or even at the end of the story (Gallagher, "War" 63). Unlike counterfactual history, alternate history often looks beyond the point of divergence and depicts the shape of the world many years after the divergence from the real history. In addition, some alternate history narratives describe multiple worlds that have the same ontological weight in the diegetic world of the story (Gallagher, "War" 60). Oftentimes, the protagonists can freely travel between these worlds or, at least, see a glimpse of a parallel universe. Finally, alternate history narratives use not only historical figures such as Adolf Hitler or Charles Lindbergh, but also fictional characters.

To sum up, counterfactual history and alternate history have different discursive strategies. As Gallagher aptly puts it, counterfactual histories follow the rules of history writing, while alternate history novels conform to the rules of novel writing ("War" 59). Having discussed the essential differences between alternate history and counterfactual history, let us now address the problem of the definition of alternate history in more detail.

1.2. Definition of Alternate History

Alternate history scholars often find themselves exasperated by the methodological problems posed by defining the genre. For instance, the status of alternate history as a genre has been a matter of debate. While some literary scholars believe that it is a subgenre of science fiction (Alkon; Hellekson; G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made*; Clute et al.;

Hughes), others assert that it has more in common with the historical novel or historiographic metafiction than with science fiction (Widmann; Singles; Booker; Lemann, *Historie alternatywne i steampunk w literaturze*). In fact, alternate history can also be seen as a separate genre situated at the intersection of the historical novel and science fiction (Butter 50). Moreover, the name also gives rise to controversies; while "alternate history" is by far the most widely recognized, it is criticized for its ungrammatical form and is often used interchangeably with terms such as alternative history, uchronia, virtual history, and allohistory[12]. In consequence, scholars, literary critics, and fans often misuse the term "alternate history" either assuming that it refers to all stories that involve a highly subjective point of view or confusing it with other genres and literary conventions, such as secret history, future history, historical fantasy, or even fantasy in general.

In light of the above, it becomes clear that we need a precise definition of alternate history. In order to formulate a comprehensive definition, I aggregate the existing

[12] In the present dissertation, only "alternate history" is used because other terms have slightly different connotations. "Alternative history", the term which has the advantage of being grammatically correct, refers not only to "what-if" narratives but also to historical books that describe history from a non-standard point of view, for instance looking at the Italian Renaissance from the perspective of women (Hellekson 3; Singles 17). Therefore, "alternative history" can be misleading. The term "uchronia" was coined by French writer Charles Renouvier who used it as a title of his alternate history of Napoleonic wars. The coinage was inspired by Thomas More's word "utopia" formed from Greek words οὐ (not) and *topos* (place). Renouvier replaced *topos* (place) with *chronos* (time) to form "uchronia" which denotes a nonexistent, perfect time. Although originally the term uchronia implied a story about a better version of history, in English-speaking countries it is often used as a synonym for alternate history. While such alternate history researchers as Gavriel Rosenfeld or Karen Hellekson have no objection to this, Natalia Lemann suggests that uchronia should be understood as a subtype of alternate history, one that depicts more optimistic historical developments than the ones that really happened (Maj et al. 205–06; Lemann, *Historie alternatywne i steampunk w literaturze* 88). In turn, "virtual history" was proposed by Niall Ferguson who used it to describe texts I classify in this dissertation as counterfactual history.

observations regarding the genre and examine them through juxtaposition with the paradigmatic alternate history novels. My approach is inspired by Stefan Ekman's article "Urban Fantasy: A Literature of the Unseen" (2016), in which Ekman analyzes various accounts of urban fantasy in order to understand it better[13]. As Ekman points out, an analysis of the existing definitions can provide an opportunity to learn something about a particular group of texts and enhance our understanding of their nature much better than any single definition (454–55). Therefore, in this subchapter, I emulate Ekman and refer to various sources such as dictionary definitions, research papers, books, and statements made by alternate history experts to answer the question of what alternate history is and what conditions have to be satisfied for a text to be classified as alternate history.

My aggregate consists of four dictionary definitions written by Andy Duncan (2003), William Hughes (2012), Natalia Lemann (2012), and Keith M. Booker (2014), two journal articles written by Paul Alkon (1994), and Andreas Martin Widmann (2011), seven books that include a definition of alternate history written by Elisabeth Wesseling (1991), Karen Hellekson (2001), Gavriel D. Rosenfeld (2005), Kathleen Singles (2013), Catherine Gallagher (2018), Natalia Lemann (2019), and Glyn Morgan (2020), and finally, two magazine columns. The first column was written by Steven H. Silver (2006), while the second constitutes a discussion between science fiction and alternate history scholars: Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, Krzysztof M. Maj, Karen Hellekson, Natalia Lemann, Susan Johnston, and

[13] In "Urban Fantasy: A Literature of the Unseen", Stefan Ekman accumulates definitions and observations regarding the genre of urban fantasy, which, just like alternate history, is a hybrid genre. Ekman collects eleven definitions of urban fantasy and analyzes their views on four areas: worlds and settings, cities and urbanity, central characters, and the sources of fantastic elements in order to illustrate how they reveal the main thematic concern of the genre−"the Unseen". Ekman's method of aggregating and analyzing various definitions is an interesting and inspiring way of approaching hybrid genres.

myself (2019). This wide array of texts allows for a broad view on the genre and its characteristics.

The analysis of these sixteen accounts of alternate history has allowed me to distinguish four central concepts around which they all revolve: 1) history, 2) point of divergence, 3) ramifications, and 4) probability. The scrutiny of these four concepts allows for a methodical and systematic analysis of the nature of alternate history and helps to delineate genre boundaries. Therefore, in the following subchapters, I discuss the abovementioned concepts in detail and bring them together to formulate a comprehensive definition of alternate history.

1.2.1 History

As the name of the genre suggests, alternate history is based on and constantly refers to real history, which I understand as historical facts that exist outside the text. All the collected accounts underline the significance of history and historicity for the shape of the diegetic worlds of alternate history stories, unanimously acknowledging that the setting of alternate history hinges upon the historical record and collective images of the past. Some of the definitions use the term "history" to refer to historical facts, while others call it "past" or "real past". Despite these lexical differences, all the accounts refer to the same idea: real history constitutes the raw material of the worlds of alternate history stories, and it is typical for the genre to project new and unexpected developments against the backdrop of real history.

Alternate history's concern with history was first recognized by Elisabeth Wesseling (1991), who wrote that alternate history (which she calls an "uchronian fantasy") is a type of fiction that "locates utopia in *history* ... uchronian fiction can be set in the *past* ... It may also be set in a vaguely defined present or future whose shape has been determined by an alternate

course of *historical events*" (102, emphasis mine). This explanation emphasizes alternate history's preoccupation with the past. Although Wesseling's belief that alternate history can be described as a utopia set in the past is not entirely valid[14], she makes an important claim according to which the action of an alternate history narrative should be located in history. Other definitions echo her assertation. Paul Alkon (1994) claims that references to historical events are an important, if not crucial, feature of the genre (83–84). In a similar fashion, Booker (2014) observes that alternate history "looks at a single crucial turning *point in history*... and then attempts to explore the different ways *history* might have proceeded had that turning point played out differently" (21–22, emphasis mine), Natalia Lemann (2012) writes that the depiction of a different, alternative version of history is the principle of the genre: "Mechanizm historii alternatywnych polega na pokazywaniu odmiennych wariantów przebiegu *procesu historycznego*" ("Historia Alternatywna" 380–81 emphasis mine), while Silver points out the inextricable connection between the diegetic world of alternate history and the real history (*Uchronicle 1*).

Summing up, historical facts constitute building blocks of the fictional worlds of alternate history. All the examined definitions agree that alternate history treats history as raw material and a starting point for the creation of fantasy worlds in which history took a different turn; alternate history writers create the diegetic worlds of their novels on the basis of our knowledge and beliefs about the past and then insert fictional events and characters into the narrative. Therefore, the worlds of alternate history narratives are different from the real one but heavily depend on it.

[14] Alternate history can also be a dystopia. When an alternate history shows that history could have been better than it actually was (e.g. that Hitler could have died before he initiated the outbreak of World War II), it creates an utopian world which is much better than the real one. In contrast, when it shows that history could have taken a turn for the worse (e.g. the Third Reich could have won World War II), it creates a dystopian narrative.

1.2.2 Point of Divergence

According to scholars such as Kathleen Singles, Catherine Gallagher, Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, and Karen Hellekson, one of the distinguishing characteristics of alternate history genre is the narrative device called "point of divergence", often abbreviated POD (Hellekson; G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made*; Singles; Gallagher, *Telling It*; Maj et al.). "Point of divergence" refers to a breakthrough in the story when the history of the world stops following the same course as real history and the fictional, alternate history begins. Some studies on alternate history employ other terms, such as "jonbar point" or "jonbar hinge" (D. Langford)[15], "nexus event" (Hellekson, *The Alternate History*), and "bifurcation point" or "bifurcation moment" (Winthrop-Young 109; Schneider-Mayerson 73; Lebow 65). However, "point of divergence" is the most widely used among scholars and alternate history fans. It also has the advantage of being easy to understand; the word "divergence" refers directly to the concept of change and involves the idea of the branching of two paths, thus fitting well into the premise of alternate history genre (Singles 23). Hence, it is less confusing than "nexus event" because the word "nexus" (i.e., a focal point or a connection linking two or more things) does not automatically refer to the idea of change, as the word "divergence" does. What is more, "point of divergence" is less perplexing than "jonbar point" which is understandable only for those who have read Jack Williamson's *The Legion of Time*.

[15] The term "jonbar point" derives from Jack Williamson's two science fiction novels titled *The Legion of Time* (1952). They describe a war between future empires called Gyronchi (dystopia) and Jonbar (utopia). Both empires were named after the character of John Barr. The "jonbar point" refers to the moment in John Barr's childhood when he could pick up either a magnet and become a scientist who will later create Jonbar, or a pebble which will lead to world's degeneration into the Gyronchi Empire (D. Langford). Karen Hellekson rightly criticizes the term "jonbar point" for being unwieldy and confusing for those who did not read *The Legion of Time* and thus do not understand the in-joke (Hellekson 6).

Therefore, in the present dissertation I use the term "point of divergence" to refer to the idea of an important event that changes the course of history.

All the collected accounts describe the point of divergence, even though some mention it only implicitly. Paul Alkon understands it as an "imagined divergence from specific historical events... primarily intended to explore issues of historical causation and consequences in our world" (68) which distinguishes alternate history from parallel history, that is, a story that describes a different past or present without pointing to any particular reason for that difference (68). Kathleen Singles also believes that the point of divergence is the main trait differentiating alternate history from historical fiction (22–23). Similarly, Karen Hellekson maintains that the point of divergence is the primary worldbuilding technique used by alternate history (Hellekson, *The Alternate History* 4), one that must appear in a text to qualify it as alternate history (Maj et al. 207). In turn, Catherine Gallagher maintains that the divergence from history is a characteristic feature of alternate history; as she persuasively argues, the discourse of alternate history is "premised on a counterfactual-historical hypothesis... an explicit or implicit past-tense, hypothetical, conditional conjecture pursued when the antecedent condition is known to be contrary to fact" (*Telling It* 2).

Dictionary definitions support these observations. According to *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, alternate history is "an account of Earth … as it might have become in consequence of some hypothetical alteration in history" (Clute et al.). Even though this definition does not explicitly mention the point of divergence, it is implied when its authors write about "alteration in history". In *Historical Dictionary of Science Fiction in Literature*, Booker explains that alternate history "typically looks at a single crucial turning point in history (the "point of divergence") and then attempts to explore the different ways history might have proceeded had that turning point played out differently" (Booker 21).

Steven H. Silver, American science fiction publisher and founder of the Sidewise Award for Alternate History, also stresses the importance of the point of divergence. In his column on alternate history published in *Helix SF*, he argues what follows:

> Alternate history is a subgenre in which an author... makes the conscious decision to change something which happened in our own history... the key is that it must have changed history from that point forward in a manner obvious to anyone who reads the story. When an author decides to write an alternate history, *he must decide where his world's timeline differs from our own, a point of divergence... The story must have a point of departure from the history of our world* prior to the time at which the author is writing. (Silver, *Uchronicle 1*, emphasis mine)

In this passage, Silver makes four essential observations regarding the genre: firstly, alternate history involves a change of historical record through the point of divergence; secondly, this divergence is the author's conscious decision; thirdly, the change has to happen prior to the time of writing the novel; and, fourthly, the point of departure from the historical record has to be easy to recognize. As far as I have been able to establish, Silver was the first person to state that the departure from the historical record should be the author's deliberate decision. The only other scholar who mentioned the topic of intentionality is Andreas Martin Widmann, who writes that "it is crucial that the deviation from the facts takes place deliberately" (171). Even though other definitions do not address this issue, it is important to keep in mind that in alternate history fiction, the divergence from history does not result from the author's mistake or his lack of historical knowledge, but from a conscious decision to change the course of history. Therefore, to be classified as alternate history, a novel or story has to involve a deliberate departure from historical facts that stems from the author's conscious decision to alter history and explore counterfactual scenarios.

The point of divergence is approached differently in different alternate histories. Some alternate histories describe the divergence in detail, while others provide only minimal information about the date and event that led to the divergence from the historical record. The most commonly used points of divergence revolve around critical historical events such as the American Revolutionary War, the American Civil War, World War II, or the Cold War. To create a divergence from the real history, alternate history narratives usually rely on a single event, typically a battle or war, rather than cultural or social changes. Catherine Gallagher and Katherine Singles explain that this tendency to focus on military conflicts instead of socio-cultural transformations can be attributed to three issues: 1) the complexity of ideological movements, which makes them difficult to use as a point of divergence, 2) the genre's adherence to the nineteenth-century Great Man theory of history, according to which the course of history is steered by great leaders, and 3) the fact that our notion of history is governed by single pivotal events, such as a change in political leadership or a battle that radically alters the outcome of war rather than complex ideological movements (Gallagher, "War"; Singles 56–57).

To sum up, all the collected accounts agree that the point of divergence, the moment in the narrative in which the history of the fictional world stops following the same path as our history, is a distinctive feature of alternate history that distinguishes it from other literary genres.

1.2.3 Ramifications

Another concept described in the accounts is "ramifications," understood as consequences of the divergence from history. Kathleen Singles argues that alternate history can be characterized by two factors: 1) its permanent contradiction of history through the point of divergence and 2) the description of the outcome of the alteration (73–79). Hence,

she believes that alternate history fiction should depict the results of the divergence from the historical record. Similarly, Alkon points out that the concept of ramifications is an inextricable part of alternate history genre, for alternate history narratives are written to "explore issues of historical causation and consequences in our world" (68). Catherine Gallagher supports this notion by explaining that alternate history typically depicts "the social, cultural, technological, psychological, and emotional totalities that *result* from the alterations" (*Telling It* 3 emphasis mine). In a similar fashion, Michael Butter writes that alternate history is a narrative in which "one or more past events are changed and the *subsequent consequences on history* imagined" (9, emphasis mine). Karen Hellekson also claims that alternate history narratives describe a changed present whose shape resulted from divergence from the historical record (2). In turn, for Edgar V. McKnight alternate history is "defined by speculation about what the present would be like had historical events occurred differently" (qtd. in Widmann 173). Steven H. Silver stresses the significance of ramifications even more, writing that alternate history narrative "must have...an examination of the ramifications of...change" (*Uchronicle 1*).

Dictionary definitions follow the same line of thought. According to *Historical Dictionary of Science Fiction in Literature* edited by Keith M. Booker, alternate history "looks at a single crucial turning point in history...and then attempts to explore the different ways history might have proceeded had that turning point played out differently" (21). Natalia Lemann maintains in her definition that the author of alternate history must describe the ramifications of the departure from history: "Autor historii alternatywnych, wybierając moment rozejścia się dróg historii, musi przedstawić fabularnie konsekwencje wynikłe z odmiennego przebiegu zdarzeń" ("Historia Alternatywna" 381).

Most alternate history narratives indeed involve an examination of the ramifications of the divergence from history, though they approach it differently. Some alternate history

stories focus on the immediate results of the alteration; for instance, Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* describes the ramifications of Charles Lindbergh's victory in the presidential election of 1940. Others depict long-term consequences; for instance, Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, Robert Harris's *Fatherland*, or Brad Linaweaver's *Moon of Ice* describe the shape of the world decades after the Axis victory.

Summing up, all the accounts agree that alternate history typically includes a description of the consequences of the alteration of history. Thus, the concept of ramifications is, just like history and point of divergence, one of the hallmarks of alternate history genre.

1.2.4 Probability

Another thematic area addressed by the collected accounts is probability. Three of the collected accounts suggest that alternate history should involve some level of probability. Elisabeth Wesseling writes that alternate history imagines "an apocryphal course of events...*which might have taken place*" (102, emphasis mine). This assumption also appears in Natalia Lemann's definition ("Historia Alternatywna"). Steven H. Silver argues that the events described in an alternate history "from the point of departure onwards, must have some level of plausibility" (*Uchronicle 1*). Hence, three out of fifteen accounts involve the idea that alternate history should depict *probable* counterfactual scenarios.

The main problem with that idea is that it is prescriptive rather than descriptive. Unlike the aforementioned defining features (history, point of divergence, ramifications), the concept of probability does not reflect the narrative patterns of alternate history fiction. While numberless alternate history stories depict highly probable historical developments[16], many describe improbable or even absurd situations. Examples of utterly unrealistic events include,

[16] See, for instance, the discussion of Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* in Part II, Chapter 3.

for instance, the alien invasion that interrupts World War II in Harry Turtledove's *Worldwar* (1994-2004) book series, modern-day people traveling in time to help the Confederacy win the Civil War in Harry Turtledove's *The Guns of the South* (1992), or the main character moving between different worlds and timelines in Stephen King's *11/22/63* (2011). These are but a small selection of the countless other alternate history narratives that depict fantastic and unrealistic events.

Moreover, it can be argued that the sole concept of probability is debatable, for it is virtually impossible to determine the probability of certain counterfactual scenarios; since they never happened, we have no tools to verify their feasibility. Hence, deciding whether points of divergence and ramifications depicted in most alternate history stories could have happened is impossible. For instance, many historians would claim that Operation Sea Lion, which serves as a point of divergence for Len Deighton's *SS-GB* (1978) and Murray Davies' *Collaborator* (2003), could have never succeeded. Likewise, it could be argued that without Adolf Hitler, the Holocaust still would have happened, even though some alternate histories, such as Jerry Yulsman's *Elleander Morning*, claim that eliminating Hitler from history would have prevented the Holocaust.

Overall, it is virtually impossible to determine whether a counterfactual scenario is probable or improbable; alternate history is an unverifiable thought experiment by its very nature. Above all, alternate history is a literary genre, and as such, it allows tinkering with history and the creation of situations, characters, events, and technologies that did not exist and could have never existed. Moreover, assessing it on the basis of probability would be a misapprehension because even improbable alternate histories can have literary merit and involve reflections on the collective perceptions of the past. For these reasons, the idea that alternate history depicts events that might have taken place should be dismissed.

1.2.5 Conclusion: Definition of alternate history

This subchapter has discussed four defining features of alternate history fiction: 1) history, 2) point of divergence, and 3) ramifications, and 4) probability. However, the fourth one, probability, was dismissed as inaccurate. The examination of these thematic concerns allows us to define alternate history as a literary genre that:

1) is based on and preoccupied with real history. In an alternate history, the real history is used as a starting point for the creation of fantasy worlds in which one or more events unfold differently than in reality. Historical events serve as building blocks for the diegetic worlds of alernate history fiction;

2) involves a point of divergence (abbreviated as POD), which is the point at which the history of the fictional world stops following the same course as the real history and the fictional, alternate history begins. The deviation from facts is the author's deliberate decision aimed at exploring unrealized historical possibilities. In most cases, the point of divergence is situated prior to the time at which the author is writing;

3) depicts the ramifications of the alteration of history. They may include political, technological, cultural, religious, and social changes that have arisen as a consequence of the divergence;

4) can describe both probable and improbable historical developments. As a work of fiction, alternate history can involve improbable historical developments as well as fantastic elements such as time travel, multiple universes, or supernatural forces.

All the collected definitions unanimously agree that the point of divergence is the principle of the genre. Other elements – history and ramifications – appear in the definitions in varying degrees, so it can be inferred that, albeit important, they are perceived as less crucial than the point of divergence.

The identification of the features described above helps to differentiate alternate history from other genres with which it is often confused: secret history, future history, fantasy, and historical fantasy. Alternate history is different from secret history, a type of story that reveals that something we know about history is incorrect because of hidden facts, conspiracy, or dimensions available only to insiders[17] because secret history does not involve a bifurcation of timelines and thus has no point of divergence. Alternate history is also different from future history, a subgenre of science fiction that depicts a future course of history[18]. When future histories become outdated, some scholars categorize them as alternate histories (Butter; Haska and Stachowicz; G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made*). However, future history cannot become alternate history because it has no point of divergence and lacks the authorial intention to picture a different course of history. Fantasy novels also cannot be classified as alternate history. Even though stories such as J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*, or Andrzej Sapkowski's *The Witcher* depict worlds that are different from ours, they are not alternate history novels because they lack the point of divergence and, therefore, do not depict the ramifications of the divergence from history. Finally, historical fantasy, a subgenre of fantasy in which fantastic elements like magic, parallel worlds, demons, dragons, and other supernatural creatures are incorporated into historical reality,[19] cannot be considered alternate history unless they have a point of departure from actual history (Maj et al.).

[17] For instance Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* (2003), Elisabeth Kostova's *The Historian* (2005), Roger Zelazny's *Amber* series, or Sergei Lukyanenko's *The Night Watch* series.

[18] For instance H. G. Well's *The Shape of Things to Come* (1993) or George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949).

[19] For instance, Andrzej Sapkowski's *The Hussite Trilogy* (2001-2006), Susanna Clarke's *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* (2004), or Guy Gavriel Kay's *The Sarantine Mosaic* (2012).

It should be pointed out that alternate history scholars and fans have created a number of terms that allow us to describe important aspects of alternate history in a concise manner. They include, apart from the aforementioned point of divergence, terms such as the "point of convergence" (that is, the moment in the story when the fictional past and the real past merge back together), "our timeline" (factual events that happened in the real world, often abbreviated as OTL), and "alternate timeline" or ATL (fictional events that happened in the fictional world). Since the motif of travel between different timelines is quite popular in alternate history fiction, alternate history scholars and fans use the term "multiverse" to describe a set of multiple possible universes or a collection of related timelines. In turn, "double-blind what-if" describes a popular motif in which a character who lives in an alternate timeline has access, ponders, or catches a glimpse of our timeline, and realizes that the history they know is not the only possible history.

To conclude, the identification of the central thematic concerns of alternate history allowed us to enrich the understanding of the genre and delineate genre boundaries. Alternate history is a genre that is preoccupied with three concepts: history, point of divergence, and ramifications. History serves as a starting point for the creation of fantasy worlds in which one or more events unfold differently than in reality. An alternate history narrative has to involve a point of divergence from the real historical record. This divergence has to stem from the author's conscious decision to speculate about the different paths that history might have taken. In most cases, the point of divergence is situated prior to the time at which the author is writing. Typically, an alternate history narrative describes the political, technological, cultural, religious, and social ramifications of the point of divergence. Finally, as a work of fiction, alternate history can depict historical developments of any degree of probability, as well as fantastic elements such as time travel, multiple universes, supernatural forces, and others,

2. ALTERNATE HISTORY AND MEMORY

Initially, the growing importance of alternate history did not attract much interest from literary scholars. Until the publication of Karen Hellekson's *The Alternate History: Refiguring Historical Time* (2001) and Gavriel D. Rosenfeld's *The World Hitler Never Made: Alternate History and the Memory of Nazism* (2005), scholarly publications on alternate history fiction were scarce. Fortunately, Hellekson's and Rosenfeld's works prove that alternate history is worthy of serious study, thus paving the way for further research into the genre. However, few works pointed out that alternate history can be an interesting research area for memory studies. Despite Rosenfeld's extensive (though problematic) study, memory studies remain uncharted territory for alternate history scholars. In turn, memory studies scholars have yet to explore alternate history. This lack of research on the connections between memory and alternate history is difficult to understand because both are strikingly similar in their approaches to the past; both focus on crucial historical events and explain the present by referring to the past.

Considering the similarities between alternate history and the working of memory, I believe that the analysis of alternate history with the theoretical toolkit developed within memory studies can enrich our understanding of the genre and its social importance in a way that no other theoretical school can. Therefore, in the following subchapters, I briefly present the crucial concepts of memory studies, explain the significance of literature for memory studies, analyze the intersections between memory studies and alternate history, and develop a scheme of analysis of alternate history fiction in the context of memory studies.

2.1. Memory Studies: Key Concepts

The development of memory studies stems from the increased interest in the concepts of past and remembrance that emerged at the beginning of the new millenium. Over the past three decades, the concept of memory as a social and cultural phenomenon has superseded the established terms of oral history, popular history, or myth (Gedi and Elam; K. L. Klein). In social and human sciences, the word "memory" refers to the phenomenon of the presence and salience of the past in the present (Erll; Tabaszewska, "Od literatury"; Kobielska; Saryusz-Wolska, "Przeszłość i przyszłość badań pamięci")[20]. As a field, memory studies possess an aura of social significance and opens up many opportunities for practical application. Research is usually carried out within one of the following three areas: 1) the study of the history and tradition of memory studies, 2) methodological considerations involving examination of the existing theories and the invention of new concepts, and 3) analysis of particular manifestations of memory in, for instance, works of literature, movies, monuments, celebrations, and many others. These three areas often intertwine, as an analysis of manifestations of memory is impossible without a reference to the methodology of memory studies, which, in turn, is often connected to the history of this field. Therefore, the following sections focus on the crucial concepts of memory studies as well as on the context of their emergence.

[20] The term "memory" is used in a figurative sense. It is clear that societies cannot "remember" in a literal sense of the term in a way an individual does.

2.1.1. Collective Memory, Cultural Memory, and Multidirectional Memory

The idea of understanding memory as a social rather than an individual phenomenon is usually attributed to French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs. In his works *Social Frameworks of Memory* (1925) and *The Legendary Topography of the Holy Land* (1941), Halbwachs coined the terms "collective memory" and "social frameworks of memory" which became cornerstones of memory studies[21]. As Astrid Erll (2011) points out, Halbwachs's research provided directions for modern memory studies by discussing three areas: the dependence of individual memory on social structures, intergenerational memory, and the cultural transmission of collective memory (14–15). Moreover, in later years, Halbwachs's work on the religious topography of Palestine prompted Pierre Nora's studies on sites of memory.

In his work, Halbwachs claims that memory is a collective phenomenon, a reservoir of experiences and ideas about the past shared by all members of a group, that constitutes a reference framework for individual memories. Through communication and interaction with other members of a social group, people can acquire, recall, and recognize their individual memories (Halbwachs 38); therefore, collective and individual memory are mutually

[21] Of course Maurice Halbwachs did not develop his theory of memory in a vacuum. The idea that the study of the past should differentiate between objective facts and their perception was exploited by many other intellectuals such as Ernest Renan, Charles Horton, Aby Warburg, Walter Benjamin, Theodor W. Adorno, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Stefan Czarnowski, Lev Vygotsky, Ludwik Krzywicki, and Nina Assorodobraj-Kula, albeit most of them did not use the term "memory" (Gedi and Elam; Saryusz-Wolska, *Spotkania czasu z miejscem*; Olick et al.; Saryusz-Wolska, "Przeszłość i przyszłość badań pamięci"; Kalicka et al.). Halbwachs also drew from Henri Bergson and Emile Durkheim, addressing Bergson's concept of time and memory through Durkheim's sociological lenses (Olick 153–55; Kalicka et al.). Therefore, it can be concluded that Halbwachs was proclaimed a founding father of memory studies not because of the originality of his theory but because of the apt metaphors he created (Saryusz-Wolska, "Przeszłość i przyszłość badań pamięci" 14).

dependent. The central function of collective memory is identity formation, which often means that only the things corresponding to the group's positive self-image are commemorated and that remembrance concentrates not on the past as such but on the needs of the group in the present (Erll 17). Thus, collective memory is selective and malleable as individuals and groups discuss and negotiate their memories (Halbwachs; Olick).

Halbwachs' works inspired the German Egyptologist Jan Assmann to formulate the concept of cultural memory, which draws on collective memory but adds a cultural dimension to this strictly sociological concept. Assmann proposes dividing collective memory into communicative and cultural memory, albeit the former served mainly as a background for the latter. Assmann defines communicative memory as a type of collective memory shaped by everyday communication between community members; consequently, it has a limited temporal horizon that extends approximately eighty to one hundred years into the past (J. Assmann *Cultural Memory* 336–41). Cultural memory emerges when society recognizes the need to preserve its collective memory outside the individual human brain and embeds it in cultural texts. Hence, cultural memory comprises a body of literary texts, images, monuments, and rituals that stabilize and transmit collective memory, thus disseminating the collective self-image, identity, and awareness of particularity (J. Assmann, "Collective Memory" 132).

One of the characteristic features of cultural memory is its focus on fixed points from the past, such as origin stories, wars, and other developments that affect the community's self-image. Unlike communicative memory passed on through everyday communication, cultural memory is transmitted by specialized carriers such as shamans, teachers, poets, or priests. While it is passed from one generation to the next, it turns historical events into myths that provide guidance for the present and hope for the future (J. Assmann, "Collective Memory" 129; J. Assmann, *Cultural Memory* 37–38; Erll 34). Cultural memory's primary

function is the formation and preservation of collective identity, as well as the explanation of the present through the past (J. Assmann, *Cultural Memory*; J. Assmann, "Collective Memory").

As can be seen, cultural memory is concerned with the cultural significance of historical events, not the historical events themselves. Hence, the study of cultural memory focuses on how and why communities remember their past, rather than on rectifying historical facts. Such an analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of the meaning of the past and can potentially pose a first step in a reconciliation between opposing groups.

Despite its social significance, Jan Assmann's cultural memory theory poses certain problems. Firstly, his understanding of the term *culture* has been challenged by Astrid Erll, who points out that Assmann associates culture with high culture only, even though contemporary definitions developed by cultural studies underscore that popular culture and everyday practices are also part of culture (Erll 30). Another problem posed by Assmann's approach is its incompatibility with the contemporary modes of memory transmission. Globalization and technology have significantly reduced the floating gap between communicative and cultural memory, rendering it virtually non-existent. Therefore, in contemporary societies, communicative and cultural memory often coexist; such historical events as World War II, the Holocaust, the Vietnam War, or the September 11 terrorist attacks function in both cultural memory and communicative memory. Moreover, as Erll points out, in the modern world the distinction between everyday communication and the specialized carriers of memory is getting more blurred as life experiences are transmitted through such media as Facebook, YouTube, or Wikipedia (31). Therefore, as Erll concludes, the difference between communicative and cultural memory should be founded not on the chronological distance between the remembered events and the present but on the ways the community remembers and how the past is embedded within temporal processes (32). Recent

studies on cultural memory take it for granted that communicative and cultural memory intertwine, which indicates that even fairly recent events can be mythologized and become a part of cultural memory.

Contemporary discussions regarding cultural memory draw heavily on Aleida Assmann's works which significantly expanded the body of theoretical concepts related to cultural memory. For the present study, the concept of media of memory is the most essential one. Media of memory mediate and back up cultural memory; they comprise cultural artifacts that preserve memory (symbols, texts, images, rites, ceremonies, places, monuments, and even bodies) and allow the adoption of a collective viewpoint (A. Assmann, "Transformations between History and Memory"; A. Assmann, *Między Historią a Pamięcią*; Saryusz-Wolska, *Spotkania czasu z miejscem* 25). Therefore, media of memory can be defined as all things that carry and disseminate collective ideas about the past. They represent the cultural memory of a given society, as well as introduce new memories to the already established cultural memory, supporting or undermining the hegemonic narrative. When institutionalized, media of memory can become a part of national or ideological politics of memory, storing and circulating officially approved perceptions of the collective past.

To conclude, it can be said that cultural memory is a form of collective memory with an extra layer of cultural dimension. It uses pivotal historical events to form and uphold collective identity and explains the present by referring to the past and it is always specific to a group and its values (J. Assmann *Communicative and Cultural Memory* 113). Hence, studies on collective and cultural memory tend to focus on national forms of remembrance and the tensions that arise when nations or social groups negotiate their memories. Memory wars can take different directions; in some cases, the conflict arises when a minority group struggles to undermine the hegemonic memory promoted by political authorities, while in others, countermemories of different minority groups compete over whose version of the past

gets recognized. This struggle for recognition, difficult as it is, becomes even more complicated when disparate groups clash over the question of whose story of victimization should be commemorated. This competitive memory assumes that recognition of one version of memory automatically erases other recollections, and it is especially prominent in the United States, where memories of slavery, the persecution of the indigenous tribes, and the Holocaust clash with each other leading to disputes over whose suffering outweighs whose. These memory wars induced memory studies scholars to transcend national boundaries and look for new ways of reconciling the memories of disparate nations and social groups (Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*; Bond and Rapson; De Cesari and Rigney; see also Michaels). Michael Rothbergh's model of multidirectional memory proves to be most helpful with its assumption that collective and cultural memory "are subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing" (*Multidirectional Memory* 3). Rothberg's multidirectional memory, open to borrowings from other mnemonic discourses and which emerges through dialogical interactions (5), allows a more nuanced outlook on memory cultures and their relations. Most importantly, it underscores that the acceptance of one group's memory does not automatically lead to the forgetting of other countermemories. The recognition of the Holocaust as a global site of memory did not block out the consideration of other memories of victimhood as some critics claimed (Michaels; see also Young, "America's Holocaust: Memory and the Politics of Identity") but supported the emergence of memories such as those of slavery, the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), or the Bosnian genocide in the 1990s (Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory* 6). Thus, the concept of multidirectional memory accentuates the dynamic exchange between different places and times during the act of remembrance, proves the productivity of juxtaposition of two or more disturbing memories (e.g., slavery and the Holocaust), and "acknowledges how remembrance cuts across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal, and cultural sites" (Rothberg, *Multidirectional*

Memory 11). Therefore, the comparison of different memories upheld by disparate social groups should not be perceived as a threat to either of them, but as a creative exchange that can potentially produce new meanings and build a more inclusive society.

2.1.2 Sites of Memory

Sites of memory are one of the central concepts of memory studies. The theory was introduced by Pierre Nora, a French historian from the third generation of the Annales school and the author of a groundbreaking seven-volume work *Les lieux de mémoire* (published between 1984 and 1992), aimed at reviving historiography which, according to Nora, was facing a severe crisis.

The title concept *lieux de mémoire* has been translated into English as "realms of memory," "spaces of memory," or "sites of memory." The latter translation is most commonly used in scholarship, although it was criticized for its spatial designation, which does not convey the abstract meaning the French word involves (Boer 22; Szpociński 246). It is indeed problematic because Nora (unlike Halbwachs, for whom the word "memory" served as a metaphor from the very beginning) used the term *lieux* in both a literal and metaphorical sense. Thus, the concept of sites of memory involves physical places, such as the Louvre, the Eiffel Tower, or Verdun, as well as material or non-material entities that evoke the past, such as historical figures (Joan of Arc or Descartes), phrases ("liberty, equality, fraternity"), symbols (colors of the French flag, *La Marseillaise*), or even ways of thinking and political divisions (Franks versus Gauls, Gaullists versus communists, etc.). It is exceptionally capacious because the sheer size of Nora's project precluded the creation of a final, precise definition, and Nora changed the definition of *lieux de mémoire* with every new volume. The most comprehensive explanation of sites of memory can be found in "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire" (1989), where Nora describes sites of memory as sites

where “memory crystallizes and secretes itself” (Nora 7). *Lieux de mémoire* can be “simple and ambiguous, natural and artificial, at once immediately available in concrete sensual experience and susceptible to the most abstract elaboration” (18). Therefore, the notion of sites of memory refers to physical and metaphorical spaces which serve as reservoirs of memories and ranges from real places and things, such as battlefields, cathedrals and burial places, or cultural artifacts such as books, works of art, and philosophical texts, to non-material, symbolic sites, such as rituals, spectacles, celebrations, or historical figures. As Szpociński (2016) observes, the broadened use of the notion of “sites of memory” is justified by the fact that material and metaphorical sites of memory manifest the same properties: they belong to particular social groups and serve as reservoirs of norms, ideas, and behavioral patterns important to these groups (249). The idea that sites of memory should be important to the group is crucial here, for sites of memory require an intention on the part of the community; a place can become a site of memory only if there is a will to remember (Nora 18–19).

Analysis of *lieux de mémoire* should consider three dimensions of sites of memory: 1) material, 2) functional, and 3) symbolic, which means that it should focus on the form of the site (as an actual object or cultural practice), the function it performs in society, and its meaning (Erll 25). Since sites of memory are, just like collective and cultural memory, susceptible to new interpretations as people’s perception of the past changes, such an analysis has to take into account the malleability of sites of memory (Nora 19). Therefore, they can be studied not only as reflections of collective and cultural memory but also as spaces that mediate social tensions, political debates, and competing interpretations of the collective past.

There is no doubt that one of the most appealing aspects of the concept of sites of memory is its interdisciplinary potential. Research practice has shown that the study of sites of memory cannot be restricted to any particular discipline. Even though the first

examinations of sites of memory were nation-centered, many international and transnational projects emerged over the last two decades, proving that the analysis of *lieux de mémoire* can yield fascinating results across different disciplines and various nationals contexts (Le Rider et al.; Górny et al.; Wüstenberg; Pakier and Wawrzyniak; De Cesari and Rigney; Roediger et al.). According to Kończal (2012), who has examined various research projects on sites of memory from nine different countries, all the projects have two things in common: the departure from political history toward the analysis of the symbolic meaning of the past and a focus on how collective images are used to meet the current needs (29); this is also the direction that memory studies tend to take.

2.1.3 Politics of Memory

As has been indicated, one of the most central functions of cultural memory is the creation of collective identity, which renders cultural memory deeply political. This political dimension is reflected in the term "politics of memory", which has gained significant popularity amongst scholars of memory studies as well as in public discourse. Unfortunately, its popularity contributed to its banalization; consequently, the term is often used as a catchall without a profound reflection (Kubik and Bernhard 7; Verovšek 11–12). Because of that, the following section explains what the term"politics of memory" means for memory studies.

The methodological reflection on the politics of memory ranges from theories that assume a broad understanding of the term to ones that delineate strict boundaries and narrow down its meaning. According to Lech M. Nijakowski, the author of *Polska polityka pamięci. Esej socjologiczny* (2008), there are three approaches to the politics of memory, which differ in their understanding of who is responsible for the dissemination of memory. All three definitions describe the politics of memory as conscious and unconscious measures people undertake to change or reinforce collective memory. The first explanation assumes that all

people participate in the politics of memory, regardless of their social class, while the second one presumes that only individual people who publicly advocate a given understanding of the past participate in the politics of memory. In contrast, according to the third definition, only the activities stimulated by public bodies in a formal, institutionalized context can be called "politics of memory" (Nijakowski 43–44). Nijakowski combines these three threads to formulate a new definition that understands the politics of memory as intentional actions carried out by various community members to reinforce or alter the contents of collective memory. Hence, the politics of memory can be pursued through a wide array of enterprises, such as public lectures, speeches, publications, education, demonstrations, historical reenactments, and the hanging of national flags (Nijakowski 44). Therefore, Nijakowski's definition emphasizes that: 1) the politics of memory is intentional, 2) it is reciprocal, 3) it involves the cultivation of a strictly defined interpretation of the past, and 4) it pursues political objectives. As Maria Kobielska (2016) observes, intentionality suggests that if a given action/cultural text is to be recognized as politics of memory, it has to be performed and disseminated with an intention to pursue politics of memory; moreover, it may also imply that everything that happens around a cultural text that partakes in politics of memory, such as its distribution, promotion, reception, and analysis, exerts an influence on the collective perception of the past (27). Overall, Nijakowski's discussion of the politics of memory is similar to explanations provided by other scholars of memory studies, such as Beatrix Bouvier or Michael Schneider, who define "politics of memory" as an intentional reinforcement of memory to achieve political objectives (Kącka 65).

Therefore, in the broadest understanding, nearly every discussion regarding the meaning of the past can be called politics of memory. In contrast, the most narrow definition argues that only the activities stimulated by public bodies in a formal, institutionalized context can be called "politics of memory". Of course, both the narrow and broad definition

have their advantages and disadvantages. While the broad definition acknowledges the intricacies of social life where it is difficult to establish boundaries between the official and the unofficial, it blurs the meaning of the term; if every discussion about the past can be regarded as politics of memory, the concept becomes meaningless. By contrast, the broad definition enables a focus on clearly defined actions (undertaken by official bodies). However, it neglects the significance of bottom-up actions and social efforts to reshape collective memory. What is even more troubling, it does not account for the significance of culture in the process of reinforcing the collective perception of the past, even though culture has always been a powerful tool for molding social attitudes about the past. Therefore, we should lean toward a more moderate understanding of the politics of memory suggested by Nijakowski, according to which politics of memory can be understood as conscious activities undertaken by public bodies, writers, artists, and other specialized carriers of memory which aim at reinforcement and/or change of collective and cultural memory.

It is universally acknowledged that studies on politics of memory should be concerned with uncovering and examining political agendas. Peter J. Verovšek (2016) argues that the politics of memory should be studied as a communicative paradigm that places the focus "on both the contested interpretations of the past by official actors within the state, and on how these ideas are produced, influence, draw on, and conflict with other narratives that are present within society at large" (7). Thus, for Verovšek, studies on the politics of memory should be made with a view to understanding how the misconceptions about history are produced, disseminated, and whose interests they serve (Verovšek 19). Similarly, Erik Meyer (2008) notes that the primary questions provoked by the politics of memory are "how and by whom, as well as through which means, with which intention, and which effect past experiences are brought up and become politically relevant" (176). Therefore, the study of

the politics of memory should concentrate on the question of who produces interpretations of the past, how they are disseminated, and to what purpose.

2.2. Memory and Literary Studies

As an interdisciplinary field, memory studies provide a theoretical framework that can be used across many disciplines, including literary studies. Literature, Erll observes, is different from other symbol systems of cultural memory and thus makes a specific contribution to memory culture, representing, shaping, and transforming the existing mnemonic patterns (148). Moreover, literary works structure and consolidate mnemonic schemata, exerting influence on extra-literary forms of cultural memory (Tabaszewska, *Pamięć Afektywna* 63). Therefore, literary studies occupy a special place in the field of memory studies.

The existing research into the relationship between memory and literature can be broken down into five major approaches: 1) literature as *ars memoriae* that studies literature's function in cultural mnemonics and focuses on the art of memory of the Middle Ages and early modern period; 2) memory of literature defined as the study of the repetition of certain elements in different works of art, often in terms of intertextuality and intermediality; 3) memory of literature understood as literary historiography and the process of canon formation; 4) memory in literature, that is "work done on the forms of the aesthetic representation" (Erll 68), and 5) literature as a medium of cultural memory, an approach that recognizes literature as an active force in memory culture (Erll 67–68). Of course, these approaches can be used simultaneously to enrich one another; for instance, a reflection on intertextual references to earlier literary works (memory of literature) can enhance research focused primarily on literature as a medium of memory. The present dissertation concentrates

on the fifth approach which recognizes literature as a medium of memory which engages in collective and cultural memory.

But how exactly is literature connected to cultural memory? According to Erll, there are three crucial intersections between memory and literature: 1) condensation, 2) narration, and 3) genre (*Memory in Culture* 145). "Condensation" refers to Sigmund Freud's writings, where it means the compression of complex ideas, feelings, or images into a single object; in the case of memory processes, it means that different assumptions about the past may merge into a single mnemonic object which, in turn, can be subjected to different interpretations. Pierre Nora's concept of sites of memory, where various memories become condensed within a single site of memory, is an example of condensation. As Erll points out, condensation is also the main characteristic of literature which brings together different semantic fields (146). The second intersection, narration, refers to the idea that both literature and cultural memory rest on narrative structures. Literature needs narration to convey a story; memory, in turn, orders the events that were chosen as worth remembering into a narrative and endows them with meaning and cohesion, thus creating origin stories that allow communities to gauge their present circumstances (Erll 146–47; see also Rigney). Finally, genres, understood as "conventionalized formats we use to encode events and experience" (Erll 147), are equally important to memory and literature because they are commonly used as models for understanding the world (Erll 148). Literary genres are often employed to encode cultural memory and to deal with challenges memory cultures face through the provision of familiar, conventionalized patterns for recounting difficult experiences. For instance, in the nineteenth century, the historical novel reflected the course of history and molded national identities. Therefore, as Erll emphasizes, the emergence of new genres may constitute an attempt to answer new mnemonic challenges (Erll 149). We may assume that the unprecedented

development of alternate history in recent decades stemmed from the desire to find new ways of addressing traumatic memories of the twentieth century.

However, Erll's notion that new mnemonic challenges may require the emergence of new genres runs counter to Jan and Aleida Assmann's theory of cultural memory and cultural texts which assume that cultural memory is transmitted solely via high culture. According to Aleida Assmann (2013), high culture with its set of canonical texts such as the Bible, Virgil's *The Aeneid*, Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* or John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, secures cultural continuity, forms collective identities, and passes on the knowledge about the origins and values of the groups that created them (*Między Historią a Pamięcią* 23–38). Therefore, she suggests that only canonical texts can be considered media of memory. Jerzy Kałążny (2007) criticized this approach, rightly pointing out that it overlooks the polysemantic quality of literature and assumes that societies uncritically accept the values transmitted by cultural texts (93). Therefore, Jan and Aleida Assmann's theory excludes mnemonic discourses that do not conform to the hegemonic memory and ignores popular culture, thus rejecting countless literary texts, genres, tropes, and styles that move across the high/low culture divide (Kukkonen 263); such an approach assumes popular culture has little to no influence on collective ideas about the past. Meanwhile, popular culture can be much more effective than high culture in disseminating cultural memory because it has an immense public reach[22]. While there is no denying that works of popular culture are not as artistically refined as those of high culture, they are still a part of *culture*−and thus affect collective perceptions of the past. Therefore, Jan and Aleida Assmanns' approach is elitist and limiting; it does not account for the versatility of the contemporary world, where high and popular culture

[22] One of the most blatant effect of this is Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*. Both the novel and its movie adaptation exerted major influence on solidifying the mythologized memory of the antebellum South, not only in the United States but worldwide.

increasingly overlap and intertwine. The exclusion of popular culture and, therefore, popular literature from the studies on memory does not enrich our knowledge of the proceedings of memory but obscures our understanding of cultural memory. Without popular culture, it is impossible to fully comprehend memory cultures. As the research into the mnemonic functions of literature carried out by Astrid Erll (2008, 2011), Birgit Neumann (2008, 2009), and Justyna Tabaszewska (2013, 2022) has demonstrated, popular culture can be as effective as high culture in representing, shaping, and disseminating cultural memory. Moreover, as Tabaszewska (2022) underlines, popular literature also shapes mnemonic frameworks and patterns, thus revealing anachronistic relations between different forms of remembrance (Tabaszewska, *Pamięć Afektywna* 65). Therefore, popular culture and, consequently, alternate history should be considered worthy of serious academic study.

To avoid the divisive terminology of "high" and "popular" culture and to account for the texts that do not belong to the canon, Astrid Erll introduced the notion of "collective texts" which is meant to convey literature's function "as a circulation medium that disseminates and shapes cultural memory" (Erll 164) and to point to "a way of reading in which literary works are actualized … as v*ehicles* for envisioning the past" (Erll 164). The concept of collective texts embraces high and popular culture, presuming that what matters most is the mnemonic force of the text, not its artistic value. Collective texts are transmedial by nature and circulate in various forms, just like memory travels across media. Therefore, they reach broad audiences, reflecting and shaping the contents of cultural memory.

According to Erll, there are three approaches to studying literary works as a medium of cultural memory. Assmanns' "cultural-texts approach" treats a literary text as a medium and object of cultural memory– one that remembers the community's past and is itself remembered as a canonical work, and therefore is approached with reverence and solemnity (Erll 162–63). It assumes that literature is a storage medium and is interested in social

institutions involved in preserving and interpreting canonical texts. By contrast, the "collective-texts approach" is concerned with literature's involvement in the current memory debates and how it shapes collective perceptions of the past (Erll 168). Finally, the 'afterlives approach' reconstructs the text's cultural biography by studying how it was received, discussed, reinterpreted, forgotten, censored, or remembered; therefore, it addresses "the basic process of memory culture: that of continuation and actualization" (Erll 166) by asking how given texts remain meaningful to readers (Erll 168). Literary texts can be explored through the lenses of all three approaches, but the research concerned with gauging the mnemonic purport of works of popular culture should first and foremost consider the collective-text approach and the afterlives approach. Combining both approaches can provide fresh insights into literary texts' connection to memory culture by examining their entanglement in memory debates. As Erll observes, thinking of literature as a medium of cultural memory "entails a modification of basic assumptions made by traditional literary theory, for example regarding the clear separability between text and context, literature's (non)referentiality … or the alleged stability and unchangeability of literary works" (Erll 171). Therefore, the study of literature in the context of memory studies involves looking at the text as a part of an intricate network of historical, social, and cultural variables in which the individual is inextricably connected to the collective.

2.3. Memory and Alternate History: Intersections

As the previous subchapter has explained, literature is one of the most important media of memory, responsible for shaping and disseminating ideas about the past. In the subchapter that follows, it will be demonstrated that alternate history, largely neglected by scholars, constitutes a compelling research area; it will also be argued that the thematic

concerns of the alternate history genre described in the first chapter harmonize with the central notions of memory studies. The last part of this subchapter establishes the framework for analyzing alternate history in the context of memory studies.

As explained earlier, literary genres not only provide schemata for memory coding and thus exert influence on cultural memory but also constitute a response to new mnemonic challenges. Alternate history, a genre of literature that developed primarily in the second half of the twentieth century, reflects public demands for finding new ways of addressing traumatic memories of the twentieth century, such as World War II, the Holocaust, or the Cold War[23]. By inverting historical events, alternate history provides reinvigorating ways of coping with a difficult past making it more bearable by underlining the connection between the present and past, thus providing a sense of purpose[24]. Sometimes, it can also perform a therapeutic function by explaining the necessity of historical traumas, turning defeat into victory, or depicting symbolical revenge on the tormentor (Wąsowicz, "Historie alternatywne w literaturze polskiej"; Wąsowicz, "Powstanie styczniowe"; Górecka, "Historie alternatywne w konwencji steampunk i cyberpunk"; Lemann, "Alternatywna Miara Wielkości?"). By responding to the mnemonic challenges of the twentieth century, alternate history also mediates in the process of forming a collective identity. As Tabaszewska (2022) observes, the events that were once perceived as reasonable possibilities turn into affective facts which

[23] In addition, alternate history also constitutes an answer to the emergence of postmodernism with its concept of the constructed nature of history and blurring of fact and fiction (G. D. Rosenfeld, *The World Hitler Never Made* 6–7; Schneider-Mayerson; see also Nünning; Singles; Lemann, *Historie alternatywne i steampunk w literaturze* 56). The genre can be also conceptualized through Linda Hutcheon's notion of historiographic metafiction (Nünning; Wesseling), which also developed in reaction to postmodernism (Erll 149).

[24] The concept of literature as a space of practicing and reinforcing collective resilience is described by Justyna Tabaszewska in *Pamięć afektywna*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2022, pp. 66-71.

uphold the feelings attached to the unrealized past prospects and exert influence on the memory practices as much as the events that did happen ("Affective Future" 3). For instance, in Polish cultural memory the unrealized possibility of winning the September Campaign (often explored in Polish alternate history) functions as an affective fact around which memory obsessively loops itself to provide a short relief and imagine the future as an adjustment of the past events (Tabaszewska, "Affective Future" 5–11). In turn, in the United States, the possibility of American isolationism during World War II and its possible disastrous outcome also functions as an affective fact that organizes American collective memory and affects modern-day politics.

Alternate history can also be connected to the proceedings of cultural memory in terms of its conceptualization of the past. The comparison of the thematic concerns of alternate history distinguished in the first chapter with the major aspects of cultural memory reveals that alternate history and memory are strikingly similar. As regards history, both alternate history and cultural memory are rooted in historical facts which serve as starting points for the exploration of the meaning of the past for the present. Alternate history uses history as a foundation for the creation of fantasy worlds in which one or more historical events unfold differently than in reality; however, even though alternate history toys with history by reversing important historical events, in most cases it retains semblance to the historical period it describes. Cultural memory works in a similar fashion, for it emerges as a reaction to a historical event, forms a mythic-like narrative around it, and endows it with meaning that supports collective perceptions of the past.

The second thematic concern of alternate history, the point of divergence (POD), also intersects with cultural memory. As a rule, alternate history writers use emotionally charged developments from national history as turning points for their stories. In most cases, alternate history writers use sites of memory (or events bound to *lieux de mémoire*) as their point of

divergence. For instance, in Ward Moore's *Bring the Jubilee*, the divergence takes place during the Battle of Gettysburg, while in Robert Conroy's *1942*, it is connected to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. In many cases, the point of divergence is not tied to a historical event but to a historical figure, for instance, Franklin D. Roosevelt (Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, Brendan DuBois's *Amerikan Eagle*), Winston Churchill (C. J. Sansom's *Dominion*), or Adolf Hitler (Norman Spinrad's *The Iron Dream*, Stephen Fry's *Making History*). Alternate histories rely on Carlyle's Great Man theory of history, according to which the course of history depends on the deed of great men, while the elimination of such a man from the historical process would decisively alter the world (Gallagher, "What Would Napoleon"; Singles 56–58; see also Lemann, *Historie alternatywne i steampunk w literaturze* 69–70, 415, 449). While historical figures cannot serve as points of divergence by themselves, they can constitute forces behind POD, which means that taking them out of the historical equation can radically change the course of events and alter the sites of memory. Their meaning can be shifted, reversed, twisted, or erased altogether, which raises the question of what happens to memory cultures that cultivated them. How does the removal or transfiguration of sites of memory affect collective memory? Does it break or find new reservoirs of identity? And what does it reveal about the overall condition of memory culture? The answers to these questions may potentially provide fresh insights into the proceedings of memory. Therefore, points of divergence lend themselves to consideration in terms of memory studies, especially the notion of sites of memory; the examination of such sites in alternate histories can deepen our understanding of the real *lieux de mémoire* and their significance for contemporary memory cultures.

The third thematic concern of alternate history, ramifications, bears relation to the presentist character of cultural memory, as well as to the politics of memory. As explained in the subchapter on memory studies, one of the characteristic features of cultural memory is its

presentist character, understood as the instrumentalization of pivotal historical events in order to make sense of the present; politics of memory, in turn, utilizes sites of memory and promotes a clearly defined perception of the past to accomplish political objectives. In alternate histories, the notion of ramifications also utilizes the (altered) past to comment on the real present (or, as alternate history fans would say, on the present in our timeline). As Rosenfeld observes

> Alternate history is inherently presentist. It explores the past less for its own sake than to utilize it instrumentally to comment upon the state of the contemporary world. When the producers of alternate history speculate on how the past might have been different, they invariably express their own highly subjective present-day hopes and fears ... they explore the past instrumentally with an eye towards larger, present-day agendas. (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 10)

Therefore, alternate history, like cultural memory, uses the past to comment on and make sense of the present[25]. This phenomenon is most visible through the notion of ramifications because the worlds that emerge as a consequence of the divergence from history constitute, on the one hand, a thought experiment and, on the other hand, a political message whose purport depends on the type of divergence. Overall, alternate history can be divided into utopian alternate histories that depict worlds in which the ramifications of the divergence from history produced a better past, and dystopian alternate histories, that is, narratives that

[25] William H. Hardesty (2003) also points out that alternate history "problematizes the present … The reader is impelled to deal through inference and analogy with the ways in which the present could have been different, given a different past" (Hardesty 87). In a similar fashion, Górecka ("Polityczne afiliacje fantastyki"; "Historie alternatywne w konwencji steampunk i cyberpunk"; "Przeszłość ideologicznie zaprojektowana") and Lemann (*Historie alternatywne i steampunk w literaturze*) explain how alternate history responds to present-day political disputes.

portray the altered past as worse than the actual past[26]. In most cases, utopian alternate histories convey a disappointment with the current state of the world, while dystopian alternate histories suggest satisfaction with the status quo because they illustrate that history could have turned out worse than it really did (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 11). This implies that the diegetic world that emerges due to the divergence from history carries political overtones. When the diegetic world is better than the real one, it implies a critique of the past and current political decisions; when it is worse, it suggests satisfaction with the political decision made in the past and present, thus supporting the current political system. For instance, alternate histories depicting a powerful Poland that emerged after World War II as a consequence of the German-Polish alliance in 1939 convey dissatisfaction with the way Polish authorities acted in the face of the Nazi threat (Wolski, *Wallenrod*; Wolski, *Mocarstwo*); by contrast, alternate histories that describe the Nazi victory in World War II as a ramification of American isolationism support the politics of interventionism because they demonstrate the disastrous effects of isolationism. Ramifications can be used to either promote the dominant memory narratives or to subvert them. For instance, Ryan Graudin's novel *Wolf by Wolf* depicts the Axis victory in World War II in bleak terms, thus

[26] Gavriel D. Rosenfeld uses the terminology of a "fantasy scenario", i.e. a scenario in which the alternate history is better than the real one and a "nightmare scenario" in which the alternate history is worse than the real one (11). His terms are potentially misleading because on a sematic level the word "fantasy" carries a meaning of something fantastic, magical, and different from reality, which means that the term "fantasy scenario" can be associated with fantasy in the meaning of the genre of speculative fiction. In psychology, counterfactual scenarios presenting outcomes that are better than what really happened are called "upward counterfactuals", while scenarios that are worse than actuality are referred to as "downward counterfactuals" (Roese and Morrison, "Psychology" 17; Van Hoeck et al.). However, terminology derived from literary studies would be more appropriate. Terms "utopian" and "dystopian" highlight alternate history's affinity to utopia and dystopia, highlight the hybridity of the genre, and are not ambiguous in the way "fantasy" and "nightmare" are.

supporting the commonly accepted view of Nazism as the ultimate evil[27]. In contrast, Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* can be read as a critique of American antisemitism that would have manifested itself had there been permission for public displays of antisemitism[28]. Interestingly, the presentist implications of ramifications of the divergence can evolve along with social and political changes[29]; therefore, like memory, the mnemonic purport of alternate histories is malleable.

As a genre, alternate history corresponds with memory in terms of its inherent subjectivity. Cultural memory rejects historical facts to focus on events perceived as important by a given group. As Pierre Nora wrote, memory "... accommodates those facts that suit it" (8) and "is blind to all but the group it binds" (9), which means that it is selective and group-specific. Alternate history is also subjective and selective, for it freely blends fact and fiction, choosing emotionally-charged events from national history to accomplish its political objectives and force the reader to reconsider their attitude toward the past. The affective force of alternate history narratives also binds them with memory. As Rosenfeld observes, alternate histories

> ...are driven by many of the same psychological forces that determine how the past takes shape in rememberance. Biases, fears, wishes, the desire to avoid guilt, the quest for vindication−these and other related sentiments all influence the ways in which alternate histories represent how the past might have been,

[27] See Part II, Chapter 6.

[28] See Part II, Chapter 4.

[29] This is best exemplified by Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, which at the time of its publication was interpreted in the context of the Bush administration and his war on terror, while after the election of Donald Trump it began to be perceived as a prophethic novel and an allusion to the Trump administration.

> just as they influence the ways in which people remember how the past "really" was. (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 12)

Thus, alternate history and memory are shaped by similar emotions.

To sum up, there are numerous similarities between alternate history and the workings of memory, allowing us to conclude that alternate history can function as a medium of memory that stores and actively shapes the contents of cultural memory. As a literary genre, alternate history provides schemata for the expression of cultural memory and provides narratives that can be read both as representations and interventions into collectively held ideas about the past. What is more, the central thematic concerns of alternate history distinguished in the first chapter harmonize well with the workings of memory: history is a starting point for both alternate history and cultural memory, the point of divergence is rooted in sites of memory, while ramifications are connected to politics of memory and exhibit the presentist and subjective character of alternate history genre. These intersections between alternate history and memory render alternate history an exciting research area that remains unrecognized for memory studies.

The analytical scheme I propose in this dissertation draws on the intersections between memory studies and literature and the methods used by alternate history scholars, principally Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, whose pioneerring work on the similarities between the two disciplines, though not unproblematic, remains an important contribution to the field and provides methodical inspiration.

The central premise of this dissertation is that alternate history is inextricably connected to cultural memory, and its primary function is to serve as a medium for (re)negotiation of national identities and collective ideas about the past. My analysis of alternate history fiction as a medium of memory adopts three assumptions Astrid Erll (2011) suggests for studying collective texts. The first assumption is, of course, that alternate history novels belong to the

the category of collective texts that encode socially significant versions of mnemonic discourse and thus represent, shape, and intervene into cultural memory. The second one presumes that as media of memory, alternate history novels function as cues for acts of cultural remembrance, which means that they operate in a way similar to Pierre Nora's sites of memory, triggering a complicated chain of memories and associations. The third one accentuates the necessity to study the afterlives of media of memory by analyzing the text's cultural biography, its reinterpretation(s), and reception (Erll 164–68).

Taking into account the theoretical approaches described in this chapter, as well as the intersections between alternate history and cultural memory, the analysis of alternate history novels should take into account the following issues and concepts:

1) **The summary of the novel** which is needed to account for the point of divergence and ramifications that emerge due to the divergence from the historical record.
2) **The biographical and historical background** because, from the point of view of memory studies, the figure of the author as well as the historical context of the creation of the novel may prove relevant for understanding the memory disputes the novel engages in.
3) **Sites of memory the novel refers to**. As described above, alternate history is inherently tied to sites of memory because, just like them, it focuses on emotionally charged developments from national history. Hence, it is necessary to unpack the sites of memory explored in an alternate history novel and analyze how they are represented, transformed, and commented on. As Pierre Nora and other memory scholars suggested, both literal and metaphorical sites of memory will be examined.
4) **Politics of memory** promoted by the novel. In most cases, the concept of sites of memory is connected to the politics of memory. Therefore it is necessary to analyze

the politics of memory a given novel promotes and whether it conforms to the dominant, hegemonic cultural memory.

5) **The afterlife of the novel.** As Erll (2011) suggested, one should explore the reception of literary works to gauge literature's impact on cultural memory. This was also underlined by Rigney (2008), who points out that the analysis of literature's role as media of memory has to go beyond a simple interpretation of individual works and involve the study of their reception and interactions with other acts of remembrance in a variety of media and genres (350). From the point of view of memory studies, the analysis of afterlives of literary works can help gauge their position and impact on cultural memory. Therefore, the final part of my analysis will, if possible, attempt to focus on studying the afterlives of alternate history works, which, I hope, will shed some light on American cultural memory and Americans' changing attitudes toward the past.

As can be seen, the analysis scheme described above proposes a close reading of alternate history novels in the context of their larger cultural and memorial background. It takes into account Astrid Erll's suggestion that "conceiving of 'literature as a medium of cultural memory' requires a rigorous contextualization of literary works" (Erll 171) and involves a modification of traditional assumptions of literary theory, such as separability between text and context (Erll 171). Such an analysis may yield interesting results regarding American cultural memory; therefore, the above scheme will provide a direction for my interpretation of the memory of World War II in American alternate history fiction.

PART II: WORLD WAR II, ALTERNATE HISTORY, AND MEMORY

1. WORLD WAR II IN AMERICAN CULTURAL MEMORY

No historical event is more frequently explored in alternate history fiction than World War II. Gavriel D. Rosenfeld's *The World Hitler Never Made* lists one hundred sixteen alternate histories referring to the Third Reich, and, therefore, to World War II. Of these one hundred sixteen works, fifty-nine were written and published in the United States (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 518). In turn, Robert B. Schmunk's website *Uchronia: The Alternate History List* contains over a hundred alternate histories in different languages that refer to World War II (Schmunk). The plethora of World War II alternate histories provides an extensive and compelling research area.

This popularity of World War II in alternate history fiction mirrors American cultural fascination with World War II, the Third Reich, and the figure of Adolf Hitler. Presently, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, World War II functions in American cultural memory primarily as a romantic myth, a just war fought against the forces of evil. It has not always been like that; initially, the attitudes to war were much more complicated, and the memory and meaning of the war provoked vast public arguments (Bodnar 7). As cultural memory started to emerge, the ambivalent attitudes towards World War II faded and gave way to a romantic, mythic-like story about "the greatest generation", "a good war", and the unity and patriotism Americans showed during the war. As Bodnar notes, "A half-century after the fighting stopped, millions of Americans talked about the war as a character-building experience that transformed citizens into heroes and moral paragons" (189). In addition, politicians and the entertainment industry managed to convince the audience that the Allied victory over the Axis powers was a victory of good over evil and that World War II proved the superiority of the American political project of freedom, equality, and democracy.

Elizabeth D. Samet (2021) identified six dogmas on which the American myth of World War II is founded: 1) the United States joined the war to liberate the world from fascism and tyranny, 2) all Americans supported and committed to the war effort, 3) everyone on the home front made sacrifices, 4) Americans joined the war reluctantly − only because they had to, 5) the war was tragic but ended positively, and, finally, 6) everyone had always agreed on all five points (Samet 25). This mythical, oversimplified outlook on World War II was fueled by Stud Terkel's book *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II* (1984)[30], Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation* (1998) which depicted the war in terms of values such as individualism and self-sacrifice, and Stephen Ambrose's *Band of Brothers* (1992), which inspired Steven Speilberg and Tom Hanks's war drama miniseries of the same name (2001). The movie industry also played an important role in the process, with movies such as Steven Spielberg's blockbuster *Saving Private Ryan* (1998). The positive image of World War II as a time of valor was also reinforced by politicians who often used the rhetoric of the "good war", which is best illustrated by George W. Bush's speeches in which he used popular nostalgia for World War II to justify his political aims after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks and to promote the politics of military intervention (Schuman and Rieger; Noon; Balthrop et al. 182, 185; Otten; Pei-chen 12; Hall).

Overall, World War II is perceived in American cultural memory as a time of valor, unity, and patriotism. This positive attitude, as has been previously noted, is reflected in the concepts of "the good war" and "greatest generation" (Noon; Schuman and Rieger 316; Adams) and supported by research on public opinion. According to the Gallup Institute polls, in 1990 eighty-four percent of the respondents described World War II as a "just war", while in 2004 the number of respondents approving of the United States' involvement in World

[30] Terkel places the phrase "good war" between quotation marks to point to the incogruity of using the adjective "good" with "war"; nevertheless his book fueled the World War II mythology.

War II reached ninety percent (Newport; Schuman and Rieger). Therefore, the belief in the just character of World War II is shared by the majority of American society, regardless of political affiliation (Dorn et al.). As previously stated, this positive attitude formed at the end of the twentieth century; for the Americans who experienced World War II, the United States' involvement in the war and its aftermath was a subject of dispute (Bodnar 7). However, the debates regarding the war and the isolationist tendencies of the 1940s were almost completely repressed by the hegemonic, self-congratulatory memory of American victory. Contemporary culture tends to portray World War II as a clash between good and evil which Americans won thanks to their exceptional technology and superior moral force. In contrast, Adolf Hitler is depicted as the epitome of evil, while the Third Reich came to represent an archetypal dictatorship and the exact opposite of American democracy (Winthrop-Young 880–82; Butter; Bodnar).

Another point around which American cultural memory of World War II loops itself is the Holocaust. While in contemporary Western societies the Holocaust functions as a global site of memory and a transnational symbol for the violation of human rights (Erll 62), immediately after World War II the Nazi project of annihilation of the Jewish race was not a matter of a public debate. Instead, Americans perceived the genocide of European Jews as one of many manifestations of the Nazi evil and a confirmation of the rightness of America's war effort (Bodnar 177). The history of the introduction of the Holocaust into cultural memory of the United States can be told through landmarks such as the publication of *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* (1952)[31], Elie Wiesel's memoir *Night* (1960) and Raul

[31] As Flanzbaum (1999) and Bodnar (2010) note, the popularity of *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* in the United States stemmed from the fact that it did not depict the cruelty of the Holocaust and World War II directly. They point out that in American popular culture, the book and its adaptations function as an inspirational tale of hope which appeals to American sensibilities but marginalizes the experience of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism. The theatrical production *Anna Frank* (1955) also remains an important site of

Hilberg's *The Destruction of European Jews* (1961), the broadcast of Adolf Eichmann's trial (1961), the release of the television series *Holocaust* (1978) and Steven Spielberg's movie *Schindler's List* (1993). The establishment of the President's Commission on the Holocaust by Jimmy Carter in 1978 and the subsequent opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993 further reinforced the position of the Holocaust as a part of American cultural memory. However, it must be underscored that American perception of the Holocaust differs from the European perception because it is anchored in the ideals of human rights and democracy rather than in concrete sites of terror (Young, *The Texture of Memory* 283). This specifically American focus on human rights situates the memory of the Holocaust within a very peculiar politics of memory that turns the genocide into a universal warning against bigotry and autocracy, thus casting the Shoah as a pretext for a self-congratulatory narrative according to which the United States becomes a haven for the world's oppressed (Young, *The Texture of Memory*; Young, "America's Holocaust: Memory and the Politics of Identity" 71–73). It is especially evident in the message promoted by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum which defines the Holocaust as the ultimate violation of the United States Bill of Rights and the denial of the deepest dogmas of American life (Young, *The Texture of Memory* 336–37; see also Magid).

The process of introduction of the Holocaust into American cultural memory is often referred to as "the Americanization of the Holocaust" and stirs conflicting emotions. While some scholars understand it as a way in which American Jewry remembers and refracts the Shoah through American lenses (Magid 100), others perceive it as a degradation of the Holocaust by American popular culture (A. H. Rosenfeld "The Americanization of the

---

memory, even though it has been criticized for downplaying the Jewish context and creating a happy ending to conform to the American psyche (A. H. Rosenfeld, "The Americanization of the Holocaust"; Flanzbaum 91–94; Young, "America's Holocaust: Memory and the Politics of Identity" 125; Bodnar 178; B. Langford 4).

Holocaust"; Stratton). It has sparked discussions regarding the appropriation, representation, and status of the Holocaust in American culture and public life (Flanzbaum; A. H. Rosenfeld, "The Americanization of the Holocaust"; Niroumand; Langer; Novick; Young, "America's Holocaust: Memory and the Politics of Identity"; Stier; A. H. Rosenfeld, *The End of the Holocaust*; Stratton; Lang; Magid; Krasuska; B. Langford). Moreover, the Americanization of the Holocaust led to a controversial process of the universalization of the Holocaust, that is comparing the Shoah to other atrocities, such as the persecution of Native Americans and African Americans. The conflation of the Holocaust with America's social problems was harshly criticized by Alvin H. Rosenfeld, who complained about the utilization of the Shoah in order to "draw public attention to human-rights abuses, social inequalities suffered by racial and ethnic minorities and women, environmental disasters, AIDS, and a whole host of other things" (A. H. Rosenfeld, "The Americanization of the Holocaust"). The phenomenon was condemned by numerous other public figures who argued that the universalization of the Holocaust leads to its politicizing, underplaying the suffering of the victims, and mitigating the tragedy of millions of Jews (Langer 158; Flanzbaum 92; see also G. D. Rosenfeld, "Politics of Uniqueness"). Michael Rothberg tries to mediate between the conflicting views arguing that memory is not a zero-sum game in which recognition of one group's suffering equals oblivion of the other and that the dynamic transfer of the memory of victimization between different communities can create new forms of solidarity (Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*; Rothberg, "Against Zero-Sum Logic"). However, the dispute is by no means settled. Regardless of the directions it will take in the future, the fact remains that the Holocaust has been assimilated into American cultural memory as an universal symbol of violation of human rights and as a contradiction of American values of democracy, freedom, and equality.

World War II and, consequently, the Holocaust are perceived in contemporary American culture as a moral benchmark. In the contemporary, highly divided American society, they are recognized as the last clear distinction between right and wrong, and thus one of few things on which almost all Americans agree and, in the case of the Shoah, deplore (Stratton 234–42; Novick 13). It is, therefore, not surprising that American culture constantly returns to World War II and obsessively loops itself around it to make sense of the present.

Given the meaning ascribed to World War II in American cultural memory, as well as the undisputed significance of the war for the shape of the modern world, it is no wonder that alternate history fiction often explores themes relating to World War II. Within alternate history narratives that turn history upside down, the issues connected to the war and its contemporary perception become particularly pronounced. As Winthrop-Young (2006) points out, if we embrace the hegemonic memory according to which Americans defeated the Third Reich because of their moral superiority, we have to conclude that when the United States loses World War II in an alternate history story, it is because of its lack of moral force and fiber (882). This, in turn, raises the question of what such alernate histories of World War II try to convey about the condition of American society in the past and present. In the following chapter, I will address this question in more detail.

2. PHILIP K. DICK *THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE* (1962)

Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, awarded the Hugo Award for Best Novel in 1963, is arguably the most famous alternate history novel ever written. Published in 1962, it has served as an inspiration and a benchmark for countless other alternate history writers. In a 1964 review, Robert Silverberg declared, " [this] brilliant book…is one of the finest works in our field in a long time" (123). It was also praised for constituting a creative breakthrough in Dick's literary carrier (Suvin 8). Despite the fact that *The Man in the High Castle* was published over sixty years ago, it remains in print to this day. The TV adaptation produced by Amazon Studios between 2015 and 2019 only increased its popularity, which prompts the question of the source of the novel's enduring acclaim. I am confident the answer to that question can be found in *The Man in the High Castle*'s mnemonic purport.

The Man in the High Castle is set in a world where the Axis powers won World War II and acquired control over the world. After the victory, they divided the United States into the Pacific States of America (PSA) controlled by Imperial Japan, the neutral Rocky Mountains States, and the United States controlled by Nazi Germany. The victory of the Axis powers was made possible by Giuseppe Zangara, who successfully assassinated Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933[32], thus preventing the introduction of the New Deal and securing the policy of non-interventionism. The assassination of FDR is a point of divergence of *The Man in the High Castle*, for it starts a chain of events that results in the defeat of the Allies in 1947, partition of the United States, and a mass extermination of all the races Adolf Hitler

[32] As Silverberg observes in his review of the novel, *The Man in the High Castle* suggests that Roosevelt was already in office when the assassination happened (Silverberg 123). While Silverberg dismisses this historical inaccuracy as "one of the few historical slips in this otherwise meticulous book" (Silverberg 123), in all likelihood Dick decided to include it to validate Abendsen's argument pertaining to Roosevelt's strong policy and to substantiate the characters' sense of loss.

considered subhuman. The novel is set in 1962, when the Third Reich and Imperial Japan are world superpowers, competing with each other and engaged in a cold war reminiscent of the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Nazi Germany is far more technologically advanced than Japan and carries out a number of scientific experiments, including draining the Mediterranean Sea through atomic power, the colonization of Mars, and the invention of rocket ships for travel.

However, the story is focused not on a detailed description of the political and technological ramifications of the Axis victory but on how one can find a place for oneself in the world ruled by the Nazi regime (Robinson 27). To answer the question of how to live in a dystopian world, the story follows Juliana Frink, a judo instructor living in the Rocky Mountains; her ex-husband Frank Frink who hides his Jewish identity; a Japanese government official Nobosuke Tagomi; Rudolf Wegener, an agent for the Abwehr masquerading as a Swedish envoy named Mr. Baynes; and Robert Childan, a dealer in American antiques who supports the fascist ideology of the Third Reich. *The Man in the High Castle* also has several secondary characters such as Frank's friend Ed McCarthy, a Nazi assassin passing as an Italian truck driver named Joe Cinnadella, the author of a bestselling novel *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* Hawthorne Abendsen, the head of the German police Kreuz von Meere, or Frank's former employer Mr. Wyndam-Matson. The introduction of so many characters results in multiple points of view, which make up a fascinating narrative play in which the reader moves in space and time to discover various, often contrary, opinions regarding the alternate history of the United States.

Interestingly, despite these multiple points of view, *The Man in the High Castle* does not depict the east coast occupied by Nazi Germany. Instead, it focuses on the Pacific United States and the neutral Rocky Mountains. The reason behind this is simple: Dick found it too difficult to describe what the Nazi-occupied territory would look like and decided to set his

novel in the Japanese-occupied territory[33]. Nevertheless, as Hardesty (2003) observes, even though the novel is ostensibly pervaded by Asian culture, the Nazi presence dominates the novel (74). The fascist ideology and Nazi Germany's post-war atrocities are conjured up and pondered over by Frank (Dick, *High Castle* 16–17), Mr Tagomi (Dick, *High Castle* 93–97, 182–84), Juliana (Dick, *High Castle* 38, 40, 158), Mr Baynes (Dick, *High Castle* 44–46), and Childan (Dick, *High Castle* 29–30, 112, 118). In addition, a significant part of the plot revolves around an emerging political crisis the Third Reich wants to provoke; Adolf Hitler is sick and incapacitated, and when the acting Chancellor of Germany Martin Bormann dies at the beginning of the novel, the ensuing struggle for power between Nazi officials threatens the outbreak of a nuclear war. Therefore, the threat of nuclear annihilation looms over the main characters. This pervasive fear of Nazism is counterbalanced by the I Ching, an ancient Chinese divination text to which Frank, Juliana, and Tagomi frequently turn for advice[34], as well as by Hawthorne Abendsen's alternate history novel *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* depicting an alternate timeline in which the United States won World War II[35], and, finally,

[33] Nazism revolted Dick, which is why he never finished writing a sequel to *The Man in the High Castle*. The sequel was supposed to focus on the Third Reich trying to get access to *Nebenwelt*, the alternate universe depicted in Hawthorne Abendsen's novel. However, Dick found it impossible to continue writing: "Somebody would have to … help me do a sequel to it. Someone who had the stomach for the stamina to think along those lines, to get into the head; if you're going to start writing about Reinhard Heydrich, for instance, you have to get into his face. Can you imagine getting into Reinhard Heydrich's face?" (*Hour 25*). Eventually, he wrote two chapters and abandoned the project. The chapters were printed in *The Shifting Realities of Philip K. Dick* (1996).

[34] Interestingly, Philip K. Dick really used the I Ching to plot *The Man in the High Castle*. Every time one of the characters consulted the I Ching, he did the same, and continued writing according to the advice suggested by the oracle, which is why the ending of the novel is unresolved.

[35] Which, despite the United States' victory, is still different than our timeline. Here, Philip K. Dick uses the motif of alternate history within alternate history, which consists of an insertion of an alternate history into an alternate history narrative; the alternate history narrated within the diegetic world can be identical to our history,

by the jewelry designed by Frank and Ed McCarthy which has a profound influence on Childan and Mr. Tagomi.

The Man in the High Castle was heavily influenced by Philip K. Dick's beliefs, as well as by the political and social context of the early 1960s. Dick was only twelve when Pearl Harbor was attacked and thus too young to take part in World War II, so his experience of the war was mediated by newspapers, radio, and cinema (Rossi 79). Still, the political climate of the late 1950s and early 1960s, with Cold War politics, mass hysteria, paranoic militarism, bomb-shelters mania, and the threat of government totalitarianism exerted a considerable influence on PKD's works (Suvin 12). The turn of the fifties and sixties was also characterized by a renewed interest in Nazi Germany sparked by several interrelated happenings, most notably the eruption of the Berlin crisis in the years 1958-1961, the creation of the American Nazi Party in 1958, the "swastika wave" in West Germany in 1959 which was widely reported in the United States, the capture and trial of Adolf Eichmann between 1960 and 1961, and, finally, a wave of antisemitic attacks in American cities between December 1959 and February 1960 which involved, among other things, smearing swastikas on synagogues, attacks on Jewish property, and scattered bombings (Ehrlich; G. D. Rosenfeld, *Fourth Reich* 158–90). The reawakened memory of the Third Reich and fears of fascist influence on America was further sustained by politicians who frequently referred to the memory of World War II in their speeches, as well as by William L. Shirer's historical bestseller *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (1960) and his subsequent essay "If Hitler Had Won World War II" (1961), which was supposed to remind Americans about Germany's

---

but does not have to be. In *The Man in the High Castle*, the alternate history narrated in Abendsen's *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* describes a world in which the Allies won World War II which is similar to our timeline, but not identical, constructing a third parallel world which undermines the reality of both our timeline and the timeline of *The Man in the High Castle*.

wartime atrocities (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 104; G. D. Rosenfeld, *Fourth Reich*). This political and cultural climate of the late fifties rekindled Philip K. Dick's obsession with fascism which, as Suvin points out, haunted him as no other American science fiction writer (13).

It is not clear when Philip K. Dick started writing *The Man in the High Castle*, but from some of the interviews he gave, we know that he wrote it in time of a severe personal and creative crisis. In an interview with Daniel DePerez (1976), Dick described how he gave up writing and decided to help his wife in her jewelry business which made him so miserable that he started pretending to be writing a book only to get out of it:

> She was giving me all the shit part to do, and I decided to pretend I was writing a book … And to make the fabrication convincing, I actually had to start typing. And I had no notes, I had nothing in mind, except for years I had wanted to write that idea, about Germany and Japan actually having beaten the United States. And without any notes, I simply sat down and began to write, simply to get out of the jewelry business. And that's why the jewelry business plays such a large role in the novel. Without any notes, I had no pre-conception of how the book would develop (Dick, *An Interview With Philip K. Dick, Science Fiction Review*)

Despite Dick's claim that he started writing without any notes, the outline of the alternate timeline must have already been shaped in his mind as the research for *The Man in the High Castle* took him seven years (*Hour 25*). P. K. Dick read not only William L. Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, Allan Bullock's *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, and *The Goebbels Diaries, 1942-1943* but also stacks of marked Gestapo documents, such as the diaries of the Gestapo, which he described as "horrible" and "awful" (*Hour 25*; see also: Dick, *High Castle* 7). Over these seven years of research, Dick's disgust with fascism became solidified, and he

turned into a staunch opponent of Nazism: "I thought I hated those guys before I did the research. After I did the research then I had created for myself an enemy that I would hate the rest of my life. Fascism. Wherever it appears. Whether it's in Germany, the United States, Soviet Union or anywhere" (*Hour 25*). His revulsion finds its reflection in chapter six of *The Man in the High Castle* in which Nobosuke Tagomi becomes sick while listening to a briefing on contenders for the position of Reich Chancellor and runs out of the meeting because he is disgusted by the evil of Nazi leaders. In one of the interviews, Dick admitted that in this scene, he described himself and Mr. Tagomi's severe panic attack mirrored his own reaction to reading about the crimes perpetrated by the Nazis (*Hour 25*).

Philip K. Dick's comments on his creative process imply that *The Man in the High Castle* provided a vent to his fervent moral outrage. Therefore, we should pay close attention to how he depicts the ramifications of World War II in his alternate history, as well as to the politics of memory the novel engages with.

Even though the threat posed by fascism is omnipresent in the novel, *The Man in the High Castle* explores only two sites of memory directly connected to World War II. The first one is the Holocaust, frequently alluded to in the first part of the book. The second one is Franklin D. Roosevelt and, to some extent, his cigarette lighter, which Wyndam-Matson uses to impress his lover. However, the American historical objects, such as the Colt.44 or scrimshaw Childan gifts to the Kasouras, can also be regarded as sites of memory. Therefore, American historical objects are included in my analysis of the novel's sites of memory in the same way the Holocaust and FDR are.

The first site of memory is the Holocaust, a site of memory frequently alluded to in the first part of *The Man in the High Castle*, and looming over the second part of the novel. It is strongly linked to Frank Frink who hides his Jewish origin and constantly fears being compromised and deported to the Reich-occupied territory where he would be condemned to

a gas chamber. Frank is also the first character to bring up the Holocaust; when he appears in the middle of the first chapter, he almost immediately starts pondering his situation as a Jew in hiding. Upon hearing about Nazi Germany's space program on the radio, he imagines Nazis landing on Mars to build concentration camps there. Then, Frank's thoughts turn to mass exterminations perpetrated by Nazis and their experiments:

> And then he thought about Africa, and the Nazi experiment there. And his blood stopped in his veins, hesitated, at last went on. That huge empty ruin. … Africa. For the ghosts of dead tribes. Wiped out to make a land of − what? … Maybe even the master architects in Berlin did not know. Bunch of automatons, building and toiling away. Building? Grinding down. … Prehistoric man in a sterile white lab coat in some Berlin university lab, experimenting with the uses to which other people's skull, skin, ears, fat could be put. Ja, Herr Doktor. A new use for the big toe; see, one can adapt the joint for a quick-acting cigarette lighter mechanism. Now, if only Herr Krupp can produce it in quantity… (Dick, *High Castle* 17)

The imagery of a "sterile white lab coat", as well as the experiments regarding the potential use of human remains, are apparent references to the medical experiments conducted in concentration camps. However, in the novel they are not hidden from the public and carried out in secret in concentration camps; on the contrary, they are a part of officially approved, state-sponsored research, which renders it even more gruesome and horrific than in actual history.

Frank's stream of consciousness reveals that when the Third Reich won World War II in 1947, it executed the Holocaust on a mass scale, murdering all people it considered racially impure. This mass genocide is also referred to by Robert Childan, who muses:

> …the Germans … they had been successful with the Jews and Gypsies and Bible Students. And the Slavs had been rolled back two thousand years' worth, to their heartland in Asia. … But Africa. They had simply let their enthusiasm get the better of them there, and you had to admire that … it had taken two hundred years to dispose of the American aborigines, and Germany had almost done it in Africa in fifteen years. … the Germans never stopped applying themselves. And when did a task, they did it *right*. (Dick, *High Castle* 29–30)

Childan's thoughts reveal that in the world of *The Man in the High Castle*, the people murdered in the Holocaust belonged to various nations and religions. The image of Africa, which the Third Reich turned within fifteen years into a "huge empty ruin" (Dick, *High Castle* 17) full of "ghosts of dead tribes" (Dick, *High Castle* 17) and "the billion chemical heaps … that were now not even corpses" (Dick, *High Castle* 19), creates a frightfully evocative setting that emphasizes the horror of the Holocaust and the dystopian character of the world dominated by Nazi Germany. In the cited passages, *The Man in the High Castle* not only underlines the deeply inhuman nature of Nazism through references to the Holocaust but also argues that had the Third Reich won World War II, it would have carried out mass exterminations of various races which, in the end, would be worse than the actual Holocaust. The images of mass exterminations and experiments on humans serve to remind the reader that eventually Adolf Hitler strived to eliminate or enslave all races he considered "subhuman".

By pointing to Nazi racial ideology, *The Man in the High Castle* also draws attention to American racial policies. Childan's stream of consciousness creates an unsettling link between the Nazi extermination of the African indigenous population and America's treatment of Native Americans when he thinks that it had taken the United States two

hundred years "to dispose of the American aborigines" (Dick, *High Castle* 30), while the Third Reich accomplished it in Africa in only fifteen years. Childan's musings conflate the racial policies of the real United States and Nazi Germany, suggesting that the two countries are essentially the same; in fact, the only difference is that Germany is more effective than the United States has ever been. The ease with which American-born Childan professes fascist ideas and marvels at Nazi effectiveness only strengthens the similarity between America and the Third Reich. It is iterated further by Joe Cinnadella when he discusses Hawthorne Abendsen's alternate history novel *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* and points out that in Abdensen's novel, when the Allies win World War II and divide the world between them, Great Britain sets up "Concentration camps ... For thousands of maybe disloyal Chinese" (Dick, *High Castle* 157), thus reminding Juliana (and the reader) that concentration camps were invented not by the Nazis but by the British. Joe's comment can also be read as a reference to the shameful memory of the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, thus arguing that the Allies treated their racial minorities like the Third Reich handled its Jewish population. When Joe reflects in this scene that this racial hatred is bred by "Human nature. … Nature of states. Suspicion, fear, greed" (Dick, *High Castle* 157), it is implied that racism and fascism are not specific to Germany but are part of human nature.

To sum up that part, the references to the Holocaust in Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* contribute to the dystopian atmosphere of the novel and remind the reader about the atrocities committed by the Third Reich in our timeline. At the same time, the novel establishes a similarity between the Holocaust and American racial policies, thus openly contradicting the culturally established perception of World War II as a fight between good and evil in which Americans were moral paragons. While the dystopian reality of *The Man in the High Castle* accentuates the evil nature of fascism, the unsettling links between Nazi racism depicted in the novel and historical American racial policies imply that the real

message of Dick's work is that the Third Reich and the United States were very similar in their attitudes to ethnic minorities.

Having discussed the Holocaust, let us move to the second site of memory depicted in *The Man in the High Castle*: Franklin D. Roosevelt and his Zippo cigarette lighter, which he had in his pocket when assassinated by Giuseppe Zangara. As has been noted, the assassination of Roosevelt by Giuseppe Zangara in 1933 is a point of divergence which has far-reaching repercussions. When FDR dies, John W. Bricker rises to power and introduces his isolationist policy which leads to the Axis winning World War II and the United States falling into Nazi Germany's hands. By ascribing the whole blame for the Axis victory to Bricker's isolationism, *The Man in the High Castle* glorifies Franklin D. Roosevelt as a singular leader whose death irrevocably changes the course of history; therefore, Dick's novel subscribes to Great Man theory, according to which history is shaped by great leaders.

Roosevelt is evoked at the beginning of the novel by Robert Childan, who thinks about "the prewar days, the other times. Franklin D. Roosevelt and the World's Fair; the former better world" (Dick, *High Castle* 10). Childan's recollections establish a connection between Roosevelt and the prewar United States, which Childan views sentimentally as a "better world"; hence, he also remembers FDR as a symbol of that better time. This conjunction between Roosevelt and prewar America is evoked again in a discussion between Wyndam-Matson and his mistress Rita. Their conversation is framed around Hawthorne Abendsen's book *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* and its counterfactual premise, according to which FDR survives the assassination and is still the president when the Third Reich attacks Poland in 1939, like in our timeline. The discussion begins when Wyndam-Matson tries to prove to his mistress that the Japanese love for American antiques is absurd by showing her two cigarette lighters. The first one, he explains, is worth around fifty thousand dollars on the collectors' market because it was in Roosevelt's pocket when he was assassinated; therefore,

it possesses "historicity", highly regarded by Japanese collectors. The second lighter is just a regular lighter. Wyndam-Matson points out that one is virtually indistinguishable from the other, which means that historicity is just an illusion; after all, to prove which of the lighters belonged to FDR, he must provide a certification of authenticity. However, our interest here lies not in the problem of authenticity but in the mnemonic impact of lighters– in the memories they evoke [36].

The lighters trigger a stream of memories and encourage reminiscences and nostalgia for prewar America. When Rita sees them, she is awestruck: "'Gee', the girl said, awed. 'Is that really true? That he [FDR] had one of those on him that day?'" (Dick, *High Castle* 66); a moment later, her mood changes as she starts recollecting: "The girl now stood at the window, her arms folded, gazing out at the lights of downtown San Francisco. 'My mother and dad used to say we wouldn't have lost the war if he had lived', she said" (Dick, *High Castle* 66), and Rita becomes "withdrawn, even a little depressed" (Dick, *High Castle* 67). The lighters that symbolize Roosevelt's death stir memories of prewar times, which stand in stark contrast to the miserable present. For Rita, Roosevelt is not only a symbol of prewar America but also of American strength. She gives vent to the emotions that overcame her at the sight of the lighters by telling Wyndam-Matson about Hawthorne Abendsen's *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* and its counterfactual premise, according to which had Roosevelt survived the assassination, he would have prepared the United States for war and saved the world from Nazi Germany:

[36] From this point of view, the problem of which of the lighters really belonged to Roosevelt is redundant. In fact, both lighters may be forgeries, for as Umberto Rossi (2011) pointedly notes there is no proof that the certification allegedly issued by the Smithsonian Institution is real (88). The problem of historicity and authenticity in *The Man in the High Castle* has been widely discussed by other scholars, see: Warrick 181, Huntington, DiTommaso, Rossi 78–96, Singles 161–65.

> ‘That’s his theory. If Joe Zangara had missed him, he would have pulled America out of the Depression and armed it … Abendsen’s theory is that Roosevelt would have been a terribly strong President. As strong as Lincoln. He showed it in the year he was President, all those measures he introduced … Roosevelt isn’t assassinated in Miami; he goes on and is reelected in 1936, so he's President until 1940, until during the war. Don’t you see? He’s still President when Germany attacks England and France and Poland. And he sees all that. He makes America strong’ … Her smooth face, reflecting the traffic lights, glowed with animation; her eyes had become large and she gestured as she talked … ‘Do you see?; Turning toward him on the seat, grabbing his shoulder with intensity, she said, ‘And so Germany and Japan would have lost the war!’ (Dick, *High Castle* 68)

In the quoted passage, nostalgia and yearning for the lost, prewar America are replaced by excitement ignited by Abendsen’s alternate history in which the Allies win World War II. Rita’s account depicts Roosevelt as a strong and intelligent president, comparable to Abraham Lincoln. Moreover, it emphasizes that the outcome of World War II depends solely on FDR; his presence equals Allied victory, while his death equals defeat[37].

For Rita and other characters, the reality depicted in *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* stands in stark contrast with the bleak present in which the United States is partitioned

[37] This thread is also stressed in Dick’s unfinished sequel. In the published fragment, Reichsmarschall Herman Göring is informed that Absenden’s novel depicts an existing parallel universe (in German *Nebenwelt*) in which the Allies defeated the Third Reich. Fritz Sacher, a scientist researching this parallel universe, pauses when he narrates the history of the other timeline and reflects: “It becomes evident how vital the assassination of Roosevelt was in shaping our world. If any one single event could be said to have --” (Dick, *Shifting Realities* 92). Sacher does not finish the sentence, but it is clear that he concludes that Roosevelt had a decisive impact on the outcome of World War II.

between Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. Even though the world described in Abendsen's novel is not utopian, Rita and Juliana still recognize it as superior to their own. Therefore, *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* implies that without Roosevelt, the whole nation fell into decline and allowed itself to be physically and spiritually conquered by fascism. Hence, Dick's novel depicts Roosevelt not only as a great president who shaped history but also as a symbol of democracy and freedom. Therefore, FDR becomes an embodiment of the true spirit of America; consequently, his death symbolizes the death of American values. On the whole, Dick's portrayal of Franklin D. Roosevelt reflects FDR's prominent place in American collective and cultural memory, where he is perceived as a representative of fundamental American values and an embodiment of the greatest generation[38].

The third site of memory, or rather sites of memory, explored in Dick's novel are American historical objects such as the Mickey Mouse wristwatch, Colt.44 or a scrimshaw. These seemingly inconsequential objects are endowed with remarkable meaning; they function as sites of memory which, on the one hand, highlight the disconnection between America's past and present, while, on the other hand, they also crystalize memories and remind their owners about the heroic American past. Even though they do not refer to World War II directly, they still actively engage in a discussion regarding its ramifications, and the post-war order, thus commenting on the intricacies of American cultural memory of World War II.

The Japanese colonizers' fascination with American historical objects is one of the most salient themes of *The Man in the High Castle*. The novel opens with Robert Childan entering his shop American Artistic Handicrafts, which offers antiques to wealthy Japanese collectors. Childan sells a wide variety of products, from precious antiques to ordinary

[38] For a detailed description of Franklin D. Roosevelt in American collective memory see S. Polak, *FDR in American Memory: Roosevelt and the Making of an Icon*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 2021.

objects such as comic books, watches, or cards, because for Japanese collectors, "the historic objects of American popular civilization were of equal interest alongside the more formal antiques" (Dick, *High Castle* 31). For the wealthy, cultured Japanese they are remnants of the alien, prewar American culture; the Japanese perceive the past as a source of wisdom, and just like they ask the I Ching for advice, they turn to American historical objects to comprehend America (Carter 337). To them, even the most trivial object can carry memories of the past, which is made evident in the scene in which Robert Childan gifts the Kasouras, a young Japanese couple whom he tries to befriend, an ornamented scrimshaw: "Their [the Kasouras] faces illuminated with knowledge of the scrimshaws which the old sailors had made in their spare time. No single thing could have summed up old U. S. culture more" (Dick, *High Castle* 106). The scrimshaw conjures up romantic images of whaling expeditions reminiscent of *Moby Dick* (Carter 337) and thus evokes the memory of heroic, preindustrial America. In addition, through the association with *Moby Dick*, the scrimshaw also summons up the concept of American individualism. Hence, this tiny object assumes the proportion of a symbol of American culture, just like the 1938 Mickey Mouse wristwatch which Tagomi offers as a gift to Mr. Baynes, describing it as "most authentic of dying old U.S. culture, a rare retained artifact carrying flavour of bygone halcyon day" (Dick, *High Castle* 48). This elevated description seemingly does not match the object, which looks more like a child's plaything than a real watch; this is reflected in Baynes' reaction, who initially thinks that Tagomi is playing a ludicrous joke on him. As it turns out, for Mr. Tagomi the Mickey Mouse wristwatch is as significant as the scrimshaw Childan gave the Kasouras because it evokes the mythic-like memory of idyllic, prewar American culture.

Thus, seemingly trivial American historical objects collected by the Japanese function as sites of memory that evoke images of the prewar past and serve as reservoirs of American identity. As Carter observes, they are "emblems of America's accumulated truths, narrating

the story America tells of itself … repository of lost innocence, prosperity, and rugged individualism" (337). This romantic story is narrated through playthings and weapons, which, respectively, evoke the ideas of innocence and heroism. For example, Childan associates "Horrors of War" cards upon which he built his business with his childhood. When he thinks about that time, he muses: "How enjoyable to recall those good days, those early happy days of his childhood" (Dick, *High Castle* 32), and then his mind jumps from the cards to another collectible, tops from milk bottles from the time "before the war when milk had come in glass bottles rather than throwaway pasteboard cartons" (Dick, *High Castle* 32). Like the Mickey Mouse wristwatch, "Horrors of War" cards and tops from milk bottles evoke the memories of childhood, the times in which life was simple and people lived closer to nature (hence the juxtaposition of glass bottles with "throwaway pasteboard carton"). The objects symbolize childhood, but, at the same time, they also embody the memories of "innocent", prewar, and pre-Nazi America. This nostalgia for the prewar United States, as well as the longing for the romantic, sentimental narrative about America, is reflected in other historical objects. As described above, the scrimshaw evokes visions of man's courageous struggle with nature, Colt. 44 revolvers and Civil War recruitment posters bring back memories of the "epic American Civil War" (Dick, *High Castle* 58), while Tagomi's buffalo head and Winchester rifle of 1866 are artifacts reminiscent of the myth of the American frontier. In short, all American historical objects described in *The Man in the High Castle* epitomize the idealized, self-flattering narration of prewar America, becoming emblems of the American myth of individualism, self-reliance, and heroism.

Ironically, only the Japanese recognize and appreciate the significance of American historical objects whose meaning is lost on other characters. Americans are not interested in collecting antiques; even Childan, exposed to the Japanese way of thinking and constantly oscillating between disdain and admiration for the Japanese colonizers, scorns his customer's

tastes: "A Civil War recruiting poster … surely only a Japanese would care about such débris" (Dick, *High Castle* 33). The attitude of American characters indicates that Americans have been completely defeated and colonized by fascism to the extent that they no longer have a reverence for their national culture. The fact that American characters earn money selling antiques (Childan) or create forgeries of American historical objects (Wyndam-Matson, Frank Frink, Ed McCarthy) implies a devaluation of American ideals and ultimate detachment from the past; Americans no longer have an empathic connection with the past, and therefore they cannot comprehend the meaning of the antiques collected by the Japanese. As a matter of fact, Americans themselves reduce the objects representing the spirit of America to trivia items that can be bought for the right price (Carter 338). Childan, who looks down on the Kasouras and mocks their fascination with America, is detached from his country's history and culture, which is made evident by his inability to distinguish the authentic antiques from the forgeries (Dick, *High Castle* 58–63), as well as by his ignorance of American music and literature (Dick, *High Castle* 109–15). So too is Wyndam-Matson, whose corporation manufactures forgeries of American historical objects on a mass scale. Americans' detachment from the past, and therefore from American values, is also exemplified by Frank Frink's initial unwillingness to start his own jewelry business, symbolizing the collapse of the American ideal of self-reliance and individualism.

It should be pointed out that even though the Japanese evince interest in American antiques and perceive them as reservoirs of America's ideals, in some respect they are as detached from the past as Americans are. They do not recognize the nuances of American history and perceive it through pop-cultural cliches, which is evidenced by Tagomi's Western movie-like act of Buffalo slaying (Dick, *High Castle* 72). Moreover, Japanese collectors cannot fully comprehend the meaning of the artifacts they possess because they do not understand their original context; for instance, Paul Kasoura is puzzled by Nathaniel West's

Miss Lonelyhearts, while Major Humo, who collects "Horrors of War" cards, admits that neither he nor any other collector he knows has any idea how the cards were used. The Japanese's ignorance is further emphasized by their inability to distinguish authentic antiques from forgeries manufactured by Wyndam-Matson on a mass scale. As Hellekson (2001) points out, the forgeries only pretend to provide a meaningful connection to the past because they are made in the present to evoke the past and symbolize the Japanese's need to own but not necessarily understand American history (69). Thus, the fake antiques underscore the characters' detachment from the past, as well as their inability and unwillingness to meaningfully connect to it[39].

Despite this dreary picture of the state of American identity under Japanese occupation, *The Man in the High Castle* provides a glimmer of hope. Even though American artifacts are reduced to trivia items that can be bought for the right price, they still retain the power to bring about change. Throughout the novel, the characters undergo a series of formative experiences as they try to make sense of the world around them. In the case of Mr. Tagomi, this formative experience is facilitated by historical objects. Mr. Tagomi is a high-ranking trade mission official fascinated by American culture. He tries to speak American slang, and owns a vast collection of American historical objects; yet, just like other Japanese collectors, he sees America through highly sentimental lenses. He is deeply disturbed that the Americans he meets do not hold to his sentimentalized version of American values and adopt fascist attitudes (Robinson 45). With his aversion to evil and fascism, Mr. Tagomi remains a moral compass of the novel. In the twelfth chapter, where he has to protect General Tedeki and Mr. Baynes from Nazi agents, he reaches for his Colt.44 and undergoes a transformation:

[39] The motif of fake antiques manufactrued by Wyndam Matson has also been interpreted as a critique of capitalism and mass production (Robinson; Carter; Huntington 157).

> He opened his desk drawer and lifted out a teakwood box; unlocking it, he brought forth a perfectly preserved U.S. 1860 Civil War Colt .44, a treasured collector's item … he began loading the revolver … Holding the gun in correct fashion he pointed it at the office door. And sat waiting. (Dick, *High Castle* 186)

When the Nazi agents enter the office, Mr. Tagomi, who abhors violence, has no choice but to stand up to the evil and shoot them. Hence, he becomes an embodiment of the myth of the American frontier:

> At his desk, Mr. Tagomi pointed his Colt .44 ancient collector's item and compressed the trigger. One of the SD men fell to the floor. The other whipped his silencer-equipped gun toward Mr. Tagomi and returned fire. Mr. Tagomi heard no report, saw only a tiny wisp of smoke from the gun, heard the whistle of a slug passing near. With record-eclipsing speed he fanned the hammer of the single-action Colt, firing it again and again … The S. D. man's jaw burst. ... 'Now we will mow them down,' Mr Tagomi said, reseating himself with his Colt .44, as before. (Dick, *High Castle* 192)

As Carter observes, in the confrontation with SD men, Mr. Tagomi offers "a reasonable facsimile of John Wayne" (Carter 340). It is highly ironic that American values are upheld not by an American character but by a Japanese one; this underscores the moral decline of the United States. The scene in Tagomi's office demonstrates the mnemonic power of American historical objects, in this case the Colt .44, which transforms its owner into a "facsimile" of John Wayne; it impels him to protect himself and his guests from Nazi agents and, therefore, to protect the whole world from a nuclear war.

Mr. Tagomi's heroic moment also provides an important lesson. As a pacifist, Mr. Tagomi is highly disturbed by the fact that he killed two men. At this point, he comes to

realize that the American myth of self-reliance may be morally questionable. His prized Colt.44, a symbol of the Civil War and of the American frontier, is not just any object but a weapon made to kill. Similarly, the other collectibles he owns may evoke disturbing images. As Carter observes, "…his cherished buffalo head represents not just the sustenance of the plains Indians but also loot amassed by white men conquering the "frontier" while slaughtering buffalo *and* plains Indians until both were near extinction" (340). In a similar fashion, Kasouras' scrimshaw represents both man's heroic struggle with nature and symbolizes the extinction of whales brought about by the whaling industry; moreover, it can also be associated with the abduction of Africans by American sailors during their voyages (Carter 340). Hence, the historical objects collected by the Japanese carry not only the memories of the mythic-like episodes of American history but also point to highly disturbing episodes often removed from the hegemonic memory of the American past. In this way, American historical objects assume agency; the Colt.44 forces Mr.Tagomi to abandon his idealistic perception of America and recognize that the history of the United States is, in fact, disturbingly similar to the brutal history of the Third Reich.

To sum up this part, American historical objects depicted in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* can be described as sites of memory around which various narratives revolve. These remnants of the old America serve as repositories of collective memories of the time before World War II. The Colt.44, the scrimshaw, the Mickey Mouse wristwatch, and the "Horrors of War" cards evoke the romanticized memory of America as a country of freedom, self-reliance, and courage; for American characters such as Robert Childan, they also stir up their autobiographical memory of childhood in prewar America, which stands in stark contrast with the partitioned America of their present. By bringing back these memories, the objects underline the difference between past and present and situate World War II as a breaking point, an event that destroyed the old United States and led to the

decline of American values. However, the objects also carry memories of violence and death, pointing to disturbing events from American history, such as the extinction of buffaloes and whales, the murders of Native Americans, the bloodshed of the Civil War, and the horror of World War II.

Thus far, I have argued that in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* there are three primary sites of memory: the Holocaust, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and American historical objects which serve as bridges between the prewar United States and the occupied America of the present. Each site of memory performs a different role in the narrative. The Holocaust largely contributes to the dystopian atmosphere of the novel and encourages comparisons between the diegetic world of the novel and the actual world; the figure of Franklin D. Roosevelt emphasizes the role of great leaders in the process of shaping history and constitutes a symbol of American values; historical objects serve a dual role as reservoirs of American values which, on the one hand, embody America's romantic ideals, and, on the other hand, point up the decline of these ideals in the world in which the Axis powers won World War II. With all these meanings in mind, let us now analyze the politics of memory of *The Man in the High Castle*.

As has already been mentioned, Philip K. Dick spent seven years researching World War II and Nazi Germany before he started writing *The Man in the High Castle*. Throughout that time, his already pronounced revulsion for fascism solidified, turning into a lifelong paranoia[40]. His well-known hatred of Nazism led Gavriel D. Rosenfeld to claim that in

[40] Philip K. Dick was convinced that there are neo-Nazi groups plotting against the United States. He claimed that in October 1972 he was approached by a representative of a neo-Nazi organization who told him about the organization's plan to spark World War III through introducing a lethal strain of syphylis into the US population (Arnold 98). Throughout the 1970s, Dick was sending letters to the county sheriff and the FBI in which he linked the burglary of his home in California with neo-Nazi organisations that, he believed, persecuted him for his refusal to introduce coded political messages into his future novels. He was convinced that the organization

writing *The Man in the High Castle*, "Dick was prompted by a passionate moral commitment to preserving the memory of Nazi barbarism" (*World Hitler Never Made* 108). In addition, Rosenfeld argues that Dick's portrayal of the past as dystopia implies that *The Man in the High Castle* validates the present and serves "the didactic function of preserving the Germans' crimes in memory and of triumphalistically vindicating America's historic decision to intervene against them … vindicating the past as it really happened" ("Why Do We Ask" 96). Catherine Gallagher adds that the novel is supposed to exonerate America's bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima by showing that it pales in comparison to what the Nazis would have done had they won World War II ("War" 64), thus subscribing to Rosenfeld's interpretation of *The Man in the High Castle* as validating the actual course of history.

While the dystopian world of *The Man in the High Castle* does encourage the conclusion that we are lucky that the United States joined World War II and defeated Nazi Germany, the novel is much more critical of American politics than Rosenfeld claims. Moreover, the novel uses World War II as a pretext for criticizing the United States of the 1960s and a warning that fascism has not been eradicated. As Gallagher points out, just like many other alternate histories of World War II, *The Man in the High Castle* asks whether the American people live according to the principles for which they fought and whether they have achieved the peace they anticipated ("War" 59). For Dick, the answer to both these questions is "no".

As the analysis of the sites of memory suggests, *The Man in the High Castle* provides an extensive critique of American society, and nowhere is it more pronounced than in Robert Childan's storyline and the novel's final chapter. Let us look at the final chapter first, for it suggests the direction of further interpretation.

---

approached other science fiction writers who may have yielded to their demands (Arnold 87). In his letters to the FBI, he connected neo-Nazi groups' interest in him directly to *The Man in the High Castle*.

The open ending of *The Man in the High Castle* is widely perceived as unsatisfactory and disappointing[41]. In the finale, Juliana, led by the I Ching, arrives at Hawthorne Abendsen's house to discover that the famous "High Castle" is just an ordinary house. When she gets Abendsen to admit that he had used the oracle to write his novel, Juliana decides to ask the oracle what people should learn from *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. Hexagram 61 "Inner Truth" emerges, and Juliana realizes that Abendsen's book is true and Nazi Germany really lost World War II (Dick, *High Castle* 247). This conclusion has been widely understood as a manifestation of a typically Dickian theme of false reality. It has also been suggested that it exposes the fiction as reality and reality as fiction, thus commenting on the nature of reality (Rieder 216; G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 107) or that it implies that art is the world's most profound truth (Suvin). However, as DiTommaso (1999) pointedly observes, the Hexagram "Inner Truth" is not only the answer to Juliana's question but also the answer to the philosophical question posed by the entire novel (112); what is more, it also provides clues as to the politics of memory promoted by the novel.

One of the most favored interpretations of the ending of *The Man in the High Castle* is that it should be taken literally: the Nazis really won World War II (Pagetti; Robinson 43–44; Warrick; Canaan; Lord 104; Gallagher, "War" 65; Mountfort; Butter 56; Morgan 49). Many critics have pointed out that not only Dick's novel mirrors our timeline, but also

[41] Dick blamed the I Ching for the unresolved ending. In one of the interviews, he admitted that the I Ching failed him when he wanted to finish the book, and he became so frustrated that he stopped using it altogether: "And since I had no notes, no plot, no structure in mind, I was in a terrible spot, and … I noticed … that the I CHING will lead you along the garden path, giving you information that either you want to hear, or you expect to hear … And then, just about the time … you're willing to trust it … it will zap you with the most malevolent, wrong information. In other words, it sets you up ... I think it is an evil book, and I no longer use it. And I don't recommend that people … The more important the decision, the more it tends to hand you an answer which brings tragedy into your life" (Dick, *An Interview With Philip K. Dick, Science Fiction Review*).

Hawthorne Abendsen is Philip K. Dick's alter ego, and Hawthorne's alternate history *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* has a similar premise as Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* (Warrick 187; Rieder 223); therefore, *MHC* might imply that our timeline is false, and the timeline of *The Man in the High Castle* is true−Nazi Germany won World War II. Therefore, Juliana's realization that *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* is about her world would mirror our experience of reading *MHC* and our realization that its timeline is true and that Nazis did win the war. This contention should, of course, be taken metaphorically. What *The Man in the High Castle* suggests is not that our timeline is not real, but that fascism was not destroyed despite the Allied victory. Nazism is very much alive, both in Europe and the United States, which means that the Nazis won World War II. As Robinson points out, despite the Allies' victory: "the international corporations that supported Hitler … are still powerful … as are the forces of racism, the practice of genocide, hyped-up nationalism in the service of military expansions, and massive disregard for the Earth and for nature at large" (43). All the problems mentioned by Robinson are reflected in the novel's descriptions of Nazi projects: the Holocaust, the mass murder of the peoples of Africa, the space projects, and the draining of the Mediterranean.

In the novel, the idea that Nazism has not been defeated and is very much alive in Europe and the United States is reflected by Americans' easy adoption of fascist attitudes. It is exemplified chiefly by Robert Childan, a middle-class shopkeeper who believes that Jews "can control an entire society" (Dick, *High Castle* 117), admires Nazi projects such as the "disposal" of the "American aborigines" (Dick, *High Castle* 30), or the draining of the Mediterranean: "it was science and technology and that fabulous talent for hard work; the Germans never stopped applying themselves. And when they did a task, they did it *right*" (Dick, *High Castle* 30). Childan's juxtaposition of American and Nazi Germany's racial policies suggests that the United States and Third Reich are identical. The only difference is

Nazi Germany's effectiveness, for it managed to eliminate racial minorities much faster than the United States. This parallel encourages the reader to look critically at American exceptionalism and manifest destiny, which, the novel argues, are eerily similar to fascist belief in the master race and *Lebensraum* (Carter 341).

The affinity between Nazi Germany and the United States is also reflected in Americans' lack of resistance to the German and Japanese occupation. In *The Man in the High* Castle, there is no underground American resistance to the occupiers; the whole society seems to have accepted fascist dictatorship. Therefore, "not only have the Nazis conquered America physically, they have done so mentally as well" (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 107). For American readers, this motif is highly disturbing, which is reflected by Robinson's emotional outburst in his otherwise academic study of Dick's novels:

> Americans are the underdog … they're ruled by a dictatorship we have learned to associate with the worst sort of political evil. We therefore expect to see a vigorous resistance … lots of heroism, and perhaps the eventual overthrow of the oppressors, perhaps the re-establishment of the Republic. Yet … there is none of this, no spirit of 1776, no groups out in the hills keeping the fight alive. Even the most sophisticated American reader has been stuffed with patriotism for too many years to be able to completely overcome it; this fictional situation cries out for resistance, and at some level we want to see it. When the novel progresses and we don't find it, we experience the fact as a sort of slap in the face, implying as it does that Americans are a nation of potential quislings. (Robinson 46)

The "slap in the face" Robinson writes about is made even more painful by the fact that, as described earlier, the only person who eventually resists the Nazi oppression is none other than Mr. Tagomi, who, for a brief moment, becomes more American than any other

American character in the novel. Robinson aptly describes the reader's response to the situation: "the American reader stands up from his chair and cheers at this moment of defiance and disdain, visions of John Wayne and Jimmy Stewart altered into the little figure of Tagomi" (47). Nonetheless, this euphoria is short-lived and it has to subside when one starts wondering what it means that it is Tagomi, not Childan or Frank, who behaves like a "real" American. The transplantation of traditional American values into a Japanese character suggests that no American-born character could have behaved the way Tagomi did, which, in turn, implies that the United States had been completely conquered by fascism. This conclusion is directed as much at the diegetic world of the novel as the extra-diegetic America of the 1960s.

All in all, Rosenfeld is mistaken in his belief that *The Man in the High Castle* is concerned with "preserving the memory of Nazi barbarism" (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 108). While the novel does mention Nazi crimes, most importantly the Holocaust, it does not do it to sustain the memory of the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany but to criticize the United States and its policies of the 1960s. As Patricia Warrick suggests, "the winner of any war is locked into the necessity of continuing to fight to maintain his superior power position. The effort eventually destroys him. On a moral level, he has already been destroyed because of the horrendous acts he committed to win" (187). This is, one may argue, the case of the United States of the 1960s, and its atmosphere of conspiracy and paranoia ensuing from the Cold War and the looming threat of nuclear war with the Soviet Union (Rossi 93).

As Warrick observes, in *The Man in the High Castle*, Nazism is something more than simply Germany under Hitler because it serves as "a symbol for all fascist drives to overpower and control − be they German, Japanese, American, or Russian" (Warrick 174). Howard Canaan added that in Dick's novel, "the evils of Nazism take on absolute quality that

transcends any particular time and place … Nazism … is a psychic or spiritual sickness, a perversion not just of civilization or community, but the true communion" (101). Warrick's and Canaan's observations comply with Dick's personal beliefs which he expressed in an interview for a radio show *Hour 25* in 1977:

> Fascism and Germany are not that intimately linked. Fascism is a world wide phenomena. It can hit a bunch of baboons swinging in the trees in Polynesia. They can all suddenly put on iron helmets and march around. Fascism is very much with us today, boys and girls. And it's still an enemy. (*Hour 25*)

Therefore, the reading of *The Man in the High Castle* presented in this dissertation, according to which the novel aims to criticize the present (i.e., the United States of the early 1960s) and warn that fascism has not been not destroyed in World War II, corresponds to Dick's intentions (even though, as we know, Dick was not satisfied with how the novel ended). Nevertheless, it is clear that *The Man in the High Castle* is not concerned with praising America's wartime effort and preserving the Nazi atrocities in collective memory but with the critique of the present. The politics of memory expressed in the novel are therefore clear: fascism has not been defeated, it is very much alive both in the United States and Europe and still poses a threat to freedom and democracy. Moreover, it criticizes the United States' policies during the Cold War era by conflating them with Nazi Germany's drive to power and its racial policies. Therefore, *The Man in the High Castle* challenges the hegemonic cultural memory of World War II, according to which Americans were "the good guys" who defeated fascism epitomized by Nazi Germany, claiming that fascism still exists.

It is indisputable that *The Man in the High Castle* has exerted a strong influence on the alternate history genre as a whole. Nevertheless, it is difficult to establish whether the first American readers of *The Man in the High Castle* read Dick's novel as a critique of America of the 1960s or as a praise of America's fight against the Third Reich. It can undoubtedly be

read both ways, even though the latter interpretation oversimplifies the novel; the attentive reader should be able to decode the message regarding the prevalence of fascism in modern-day America despite the Allied victory in World War II. Whatever the case, the novel's purport is as important in the 2020s as it was in the 1960s, and nothing proves that more than the TV adaptation of *The Man in the High Castle*. Having that in mind, let us briefly consider the reception of Philip K. Dick's novel and its contribution to the modern-day cultural memory of World War II.

The Man in the High Castle was well received by readers and critics. It was published in hardcover by Putnam, a mainstream publisher, and advertised "in a mainstream type of way as well as a way that would appeal to the s-f reader" (Lord 100). In late 1962 *The Man in the High Castle* was picked by Putnam's Science Fiction Book Club, which largely contributed to its later success. In his review, Avram Davidson calls Dick's novel "a remarkable book" (Davis); *The Man in the High Castle* was praised for its plausible depiction of the world under Nazi Germany's rule, the compelling portrayal of Mr. Tagomi, its profoundly humanistic value (Canaan 94), and the "artful depiction of the relationships between the conqueror and conquered" (Silverberg 124). According to Rosenfeld, this positive response proves the readers' support for the broader conclusion of the novel (*World Hitler Never Made* 115), which is, in all likelihood, correct. *The Man in the High Castle* has become paradigmatic alternate history and a source of inspiration for countless other writers. It remains popular to this day, which is confirmed by the fact that it is still available in print over sixty years since its first publication. The reviews posted by Goodreads users suggest that the book is widely read and admired (Ken-ichi; Valdez). Nevertheless, one of the most notable instances of the reception of *The Man in the High Castle* is the TV show created by Frank Spotnitz.

The show premiered on Amazon Prime Video on January 15, 2015. Four seasons were released between 2015 and 2019 to fairly positive reviews, even though some viewers initially complained about the show's significant divergence from the novel. The plot of the television series follows Juliana (called Crain instead of Frink), Nobusuke Tagomi, Robert Childan, Frank Frink, Ed McCarthy, and Joe Cinnadella (whose real surname is Blake). Their stories are, however, expanded. In the TV series, Juliana has a half-sister named Trudy Walker; Frank joins the resistance and is eventually executed by the Kempeitai Chief Inspector; Mr. Tagomi is traumatized by the loss of his family during World War II; Ed McCarthy befriends Robert Childan. Moreover, Joe discovers that he was conceived in the Lebensborn program[42] and that his father, Martin Heusmann, is Reichsminister of the Greater Nazi Reich. The television series introduces several new characters, most notably Obergruppenführer John Smith, a former American soldier who joined the SS following the surrender of the United States, his wife Helen Smith, and Chief Inspector Takeshi Kido, the head of the Kempeitai, Japanese military police.

Like Dick's novel, Amazon's *The Man in the High Castle* is set in the 1960s. As Powell (2018) observes, this creates an effect of double estrangement because the story is set not only in an alternate world but also in the audiences' past (unlike the novel, which was set in the audience's present), thus encouraging them to compare contemporary American society simultaneously to the one they see on screen and to the real past, thus contributing to erasing nostalgia for "a past permeated with bigotry and racism" (157). The television adaptation expands the world of the novel because it depicts not only the Japanese-occupied

[42] Lebensborn was a state-supported Nazi program whose goal was to increase the number of racially pure children. It was established by Heinrich Himmler and ran maternity homes where racially pure women could find financial aid and give birth to their children. If women were unmarried and wanted to give up their children, Lebensborn mediated adoption of their children.

territory of the United States but also a large part of the Neutral Zones and the territory controlled by Nazi Germany called the American Reich. Therefore, the show's creators did what Philip K. Dick could not force himself to do: imagine Nazi-occupied lands. Importantly, they also decided to modify the character of the Japanese occupation. In Dick's novel, it is relatively humane; in the show, it is much more brutal and, therefore, more realistic[43]. Moreover, the show drew on Dick's sequel idea of Nazi scientists trying to break through to parallel worlds and introduced a subplot connected to *Project Nebenwelt* led by Josef Mengele, whose aim was to build a machine that would allow the Greater Nazi Reich to conquer the parallel worlds.

Amazon's *The Man in the High Castle* makes use of a variety of spaces of memory. While Franklin D. Roosevelt is absent, the Holocaust remains a strong motif permeating the whole show; for instance, the subplot of *Project Nebenwelt* refers directly to Josef Mengele's human experimentation in Auschwitz (the travel between parallel words is lethal for most travelers), while in the second episode of the first season Frank's sister and his nephews are executed in a gas chamber by Kempeitai because the law mandates capture and execution of all the remaining Jews. American historical objects remain an important part of the plot throughout the first season. In the third season, numerous other spaces of memory appear, such as Mount Rushmore, the Statue of Liberty, and the Liberty Bell, all destroyed by the Nazi officials as an inauguration of the *Jahr Null* (Year Zero) project, whose aim is to wipe out all symbols of American past and therefore erase all the memories of American identity.

[43] In a letter to the Japanese translator of *The Man in the High Castle* Dick wrote that he had believed that the Japanese occupation of the United States would be, unlike German one, stern but fair (Lord 103). However, the novel's portrayal of the Japanese occupation as relatively humane has been criticized, most importantly by Darko Suvin, who claimed that Dick's assumption that "a victorious Japanese fascism would be radically better than the German one is the major political blunder of Dick's novel" (Suvin 10).

The subplot connected to the Year Zero project provides an excellent commentary on the inextricable connection between sites of memory and national identity[44].

One of the most significant changes made by the show's creators is the introduction of American resistance which downplays the novel's critique of American society as susceptible to fascism. As has been noted above, there is no American resistance to Nazi and Japanese occupation in Dick's novel, which is highly frustrating for the American reader (Robinson 46–47). In the TV show, a large network of resistance soldiers tries to sabotage the Japanese and German regimes, and even though many of their actions are depicted as morally ambivalent, especially in the first two seasons, there is little doubt that their fight brings hope to the oppressed Americans and underscores the brutality of fascist regimes. Obviously, the introduction of the American resistance constitutes a significant divergence from the novel which changes the story's message by contradicting the pessimistic notion that Americans would not only passively accept the status of underdogs but also become collaborators and Nazi sympathizers. To some extent, the motif of American collaboration is shifted from Robert Childan to a new character, John Smith, a former American soldier who easily adapts to Nazi occupation, betrays his friends from the army, and eventually becomes a Reichsführer. Still, it has to be pointed out that John Smith is full of contradictions, which is why he is widely perceived as one of the most fascinating characters in the show. His relationship with his family, especially with his son Thomas, who later in the series is euthanized because he is diagnosed with a congenital disease, makes him a sympathetic character. It is clear that Smith becomes loyal to the Nazi regime to protect his family, and as

[44] The Year Zero project demonstrates how the victorious regimes take control over the conquered nations' sites of memory and replace them with their own to solidify their power. In the television series, *Jahr Null* involves melting down the Liberty Bell into a swastika, as well as the destruction of the Statue of Liberty and its replacement with a new monument called the New Collosus (reminiscent of Vera Mukhina's Worker and Kolkhoz Woman Monument) which is supposed to promote fascist ideology of racial purity.

the series progresses, he becomes so mixed up in politics that he has no choice but to remain loyal to Nazi Germany. Therefore, John Smith remains loyal to the Greater Nazi Reich but does not seem to share their ideology. Therefore, his story demonstrates the difficult choices one has to make in the face of a fascist regime, not American susceptibility to fascist ideology. It seems then that the creators of the TV show were not comfortable with Dick's portrayal of Americans as a nation susceptible to Nazi ideology and decided to downplay this aspect of the novel in order to make the show more similar to the dominant cultural memory of World War II according to which fascism is an exact opposite of everything the United States stands for.

Nevertheless, those changes do not alter Dick's portrayal of fascism as an ultimate evil and a threat to humanity. Moreover, even though the show's creators downplay Americans' acceptance of fascism, they preserve the novel's unsettling idea of the affinity between Nazi Germany and the United States of the 1960s. This concept is particularly pronounced in season four, where John Smith travels to our timeline to meet an alternate version of his son Thomas, who was euthanized in Smith's timeline but is still alive in our timeline. In the fifth episode, John and Thomas discuss Thomas's decision to enlist and fight in Vietnam. Alt-Thomas feels that joining the army is his patriotic duty, as John's Thomas felt that he must report his disability to the Nazi authorities in the name of racial purity. As Bryant W. Sculos (2020) claims, the discussion between John and Alt-Thomas depicts "the ethical comparability of Nazi eugenics, which is what leads to the death of Smith's actual son, and delusional American patriotic murderous militarism" (4). The comparability of Nazim and American patriotism is further reinforced in the sixth episode when Marines arrive at the Smiths' house to take Alt-Thomas to the army. Alt-Thomas walks out of the house indifferent to his parents' distress, which mirrors Thomas' surrender to the Public Health Department of the American Reich in the tenth episode of the second season. This

conflation of Nazi ideology and American patriotism mirrors Dick's critique of the United States of the 1960s.

The juxtaposition of America and the Third Reich in Amazon's *The Man in the High Castle* acquired new importance in 2016 when Donald Trump was elected the president of the United States. The first season was written and filmed before Donald Trump announced his bid for the presidency, but when new seasons were released, the critics started pointing out the parallels between the alternate history of the show and the United States and analyzing it in the context of the Trump administration. David Scarpa, co-showrunner for the fourth season, commented that when they started shooting the show, "The idea of Nazism in America was a purely fanciful one. It was pure alt-history … Over the course of the next four years, we've seen that become a much more uncomfortable, plausible reality" (Romano). As the controversies around Donald Trump's presidency grew, so did the salience of the show and the book that inspired it. *The Man in the High Castle*, both the book and the TV series, were praised for their prophetic and prescient nature (Zemler; McNamara). Tim Goodman from *The Hollywood Reporter* called the show "the best and most consistently ominous drama of the Trump era" (Goodman). Stav Ziv from *Newsweek* observes that the fascist America depicted in the show is dismally similar to the real one: "It no longer seems impossible: The complete erosion of democratic ideals and the complacency of so many Americans under the rule of a demagogue, allowing themselves to reminisce only occasionally … about what things used to be like, before the war" (Ziv). Similar sentiments were expressed in countless other reviews.

Overall, Amazon's adaptation of *The Man in the High Castle* and reactions to it demonstrate how strongly the memories of World War II and the Third Reich continue to organize the present. When faced with the rise of the political right represented by Donald Trump, many Americans turned to World War II to explain how dangerous it can be; in that

political climate, an alternate history of World War II in which Nazi Germany conquers the United Stated was interpreted as a veiled critique of the current American politics. The fact that the adaptation was highly esteemed by critics and audiences shows that the memory of World War II is still valid for modern-day America and that alternate history can be highly effective in forging a connection between past and present.

To sum up, Philip K. Dick's novel *The Man in the High Castle* and, to refer to Astrid Erll's terminology, its afterlives reflect the salience of the memory of World War II for America of the 1960s and America of the 2010s and 2020s. In Dick's alternate history, Nazi Germany's victory is depicted in dystopian terms, and on the most superficial level it can be interpreted as a self-congratulatory narrative praising America's wartime effort. However, the novel makes use of the memory of World War II not only to comment on the past and underscore Nazi Germany's evil but primarily to comment on the America of the 1960s and provide a warning regarding the prevalence of fascism. This use of the past to comment on and explain the present is typical for the working of cultural memory, and the fact that the world depicted in *The Man in the High Castle* emerges as a result of World War II underscores the significance of World War II as the event that shaped the contemporary world.

The Man in the High Castle uses two sites of memory directly connected to World War II: the Holocaust and Franklin D. Roosevelt. The third site of memory, American historical objects, does not refer directly to World War II but nevertheless contributes to our understanding of the American society depicted in Dick's novel and serves as a bridge between the prewar United States and the occupied America of the present. Each site of memory performs a different role in the narrative: while the Holocaust encourages comparisons between the diegetic world of the novel and the actual world, the figure of Franklin D. Roosevelts underscores the role of great leaders in the process of shaping history

and constitutes a symbol of American values. American historical objects perform a dual role as reservoirs of American values which, on the one hand, embody America's romantic ideals, and, on the other hand, underline the decline of these ideals in the world in which the Axis powers won World War II.

It is important to point out that Philip K. Dick's novel does not comply with the hegemonic narrative of cultural memory in which the Third Reich is cast as the "Other" of America, a country against which America can define itself as a country of democracy and freedom. Instead, through the juxtaposition of the actual atrocities committed by the United States and the crimes the Nazis could have committed had the Axis powers prevailed, it argues that America's racial policies and its drive for world domination make it alarmingly similar to the Third Reich. Moreover, Dick's warning against fascism in all its forms and his critique of Americans' susceptibility to fascist ideas are as relevant today as they were in 1962.

3. DANIEL QUINN *AFTER DACHAU* (2001)

After Dachau (2001) was written by Daniel Quinn, an American author best known for his philosophical novel *Ishmael* (1992), and explores problems such as sustainability and global catastrophe. *After Dachau*, Quinn's first and only alternate history, explores a theme common to all Quinn's works, namely a motif of a secret nobody wants to hear about (Mayeda 26). It also explores the themes of remembering and forgetting, the relationship between communicative and cultural memory, and the dangers posed by politics of memory. Overall, *After Dachau* showcases the universal self-deception on which Western civilization is built, thus providing a relevant, if uncomfortable, critique of America as dystopia disguised as utopia.

After Dachau opens in 1992 as the first-person narrator Jason Tull, a son of a famous and wealthy father, struggles with a sense of purposelessness. Through one of his mother's books, he becomes obsessed with reincarnation and takes a job at a non-profit organization, *We Live Again*, devoted to research on the transmigration of souls. As an employee of the organization, he commits himself to finding a "Golden Case", evidence that would prove beyond all doubt the existence of reincarnation. After seven years of research, he hears about Mallory Hastings, a young woman who started behaving like a completely different person in the aftermath of a car accident. After waking up in hospital, she became hostile to the people around her and denied being Mallory. Intrigued, Jason writes to ask for permission to visit her. When she agrees, Jason drives to Oneonta to visit her, and when they meet, he suggests that she is not Mallory but a different person reincarnated in Mallory's body. He explains that every human body is animated by a soul, which transmigrates to another body after the body dies. The new incarnation loses all knowledge of the previous one, but sometimes memories spontaneously come back and overwhelm those of the present incarnation. The woman is understandably incredulous but finally admits that she believes her real name is not Mallory

but Gloria MacArthur. Fascinated, Jason befriends Mallory/Gloria and becomes romantically involved with her. He learns that Gloria was born in New York City in 1922 and belonged to New York's artistic community, so she had a chance to associate with major figures in the abstract expressionist movement, such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. Unfortunately, Mallory/Gloria is prone to sudden outbursts of anger. When Jason tries to establish whether any member of her family is still alive, she suddenly throws a heavy ceramic mug at him and screams: "'They're *dead*! … *You* killed them' … As I stood there with my mouth hanging open, she started to look around for something else to throw" (Quinn 83). When she quiets down, she moans, "How am I supposed to spend the rest of my life surrounded by murderers, Jason? Murderers with beautiful white teeth and pretty clothes and nice manners and college degrees" (Quinn 85). Jason decides to discover the source of her distress, and starts by inducing Mallory/Gloria to go on a trip with him. He takes her to the Gramercy Park Academy for Girls, where they attend a history lesson. Jason explains to students that Mallory Hastings had suffered from an unusual type of amnesia, and they must help her remember certain things. Then, through a Socratic dialogue, Mallory/Gloria learns about the history of the United States.

Up until that point, *After Dachau* seems to be a quirky novel about reincarnation. Even though there are slight suggestions that something is different about this world[45], it still seems to be exactly like our timeline. The history lesson scene constitutes a plot twist in which the reader learns that the novel is not set at the turn of the twenty-first century as he

[45] Most of the hints become apparent once the reader knows that the story is set in an alternate timeline. For instance, when Mallory's family reminds her that she works in a library, she demands a book with pictures of "different kinds" of people, but her family does not understand what she means by that (Quinn 40); when Jason visits Mallory/Gloria for the first time, he describes her as a "flawless Aryan snow maiden − milky skin, eyes as blue as the Mediterranean, and hair as yellow as the sun" (Quinn 51).

was led to believe[46], but two thousand years later, that is around 4000 A.D, in a world in which the Third Reich won World War II and exterminated not only Jews but all people of color. Mallory/Gloria learns that the current world order was built after Germany defeated Jews at the famous battle of Dachau in 1943:

> 'Finally the Germans scored a decisive victory over the Jews in a small town in Bavaria … Once the Jews had been taken out of the war in this battle, the Germans were unstoppable … And at that point the Allies and the Germans made peace and turned their attention to the global elimination of the Jewish plague.'
>
> 'A new era had begun' …
>
> 'There was a general recognition that the Christian era had in fact been a Jewish era.'
>
> 'That's right. The Christian dating system was junked, and a new zero year was adopted worldwide' (Quinn 117–18)

The defeat of Jews at Dachau was marked as a symbolic beginning of the zero year. Hence, in the novel "A.D." does not mean "Anno Domini" but "after Dachau; the action of Queen's book is set two thousand years after the victory at Dachau.

Gloria/Mallory learns that after the victory, the Aryan Council of Nations was created to carry "the Spirit of Dachau" across the earth for humanity to "purge itself of mongrel strains once and for all"(Quinn 124). The elimination of non-Aryan races took approximately eight hundred years until only Aryans remained. The person who orchestrated the victory at Dachau and the ideology of racial purity was none other than Adolf Hitler, known as "the

[46] At the beginning of the novel, Jason reveals that he graduated in 1992 (Quinn 4), to add in the fifth chapter that his meeting with Mallory/Gloria happened a couple of years later: "by the time I next saw gold everyone had gotten used to writing year dates starting with 20 instead of 19"(Quinn 31).

Hero of Dachau". When Gloria/Mallory hears the whole story, she is outraged and retorts that Dachau was not a battle but a concentration camp; however, no one in the class knows what a concentration camp is.

When at the end of the history class scene Jason quotes Napoleon Bonaparte's words that "history is just an agreed-upon fiction" (Quinn 126), he seems to imply that the version of history enunciated by the schoolgirls is highly distorted. It is rectified when Mallory/Gloria takes Jason to the tunnels underneath Hell's Kitchen to see the underground room where she spent her last three months as Gloria MacArthur. In the room, she finds her belonging. One of them is a photograph showing "a grinning African girl … cute as a proverbial button"(Quinn 164). Shocked, Jason learns that this is a picture of Gloria MacArthur. Mallory/Gloria tells her side of the story and reveals what really happened. During World War II, she tells Jason, Nazi Germany developed the atomic bomb months before the Americans did. It forced the United States to accept a cease-fire, and the United States surrendered "without ever been bombed, invaded, or even threatened" (Quinn 166); in the aftermath of the surrender, Americans quickly absorbed Nazi propaganda according to which Jews were responsible for World War II. Even though there were rumors about death camps, most people believed they were engineered by Jews who wanted to prolong the war. American popular culture spread the image of Jews as gangsters responsible for all crimes and accused African-Americans of helping them to get revenge on white people; according to the propaganda, African-Americans "made very willing thugs … being glad to have a chance to get back at their former slave-masters" (Quinn 168). When American Jews started mysteriously disappearing, African-Americans decided that the situation was getting more dangerous, and they should do what the American government wanted them to do and return to Africa. In 1950, wholesale deportations started. By the end of 1951, Gloria and her friends became suspicious because those African-Americans who stayed in the United States never heard from their relatives

who decided to sail to Africa again. When rumors about the mass murder of the emigrants spread, the government denied everything. However, at the same time, it kept stripping African-Americans of their civil rights to encourage them to escape to Africa. As a result, many people, Gloria included, sought shelter in New York underground where they were tracked down and eliminated by the police. Eventually, Gloria decided that she would never let the trackers kill her, and she committed suicide. Her story profoundly moves Jason and shatters his convictions that the world he lives in is, as he put it earlier, a "wonderful Aryan paradise" and that Gloria/Mallory should not blame him for the genocide that happened two thousand years before he was born.

As can be seen, the story about the battle at Dachau enunciated by the schoolgirls was created by Nazi authorities to distort the real story of the Holocaust and concentration camps, and to introduce a carefully prepared origin story that would support their ideology and policies.

The experience in the underground room and the revelation of the culturally repressed "founding murder" (Lemann, "Odpominanie" 119) leaves Jason changed and wanting to tell the world what really happened at Dachau. He finally discovers his purpose. He tries to schedule a meeting with a news editor of a globally influential paper and promises him a sensational story; meanwhile, he purchases long-forgotten works − Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* and Sinclair Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here*. Soon, he realizes that he is being spied on by the Intelligence. His father's friend called Uncle Harry, the Intelligence wallah, forces Jason to acknowledge that for most people, the Holocaust and systematic extermination of all non-Aryan races are "one more piece of ancient history, like the sack of Rome or the Norman Conquest" (Quinn 215), something that has nothing to do with them. Uncle Harry gives Jason a simple lesson which can be summed up in one phrase: "No one cares" (Quinn 217).

Finally, Jason decides to resort to art. He collects the material remnants of the time before World War II and opens up a gallery bookstore that exhibits long-forgotten works of Jewish and African-American artists. In the novel's last chapter, Jason receives a package from Uncle Harry which contains notebooks. Jason manages to translate their contents and discovers that he received diaries of a young Jewish woman named Anne Frank. Of course, the name "Anne Frank" means nothing to Jason; the reader, however, might expect that given the diary's impact on our timeline, they might exert a similar influence on Jason's world.

Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* stands out from other alternate history narratives analyzed in this dissertation in its focus on the Holocaust. Even though many alternate history narratives of World War II involve the motif of a completed Holocaust, in most cases the Shoah serves only as a background for the main story (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 336). In contrast, Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* revolves solely around the Holocaust and the ethical problems it poses. Gavriel Rosenfeld criticizes Quinn's novel because he believes it exhibits a "distinctly normalized view of the Holocaust" (*World Hitler Never Made* 343), but his remark regarding the normalized view of the Holocaust is not entirely true. While it is true that the world without Jews (or any other non-Aryan races for that matter) depicted in *After Dachau* is not only strikingly normal, it is horrific because it is so normal. To put it bluntly, it is horrifying *because* it feels so normal; it is a chilling dystopia disguised as a normal world, and any normalization of the Holocaust it exhibits is meant to emphasize the ethical and political message of the novel.

In all likelihood, Daniel Quinn wrote *After Dachau* in answer to ethical questions regarding commemoration and responsibility. Born in 1935, Quinn devoted his life to educating others. He was especially interested in humanity's relationship with nature and explored that theme in his best-known novel *Ishmael* (1992). Even though *After Dachau* stands out as Quinn's first and only alternate history, it shares a common thread with his

other works. As Quinn observes, "… the victors of the world of *After Dachau* naturally get to write history books, which present a story as conveniently distorted as our own. In all my novels I challenge the victors' version of history, and this is what makes *After Dachau* similar to my previous books" (Gesin and Quinn). Therefore, like other books written by Quinn, *After Dachau* challenges the *status quo*, the version of history written by the victors.

Set two thousand years after Nazi Germany's victory in World War II, *After Dachau*, without any doubt, showcases that history is written by the victors who can turn their greatest atrocities into self-glorifying narratives. The novel makes it very clear by focusing on a single site of memory connected to World War II, the Holocaust[47], which shall now be analyzed in detail.

As described above, in the alternate timeline of *After Dachau* the Holocaust is no longer a subject of living, communicative memory. Since the action of the novel takes place almost two thousand years after World War II, the Holocaust and Dachau have moved from communicative to cultural memory. In *After Dachau*, the history of World War II, the Holocaust, and concentration camps is a remote past. For Jason, it is "the stuff of legend, as the Trojan War must have seemed in Gloria MacArthur's day" (Quinn 137), whereas people who lived through it are semi-legendary characters; Adolf Hitler, known as the "Hero of Dachau", is comparable to William Tell (Quinn 185), while "The Jews have hardly more reality … than the dragons of the Middle Ages" (Quinn 137). The genocide of non-Aryan races is also a thing of the past. It is disturbing but, as the schoolteacher points out, "necessary and, after all, not without precedent" (Quinn 125). Therefore, in *After Dachau*, the history of the Holocaust is perceived as a legendary story and a foundational myth; the tragic

[47] Naturally, in *After Dachau* nobody uses the term "Holocaust" because in the world dominated by the fascist ideology, this term never came to be.

story of a mass-scale genocide is turned into a narrative of a necessary and natural 'purging' that had to be done to secure the future of the human race (Sokołowska-Paryż 175).

Therefore, in the alternate timeline of *After Dachau*, the Holocaust is, on the one hand, a foundation of human history and, on the other hand, an event so remote that is fails to evoke any emotions. The all-Aryan society living almost four thousand years after the Shoah, long before accepted the propaganda according to which they live in a utopian paradise and, as Jason finds out, does not care that it was founded on the mass murder of other races. Such a depiction of the Holocaust raises two issues: the first concerns the distortion of the past by politics of memory, while the second relates to the problem of accountability.

Let us address the problem of the distortion of the past first. After the unconditional victory over the Allies, Nazi Germany forced other countries to partake in the worldwide extermination of Jews and other, as they called them, "mongrel races". As the reader learns from Mallory/Gloria's first-person account, in the United States, the extermination took years and happened gradually. In Nazi-dominated Europe, it was accomplished through concentration camps. In the United States, the genocide was preceded by the appearance of negative representations of Jews and African-Americans in movies. After society adopted the worldview promoted by the media, mass deportations of African-Americans started, which, according to Gloria/Mallory's account, served as a disguise for wide-scale murder. As time passed and Jews, African-Americans, and other people of color were eliminated, the memory of the atrocities died out, and authorities transformed it into a self-congratulatory narrative of a "Great War" against the menacing Jewish enemy.

In *After Dachau*, the victory of the Third Reich is a combination of a successful military campaign and effective politics of memory, which completely obliterated the memory of what really happened and turned the perpetrators − Nazis − into the "collective heroes of Dachau" (Quinn 130). The bizarre transformation of the Dachau concentration

camp into a decisive battle between the Jews and the Nazis served to rationalize the genocide. As Sokołowska-Paryż persuasively argues, the concentration camp of Dachau was redesigned by Nazi propaganda as a battle because it recasts the blameless and defenseless civilian victims (i.e., Jews) into an enemy that possessed the same strength and inclination to kill as the Nazis, justifiying the Holocaust and assuaging the Nazis' guilt (Sokołowska-Paryż 176–77). The need to provide a comprehensive, self-congratulatory narrative resulted in the eradication of concentration camps from the collective and cultural memory; after all, concentration camps did not fit in the foundational story of a heroic battle. Since all victims of Nazi crimes are dead, no one can provide a countermemory to the politics of memory propagated by the Nazis. Therefore, through its depiction of the Holocaust, Quinn's *After Dachau* demonstrates the power of the politics of memory to distort and reshape history, thus illustrating the well-known adage that history is written by the victors. When Nazi Germany emerged victorious, its leaders could shape history however they saw fit. As Gavriel Rosenfeld observes, *After Dachau* validates Saul Friedlander's contention that, had the Third Reich won World War II and successfully carried out the Holocaust, they would have depicted the Holocaust as a happy ending (*World Hitler Never Made* 342) − this is precisely what happens in Quinn's novel. By describing Nazi politics of memory, Quinn's novel underscores the inextricable connection between history and power and shows how collective notions of the past are shaped and distorted in order to serve political aims.

The second issue that arises from Quinn's *After Dachau* and its depiction of the Holocaust is the question of how accountable societies are for the atrocities perpetrated by their ancestors. When Mallory/Gloria wakes up after her accident, she holds people around her accountable for her plight. She accuses Jason of being a murderer; when he protests, she starts gesticulating and explains to Jason that the gestures are "a kind of shorthand or code word. It means… someone who's thrown sight away. Someone who refuses to see" (Quinn

84). The whole meaning of the sign is revealed later in the novel when after the history lesson, Mallory/Gloria asks Jason if he is a "not-see":

> 'A not-see? What's that?'
>
> She laughed. 'Not a not-see. *This* is a not-see.' She repeated the sign she'd used earlier to characterize me, snapping her fingers together in front her eyes and tossing them away. 'Not-see is a sign-language pun. … ' Not-see equals Nazi — N-A-Z-I.'
>
> 'I still don't get it. What's a Nazi?'
>
> Her eyes widened in amused disbelief. … 'It's short for *National Socialist* — I assume it comes from the original German.'
>
> 'Okay. That part rings a bell. National Socialism was popular all over Europe for a time — but never in the U.S."
>
> 'But you still managed to murder your Jews.'
>
> 'Is that the real meaning of the word Nazi — Jew-killer?'
>
> 'Yeah, I guess it is.' (Quinn 130)

This dialogue underscores how distorted and repressed the memory of World War II is; nobody knows what concentration camps are or what Nazism is. However, the dialogue also reflects the problem of moral accountability. For Mallory/Gloria, Jason, and all other people descend from Nazis, which implies that they are Nazis, too; the current order was built upon the Holocaust, which implies that they are physical and spiritual successors of Nazis and should be held accountable for the crimes committed by them. Moreover, the clever wordplay between the word "Nazi" and "not-see" establishes a connection between past and present: the Aryans are "Nazis" because they descend from the Nazis, and they "not-see" because they refuse to accept the responsibility for the crimes committed by their ancestors. Jason

repeatedly denies any responsibility for his ancestors' crimes and tries to put the Holocaust into a larger perspective:

> I thought about the charge for a while, then said, 'The greatest library of the ancient world, full of unique and unreplaceable manuscripts, was in Alexandria. Near the end of the fourth century, the Roman emperor Theodosius had it burned so as to rid the world of all those horrid pagan works, most of which were lost to us forever … Did you feel guilty about this act of barbarism when you were alive as Gloria MacArthur?'"(Quinn 131)

Therefore, Jason argues that he cannot be held responsible for the Holocaust for two reasons. Firstly, it happened so long ago that it is impossible for him to feel responsible. The temporal distance between him and the Holocaust is so great that there is no possibility of establishing an empathic connection with the past. Hence, just as people of the twentieth century did not feel any connection between themselves and the destruction of the Great Library of Alexandria, so the Aryan society of *After Dachau* does not feel that it is in any way connected to the Holocaust. Secondly, Jason points out that human civilization has always been built upon crimes, and the Holocaust is nothing more but one of many atrocities committed by the human race.

Over the course of the novel, Mallory/Gloria comes to understand his point of view. While she insists on telling him her story, she finally concludes, "I'm through calling you a murderer, Jason. It doesn't do me any good, and it certainly doesn't do you any good. You might as well apologize for killing Julius Caesar" (Quinn 175). However, at the very point Mallory/Gloria is ready to give up, Jason experiences a change in his defensive behavior and realizes that he needs to take responsibility for what his ancestors did. Gavriel D. Rosenfeld scathingly asserts that Jason has a change of heart "perhaps out of Mallory's de facto act of forgiveness, perhaps out of a desire to add some spice to his otherwise monotonous life" (G.

D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 341), but Rosenfeld misreads the scene. Jason experiences a profound change of attitude not because he wants to change his "monotonous life" but because he encounters material evidence of the genocide: the underground room in which Gloria hid in the 1950s and the crate with memorabilia of the world from two thousand years ago.

The trip that Jason and Mallory/Gloria take to the underground of New York can be read as a descent from the conscious to the unconscious mind in order to confront repressed memories. They travel through tunnels to arrive at the room in which Gloria and her friends hid and in which they finally killed themselves. Mallory/Gloria shows Jason a crate of memorabilia she put there when she was Gloria MacArthur: the photograph which proves that she was a black woman, letters, passports, diaries, photo albums, drawings, and jewelry, and proceeds to tell Jason about her experiences as an African-American woman in the 1940s. Her account, along with the room and memorabilia, completely changes Jason's point of view. His incredulity changes into terror when he listens to Mallory/Gloria's story. The fact that he hears it inside the underground room surrounded by material proofs of Gloria's story profoundly affects him and shatters the myth of the superiority of the Aryan race and the necessity of the Holocaust imposed on him by his society's cultural memory (Lemann, "Odpominanie" 121). Therefore, the underground room and Gloria's crate serve as tangible sites of memory recounting the story of the genocide that force Jason to finally acknowledge the horrific foundations of the contemporary social order.

When Jason finally accepts his responsibility, he decides to commit his life to exposing the lies of the official narrative of the past and restoring the memory of the Holocaust, thus attempting to translate his acceptance of the responsibility for the Holocaust to the collective level. Ultimately, he realizes that the only way to do this is by recapturing his experience in New York underground, where he was confronted with Mallory/Gloria's

memorabilia. Therefore, Jason opens an art gallery where he exhibits various remnants of the past, hoping that they would have a similar effect on the visitors as Gloria's memorabilia had on him. Moreover, he establishes a publishing house committed to republishing works written by Jews and people of color, such as Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* and "several purely literary works … from authors with names like Stein, Kafka, Zangwill, and Büchner" (Quinn 223). The exhibition is supposed to remind Jason's society about the murdered races, expose the lies of the state-supported cultural memory according to which Dachau was a battle against Jews who wanted to control the whole world, and, most importantly, create a new cultural memory which would pay homage to the victims of the Holocaust. Moreover, its goal is also to counteract Jason's society's emphatic estrangement, make people finally care about their ancestors' crimes (Sokołowska-Paryż 180). When somebody throws a stone and breaks the gallery window, Jason takes it as a sign that somebody became so enraged at the exhibition that he decided to vent his outrage, and, therefore, the exhibition has achieved its purpose: someone finally cared. Moreover, we might assume that the real breakthrough will happen once he publishes the diary of Anne Frank. Therefore, Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* puts a hopeful message across. Through the character of Jason, it argues that even the reluctant can be convinced that they should accept responsibility for their ancestors' past crimes. Moreover, he provides hope that Jason's society will finally acknowledge the repressed memory of the genocide and become better[48].

[48] Gavriel D. Rosenfeld takes a different view on the subject. He argues that "the novel ends with him [Jason] abandoning his ambitious crusade for mass enlightement and instead embracing a small-scale policy of public commemoration by opening up an art gallery and a publishing house dedicated to the art and literature of forgotten races" (*World Hitler Never Made* 341). However, it has to be noted that Jason abandons his "ambitious crusade for mass enlightement", that is publishing his story of the Holocaust in a renowed magazine, because of the pressure from the Intelligence Service. The involvement of the Intelligence Service is a proof of

In Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau*, the Holocaust, symbolized by the Dachau concentration camp, becomes a foundation of the new, all-Aryan society. However, in *After Dachau*, the Holocaust involved not only Jews but all races perceived by Nazi ideology as "subhuman". The fact that an African-American woman Gloria MacArthur is the main character of the story indicates that in the novel, the Holocaust is conceived as a symbol that stands for all racially-motivated genocides, especially those perpetrated in and by the United States. Thus, the novel universalizes the Holocaust to criticize America and points out that just as Jason accepted responsibility for his ancestors' crimes, so should Americans.

This aspect of Quinn's novel becomes visible when we trace back the history of the Holocaust in the alternate timeline. After the peace treaty between Nazi Germany and America, the United States accepted Nazi propaganda and gradually introduced its own form of genocide. Like in *The Man in the High Castle*, the American nation readily accepts Nazism and exhibits no resistance to the world domination of the Third Reich. In fact, as Mallory/Gloria recounts, Americans do not perceive themselves as defeated because the United States surrendered right after Nazi Germany developed the atomic bomb, and therefore it was never invaded or even bombed. The lack of American resistance implies that fascism and its concept of inferior races did not arouse opposition from the nation, which, in turn, implies that Americans were not strangers to fascist ideas; it is later confirmed by the facts that in the American version of the Holocaust, African-Americans fall victim to persecution right after the Jews. Hence, in *After Dachau*, the fate of Jews and African-Americans is conflated, as demonstrated by Jason's final words in which he compares Mallory/Gloris to Anne Frank: "I wonder what Mallory will think when I tell her my first offering as a publisher of original material will be the diary of *another young woman* who

---

how potentially dangerous the truth can be; and even though Jason is forced to abandon his original idea, the text suggests that his gallery and publishing enterprise may have a profound influence on the society.

was hunted down for extermination, a Jewish teenager named Anne Frank" (Quinn 226; my emphasis). Here, Mallory/Gloria is a stand-in for Anne Frank, which emphasizes how similar her experience is to that of the Jewish "young woman". Moreover, the novel connects the fate of the Jews and African-Americans to that of Native Americans, further universalizing the Holocaust. When Mallory/Gloria once more accuses Jason of being a murderer, he thinks that he should ask her "if Jackson Pollock lived in sackcloth and ashes because his ancestors exterminated the original inhabitants of North America to make room for people like him" (Quinn 138). Through this reference to the extermination of Native Americans and manifest destiny, a parallel is created between the sufferings of Jews, African-Americans, and Native Americans, which draws attention to America's history of racial violence.

Overall, Daniel Quinn uses the Holocaust as the central theme of *After Dachau* to comment on the questions regarding remembering, forgetting, and responsibility. The world depicted in the novel is disturbingly normal, even though it was built upon world-scale genocide. Unlike Nazi characters in other alternate history narratives of the Axis victory in World War II, the characters in *After Dachau*, especially Jason Tull, are depicted as normal and likable; Jason's search for purpose is something many readers can identify with. The appearance of Gloria/Mallory undermines the social order because her memories of World War II highlight the flagitious nature of the Aryan society; moreover, it provokes reflection on memory and responsibility for crimes committed by the society in which we have to live. The seeming normalcy of the diegetic world is meant to accentuate its horrific nature and invite comparisons between the alternate timeline and our timeline, thus pointing out that even though in our timeline the Final Solution was never completed and the Holocaust is widely commemorated, we tend to forget about other atrocities, such as slavery of African-Americans or annihilation of Native Americans simply because they happened a long time ago. In Quinn's novel, the Holocaust is cast as this distant past. Even though it is perceived as

a symbolic foundation of all-Aryan society and is taught in schools (albeit in a highly distorted form), it is so remote that it fails to attract emotion. However, the novel argues that temporal distance does not absolve from responsibility, and societies should confront their disturbing past and make amends for the crimes they committed. However, that can be done only when we establish an emphatic connection with the past. *After Dachau* demonstrates that it is possible to restore this connection through art which serves as a medium of memory narrating the experiences of the vanquished.

As seen above, in Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* the Holocaust serves as a site of memory that encompasses numerous themes. Its analysis largely revealed the politics of memory it promotes, most importantly, the ethical requirement to remember and atone for past crimes. Let us, however, take one more look at Daniel Quinn's use of the Holocaust and see how it contributes to the political message of the novel.

Firstly, Quinn's *After Dachau* cautions against the mythologization of the past. By juxtaposing the established cultural memory of the "battle of Dachau" with Mallory/Gloria's countermemory of the Holocaust, the novel showcases how political authorities distort the past in order to build up their power. In Jason's timeline, the systemic murder of innocent Jewish civilians in concentration camps is recast as a battle to rationalize mass extermination for when victims are turned into enemies willing to fight against the Aryans, it is easy to exonerate the murderers of millions of Jews (Sokołowska-Paryż 176–77). Once no one remains to counter the officially approved politics of memory, society accepts the version offered by the political authorities and promoted by the media. The novel makes it clear that Jason Tull is a role model whose willingness to investigate the past and unveil the distortions of cultural memory should be emulated.

Secondly, the novel asserts that all human civilization is founded on the extermination of weaker races and species. Jason repeatedly explains to Mallory/Gloria that he cannot be

held responsible for what his ancestors did to the Jews and African-Americans and tries to put the Holocaust into a broader perspective by pointing out that Gloria's world was founded on the crimes of her ancestors in the same way his world was built upon the Holocaust. To prove that, he brings up Theodosius's burning of the Great Library of Alexandria (Quinn 131) and the extermination of Native Americans (Quinn 138). In another attempt to normalize the Holocaust, Miss Crenevant, the schoolteacher, describes the extermination of non-Aryan races as something that has happened before:

> 'The story of human evolution doesn't follow the same pattern as the evolution of other creatures. When reptiles emerged from the amphibians, they didn't destroy the amphibians. When mammals emerged from the reptiles, they didn't destroy the reptiles. But the same is not true of humans. Among humans, each emerging species apparently destroyed the species from which it emerged. This explains why none of those earlier species survived to the present time. In fact, most biologists feel this accounts for the tremendous speed with which humans evolved from lower forms.'
>
> 'So we Aryans were only doing what humans have done from the beginning.'
>
> 'Exactly'. (Quinn 125)

The above quote is a penetrating critique of the human race as inherently predisposed to violence and the extermination of other species. This critique aligns with Daniel Quinn's philosophical reflection on the relationship between the human race and the natural environment, the theme explored in his other novels (Gorman 201–02). Therefore, the extermination of the Jews, African-Americans, and Native Americans are just three instances of humans' drive to the destruction of other races. Quinn's point here is that one of the deepest, culturally repressed truths is that human civilization is founded on the extermination of civilizations that existed before it.

The most harshly criticized country in the novel for its history of extermination is not, as one might expect from an alternate history of World War II, the Third Reich but the United States. Actually, Nazi Germany is hardly ever mentioned in the novel, and when it is, it is done only in reference to World War II[49]. The attention is shifted from Nazi Germany to America, where Mallory and Jason live (and where Gloria lived). As described above, *After Dachau* conflates the Nazi project of the Final Solution with the historical plight of Native Americans and African-Americans, which leads to a conclusion that, historically speaking, Americans were no better than Nazis in their treatment of racial minorities. This conclusion provides a bitter commentary on American cultural memory. The plot twist in which the reader, who was led to believe that *After Dachau* is set in contemporary America, realizes that it is not only an alternate history but one set two thousand years in the future, is meant to imply that *After Dachau* is a parable about our timeline. Jason's all-Aryan America, the novel implies, is just like the contemporary United States and suffers from the same cultural amnesia. Just like Jason's society refused to accept that its ancestors murdered millions of people of color, contemporary American society repressed the memory of the extermination of Native Americans and the victimization of African-Americans. Therefore, Americans are, like in Mallory/Gloria's wordplay, "not-see" ("Nazis") in the sense that they are unwilling to acknowledge their criminal past. Instead, they repress it and describe their past through myths and concepts of manifest destiny and the American Dream, the mythologization of the frontier period, the antebellum South, and the glorification of America's involvement in World War II.

[49] In fact, Germany is mentioned twice in the novel when Mallory/Gloria recounts World War II: "Germany had the whip in its hand but was too exhausted to use it … Places like France, Belgium, and the Netherlands became virtual provinces of Germany" (Quinn 166).

Gavriel D. Rosenfeld harshly criticizes *After Dachau* for undermining the "longstanding belief in the Holocaust's uniqueness" by juxtaposing it with historical persecution of Native Americans and African slaves, as well as for the instrumentalization of the Holocaust to condemn American historical crimes instead of "exploring the (allo)historical fate of the Jews for its own sake" (*World Hitler Never Made* 343). However, in his critique Rosenfeld does not take into account that nothing is ever remembered for its own sake. Communities choose what to remember and what to forget in accordance with their current circumstances and needs. The aim of *After Dachau* is not to preserve the belief in the uniqueness of the Holocaust but to provide a philosophical reflection on the nature of humankind and force the reader to reflect on their nation's history. In all likelihood, Daniel Quinn's decision to use the Holocaust stemmed from its status as a universally-accepted symbol of evil. Moreover, as Michael Rothberg points out, memory is not a zero-sum game in which remembering one thing equals forgetting the other; the act of remembrance is characterized by dynamic interactions between different versions of memory. Therefore, it is no wonder that the recognition of the Holocaust as a unique form of political violence resulted in the emergence of narratives that use it as an analogy for other traumatic events which cannot be approached directly (Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory* 11–12). This is precisely how the Holocaust functions in *After Dachau*; as a symbol and metaphor for other instances of racial violence and the human drive to destroy. *After Dachau* encourages a dynamic flow of memory between the Holocaust, the persecution of African-Americans, and the extermination of Native Americans, thus challenging the reader to make sense of and work through their repressed memory of American racial violence.

Ultimately, Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* calls attention to our ethical responsibility for the crimes committed by our ancestors and encourages us to atone. Jason Tull, an Aryan man from a wealthy family, is an example of a person who accepts his responsibility and is

ready to atone by educating others and thus create a new cultural memory for his world. His transformation from an indifferent skeptic to a person committed to changing the world reflects Daniel Quinn's belief that to create virtuous people, we, as a society, have to alter the myths we live by and create new ones that will teach us how to live peacefully (Gorman 202). What Quinn seems to be teaching his reader is that recognition of ethical responsibility for the crimes of our ancestors can be achieved through the establishment of an emotional connection with the past mediated by art and thus, by extension, sites of memory. After all, Jason concludes that the only way to change something is by replicating his own experience in the New York underground and exposing people to memorabilia of the bygone times, thus demonstrating that the victims of the genocide were people, too. Therefore, *After Dachau* points to the meaning of art in forming a meaningful, empathic connection with the past.

After Dachau was published in 2001 by an independent American publishing house Context Books, which, as one of the critics put it, "raised more than a few eyebrows" (Mayeda). Since Quinn was by then a well-known author, many people found it surprising that he did not decide to publish in a well-known publishing house that would also be able to promote his novel better. However, Quinn's choice of an independent publishing house, as well as his consent to visit and promote *After Dachau* in independent bookstores only (Gesin and Quinn), was consistent with his philosophy of supporting the weak and challenging the victors.

The reactions to *After Dachau* were mixed. The novel was criticized for plotting and weak characterization (Sullivan 105; Silver, "After Dachau"), but it was praised for its philosophical message (Silver, "After Dachau"). Currently, *After Dachau* has been reprinted four times. It is still available in bookstores and it seems that the readers find it interesting. On Amazon, it is rated 4.2 on a scale of five stars ("Amazon.Com: After Dachau: Daniel Quinn"). On Goodreads, one of the biggest and most popular websites for readers and book

recommendations, *After Dachau* is rated 3.77 on a scale of five stars and has one hundred seventy-three reviews ("Goodreads: After Dachau"). The reviewers on Goodreads describe it as "jaw-dropping" ("Stephen Gallup's Review of After Dachau"; "Frank's Review of After Dachau"), "outstanding … downright creepy" (*Ru's Review of After Dachau*), "Unsettling. Intelligent. Surprisingly surprising" ("Nathan's Review of After Dachau"). Goodreads users' reviews also suggest that most readers see it as thought-provoking and eye-opening ("Veronica Viersen's Review of After Dachau"; "William's Review of After Dachau"; "Jon Barber's Review of After Dachau"). Thus, it can be concluded that *After Dachau* has served its purpose as a novel that is supposed to make people rethink their attitudes toward the past.

To conclude, Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* revolves around a single site of memory of World War II, the Holocaust. The novel exhibits a highly normalized depiction of the world that emerged as a consequence of the Axis victory and in which the Holocaust was not only completed but also involved all non-Aryan races. However, there is no doubt that *After Dachau* is a dystopia made even more horrific by its normalcy. Quinn's novel uses the Holocaust as the central theme to comment on the socially relevant issues regarding remembering, forgetting, and responsibility, thus providing a bitter critique of the contemporary state of American cultural memory. Through a multidirectional memory of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, the exterminated Native Americans, and the persecuted African-Americans, the novel challenges the reader to take responsibility for the historical crimes committed by the United States, thus arguing that no matter how much time has passed, we have a responsibility to remember and commemorate the victims. Therefore, we should cherish a meaningful, empathic connection with the past.

4. PHILIP ROTH *THE PLOT AGAINST AMERICA* (2004)

Published in 2004, *The Plot Against America* remains one of the finest and best-known of all alternate histories. Written by a prolific mainstream author, Philip Roth, it has received much attention from literary critics and scholars, and has recently been adapted into a six-episode television miniseries by HBO. Written and published amid the climate of fear triggered by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, *The Plot Against America* has been read as a parable on the Bush administration and has been hailed as a prophecy regarding the rise of alt-right movements in the 2010s and the presidency of Donald Trump (Kakutani; Berman; Halio; Lewis; Galupo; Kuttner; Power; Connolly, "Ambiguously Menacing Predicament"). It is, therefore, a fascinating example of an alternate history novel that partakes in the cultural memory of World War II and is, at the same time, very much immersed in the here and now. Just like Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and Daniel Quinn's *After* Dachau, Philip Roth's work uses the convention of alternate history as a highly effective tool for exposing the falsehoods of mainstream cultural memory. In the following chapter, I demonstrate how Philip Roth's novel engages in a discussion on the cultural memory of World War II, the possibility of an American Holocaust, and present-day American politics.

The Plot Against America belongs to the collection of so-called "Roth novels", that is novels written by Philip Roth that contain a protagonist named after the author, such as *The Facts: A Novelists Autobiography* (1988), *Deception* (1990), *Patrimony: A True Story* (1991), and *Operation Shylock: A Confession* (1993). Natalia Lemann dubbed it a "counterfactual autobiography" whose aim is to work through the trauma of World War II (*Historie alternatywne i steampunk w literaturze* 433). Indeed, the novel represents World War II as a central and traumatic event that perpetually damages the narrator because even though he

never experiences the war firsthand, he is doomed to live in the shadow of "perpetual fear" (Roth, *Plot* 1) instilled by World War II.

The plot of the novel stretches from the point of divergence that takes place in June 1940, when Charles A. Lindbergh, the famous aviator and the first man to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, is nominated for the presidency by the Republican Convention at Philadelphia, to the point of convergence in October 1942, when Lindbergh disappears, and Franklin D. Roosevelt is reelected. These events are narrated by a man called Philip Roth[50], the author's alter ego, who recalls the abrupt end of his secure childhood brought about by Charles Lindbergh's presidency. Therefore, *The Plot Against America* does not focus on great historical events but on the personal history of how Lindbergh's presidency changed the life of the Roth family.

The novel opens with a description of the Weequahic neighborhood of Newark, New Jersey, inhabited by assimilated, mostly secular Jewish families. The narrator recalls how he perceived himself as "an American child of American parents in an American school in an American city in an America at peace with the world" (Roth, *Plot* 7). His sense of security is shattered when Lindbergh becomes the thirty-third president of the United States and negotiates a deal with the Third Reich meant to keep America out of World War II, leading the United States down a path of fascism and anti-Semitism. When the Office of American Absorption (OAA) introduces the Homestead 42 Act, meant to "Americanize" Jews by forcibly relocating Jewish families to the Midwest, Philip's parents grow indignant, suspecting that the act is meant to disintegrate Jewish communities. The growing tensions

[50] It is sometimes overlooked that the narrator is an adult man who recalls his childhood.There is no doubt that the time of narration it can be situated after 1968, as suggested in chapter 6, where the narrator writes "it wasn't until twenty-six years after Winchell's assassination that a second presidential candidate would be gunned down − that was New York's Democratic senator Robert Kennedy … on Tuesday, June 4, 1968" (Roth, *Plot* 272).

take a toll on the Roth family as Philip's cousin Alvin joins the Canadian army and comes back from Europe with an amputated leg; Philip's brother Sandy takes part in the newly-established Just Folks program[51] and fascinated by the time spent on the Mawhinneys' farm becomes a spokesman for the program which results in a rift with his father; Philip's aunt Evelyn marries Rabbi Lionel Bengelsdorf whose support of Lindbergh is harshly criticized by many Jews; finally, Philip's parents, Herman and Bess, grow agitated by the rise of anti-Semitism. When the frightened Bess tries to convince her husband to move to Canada, fiercely patriotic Herman refuses point blank: "I am not running away! …This is our country!" (Roth, *Plot* 226). Little Philip is terrified by the dissolution of his family and starts indulging in fantasies of running away, becoming an orphan, and thus abandoning his Jewish identity. However, when he tries to do that, he accidentally gets kicked by a horse and loses his precious stamp collection. The situation grows even more tense when many Jewish families are removed from Newark to make place for non-Jewish residents who are supposed to "enrich the Americanness" of the neighborhood, and Walter Winchell's[52] presidential campaign fuels anti-Semitism. As a result, race riots and pogroms break out across the country. Winchell's presidential campaign comes to an abrupt end when he is assassinated on October 5th, 1942, in Louisville, Kentucky. The assassination causes another wave of anti-Semitic attacks, finally convincing Herman that it is time to emigrate to Canada. However, before the Roths manage to emigrate, Lindbergh disappears during a solo flight, and the vice president, Burton K. Wheeler, declares martial law. Meanwhile, newspapers claim that

[51] Just Folks program is designed by the Lindbergh administration to assimilate Jewish children through sending them to Western states to live with American foster families during summer vacation.

[52] The real Walter Winchell (1897-1972) was a popular American journalist and broadcaster who exerted great influence of American audiences. In Roth's novel, he becomes even more powerful when he starts agitating against the Lindbergh administration and decides to become a presidential candidate. His election trail and assassination are, of course, alternate history.

British intelligence had intercepted coded communications proving that Lindbergh did not disappear but met with a German U-boat and was transported to Berlin to meet with Adolf Hitler. In response, rumors claiming that Lindbergh was a Nazi agent mix with conspiracy theories blaming Jews for concocting a plot against America. As a result, new riots break out across the United States, Rabbi Bengelsdorf is arrested along with some Jewish members of the Lindbergh administration and the First Lady, Anne Morrow Lindbergh. She manages to escape and delivers a speech in which she asks Congress to remove the acting president Wheeler from office and call a presidential election. Two and a half weeks later, in November 1942, history comes back on track as Franklin D. Roosevelt is elected for his third presidential term, the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor (albeit a year later than in our timeline), the United States enter World War II, and the Axis powers are defeated.

The Plot Against America has been criticized for its convoluted *deus ex machina* ending, and many critics have struggled to make sense of it (Siegel 148; Singles 172, 184–89; Toker; Morgan 107–08). Kathleen Singles dubbed *The Plot Against America* a "flawed" alternate history (169) because even though it has an obvious point of divergence which creates a history recognizably different from our own, the change does not affect the present because Roosevelt eventually comes back for his third term, the United States joins the war, and the Allies defeat the Axis (Singles 171). Hence, Lindbergh's presidency has little to no influence on the course of world history; it does however leave a mark on the personal history of the Roth family, especially that of young Philip. As he confesses: "Lindbergh was gone and we were safe, though never would I be able to revive that unfazed sense of security first fostered in a little child by a big, protective republic and his ferociously responsible parents" (Roth, *Plot* 301). Therefore, the trauma of Lindbergh's presidency experienced by Philip in his early childhood significantly shaped his self-perception.

Philip Roth began writing *The Plot Against America* in December 2000, a month before George W. Bush's inauguration as the 43rd President of the United States, and it took him three years to finish it. According to Roth, the novel was inspired by a single sentence from Arthur Schlesinger's autobiography in which Schlesinger wrote about how the far-right wing of the Republican party had wanted to choose Charles Lindbergh as their candidate for the presidency in 1940. Schlesinger quoted Lindbergh's speech of September 1941 accusing American Jews of pushing the United States towards war, and observed that isolationists may have fared better with Lindbergh's leadership. Roth scribbled on the margin: "What if they had?" and started toying with the idea (Roth Pierpont 183; Bailey 388). The first "what if?" he wanted to explore was the idea of an isolationist US president who would keep America out of World War II, while the second "what if?" concerned the question of how the Jews would have fared under such a president (*A Look Back*). Such speculations had a lot of appeal to the author of *The Plot Against America* because the period between the late 1930s and early 1940 had a significant impact on his life. He was born in 1933, the year Hitler came to power and Roosevelt became the president of the United States; he grew up hearing Adolf Hitler's speeches on the radio, and while during his grade school years, between 1941 and 1945, everybody was concerned with the outcome of World War II (Roth, "The Story Behind"). For Roth, the writing of the novel posed a chance to come back to his childhood memories and depict the atmosphere of the times:

> To alter the historical reality by making Lindbergh America's 33rd president while keeping everything else as close to factual truth as I could ... I wanted to make the atmosphere of the times genuine, to present a reality as authentically American as the reality in Schlesinger's book, even if, unlike him, I was giving to history a turn it had not taken. … It also gave me an opportunity to bring my parents back from the grave… and then to go ahead to imagine how

> they might have conducted themselves under the enormous pressure of a Jewish crisis such as they never really had to encounter as native-born New Jerseyans, living all their lives, luckily enough, without an Aryan white supremacist in the White House. (Roth, "The Story Behind")

To make his alternate history[53] as realistic as possible, Roth used various historical figures and documents, as well as his own memories. He included historical figures such as Franklin D. Roosevelt, Charles Lindbergh, New York City Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia, Walter Winchell, Burton Wheeler, and Joachim von Ribbentrop, trying to imagine them in a new historical context in as plausible way as possible (Roth, "The Story Behind"); for instance, he chose Walter Winchell for Lindbergh's opponent because in the real past Winchell was one of Lindbergh's most steadfast critics.

The autobiographical mode in which *The Plot Against America* is written further underlines the realism of the novel. Roth modeled the narrator's family after his own, set the action in his hometown, and drew on his childhood memories, some of which the reader can recognize from other publications. For instance, the scene in chapter one in which the narrator describes his father's outrage at the people sitting in the German-American Bund's beer garden was inspired by an actual event: "Roth remembered his father cursing only twice during his childhood … once when they drove past the Bund beer garden in Union, New Jersey, a memory Roth included in *The Plot Against America*" (Bailey 29). Similarly, Herman Roth's difficulties at getting a better-paid position at work resulting from

[53] Interestingly, Roth seems not to have been aware of the existence of alternate history genre. In "The Story Behind *The Plot Against America*", he claimed "I had no literary models for reimagining the historical past. I was familiar with books that imagined a historical future, notably *1984*, but … I didn't bother to reread it. … The book began inadvertently, as a thought experiment. … The subject, let alone the method, would never have occurred to me on its own. I frequently write about things that didn't happen, but never about history that didn't happen" (Roth, "The Story Behind").

"unchallenged discrimination that denied Jews significant promotions in the big corporations" (Roth, *Plot* 11) were inspired by the money trouble the actual Herman Roth faced (Roth, *Facts* 17–18; Roth Pierpont 16–17; Bailey 40). As a result, *PAA* makes an impression of a highly realistic novel.

The Plot Against America is connected to memory on many different levels. First of all, it is, to some extent, based on the author's childhood memories. Secondly, it is involved in a commentary on the American cultural memory of World War II, traditionally remembered as a time of national valor; however, the novel undermines this perception by pointing out that in the 1930s and 1940s, many Americans harbored fascist ideas which implies that the greatest generation was not as great as cultural memory makes it out to be. Consequently, *PAA* constitutes an intervention of Roth's individual and communicative memory of the early 1940s into the fabric of the mainstream cultural memory of World War II. To demonstrate how *The Plot Against America* revolves around various ideas concerning World War II and what kind of politics of memory it engages in, this chapter analyzes three sites of memory: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Charles Lindbergh, and the Holocaust, as well as examines the politics of memory the novel is involved in and scrutinizing its afterlives, most notably its television adaptation.

As Singles points out, *The Plot Against America* has much in common with *The Man in the High Castle*, as in both novels the history of World War II consists of great men and great events (170). This is reflected by the point of divergence of *PAA* which involves American national hero, Charles Lindbergh, running in the 1940 election against another great man of history, Franklin D. Roosevelt. When Lindbergh is elected, Roosevelt pulls himself away from politics, and the situation in the country rapidly deteriorates, especially for the Jews. To make things even worse, America signs a treaty with Nazi Germany to stay out of World War II. When Lindbergh mysteriously disappears and Roosevelt is reelected,

history comes back on track, the United States joins the war, and the calamity of fascist America is averted. Therefore, the course of history depends on the decisions made by great men, while ordinary people, such as the members of the Roth family, have little to no influence on what is happening in their country. The fact that FDR and Lindbergh have such an impact on the lives of the novel's main characters suggests that we should turn our attention to them first.

Franklin D. Roosevelt and Charles A. Lindbergh are two sites of memory around which the novel's plot revolves. While Roosevelt has always been one of the central sites of memory of World War II as a politician who has forged the current world order (Polak), Charles Lindbergh is famous because of his solo flight across the Atlantic in 1927. In *The Plot Against America*, he serves mainly as a counterbalance to FDR; while Roosevelt embodies freedom and democracy, Lindbergh epitomizes authoritarianism and fascism. They are like two sides of the same coin and two faces of America: As young Philip confesses: "Lindbergh was the first famous living American whom I learned to hate − just as President Roosevelt was the first famous living American whom I was taught to love" (Roth, *Plot* 7).

Even though neither FDR nor Lindbergh appear as characters, their presence is felt throughout the novel. While Lindbergh is responsible for every hardship the Roth family has to go through, Roosevelt is markedly absent. Nevertheless, his name is uttered over one hundred and thirty times in various contexts, and his presence can be felt through other characters, such as Philip's cousin Alvin who joins the Canadian army, goes to fight in Europe in 1940, and loses a leg. Alvin's struggle with his disability and its social stigma can be read as an allusion to Roosevelt's struggle with polio and paralysis (Polak 140, 173). Walter Winchell can also be read as a foil for FDR because, just like Roosevelt whom he supported in our timeline, he developed a charismatic radio style, held similar political views, and, in the later part of the novel, became a presidential candidate (Polak 173).

Franklin D. Roosevelt is also symbolically connected to young Philip who was born in 1933, in the first year of Roosevelt's term as the president of the United States[54]. Philip frequently refers to Roosevelt in his narrative and, inspired by him, starts collecting stamps. His first goal as a collector is to accumulate all the stamps FDR had a hand in designing (Roth, *Plot* 57). As Sara Polak concludes, "through shifting … defining characteristics of FDR onto other characters in the novel, Roosevelt remains conspicuously present through his best-known personal and public emblems" (Polak 173).

The memory of Franklin D. Roosevelt as a president of the United States, as depicted in *The Plot Against America*, can be best described through the juxtaposition of America under FDR and America under Charles Lindbergh. As we learn from Philip, before Lindbergh delivers his anti-Semitic speeches and decides to run for the presidency, the American nation seems to be united. The narrator repeatedly underlines the sense of security and peace he felt as a child during Roosevelt's presidency, and depicts himself as a model citizen who observes American national holidays, pledges allegiance to the flag of the United States at school, and is confident that America is his homeland. He glorifies FDR, mentioning him in the same breath as other symbols of American democracy: "There was Roosevelt, there was the U.S. Constitution, there was the Bill of Rights, and there were the papers, America's free press" (Roth, *Plot* 18). Therefore, young Philip perceives FDR as a symbol of American democracy, freedom, and unity. As long as Roosevelt was president, the nation remained united. During that time, the Jews of Newark, just like other Americans, treated

[54] In a similar fashion, Philip's brother Sandy is connected to Charles Lindbergh. Bess Roth found out that she was pregnant with Sandy in 1927, on the day Lindbergh made his famous flight from Long Island to Paris, and this coincidence became a part of "gallery of family anecdotes that generate a child's first cohesive mythology" (Roth, *Plot* 5). It also foreshadows Sandy's later allegiance to Lindbergh and his position as a spokesman for the Just Folk program, just like Philip's date of birth foreshadows his loyalty to Roosevelt and the ideals FDR represents.

Lindbergh as one of the greatest national heroes: "For nearly a decade Lindbergh was as great a hero in our neighborhood as he was everywhere else … the boldness of the world's first transatlantic solo pilot had been permeated with a pathos that transformed him into a martyred titan" (Roth, "The Story Behind" 6). The situation changes when the pilot starts supporting the isolationist America First Committee, advocating against the United States' involvement in World War II, and expressing anti-Semitic views. In contrast to Lindbergh, Roosevelt supports interventionism and is immensely popular among Jews. Lindbergh and FDR are thus cast as symbols of two ideas of America: Roosevelt represents liberal, democratic America, while Lindbergh embodies isolationism and fascism.

This difference between Roosevelt and Lindbergh comes to the fore when the latter decides to run for the presidency and wins the election. For young Philip, who self-identifies as an American, not a Jew, Lindbergh's victory means confronting his sense of identity: "his nomination by the Republicans to run against Roosevelt in 1940 assaulted, as nothing ever had before, that huge endowment of personal security that I had taken for granted as an American child" (Roth, *Plot* 7). Here begins the split between Roosevelt's America and Lindbergh's America, for Lindbergh's presidency brings out isolationist and anti-Semitic tendencies.

The split becomes painfully evident during the Roths' trip to Washington, DC. When the family visits the Lincoln Memorial, Herman Roth talks about the assassination of Lincoln and complains: "When you think of what this country does to its greatest presidents…" (Roth, *Plot* 64). He is overheard by an elderly lady who comments, "Thank goodness we have President Lindbergh" (Roth, *Plot* 64), to which Herman replies, "Compare Lincoln to Lindbergh? Boy oh boy" (Roth, *Plot* 64); as a result, he is called a "loudmouthed Jew" (Roth, *Plot* 65) by a man from the old lady's group, while the lady declares "I'd give anything to slap his [Herman's] face" (Roth, *Plot* 65). This exchange deeply upsets Philip's parents;

Herman is especially shocked that people dare to utter such comments in the heart of American democracy. The incident is not the only example of growing anti-Semitic attitudes. When the Roths return to their hotel, they are evicted under the pretext of a double reservation; however, Herman and Bess are sure that it is because they are Jews. When Herman tries to argue by quoting the Declaration of Independence, he hears that even if all men are created equal, "that doesn't mean all hotel reservations are created equal" (Roth, *Plot* 70). This scornful retort implies that as Jews, the Roths are now second-class citizens. Finally, on their last day, the Roths are approached by an elderly man who had overheard them talking about Walter Winchell and interjects: "Winchell is a Jew … a loudmouth Jew with too much power…" (Roth, *Plot* 78). On top of all that, the Roths spot Lindbergh's plane flying over Washington and are surprised when they see and hear people applauding. When they come back to New Jersey deeply distressed by the experience, Herman comments: "They live in a dream, and we [Jews] live in a nightmare" (Roth, *Plot* 76). His words provide an ironic comment on the American Dream, revealing a rift within American society; while some people can enjoy their "inalienable rights", minorities are treated as outsiders who can easily be deprived of their civil rights (Siegel 143). Hence, Lindbergh's presidency divided America into the utopian country of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, and the dystopian America of ethnic minorities. As Siegel observes, the Roths' trip to Washington solidifies the division of the United States into "Lindbergh's fascist state characterized by discrimination … and violence … and Lincoln's democratic republic described by Herman as a 'free country in which 'all men are created equal" (142). Therefore, the Roths' trip demonstrates the deterioration of liberal values under Lindbergh and further foregrounds the role of the great men of history by depicting how Lindbergh's policy of isolationism and cooperation with Nazi Germany encourages open manifestations of anti-Semitism. Even though *The Plot Against America* makes it clear that such sentiments have always existed in the United States,

it also implies that they remained hidden until Lindbergh gave his approval for open manifestations of racism. Under Roosevelt, Herman Roth believes, no one would dare to cast racial slurs: "You think you'd hear that [loudmouthed Jew] here if Roosevelt was president? People wouldn't dare, they wouldn't dream" (Roth, *Plot* 65). This motif accentuates the power of "Great Men" who shape and control people's attitudes, and it also further emphasizes the difference between Lindbergh, who collaborates with Adolf Hitler, and Franklin D. Roosevelt who is compared to one of America's greatest presidents, Abraham Lincoln.

To sum this part up, in *The Plot Against America*, Franklin D. Roosevelt is depicted as the epitome of the United States and American values. He is glorified as an embodiment of American freedom, equality, and democracy; in addition, he is cast as Abraham Lincoln's successor. In contrast, Charles Lindbergh is deglorified. While his achievements as an aviator are acknowledged at the beginning of the novel, they quickly become nullified by his anti-Semitism. As a result, Lindbergh becomes a symbol of authoritarianism and fascism, and a negation of America's values.

Just like Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* in which the United States loses World War II because of Roosevelt's death, Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* underlines the role of great men in history. By showing how easily America could have become a fascist state had Roosevelt not been elected president in 1940, Roth emphasizes the role of FDR in upholding American values in the face of fascism. The novel implies that without Roosevelt, the United States would have never joined World War II and, therefore, there would be no myth of the "good war" on the basis of which a large part of modern American identity has been founded. Therefore, in *PAA*, Roosevelt functions as an allegorical figure that holds together the nation and its congratulatory self-perception in cultural memory (Polak 172).

The second site of memory that will be analyzed in this chapter is the Holocaust. Even though it is never explicitly mentioned in the novel, its shadow looms over the Roths. The programs introduced by the Lindbergh administration, Lindbergh's anti-Semitic comments, the increasing anti-Semitic incidents beg the question of whether the Holocaust could have happened in the United States. As Austin Graham (2007) observes, Roth never really answers it, choosing instead to hint at the possibility, "creating an often foreboding yet never entirely reliable sense that genocide or some other atrocity is waiting in the wings for his Jewish characters" (119). In *The Plot Against America,* the question of whether the Holocaust could have happened in the United States is explored on the level of public administration (whether it would be possible to introduce laws that would allow the extermination of the Jewish minority), social attitudes (how ordinary Americans would react to anti-Semitism), and personal consequences (how anti-Semitism would affect the characters).

One of alternate history's distinguishing traits is its capacity to turn familiar history into something new and unpredictable. When alternate history introduces the divergence and suddenly history takes a new route, the reader can never be sure what will happen and thus experiences history as an ongoing process with an unpredictable ending. *The Plot Against America* works precisely that way. The divergence from the actual history makes it difficult for the reader to predict how Lindbergh's presidency will affect America, and Roth inserts so many instances of anti-Semitism into the narrative that the reader might start suspecting that the Holocaust is actually about to happen in the United Staes.

At the beginning of the novel, the Roths are alarmed by Lindbergh's isolationist policy, and their indignation grows as Lindbergh's administration commences cooperation with the Third Reich and introduces new programs that are supposed to "Americanize" Jews. Firstly, Lindbergh signs a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany to keep "America out of all foreign wars" (Roth, *Plot* 84), which fuels Herman Roth's fear of Lindbergh replicating

Nazi Germany's policy towards Jews. Then, the Office of American Absorption (OAA) is established with its Just Folks program, whose aim is to introduce "city youth to the traditional ways of heartland life" (Roth, *Plot* 84). As Graham points out, with its rural summer camps, the Just Folks program immediately brings to mind the concentration camps set up in Eastern Europe by Nazi Germany (133–34). These associations are further reinforced by Philip's parents who try to dissuade Sandy from joining the program by pointing out that after the whole day of working on the farm he will not be able to stand on his feet and warn him that "there's barbed wire on farms. There are machines with sharp blades" (Roth, *Plot* 86). The imagery of barbed wire and "machines with sharp blades" refers to Nazis' industrialized killing (Graham 134). In addition, Just Folks is also reminiscent of the Nazi *Kraft durch Freude* (*Strength Through Joy*) program that organized leisure activities such as sporting events, holidays, and cruises for German workers. Consequently, Just Folks becomes a menace, all the more threatening because it is aimed at children. Herman and Bess believe that the whole program was created to separate Jewish children from their parents and turn families against each other in order to disintegrate Jewish communities.

After the Just Folk program becomes a success, the Lindbergh administration introduces another law, this time disguised as a new version of the Homestead Act of 1862. It is called Homestead 42 and, according to Lindbergh's propaganda, offers "relocation opportunities … steeped in our country's oldest traditions where parents and children can enrich their Americaness over the generations" (Roth, *Plot* 204). When Homestead 42 is adopted, numerous families from Jewish neighborhoods are forcibly relocated to the Western and Southern states, stripped of the security provided by Jewish communities, at the mercy of their white neighbors. In his radio broadcast, Walter Winchell scorns: "Whether the Homestead 42 Jews end up in concentration camps à la Hitler's Buchenwald has yet to be decided by Lindbergh's two top swastinkers … Did I say 'whether'? Pardon my German. I

meant when" (Roth, *Plot* 228). Winchell explicitly connects the act and concentration camps, thus interpreting the program as a prelude to the Holocaust. What Winchell does not mention is, however, the fact that Homestead 42, with its forcible removal of Jews from their homes, is reminiscent of the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the Trail of Tears, which has often been compared to the Holocaust. Therefore, Homestead 42 establishes a similarity of experience between Jews and Native Americans and points to America's historical crimes in a manner similar to Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau*.

The Office of American Absorption, Homestead 42, and Just Folks program are, as Graham writes, "instruments of a kind of compromise Holocaust" (142). Rabbi Bengelsdorf explains in his memoir of the Lindbergh administration that they were established because the Constitution of the United States and American democratic tradition prevented "a final solution to the Jewish problem to be executed in America as rapidly or efficiently as on a continent where there was a thousand-year history of anti-Semitism … and where Nazi rule was absolute" (Roth, *Plot* 324). This quote is disturbingly similar to Robert Childan's musings in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* regarding Nazis being more effective than the United States at "disposing" of ethnic minorities; moreover, it seems to confirm the Roths' belief that the Lindbergh administration was using Homestead 42 and Just Folks to persecute Jews, not integrate them into the American society.

The wave of anti-Semitic incidents culminating in the assassination of Walter Winchell and a wave of racial riots serve as another indication that the Holocaust could have happened in the United States. As the Roths' trip to Washington, D.C., demonstrates, Lindbergh's administration allowed anti-Semitism to emerge and flourish. Winchell's presidential campaign provokes numerous attacks on synagogues and Jewish property in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and St. Louis (Roth, *Plot* 266). For Philip's parents, this atmosphere of fear brings back memories of the Kishinev pogrom of 1903 or the lynching of

Leo Frank, thus waking the generational memory of the oppression of Jews. The verbal and physical violence against Jews which gets more pronounced as the story progresses, stresses the fascist attitudes that were allowed to emerge thanks to Lindbergh's anti-Semitic attitudes. Therefore, *The Plot Against America* shows that American society would allow the Holocaust to happen.

The effect of the Lindbergh administration on the lives of individual Jews is represented not only through the members of the Roth family but also through the character of Seldon Wishnow, interpreted by some literary critics as a symbol of the Holocaust. Seldon, who lives in the same house as Philip, is an intelligent child who loses his terminally ill father early in the novel. In the aftermath of Homestead 42, he and his mother are relocated to Danville, Kentucky, where Mrs. Wishnow is murdered by the members of the Ku Klux Klan. Seldon is rescued and taken in by Philip's parents before his maternal aunt adopts him. In "The Story Behind *The Plot Against America*", Philip Roth suggested that Seldon "suffers something like the European Jewish experience" (Roth, "The Story Behind"). Unlike Philip, who survives to tell the story, Seldon is destroyed by Lindbergh's presidency. According to Siegel, "the plot concerning Seldon connects the American experience (on a national and individual level) to European history" (149), that is, to the Holocaust.

The tragic story of Seldon, who loses both parents and is removed from his hometown to Danville, Kentucky, the very place Herman and Bess warned Sandy against, may indeed evoke the fate of European Jews and the Holocaust. After moving to Kentucky, Seldon is so profoundly traumatized that he, who once has been "the smartest kid in our class and the schoolwide whiz at arithmetic" (Roth, *Plot* 141–42), sounds "as though he were the one who was kicked in the head … stunned. Stunted" (Roth, *Plot* 279). When Seldon is taken in by the Roths after his mother's death, Philip compares him to a stump and himself to a prosthesis: "The boy himself was the stump … I was the prosthesis" (Roth, *Plot* 362); here, Seldon is but

a shadow of his former self and reflects, as Maurer (2011) suggested, "the Jewish condition of victimhood" (61). Hence, Seldon is permanently crippled by the anti-Semitic programs introduced by the Lindbergh administration. Since the initiatives such as the Office of American Absorption, and Homestead 42 are, to borrow Graham's phrase, "instruments of a kind of compromise Holocaust," Seldon can be understood as a representative of European Holocaust survivors. In contrast to Seldon, Philip, whose father quit his job to avoid being relocated to Kentucky, represents American Jews who did not experience fascism and the Holocaust. Philip's obsession with Seldon and his fantasies about becoming him[55] reflect the guilt and fear that plague American Jews (Siegel 149) and reveal that the Holocaust is ineradicable from Jewish American history (Siegel 149; Simonetti 25; Gross 421).

To conclude, even though *The Plot Against America* never explicitly mentions the Holocaust, there is a threat of genocide looming over the Roths. As new governmental programs are introduced, the violence against the Jews rises, and Detroit's *Kristallnacht* happens, an American Holocaust gets increasingly feasible. According to Siegel, the fact that it did not happen and history quickly came back on track is not necessarily uplifting; instead, it raises concerns that "the nation can take a frightening turn in an instant and with superficial explanation dismiss it almost as quickly" (145), without really addressing what has happened and why. The anti-Semitism does not disappear along with Lindbergh but is reined in by Roosevelt and goes back into hiding. Still, it can emerge at any time. Hence, *The Plot Against*

[55] Philip has ambivalent feelings for Seldon. On the one hand, he cannot stand Seldon's attempts at befriending him; on the other hand, he exhibits a strange fascination with Seldon and repeatedly fantasizes about running away from home, adopting the name "Seldon Wishnow" and becoming an orphan. It is not a coincidence that Seldon's last name "Wishnow" refers to an idea of wish fullfillment; it is connected to Philip's desire to reject his Jewish identity and run away to a Catholic orphanage because he is scared of the dissolution of his family. Therefore, Seldon serves as Philip's alter ego, a doppelganger who lives out every fear Philip suffers from.

America argues that it does not really matter that the Holocaust did not happen in the United States; the point is that it could have happened and, possibly, still can.

The above analysis of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Charles Lindbergh, and the Holocaust as sites of memory provides some clues as to the politics of memory *The Plot Against America* engages in. Therefore, in the examination of the politics of memory provided below, I refer to these sites of memory to draw conclusions regarding the political purport of the novel.

According to Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, *The Plot Against America* has an "upbeat conclusion" (*World Hitler Never Made* 155); moreover, the novel "by depicting the Nazis as fearsome enemies who come dangerously close to realizing their demonic goals in the United States … expresses an enduring sense of their evil" (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 155). Rosenfeld's reading seems to have been guided by his belief that texts concerned with World War II should stress the exceptionality of the Third Reich; however, Roth's novel is not really concerned with Nazi Germany but with the United States. It highlights American anti-Semitism showcasing "home-grown fascism, rather than the philosophy of a hostile invading enemy, and the capacity for the United States to succumb to the same fate as Germany, Italy, Hungary, Spain and other nations" (Morgan 103). Another mistake that Rosenfeld makes in his interpretation is his uncritical acceptance of Rabbi Bengelsdorf's memoir, which claims that Nazi Germany developed a plot against America and blackmailed Charles Lindbergh. Yet the rabbi's version of events is nothing more than one of many conspiracy theories disseminated after Lindbergh's disappearance. As Graham persuasively argues, "the veracity of the rabbi's claims is never settled and the ultimate truth of Lindbergh's aims never revealed … Bengelsdorf's depiction of an American government held hostage by Hitler serves to ease both his and the nation's collective guilt" (143). Hence, Rabbi Bengelsdorf's explanation should be treated as nothing more than a theory. Finally, as has been discussed above, the fact that in the end history comes back on track, and the United

States joins World War II is not necessarily optimistic because it implies that the American nation can easily take a turn for the worse, and then promptly repress the crimes committed against its Jewish citizens. All in all, Roth's *The Plot Against America* does not direct its critique towards Nazi Germany to express an "enduring sense" of Nazi evil as Rosenfeld suggests; instead, it exposes fascist undercurrents in American society to disrupt the reader's ideas about America's past and undermine the cultural memory of the greatest generation and of World War II as a time of national valor.

Philip Roth famously stated that his goal in writing *The Plot Against America* was to "illuminate the past through the past" (Roth, "The Story Behind"). His insistence on reading the novel against the actual history, alongside the painstaking realism of *The Plot Against America,* suggests that the novel is supposed not to simply imagine what could have happened had America chosen an isolationist anti-Semite for a president in the 1940 election but to assert that America was a fascist, anti-Semitic state, and that this fact has been largely ignored in the mainstream narrative of America's involvement in World War II (Siegel 134–35, 150; Gross 418–19; Pei-chen 74). Even though *The Plot Against America* is an alternate history, Roth based his depiction of the United States of the 1940s on historical facts. As well as leaning on his childhood memories[56], he made references to famous anti-Semites of that

[56] As described at the beginning of this chapter, Roth reminds the reader about the discrimination that denied Jews significant promotions in companies, as well as "the unadvertised quotas to keep Jewish admissions to a minimum in colleges and professional schools" (Roth, *Plot* 11), and "rigid restrictions against Jewish membership in thousands of social organizations and communal institutions" (Roth, *Plot* 11). Roth narrates his father's struggle for promotion in Metropolitan Life in several of his works. After he described it in his memoir *Patrimony: A True Story* (1991) for the first time, he received a letter from John Creedon, the CEO of Metropolitan Life, denying the existence of quotas at the Metropolitan Life and accusing Roth of paranoia. According to Siegel (2012), Creedon's denial resembles denials of the Holocaust. The issue might have inspired the argument between Herman Roth and Rabbi Bengelsdorf in *The Plot Against America* where the rabbi insults

time, such as Charles Lindbergh, Henry Ford, Burton K. Wheeler or Father Coughlin, mentioned actual anti-Semitic organizations such as the German-American Bund, the isolationist America First Committee, the Ku Klux Klan, and the Christian Front. In fact, historical studies suggest that anti-Semitism was a real factor in America around the time of World War II and that "anti-Jewish prejudice was a stronger social factor in the United States in 1945 than it had been in Germany before Hitler's rise to power" (Gross 419). Roth uses *The Plot Against America* to expose the pervasive, yet repressed, anti-Semitism of the 1940s; anti-Semitism which was so omnipresent that it is a wonder that the Holocaust did not happen in the United States, even though it "should have happened" (Roth, "The Story Behind"). Therefore, *The Plot Against America* draws the reader's attention to historical anti-Semitism which has been omitted from America's cultural memory of World War II. This reading is supported by the eventual conflation of the alternate timeline and our timeline. The merging of the two timelines suggests that Linbergh's fascist and isolationist America does not disappear but becomes a part of our timeline (Siegel 148), thus turning into a counter-memory that proves that the self-congratulatory narrative of America's involvement in World War II is a myth.

The novel's concern with anti-Semitism has provoked some exasperated responses condemning Philip Roth for entertaining the thought of a fictional American Holocaust when there are American minorities who really experienced genocide and institutionalized racism. In *Plots Against America: Neoliberalism and Antiracism*, Walter Benn Michaels complains that the reader of *The Plot Against America* derives pleasure from the fact that "it" (fascism and discrimination) did not happen in the United States while:

Herman by scorning Herman's belief that the Just Folks program is designed to break up Jewish communities and claiming that it is an example of Jewish paranoia (Siegel 139–40).

> of course, it did happen here, only not to the Jews. It has surely occurred to every reader … the scene in which the Roths are denied rooms at the hotel … were a standard feature of American life at least from 1896 (when Plessy legalized segregation) until the early 1960s. But, of course, it happened to black people, almost never to Jews. …..you didn't then (and you don't now) need quotas to keep down the numbers of black people …. The effects of several centuries of slavery and a half century of apartheid have made artificial limits entirely supererogatory … Why should we be outraged by what didn't happen rather than outraged by what did? (Michaels 288–89)

For Michaels, the evocation of the memory of anti-Semitism in *The Plot Against America* equals forgetting real crimes commited by the United States, such as slavery or the genocide of Native Americans. In contrast, Michael Rothberg argues that remembering one thing does not equal forgetting the other (Rothberg, "Against Zero-Sum Logic" 307). While there is no doubt that Rothbergh has a point here, it needs to be pointed out that the anti-Semitism depicted in *The Plot Against America* can be interpreted as a symbol of racism at large. There are several points in the novel in which Roth makes a connection between the discrimination his Jewish characters face and the discrimination against other minorities. For instance, when Sandy draws a poster to commemorate Arbor Day, Philip agrees to model for Sandy who draws a picture of an African-American child (Roth, *Plot* 22), or when Philip runs away from home, one of his teachers comments that he must have been inspired to do it by the Underground Railroad (Roth, *Plot* 232). These scenes suggest an affinity between Jews and African-Americans. Similarly, Homestead 42 is reminiscent of the Trail of Tears and conflates the plight of Jews with that of the Native Americans. Therefore, even though *The Plot Against America* focuses on Jews, the novel does not eradicate the historical discrimination of non-Jewish minorities, as Michaels claims. On the contrary, as Ginevra

Geraci (2011) observes, "Nazi America turns into an easily interpretable metaphor for all the other forms of mass destruction that weigh on the United States' conscience" (Geraci 201). Thus, the lot of American Jews in *The Plot Against America* is a metonymy of racial injustice.

By exposing the racism of American society, *The Plot Against America* undermines the narrative of America's heroic involvement in World War II. As the moral of Roth's novel is that anti-Semitism and isolationism were a real social factor in America in the 1940s, then it implies that the people who went to fight when the United States joined World War II were not as "great" as the cultural memory of World War II indicates. In fact, Sara Polak is right when she writes that *The Plot Against America* implies that the greatest generation did not exist and that Franklin D. Roosevelt was the only barrier between the United States and Nazism and the only person who could uphold America's congratulatory self-perception in cultural memory (Polak 175). By reminding the reader about isolationist and anti-Semitic undercurrents that existed in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s, Roth comments on the celebratory quality the past assumes as it becomes "history" (Polak 174). American society has conveniently forgotten its history of anti-Semitism and isolationism to embrace the discourse of "good war" and the greatest generation. However, *The Plot Against America* implies that to fully understand the past, we need to reject the clichéd images retained by cultural memory and acknowledge not only that what happened but also the things that could have happened.

Apart from this critique of American myths revolving around World War II, *The Plot Against America* has often been interpreted as roman à clef which was meant to comment on the threats America faced in the wake of terrorist attacks of 9/11. Gavriel Rosenfeld claims that "In portraying the United States becoming a fascist-like state under the administration of an ill-qualified, naïve, and incompetent president, Roth offers not-so-thinly veiled critique of

the United States under the administration of President George W. Bush" (*World Hitler Never Made* 156). This sentiment was shared by numerous other scholars and literary critics (Safer 92; Halio; Kakutani; Berman; Morrison; Pei-chen 11-12,51, 64–66; Morley; Jacobi; Gross; Morgan 109–10). The prevalent theme of fear announced in the novel's opening sentence in which the narrator confides, "Fear presides over these memories, a perpetual fear" (Roth, *Plot* 1) seems to reference the climate of fear and uncertainty after 9/11. Stevan G. Kellman notes that "the reader opening the novel in September 2004 might well have thought that its narrator, 'Philip Roth', was evoking the traumatized post-9/11 world rather than the period 1940-1942" (113).

Even though Roth started writing his novel before the terrorist attacks, he completed it in their aftermath when, as Kellman wrote, "terrorist alerts were being issued by the newly created Department of Homeland security … unnamed suspects were being rounded up … American Arabs and Muslims were stigmatized and harassed … Republican administration … was attempting to undo much of the domestic legacy of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal" (114). In the aftermath of 9/11, media and politicians commonly referred to the sites of memory of World War II to comment on and make sense of what was happening in the United States. The attack on Pearl Harbor has become one of the enduring analogies to 9/11. CBS news anchorman Dan Rather called the attacks "the Pearl Harbor of Terrorism", George W. Bush dubbed 9/11 "the Pearl Harbor of the twenty-first century" and coined the phrase "axis of evil" to refer to countries that sponsored terrorism, while the *New York Times* featured thirteen articles referring to Pearl Harbor (Pei-chen 12; Noon 352). Osama Bin Laden was often compared to Adolf Hitler, while George W. Bush frequently compared the war on terror to World War II and used the rhetoric of "the good war" to pursue his political aims (Noon 345–47, 353–57). Finally, literature and culture of the time repeatedly invoked the Holocaust to reflect on 9/11; for instance, Frédéric Beigbeder's *Windows on the World*

compared the smoke-filled restaurant in one of the towers to a gas chamber in a concentration camp (Gross 409–13). It is, therefore, not surprising that those readers of *The Plot Against America* who lived through the events of 9/11 and had heard politicians, journalists, and artists comparing the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the subsequent war on terror to World War II, perceived Roth's novel as a roman à clef and a veiled critique of the Bush administration.

The Plot Against America became a bestseller because of its political implications (Roth Pierpont 187), and there is a consensus that it should be interpreted in the context of American politics. For Lewis, Roth's novel serves as a 9/11 replacement narrative (247), a way to discuss 9/11 without actually mentioning it. In turn, Michiko Kakutani observes that *The Plot Against America* could be read "in the current Bush era, as either a warning about the dangers of isolationism or a warning about the dangers of the Patriot Act and the threat to civil liberties" (Kakutani). Jay L. Halio claims that the novel warns against the destruction of the Constitution of the United States and the "confusion over moral values" that leads the nation to choose unsuitable people, such as Charles Lindbergh or George W. Bush, for the highest office in the country (Halio). Many critics have pointed out that Lindbergh's behavior in Roth's novel mirrors George W. Bush's. For Paul Berman, "you would have to be pretty dimwitted" to read about Charles Lindbergh in his flying attire and not to think of George W. Bush and his "Mission Accomplished" speech delivered on May 1, 2003, from the deck of the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (Berman). Gabriel Brownstein also believes that "references to George W. Bush's America are impossible to miss", while Michael Rothberg adds in a slightly scornful tone that "President Charles Lindbergh's know-nothing populism and folksy Americanism have reminded more than a few readers of a certain American president closer to home" ("Against Zero-Sum Logic" 306). To further prove the similarity between the present and the past as depicted in Roth's novel, Lewis notes that the novel

frequently uses the word "homeland" which became a common term in the aftermath of the attacks; most Americans, Lewis observes, had never encountered the reference to America as "homeland" until after 9/11 (253).

However, Philip Roth tried to discourage readers from seeing *The Plot Against America* against the politics of the Bush administration. In "The Story Behind *The Plot Against America*", he asserted that his goal was to imagine how the years 1940-1942 might have looked like if Lindbergh had been elected president and illuminate "the past through past", not to explain "the present through the past" (Roth, "The Story Behind"). However, in the same essay, he also harshly criticizes George W. Bush and his politics:

> And now Aristophanes, who surely must be God, has given us George W. Bush, a man unfit to run a hardware store let alone a nation like this one, and who has merely reaffirmed for me the maxim that informed the writing of all these books and that makes our lives as Americans as precarious as anyone else's: all the assurances are provisional, even here in a 200-year-old democracy. (Roth, "The Story Behind")

As Marek Paryż (2011) observes, Roth does here exactly what he discourages others from doing −"draws implicit analogies where analogies should not be made" (Paryż 135). It seems, therefore, that Roth sends conflicting signals, which may imply that the analogies between the diegetic world of *The Plot Against America* and the post-9/11 America are not coincidental. Of course, the analogies with the Bush administration are not perfect. Kellman (2008) points out that George W. Bush, unlike Lindbergh, was not an anti-Semite because his foreign policy served Israeli interests; moreover, he pursued an aggressive foreign policy, often perceived as imperialistic, which did not resemble Lindbergh's isolationism (119).

Despite these reservations, *The Plot Against America* was originally read as an allusion and critique of the Bush administration, which, I believe, does not diminish its

literary worth. The fact that it has been so widely and consequently read in a presentist manner testifies to its significance and casts it as a novel that reflects the spirit of the time and the collective mind of American society. What is more, the novel's use of sites of memory connected to World War II attests to the salience and vitality of the memory of World War II for American society.

Roth's novel is remarkable in its capacity for reflecting the American psyche and its adaptability to contemporary matters, and nowhere is it more evident than in its television adaptation and the new wave of interpretations it sparked. Released on March 16, 2020, the television miniseries received critical acclaim and once more provided a bridge between the time of World War II and contemporary America. This time, however, it was read in the context of the Trump administration.

Even before the television miniseries was aired, some journalists had turned to *The Plot Against America* to explain Donald Trump's unprecedented entry into American politics. On January 4, 2017, Scott Galupo opened his article by stating that "our greatest living novelist foresaw, in startling granular detail, how a demagogic celebrity like Trump *could* come to power" (Galupo) to provide an elaborate analysis of Lindbergh's rise to power and compare it to Donald Trump's campaign. In a similar fashion, *The Huffington Post* columnist Robert Kuttner proclaimed Roth's novel "all too prescient" declaring that with Donald Trump, "the plot against America is real" (Kuttner), and Ed Powers commented that "Now the novel feels horrifically prophetic" (Power). These sentiments were shared by scholars such as Brittany Hirth (2018), who observes that "Roth's anticipation of contemporary political life in his art is downright uncanny" (89). Therefore, with Donald Trump's growing power, *The Plot Against America* became a revelatory novel and warning regarding the possible disintegration of American democracy (Connolly, "Posthumous Roth" 7; Connolly, "Ambiguously Menacing Predicament" 65).

A new wave of presentist interpretations appeared after the release of the television miniseries on March 16, 2020. For the most part, the miniseries remain fairly faithful to the novel, despite slight differences. Upon Philip Roth's request, the family's name was changed from Roth to Levin because he wanted to distance it from his family (Bilmes). The show puts more emphasis on the adults' experience than the book does, and some scenes briefly described in the novel, such as Alvin's service in the Canadian army or Herman and Sandy's heroic trip to Kentucky to rescue Seldon (arguably the most bloodcurdling scene in the whole show), are shown in detail. Furthermore, the last episode ends with the Roths sitting by the radio, waiting for the results of the emergency election, but the audience never learns whether FDR is reelected.

It is no secret that the television adaptation of *The Plot Against America* was made with political agenda in mind. The show was created and written by David Simon, a screenwriter best known for *The Wire* (2002-2008), who openly admitted to his political agenda. He was first approached about filming Roth's *The Plot Against America* in 2013, but with the reelection of Barack Obama, he did not feel that this was the right moment to do it. The situation changed in 2017 when Donald Trump was elected: "I'm sitting at lunch with the HBO guys and we're all talking about what sort of television you can make in the age of Trump. And I had this book in my head. I said, 'Whoever's got the rights to *Plot Against America*, you should buy them up'" (Bilmes). He decided that in the face of Donald Trump's election, it was finally time to bring *The Plot Against America* to the screen. In addition, Simon made sure that the miniseries would be released at the beginning of 2020 because he wanted to air it early in the election cycle to make a lasting impression on the audience before "one of the most fundamental dates of our history" (Bilmes), that is the election of 2020. Hence, the whole adaptation was created not only with Donald Trump in mind but also with a

view to provide a cautionary story for the American audience in the face of the upcoming presidential election of 2020.

The show has received critical acclaim, and its political message was not lost on the critics. Just like in 2004 when Roth's Charles Lindbergh was compared to George W. Bush, in 2020 most critics compared Lindbergh to Donald Trump, praising the show for creating a convincing climate of fear and uncertainty reminiscent of the 2016 election. David Klion (2020) claimed that the climate of fear depicted in the miniseries reminded him about his own dread the morning after Donald Trump's election to conclude that "*The Plot Against America* is a story that feels especially urgent in the context of the Trump administration"(Klion). In *The New York* Times, James Poniewoznik (2020) called the miniseries a "final, dire warning for election season" (Poniewozik), while Charles Bramesco (2020), a film and television critic writing for *The Guardian,* observes that "an alternate vision of the US shares uncomfortable similarities with today" (Bramesco). Some reviewers decided to make more detailed comparisons between Roth's story and American politics in 2020; they pointed out the celebrity President, isolationism, 'America first' dogma, and tricky international relations (Freer; Dry; Lowry). According to Alan Sepinwall (2020) from *Rolling Stone*

> Lindbergh's political rise plays out much like Trump's. First, he's satirized in ways his critics believe will sink him but that he proves immune to. Herman dismisses him as "an airplane pilot with opinions," in the same way Trump's reality-show fame was initially treated as a disqualifier. Then, Lindbergh is viewed as a useful idiot by his party. "This is how it starts: everyone thinking they can work with the guy," laments Herman. "Like Hitler: Everyone believes he doesn't mean what he says." (Sepinwall)

Many reviewers recalled Roth's novel to point to its prophetic character; with Donald Trump, they claimed, the fictional history became a reality (Solly; Fienberg).

The above reviews demonstrate that although *The Plot Against America* is a novel about a history that never happened, it is highly universal. It is as relevant in 2023 as it was in 2004, and, as David Klion points out, it will probably "remain relevant under presidents to come" (Klion). The fact that the Trump administration reminded so many critics of *The Plot Against America* testifies to Roth's insight into the American psyche, as well as to the alternate history genre's adaptability to changing social and political conditions. Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* is such a relevant and universal work because it is an alternate history; and, like other alternate histories, it draws and comments on critical, formative events from the nation's history. In this case, Roth alters the history of America's involvement in World War II by removing an iconic figure of Franklin D. Roosevelt from the picture and replacing him with Charles Lindbergh, who becomes a stand-in for the Führer of the Third Reich, an American version of Adolf Hitler. In the novel, Franklin D. Roosevelt is depicted as the epitome of the United States and an embodiment of American values of freedom, equality, and democracy. In contrast, Charles Lindbergh is deglorified; while at the beginning of the novel his achievements as an aviator are acknowledged, they are nullified by his anti-Semitism. As a result, Lindbergh becomes a symbol of authoritarianism and fascism, and a negation of America's values. By showing how easily America could have become a fascist state had Roosevelt not been elected president in 1940, Roth emphasizes the role of Roosevelt in upholding American values in the face of fascism.

Roth's novel also speculates on the possibility of American Holocaust and depicts it as highly feasible. Even though the Holocaust does not happen, it does not mean American anti-Semitism disappears; FDR reins it in, but it still exists. Therefore, the novel implies that

it does not really matter that the Holocaust did not happen in America; the point is that it could have happened and, possibly, still can.

In *The Plot Against America*, the convention of alternate history becomes a highly effective instrument for exposing the falsehoods of the dominant modes of cultural memory and acknowledging American anti-Semitism, which has been removed from American cultural memory. *The Plot Against America* is, therefore, not only a fascinating, minutely realistic alternate history but also an intervention into American self-congratulatory cultural memory of World War II.

5. BRENDAN DUBOIS *AMERIKAN EAGLE* (2011)

Amerikan Eagle[57] was written by Brendan DuBois, the New York Times bestselling author of thrillers and alternate histories, such as *Resurrection Day* (1999) and *Six Days* (2001). *Amerikan Eagle*, published in 2011, is his third alternate history novel which, unlike the previous ones that explore the idea of a nuclear war, speculates about the alliance between the United States and Nazi Germany during World War II.

Amerikan Eagle combines alternate history with a murder mystery in a manner reminiscent of Robert Harris's *Fatherland* and Len Deighton's *SS-GB*, famous alternate history novels where the investigation into a murder leads the protagonist to discover the real nature of the alternate timeline. The novel opens on Wednesday, February 15, 1933. The newly elected president of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, attends a rally at Bayfront Park in Miami and ruminates about the reforms he would have to push through as a president when suddenly he hears a noise and feels pain in his chest. His last thought is, "Oh, there was so much to do" (DuBois 4). Thus Giuseppe Zangara's assassination is successful and sets off a chain of events leading to Senator Huey Long's victory in the presidential election. In our timeline, Huey Long, also known by his nickname "Kingfish", was assassinated in 1935 by Carl Austin Weiss, while in *Amerikan Eagle*, he survives and wins the 1936 presidential election. Therefore, the novel reverses the roles of the two politicians, which is reflected in alt-Roosevelt's final thought that alludes to Long's last words, "I have so much to do" (Glass).

The first chapter of the novel is set ten years after the assassination of FDR, in 1943, in Portsmouth. The protagonist, probationary inspector Sam Miller working for the police department of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, attends a murder scene where he inspects a body

[57] The word "Amerikan" is deliberately used in German to foreground the novel's premise of the alliance between the United States and Nazi Germany.

of a half-starved man found by the railroad tracks. Upon closer inspection, Sam discovers a row of numbers tattooed along his wrist. He is intrigued by this unusual detail, and launches an investigation that will turn his life upside down.

The political situation of the United States in 1943 is bleak. In 1941, France is ruled by Nazi Germany while Great Britain signed an armistice agreement allowing German troops to be stationed in Britain and her overseas possessions. The country is led by Oswald Mosley[58], while Winston Churchill tries to gather support for the British government in exile. The Soviet Union is the only European country still resisting the Third Reich. Meanwhile, Huey Long's administration turned the United States into an isolationist and fascist country which signed trade agreements with Nazi Germany. What is more, the Republican Party and Democratic Party no longer exist; under Huey Long, there is only one Party, and newsprint becomes a rationed government resource. Since Roosevelt died in 1933, the New Deal was never introduced, and the Great Depression dragged out. Even though the official propaganda claims that most Americans are employed, in reality the unemployment rate reaches forty percent. As a result, many Americans are evicted from their homes and have to live on the streets. To make matters worse, dissidents such as communists, proponents of the Republican party, African-Americans, union organizers, immigrants, Jews, and other people whom Huey Long perceives as a threat to the government are subjected to detention, arrested, and incarcerated in labor camps. New laws are being introduced, among them the Patriot Enhancement Act, which requires all Americans receiving federal assistance to sign a loyalty oath to the government, a violation of which will result in a prison term. In addition, Americans are required to join the local branches of the Party and attend their meetings, where they are forced to join the National Guard and asked to inform on friends and neighbors who exhibit "subversive activities or words" (DuBois 69), such as insulting the

[58] In our timeline, Oswald Mosley was a leader of the British Union of Fascists.

President and his people. Even though the protagonist is appalled by Huey Long's policies, he knows that if he wants to keep his job and support his family, he has to fall in line. The need to observe the rules becomes even more critical when he discovers that his wife, Sarah, not only uses their house as a station for the Underground Railroad, which helps people persecuted by the Long administration to escape to Canada but is also a devoted member of the resistance movement led by her father who, on the surface, is a dedicated member of the Party.

During the murder investigation, Sam Miller realizes that the government hides many secrets. When it turns out that the unidentified man found by the railroad track was a German citizen, the FBI and Gestapo take over the investigation; however, Sam is so intrigued by the murdered man's mysterious tattoo that he continues the inquiry in secret. He decides to visit his friend and former coworker, Sean Donovan, who was sentenced to a year in a labor camp, officially for an unauthorized release of classified information, in reality for overhearing a piece of information about Sam's brother, Tony, who was also sent to a labor camp. During the meeting, Sam learns about secret camps that are not officially part of the system. As Sean says, "Word is, there are special trains that take prisoners to these camps. … The prisoners in those special trains… they're tattooed. Numbers on their wrists. … like … cattle" (DuBois 205–06). Shocked by the information, Sam forces the Hampshire railroad manager to divulge the destination of the mysterious trains, masquerades as an FBI agent, and drives upstate Vermont to find one of the camps. When he arrives, he convinces the commandant, Royal LaBayeux, that he came there to investigate the death of one of the inmates. LaBayeux informs him that the dead man's name was Petr Wowenstein, "from Munich, transferred to a place over there called Dachau, then sent here nearly two years ago, out to New Mexico" (DuBois 233). Unfortunately for Sam, the commandant realizes he is not an FBI agent and has him arrested, beaten, and thrown into one of the barracks. As it turns out, the camp is

filled chiefly with European Jews from Germany, Poland, and Holland, who all volunteered to come there because they thought that American concentration camps would be better than European ones.

Sam's imprisonment comes to a quick end as his boss, Marshal Harold Hanson, arrives to free him. From Hanson, Sam learns that the camps were set as a part of an arrangement with the Third Reich and that the United States spends the money earned by means of slave labor on military equipment meant to prepare the country for the inevitable war with Nazi Germany. Hanson also argues that the agreement helps to save Jews who are considerably safer in American camps than in German ones because nobody kills them. Sam feels torn; on the one hand, he agrees with his boss, but on the other, he knows that the things that happen in the camps are morally wrong. However, as soon as he gets back to New Hampshire, he has to face other problems, for he learns that his brother Tony not only escaped the labor camp but is also involved in a conspiracy to assassinate Adolf Hitler, who is supposed to visit the city to meet with Huey Long. When the FBI learns about Tony's plan, they incarcerate Sam's wife and son to coerce Sam to help them catch Tony.

On the day of Adolf Hitler's visit, Sam finds his brother and tries to stop him from shooting the Führer of the Third Reich; just when he disarms Tony, FBI agents appear and kill him. In a shocking twist, Special Agent LaCouture explains that even though Tony believed that he was supposed to kill the Führer, the assassination attempt was engineered by the FBI to make Adolf Hitler believe that Americans saved his life and thus make him more willing to sign treaty concessions. Sam is deeply shocked by the plot; nevertheless, the next day, he thwarts an assassination attempt on Huey Long's life, and as a reward, the President grants his wife and son an official pardon. This is, however, not the end of the story. Sam is approached by the country medical examiner, who confesses that he found a microfilm in Petr Wowenstein's clothes. Sam takes the microfilm to find out that it contains top-secret

plans for building an atomic bomb and finally puts the puzzle pieces together. It turns out that Petr Wowenstein escaped from a research facility in New Mexico and tried to make his way to Montreal in order to smuggle the plans for building an atomic bomb to the Soviet Union, the only European country still resisting Nazi Germany. He never managed that because he was followed and killed by Harold Hanson, who was determined to acquire the plans hoping the bomb would become an equalizer in the inevitable war between the United States and the Third Reich.

Now that Sam possesses the plans, he finally has the upper hand. He meets Hanson in secret and blackmails him into improving the conditions of the concentration camp inmates. In addition, he demands that Hanson helps him get to the highest ranks of the Party because, he explains, "a couple of guys these past few days … said to me that sometimes one man can make a difference. I plan to be that man" (DuBois 371). The novel ends with Sam thinking, just like Roosevelt thought at the beginning of the story, that there is much to be done.

In some respects, *Amerikan Eagle* is similar to the other alternate history novels analyzed so far, for like in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, the point of divergence hinges on the removal of Franklin D. Roosevelt from history. As in Dick's and Roth's novels, the death of FDR in DuBois' alternate history has a detrimental effect on the whole country; in that respect, *Amerikan Eagle* is more similar to *The Plot Against America* because both stories depict an isolationist president who admires the Third Reich and forges an alliance between the United States and Nazi Germany, thus contributing to the emergence of anti-Semitic sentiments in America. While it may suggest that Philip Roth might have influenced DuBois, this similarity may be purely coincidental, for little is known about DuBois' motivation for writing *Amerikan Eagle*. It can be assumed that apart from his general interest in the question of how World War II would have looked like had Franklin D. Roosevelt been assassinated by Giuseppe Zangara

(as he suggests in the afterword titled O*n the Use of Pen Names*, DuBois 376), DuBois was inspired by the 2008 financial crisis and ensuing Great Recession that has often been compared to the Great Depression. One of the morals of *Amerikan Eagle* is that when people are poor, they become susceptible to demagoguery; this rings true both in the context of the Great Depression and the 2008 financial crisis.

Brendan DuBois' novel explores and subverts the cultural memory of America's involvement in World War II by implying that there is something inherently fascist in American society by engaging in multidirectional acts of memory which conflate diverse, often disparate, experiences such as the emergence of fascism, the degeneration of democracy, economic crisis, the Holocaust, the history of slavery and racial violence, as well as the discrepancy between the North and the South harking back to the Civil War. All these experiences are narrated through three sites of memory of World War II that bring together various recollections. The first site of memory is Franklin D. Roosevelt, who is inextricably connected to the New Deal and Great Depression; the second one, Huey Long, stands for Adolf Hitler and evokes memories of slavery, the Underground Railroad, and the Civil War; the third one is the Holocaust with its imagery of trains, concentration camps, tattoos, racial violence, and barbed wire. All these sites of memory are entangled in a network of connections that subvert the hegemonic narrative of the greatest generation and force the reader to face disturbing questions regarding America's past and present.

The first site of memory, Franklin D. Roosevelt, exerts a strong influence on the shape of the diegetic world, even though in the prologue it is removed from history. As in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, Roosevelt's absence is strongly felt throughout *Amerikan Eagle*. As has been pointed out above, FDR appears only in the prologue; even though he is never mentioned by name, he is easily identifiable because his inner monologue refers to all the characteristics typically associated

with FDR in American cultural memory: strong leadership, tenacity, disability, and the New Deal. In the prologue, Roosevelt's mental strength is contrasted with his physical weakness– the paralysis he has to keep secret so as not to scare away the voters[59]. The prologue points out that the disability was unimportant; what really mattered was Roosevelt's stamina and political insight. It is stressed on the very first page when he looks at the people who came to meet him at Bayfront Park:

> …the newly elected president of the United States looked at the swarms of people … amid all the waves and jokes … he thought … They are all children, frightened at what happened to them, what has happened to their families, what has happened to their country. That was his latest secret, then, that he looked at the 140 million Americans out there and thought of them as children … Children who needed to look to a strong father who would promise to make everything right again. (DuBois 1)

This passage casts FDR as a self-confident paternal figure who intends to take responsibility for the country, thus reflecting the cultural memory of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his family that served as an allegory for the whole nation (Polak 157). This portrayal is further developed, and Roosevelt is depicted as a good leader who feels responsible for Americans' well-being and intends to use his power as the president of the United States not to assume

[59] The historical Franklin D. Roosevelt also tried to downplay his disability in order not to be perceived as weak and, therefore, unworthy of the United States' highest office. He negotiated an agreement with the press which agreed not to photograph or describe his wheelchair, which is why there are few photos that show him on a wheelchair. Interestingly, the attitudes toward Roosevelt's disability showcase how cultural memory absorbs changing societal attitudes; contemporary portrayals of FDR underline his disability as his key attribute, following movies such as *Sunrise at Campobello* (1960) and *Annie* (1982), as well as Hugh Gallagher's book *FDR's Splendid Deception* (1985). This interest arose alongside emancipation movements and a larger social need to acknowledge that disability does not preclude success (Polak 128–56).

control over the country in a manner reminiscent of Hitler but to help people and provide, as he muses, "a New Deal for the American people" (DuBois 3). FDR is therefore characterized as a strong paternal figure and an exemplary leader who seeks power out of the genuine need to push through necessary reforms and improve people's lives. Hence, he is portrayed as an icon of American democracy.

Like Roth's *The Plot Against America*, DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle* argues that the America would deteriorate without Roosevelt. However, even though all three novels indicate that had it not been for FDR, the United States would have become an isolationist country, *Amerikan Eagle* goes much further in its dystopian vision of America under the fascist president. In DuBois' novel, neither John Nance Garner (who became the president after Roosevelt was assassinated) nor Huey Long introduced the New Deal. Consequently, the Great Depression turned out much worse than in actual history, and in 1943 the United States is still in its grip. Therefore, the images of poverty and homelessness reminiscent of the historical photographs of the Great Depression permeate DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle*. For instance, when Sam drives to Manchester, he sees "hitchhikers on the side of the road, standing either defiantly or in bowed exhaustion… a couple of families slowly moving along, pushing their belongings in metal or wooden carts" (DuBois 196); when he walks the streets of Portsmouth, he passes "a man setting up a table on the sidewalk … toy peddler had on a coat that was a size too small, a battered fedora, and his sunken face was unshaved" (DuBois 54). Moreover, the streets of Portsmouth are filled with people wearing cardboard signs, looking for employment: "One said *Carpenter with 10 years' experience. No job or pay too small. Please help. I have 3 children.* Sam looked away. The signs were different, but the men all looked the same: unshaved, thin, clothes and shoes held together by tape or string" (DuBois 98). For Sam, these sights are so much a part of everyday life that, for the most part, he ignores them. Nevertheless, even he gets deeply uncomfortable when he visits the

homeless encampment set by the railroad track on which the body of Petr Wowenstein was found:

> The encampment was built on a muddy stretch of ground … there were automobiles and trucks parked near the trees, and from the condition of most of the tires, it looked like the vehicles had made their final stop. Shacks made from scrap lumber and tree branches were scattered around, most with meager fires burning before and women tending them. The children playing about were shoeless, their feet black with dirt. The women, with their thin dresses soiled and patched, looked up at him, eyes and expressions dull. (DuBois 59)

As the reader learns, many such encampments exist in Portsmouth and other American cities. In them, people live like animals, collecting bottles to earn a little money, rummaging through trash bins to find food scraps, and scavenging for coal lumps to build a campfire (DuBois 60). When the camps get too big, they are burned down by the National Guard, and all the people living in them are sent to resettlement camps which are no better than labor camps.

The responsibility for all this poverty and the general atmosphere of hopelessness lies on Huey Long, who, unlike Franklin D. Roosevelt in our timeline, did not find a way to manage the Great Depression; therefore, Long's failure only emphasizes the historical importance of FDR. It is further pointed out when *Amerikan Eagle* describes how the economic downturn of the 1930s and 1940s created favorable conditions for dictatorship and fascism, thus making a point about poverty rendering people susceptible to demagoguery and indifferent to the suffering of others. While the process of giving up democracy for the promise of economic safety is not depicted in detail, it t is frequently discussed by the characters who provide insight into the aftermath of the two decades of the Great Depression. The reader is made aware that the transition from democracy to dictatorship happened

gradually and that, in the beginning, the promise of a change encouraged people to vote for Kingfish. Even Sam, who is against Huey Long's policies, admits that back in 1936, he voted for him: "It was even tougher back then. My dad, he was getting sicker ... He died at home, coughing his lungs out. So yeah, I voted for Long. He promised change so old guys like my dad wouldn't have to die without medical help" (DuBois 101). The promise, of course, was never fulfilled.

As the Great Depression progressed, people became selfish and indifferent; they accepted Huey Long's laws according to which citizens should belong to the local branches of the Party and attend its meeting, started believing in isolationism, and approved of the United States' trade treaties with the Third Reich, hoping that they could save the American economy. One of the most striking examples of such a mindset can be found in a conversation between Sam and a marine he meets in Portsmouth harbor right before Adolf Hitler's arrival. When Sam observes that the marine must hate the sight of a Nazi flag on American soil, the marine answers that he did not mind the flag, for what really bothered him was his family's situation:

> I'm from Oklahoma originally, sir, and you see, the dust bowl drove us out of our farm. Grew up in a hobo camp … We got treated no better than dogs. Picking peaches and apples for fifty cents a day. I'm the oldest, so I got into the marines, send most of my paycheck home every month. If having Hitler and Long meet means my pa and my brothers can get jobs in those new aircraft factories, that's fine with me. … I know what the Nazis done in Europe …and how they treat their Jews… but you know what? Me and my family, we don't live in Europe, we ain't Jews, and we need jobs. Simple as that. (DuBois 301)

The above passage exemplifies the novel's argument that poverty forces people to focus on survival. The marine, who grew up in a homeless encampment, realizes that the cooperation between the United States and the Third Reich is morally wrong and knows what Nazis did to their Jewish citizens. Despite that, he supports Huey Long's authoritarian politics because he hopes the treaty with Nazi Germany would boost the American economy and thus improve his family's situation.

American society from *Amerikan Eagle*, in a manner similar to the Aryan society depicted in Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau*, does not care what happens to Jews. This point is elaborated on in an exchange between Sam, the Gestapo officer Herr Groebke, and FBI agent LaCouture:

> Groebke smiled. "Nobody cares. That's what I read in your newspapers, hear on your radio broadcasts. It's Europe's business, not yours. We can do anything we want and the world doesn't give a shit. …
>
> LaCouture frowned, "…Europeans have been slaughtering each other in creative ways for thousands of years. Why should we care how they're doing it this year? We care about *us*."(DuBois 275)

LaCouture's reasoning is very similar to Jason Tull's arguments in *After Dachau*, according to which violence is an inherent part of human civilization. In a similar fashion, LaCouture contends that World War II does not differ from other European wars, and Americans should take care of the matters at home. His isolationist belief reflects the general indifference and inertia of American society, too occupied by the Great Depression to take an interest in anything other than themselves.

The Great Depression and the poverty it brings underline the role of Franklin D. Roosevelt in American history because *Amerikan Eagle* argues that FDR was the only person who could have stopped the economic downturn. Apart from that, Roosevelt is also portrayed

as a symbol of the greatest generation and, thus, of freedom and democracy. This can be exemplified by a discussion between Smith and his tenant, Walter Tucker, a former professor at Harvard University, in which Walter reminisces about FDR's visit to Portsmouth in 1932, recollecting that he had "such magic in his words, such power … energy, a confidence, a style what was just what we needed" (DuBois 100) and concluding that with Roosevelt as the president, "we could have been a great generation, you know, something for the history books, instead of what we've become" (DuBois 101). Therefore, without Roosevelt, the mythical greatest generation ceases to exist, and American society mutates into a caricature of its former self.

To conclude, the portrayal of Franklin D. Roosevelt in *Amerikan Eagle* aligns with the American cultural memory of World War II, where FDR symbolizes a generational experience of the Great Depression and war, as well as a triumph of democracy and freedom over fascism. Therefore, like in Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, Roosevelt in *Amerikan Eagle* is depicted as the embodiment of American values.

In contrast, the second site of memory, Huey Long, epitomizes everything America should reject to remain its true self: dictatorship, racism, and isolationism. Even though historically Huey Long was not connected to World War II because he was assassinated in 1935, in DuBois' novel Long becomes a part of it, not only because he replaces Roosevelt as the president of the United States, but most importantly because he serves as a stand-in for Adolf Hitler. Thus, he activates an intriguing web of seemingly unrelated memories in which the remembrance of slavery, the Civil War, and the Underground Railroad conflate with World War II, concentration camps, and Adolf Hitler.

The laws introduced by Huey Long leave little doubt that he is a mirror image of the Führer, especially taking into consideration the fact that in American cultural memory, Kingfish is remembered as eerily similar to Adolf Hitler. The semblance was pointed out by

his contemporaries; for instance, Hugh Samuel Johnson called Long "the Hitler of one of our sovereign states" (qtd. in Haas 133) and compared him to European dictators (Snyder 137). In turn, Henry Justin Allen described Adolf Hitler as "a sort of Teutonic Huey Long", while Raymond Gram Swing contended that Kingfish could "Hitlerize America" (qtd. in Haas 134). Such a perception of Long was perpetuated by culture, most notably by Sinclair Lewis' dystopian novel *It Can't Happen Here* (1935), which describes the rise of a United States dictator Berzelius "Buzz" Windrip modeled after Huey Long, and by Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men* (1946) loosely based on Long's life. Therefore, the image of Huey Long as Hitler's counterpart has been etched in American cultural memory.

Brendan Dubois' *Amerikan Eagle* follows that tradition by portraying Huey Long as a Hitleresque figure. Long's similarity to the Führer of the Third Reich is indicated in the prologue, where Roosevelt muses about Hitler's rise to power and immediately associates it with Huey Long, who runs Louisiana "as his own private kingdom" (DuBois 2). Later in the novel, it turns out that the changes introduced by the Long administration render the United States similar to Nazi Germany: the Republican Party is dissolved, the media are taken hold of, and labor and concentration camps are set up to manage political dissidents. Long's name is often used alongside Hitler's; for instance, William Saunders, a pathologist working for the Portsmouth police, complains about being visited by "Two thugs. One working for a gangster called Hitler, the other working for a gangster called Long" (DuBois 113), while when Sam thinks that Portsmouth is about to host "a summit between the world's two most powerful men, Long and Hitler" (DuBois 152). The phrase "Long and Hitler" appears frequently in the novel, establishing an affinity and relationship between the two dictators.

Apart from being an American version of Hitler, Huey Long triggers memories of the history of the American South and slavery, which means that his presidency can be viewed as a reversal of the Reconstruction era. Huey Long's Southernness is repeatedly emphasized in

the novel through bits of conversation that connect him to his home state of Louisiana or through mentions of his distinctly Southern supporters. After becoming the president, Long created a special unit of the Party called "Long's Legionnaires", who were "sent North as reverse carpetbaggers, to install Party discipline" (DuBois 22). The pejorative term "carpetbaggers" alludes to the times of the Civil War and Reconstruction when, after the South's defeat, large groups of Northerners came to Southern states in order to obtain political and financial profits. The term "carpetbaggers" draws an analogy between the historical period of Reconstruction and the imagined presidency of Huey Long; however, in the alternate timeline of *Amerikan Eagle*, the roles become reversed. During the Reconstruction, it were the Northerners who came to the Southern states to instill their political views on the inhabitants of the South; in *Amerikan Eagle*, it is the other way round, the Southerners and supporters of Kingfish invade the North in order to imbue it with their fascist political beliefs by whatever means necessary. They hang up posters with Huey Long's political slogans "Share the wealth" and "Every man a king", hand out flyers, visit houses, and patrol the streets. Oftentimes, they do not need to exercise violence because most people are so afraid of losing their jobs or being sentenced to labor camps that they do not need to be forced to cooperate. The conquest of the North by Huey Long and his Southern supporters is also emphasized by the fact that Long appoints Southerners to high positions in the federal government, which is depicted through the character of FBI Special Agent LaCouture, whose accent, as Sam notices (DuBois 107), is distinctly Southern.

Another aspect linking Long's regime to the American South and Nazi Germany is the labor and concentration camps system established to control the citizens. Anyone who challenges the regime, organizes unions, reads illegal newspapers, refuses to pledge allegiance to the president, or is simply non-white can be sent to a labor camp where inmates are forced to undertake backbreaking work and shot on the spot if they try to escape. The

conditions in these detention facilities, as well as the fact that they were created by a Southerner, evoke memories of slavery and the plight of African slaves in the antebellum South. This association is reinforced by the reappearance of the Underground Railroad, which, this time, is meant to aid political dissidents in escaping to Canada. The stations of the Underground Railroad are set in the same cities as in the nineteenth century. As Sam discovers, the Portsmouth station that operated before the Civil War is re-established in the 1940s (DuBois 28), which draws attention to the similarity between the alternate timeline and the historical antebellum South. One of the dissidents who stops at the Portsmouth station, Paul Robeson[60], explicitly points that out: "My own father was a slave on a plantation in North Carolina. … and now here I am … on a new Underground Railroad. … Alone, hunted, just like my daddy, like a fugitive slave from the last century, on the run from the South" (DuBois 129). His bitter conclusion further emphasizes the connection between the Long administration and the historical slavery system; however, this time, all the citizens of the United States can be subjected to imprisonment, regardless of race.

The Long administration is depicted as another phase of the conflict between the South and the North in which the Southern states finally conquered the Northern states. The similarity between the alternate United States of 1943 and the historical conflict between the South and the North is also explored through the various instances of resistance to the Long administration. In some cases, it is expressed verbally, such as Hanson's angry outburst in which he refers to the Civil War: "Goddamn Southerners forgot who kicked their ass back in '65" (DuBois 52). In other cases, it involves small-scale acts of defiance, such as slitting the tires of a car that belongs to Long's Legionnaires (DuBois 22). It also consists of country-wide initiatives such as the aforementioned reestablishment of the Underground Railroad. In addition, sometimes Long's Legionnaires' attempts at instilling Party discipline provoke

[60] DuBois probably refers to the actual Paul Robson (1898-1976), African-American singer, actor, and activist.

riots. One of the most significant ones breaks out in South Boston after Boston police officers defy Legionnaires and, as Hanson describes, "before you know it, you had barricades … with a couple of squads of Legionnaires on one side, and some Southie Irish cops on the other ... three dead, scores injured, and one police precinct burned down" (DuBois 52). The fact that one of the biggest riots broke out in Boston is by no means coincidental, for it brings back memories of the revolutionary activity connected to the American War of Independence. However, eventually, all these acts of resistance to the "Southernization" of America are futile, for ordinary Americans are too concerned about their financial situation to take an interest in Huey Long's dictatorial inclinations.

As can be seen, Huey Long serves as a site of memory that evokes a whole set of memories, images, and historical experiences. On the one hand, he is depicted as an American version of Adolf Hitler, who gains power through demagoguery and instills his political ideas through violence. At the same time, he represents the American South and its complicated history of slavery and racial violence. Long's America is reminiscent of the United States in the nineteenth century, a time marked by the Civil War, the Reconstruction, slavery, and the Underground Railroad. In *Amerikan Eagle*, the figure of Huey Long conflates World War II and its history of fascist dictators with shameful, oftentimes repressed memory of slavery and the Civil War. Therefore, by establishing a connection between Long and Hitler, DuBois also fuses the American South with Nazi Germany, thus arguing that fascism has always been an unacknowledged part of American identity, just like the South has always been a part of America.

This multidirectional memory which conflates the American South with the Third Reich is also reflected in the third site of memory, the Holocaust. DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle* is the only novel in this dissertation that takes the concept of Nazi concentration camps with their imagery of trains, barbed wires, and half-starved inmates and relocates it to the United

States. In contrast, in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau*, the genocide is mentioned, but never in detail; the reader does not see it happening. *Amerikan Eagle* places Nazi-style concentration camps on American soil, thus activating the cultural memory of slavery and implying that fascism is inherent, albeit repressed, part of the American psyche.

The concentration camps are one of the best-guarded secrets of the Long administration. While everybody knows about labor camps for political prisoners, few realize that Hans Morgenthau negotiated an agreement between Long administration and Nazi Germany under which some European Jews from Nazi concentration camps were shipped to the United States as labor. As Hanson explains, all the parties benefit from this agreement: Nazis can dispose of some of their Jews, the United States gets cheap labor (the European inmates are paid a dollar a week) that the country desperately needs, and the inmates get a hope that they will survive the war. The novel uses a whole set of images commonly associated with the Holocaust, such as sealed trains transporting concentration camp inmates, numbers tattooed on prisoners' wrists, barbed wire, and striped clothes. When Sam reaches the first fence around the Vermont concentration camp, he sees "another gate, another barrier. The chain-link fence had barbed wire around the top" (DuBois 227) and guards holding Thompson submachine guns. As he gets closer to the camp, he notices other details:

> There was another gate up ahead, but this one looked ceremonial: just wrought iron with an arch. In the arch was a series of letters. Sam made out the words as they drew closer: WORK WILL MAKE YOU FREE … Then he saw the workers. Long lines of men … dressed in white prisoner clothing with thin blue stripes, wearing flat cloth caps. … They were gaunt and they shuffled, as if each step was as hard as lifting a hundred pounds. (DuBois 229)

The above descriptions of a fence with barbed wire, the slogan "work will make you free", and men in prisoner clothing immediately evoke memories of Auschwitz concentration camp. What makes this image chilling is the fact that it is set in a small town in upstate Vermont.

The descriptions of the camp Sam visits reintroduce the parallels between Huey Long, the American South, and Nazi Germany because, as the reader learns over the course of the novel, most concentration camps are situated in small towns down South. This information is passed on by people imprisoned in labor camps, the railroad manager Sam interrogates, and Otto, one of the concentration camp inmates Sam meets. When asked how long he had been in the camp, Otto answers: "Eight months. Before that, I was somewhere in the South. Very hot. We cut trees in the swamps" (DuBois 244). This implies that the Long administration believed that the camps would be more accepted in the South than in the North, thus drawing a parallel between concentration camps and slavery, as well as between the American South and Nazi Germany. The concentration camp Sam visits is one of few camps not located in the South, but even there the presence of the South is marked by the standard of Louisiana, Huey Long's home state, which is hung alongside the American flag and the flag of Vermont (DuBois 230). In addition, the people who manage the camp are all Southerners who speak with a distinctly Southern accent and have a cordial relationship with the German SS who guard the prisoners. For Sam, it is like a nightmare: "This can't be real, cannot be true, German SS and Long's Legionnaires, stormtroopers from each side of the Atlantic, cooperating and working together as one in the mountains of Vermont" (DuBois 242). This cooperation suggests similarities not only between the two formations but also between the American South and Nazi Germany.

This possibility of the American Holocaust is suggested by Otto (DuBois 244–45) and Herr Groebke (DuBois 268–70). It is also explored through the character of FBI Agent

LaCouture, who delivers a shocking speech in which he recollects his trip to concentration camps in Nazi Germany:

> The camp, what a place… so simple, really, so simple. Just a place to deal with your enemies. You never saw such terrible beauty. … These trains came in, filled with your enemies … and then they disappeared. … Your enemies came in full and alive, and then they didn't exist anymore, and what a wonderful thing. … We've just barely started to catch up to what Germans can do, and they're going to teach us so very much in the years ahead. (DuBois 317)

LaCouture's monologue in which Nazi death camps are described as "terrible beauty" and innocent civilians are cast as "enemies" exemplifies the twisted psyche of Long's supporters and underlines their affinity with Nazis. LaCouture's words also reveal the plans to extend the camp system to the United States.

Taken together, all these elements point to the idea explored in *The Man in the High Castle* and *After Dachau*, namely that of the parallel between the Holocaust and the racial policies of the United States. Through the juxtaposition of the German SS and Long's Legionnaires, as well as of concentration camps with slavery, *Amerikan Eagle* implies that the Holocaust could have happened in the United States; America, with its long history of slavery and discrimination against African-Americans did not differ much from Nazi Germany and its anti-Semitic policies; therefore, the Holocaust could have happened there just like slavery did.

Having noticed how slavery and the Holocaust are conflated in *Amerikan Eagle* to argue that the Holocaust could have happened in the United States, it has to be stressed that the novel is inconsequential in its treatment of that idea. In all likelihood, this inconsequence stems from the need to at least partially adhere to the widely-held belief in the uniqueness of

the Holocaust. As has been demonstrated, the existence of concentration camps on American soil is Huey Long's most guarded secret. Sam uncovers it roughly in the middle of the novel, and the subplot concerning his journey to Vermont and experience of incarceration in the camp is one of the most shocking parts of *Amerikan Eagle*, full of menace and horror created through its references to well-known images of Auschwitz concentration camp. This pervasive atmosphere of dread changes when Sam gets acquainted with a fellow prisoner named Otto and realizes that the inmates have volunteered to come to the United States. At first, Sam is incredulous, but his conviction that the camps are wrong soon starts to shake: "Otto smiled, his lips twitching mirthlessly. 'We all volunteered. …We were told we would come to America to work, to survive, and even if we came here to work, who would not want to come to America?' (DuBois 240). Later, after freeing him from the camp, Sam's boss Marshal Harold Hanson points out:

> 'The Jews would come here secretly, not as refugees, but as labor. The Nazis get their Jew-free Europe, and we got workers.'
>
> 'Slave labor, you mean.'
>
> 'They get paid.'
>
> 'A dollar a week!'
>
> Hanson said, 'Which is more than they got back in Europe. … They are hard workers, Sam, happy to be here and not there. … Every Jew here is a Jew that's saved.'
>
> 'Some saved,' Sam said. 'Worked hard, barely dressed, barely fed–'
>
> 'But saved nonetheless, compared to what awaits them in Europe … it's better to be here, overworked and underfed, than to be back in Europe, slaughtered.'
>
> (DuBois 253–54)

Finally, Hanson shows Sam photos from European concentration camps, and Sam realizes that even though the conditions in American camps are appalling, they are still nothing compared to Nazi death camps. Reluctantly he admits to himself that Hanson has a point and that the American concentration camps really help save the Jews. Sam's conclusion is baffling, especially considering his experience as an inmate. Even though in the novel's finale he commits himself to politics and blackmails Hanson into improving the conditions in the camps, he does not try to devise other plans of saving Jews and acknowledge the necessity of the camps. His conclusion is morally dubious because even though it is true that in American camps there are no gas chambers and prisoners are not killed unless they try to escape, the fact that Jewish immigrants are imprisoned, tattooed, and tortured does raise moral objections. Moreover, Hanson makes it perfectly clear that the Long administration did not agree to set up concentration camps to save European Jews from the Holocaust but because the United States desperately needed slave labor. Hence, Sam's acceptance of the camps can be read as another allusion to slavery being an intrinsic part of American history.

As has been shown, Brendan DuBois' alternate history novel *Amerikan Eagle* uses three sites of memory that revolve around World War II and establish a network of other interrelated sites of memory. Franklin D. Roosevelt evokes cultural memory of World War II and the greatest generation, the Great Depression, and the New Deal; he is also cast as a paternal figure and an icon of American democracy. The novel argues that without Roosevelt, the Great Depression would have ruined the United States and pushed it toward fascism. Therefore, Roosevelt is depicted as the only person to whom America owes its economic prosperity, the triumphant memory of World War II as a "good war", and congratulatory self-perception as a country of freedom and democracy. In contrast, Huey Long serves as a stand-in for Adolf Hitler and counterbalance to Roosevelt. He also activates multidirectional memory, which conflates the memories of the Civil War, the Reconstruction, slavery, and the

Holocaust. Thus, the figure of Huey Long casts fascism as an inherent and repressed part of American identity. Finally, the Holocaust is used to trigger cultural memory of slavery to support the idea that the Holocaust could have happened in the United States because racial discrimination and abuse are an inherent part of American history.

The above analysis of sites of memory essentially revealed the political agenda promoted by Brendan DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle*; nevertheless, some of the described ideas require further analysis. Therefore, the section below describes the politics of memory promoted by the novel and looks at the issue of America's split identity and repressed memory of slavery which renders it similar to the Third Reich. It also examines how the multidirectional memory pursued in the novel pertains to the present.

First, it must be noted that the motif of the division between the North and the South calls attention to America's split identity. As has been explained earlier, the novel replaces New York-born Franklin D. Roosevelt, etched in cultural memory as a symbol of the greatest generation, with Huey Long, the governor of Louisiana, commonly remembered as a Hitleresque figure. These two sites of memory represent the United States' dual nature; Franklin D. Roosevelt embodies the North with its traditionally American principles of liberty, equality, and democracy, while Huey Long symbolizes the South, the region which has served as a negative reference point against which America could identify itself in a favorable contrast (Cobb). Perceived as a distant and exotic land sharply different from the rest of America, the South has been culturally perceived as a negative example of all America must overcome to realize its true self (Cash; Cobb; Thompson). *Amerikan Eagle* upholds that division by referencing the Civil War, and depicting the Southerners as violent and sadistic. Therefore, the South is cast as a repressed part of the American psyche which was superseded by the self-congratulatory narrative of the "good war" and the greatest generation symbolized by FDR. In DuBois' alternate history, the repressed returns to replace the hegemonic memory

of World War II with its own demons. Hence, *Amerikan Eagle* argues that the United States possesses two identities. The repressed one needs to be acknowledged and understood because without the will to acknowledge the painful past, the repressed poses a continuous threat to America's principles of liberty, equality, and democracy.

The similarity between the United States and Nazi Germany is frequently brought up in the novel, and Huey Long's dictatorial tendencies are evident from the beginning. In addition, his cordial relationship with Adolf Hitler indicates that Long is willing to turn America into the mirror image of Nazi Germany. As the novel progresses, the similarities between the United States governed by Long and the Third Reich increase. When Sam takes part in a mass arrest of illegal immigrants from Europe, one of his colleagues whispers, "This is like those … newsreels from Europe, you know?", to which Sam answers, "Yeah, I know, … I guess we're all Europeans now" (DuBois 180). The immigrants are "shocked, wide-eyed ... All had the look of having been put through this before, but with soldiers in gray uniforms and coal-scuttle helmets, soldiers with crooked cross symbols on their vehicles, not white stars" (DuBois 180). In that scene, American police officers are compared to Wehrmacht soldiers, and the scene to mass arrests of Jews in Europe, indicating that America's policies regarding illegal immigrants were similar to the racial policy of the Third Reich. The Gestapo officer Hans Groebke also thinks that America and Nazi Germany are very much alike:

> Groebke pointed to the left. … 'Who slaughtered the red Indian last century, who stole their lands and put them on reservations? … Your own hands, how clean are they, Herr Miller? Did you not participate a few days ago in a … a *cleansing*, is that the word? … And are these people not on their way to camps because of you? … We are similar, you and I. Our nations. We each have made empires on the back of other people. We each have destinies. Even our

> symbols are the same. The eagles, yes? … Amerikan Eagle, both of our nations, so similar. (DuBois 269)

In this monologue, Groebke compares various aspects of American historical experience to that of Nazi Germany; he points to the extermination of Native Americans to the Holocaust, the American eagle and *Reichadler*, the German heraldic eagle, as well as the American concept of manifest destiny and the German *drang nach Osten*. Such a comparison poses a very strong criticism of the United States and its imperial policies because it juxtaposes American ideas and values with those of Nazi Germany and demonstrates that they are, in fact, very similar. Thus it emphasizes the idea that America repressed the memory of atrocities it committed and replaced it with a triumphant self-narrative that casts the United States as a country of freedom and democracy.

Amerikan Eagle makes it blatantly clear that fascism is tied to poverty, which means that a nation in crisis has no strength to stand against fascism. As has been discussed, *Amerikan Eagle* argues that poverty and hunger not only make people indifferent to the suffering of others but also render them susceptible to demagoguery. As the novel's epilogue warns, “People who are hungry … are the stuff of which dictatorships are made” (DuBois 375). In *Amerikan Eagle*, there is little resistance to Huey Long’s dictatorship. While many people do not support his cooperation with Nazi Germany and criticize Long’s Legionnaires, they are too afraid of what may happen if they dare to resist. As the narrator describes, “not being cooperative … meant you could get fired. … No job. No government relief, no charity, and in a manner of weeks, you and your desperate family would be scratching out a living in the hobo camp” (DuBois 72). Hence, most people choose to cooperate, which is best exemplified by Sam, who is deeply uncomfortable with supporting the Long administration as a police officer but realizes that he would not be able to support his family without that job.

Amerikan Eagle is also meant to make a statement about the Great Recession of 2008. Therefore, it refers to the important events from the past to explain the present and provide guidance for the future in a manner characteristic of cultural memory. It does not seem to be a coincidence that Dubois' novel, published in 2011, speculates about the outcome of World War II had the Great Depression never been adequately addressed by the federal government. In fact, the idea that the Great Recession of 2008 was the Great Depression happening all over again was widespread at that time, which means that the atmosphere of the period between 2008 and 2011 encouraged comparisons to the United States of the 1930s. The perceived similarity between the Great Recession and the Great Depression provoked discussions regarding ways to address it (Isidore; Hanke; Gjerstad and Smith; O'Rourke and Eichengreen; Folsom). Political commentators and journalists analyzed Franklin D. Roosevelt's politics as well as the changes introduced by the New Deal in order to establish their relevance for the present (Leuchtenburg, "Watching Obama"; Alter; Roselund; Vago; Brinkley; see also Leuchtenburg, "Franklin Delano Obama"). In addition, Barack Obama was commonly perceived as a second Roosevelt, which is exemplified by the cover of "Times" issued on November 24, 2008, where the headline reads *The New Deal: What Barack Obama can Learn from F.D.R.* The cover story directly linked Obama to Roosevelt, claiming that "not since Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in the midst of the Depression has a new President faced a set of challenges quite as formidable as those that await Obama" (Tumulty). In addition, the figure of Huey Long, who famously opposed Roosevelt's idea of the New Deal, also emerged in some of the analyses. For example, Alan Brinkley's article from "Politico" titled "Obama vs. Tea Party: Think FDR vs. Huey Long" compared the conflict between Barack Obama and the tea party movements to the disagreement between FDR and Huey Long in order to draw conclusions regarding Obama's future course of action (Brinkley). Even though most disscusions comparing the Great Recession to the Great

Depression concluded that despite certain similarities they are not alike and that Barack Obama is not like Roosevelt, the atmosphere of the time invited comparision to the 1930s and referring to the memories of the Roosevelt administration to understand the present moment and find guidance for the future. In all likelihood, it also exerted influence on Brendan DuBois and inspired him to write *Amerikan Eagle.* With its references to World War II and the Great Depression, the novel issues a warning that if the Great Recession is not addressed adequately like the Great Depression was in the 1930s, it may lead to emergence of alt-right movements and endanger American democracy.

Overall, *Amerikan Eagle* is a cautionary tale that uses the affective power of sites of memory of World War II, the Holocaust, and Franklin D. Roosevelt in order to comment on the psychological effects of the Great Depression (and, by extension, the Great Recession) and issue a warning for the future. Alternate history makes this warning more shocking and thus more potent because it depicts an alternate timeline that subverts the well-established myth of the greatest generation and reminds the reader that fascism, as symbolized by Huey Long, has always been a part of the American psyche. Thus, the novel implies that even though the historical Huey Long never fulfilled his potential to become the president of the United States and fascism never became a part of mainstream American politics, it may still emerge and endanger American democracy, especially in times of crisis.

Brendan DuBois' novel stresses the importance of individual resistance and that every man can exercise influence on the course of history. It is suggested early in the novel, during a conversation between Sam and Walter Tucker, in which Sam claims that Roosevelt alone would have never changed history for the better:

> 'Walter, he [Roosevelt] was just a man. … He didn't become President. Somebody else did. Life goes on.'

> ‘Inspector … you’re wrong about Roosevelt. He was what this country desperately needed. Hell, maybe even what the world needed, a real strong leader, and he was taken away before he could do one damn thing. … Don’t even think one man can’t make a tremendous difference (DuBois 101)

The conversation foreshadows Sam’s role as a man who decides to change history. At the beginning, Sam sees himself as insignificant; he believes he should fulfill his duty as a husband, father, and police officer and keep his head down. As the novel progresses and Sam reveals various secrets, the question of what he can do to change things becomes increasingly urgent. It reaches a dramatic peak in his confrontation with Tony when Sam tries to dissuade Tony from assassinating Adolf Hitler by arguing that it will change nothing:

> Sam stepped forward. ‘Tony, he’s [Adolf Hitler] a bastard, but just one bastard. You kill him, and so what? Another bastard will take his place. He’s just one man. That’s all.’
>
> Tony glanced out the opening. ‘No, that’s not all. He holds it all together. Get rid of him and the whole rotten system collapses. One man can turn this world to hell. And one man can make it right. (DuBois 313)

In a manner similar to Walter, Tony argues that one man can radically alter the course of history, and his words finally change something in Sam. As Sam saves Adolf Hitler from his brother, prevents the assassination of Huey Long, and solves the mystery of Petr Wowenstein’s death, he acquires the means to exert influence on the course of history. When Sam realizes that he has leverage, he decides to use it to restore his idea of pre-Huey Long America. In the finale, he is symbolically fused with FDR when he thinks, “There was so much to do, so much to hope for, and he didn’t know how much time he had left” (DuBois 372), thus mirroring Roosevelt’s last thought in the prologue. Therefore, through Sam’s

journey from a regular man to a man willing to change the course of history, *Amerikan Eagle* depicts the importance of resistance to an authoritarian regime.

6. RYAN GRAUDIN *WOLF BY WOLF* (2015) and *BLOOD FOR BLOOD* (2016)

Ryan Graudin's novels *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* were published to popular acclaim in 2015 and 2016 by Little, Brown and Company Books. Even though they belong to young adult fiction (often abbreviated as YA), which means that they are theoretically addressed to adolescents between twelve and eighteen, they gained wide recognition among older readers. That is not surprising given that according to data, over 55% of people who buy young adult novels are over eighteen years old, and most of them purchase YA to read it themselves (Curcic; Peterson); moreover, Graudin's fast-paced alternate history novels set in a world where Nazi Germany won World War II are as much about the past, as they are about the present.

The first installment of the duology titled *Wolf by Wolf* is set in 1956 in an alternate timeline in which the world is ruled by the Third Reich (in the novel called German Reich) and Imperial Japan. In Graudin's novel, the point of divergence hinges on Operation Sea Lion, the Third Reich's plan for an invasion of the United Kingdom which, in our timeline, has never been put into action. In *Wolf by Wolf*, Adolf Hitler decides to carry it out; as a result, he wins the Battle of Britain. The United States, scarred after World War I, yields to isolationist tendencies promoted by American newspapers through slogans such as "Peace at all costs" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 19) and "European politics are for Europe" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 160) and agrees to sign a non-aggression pact with the Third Reich. In 1942, Adolf Hitler, aided by fascist Italy, attacks the Soviet Union from the west while Japan invades it from the east (instead of focusing on Pearl Harbor), thus forcing Stalin to fight a two-front war. As a result, the Soviet Union loses; the fractured remains of the Soviet army hide in Siberia but are too weak to pose a threat to the Axis forces. Eventually, the Third Reich and

Imperial Japan divide the world between themselves; Germany takes control over Europe and Africa, and metropolises such as Berlin (renamed Germania), London, Cairo, Rome, Baghdad, and Paris become the major cities of the new Nazi empire. As the World War II ends, life returns to normal, even though the world is no longer the way it used to be. The native populations of Europe and Africa are declared U*ntermenschen* and shipped off to death camps and labor camps alongside Jews. In the Reich, German boys are obliged to join *Hitlerjugend*, while young women are stripped of most of their rights as their only duty is to marry and bear children; many are sent to *Lebensborn* facilities and treated like livestock (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 221). To celebrate their victory in World War II, the Third Reich and Imperial Japan organize the Axis Tour, an annual motorcycle race across Europe and Asia in which teenage boys from the Hitler Youth race from Germania to Tokyo, promoting the territories conquered by the Axis powers. The race's victor wins an Iron Cross and is invited to the traditional Victor's Ball at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, attended by the Reich's highest officials and highly reclusive Adolf Hitler, who, after several assassination attempts, almost ceased public appearances.

The protagonist of *Wolf by Wolf* duology is Yael, a young Jewish woman who seeks revenge on Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich for exterminating her family. As a six-year-old girl, she was taken to an unspecified concentration camp, where she was picked out by the camp's doctor Geyer to be a subject of Experiment Eighty-Five, which aims to erase people's Jewish traits and produce ideal Aryan features. Unexpectedly, painful medical experiments endow Yael with the ability to skinshift, that is change her appearance and turn into other people. There are, however, three limitations to her skinshifting abilities: she cannot change her gender, get rid of scars, or remove her tattoos. Young Yael uses her newly acquired skills to run from the camp and join the resistance movement, which takes care of her. Nevertheless, she cherishes the memories of her family and friends who died in the

concentration camp, which is why she decides to sneak off the resistance headquarters to visit a tattoo artist who turns concentration camp identification numbers tattooed on her hand into pictures of wolves. She gets five wolves, and each of them symbolizes an important person from her life: her mother and friend Miriam, who perished in the camp; the elderly Russian woman *Babushka* who took care of her; Aaron-Klaus, who got killed when he had tried to assassinate Adolf Hitler in 1952; and Vlad, the member of the Resistance responsible for training young recruits.

Yael is trained by the Resistance to take part in the Axis Tour and assassinate Adolf Hitler during Victor's Ball. It is 1956, and a year earlier the whole world was shocked when it turned out that the Victor of the 1955 Axis Tour was a woman named Adele Wolfe who dressed up as her brother Felix Wolfe to participate in the Tour. To everybody's surprise, the Führer not only awarded Adele with the Iron Cross but also asked her to dance during the televised Victor's Ball. The Resistance leader, Erwin Reiniger, wants Yael to steal Adele Wolfe's identity and win the 1956 Tour, hoping that Adolf Hitler will dance with Adele again, thus giving Yael an opportunity to execute him during a live broadcast.

The real Adele Wolfe is taken hostage, and Yael impersonates her during the race. The mission proves more difficult than expected. One of the participants, Luka Löwe, who has already won one Axis Tour and is determined to win again, shared some experiences with Adele during the previous race, and Yael cannot figure out what happened between them. The rest of the participants want to win by whatever means necessary. To complicate matters, Adele's brother Felix Wolfe joins the race to protect his sister. Having to deal with Luka and Felix, Yael develops a bond with them and starts questioning her actions. After many adventures, she gets to the finish line second after Luka; fortunately, the winner invites her to the Victor's Ball as his escort. During the ball, Adolf Hitler approaches Yael to ask her to dance, and she kills him only to discover that it is not the Führer, but his doppelgänger,

another subject of Experiment Eighty-Five who, after death, changes back into his true body. The assassination is televised worldwide and serves as a signal for the resistance to spark off uprisings in all the countries ruled by the Axis powers. When the media announce that the Führer is alive, it is too late; the uprising has already started.

The second installment of the *Wolf by Wolf* duology titled *Blood for Blood* starts immediately after the assassination attempt. Yael escapes the Imperial Palace followed by Luka Löwe, who, upon learning that she is not Adele Wolfe, wants to turn her in to the Schutzstaffel. In the meantime, Felix Wolfe is tortured by the SS and coerced into executing their plan to defeat the Resistance by following Yael. Therefore, when she and Luka are caught, they are reunited with Felix and sent back to Germania. During the flight, Yael frees herself and persuades the boys to escape the SS by jumping off the plane. The trio finds themselves somewhere in Siberia, and as they try to find their way back to the Reich, they grow so close that Yael confides in Luka and tells him about her past. The party is caught by soldiers from the Soviet guerilla army who recognize them as Axis Tour racers; to Yael's surprise, one of the soldiers reveals herself to be Miriam, her friend from the concentration camp whom she presumed dead. It turns out that after her escape from the camp, Dr. Geyer chose Miriam to participate in Experiment Eighty-Five and was turned into a skinshifter. Miriam also used her newly-acquired skills to escape and headed east in order to get as far from the center of the Reich as possible. She joined the guerilla soldiers and became known as *Comrade Mnogolikiy*; thanks to her position in the Soviet Resistance, she can protect Yael and her companions. As Miriam reveals, Yael's assassination attempt sparked off numerous uprisings in different parts of the Reich's territory but with Hitler alive, the leader of the Resistance cannot carry out his plan of winning the Reich army over and dismantling the National Socialist Party.

After talks between Germania and Novosibirsk guerilla units, Reiniger decides that Yael and Miriam have to return to Germania and assassinate the real Adolf Hitler. They must gather intelligence on Hitler's face-changing doppelgängers to execute the plan. The girls break into the concentration camp where they were incarcerated as children to learn more about Experiment Eighty-Five. They manage to steal documents about medical experiments, including the so-called Doppelgänger Project. From the documents, Yael and Mirian learn that the skinshifting project was so successful that Adolf Hitler decided to create a special SS unit called *Maskiertekommando des Führers*. Carefully selected soldiers were injected with Dr. Geyer's substance to acquire skinshifting abilities and protect the real Adolf Hitler by substituting for him during public appearances.

Yael shows Luka all the documents. The boy is shocked when he realizes that everything he learned from Yael about the concentration camps, the Holocaust, and Dr. Geyer's experiments on children is true. Upon learning that, Luka, who has been harboring doubts about National Socialism for years, wholly rebels against the Nazi regime. He wants to join the resistance and develops an elaborate plan to inform the public about concentration camps and Hitler's skinshifters, hoping to destroy Führer's reputation and encourage people to overthrow the government. Yael and Miriam agree to the plan, but when the party reaches the resistance's headquarters in Germania, Felix, who has been passing information about their actions to the SS, immediately informs them about the base's location. The headquarters are attacked, and resistance members are killed and taken hostage. Yael and Luka manage to escape and decide to carry out the plan. They break into the Ministry of Public Enlightenment's broadcasting tower and interrupt the recording of the *Chancellery Chat* program in which Heinrich Himmler talks to Adolf Hitler. When it turns out that the supposed Führer is another doppelgänger, Luka realizes that Himmler has been hiding the fact that Adolf Hitler was assassinated by the Resistance member Aaron-Klaus in 1952, and

since that time Himmler has been controlling the Reich through Hitler's doubles. This shocking revelation ends in a firefight, of which Yael is the sole survivor. She steals the videotape with the *Chancellery Chat* and manages to broadcast Himmler's admission that he has been controlling the country through Hitler's doppelgängers. The shocked public revolts, General Reiniger takes control of the army and defeats the remnants of Waffen-SS. On January 5, 1975, a peace treaty is signed. Yael decides to have another tattoo, this time in memory of Luka Löwe and commits herself to hunting down all the skinshifters that remained loyal to Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler. Those Jews who managed to survive the victory of the Third Reich and Adolf Hitler's governance reveal themselves and are slowly reintegrated into society. Yael can finally reclaim her identity and live "happily, sadly, humanly ever after…" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 481).

Since Ryan Graudin's alternate history duology was originally addressed to young adults, *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood For Blood* exhibit features characteristic of young adult fiction, such as teenage protagonists who struggle to come to terms with their identities, try to make sense of the world around them, develop personal value system, and achieve emotional independence. All these themes are common in young adult fiction because they strongly resonate with teenagers to whom YA is addressed (Too). In addition, the novels explore the popular YA theme of feminine empowerment through the characters of Yael and Adele Wolfe, who are headstrong, fearless, and refuse to comply with stereotypical gender roles. Adele rebels against the National Socialist society and joins the Axis tour because she believes this is the only way to avoid being forced into marriage or sent to the *Lebensborn* facility. Yael, in turn, does not conform to the role of a helpless victim and becomes a guerilla fighter, thus breaking Reich's gender politics and racial stereotypes. What is more, besides being an alternate history, Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* duology is also a dystopia, a genre immensely popular among young audiences (Loh et al. 12; Ames). The novel seems to have

been partially inspired by such blockbusters as Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy and its movie adaptation[61] , as well as by George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* books and TV series[62]. The author herself mentioned the television series *Long Way Round* (2004-2005) and Alias (2001-2006) as her primary inspirations (Graudin, *Ryan Graudin Interview and Excerpt*).

As for the alternate history genre, Graudin's novels fit into the American trend of dystopian alternate histories depicting the hypothetical Axis victory in World War II to comment on the state of the contemporary world. Interestingly though, unlike the novels analyzed so far, *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* take place not in the United States but in Europe, which partially precludes comparisons between America and the Third Reich explored in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau*, Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, and Brendan DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle*. Moreover, unlike the abovementioned works, Gaudin's novels contain a fantastic element of skinshifting which may strike many readers not only as odd but also disrespectful because of its

[61] The similarity between *Wolf by Wolf* duology and Suzanne Collin's *The Hunger Games* trilogy consists in their dystopian atmosphere, the motif of a bloody competition designed to commemorate an important event, and the protagonist who, in both series, is a strong, female character committed to bringing down the inhuman political system.

[62] In some aspects, Yael is similar to Arysa Stark, one of the main characters of George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*. Just like Arya, Yael is a young woman who undergoes a traumatic experience (Arya − the execution of her father, Yael − medical experiments and the death of her family and friends) and seeks revenge. Both girls indetify themselves and their family as wolves. Similarily to Arya who recalls the names of her enemies before going to sleep, Yael repeats the names of the people she wants to avenge. Moreover, both Arya and Yael become assassins and acquire the ability of shapeshifting which undermines their sense of identity; just like Arya Stark is taught in the House of Black and White that she has to become "no one", Yael calls herself "no one" (cf. Martin, *A Feast for Crows*; Martin, *A Dance with Dragons*; Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf*; Graudin, *Blood for Blood*).

connection to the Holocaust and historical Nazi medical experiments. However, as will be shown, the motif of skinshifting conveys an important message regarding racial identity and is not meant to trivialize the Holocaust.

Wolf by Wolf and *Blood for Blood* were inspired by Ryan Graudin's lifelong fascination with the history of World War II ("Asking 'What If?"; Graudin, *Ryan Graudin Interview and Excerpt*; *Ryan Graudin on Wolf by Wolf Behind the Scenes*; Graudin, *Reading Group Choices*). In one of the interviews, Graudin reflected:

> There was something so extreme about that time—people went to extraordinary lengths to do both good and evil—and ever since I was a young girl I read everything I could about that era in an effort to understand it. The more I learned about the sheer breadth of the Nazis' crimes against humanity, the more thankful I was that the war ended the way it did. (Graudin, *Ryan Graudin Interview and Excerpt*)

This statement suggests that Graudin intended to use the dystopian alternate history depicted in *Wolf by Wolf* to ratify the present by showing that had the Third Reich won World War II, our history might have looked much worse than it really did. Such a conclusion is in accordance with the novels, for the world that emerges after Yael's intervention seems similar to ours, thus implying that our timeline is the best of all possible timelines.

Two sites of memory are explored in Ryan Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood*: the Holocaust[63], through which themes such as identity, race, and memory are discussed, and Adolf Hitler, who is depicted as the epitome of evil. Therefore, the analysis of

[63] Like in other alternate history novels speculating about the Axis victory, the term "Holocaust" is not used in *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* because the Nazi society does not want to remember about the mass extermination of racial minorities. Therefore, there is no possibility for the term "Holocaust" to appear in public discourse.

sites of memory that follows focuses on the Holocaust and its symbols as well as on the figure of Adolf Hitler.

The Holocaust pervades the duology through well-known imagery of the Shoah, such as trains, concentration camps, medical experiments, and tattoos; *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* also fictionalize motifs typical for Holocaust literature and scholarship, such as loss of identity, trauma, mental scars, and the difficulty of comprehending the enormity of the genocide (Lemann, "Odpominanie" 119; Brown 134). The first book starts with young Yael's journey to the concentration camp, and the second ends with the protagonist returning to the camp to commemorate people murdered by the Nazis and symbolically claim the space as her own. Since the traumatic experience of the Holocaust not only scars Yael but also changes her physical appearance, turns her into a skinshifter, and defines her goals, it might be said that the whole duology revolves around the Shoah and its meaning for individual and collective memory.

What distinguishes *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* from other works analyzed in this dissertation is its extensive and relatively realistic depiction of concentration camps. Even though the protagonist of Brendan DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle* becomes one of the inmates of an American camp, he remains there for a short period; moreover, there are no mass murder facilities or medical experiments in the facility. In contrast, the concentration camp described in Ryan Graudin's works reflects historical Nazi death camps in terms of the conditions the prisoners lived in and what they were subjected to. In the first installment of the duology, there are multiple flashbacks to Yael's childhood and her experiences in the concentration camp. The girl reminisces how the bunk she shared with her mother, Miriam, and three other women, was infested with lice and that she was always hungry (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 8). When Yael tries to recollect an elderly Russian woman called "Babushka", she remembers that to get to Babushka's bunk, she had to climb "through the jumble of bony,

inked limbs, and bristle-hair scalps" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 49). The descriptions of the outside are sparse, only hinting at what Nazi guards did to the inmates, probably because young Yael is not fully aware of what the camp was for. However, she can sense it, for she describes the camp as pervaded with "the smell of death" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 111) and "the smoke spewing, blotting out the sun. …the hungry black smoke" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 54); the girl also points to "those brick buildings no one returned from" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 54). When Yael returns to the camp as an eighteen-year-old woman who is fully aware of what is happening inside these buildings, she immediately calls them "the killing machine" and "crematorium" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 289). Interestingly, both novels point out that not only Jews perished in the Holocaust; when Yael sneaks into the concentration camp in *Blood for Blood*, she muses that it has always been filled not only with Jews but also Aryan political prisoners and other people whom Hitler considered subhuman: Romani, Slavs, and homosexuals (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 289), thus universalizing the Shoah and showing that Nazism was not only anti-Semitic but racist in general.

Another motif explored in the duology and frequently associated with the Holocaust is medical experiments. In the novels, they are conducted on children, thus provoking an emotional response from the reader. Dr. Geyer's Experiment Eighty-Five is aimed at creating a substance that would change people's physical features and turn them into perfect Aryans[64]. Ironically, it is designed not for Jews or other races but for Germans; as Dr. Geyer excitedly explains to Reichsführer Himmler, "What would take generations with eugenics could be accomplished with just a few injections! Those of us with flawless pedigrees who want more desirable traits can have them" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 117). The experiments are painful and dangerous; young Yael, who is not yet aware of what is done to her, is injected with substances that cause extreme pain, life-threatening fevers, and unsettling changes in

[64] Thus, Dr. Geyer's experiments also hint at the subject of eugenics and Nazi idea of racial purity.

appearance. The girl notices that her skins start flaking, her hair becomes lighter, and her eye color gets brighter. When the high fever finally breaks, she realizes that the raw shine of her skin "was gone, peeled away ... No more splotches or spots. Her skin was soft, white as milk. Her fingers danced up, pulled out a single strand of hair. It was shock pale" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 88). She looks so different that her mother suffers a nervous breakdown and claims she is not her daughter.

For Yael, the psychological torture of not being recognized by her own mother is almost as unbearable as physical pain because it further undermines her sense of self. As a concentration camp inmate, she was stripped of her identity figuratively and literally. The camp identification numbers tattooed on the girl's hand dehumanized and marked her as Dr. Geyer's property. Nazi doctors consequently referred to her as "the subject", thus denying her humanity and turning her into an object that could be studied and examined. As a result of Dr. Geyer's experiments, Yael changes her appearance, her "Jewish traits" disappear, and she can no longer recognize herself. She also loses all the ties to her past; her family and friends die in the Holocaust, and when she escapes from the concentration camp, she has to keep skinshifting to protect herself. The ability to skinshift exacerbates Yael's identity crisis because, after years of changing her appearance, she can no longer remember how she really looks like (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 328). Therefore, the girl is robbed virtually of all markers of identity; physical appearance, family, cultural and national identity, and memory of life before World War II. Thus, she often perceives herself as hollow and fragmented: "Her self-reflection was no reflection at all. It was a shattered mirror. Something she had to piece together, over and over again … Loss by loss" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 47). Yael's constant skinshifting reflects her fractured identity. The girl manages to recreate her real appearance only after she finds a photo Dr. Geyer took when she was brought to the camp; however, the face Yael imagines as her own is nothing more than a projection of how she

could have looked like as an adult woman made on the basis of a photo taken when she was six years old.

Apart from commenting on the issue of identity, the theme of medical experiments emphasizes the horrific character of the Nazi ideology of racial purity. Its affective charge is reinforced by the fact that Dr. Geyer experiments on children; in *Wolf by Wolf*, the narrative focuses on the protagonist, the first child to survive Experiment Eighty-Five, while in *Blood for Blood* the attention shifts to Miriam, who was chosen to replace Yael. When the girls meet, Miriam tells Yael how she was experimented on, sure that Dr. Geyer would not limit himself to studying her blood but would reach for her "lung, a brain, a heart"(Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 161), and how the doctor extended his experimentations and brought in new "test subjects". The enormity of Experiment Eighty-Five is depicted in *Blood for Blood* when Luka Löwe reads Dr. Geyer's documentation stolen by Yael:

> There were more pictures. More children … some on the verge of adolescence, others too young to be even in school − stared at the camera … Luka shuffled through these with a growing sense of horror, one that gnawed an open pit in his stomach. Each collection of pictures, each *child* ended the same way − a postmortem snapshot clipped to an autopsy report. All looked eerily the same; chalky skin; empty, water-pale eyes; hair the color of nothing; left arms bare and turned out, inked with numbers. Miriam's numbers. Yael's colorlessness. … This is not possible. No person could endure this. No person could *do* this. But it had been done. … It was only a fraction of suffering, he realized as he stared at the many papers. … He saw what he could not unsee: the work of devils, executed by the hands of men. … Luka's teeth felt like they were rotting in his mouth. Bile. A mist rimmed his eyes. (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 313–14)

The above description of the experiment is meant to shock the reader and raise moral indignation. The scene is reminiscent of Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* and Jason Tull's reaction when he sees Mallory/Gloria's memorabilia and understands that her story is true. Luka behaves in a similar fashion; when he reads through the documentation Dr. Geyer compiled, he finally understands what Yael and Miriam went through and rebels against the Nazi society. His revulsion and terror are supposed to serve as an example of what the reader should feel when confronted with the Holocaust. In turn, Luka's realization that there were countless other experiments before and after Experiment Eighty-Five is also a reminder of real Nazi crimes, for even though the motif of skinshifting is fictive[65], the Nazis really conducted medical experiments on children, which often resulted in their death (Weindling).

The descriptions of the concentration camps, Dr. Geyer's experiments on children, and Yael's psychological trauma cast the Holocaust as a despicable atrocity. Therefore, Graudin's novels are also critical of the society that allowed it to happen. The action of the novels takes place in 1956, over ten years after the end of World War II and the completion of the Final Solution (even though some Jews managed to survive). The society that emerged after the war tries to repress the memory of the Shoah, and the politics of memory pursued by Adolf Hitler and his inner circle supports that. Consequently, nobody knows what happened inside concentration camps. German children such as Felix Wolfe or Luka Löwe are taught that Jews were their enemies: "*Untermensch*, his [Luka Löwe's] racial sciences teacher had called them, citing facts about skull sizes and bloodlines. *Enemy of the Aryan race* had been his own father's terminology of choice ... *Thieves* and *devils* were also thrown out" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 188). When the boy recollects his childhood in Hamburg, he remembers his

[65] The motif of skinshifting allows gaining emotional distance from the plot of *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* because it serves as a constant reminder of the novels' fictiveness, which is important for young readers to whom they are addressed.

fascination with yellow stars stitched on the clothes of Jewish children and their gradual disappearance; when he asked his mother where they went, she just answered "away" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 312). In school, Luka and other children were taught that subhuman races were relocated or sent to labor camps to make room for the Aryan race. Later, as a teenager, he grew suspicious of that explanation because it was too simple and "did not speak to the tangled skeletons of the Muscovy territories. They did not still the winds … filling Hamburg with a smell that singed his insides, a smell his mother and teachers and neighbors all went out of their way to ignore" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 312). Luka finally concludes that it was easier for German society to turn their heads and pretend that nothing is happening than accept the truth and be forced to react.

Luka's recollections demonstrate society's unwillingness to take responsibility and react to the atrocities committed by their government. Like Americans in Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau*, they prefer to repress the truth to preserve a positive self-image and teach their children to do the same. In adopting Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda and refusing to preserve the memory of the Jewish population, they become less human. When Yael confesses to Miriam that she sees herself as a monster because of her skinshifting abilities, Miriam fervently argues that "Monsters are the ones who watch other people do these things and do nothing to stop it. You and I are not monsters" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 297), thus criticizing the indifference of Nazi society.

The novels imply that memory and empathy are the only weapons against this indifference. *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* are concerned with individual and collective memory and the duty to remember the Holocaust. On the individual level, memory makes people who they are. Yael's memory of the people she loved is the only thing that upholds her identity; therefore, she used camp identification numbers to create wolf tattoos, each symbolizing one person close to her, thus turning the very thing that was supposed to

dehumanize her into an emblem of her humanity. When she looks at her tattoos every evening, she is reminded, "*You must never forget the dead*. Remember and be rendered" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 266). In this way, the memory of the people she loved allows her to preserve her empathy and conscience. Graudin's novels argue that on a collective level, memory has the potential to create better, more just societies. Much of Yael and Luka's plan to bring down the Third Reich hinges on reinstating the memory of the Holocaust into collective memory because Luka is confident that when people hear about the concentration camps and Doppelganger Project, they will react the way he did and rebel against the Nazi authorities. He is therefore convinced that once you acknowledge the repressed memories, you will no longer be able to uphold your indifference and turn your back on the suffering of Jews and other victims of the Nazi regime.

All in all, Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* revolve around the Holocaust, casting it as an unimaginable and despicable crime whose horror is underlined by the story's focus on medical experiments on children. Through the character of Yael, a Jewish girl who was robbed of everything that makes people who they are, *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* fictionalize motifs typical for Holocaust literature, such as loss of identity, trauma, mental scars, and the difficulty of comprehending the enormity of the Holocaust. The novels also call attention to the moral obligation to stand up to evil because, as Miriam argues, people who watch others suffer and do nothing about it become responsible for their pain. Moreover, by emphasizing Yael's personal need to remember and Luka's quest to confront his society with the truth about the death camps, *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* remind their reader that it is important to maintain a meaningful and empathic connection with the past. Yael and Luka are cast as role models and characters that celebrate memory, commemorate the victims of the Nazi regime, and fight to improve their society. Through Yael and Luka, who become

better, more emphatic people, the novels argue that contemporary societies should remember the Holocaust because this memory can help build a better, more compassionate society.

The second site of memory explored in Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood*, though not in such an extensive way as the Holocaust, is Adolf Hitler, who is depicted as an epitome of evil. The Führer is the main villain around whom the plots of *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* revolve because in both novels the Resistance entrusts Yael with the task of executing him, hoping that without Hitler the Third Reich would collapse. Therefore, like other alternate histories analyzed in this dissertation, Graudin's novels adhere to the idea that the course of history is controlled by great men.

In *Wolf by Wolf,* Nazi Germany wins World War II because of two factors. First of all, the United States yields to isolationist tendencies and decides that World War II is Europe's war. Secondly, in 1940 Adolf Hitler decides to launch Operation Sea Lion and defeats Great Britain. These points of divergence are never described in detail, so it is not possible to establish why America became an isolationist country; perhaps the changes in the course of World War II initiated by Operation Sea Lion rendered it unnecessary for Japan to attack Pearl Harbor, and therefore the United States lacked the impetus to join the Allies. Still, it is clear that the Third Reich emerged victorious thanks to Adolf Hitler's leadership, for all characters in the novel credit the Führer with winning World War II. When Yael looks at the map of Europe hanging in the headquarters of the resistance, she is impressed despite herself:

> Whenever Yael studied this map, she couldn't help but be amazed at the scale of Hitler's victory. According to the stories, when the Führer first announced his vision of an occupied Africa and Europe to his generals, some of them had laughed. 'Impossible,' they'd said. 'It can't be done'. But the word *impossible* held no sway over a man like Hitler. He sent his armies marching across

> Europe anyway; his ruthless SS troops ignored all 'civilized' rules of war, mowing down soldiers and civilians alike (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 19).

In the above passage, Adolf Hitler is depicted as a man holding god-like power who has no regard for human life, which is demonstrated by the fact that he waged war not only against enemy armies but also the civilian population. Moreover, he created an oppressive postwar world and was the mastermind behind the genocide of Jews, Slavs, and other people he deemed "subhuman". The fact that the Holocaust, with concentration camps and experiments on children, is depicted in Graudin's novels as unimaginable evil underscores the depravity of its creator.

The cruelty of Adolf Hitler's political system is further emphasized by Yael's journey from Germania to Tokyo and back. During her journey, she goes "through a dead land" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 151) of empty cities whose population was deported to labor camps, "no-man's-land made of gutted villages and crumbling roads" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 230), a town which seems "a collection of bones and stillness" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 142), and "North Africa's skeleton villages and Baghdad's gutted streets" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 142). These images of desolate houses, empty towns, and destroyed cities accentuate the brutality of the Nazi army and the barbarism of Adolf Hitler, who sent thousands of native populations to concentration camps.

As has been mentioned earlier, Graudin's novels fixate on the idea that without Adolf Hitler, the Third Reich would immediately collapse. The resistance leader, General Erwin Reiniger, explains to Yael that once Hitler dies, the Wehrmacht soldiers will be freed from the *Führereid*, a fealty oath every soldier in the Reich had to swear the Führer, and able to join him and his Germania resistance cell (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 221). However, to achieve that, Hitler has to be assassinated in public; if he died behind the walls of the Chancellery, his death would be covered up, and nothing would change. Thus, people must

see Hitler dying because only then will they realize the resistance exists and find the courage to join a Reich-wide uprising against the Party (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 57). When it turns out that the man Yael killed during the Victor's Ball in *Wolf by Wolf* is a skinshifter, the resistance decides that she must return to Germania and execute the real Führer. When in a major plot twist, Yael and Luka publicly prove that Adolf Hitler had been dead for four years and the Reich has been governed by Heinrich Himmler, the whole country rebels against the Party. The public outrage is so great that even Wehrmacht soldiers join Reiniger's army, and, as a result, "the swastikas of Germania burned and burned until the skies went black and the New Order became a thing of the past" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 454). When Reiniger takes control over the Reich, the world slowly comes back to the way it was before World War II, and Yael can finally feel safe.

The fact that Adolf Hitler's death is the only thing that can secure the victory of the resistance testifies to the Führer's significance as an embodiment of the Third Reich. Wehrmacht soldiers and Nazi propaganda portray Hitler as a god. When Luka's father, a veteran of the Russian front, returns home from the war, he hangs the Führer's portrait over the mantel and talks only of battles. In Luka's childhood memories of Christmas Eve, "the Führer's immortalized face loomed" (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 8) over the picture of the Holy Family, thus indicating Hitler's god-like status. Luka also notices how during Hitler's speech, the members of Hitler Youth are instructed to look to the Führer and nowhere else during the entire rally (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 105). Luka's childhood memories highlight Hitler's pervasive control over German society and the god-like status he enjoyed.

By contrast, Yael repeatedly refers to Adolf Hitler as a monster. When she listens to one of the Chancellery Chats, she is disgusted: "Word from a monster's mouth. Aged, but still evil red, intoxicating the masses like some potent wine" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 41), and when she sees him for the first time at the Victor's Ball, she thinks to herself, "Monster in the

flesh" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 363). In addition, when Yael watches Hitler's speech on television after her assassination attempt in which she killed one of his doppelganger decoys, she thinks that Hitler is not just any monster but a mythological hydra:

> He'd always been monstrous, but now when Yael watched Hitler looming on the screen, she was reminded of the many-headed hydra … Cut off a head and two more sprang back. Try to kill him once, twice, fifty times, and he only grew stronger, crippling entire nations with a single speech. (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 220)

Therefore, in Yael's eyes, Adolf Hitler takes on monstrous qualities, becoming a cruel, undefeatable hydra.

The portrayal of Adolf Hitler in *Wolf by Wolf* duology as a monstrous and omnipresent figure casts him as the primary perpetrator of the Holocaust. The fact that Hitler's death is enough to dismantle the Nazi system indicates that many citizens are against the ideas of National Socialism, and the Führer is the only person that upholds it. This is supported by the motif of the Holocaust being hidden from the public which suggests that the authorities do not want to reveal what happened to non-Aryan races for fear of people's reaction. Moreover, the return of Jews to Germania after the Führer's death implies that the society is not anti-Semitic, and the whole responsibility for the Holocaust lies with Adolf Hitler and his closest circle. This idea is repeatedly suggested in dialogues between Yael and resistance members, most notably with the leader of the Soviet guerilla soldiers, to whom she says: "The Third Reich is rotting from the inside. People are unhappy with the New Order ... The resistance has been growing. We're strong enough to change things now" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 237–38). It clearly indicates that the majority of society does not support Hitler but is too afraid of him to resist the Nazi regime.

Overall, Adolf Hitler is depicted in *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* as a monstrous figure, an epitome of evil that has to be eliminated to create a better, more just society. The novels imply that Hitler was not supported by the whole society and, therefore, that he alone should be held responsible for the evils of World War II. Therefore, Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* duology subscribes to the mainstream American cultural memory which casts Adolf Hitler as a symbol of evil and a rhetorical device employed as the "other", a counterbalance to American values (Butter; G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made*).

The analysis of the Holocaust and Adolf Hitler as sites of memory employed in *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* provides answers to the questions of the politics of memory pursued in the novels, for Graudin's duology is first and foremost concerned with stressing the importance of the Holocaust and educating its readers about World War II. Ryan Graudin openly admitted that this was her primary goal in writing *Wolf by Wolf*.; in the author's note, she lists historical inspirations, such as Adolf Hitler's New Order, the Third Reich's policy regarding women, Hanna Reitsch − a female Nazi test pilot who inspired the character of Adele Wolfe − or Claus von Stauffenberg's plot to assassinate Hitler. By doing that, she does not only provide historical information, thus potentially educating her readers, but also argues that the diegetic world of her duology is close to the historical record. The author's note indicates that even though the story is fictional and the Axis powers lost World War II, the novels foreground essential historical truths: The Third Reich really existed, World War II happened, the Holocaust happened, and the policies of Nazi Germany described in the books align with Adolf Hitler's ideology (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 381–83). For Graudin, alternate history is a good springboard for learning about actual history, one that can draw in people who have found the subject boring and introduce them to the true history of World War II and the Holocaust (Graudin, *Reading Group Choices*).

In addition, Graudin's comments imply that alternate history can effectively explain the present and project the future in a manner typical for cultural memory. In one of the interviews, she observes that "We need to understand where we've been to inform where we're going" (Graudin, *Reading Group Choices*), asserting that societies need to acknowledge and understand their past in order to shape their present and their future. Still, the condition of a society can be gauged only when we consider its past in the context of the things that happened and those that could have happened. Graudin points to that idea when she writes, "The world within these pages could have been our own. For a time and in a place it was, and we should do our best not to forget that" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 386). Hence, she not only underlines that the diegetic world of *Wolf by Wolf* duology is based on historical facts but also points out that it could have easily become our reality had the Third Reich won World War II. Graudin thus emphasizes that cultural memory of World War II, the Third Reich, and the Holocaust should involve not only the things that really happened but also the things that could have happened. Yael's hypothetical, dystopian world in which Nazi Germany took over Europe and completed the Final Solution should inform our perception of the present and serve as, on the one hand, a source of contentment that the Allies defeated the Axis powers, and, on the other hand, a constant reminder of people's capacity for evil. Therefore, we need to remember World War II and Nazi crimes not only to be thankful that Hitler's New Order never came to be, but also to make sure that it will never happen again.

Even though Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* duology implies through its dystopian scenario that we should be content that America joined World War II and defeated the Axis powers, thus seemingly expressing contentment with the state of the contemporary world, *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* do not shrink from social critique. The novels put the Holocaust to the fore as a universally acknowledged symbol for the violation of human rights and the most extreme instance of racial violence. In a way reminiscent of Quinn's *After Dachau* and

DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle*, Graudin's novels draw on the Holocaust not so much to highlight the suffering of Jewish people but to comment on racism; therefore, *Wolf by Wolf* has a typically American bent. The author herself points that out when she writes about her hope that Yael's story will remind readers that "all people are created equal" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 385). Her reference to the Declaration of Independence underscores the universal message of her alternate history novels: the only thing that matters is what people do, not how they look. However, even without this comment, the American bent of Yael's story is clear; the novels' plot makes it clear that the references to the memory of World War II and the Holocaust are meant to prompt the reader to empathize with the protagonist, and, by extension, with other victims of racial violence. As Graudin puts it, by focusing on Yael's point of view, the novels "push readers out of their own comfort zones and into Yael's many skins" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 385), thus inducing them to experience the world through the eyes of a traumatized representative of a minority group, and imparting a deeper understanding of what racism leads to.

Yael's skinshifting ability ridicules the idea of racial superiority. Even though the girl can assume an appearance of a perfect Aryan, on the inside she is still the same Jewish girl. Her inextricable connection to the Jewish culture is reflected in her eager return to Jewish traditions when the Nazi state is finally dismantled (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 475–77). Yael's changing appearance demonstrates the absurdity of judging people on the basis of their race or looks; after all, appearances can change, but what is inside is unchangeable. This is pointed out by Henryka, a Polish woman working for the Resistance, when she learns that Yael no longer remembers her real face: "*It's okay*, Henryka had told her. *It's what on the inside that matters*" (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 45). Arguably, this message strongly resonates with the duology's intended audience, for the identity struggle is a common theme in young adult fiction.

Moreover, the novel makes a strong case against racism by showing that Yael, treated by the Nazi ideology as subhuman, is deeply humane in her compassion, trust, and readiness to help others, even if they are (or should be) her enemies. Hence, she is more human than the society that dubbed her 'subhuman' and condemned to death in concentration camps. For instance, she develops a connection with Luka Löwe, even though he is not only her competitor in the Axis tour but also a Nazi poster boy whom she should blame for promoting National Socialism; furthermore, she decides against killing Felix Wolfe in *Blood for Blood* because she does not want to cause more pain and suffering. It is her inherent kindness that draws Luka to her even though he was taught to hate Jews. When faced with the information about her Jewish heritage, Luka muses:

> Was it really so surprising that Yael was nothing like the slurs Luka's father/teacher/Führer spewed? That out of all the souls Luka had ever come across, hers was one of the brightest? It held the bravery of one hundred Iron Crosses, melted down and forged into something purer − a courage not corroded by cruelty. (Graudin, *Blood for Blood* 189)

For Luka, Yael's personal qualities outbalance her race, making him question everything he was taught. Luka's attitude toward Yael and his ability to look beyond her physical appearance is supposed to serve as an example to the reader.

Ironically, the very fact that *Wolf by Wolf* duology emphasizes the absurdity of racism testifies to racism's pervasiveness in contemporary American society. In the author's note, Graudin notes that some people may deem it useless and upsetting to ponder what would have happened if the Third Reich had won World War II because, ultimately, Hitler was defeated and the Holocaust stopped. She, however, believes that racism, of which the Holocaust is an extreme example, is by no means a thing of the past:

> For many, it's tempting to dismiss the Nazis and their policies as evils locked away in history. But racism and anti-Semitism are hardly things of the past. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights reported in its 2013 survey on anti-Semitism that 76 percent of the respondents believe anti-Semitism has increased in their countries over the past five years. In fact, at the time I wrote this author's note, both *New York Times* and *Newsweek* had published articles on the rise of anti-Semitism, detailing incidents of mobs attacking synagogues. It's my hope that Yael's story will not only remind readers that all people are created equal, but also challenge people to educate themselves on the history behind the fiction and to use this knowledge to examine our present world. (Graudin, *Wolf by Wolf* 385)

By pointing out the results of surveys on anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic incidents, Graudin reiterates the politics of memory pursued in *Wolf by Wolf* duology: since racism is still with us, we need to remember World War II and the Holocaust because they can help to challenge present-day racial attitudes and ensure that history will never repeat itself. As she adds in an interview on *Wolf by Wolf* for the website of Reading Group Choices: "Racism has plagued our society for a very long time, and it's important to understand just how pervasive it is − how systems we've come to accept as default are actually grown out of intense prejudice and injustice" (Graudin, *Reading Group Choices*). Graudin's author's note and her interviews imply that American society still needs to learn that "all men are created equal", which is why her novels tap into the cultural memory of World War II which became a universally acknowledged symbol of the violation of human rights.

It is interesting to note that Graudin's perspective on the pervasiveness of racism in the contemporary world is strikingly similar to the politics of memory Philip K. Dick expressed in *The Man in the High Castle* and his interviews in the 1970s. Even though Dick

was more overt in his critique of the United States, the message he and Graudin get across is similar: fascism and racism were not defeated in World War II and remain a part of the contemporary world. However, unlike *The Man in the High Castle* that seems skeptical as to whether it is possible to dismantle the oppressive system, *Wolf by Wolf* argues that one person can change the course of history and inspire others to become better people. In all likelihood, this optimistic message stems from Graudin's private belief that racism can be uprooted through empathy and education (Graudin, *Reading Group Choices*), as well as from the fact that *Wolf by Wolf* duology is addressed to young adults who should be offered a positive, inspirational message.

It is difficult to establish how successful Graudin's novels are in their mnemonic message; however, their popularity may indicate that they have exerted a significant influence on their readers. The first volume, *Wolf by Wolf*, was awarded the title of An Amazon Best YA Book of 2015 and shortlisted for *Huffington Post* Top Ten YA of 2015, YALSA[66] 2016 Best Fiction for Young Adults Pick, and the 2016 Amelia Elizabeth Walden Book Award. Reviewers praised *Wolf by Wolf* for Yael's poignant and brutal backstory (Martaus 199; Little et al.), grabbing alternate history setting, and moving themes (Dretzke 11; "One of the Most Intriguing"; "Wolf by Wolf"), although some reviewers expressed their concern over the romance between Yael, a Jewish girl, and Luka, a Nazi poster boy (Matos; "Blood for Blood"; see also "Sarah Tate's Review"; "Audrey's Review"). The novels seem to have resonated with the readers; on Goodreads *Wolf by Wolf* is rated 4.21/5 stars (21,304 ratings), while *Blood for Blood* 4.29/5 stars (8,484 ratings). Many reviews describe strong emotions after reading the books ("Madison's Review"; "Michael's Review of Blood for Blood"; "Arunimaa's Review"), which indicates that Graudin's goal to elicit sympathy for Yael was successful. Moreover, the readers who published their reviews on Goodreads often

[66] Abbreviation for Young Adult Library Services Association.

referenced the Holocaust and World War II, indicating that the books helped them to understand that time and empathize with the victims. For instance, the user "Wren" writes that *Blood for Blood* "helps see the hurt and pain that can come from such a horrible event [the Holocaust]" ("Wren's Review"); "Lisa" expresses her appreciation for Ryan Graudin because "this book taught me so much … history's perspective, human perspective. I feel I have come away richer. more understanding" and reports her emotional damage after reading about "something so evil so real so painful as the Holocaust and WWII" ("Lisa's Review"). The user "Priscilla" recollects the scene in *Blood for Blood* where Yael returns to the concentration camp and writes that "It strikes me afresh how horrifying that period of history was every time I read it. That particular stage of the story also reminds me how easy it is to be ignorant to atrocities when you're on the safe side of the war" ("Priscilla's Review of Blood for Blood"). These are just few representative examples out of over five thousand reviews of *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* published on Goodreads.com. All those comments testify to readers' reactions and reflections pertaining to the *Wolf by Wolf* duology, and seem to prove that Ryan Graudin's politics of memory regarding empathy and the need to uphold the collective memory of the atrocities of World War II and the Holocaust exerted a strong influence on their readers.

7. CY STEIN *ROCKET'S RED GLARE (*2020)

Cy Stein's alternate history novel *Rocket's Red Glare* was published in March 2020, and even though it did not attract wider attention, it is an interesting example of how the memory of World War II can be used to criticize contemporary American politics. Stein's novel combines alternate history, murder mystery, spy thriller, and political satire to tell the story of an alternate America in which Charles Lindbergh becomes the president of the United States, and the Manhattan Project is carried out in secret by the resistance.

The novel is set in New York City and covers the period between December 1940 and October 1941. The protagonist, twenty-two years-old Sid Peskin, is a Jewish graduate student living with his family in the West Bronx. He does his best to pursue his studies in physics at the City College, which proves increasingly difficult because of the internal situation in America and the development of World War II in Europe. In the novel's timeline, the New Deal did not bring the expected results, and Franklin D. Roosevelt died of a heart attack in the middle of his second term. In consequence, the Great Depression continued unabated.

In 1940, the famous aviator Charles Lindbergh is elected the president of the United States on the promise to keep America out of war. He consolidates his power and establishes a cordial relationship between the United States and the Third Reich based on the politics of appeasement. However, Lindbergh's policy of isolationism produces disastrous results. When Nazi Germany attacks the British Isles in 1940, the isolationist Congress refuses to provide material aid for Great Britain; instead, American Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy advises Winston Churchill to surrender. Churchill refuses, the United Kingdom is defeated, and his government is replaced by a group of aristocrats centered around Edward VIII. Adolf Hitler and his advisors, Albert Speer and Herman Göring, decide to use Charles Lindbergh and anti-Semite industrialists like Henry Ford to take control of the United States. They want to start

with silencing America's Jews, which is why the Ambassador of the Third Reich in the United States, Hans Thomsen, threatens Lindbergh that Nazi Germany will introduce economic sanctions against America unless he shuts down the Jew-owned media such as *The New York Times*. Lindbergh, scared that a drop in American export may damage his chance for reelection, consults John Edgar Hoover, the Director of the FBI. Together, they conclude that American courts would never allow the government to close privately-owned media, so they turn to the mayor of New York City for help. In the novel's timeline, Fiorello LaGuardia is no longer the mayor of NYC; he is replaced by Frederick Ch. Trump, an ardent anti-Semite and supporter of the German-American Bund[67]. Trump is easily persuaded that it is in America's best interest to let the Bundists attack Jews, African-Americans, and other minorities living in New York City. Lindbergh and Hoover hope to use these attacks to justify introducing anti-Semitic laws.

Meanwhile, Sid Peskin finds it tricky to navigate his parent's expectations, education, and personal life. The matters get even more complicated when unusual things start happening around him. First, he meets his old friend Joey Falcone, a son of Italian immigrants, who used to be Sid's neighbor. Joey warns Sid that there is a "bad world out there" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 20) and invites him to visit and meet people interested in his work. Astonished, Sid agrees and thanks Joey for giving him a lift to City College. Walking into the college cafeteria, he meets Julius Rosenberg and his wife Ethel, who want him to join the Young Communists League. After a lecture delivered by the prominent physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, Sid decides to retreat to the college library to work on his

[67] In reality, Frederick Christ Trump was the father of the 45th president of the United States, Donald Trump, and a real estate developer. There is no evidence that he was an anti-Semite, although some speculated that he was a member of the Ku Klux Klan, a Nazi spy, and German-American Bund sympathizer (Bump; Stapleton; Corn; Madsen).

calculations. There, he encounters an eccentric man who takes an interest in his work and introduces himself as Leo. Sid is suspicious, especially when he realizes that the man speaks with an Eastern-European accent; unfortunately, he cannot determine what the man wants from him[68].

A few days later, Sid decides to meet his advisor, a renowned physics professor I. Bernard Strauss. He goes to Strauss' where he discovers the body of his advisor. The next day, *New York Times* informs about the murder of Strauss, as well as about the mysterious disappearance of Enrico Fermi, an expatriate Italian physicist. As Sid wonders who killed Strauss, he visits his friend Joey Falcone and meets him, his sister Julia, and the rest of the Falcone family. Vince, Joey's uncle and a Sicilian mobster, seems interested in his college education; Sid, however, ignores him because he is fascinated with Joey's sister Julia whom he soon starts dating. A couple of days later, he is approached by Julius Rosenberg, who warns that he may be in danger because of the mysterious disappearances of America's renowned scientists.

In the meantime, the media inform about riots provoked by German-American Bundists who attacked the largest synagogue in New York City and broke into the headquarters of the local Communist Party. Thanks to the support of Fred Trump and Charles Lindbergh, the Bundists are not punished for their actions. Unfortunately for Lindbergh, it turns out that the measures he introduced against the Jewish population of New York do not satisfy the Third Reich. The German ambassador continues to provide "suggestions for furthering German-American relations", which "incorporated clever methods of

[68] Later in the novel it turns out that the mysterious man is Leo Szilard, a Hungarian physicist and inventor, famous for conceiving the nuclear chain reaction. In our timeline, he wrote the Einstein-Szilard letter which warned the government of the United States that the Third Reich might develop an atomic bomb, and thus encouraged Franklin D. Roosevelt to launch the Manhattan Project.

marginalizing American ethnic and racial minorities" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 85). He also demands the deportation of Enrico Fermi to Europe, unaware that the FBI has no idea what happened to the physicist. To address Adolf Hitler's demands, Lindbergh holds a meeting with J. Edgar Hoover, Frederick Trump, and "a group of anti-Semites, white supremacists, and authoritarian types" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 98), among them Joseph P. Kennedy, Henry Ford, Herbert Hoover, and Gerald L. Ford. During the meeting, Trump proposes declaring martial law, arguing that it would allow the president to bypass Congress and silence the press. Apart from Henry Ford, Gerald L. Smith, and Herbert Hoover, everybody agrees with this proposition. Lindbergh declares martial law under the pretext of an "unacceptable increase in violence" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 105); consequently, New York Times is shut down, and its publisher is arrested.

In May 1941, Sid decides to arrange a meeting with Albert Einstein to discuss the hypothesis he has developed. Einstein is impressed by Sid's work pertaining to the practical application of the concept of chain reaction, and promises to get him in touch with the scientist who conceived the idea, Leo Szilard. Only then does Sid realize that the eccentric man he met in the library a few months before was the famous physicist Leo Szilard. During the conversation, Einstein suggests that Sid's hypothesis can lead to a development of an atomic bomb, and that he is not the first person to come up with that idea. He asks Sid to keep this secret because the calculations cannot fall into the hands of the Nazis or the American government. The next day, Sid is abducted by Italian mobsters and thrown into a cellar where he learns Leo Szilard has been working with Sicilian mobsters, Uncle Vince, the Mangano brothers, and Louis "Lepke" Buchalter with whom he created a secret anti-Lindbergh resistance movement. The leader of the organization is called "Omega", and the resistance is dedicated to the removal of Lindberg and the extirpation of all racist and Nazi influence in American society. Sid readily decides to join.

In the White House, Lindbergh grows increasingly agitated because Adolf Hitler believes that Jewish influence in America was not suppressed effectively enough and is angry with the FBI for failing to locate Enrico Fermi. Moreover, he wants to build a naval base in Mexico and demands Lindbergh's approval. The German ambassador warns that if the United States does not fulfill these demands, the Third Reich will not only introduce a continent-wide blockade of American imports but also reveal sensitive information about Lindbergh's personal life. At this point, the action of the novel focuses on Leo Szilard, who is approached by J.F. Kennedy, who reveals that he possesses intelligence that could take down Lindbergh and is willing to share it, provided that he is allowed to join the resistance. When asked why, JFK confides that during the time he spent in the Third Reich, he saw concentration camps and the unimaginable things the Nazis did to their Jews. He decided it was immoral to support such evil and started looking for a way to undermine the Lindbergh administration. While the resistance leaders wonder whether they can trust Kennedy, JFK learns that the FBI knows about Leo Szilard's role in the resistance and is preparing to attack their headquarters. JFK warns Szilard and tells him that Lindbergh has a second family in Germany: a lover named Hilda and three children. Omega decides this is the political dynamite they have been waiting for and leaks the information to the press. The revelation causes public outrage, Anne Morrow Lindbergh files for divorce, and Charles Lindbergh's reputation becomes irrevocably damaged.

In the meantime, Sid and other scientists working for the resistance conclude that it is possible to develop an atomic bomb and are transported to Los Alamos to join J. Robert Oppenheimer's research group. Together, they successfully construct the bomb thus helping to ensure the Allied victory.

In the White House, the president is visited by Democratic and Republican leaders of the House and Senate who demand his resignation. Lindbergh has no choice but to obey and

resigns in favor of his vice president, Robert A. Taft. It turns out that Taft, who used to be an isolationist and appeaser, learned from Lindbergh's mistakes and abandons the politics of isolationism to support the Soviet Union. Thanks to the weapons from the United States, the Soviet Union manages to oppose the Third Reich, and Nazi Germany has to retreat from the United Kingdom. Eventually, America joins the war on the Allies' side, Kennedy becomes a war hero, Frederick Trump Sr. goes bankrupt, and Sid Peskin marries Julia Falcone. In their final conversation, Sid convinces his wife that nothing like Lindbergh will ever happen again because Lindbergh was unique, a "product of a bad time in the country's history. Fascism's dead in America. It will never dare raise its ugly head again" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 287). The third-person omniscient narrator comments: "Well, perhaps" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 287).

The overall premise of Cy Stein's *Rocket's Red Glare* is strikingly similar to Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*. Both novels are set in the early 1940s and have Jewish protagonists who have to learn how to navigate their lives in a fascist America. Both refer to countless historical figures; in Cy Stein's novels, these are, among others, Albert Einstein, the German ambassador Hans Thomsen, Albert Speer, Enrico Fermi, J. E. Hoover, John F. Kennedy, Herbert Hoover, Lepke Buchalter, Henry Ford, Harry S. Truman, and many others. In *The Plot Against America* and *Rocket's Red Glare*, Charles Lindbergh is elected as the president of the United States, albeit in Cy Stein's novel it happens only because Franklin D. Roosevelt died in the middle of his second term. In addition, Lindbergh's presidency develops like in Roth's novel: after becoming the president of the United States, he refuses to interfere in World War II, enters into an alliance with Nazi Germany, promotes fascist ideology, and allows the German-American Bund to attack ethnic minorities. On top of that, *Rocket's Red Glare* seems to borrow the idea of Lindbergh being blackmailed by the Third Reich into introducing fascist laws. In *The Plot Against America*, Rabbi Lionel Bengelsdorf

claims that Charles and Anne Lindbergh were blackmailed by the Nazis who had kidnapped their son Charles Lindbergh, Jr., and had raised him as a model Hitler Youth to coerce the Lindberghs to promote isolationism in the United States. *Rocket's Red Glare* also uses the motif of blackmail, but in Stein's novel Adolf Hitler threatens to reveal information about Lindbergh's second family in Germany. However, despite this slight difference, these two threads are strikingly similar. What is more, both *The Plot Against America* and *Rocket's Red Glare* imply that Charles Lindbergh was a one-off, a fluke that changed the history of the early 1940s but had little impact on the overall course of history because in both novels history comes back on its right track once Lindbergh is removed from office.

Having acknowledged all these similarities, it has to be pointed out that Stein's novel differs from Roth's in many other aspects; *Rocket's Red Glare* cannot compete with *The Plot Against America* in terms of literary merit; moreover, it focuses more on macrohistory than microhistory and is split into two subplots, one concerning Sid Peskin and his path to joining the Manhattan Project, and the second regarding political negotiations between Adolf Hitler, Charles Lindbergh, and Frederick Trump. These two subplots radically differ in tone; while Sid's story is narrated by a reasonably objective third-person omniscient narrator, the political subplot has a satiric and quizzical character. As a result, one may have an impression that *Rocket's Red Glare* was intended to serve as symbolic revenge on Donald Trump, and Sid's subplot serves as an excuse for an angry political satire. This may have been true, for Cy Stein openly wrote in one of his blog posts that he suffered from "a bad case of Trump Derangement Syndrome" (Stein, "Trump and How 'Rocket's Red Glare' Came To Be"), that is an intense and irrational dislike of the 45th president of the United States and had written *Rocket's Red Glare* in reaction to Donald Trump's presidency. For this reason, Stein's novel constitutes an example of how alternate history and memory of World War II

can be used instrumentally to comment on contemporary American politics and promote particular political agendas.

Cy Stein's novel is concerned primarily with the politics of memory which springs from three primary sites of memory: Charles Lindbergh, Adolf Hitler, and the Holocaust. Unlike Roth's *Plot Against America* or DuBois' *Amerikan* Eagle, Stein's *Rocket's Red Glare* does not really employ Franklin D. Roosevelt as a site of memory[69], focusing instead on the figures of Lindbergh and Hitler. As has been mentioned above, Sid's personal history is overshadowed by the political subplot of *Rocket's Red Glare*, whose most prominent figures are Charles Lindbergh and Adolf Hitler. The Führer is a menacing figure, threatening because of his fascist views and influence over the masses. When he appears for the first time in the second chapter, he is described as "The despoiler of France and conqueror of England" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 7) with a talent for "seducing the masses in the very way they begged to be seduced" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 7). The novel demonstrates Hitler's insatiable desire for power when he exclaims "Today Germany, tomorrow the world!" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 9), or when he plots how to keep the United States out of war, and plans to conquer the Soviet Union. *Rocket's Red Glare* also emphasizes Hitler's racism, mainly by describing his angry rants in which he contends that, for example, "America was born of miscegenation among negroes, Gypsies, and Jews" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 112), "if millions of subhuman Slavs must starve, then that will be their fate!" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 190), or "that nation of Jews and mongrels, the United States" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 251). The Führer's contempt for ethnic minorities and language he uses cast him as a negative, abhorrent figure. His menacing character is also underlined by Julius Rosenberg, who calls Hitler a psychopathic killer "who divides the world into those being exploited and

[69] Franklin D. Roosevelt is mentioned only once at the very beginning of the novel when Sid listens to Lindbergh's speech and wishes Roosevelt had lived (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 2).

those to be exploited in the future" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 73), as well as by J. F. Kennedy when he tells Leo Szilard about the horrors he witnessed during his stay in the Third Reich.

Despite these descriptions of Adolf Hitler's racism, Stein's Führer is dissimilar to the omnipresent monster depicted in Ryan Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* duology. In *Rocket's Red Glare*, the threatening character of Hitler's rants is deflated by the narrator's satirical comments and quizzical scenes in which, for example, the Führer starts ruminating about his past experiences as a boy from provincial Austria and a failed artist (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 7) or uses German words and exclamation marks that render him comical and childlike. Hitler's arrogance and megalomania, symbolized by the dream to build a new capital of the Third Reich with a hall ten times larger than St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, are also ridiculed when his frenzied speech about the shape of the metropolis is interrupted by a digestive disorder, a lengthy description of his hypochondria, and the drugs he takes to boost his energy (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 111). On top of that, Adolf Hitler reveals himself to be a fool, for his plan to establish control over America fails miserably when Robert A. Taft becomes the president of the United States and abandons the politics of isolationism. Therefore, Hitler emerges as a half-menacing, half-comic figure with delusions of grandeur.

By contrast, Charles Lindbergh, who is cast as Adolf Hitler's American counterpart, lacks Hitler's menacing character and turns out to be much more grotesque. Charles Lindbergh is entirely unprepared to be the president of the United States. He is depicted as a populist who tells people what they want to hear and has no moral backbone whatsoever. Lindbergh is only interested in power, which is why he cooperates with Nazi Germany; actually, the only time he tries to oppose the Third Reich is the creation of a Nazi naval base in Mexico, which Lindbergh defied for fear of being impeached. Still, his dissent was quickly stifled when the German ambassador threatened to reveal the information about his second

family publicly. As the novel demonstrates, Lindbergh is naïve in his belief that the politics of appeasement will work and that the United States can peacefully cooperate with Nazi Germany; after all, as the narrator comments, "the more Hitler got what he wanted, the more he craved" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 69). What is more, Lindbergh cannot grasp the consequences of his political program; in fact, he is not interested in doing so because the only thing he cares about is being elected for the second term. Hitler disdains Lindbergh and calls him an amateur who knows nothing about politics or history (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 9), and the plot of the novel seems to confirm his observation.

At the same time, Lindbergh is similar to Hitler in his racism and megalomania. As he explains to the German ambassador in America, he adheres to the vision of society in which "On the bottom are the negroes − an inferior population … must be treated with paternal neglect and never be allowed to participate in governance. … On the top, then, are white folks − born leaders" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 29). In addition, he believes that the poor and ethnic minorities, whom he calls "lesser people" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 85), cannot be allowed to participate in governing the United States. Lindbergh also allows the race riots provoked by the German-American Bund to continue without punishing the perpetrators.

As can be seen, Lindbergh's ignorance combined with his blatant racism make him a comic and dangerous person, eerily similar to Adolf Hitler. Even though the Führer is a much more sinister figure, he and Lindbergh are depicted as populists interested in maintaining their power at all costs, comic in their delusions of grandeur but dangerous in their racism. Therefore, Hitler and Lindbergh are so similar in their personalities and views that they appear to be the same person.

Unlike in Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, where Charles Lindbergh is cast as an antithesis of Franklin D. Roosevelt, in Cy Stein's *Rocket's Red Glare* the focus is on Lindbergh as Hitler's double. While Roth's novel uses the figure of Roosevelt as an

embodiment of American democracy and a symbol of what America should be, Stein's book concentrates on describing what America should not be. Therefore, Adolf Hitler and Charles Lindbergh serve as negative reference points, symbols of everything America should resist. And, in fact, it does, which is evident in Sid's subplot where New York ethnic minorities form an alliance to remove Lindbergh from office. The resistance movement is created by Jews, Italians, and immigrants from Central Europe, which implies that they are the ones who represent the true spirit of America.

As for the Holocaust, it is predominantly used to foreground the consequences of racism and authoritarianism. The Holocaust in *Rocket's Red Glare* is split into two separate representations, the first one being the persecution of Jews in Europe and the second one the possibility of the Holocaust happening in the United States. Even though the Holocaust is not as important a site of memory as in Roth's *The Plot Against America*, DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle*, or Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* duology, it remains one of the crucial symbols which has a substantial impact on the course of events.

Throughout the novel, various characters provide hints of information about the plight of Jews in Europe, but it is J. F. Kennedy who brings it to the fore. When he approaches Leo Szilard and asks to join the resistance, he explains his motivations by referring to his experiences in the Third Reich:

> What the Germans are doing is not conceivable by normal-thinking people. They are systematically, methodically, and in cold blood, moving forward with their plans to murder the entire Jewish population of Europe. The Russian Jews were their first targets, but only the first. Thousands upon thousands are already dead, shot into giant pits by the Germans and their helpers. Men, women, and children, no distinctions made. … more than two million Jews the

> Nazis have ghettoized in occupied Poland. And I fear the ghetto, as bad as it is, may the antechamber to far worse. (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 178–79)

Kennedy is so terrified by what he saw and heard from various Germans that he decides to rebel against his father, Joseph P. Kennedy, who cooperates with president Lindbergh and supports his racial policies. At first, Leo Szilard does not believe JFK, arguing that Germany is still a civilized country, to which Kennedy answers that because of Hitler and Göbbels, it no longer is. This scene is mirrored later in the novel when Kennedy is introduced to the gathering of scientists; he tells his story again, and they react like Szilard did. The disbelief the characters express casts the Holocaust as an unimaginable atrocity. For Kennedy, the persecution of Jews is "monumental evil … evil on an unimaginable scale. Evil so despicable, so malevolent, even Satan would gaze on it in thunderstruck wonder" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 179); it forces him to reevaluate his actions, join the resistance, and divulge the information about Lindbergh's German family. Therefore, the Holocaust becomes a turning point; the release of information about Lindbergh's bigamy undermines his credibility and eventually leads him to resign in favor of his vice president.

Cy Stein's *Rocket's Red Glare* speculates about the possibility of an American Holocaust in a similar manner that Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* does. Like in Roth's novel, *Rocket's Red Glare* depicts a looming possibility of an American Holocaust, especially through its conflation of Charles Lindbergh with Adolf Hitler. In a manner similar to *The Plot Against America*, Stein recollects famous anti-Semites of the early 1940s, as well as historical figures accused of expressing anti-Semitic views, such as Henry Ford, Joseph P. Kennedy, Frederick Ch. Trump, J. Edgar Hoover, Gerald L. K. Smith, Fritz Kuhn, and his German-American Bund. By pointing to these historical figures, the novel reminds the reader that anti-Semitism was a historical reality of the United States in the 1940s.

Nevertheless, *Rocket's Red Glare* argues that despite these instances of anti-Semitism, the Holocaust is not likely to happen in America. It is reflected in the fact that Lindbergh loses public support when he introduces martial law and does nothing against racial riots breaking out in American cities. Even Adolf Hitler understands that when he muses: "paradoxically, the racial violence that lifted us to power here in Germany has not been to the liking of the Americans. … They prefer a gentler approach … violence Americans seem to abhor" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 252–53). Therefore, Stein's novel implies that American society as a whole is not racist and detests violence, thus attributing the responsibility for anti-Semitism and racial violence to its leader, Charles Lindbergh. Moreover, the novel points out that the American political system, especially the Constitution and the courts, would not allow the Holocaust to happen. As Lindbergh complains to the German ambassador, "My problem is … that there isn't much I can do about them [Jews]. …there's that Constitution the Democrats are always babbling about. … because of our legal system, I have limited power in these matters" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 29–30). Lindbergh's words leave little doubt that he would be willing to do everything Adolf Hitler asks him to do, but the American legal system prevents him from introducing measures against Jews and other ethnic minorities.

Overall, *Rocket's Red Glare* is more optimistic in its appraisal of the United States than *The Plot Against America*. While it speculates about the possibility of the American Holocaust and points to famous anti-Semites, it argues that the American political system based on the Constitution of the United States would preclude any attempts at introducing systematic persecution of American ethnic minorities. What is more, the novel underlines the horror of the Holocaust through J. F. Kennedy, who finds it impossible to continue working for people who support Nazi Germany precisely because he learns about the Shoah. Hence, *Rocket's Red Glare* emphasizes the uniqueness of the Holocaust as an incomparable and

unprecedented event in human history; Kennedy describes it as a despicable, malevolent, and monumental evil (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 179) which should be opposed at all costs.

Cy Stein's approach to the sites of memory described above stems from his political agenda. The conflation of Charles Lindbergh and Adolf Hitler, the depiction of the Holocaust as an unimaginable atrocity no one should support, and the motif of American society opposing the president of the United States are all supposed to provide a commentary on contemporary American politics, especially on Donald Trump's presidency. As Stein admitted in his blog post, Trump crossed a red line "with his pursuit of the Central Park Five. He followed this by his promotion of birtherism, and comments about Judge Curiel" (Stein, "Trump and How 'Rocket's Red Glare' Came To Be"). What is more, the author observes how Donald Trump's comments about Judge Curiel made in the context of the United States-Mexico wall case terrified him because they reminded him of Adolf Hitler's speeches in which he demonized the Jews claiming that they were insufficiently German by blood. That association between Donald Trump and Adolf Hitler inspired him to write *Rocket's Red Glare* (Stein, "Trump and How 'Rocket's Red Glare' Came To Be"). That story explains the way in which Stein portrays political leaders in his novel and his insistence on attributing all blame for American anti-Semitism to Hitler and Lindbergh.

There are three figures in *Rocket's Red Glare* that serve as stand-ins for Donald Trump: Adolf Hitler, Charles Lindbergh, and Frederick Ch. Trump, each embodying a slightly different personality trait Stein attributes to the 45th president of the United States. As has been analyzed, Adolf Hitler is depicted as a fascist, self-confident megalomaniac, while Charles Lindbergh is an incompetent and naïve egomaniac. In turn, the novel describes Frederick Ch. Trump as a grossly foolish businessman who cares about nothing but money. Cy Stein uses these three historical figures to provide a scathing critique of the 45th president of the United States. The connection between Charles Lindbergh, Adolf Hitler, and Donald

Trump is established primarily by the language they speak. In the second chapter, Adolf Hitler declares that he intends to "make Germany great again" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 9), which is an obvious reference to Donald Trump's political slogan from his 2016 presidential campaign. Furthermore, Adolf Hitler and Charles Lindbergh frequently use epistrophic punctuation, that is the repetition of short phrases conveying an affective or epistemic stance, often accompanied by hyperboles; epistrophic punctuation is one of the typical rhetoric devices Donald Trump uses in his speeches (Sclafani 39; see also Björkenstam and Grigonytė). For instance, Hitler explains to Göring that "we have *friends, many good friends,* in North America" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 10, my emphasis), while Charles Lindbergh tells J. F. Kennedy that his father is "a *wonderful man, a great man*" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 86, my emphasis), and tries to convince his advisors that "there are *lots of fine people, very fine people*, in Germany, in the German government" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 101, my emphasis). These phrases not only use the same rhetorical device that Donald Trump uses in his speeches but also bring to mind his infamous comment about fine people "on both sides" made with regard to the white supremacist rally that took place in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017 ("Trump's Comments on White Supremacists"; R. Klein). Lindbergh's use of the phrase "fine people" to defend Nazi Germany mirrors Trump's defense of white nationalist protesters in Charlottesville, thus implicitly criticizing the 45th president of the United States. Therefore, by providing a connection between Charles Lindbergh and Nazi Germany, Stein's novel imputes fascist sympathies to Donald Trump,

The figure of Frederick Ch. Trump is a straightforward allusion to his son. In the novel, Frederick Trump is depicted as a foolish businessman who cares about nothing but money − and, just like Lindbergh, is highly incompetent. For instance, his scheme to borrow money from Nazi Germany to build a skyscraper in New York City ends in utter disaster. Frederick Trump approaches the German ambassador and coaxes him to fund the

construction of, as he calls it, "Trump Tower", by promising to hang the portrait of Adolf Hitler on the ground floor. Fred's project is an allusion to the actual Trump Tower, while the idea of hanging the portrait of the Führer in the lobby is meant to further underline Donald Trump's fascist sympathies. The conversation between Frederick Trump and the German ambassador is a perfect occasion to criticize Frederick Trump and, by extension, Donald Trump: "The problem with Fred Trump wasn't that his reasoning was flawed; the problem was that he reasoned from premises that most people found abhorrent. … Concepts of the greater good and the public benefit never entered his thinking" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 143). Such observations frequently appear in connection to the character of Fred Trump, and it is quite clear that these critical comments are in reality directed at Donald Trump. When the German ambassador wants Fred Trump to return the money offered by the Third Reich because the construction is not moving forward and the war with the Soviet Union costs more than anticipated, Trump is terrified because he used the money to play the market; eventually, Fred has to look for a job. The only one he can find is sweeping floors in the kitchen of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and as a result, Fred becomes "even more miserable and embittered, qualities he passed on to at least one of his children" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 286). These passages underline the connection between the character of Fred Trump and the real Donald Trump. It is quite apparent that the alternate history of Donald Trump's father takes on a form of an emotion outlet through which the author gives vent to his anger and disdain for the 45th president of the United States. The scathing comments regarding Fred Trump's lack of intelligence, racism, and incompetence, as well as his eventual bankruptcy, are a fictional revenge on Donald Trump.

Therefore, the politics of memory promoted by *Rocket's Red Glare* focuses on casting Donald Trump as an American Hitler. As has been discussed, there are three historical figures that serve as Donald Trump's stand-ins, and each figure refers to a slightly different set of

ideas connected, according to the author, to the figure of Donald Trump. Hitler represents fascism, Lindbergh embodies incompetence and weakness of character, while Fred Trump is a symbol of rotten capitalism. Through these characters, the author forms a link between the past and present, altering the history of World War II and using it to explain the present. Firstly, by linking Donald Trump to Adolf Hitler, he demonstrates that Trump is not the first fascist leader in history, thus providing a warning regarding the future of America and the consequences of racial hatred. Secondly, by establishing a connection between Donald Trump and Charles Lindbergh, he accuses the 45th president of the United States of incompetence and fascist attitudes. Thirdly, by employing the figure of Frederick Ch. Trump, he explains Donald Trump's lack of backbone and alleged fascist views as attitudes inherited from his father.

Overall, the politics of memory promoted by Cy Stein's *Rocket's Red Glare* can be summed up through reference to the narrator's comment on how Charles Lindbergh was remembered by American society: "Charles Lindbergh was either forgotten about, or when remembered, reviled as the worst president in the history of the nation, a caricature of what a holder of such a high office should be all about" (Stein, *Rocket's Red Glare* 286). This quote is as much about the fictional Charles Lindbergh as the real 45th president of the United States and constitutes an expression of how the author wants Donald Trump to be remembered.

Rocket's Red Glare did not attract much attention, but those who read it praised it for its allusions to the contemporary America. Jonathan Kirsch from *Jewish Journal* noted how Stein's novel "prefigures our own benighted times" (Kirsch). On Goodreads, the novel has an average rating of 3.64 stars out of 5, and it is clear that the political message was not lost on the readers. The user name Sandra wrote that *Rocket's Red Glare* "mirrors many events and issues that are in Washington DC that loomed abundant in 1940-1941 and are sadly still

occurring in 2020"; the user Jani Brooks hopes that "this novel will open a few eyes" (Brooks), while Sven recommends the book "for a view of what could have been, and what may yet be" (Sven). Therefore, the political message of the novel, as well as the warning it provided, did not go unnoticed and resonated with the audience.

To conclude, Cy Stein's novel is an interesting example of how the memory of World War II can be used instrumentally to criticize the present state of American politics. Out of all the analyzed alternate history novels, *Rocket's Red Glare* is the most overtly political story, rooted in the atmosphere of Donald Trump's presidency. It uses the figures of Adolf Hitler, Charles Lindbergh, and Frederick Ch. Trump as stand-ins for Donald Trump, which allows it to cast Donald Trump as American Hitler, a symbol of everything the United States should resist. Unlike other writers whose works have been discussed in this dissertation, Cy Stein is optimistic in his appraisal of American society; while he suggests that there was anti-Semitism in the United States, he argues that the American political system based on the Constitution of the United States would preclude any attempts at introducing systematic persecution of American ethnic minorities.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation set out to assess how that what merely could have happened but never had can shape the collective and cultural memory of what really happened. My goal has been to demonstrate that the alternate history genre constitutes a unique and reinvigorating intervention into American mnemonic discourses regarding World War II, and as such, can become an interesting area of research for memory studies.

To gauge the correlation between alternate history and mnemonic discourses regarding World War II, I have focused on five questions: 1) Which World War II sites of memory are employed in American alternate history? 2) How do alternate history narratives utilize World War II sites of memory? 3) What politics of memory do alternate histories promote? 4) Do alternate histories support or subvert the hegemonic memory? 5) How do alternate history narratives contribute to our understanding of American memory culture?

To answer these questions, I have begun by defining alternate history and how it connects to memory. I have collected and examined sixteen accounts provided by alternate history experts to extract four characteristic features of the genre: 1) history, 2) point of divergence, 3) ramifications, and 4) probability (which has been refuted as prescriptive rather than descriptive). The thematic concerns have been used to demonstrate that alternate history is inextricably connected to collective and cultural memory and that one of the distinguishing features of alternate history narratives, the point of divergence, hinges on sites of memory. Finally, I have proposed an interpretative scheme of alternate history works which considers the historical-cultural background of the examined alternate history narrative, an analysis of sites of memory and the politics of

memory, as well as an examination, if possible, of the reception. The scheme has been consequently used to analyze alternate history novels pertaining to World War II.

Overall, the present dissertation analyzes seven novels that refer to World War II: *The Man in the High Castle* (1962) by Philip K. Dick, *After Dachau* (2001) by Daniel Quinn, *The Plot Against America* (2004) by Philip Roth, *Amerikan Eagle* (2011) by Brendan DuBois, *Wolf by Wolf* (2015) and *Blood for Blood* (2016) by Ryan Graudin, and *Rocket's Red Glare* (2020) by Cy Stein. While all the novels explore dystopian scenarios in which either Nazi Germany wins World War II or the United States is ruled by a fascist president, they differ in terms of their intended audiences, as well as in the genres and conventions they employ. Apart from being an alternate history, Philip K. Dick's *Man in the High Castle* is a science fiction classic; Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* belongs to mainstream fiction and employs the characteristics of a parable and a philosophical novel; Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* is a realistic novel that minutely reconstructs the social reality of the 1940s; Brendan DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle* is a murder mystery; Ryan Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* are young adult novels; Cy Stein's *Rocket's Red Glare* is a satire and political thriller. Therefore, the novels this dissertation explores reflect the hybridity and diversity of alternate history genre.

A close reading of the abovementioned novels has revealed that Gavriel D. Rosenfeld's assertion that dystopian alternate histories tend to ratify the present by depicting a history that is worse than the real one is far from true because all the analyzed novels describe a dystopian world in order to criticize the present and thus constitute an intervention into the hegemonic memory of World War II which praises the greatest generation and depicts the war as a mythic-like conflict between good and evil.

The analysis of alternate history novels has established three sites of memory toward which all the narratives gravitate: 1) Franklin D. Roosevelt, 2) the Holocaust, and

3) Adolf Hitler (often in the form of a stand-in). In most cases, these sites of memory constitute starting points around which various memories of American historical experience loop themselves. The first site of memory, Franklin D. Roosevelt, is consequently depicted in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, and Brendan DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle* as a symbol of the greatest generation and an embodiment of American democracy. In the novels, the removal of FDR from history constitutes a point of divergence which leads to the disintegration of the United States and emphasizes the importance of Roosevelt as the only man who could bind the society together and uphold American values of freedom, democracy, and equality in the trying times of World War II. The significance of FDR is also underlined by the fact that without his leadership, American society quickly turns fascist. Hence, even though the analyzed novels endorse the hegemonic memory of Franklin D. Roosevelt as one of the greatest presidents in the history of the United States, they utilize it not to praise FDR but to deflate the myth of the greatest generation and bring the memory of isolationism to the forefront. By doing so, they highlight the repressed memory of American isolationism, anti-Semitism, and fascist undercurrents of American society.

The second site of memory, the Holocaust, constitutes a traumatic event around which all the analyzed novels revolve. The Holocaust is explored as a major site of memory in Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau* and Ryan Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* and *Blood for Blood* but is almost equally significant for Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* and Brendan DuBois' *Amerikan Eagle*. It also appears in Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and Cy Stein's *Rocket's Red Glare*. Interestingly, in the analyzed novels the Holocaust supersedes other sites of memory of World War II, thus becoming a hallmark of the war and reducing the memory of World War II to the Shoah. This salience of the

Holocaust in the analyzed alternate history novels reflects larger extra-literary developments, for, as Gavriel D. Rosenfeld pointedly observes, "the years since the late 1970s have witnessed such a proliferation of Holocaust-related films, television programs, memorials, museums, and artworks, that the Nazi genocide has become regarded as *the* signature event of the entire Nazi experience" (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 371). However, the analysis of the Holocaust as a site of memory in alternate history fiction that has been carried out in this dissertation proves that Rosenfeld was mistaken in his assessment according to which alternate history novels, especially Daniel Quinn's *After Dachau*, challenge the necessity of remembrance, rehabilitate the perpetrators, and indicate universal support for depicting the Holocaust without regard for moral and aesthetic imperatives (G. D. Rosenfeld, *World Hitler Never Made* 371–73). While initially alternate history narratives such as Graudin's *Wolf by Wolf* or Quinn's *After Dachau* may seem to trivialize the Holocaust, they, in fact, emphasize its horrific nature and underline the need to remember the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany.

In the analyzed novels, the Holocaust absorbs other sites of memory and draws our attention towards specifically American avenues of history, such as slavery, the genocide of indigenous peoples, and the discrimination against ethnic minorities. Most analyzed works indicate that had Nazi Germany won World War II, all people deemed "subhuman" by Adolf Hitler would have perished in the Holocaust. A worldwide genocide of ethnic minorities is described in *The Man in the High Castle*, *After Dachau*, *Wolf by Wolf*, *Blood for Blood*, and, to some extent, *Rocket's Red Glare.* In turn, alternate history narratives that employ the trope of a fascist American president imply that had the Holocaust happened in the United States, all the ethnic minorities would have been exterminated. Through the use of various narrative devices, the analyzed alternate history novels both underscore the horrific nature of the Holocaust and universalize it by conflating it with

historical atrocities such as slavery or genocide of indigenous peoples. While Gavriel D. Rosenfeld is highly critical of this approach, claiming that the Holocaust was a unique event in human history that should be remembered for "its own sake", he forgets that memory is political by its very nature and nothing is ever remembered for its own sake. Remembrance always has its purpose; therefore, instead of wondering whether the conflation of the Holocaust with other historical atrocities is appropriate, we should consider the purpose such a conflation serves. As Michael Rothberg pointedly observes, the emergence of Holocaust memory on a global scale allowed the articulation of other memories of victimization precisely because the Holocaust is conceived as a uniquely terrible form of political violence (*Multidirectional Memory* 1–11). Therefore, blending Holocaust with slavery and the discrimination of African-Americans does not diminish its symbolic significance nor displace the Shoah; instead, it fosters a discussion regarding the story America tells of itself.

In the analyzed alternate history narratives, the conflation of the Holocaust with the United States' historical crimes is used to disrupt the comforting cultural memory of America's valiant victory over the Nazi regime. In American cultural memory, World War II is often invoked as a fight between good and evil, where the United States symbolizes moral superiority, while the Third Reich is viewed as an embodiment of evil (Winthrop-Young; Butter); thus, Nazi Germany is cast as a symbol of evil against which America can identify itself in a favorable light. However, the sense of moral superiority exhibited by American society may preclude discussions about America's historical crimes and justify its lack of response to discrimination. As Hansen (1996), Young (1999), and Butter (2009) point out, the Holocaust has functioned in American collective consciousness as an event that allows replacing the distressing memory of America's historical crimes with a comforting notion that the United States stopped the Holocaust

and defeated the Axis powers (Hansen 311; Young, "America's Holocaust: Memory and the Politics of Identity" 81–82; Butter 16). James E. Young addressed that issue when he voiced his doubts regarding the politics of memory behind the creation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which situated the museum as a commemoration of American ideals and a counterpoint to the Holocaust. As he wrote, "we were turning Holocaust memory into a kind of national self-congratulatory spectacle … what if Holocaust memory was becoming a substitute for real action against contemporary genocide, instead of inspiration?" (Young, "America's Holocaust: Memory and the Politics of Identity" 82). Alternate histories that have been analyzed in the present dissertation counteract this self-congratulatory cultural memory by pointing out that the United States is not free of racism and discrimination (*The Plot Against America*, *Wolf by Wolf*, *Blood for Blood*, *Rocket's Red Glare*) and committed crimes which were reminiscent of the Holocaust (*The Man in the High Castle*, *After Dachau*, *Amerikan Eagle*). Therefore, the analyzed novels provide counter-memories to the hegemonic American cultural memory of the Holocaust. At the same time, they also underline the horrific nature of the Shoah, emphasize the need to remember it, and remind the reader about the need to establish an emphatic connection with the past in order to prevent history repeating itself. The blending of the Holocaust with America's historical atrocities forces readers to reevaluate their perception of the past and acknowledge the uncomfortable truths about American history that have been superseded by the self-congratulatory memory of World War II, as well as reinvigorating their perception of the present.

The third site of memory identified in the dissertation is Adolf Hitler. The analyzed works of alternate history manifest the United States' fascination with the figure of Adolf Hitler and, interestingly, are preoccupied with identifying his American counterpart to warn that fascism could have (and still can) easily developed in the United

States. Even though only Graudin's and Stein's novels use Hitler as a character, the figure of the Führer is depicted in other works, too. In *The Plot Against America* and *Rocket's Red Glare,* Adolf Hitler is represented by Charles Lindbergh[70], while in *Amerikan Eagle*– by Huey Long. In all the alternate history novels, Adolf Hitler and his counterparts are used as a narrative device that exposes American racism and anti-Semitism[71]. Moreover, the depiction of Adolf Hitler and his stand-ins in concurrence with the dominant memory of the Führer as an embodiment of evil ironically undermines the hegemonic memory of American righteousness. For, if we agree that Charles Lindbergh and Huey Long were Nazi sympathizers (as we know they were) and both could have become the president of the United States, then we would have to admit that Americans could have elected a fascist president just like German society voted for Adolf Hitler. This would render the United States disturbingly similar to the Third Reich. *The Plot Against America, Amerikan Eagle,* and *Rocket's Red Glare* explore the idea of American society voting for a fascist president, thus undermining the belief in the United States' moral superiority.

In the analyzed novels, the sites of memory of the Holocaust and Adolf Hitler/Charles Lindbergh/Huey Long are used to cast the Third Reich as the United States' double, a mirror image in which America can recognize its own features. The analyzed alternate histories imply that the United States was, and perhaps still is, eerily similar to Nazi Germany because it also committed heinous crimes against its own citizens (as suggested in *The Man in the High Castle*, *After Dachau, The Plot Against*

[70] As explained in Part II, Chapter 7, Cy Stein's *Rocket's Red Glare* employes three Hitleresque characters: Adolf Hitler himself, Charles Lindbergh, and, to some extent, Frederick Christ Trump who serves as a symbol of Donald Trump.

[71] As discussed earlier, Charles Lindbergh in *The Plot Against America* and *Rocket's Red Glare,* as well as Huey Long in *Amerikan Eagle,* allow the emergence of fascism. This leads to ethnic violence and attacks on Jews that are reminiscent of *Kristallnacht*.

America, *Amerikan Eagle*, *Rocket's Red Glare*), accepted the existence of racist organizations, and could have elected a fascist president (*The Plot Against America*, *Amerikan Eagle*, *Rocket's Red Glare*). Moreover, the narratives depicting the United States as being conquered by the Third Reich (*The Man in the High Castle*, to some extent also *After Dachau*) further support that idea by demonstrating how easily American society would succumb and adapt to Nazi rule. The conflation of the United States and Nazi Germany is almost sacrilegious and starkly contrasts the cultural memory of World War II that casts the Third Reich as a symbol of everything America is not. Therefore, the analyzed alternate history novels modify the existing discourses of American collective and cultural memory, enliving the memory of World War II, emphasizing the uncomfortable truths, and disrupting stereotypical notions of America's past. In addition, they also force the reader to question his present circumstances and sensitize them to racism and xenophobia.

In addition, the present dissertation has investigated the politics of memory pursued by particular novels, thus showing how they relate to and correlate with extra-literary developments, such as the political tensions of the 1960s, the September 11 terrorist attacks, the Great Recession between 2007 and 2009, the election of Donald Trump as the president of the United States, the emergence of the far right in the 2010s, and the gradual waning of the Holocaust memory since 2000. The analysis of the politics of memory they participate in, as well as the examination of their literary afterlives, has allowed me to demonstrate that alternate history reflects mnemonic discourses and can be a bellwether of social attitudes. It has also explained how alternate history instrumentally uses the past to comment on the present and ponder the future. By exploring the possible, though unrealized dystopian versions of the pastthe genre not only points to the things that might have happened, but also casts them as events that might still happen. Hence,

the analyzed novels warn that despite that the hegemonic memory of World War II maintains that fascism disappeared with the fall of the Third Reich, in reality it is still a part of the contemporary world. Moreover, they also underline the significance of individual resistance against the oppressive, racist system.

Alternate history emerges as a unique, invigorating literary mode of accessing collective and cultural memory and a powerful tool for memory activism. As Glyn Morgan observes, alternate history can offer a complementary mode of interpretation which allows us to find alternate approaches to giving voice to the voiceless and shows how to access traumatic historical events from a different direction, less burdened by the critical discourse of realism (Morgan 161). The analysis of alternate histories in the context of memory studies that has been conducted in this dissertation proves that his observation is accurate; alternate history allows us to approach the mnemonic discourse regarding American memory of World War II from a new direction and provides an intriguing space for creation of counter-memories to the hegemonic mnemonic discourses. Moreover, it confirms that so-called "popular literature" can be as important for national memory cultures as high literature.

While I have attempted in this dissertation to provide a broad overview of the alternate history novels that refer to the memory of World War II, there remains much work to be done. Alongside two classic alternate history novels that have received much attention from scholars, namely Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, I have analyzed five novels published after 2000, largely overlooked by scholarship. Nonetheless, World War II remains one of the most popular points of divergence for alternate history fiction, and there are countless other works to study; it would therefore be interesting to examine more alternate history novels about World War II to establish whether the central position of the Holocaust as a site of

memory that supersedes other sites of memory can be upheld. Moreover, it would be highly interesting to examine non-American alternate histories pertaining to World War II to see how they conceptualize the past and whether the self-critical thread, so evident in American AH fiction, is employed in alternate history stories published in other countries.

Notwithstanding these limitations, this dissertation certainly adds to our understanding of the entanglement of alternate history fiction into American mnemonic discourses regarding World War II, as well as contributes to the scholarship regarding the role of World War II for contemporary mnemonic discourses. It is my hope that it will inspire future research on alternate history and encourage memory studies scholars to study the genre in the context of national memory cultures. Alternate history is a fairly popular genre that tends to proliferate in times of crisis and national upheavals, which means that in the near future we will probably see an abundance of new stories about the possible, but unrealized avenues of history.

WORKS CITED

A Look Back at What Author Philip Roth Said about "The Plot Against America," Now an HBO Series. Directed by PBS NewsHour, 2020. *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-RcxGxJZL4.

Adams, Michael C. C. *The Best War Ever: America and World War II*. Second edition, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015.

Alkon, Paul J. "Uchronia: Alternate History and Postmodern Temporality." *Time, Literature and the Arts: Essays in Honor of Samuel L. Macey*, vol. 61, University of Victoria, 1994, pp. 65–85, https://archive.org/details/timeliteraturear0000unse/page/n10/mode/1up.

Alter, Jonathan. *Obama And FDR: Similar Challenges*. Interview by Guy Raz, 1 Nov. 2009, https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=114376732.

"Amazon.Com: After Dachau: Daniel Quinn." *Amazon.Com*, https://www.amazon.com/After-Dachau-Daniel-Quinn-audiobook/dp/B005SNV59O/ref=sr_1_1?crid=A9NQOJMH73Z8&keywords=after+dachau&qid=1677950149&sprefix=after+dachau%2Caps%2C284&sr=8-1. Accessed 7 Mar. 2023.

Ames, Melissa. "Engaging 'Apolitical' Adolescents: Analyzing the Popularity and Educational Potential of Dystopian Literature Post-9/11." *The High School Journal*, vol. 97, no. 1, 2013, pp. 3–20.

Arnold, Kyle. *The Divine Madness of Philip K. Dick*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

"Arunimaa's Review of Blood for Blood." *Goodreads.Com*, 10 Oct. 2020, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/3565244492.

"Asking 'What If?' and Zooming Round on Dirt Bikes: The Story Behind Ryan Graudin's Enthralling YA Novel 'Wolf by Wolf.'" *Better Reading*, 12 Nov. 2015,

https://www.betterreading.com.au/kids-ya/asking-what-if-and-zooming-round-on-dirt-bikes-the-story-behind-ryan-graudins-enthralling-ya-novel-wolf-by-wolf/.

Assmann, Aleida. *Między Historią a Pamięcią. Antologia*. Edited by Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2013.

---. "Transformations between History and Memory." *Social Research*, vol. 75, no. 1, Collective Memory and Collective Identity, 2008, pp. 49–72.

Assmann, Jan. "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity." *New German Critique*, no. 65, 1995, pp. 125–33.

---. *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

"Audrey's Review of Blood for Blood." *Goodreads.Com*, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/1879104310. Accessed 20 Mar. 2023.

Bailey, Blake. *Philip Roth: The Biography*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2021.

Balthrop, V. William, et al. "The Presence of the Present: Hijacking 'The Good War'?" *Western Journal of Communication*, vol. 74, no. 2, 2010, pp. 170–207.

Berman, Paul. "'The Plot Against America.'" *The New York Times*, 3 Oct. 2004. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/03/books/review/the-plot-against-america.html.

Bilmes, Alex. "David Simon On Trump, TV And Twitter: 'There's Nothing To Do But Have The Fight.'" *Esquire*, 11 July 2020, https://www.esquire.com/uk/culture/tv/a33274502/david-simon-plot-against-america/.

Björkenstam, Kristina Nilsson, and Gintarė Grigonytė. "'I Know Words, I Have the Best Words': Repetitions, Parallelisms, and Matters of (In)Coherence." *Linguistic Inquiries into Donald Trump's Language: From 'Fake News' to 'Tremendous*

Success,' edited by Ulrike Schneider and Matthias Eitelmann, Bloomsbury Academic, 2020, pp. 41–61.

"'Blood for Blood' from the 'Wolf by Wolf' Series, Vol. 2." *Kirkus Reviews*, 2 Sept. 2016, https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/ryan-graudin/blood-for-blood-graudin/.

Bodnar, John. *The "Good War" in American Memory*. The John Hopkins University Press, 2010, https://www.amazon.com/Good-War-American-Memory-ebook/dp/B07DFPNNRN/ref=tmm_kin_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=.

Boer, Pim. "Loci Memoriae–Lieux de Mémoire." *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, edited by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, De Gruyter, 2008, pp. 19–26.

Bond, Lucy, and Jessica Rapson, editors. *The Transcultural Turn: Interrogating Memory Between and Beyond Borders*. De Gruyter, 2014, https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110337617/html.

Booker, M. Keith. *Historical Dictionary of Science Fiction in Literature*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.

Bramesco, Charles. "'It Can't Happen Here': The Horrifying Power of The Plot Against America." *The Guardian*, 30 Mar. 2020. *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2020/mar/30/the-plot-against-america-philip-roth-tv-hbo.

Brinkley, Alan. "Obama vs. Tea Party: Think FDR vs. Huey Long." *POLITICO*, 4 Nov. 2010, https://www.politico.com/story/2010/11/obama-vs-tea-party-think-fdr-vs-huey-long-044692.

Brooks, Jani. "Jani Brooks's Review of Rocket's Red Glare." *Goodreads.Com*, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/3131324613. Accessed 29 Mar. 2023.

Brown, Michael. “Of ‘Maus’ and Men: Problems of Asserting Identity in a Post-Holocaust Age.” *Studies in American Jewish Literature*, vol. 12, 1993, pp. 134–40.

Bump, Philip. “In 1927, Donald Trump’s Father Was Arrested after a Klan Riot in Queens.” *Washington Post*, 29 Feb. 2016. *www.washingtonpost.com*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/02/28/in-1927-donald-trumps-father-was-arrested-after-a-klan-riot-in-queens/.

Butter, M. *The Epitome of Evil: Hitler in American Fiction, 1939–2002*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Canaan, Howard. “Metafiction and the Gnostic Quest in ‘The Man in the High Castle’: Dick’s Alternate History Classic after Four Decades.” *Classic and Iconoclastic Alternate History Science Fiction*, edited by Edgar L. Chapman and Carl B. Yoke, Edwin Mellen Press, 2003, pp. 93–121.

Carr, Edward H. *What Is History?* Penguin Books, 1990.

Carter, Cassie. “The Metacolonization of Dick’s ‘The Man in the High Castle’: Mimicry, Parasitism, and Americanism in the PSA.” *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 22, no. 3, 1995, pp. 333–42.

Cash, Wilbur J. *The Mind of the South*. Vintage Books, 1991.

Clute, John, et al. “Alternate History.” *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, edited by Brian M Stableford et al., http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate_history. Accessed 13 Apr. 2021.

Cobb, James C. *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

Connolly, Andy. “An ‘Ambiguously Menacing Predicament’: Reading ‘The Plot Against America’ in the Age of Donald Trump.” *Studies in American Jewish Literature*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2022, pp. 60–92.

---. "Posthumous Roth: Reflections on the Dilemmas of Historicizing Philip Roth's Fiction." *Philip Roth Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2019, p. 5. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.5703/philrothstud.15.2.0005.

Corn, David. "Mary Trump on Why Donald Trump Lies, Why He's 'Racist,' and Why She Wrote Her Book." *Mother Jones*, 22 July 2020, https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2020/07/watch-mary-trump-on-why-donald-trump-lies-why-hes-racist-and-why-she-wrote-her-book/.

Curcic, Dimitrije. "Young Adult Book Sales Statistics." *Wordsrated*, 30 Jan. 2023, https://wordsrated.com/young-adult-book-sales/.

Davis, Seth. *Happy Birthday Philip K. Dick: A Narrative of Avram Davidson's Original Review of The Man in The High Castle from The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, June 1963*. Season 1, https://avramdavidsonuniverse.buzzsprout.com/1310005/6883886-happy-birthday-philip-k-dick. Accessed 16 Feb. 2023.

De Cesari, Chiara, and Ann Rigney, editors. *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales*. De Gruyter, 2014.

Demandt, Alexander. *History That Never Happened: A Treatise on the Question, What Would Have Happened If...?* Translated by Colin D. Thomson, Revised, Subsequent edition, McFarland Publishing, 1993.

Dick, Philip K. *An Interview With Philip K. Dick, Science Fiction Review, No. 19, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1976*. Interview by Daniel DePerez, 1976, https://philipdick.com/literary-criticism/frank-views-archive/interview-with-philip-k-dick-science-fiction-review/.

---. *The Man in the High Castle*. Penguin Random House UK, 2015.

---. *The Shifting Realities of Philip K. Dick Selected Literary and Philosophical Writings*. Edited by Lawrence Sutin, Pantheon Books, 1995.

DiTommaso, Lorenzo. “Redemption in Philip K. Dick’s ‘The Man in the High Castle.’” *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 26, no. 1, 1999, pp. 91–119.

Dorn, A. Walter, et al. “How Just Were America’s Wars? A Survey of Experts Using a Just War Index.” *International Studies Perspectives*, vol. 16, no. 3, Aug. 2015, pp. 270–85. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.1111/insp.12079.

Dretzke, Katherine. “Review: ‘Wolf by Wolf’ by Ryan Graudin.” *Readings Monthly*, Nov. 2015, p. 11.

Dry, Jude. “‘The Plot Against America’ Finale Review: The Future Is Grim in David Simon’s Alt-America.” *IndieWire*, 21 Apr. 2020, https://www.indiewire.com/2020/04/the-plot-against-america-finale-review-david-simon-1202226042/.

DuBois, Brendan. *Amerikan Eagle*. Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015.

Ehrlich, Howard J. “The Swastika Epidemic of 1959-1960: Anti-Semitism and Community Characteristics.” *Social Problems*, vol. 9, no. 3, 1962, pp. 264–72. *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.2307/799237.

Ekman, Stefan. “Urban Fantasy: A Literature of the Unseen.” *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, vol. 27, no. 3, 2016, pp. 452–69.

Erll, Astrid. *Memory in Culture*. Translated by Sara B. Young, Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2011. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230321670.

Fienberg, Daniel. “‘The Plot Against America’: TV Review.” *The Hollywood Reporter*, 9 Mar. 2020, https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-reviews/plot-america-review-1281955/.

Flanzbaum, Hilene. “The Americanization of the Holocaust.” *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 1, no. 1, Mar. 1999, pp. 91–104. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.1080/14623529908413937.

Folsom, Burton W. *Comparing the Great Depression to the Great Recession*. 20 May 2010, https://fee.org/articles/comparing-the-great-depression-to-the-great-recession/.

"Frank's Review of After Dachau." *Goodreads.Com*, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/2228815706. Accessed 22 Apr. 2023.

Freer, Ian. "'The Plot Against America' Review." *Empire*, 14 July 2020, https://www.empireonline.com/tv/reviews/the-plot-against-america/.

Frost, Andrew. "Bad Future: Real-Time Alternate History." *Studies in the Fantastic*, vol. 5, 2017, pp. 26–46.

"Full Text: Trump's Comments on White Supremacists, 'Alt-Left' in Charlottesville." *POLITICO*, 15 Aug. 2017, https://www.politico.com/story/2017/08/15/full-text-trump-comments-white-supremacists-alt-left-transcript-241662.

Gallagher, Catherine. *Telling It Like It Wasn't: The Counterfactual Imagination in History and Fiction*. The University of Chicago Press, 2018.

---. "War, Counterfactual History, and Alternate-History Novels." *Field Day Review*, vol. 3, 2007, pp. 52–65.

---. "What Would Napoleon Do? Historical, Fictional, and Counterfactual Characters." *New Literary History*, vol. 42, no. 2, 2011, pp. 315–36.

Galupo, Scott. "Donald Trump and The Plot Against America." *The Week*, https://theweek.com/articles/670634/donald-trump-plot-against-america. Accessed 3 Mar. 2023.

Gedi, Noa, and Yigal Elam. "Collective Memory — What Is It?" *History and Memory*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1996, pp. 30–50.

Geraci, Ginevra. "The Sense of an Ending: Alternative History in Philip Roth's The Plot Against America." *Philip Roth Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2011, pp. 187–204. *search.lib.buffalo.edu*, https://doi.org/10.5703/philrothstud.7.2.187.

Gesin, Jay], and Daniel Quinn. *Daniel Quinn Interview | IndieBound.Org*. https://www.indiebound.org/author-interviews/quinndaniel. Accessed 5 Mar. 2023.

Gjerstad, Steven, and Vernon L. Smith. "From Bubble to Depression?" *Wall Street Journal*, 6 Apr. 2009. *www.wsj.com*, https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB123897612802791281.

Glass, Andrew. "Huey Long Assassinated, Sept. 8, 1935." *POLITICO*, https://www.politico.com/story/2017/09/08/huey-long-assassinated-sept-8-1935-242325. Accessed 9 Dec. 2020.

Goodman, Tim. "Critic's Notebook: 'The Man in the High Castle' Is So Good Now Because It's So Real Now." *The Hollywood Reporter*, Oct. 2018, https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/tv/tv-news/critics-notebook-man-high-castle-is-good-now-because-real-now-1156620/.

"Goodreads: After Dachau." *Goodreads.Com*, https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/94760.After_Dachau. Accessed 7 Mar. 2023.

Górecka, Magdalena. "Historie alternatywne w konwencji steampunk i cyberpunk – wariacje na temat powstania styczniowego w powieściach Konrada T. Lewandowskiego i Adama Przechrzty." *Acta Humana*, no. 4, 0, 2013, pp. 37–48. *journals.umcs.pl*, https://doi.org/10.17951/ah.2013.4.37.

---. "Polityczne afiliacje fantastyki - historie alternaytywne jako dyskurs ideologiczny." *Literaturoznawstwo: historia, teoria, metodologia, krytyka*, no. 1(6)-2(7), 2013 2012, pp. 195–207.

---. "Przeszłość ideologicznie zaprojektowana. Historie alternatywne w służbie prawicowej utopii." *Estetyka i Krytyka*, vol. 35, no. 4, 2014, pp. 11–28.

Gorman, Michael E. *Transforming Nature: Ethics, Invention and Discovery*. Springer Science+Business Media, 1998.

Górny, Maciej, et al., editors. *Polsko-niemieckie miejsca pamięci. T. 1, Wspólne/Oddzielne*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2015.

Graham, T. Austin. "On the Possibility of an American Holocaust: Philip Roth's The Plot Against America." *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture, and Theory*, vol. 63, no. 3, Oct. 2007, pp. 119–49. *Project MUSE*, https://doi.org/10.1353/arq.2007.0014.

Graudin, Ryan. *Blood for Blood*. Hodder and Stoughton, 2017.

---. *Reading Group Choices Interview with Ryan Graudin*. Interview by Reading Group Choices, 30 June 2020, https://readinggroupchoices.com/ryan-graudin-interview/.

---. *Wolf by Wolf*. Reprint edition, Little, Brown and Company, 2018.

---. *"Wolf by Wolf" Author Ryan Graudin Interview and Excerpt*. Interview by Isabella Biedenharn, 8 Oct. 2015, https://ew.com/article/2015/10/08/wolf-wolf-author-ryan-graudin-interview-excerpt/.

Gross, Andrew S. "It Might Have Happened Here: Real Anti-Semitism, Fake History, and Remembering the Present." *Amerikastudien / American Studies*, vol. 55, no. 3, 2010, pp. 409–27.

Haas, Edward F. "Huey Long and the Dictators." *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*, vol. 47, no. 2, 2006, pp. 133–51.

Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*. Translated by Lewis A. Coser, The University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Halio, Jay L. "The Plot Against America (Review)." *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. 24, no. 2, 2006, pp. 204–06. *Project MUSE*, https://doi.org/10.1353/sho.2006.0016.

Hall, Jonny. "'Winning' the Forever Wars? Presidential Rhetoric and US Ontological (In)Security." *Global Studies Quarterly*, vol. 2, 2022, pp. 1–14.

Hanke, Steve H. “Unconventional Wisdom | Steve H. Hanke | Cato Institute: Commentary.” *Cato Institute*, 6 Dec. 2010, https://web.archive.org/web/20101206214118/http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=10016.

Hansen, Miriam Bratu. “‘Schindler’s List’ Is Not ‘Shoah’: The Second Commandment, Popular Modernism, and Public Memory.” *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 22, no. 2, 1996, pp. 292–312.

Hardesty, Willian H. “Toward a Theory of Alternate History: Some Versions of Alternative Nazis.” *Classic and Iconoclastic Alternate History Science Fiction*, edited by Edgar L. Chapman and Carl B. Yoke, Edwin Mellen Press, 2003, pp. 71–92.

Haska, Agnieszka, and Jerzy Stachowicz. *Śniąc o potędze*. Narodowe Centrum Kultury, 2012.

Hellekson, Karen. *The Alternate History: Refiguring Historical Time*. Kent State University Press, 2001.

Hirth, Brittany. “‘An Independent Destiny for America’: Roth’s Vision of American Exceptionalism.” *Philip Roth Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2018, pp. 70–93. *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.5703/philrothstud.14.1.0070.

Hour 25: A Talk With Philip K. Dick. Hosted by Mike Hodel, Transcribed and Edited by Frank C. Bertrand. 1976, https://philipdick.com/literary-criticism/interviews/hour-25-a-talk-with-philip-k-dick/.

Hughes, William. *Historical Dictionary of Gothic Literature*. Scarecrow Press, 2012. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/buffalo/detail.action?docID=1144297.

Huntington, John. “Philip K. Dick: Authenticity and Insincerity.” *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1988, pp. 152–60.

Isidore, Chris. “Why This Ts The Worst Recession, Not a Depression.” *CNN Money*, 25 Mar. 2009, https://money.cnn.com/2009/03/25/news/economy/depression_comparisons/index.htm.

Jacobi, Martin J. “Rhetoric and Fascism in Jack London’s The Iron Heel, Sinclair Lewis’s It Can’t Happen Here, and Philip Roth’s The Plot Against America.” *Philip Roth Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2010, pp. 85–102.

“Jon Barber’s Review of After Dachau.” *Goodreads.Com*, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/95777498. Accessed 22 Apr. 2023.

Kącka, Katarzyna. “Polityka Historyczna: Kreatorzy, Narzędzia, Mechanizmy Działania – Przykład Polski.” *Narracje Pamięci: Między Polityką a Historią*, edited by Katarzyna Kącka et al., Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, 2015, pp. 59–80.

Kahneman, D., and D. Miller. *Norm Theory: Comparing Reality to Its Alternatives*. 1986. *Semantic Scholar*, https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.93.2.136.

Kakutani, Michiko. “A Pro-Nazi President, a Family Feeling the Effects.” *The New York Times*, 21 Sept. 2004. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/21/books/a-pronazi-president-a-family-feeling-the-effects.html.

Kalicka, Joanna, et al., editors. *Modi memorandi: leksykon kultury pamięci*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2014.

Kellman, Steven G. “It Is Happening Here: The Plot Against America and the Political Moment.” *Philip Roth Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2008, pp. 113–23.

Ken-ichi. “The Man in the High Castle.” *Goodreads.Com*, 20 Oct. 2012, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/437873135.

Kirsch, Jonathan. “Nazis Have Upper Hand in Page-Turning ‘What-If’ WWII Novel ‘Rocket’s Red Glare.’” *Jewish Journal*, 21 July 2020,

https://jewishjournal.com/culture/arts/books/319288/nazis-have-upper-hand-in-page-turning-what-if-wwii-novel-rockets-red-glare/.

Klein, Kerwin Lee. "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse." *Representations*, no. 69, Special Issue: Grounds for Remembering, 2000, pp. 127–50.

Klein, Rick. "Trump Said 'blame on Both Sides' in Charlottesville, Now the Anniversary Puts Him on the Spot." *ABC News*, 12 Aug. 2018, https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-blame-sides-charlottesville-now-anniversary-puts-spot/story?id=57141612.

Klion, David. "The Plot Against America's Powerful Warning." *The New Republic*, 16 Mar. 2020. *The New Republic*, https://newrepublic.com/article/156920/plot-against-america-powerful-warning-hbo-tv-show.

Kobielska, Maria. *Polska kultura pamięci w XXI wieku: dominanty : zbrodnia katyńska, powstanie warszawskie i stan wojenny*. Instytut Badań Literackich PANWydawnictwo, 2016.

Kończal, Kornelia. "Les Lieux de Memoire/Realms of Memory : The Unparalleled Career of a Research Concept." *Acta Poloniae Historica*, no. 106, 2012, pp. 5–30.

Krasuska, Karolina. "Americanizations of Holocaust Memory and Museum Aesthetic Experience." *European Journal of American Studies*, no. 13–3, 2018, pp. 1–12.

Kubik, Jan, and Michael Bernhard. "A Theory of the Politics of Memory." *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration*, edited by Jan Kubik and Michael Bernhard, Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 7–37.

Kukkonen, Karin. "Popular Cultural Memory: Comics, Communities and Context Knowledge." *Nordicom Review*, no. 29, 2008, pp. 261–73.

Kuttner, Robert. “Phillip Roth’s ‘The Plot Against America’ Is Fast Becoming Reality.” *HuffPost*, 15 Jan. 2017, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/phillip-roths-the-plot-ag_b_14190564.

Lang, Berel. *Post-Holocaust: Interpretation, Misinterpretation, and the Claims of History*. Indiana University Press, 2005.

Langer, Lawrence L. *Admitting the Holocaust: Collected Essays*. Oxfrod University Press, 1995.

Langford, Barry. “Un-American? Or Just ‘Inglourious’? Reflections on the ‘Americanization of the Holocaust’ from Langer to Tarantino.” *The Journal of Holocaust Research*, vol. 34, no. 4, Oct. 2020, pp. 370–87. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.1080/25785648.2020.1832311.

Langford, David. “Jonbar Point.” *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, edited by John Clute et al., 12 Aug. 2018, http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/jonbar_poin.

Le Rider, Jacques, et al., editors. *Transnationale Gedächtnisorte in Zentraleuropa*. Studien Verlag, 2002.

Lebow, Richard Ned. “Counterfactuals, History and Fiction.” *Historical Social Research*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2009, pp. 57–73. *SSOAR*, https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.34.2009.2.57-73.

Lemann, Natalia. “‘After Dachau’ Daniela Quinna: Odpominanie Holokaustu: Afekt, Pobudzenie, Transkrypta.” *Creatio Fantastica*, vol. 60, no. 1, 2019, pp. 115–26.

---. “Alternatywna Miara Wielkości? − Postkolonialne Uwarunkowania Wizji Hegemonicznej Przeszłości Polski w Wybranych Historiach Alternatywnych.” *PORÓWNANIA. Czasopismo Poswiecone Zagadnieniom Komparatystyki Literackiej...*, no. 14, 2014, pp. 19–41.

---. “Historia Alternatywna.” *Słownik Rodzajów i Gatunków Literackich*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2012.

---. *Historie alternatywne i steampunk w literaturze: archipelagi badawczo-interpretacyjne*. Wydanie I., Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2019.

Leuchtenburg, William E. "Franklin Delano Obama." *In the Shadow of FDR: From Harry Truman to Barack Obama*, Fourth Edition, Cornell University Press, 2009, pp. 299–312.

---. "Watching Obama, Yearning for FDR." *POLITICO*, 15 June 2010, https://www.politico.com/story/2010/06/watching-obama-yearning-for-fdr-038510.

Lewis, Charles. "Real Planes and Imaginary Towers: Philip Roth's 'The Plot Against America' as 9/11 Prosthetic Screen." *Literature after 9/11*, edited by Jeanne Quinn Follansbee, Routledge, 2008, pp. 246–60.

"Lisa's Review of Blood for Blood." *Goodreads.Com*, 28 Apr. 2020, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/2239332432.

Little, et al. "Book Review: 'Wolf By Wolf' by Ryan Graudin." *MuggleNet Book Trolley*, 21 Oct. 2015, https://blog.mugglenet.com/2015/10/book-review-wolf-by-wolf-by-ryan-graudin/.

Loh, Chin Ee, et al. "Do Girls Read Differently from Boys? Adolescents and Their Gendered Reading Habits and Preferences." *English in Education*, vol. 54, no. 2, Apr. 2020, pp. 174–90. *Taylor and Francis+NEJM*, https://doi.org/10.1080/04250494.2019.1610328.

Lord, RC. *Pink Beam: A Philip K. Dick Companion*. Ganymedean Slime Mold Pubs, 2006.

Lowry, Brian. "'The Plot Against America' Offers a Chilling Alternate Past, with an Eye on the Present." *CNN*, 15 Mar. 2020, https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/15/entertainment/the-plot-against-america-review/index.html.

Maar, Alexander. “Possible Uses of Counterfactual Thought Experiments in History.” *Principia: An International Journal of Epistemology*, vol. 18, May 2014, p. 87. *ResearchGate*, https://doi.org/10.5007/1808-1711.2014v18n1p87.

“Madison’s Review of Blood for Blood.” *Goodreads.Com*, 22 Dec. 2015, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/1475988184.

Madsen, Wayne. “The America of Trump’s Father | Scoop News.” *Scoop: Independent News*, 8 Oct. 2019, https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL1910/S00036/the-america-of-trumps-father.htm.

Magid. “The Holocaust and Jewish Identity in America: Memory, the Unique, and the Universal.” *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2012, p. 100. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.2979/jewisocistud.18.2.100.

Maj, Krzysztof M., et al. “Allohistorie i kontrfaktyczności.” *Creatio Fantastica*, translated by Sylwia Borowska-Szerszun and Mateusz Tokarski, vol. 60, no. 1, 2019, pp. 199–212.

Martaus, Alaine. “‘Wolf by Wolf’ by Ryan Graudin (Review).” *Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books*, vol. 69, no. 4, Dec. 2015, p. 199.

Martin, George R. R. *A Dance with Dragons*. Reprint edition, Bantam, 2013.

---. *A Feast for Crows*. Bantam Spectra mass market edition., Bantam Books, 2006.

Matos, Elannah. “Book Review: Wolf by Wolf by Ryan Graudin.” *English Department - UPRM*, 10 Sept. 2020, https://www.uprm.edu/english/book-review-wolf-by-wolf-by-ryan-graudin/.

Maurer, Yael. “If I Didn’t See It with My Own Eyes, I’d Think I Was Having a Hallucination: Re-Imagining Jewish History in Philip Roth’s The Plot Against America.” *OPhilip Roth Studies*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2011, pp. 51–63.

Mayeda, Julie. “Quinn Is Back with a Buzz, But Minus the Gorilla.” *Pubslihers Weekly*, Feb. 2001, p. 26.

McNamara, Mary. “Review: Adaptation of 1962’s ‘Man in the High Castle’ Provides Timely View of Freedom’s Cost.” *Los Angeles Times,* 20 Nov. 2015, https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/tv/la-et-st-man-in-the-high-castle-review-20151120-column.html.

Meyer, Erik. “Memory and Politics.” *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook,* edited by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, De Gruyter, 2008, pp. 173–80.

“Michael’s Review of Blood for Blood.” *Goodreads.Com,* 2017, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/1871468911.

Michaels, Walter Benn. “Plots against America: Neoliberalism and Antiracism.” *American Literary History,* vol. 18, no. 2, 2006, pp. 288–302. JSTOR.

Morgan, Glyn. *Imagining the Unimaginable: Speculative Fiction and the Holocaust*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

Morley, Catherine. “Memories of the Lindbergh Administration: Plotting, Genre, and the Splitting of the Self in The Plot Against America.” *Philip Roth Studies,* vol. 4, no. 2, 2008, pp. 137–52.

Morrison, Blake. “The Relentless Unforeseen.” *The Guardian*, 2 Oct. 2004. *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2004/oct/02/fiction.philiproth.

Mountfort, Paul. “The I Ching and Philip K. Dick’s The Man in the High Castle.” *Science Fiction Studies,* vol. 43, no. 2, 2016, pp. 287–309. *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.5621/sciefictstud.43.2.0287.

“Nathan’s Review of After Dachau.” *Goodreads.Com,* https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/4035392915. Accessed 22 Apr. 2023.

Newport, Frank. “Almost All Americans Consider World War II a ‘Just’ War.” *Gallup News*, 3 June 2004, https://news.gallup.com/poll/11881/Almost-All-Americans-Consider-World-War-Just-War.aspx.

Nijakowski, Lech M. *Polska polityka pamięci: esej socjologiczny*. Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, 2008.

Niroumand, Mariam. *“Americanization” of the Holocaust*. John F. Kennedy-Institut fuer Nordamerikastudien Freie Universitaet Berlin, 1995.

Noon, David Hoogland. “Operation Enduring Analogy: World War II, the War on Terror, and the Uses of Historical Memory.” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2004, pp. 339–64. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.1353/rap.2005.0015.

Nora, Pierre. “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire.” *Representations*, no. 26, 1989, pp. 7–24.

Novick, Peter. *The Holocaust in American Life*. 1999.

Nünning, Ansgar. “Crossing Borders and Blurring Genres: Towards a Typology and Poetics of Postmodernist Historical Fiction in England since the 1960s.” *European Journal of English Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1997, pp. 217–38.

Olick, Jeffrey K. “From Collective Memory to the Sociology of Mnemonic Practices and Products.” *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, edited by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, De Gruyter, 2008, pp. 151–62.

---. *The Collective Memory Reader*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

“One of the Most Intriguing and Heart-Stoppingly Exciting YA Books We’ve Read in a Long Time: ‘Wolf by Wolf.’” *Better Reading*, 12 Nov. 2015, https://www.betterreading.com.au/kids-ya/one-of-the-most-intriguing-and-heart-stoppingly-exciting-ya-books-weve-read-in-a-long-time-wolf-by-wolf/.

O'Rourke, Kevin, and Barry Eichengreen. "What Do the New Data Tell Us?" *CEPR Centre for Economic Policy Research,* 8 Mar. 2010, https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/what-do-new-data-tell-us.

Otten, Birte. *Zeit/Geschichte: Amerikanische Alternate Histories nach 9/11*. Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, 2012. *ediss.uni-goettingen.de,* https://ediss.uni-goettingen.de/handle/11858/00-1735-0000-0028-8697-8.

Pagetti, Carlo. "Dick and Meta-SF." *Science Fiction Studies*, translated by Angela Minchella and Darko Suvin, vol. 2, no. 1, 1975, pp. 24–31.

Pakier, Małgorzata, and Joanna Wawrzyniak, editors. *Memory and Change in Europe: Eastern Perspectives*. Berghahn Books, 2015.

Paryż, Marek. *Philip Roth's "The Plot Against America": Transgressive Historical Fiction*. 2011, pp. 127–37.

Pei-chen, Liao. *Post-9/11 Historical Fiction and Alternate History Fiction: Transnational and Multidirectional Memory*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. *link.springer.com,* https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-52492-0.

Peterson, Valerie. "Young Adult Book Market Facts and Figures." *LiveAbout,* 15 Dec. 2018, https://www.liveabout.com/the-young-adult-book-market-2799954.

Polak, Sara. *FDR in American Memory: Roosevelt and the Making of an Icon*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2021, https://web-1p-1ebscohost-1com-1fpm2wfsc07e3.hps.bj.uj.edu.pl/ehost/detail/detail?nobk=y&vid=1&sid=6feec6ca-ea42-4d93-95eb-23da7aac2643@redis&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ==#AN=2968569&db=nlebk.

Poniewozik, James. “When Democracy Dies in Daylight.” *The New York Times*, 1 Sept. 2020. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/01/arts/television/plot-against-america-election.html.

Powell, Zachary Michael. “The Ethics of Alternate History: Melodrama and Political Engagement in Amazon’s ‘The Man in the High Castle.’” *South Atlantic Review*, vol. 83, no. 3, 2018, pp. 150–69.

Power. “How Science Fiction Predicted President Trump: A Warning from Alternate History.” *The Irish Times*, https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/how-science-fiction-predicted-president-trump-a-warning-from-alternate-history-1.2864499. Accessed 3 Mar. 2023.

“Priscilla’s Review of Blood for Blood.” *Goodreads.Com*, 25 Oct. 2016, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/1702767281.

Quinn, Daniel. *After Dachau*. Steerforth Press, 2006.

Rieder, John. “The Metafictive World of ‘The Man in the High Castle’: Hermeneutics, Ethics, and Political Ideology.” *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1988, pp. 214–25.

Rigney, Ann. “The Dynamics of Remembrance: Texts Between Monumentality and Morphing.” *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, De Gruyter, 2008, pp. 345–53.

Robinson, Kim Stanley. *The Novels of Philip K. Dick*. UMI Research Press, 1984.

Roediger, Henry, et al. “Competing National Memories of World War II.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, vol. 116, Aug. 2019, p. 201907992. *ResearchGate*, https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1907992116.

Roese, Neal J., and Mike Morrison. “The Psychology of Counterfactual Thinking.” *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, vol. 34, no. 2 (128), 2009, pp. 16–26.

---. “The Psychology of Counterfactual Thinking.” *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, vol. 34, no. 2 (128), 2009, pp. 16–26.

Roese, Neal J., and James M. Olson. “Counterfactual Thinking: A Critical Overview.” *What Might Have Been: The Social Psychology of Counterfactual Thinking*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 1995, pp. 1–55.

Romano, Nick. “‘The Man in the High Castle’ Ending Explained: Series Boss Unpacks the ‘Ambiguous’ Finale.” *EW.Com*, 19 Nov. 2019, https://ew.com/tv/2019/11/19/the-man-in-the-high-castle-ending-explained-series-finale/.

Roselund, Christian. “Remembering Huey Long.” *The Brooklyn Rail*, 6 Mar. 2009, https://brooklynrail.org/2009/03/express/remembering-huey-long.

Rosenfeld, Alvin H. “The Americanization of the Holocaust.” *Commentary Magazine*, 1 June 1995, https://www.commentary.org/articles/alvin-rosenfeld/the-americanization-of-the-holocaust/.

---. *The End of the Holocaust*. Indiana University Press, 2011.

Rosenfeld, Gavriel D. *The Fourth Reich: The Specter of Nazism from World War II to the Present*. Cambridge University Press, 2019, https://www.amazon.pl/Fourth-Reich-Specter-Nazism-Present/dp/1108497497.

---. “The Politics of Uniqueness: Reflections on the Recent Polemical Turn in Holocaust and Genocide Scholarship.” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, no. 13(1), 1999, pp. 28–62.

---. *The World Hitler Never Made: Alternate History and the Memory of Nazism*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

---. “Why Do We Ask “What If?": Reflections on the Function of Alternate History.” *History and Theory*, vol. 41, no. 4, Jan. 2002, pp. 90–103, https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2303.00222.

Rossi, Umberto. *The Twisted Worlds of Philip K. Dick: A Reading of Twenty Ontologically Uncertain Novels*. McFarland and Company, Inc., 2011, https://www.amazon.pl/Twisted-Worlds-Philip-Dick-Ontologically/dp/0786448830.

Roth, Philip. *The Facts: A Novelists Autobiography*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013.

---. *The Plot Against America*. Vintage Classics, 2004.

---. "The Story Behind 'The Plot Against America.'" *The New York Times*, 19 Sept. 2004. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/19/books/review/the-story-behind-the-plot-against-america.html.

Roth Pierpont, Claudia. *Roth Unbound: A Writer and His Books*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013.

Rothberg, Michael. "Against Zero-Sum Logic: A Response to Walter Benn Michaels." *American Literary History*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2006, pp. 303–11.

---. *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. Stanford University Press, 2009.

Ru's Review of After Dachau. https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/414921109. Accessed 7 Mar. 2023.

Ryan Graudin on Wolf by Wolf Behind the Scenes. Directed by Uppercase Box, 2017. *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j16ydb91wAk.

Safer, Elaine B. "The Plot Against America by Philip Roth." *Studies in American Jewish Literature (1981-)*, vol. 26, 2007, pp. 91–94.

Samet, Elizabeth D. *Looking for the Good War: American Amnesia and the Violent Pursuit of Happiness*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021, https://www.amazon.com/Looking-Good-War-American-Happiness/dp/0374219923.

"Sarah Tate's Review of Wolf By Wolf." *Goodreads.Com*, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/3070909897. Accessed 14 Mar. 2023.

Saryusz-Wolska, Magdalena. “Przeszłość i przyszłość badań pamięci : Czy potrzebujemy nowej dyscypliny?” *Politeja*, vol. 17, no. 2(65), 2(65), Apr. 2020, pp. 11–24. *journals.akademicka.pl*, https://doi.org/10.12797/Politeja.17.2020.65.01.

---. *Spotkania czasu z miejscem: studia o pamięci i miastach / Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska ; fot. Jürgen Hohmuth.* Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2011.

Schmunk, Robert B. “Uchronia: Divergence Chronology.” *Divergence Chronology*, 2022, http://www.uchronia.net/bib.cgi/diverge.html?o=1750.

Schneider-Mayerson, Matthew. “What Almost Was: The Politics of the Contemporary Alternate History Novel.” *American Studies*, vol. 50, no. 3/4, 2009, pp. 63–83.

Schuman, Howard, and Cheryl Rieger. “Historical Analogies, Generational Effects, and Attitudes Toward War.” *American Sociological Review*, vol. 57, no. 3, 1992, pp. 315–26.

Sclafani, Jennifer. “Trump’s Idiolect: Discourse-Marking Devices.” *Talking Donald Trump: A Sociolinguistic Study of Style, Metadiscourse, and Political Identity*, Routledge, 2018, pp. 21–43.

Sculos, Bryant W. “Revolution in the High Castle: Interpretation and the Political Implications of Hope.” *Class, Race and Corporate Power*, vol. 8, no. 2, Oct. 2020, p. Article 3, https://doi.org/10.25148/CRCP.8.2.009644.

Sepinwall, Alan. “‘The Plot Against America’ Review: An Alternate History Turned Terrifying Allegory.” *Rolling Stone*, 10 Mar. 2020, https://www.rollingstone.com/tv/tv-reviews/plot-against-america-roth-simon-wire-review-961570/.

Siegel, Jason. “‘The Plot Against America’: Philip Roth’s Counter-Plot to American History.” *MELUS*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2012, pp. 131–54.

Silver, Steven H. “Daniel Quinn: After Dachau.” *Steven Silver’s Reviews*, http://stevenhsilver.com/dachau.html. Accessed 7 Mar. 2023.

---. *Uchronicle 1*. July 2006, http://www.stevenhsilver.com/uchronicle1.htm.

Silverberg, Robert. “The Spectroscope.” *Amazing Stories*, vol. 38, no. 6, 1964, pp. 123–24.

Simonetti, Paolo. “Inventing (Post)Memory, Writing (Non)Fiction: Jerzy Kosinski, Philip Roth and the Legacy of World War II | Status Quaestionis.” *Status Quaestionis*, vol. 1 (18), 2020, pp. 17–28.

Singles, Kathleen. *Alternate History: Playing with Contingency and Necessity*. De Gruyter, 2013.

Snyder, Robert E. “Huey Long and the Presidential Election of 1936.” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*, vol. 16, no. 2, 1975, pp. 117–43.

Sokołowska-Paryż, Marzena. “History, (Non)Memory and the Ideological Uses of Genre: Alternate Scenarios and Dystopian Visions.” *History, Memory and Nostalgia in Literature and Culture*, edited by Regina Rudaitytė, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018, pp. 173–88.

Solly, Meilan. “The True History Behind ‘The Plot Against America.’” *Smithsonian Magazine*, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/true-history-behind-plot-against-america-180974365/. Accessed 18 Feb. 2023.

Stapleton, Christine. “Fact Check: Fred Trump Was Detained at KKK Rally but There’s No Evidence He Was Supporter.” *USA TODAY*, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2020/06/18/fact-check-fred-trump-detained-kkk-rally-circumstances-unclear/3209853001/. Accessed 26 Mar. 2023.

Stein, Cy. *Rocket’s Red Glare*. Abeel Street Press, 2020.

---. “Trump and How ‘Rocket’s Red Glare’ Came To Be.” *Cy Stein Books*, 21 Jan. 2020, http://cysteinbooks.com/trump-and-how-rockets-red-glare-came-to-be/.

"Stephen Gallup's Review of After Dachau." *Goodreads.Com*, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/25693560. Accessed 7 Mar. 2023.

Sternberg, Robert J., and Joyce Gastel. "If Dancers Ate Their Shoes: Inductive Reasoning with Factual and Counterfactual Premises." *Memory & Cognition*, vol. 17, no. 1, Jan. 1989, pp. 1–10. *Springer Link*, https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03199551.

Stier, Oren Baruch. "Holocaust, American Style." *Prooftexts*, vol. 22, no. 3, 2002, pp. 354–91. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.1353/ptx.2003.0007.

Stratton, Jon. "Thinking Through the Holocaust. A Discussion Inspired by Hilene Flanzbaum (Ed.), The Americanization of the Holocaust." *Continuum*, vol. 14, no. 2, July 2000, pp. 231–45. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.1080/713657704.

Sullivan, Patrick. "Quinn, Daniel: After Dachau. Review." *Library Journal*, 15 June 2001, p. 105.

Suvin, Darko. "P.K. Dick's Opus: Artifice as Refuge and World View (Introductory Reflections)." *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1975, pp. 8–22.

Sven. "Sven's Review of Rocket's Red Glare." *Goodreads.Com*, 11 Nov. 2019, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/3023357011.

Szpociński, Andrzej. "Sites and Non-Sites of Memory." *Teksty Drugie*, no. 1, 2016, pp. 245–54.

Tabaszewska, Justyna. "Affective Future and Non-Existent History: The Issue of Future Past in Memory Research." *Memory Studies*, July 2022, p. 17506980221108480. *SAGE Journals*, https://doi.org/10.1177/17506980221108481.

---. "Od literatury jako medium pamięci do poetyki pamięci. Kategoria pamięci kulturowej w badaniach nad literaturą." *Pamiętnik Literacki*, vol. 104, no. 4, 2013, pp. 53–72.

---. *Pamięć Afektywna. Dynamika Polskiej Pamięci Po 1989 Roku*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2022,

https://wydawnictwo.umk.pl/pl/products/5829/pamiec-afektywna-dynamika-polskiej-pamieci-po-1989-roku.

Thompson, Tracy. *The New Mind of the South*. Free Press, 2014.

Toker, Leona. "Between Dystopia and Allohistory: The Ending of Roth's The Plot Against America." *Philip Roth Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2013, pp. 41–50.

Too, Wei Keong. *Young Adult Literature: An Alternative Genre in the Classroom Reading List*. Dec. 2006, pp. 40–59.

Tumulty, Karen. "The Transition: What Change Will Look Like." *Time*, 13 Nov. 2008. *content.time.com*, https://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,1858889,00.html.

Vago, Sue. "Out of Keynes's Shadow." *The Economist*, 12 Feb. 2009. *The Economist*, https://www.economist.com/briefing/2009/02/12/out-of-keyness-shadow?story_id=13104022.

Valdez, Joe. "The Man in the High Castle." *Goodreads.Com*, 27 Jan. 2017, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/825966480.

Van Hoeck, Nicole, et al. "Cognitive Neuroscience of Human Counterfactual Reasoning." *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, vol. 9, July 2015. *PubMed Central*, https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2015.00420.

"Veronica Viersen's Review of After Dachau." *Goodreads.Com*, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/3032775565. Accessed 22 Apr. 2023.

Verovšek, Peter J. "Collective Memory, Politics, and the Influence of the Past: The Politics of Memory as a Research Paradigm." *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, no. 4 (3), 2016, pp. 529–43.

Warrick, Patricia S. "The Encounter of Taoism and Fascism in The Man in the High Castle." *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1980, pp. 174–90.

Wąsowicz, Magdalena. “Historie alternatywne w literaturze polskiej: typologia, tematyka, funkcje.” *Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich*, vol. 59/118 z. 2, 2016, pp. 91–105.

---. “Powstanie styczniowe i polityka pamięci. ‘Orzeł bielszy niż gołębica’ Konrada T. Lewandowskiego i ‘Gambit Wielopolskiego’ Adama Przechrzty.” *Creatio Fantastica*, vol. 60, no. 1, Nov. 2019, pp. 75–96. *Zenodo*, https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3597814.

Weindling, Paul. “Painful and Sometimes Deadly Experiments Which Nazi Doctors Carried out on Children.” *Acta Paediatrica*, vol. 111, no. 9, 2022, pp. 1664–69. *Wiley Online Library*, https://doi.org/10.1111/apa.16310.

Wesseling, Elisabeth. “Writing History as a Prophet.” *Upal.26*, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1991. *benjamins.com*, https://benjamins.com/catalog/upal.26.

Widmann, Andreas Martin. “Plot vs. Story: Towards a Typology of Counterfactual Historical Novels.” *Counterfactual Thinking - Counterfactual Writing*, De Gruyter, 2011, pp. 170–89. *www.degruyter.com*, https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110268669.170/html.

“William’s Review of After Dachau.” *Goodreads.Com*, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/79407116. Accessed 22 Apr. 2023.

Winthrop-Young, Geoffrey. “Fallacies and Thresholds: Notes on the Early Evolution of Alternate History.” *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, vol. 34, no. 2 (128), 2009, pp. 99–117. *Semantic Scholar*, https://doi.org/10.12759/HSR.34.2009.2.99-117.

Winthrop-Young, Geoffrey. “The Third Reich in Alternate History: Aspects of a Genre-Specific Depiction of Nazi Culture.” *The Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 39, no. 5, 2006, pp. 878–96. *Wiley Online Library*, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5931.2006.00310.x.

"'Wolf by Wolf' from the 'Wolf by Wolf' Series." *Kirkus Reviews*, 29 June 2015, https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/ryan-graudin/wolf-by-wolf/.

Wolski, Marcin. *Mocarstwo*. Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo, 2012.

---. *Wallenrod*. Wyd. 2. popr., Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo, 2012.

"Wren's Review of Blood for Blood." *Goodreads.Com*, 20 Feb. 2016, https://www.goodreads.com/review/show/1544408703.

Wüstenberg, Jenny. "Locating Transnational Memory." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, no. 32, 2019, pp. 371–82.

Young, James E. "America's Holocaust: Memory and the Politics of Identity." *The Americanization of the Holocaust*, edited by Hilene Flanzbaum, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, pp. 125–41.

---. *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. Yale University Press, 1993.

Zemler, Emily. "Creators of The Man in the High Castle: There Are 'Deeply Disturbing' Parallels." *The Guardian*, 16 Dec. 2016. *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/tvandradioblog/2016/dec/16/man-in-the-high-castle-season-2-review.

Ziv, Stav. "Watching 'Man in the High Castle' in Trump's America." *Newsweek*, 15 Dec. 2016, https://www.newsweek.com/man-high-castle-and-prospect-trump-presidency-532078.

SUMMARY

WORLD WAR II IN AMERICAN ALTERNATE HISTORY IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF MEMORY STUDIES

mgr Magdalena Wąsowicz-Miszczyńska

This dissertation sets out to assess how that what merely could have happened but never had can shape the collective and cultural memory of what really happened. The analysis of alternate histories of World War II in the context of memory studies provides a fresh perspective on the collective and cultural memory of the period between 1939 and 1945 and advances our understanding of its meaning for contemporary American society.

To gauge the relationship between alternate history and mnemonic discourses regarding World War II, this dissertation focuses on five questions:

6) Which World War II sites of memory are depicted in American alternate history?
7) How do alternate history narratives utilize World War II sites of memory?
8) What politics of memory do alternate histories promote?
9) Do alternate histories support the hegemonic memory or subvert it?
10) How do alternate history narratives contribute to our understanding of American memory culture?

The dissertation follows an interpretative pattern inspired by the methods used in memory studies that involves: 1) the summary of the novel, 2) the biographical and historical background, 3) the analysis of sites of memory the novel refers to, 4) the politics of memory promoted by the novel, and, if possible, 5) the literary afterlives of the novel.

The dissertation is divided into two parts. The first part is concerned with defining what alternate history is and providing an explanation of how it can be analyzed in the

context of memory studies. The first chapter focuses on defining the genre. In the first subchapter, I differentiate between alternate history and counterfactual history. The second subchapter addresses the problem of defining alternate history. I begin by aggregating the existing definitions to extract four defining features of the genre: 1) history, 2) point of divergence, 3) ramifications, and 4) probability. On the basis of the abovementioned thematic concerns, a single comprehensive definition is created. The second chapter begins by laying out the methodological dimensions of the research. Firstly, I provide an overview of the history of the most influential theories of memory studies, such as Maurice Halbwach's collective memory, Jan Assmann's cultural and communicative memory, Michael Rothberg's multidirectional memory, Pierre Nora's sites of memory, and the broadly understood politics of memory. Next, I proceed to describe the usefulness of memory studies for literary analysis and discuss the intersections between alternate history and memory. There, I demonstrate how collective and cultural memory are founded on the same mechanisms as alternate history and explain in detail how the key concepts of memory studies can be used as a toolkit for interpreting alternate history narratives.

The second part of the dissertation is concerned with the analysis of the memory of World War II in chosen American alternate history novels. It begins with a general overview of the memory of World War II in the United. What follows is an analysis of the selected alternate history novels pertaining to World War II: *The Man in the High Castle* (1962) by Philip K. Dick, *After Dachau* (2001) by Daniel Quinn, *The Plot Against America* (2004) by Philip Roth, *Amerikan Eagle* (2011) by Brendan DuBois, *Wolf by Wolf* (2015) and *Blood for Blood* (2016) by Ryan Graudin, and *Rocket's Red Glare* (2020) by Cy Stein. The analysis established three sites of memory toward which all the narratives gravitate: 1) Franklin D. Roosevelt, 2) the Holocaust, and 3) Adolf Hitler (often in the form of a stand-in). In most

cases, these sites of memory constitute starting points around which various memories of American historical experience loop themselves.

The present dissertation investigates the politics of memory pursued by particular novels, thus showing how they correlate with extra-literary developments, such as the political tensions of the 1960s, the September 11 terrorist attacks, the Great Recession between 2007 and 2009, the election of Donald Trump as the president of the United States, the emergence of the far right in the 2010s, and the waning of the Holocaust memory since 2000, especially among young people. The analysis of the politics of memory they participate in, as well as the examination of their literary afterlives, allowed me to demonstrate that alternate history can be a bellwether of social attitudes. It also demonstrates how alternate history instrumentally uses the past to comment on the present and ponder the future.

Alternate history emerges as a unique, invigorating literary mode of accessing collective and cultural memory and a powerful tool for memory activism. The analysis of alternate histories in the context of memory studies conducted in this dissertation proves that alternate history allows us to approach the mnemonic discourse regarding American memory of World War II from a new direction and provides an intriguing space for creation of counter-memories to the hegemonic mnemonic discourses. Moreover, it confirms that so-called “popular literature” can be as important for national memory cultures as high literature.

STRESZCZENIE

WORLD WAR II IN AMERICAN ALTERNATE HISTORY IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF MEMORY STUDIES

Druga wojna światowa w amerykańskich historiach alternatywnych w perspektywie studiów nad pamięcią

mgr Magdalena Wąsowicz-Miszczyńska

Celem rozprawy doktorskiej jest analiza, jak wydarzenia kontrfaktyczne mogą wpływać na kształtowanie pamięci zbiorowej i kulturowej. Przedstawiona w pracy interpretacja historii alternatywnych II wojny światowej w kontekście studiów nad pamięcią pozwala na nowe spojrzenie na okres 1939-1945 i jego znaczenie dla współczesnego amerykańskiego społeczeństwa.

Opisując związek pomiędzy historią alternatywną a dyskursami pamięci II wojny światowej, niniejsza dysertacja koncentruje się na pięciu pytaniach:

1. Jakie miejsca pamięci opisywane są w amerykańskich historiach alternatywnych?
2. W jaki sposób historie alternatywne wykorzystują te miejsca pamięci?
3. Jakie polityki pamięci są rozpowszechniane przez historie alternatywne?
4. Czy historie alternatywne wspierają, czy podważają pamięć hegemoniczną?
5. Jak historie alternatywne mogą pomóc w zrozumieniu amerykańskiej kultury pamięci?

Wykorzystywany w pracy schemat analityczny został zainspirowany przez metody wykorzystywane w studiach nad pamięcią. Składa się na niego: 1) streszczenie utworu, 2) opis historycznego i biograficznego kontekstu powstania dzieła, 3) analiza miejsc pamięci, do

których odnosi się badany tekst, 4) objaśnienie odwołań do polityk pamięci oraz, jeśli to możliwe, 5) rekapitulacja recepcji dzieła.

Rozprawa doktorska podzielona jest na dwie części. Pierwsza przedstawia kwestie metodologiczne dotyczące gatunku oraz jego związków z pamięcią zbiorową i kulturową. Rozdział pierwszy koncentruje się na definicji i rozróżnieniu pomiędzy historią kontrfaktyczną a historią alternatywną. W celu zdefiniowania gatunku literackiego, jakim jest historia alternatywna, analizuję istniejące już definicje i wyodrębniam jego cztery cechy charakterystyczne: 1) historię, 2) punkt dywergencji, 3) konsekwencje i 4) prawdopodobieństwo. Na ich podstawie sformułowana zostaje nowa, bardziej precyzyjna definicja. W drugim rozdziale opisane są kwestie dotyczące metodologii studiów nad pamięcią oraz związków pomiędzy pamięcią a historią alternatywną. Rozdział ten rozpoczyna się od zarysu najważniejszych teorii pamięci, takich jak pamięć zbiorowa Maurice Halbwachsa, pamięć komunikacyjna i kulturowa Jana Assmanna, pamięć wielokierunkowa Michaela Rothberga, miejsca pamięci Pierre'a Nory oraz szeroko rozumiana polityka pamięci. Następnie omówione zostają sposoby analizy dzieł literackich w kontekście studiów nad pamięcią oraz potencjalne związki pomiędzy pamięcią a historią alternatywną.

Część druga pracy ma charakter analityczny i zawarte są w niej interpretacje wybranych amerykańskich historii alternatywnych, których fabuła nawiązuje do II wojny światowej: *The Man in the High Castle* Philipa K. Dicka, *After Dachau* Daniela Quinna, *The Plot Against America* Philipa Rotha, *Amerikan Eagle* Brendana DuBois, *Wolf by Wolf* i *Blood for Blood* Ryan Graudin i *Rocket's Red Glare* Cy Steina. Analiza wymienionych utworów pozwoliła na wyodrębnienie trzech wspólnych miejsc pamięci: 1) postaci Franklina D. Roosevelta 2) Holokaustu 3) Adolfa Hitlera. W większości przypadków owe

miejsca pamięci stanowią punkt, wokół którego krystalizuje się amerykańskie doświadczenie historyczne.

Niniejsza rozprawa doktorska wykorzystuje wskazane miejsca pamięci jako punkt wyjścia do rozważań na temat polityki pamięci i pokazuje, że treść historii alternatywnych koreluje z bieżącymi wydarzeniami społecznymi i politycznymi, takimi jak procesy nazistowskich zbrodniarzy w latach sześćdziesiątych XX wieku, zamachy terrorystyczne z 11 września 2001 r., kryzys finansowy w latach 2007-2009, wybór Donalda Trumpa na prezydenta Stanów Zjednoczonych oraz zanikanie pamięci o Holokauście wśród młodych Amerykanów. Analiza historii alternatywnych w kontekście polityki pamięci pozwala na pokazanie, że gatunek ten może stanowić zwiastun przemian społeczno-kulturowych i jest narzędziem do promowania określonych polityk pamięci.

Dysertacja ukazuje, że historie alternatywne są unikalnym sposobem na zrozumienie dyskursów pamięciowych i stanowią inspirującą przestrzeń dla tworzenia narracji konkurencyjnych wobec tych promowanych w ramach pamięci hegemonicznej. Co więcej, udowadnia ona, że tzw. „literatura popularna" odgrywa równie ważną rolę w tworzeniu i rozpowszechnianiu pamięci jak literatura wysoka.