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- 1 At the Berlinale Film Festival in 2004, a key element in the successful strategy of the post-World War II “European Recovery Program” (ERP) was rediscovered and brought back on the screen: the comprehensive and complex film program of the Marshall Plan to win the “hearts and minds” of both allies and former enemies. These short documentary films from seventeen countries¹ offer valuable insights into the many ways in which the promise of a new beginning could be translated into compelling audio-visual narratives.² Apart from economic visions regarding issues of free trade and fresh opportunities of international cooperation, the films focused on democratic (re)education, tolerance in multiethnic societies, multilingualism, and the hitherto untapped opportunities of a “New United States of Europe.” The efforts of forging a new cosmopolitan society after the disaster of World War II placed special emphasis on modern educational methods and innovative school concepts. Boys and girls from all over Europe played a double role in the Marshall Plan films: first, they acted in documentary films embodying a future generation according to American democratic ideals. Their screen presence suggested that they represented the living proof of the motto *e pluribus unum*. Second, in the Marshall Plan films young people also served as a commodity of modern entertainment for audiences hungry for innovative success stories in post-war Europe. The “new Europe” would therefore also be a “young Europe” anticipated via child actors on the screen.
- 2 My article will analyze how European film makers of the Marshall Plan used docudramas to envisage a multi-ethnic and cosmopolitan “young Europe” free from the

political baggage of the past (in particular connected to the World War II experience). From this perspective, a number of questions arise. What kind of audio-visual strategies did Marshall Plan films employ in order to overcome national chauvinism, ethnic confrontations, and language barriers? What continuities and differences from World War II to post-war Europe can be traced in the films produced in Austria, Germany, Great Britain or France? What kind of processes regarding cultural translation, cultural diplomacy, propaganda and censorship are at work in the films financed with American taxpayers' money? And, how far do Marshall Plan films denounce themselves as idealized fictions of new beginnings American style?³

1. Re-Education, Friendly Persuasion, and Propaganda for Democracy: Lessons Learnt from Post-WW I.

- 3 After World War II, the European continent lay in ruins, its people had been physically and emotionally devastated. Cultural diplomacy emerged as an important element to press on with efforts of re-educating and democratizing former enemies as well as secure geo-strategic interests of the US in Europe. Cultural diplomacy in the sense of the former Minister in the U.S. Foreign Service, Hans N. Tuck, refers to a "government's process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, for its institutions and culture, as well as for its national goals and current policies."⁴ Mass media such as radio, advertisement, and films played a crucial role in what can be described as "propaganda for democracy."⁵ The European Reconstruction Program, as the American Marshall Plan was officially called, was designed to stabilize the dire economic situation in Europe, create strong allies overseas, and to promote cross-cultural understanding, European solidarity and cooperation. The Truman Administration launched a comprehensive marketing campaign to document the progress of reconstruction and democracy.⁶ The Economic Cooperation Administration's (ECA) Office of Information set out to promote an understanding among European people regarding the motives of the United States. They included extending recovery aid, explaining the objectives and methods of the program, informing about the help which America is providing, and generating awareness in Europe about the ERP, its progress and operations. The program capitalized on experience gained during the New Deal and WWII.⁷
- 4 One of the most challenging problems was the question how to restructure educational systems in order to prepare a young generation of German, Austrian, French, Italian, or children from other Marshall Plan countries for the new challenges in a democratic United States of Europe. In how far could the American school system serve as a model? Issues of transcultural differences had to be taken into account in order to successfully implement a process of democratic re-education. The German-American social scientist Kurt Lewin recognized already in 1936 the remarkable "gap between the ideals which the educational procedure pretends to follow and the actual procedure." (Lewin, A, 17) In the transatlantic context, the difference in school education and the relationship between child and adult, between student and teacher appeared to be decidedly different. Lewin argued that obedience, inferiority and servility of the young child towards adults were part of German education systems. In the United States, Lewin found that the system encourages the child to "become practically independent as soon as possible."⁸ In order to influence cultural patterns propaganda offers a means to

change the culture of a group which remains on its native soil. Kurt Lewin understood that the term "democracy" had different connotations for Germans and Americans. A German might associate individualist freedom with the term. However, "if an American defines democracy," Lewin explains, "he too very frequently stresses individualistic freedom and forgets that leadership is fully as important in a democracy as in an autocracy. But the American happens to live in a country where the efficiency of the process of group decisions is relatively highly developed, at least in small groups, and where democratic leadership is thoroughly accepted as a cultural pattern and taught in practice to children in school." (Lewin, B, 37) Thus, representations of new school systems need to introduce democratic decision making processes in a performative way so that children intuitively grasp the meaning of a new cultural pattern. This became one of the challenges in Marshall Plan films about re-educating the young.

- 5 The Marshall Planners had to take into account new ways regarding how to connect with a large number of people spread over 5000 miles of territory with a great diversity of culture and traditions including a diversity of 14 languages (not including regional dialects). As a consequence, increased emphasis was put on information activities and technologies. In addition to radio broadcasts, travelling exhibits, news reports, photos, graphs, and posters, the medium of film was regarded as an essential means of propaganda for the sake of democracy. The ingenious idea behind the Marshall Plan documentaries promoted a climate that encouraged artists in Europe to address the challenges of democracy in their home countries, instead of having the means, methods, and images dictated by the American authorities.⁹ The Motion Picture Unit of the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) firmly believed that Europeans would "speak most effectively to other Europeans." (Schulberg, 10) Thus, e.g., a film for an Austrian audience was developed by Austrian talents including script writers, actors, and directors. Specific national economic and cultural challenges had to be combined with intra-European visions in line with the ECA chiefs in Paris. Thus, the Marshall Plan films not only show a one-way process of cultural imperialism. Rather, they reflect a creative process of appropriation and re-appropriation. However, they also became the site of cultural misunderstandings and transcultural confrontations.
- 6 The films function as a highly successful instrument of American cultural diplomacy in the effort to democratize the former fascist enemies and persuade European countries to follow the United States in fostering a new exchange on economic, political, social and cultural levels.¹⁰ The promise for those who accepted the support of technical know-how, modern machinery, and financial aid offered by the Marshall Plan suggested: "You, too, can be like us."¹¹ Considering the growing irritation regarding segregation within US occupation troops abroad and segregation in schools and public life at home in the American South, this promise assumed ambiguous undertones in Europe. In the media campaign, this had to be avoided at all cost. After all, the Marshall Plan films were designed to offer easily understandable narratives of the American democratic promise. Usually, the films employed powerful symbols such as a ship arriving on the shore loaded with goods, tools, or machines to restore the economy of the 18 nations who accepted help from the United States. They documented economic success stories such as constructions of river dams, restoring the life of formerly destroyed city centers, the building of new factories and conveying information about more efficient ways to cultivate the land.¹²

- 7 Marshall Plan documentary films were intended to be shown in movie theatres before the main feature films. However, it was clear to the chief planners that other venues had to be utilized as well in order to heighten the general awareness. Therefore, the heads of the Marshall Plan film unit in Paris made sure that the films were being shown in Amerika-Häuser (America Houses) and Education Service Centers. In addition, the films were being rented to schools. Mobile film units criss-crossed the countries to bring the documentary films into remote corners where they were shown at public places such as schools or town halls.¹³ One of the target audiences were young children and students. Several films deal with issues regarding a new educational system and innovative learning environments. In March 1951, a survey documented that more than 2 million people had seen Marshall Plan films.

Chart: Marshall Plan Film Program Attendance (Office of Public Affairs) for the Federal Republic of Germany and Berlin (non-commercial) from Jan. 1949 to March 1951.¹⁴

- 8 The awareness of the main Marshall Plan messages among the population of various European countries was remarkably high. For example, by 1951, 88 percent of Austrians had received detailed information on the European Reconstruction Program via mass media, in Norway the numbers were even higher with 94 percent of the population. Among the films which are dedicated to young audiences, four films stand out:
- 9 1) The prize-winning color cartoon *The Shoemaker and the Hatter* created in Great Britain by John Halas (1912-1995) and Joy Batchelor (1914-1991) in 1950 translates issues of free trade vs. protectionism into an entertaining story (not only) for children. The creative team, which later turned George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1954) into a by now classic animation feature film, ingeniously portrays a shoemaker and a hatter who live next to each other. In order to revive their businesses they follow different strategies. While the hatter decides to produce few hats which he intends to sell for a comparatively high price, the shoemaker recognizes the need for inexpensive shoes for a large number of people. In order to lower costs, he looks for new ways of mass production and profit through export and free trade. With this innovative mindset comes a cultural opportunity for intercultural understanding: The shoemaker needs to travel all across Europe in order to gain information about the socio-economic situation and

opportunities. On his adventurous trips to create a business network he engages with people from different European countries. Unfortunately, these people are reduced to a few stereotypical (economic) features such as a hyper-masculine woodcutter in Austria, a dairy connoisseur in Switzerland, or a technical engineer in Germany. The New Europe of *The Shoemaker and the Hatter* relies on and enforces stereotypical reductions of national identities. This paradox of promoting a new European consciousness and the reliance on familiar ethnic and national stereotypes is highly recognizable in the visual style. Most of the films turn a blind eye on themes regarding cultural appropriation or migration. In *The Shoemaker and the Hatter*, "exchange" may be the key term. However, despite the innovative framework of cultural diplomacy in which the Marshall Plan films were produced, the term "exchange" is reduced to technical means of transporting goods in order to raise consumer standards of living. With its focus on economic issues, the film is more interested in economic strategies for a new Europe rather than showcasing the potential of intercultural communication and understanding. The Marshall Plan filmography by Linda Christenson lists no less than seven language versions.¹⁵ This is a valuable hint at the success and popularity of the film reaching far beyond British audiences. *The Shoemaker and the Hatter* offers an approach to visualizing abstract concepts of a free market economy that other animation films such as *Transatlantique* (1953) would take as a model. Documentaries which employ corresponding narrative structures and animation techniques to attract the young include *Freundschaft Ohne Grenzen* (1948-1950) and *Trois Hommes au Travail* (1951).¹⁶

Fig. 1: National stereotypes in Austria, France, and Germany, four stills from *The Shoemaker and the Hatter*.

- 10 The animation films tell stories for children about a new form of international cooperation. Instead of featuring children, the colorful animation sequences show an ideal democratic future in which they will become key players. While *The Shoemaker and*

the Hatter relies on adult protagonists and vivid colors to translate complex and abstract issues of free market economy, cross-cultural understanding, and the potential of democratic discourses for school children, other films offer different approaches. For example:

- 11 2) The black and white documentary *Frischer Wind in Alten Gassen* produced in Germany and directed by Fritz Peter Buch in 1951. It uses school children as protagonists. Following the motto "young people in charge," the film shows an unusual experiment in democratic education. In order to learn about the basic challenges of political life and local government, the city of Eberbach am Neckar hands over its political power to children. The documentary film with its young German lay characters reflects small town life as a basis to educate a new generation of a homogenous group of white children in political life. The town mayor of the tiny village of Eberbach, who steps down in order to give his position to a young boy is played by Wolfgang Preiss who had been cast in Nazi propaganda films in the 1940s such as *Die Grosse Liebe* (1942) or *Besatzung Dora* (1943). His presence provides a comment on the need for new leaders. It also shows how democratic ideas resembled a mask which is put on because it allowed actors to continue their careers. This element of continuity in the history of German film before and after 1945 is problematic. It shows the doubleness of films as providing important lessons in political education and at the same time masking the links to ideologically opposite directions in the not too distant past. On a positive note one might argue that Preiss's role in the film suggests the success of the re-education and democratization efforts of the Marshall Plan films. As was typical for German feature productions of the 1950s as well, the settings moved away from modern metropolitan centers to more rural places and spaces where the disastrous havoc of the destruction during the last phase of World War II was less visible. As such, it combines escapism with a willingness to look ahead instead of coming to terms with the political burdens of the past.¹⁷
- 12 *Frischer Wind in Alten Gassen* is remarkable in its emphasis on a group of young people from one nation compared to similar efforts in which only one boy or girl overcomes problems of everyday life such as *The Story of Koula* (1951) where a Greek boy yokes a large American mule from the harbour to his tiny village or *Bergbauern von Morgen* (1950) in which a young farmer's boy raises a prize calf.

Fig. 2: School children learning about democratic decision making processes in a performative way, four stills from *Frischer Wind in alten Gassen*.

- 13 The film *Frischer Wind in Alten Gassen* follows an ideal of offering a performative way to learn about democratic decision making processes instead of simply commanding new ways of socio-political conduct. Lewin recognized that “[d]emocracy cannot be imposed upon a person; it has to be learned by a process of voluntary and responsible participation. Changing from autocracy to democracy is a process which takes more time than changing in the opposite direction.” (Lewin, B, 38) *Frischer Wind in Alten Gassen* offers a lesson in the experiment of training future democratic leaders. Unfortunately, the film cannot escape the aesthetic narrative patterns of the past which lead to an idealization of rural German family life as a nucleus for recruiting support for the Nazi ideology. Nevertheless, the film argues convincingly that the notion of democracy cannot simply be superimposed from American traditions but needs to take into account the specific disposition of the country and its cultural heritage. Metaphorically, it expresses the dire need to exchange the familiar role models of leaders and obedient followers.
- 14 3) The black-and-white film *Let's Be Childish* produced in France by George Freedland (aka Georges Friedland, 1910-1993) in 1950 offers an innovative approach to multilingual understanding. With a group of children from different European countries and unusual camera work, Freedland translates the idea of a New Europe into striking visual imagery. As in the quaint, parochial *Frischer Wind in alten Gassen*, Freedland also avoids displaying urban centers in favour of the typical tradition of what became popular under the catchword “Heimatfilm” in Germany of the 1950s. Indeed, the film depicts an Alpine resort where children of various nationalities live and play together. Time and time again, the camera moves away from the action to find peace and assurance in the sublime image of the mountains. The repeated evocation of

Nature's grandeur creates a nexus with the children suggesting an inherent harmony between the scenic landscapes and young Europeans.

Fig. 3: Familiar national stereotypes. Stills from *Let's Be Childish*.

- 15 *Let's be Childish* effectively emphasizes the perspective of children with low camera angles. Apart from the final scene, adults are exclusively shown without body and head. Freedland positions the camera in a way that the audience can only see the feet and hear the voices. Freedland focuses on children as a nucleus of different Europeans with their own languages who find ways to interact harmoniously and solve problems. Language plays a key role as a cultural and national marker. Accordingly the children from France, Italy, Austria, Sweden, the Netherlands and Great Britain each speak their own language. When the young protagonist Toni enters the scene, she is immediately identified as an outsider. Her speckled face and obvious shyness serve as visual markers of somebody who will not automatically and seamlessly blend in with the group of children. They have already actively engaged in a contest in the snow. No one is willing to interact with her. The general response of Swedish, Italian, or French children to her wish to participate in the action is as short as it is telling: "don't understand." The ensuing snowball fight between the children is turned into an allegory of war and creates visual echoes from the not so distant past. One boy even shouts the word "war" in German – "Krieg." – which leaves no doubt as to the film maker's trajectory. Despite the idyllic mountain scenery and the presence of playful children, the recent past of war-torn Europe looms heavily over the seemingly innocent games.
- 16 When Toni's head is injured, she needs to be brought into a nearby house and treated by a doctor. In order to cheer her up, the children conceive of an ingenious plan. Instead of each building their own national monument in the now, they all work together and create a fictitious city which they name "Toniville." At the end, the prize is given to all the children.

Fig. 4: Winning the prize, stills from *Let's Be Childish*.

- 17 The *mise-en-scène* evokes an idealist visual translation of a united New Europe in which the young generation overcomes not only language barriers but is able to collaborate productively beyond chauvinistic national preconceptions. In accordance with the clear allegorical visual constructions, the film ends on a heavy didactic note when the organizer of the event states in explicit terms the underlying agenda of the strategies conceived by the Marshall Planners in Paris:

These children from all the corners of Europe have overcome the barrier of language that separates their countries. They have understood each other and united their efforts to make their contest their common cause. May their initiative serve as an example to the world at large. May it be a lesson to our adult world. [Freedland, 1950]

- 18 The long shots depicting the young representatives of the various European countries reduce the individuals by displaying types. This common technique can be found in all of the Marshall Plan films I have been able to spot. The lesson to be learned seems to be a guideline implemented by the Marshall Planners. To a certain degree, *Let's Be Childish* re-enacts the typical immigrant experience in *American* cultural history as the struggle of coming to terms with a new socio-cultural environment and language system. A similar narrative can be found in a film about educational issues of a new generation of European children by an Austrian filmmaker.
- 19 4) The black and white film *Wie die Jungen Sunen* produced in Austria by Georg Tressler (1917-2007) in 1954 stands out with its direct comments on the African American Civil Rights movement. It offers a revealing glance at the ambiguity of the promise of "you too can be like us" of the Marshall Planners and the conflicting reality at home between democratic principles and practices. Tressler was an aspiring young filmmaker from Vienna who embraced the invitation to promote the European Reconstruction Program. Young directors who had shown signs of promise in their previous films were

asked to work out story lines that might be of interest for their audience, in Tressler's case the Austrian people.

We tried to find out how new techniques are being implemented. For instance, the agricultural section or the paper industry in Linz, or the green land in Steiermark. What is done to raise production levels? There were quite a few people, groups and companies exploring new methods. There were nice American officers and people who would say, "George, you do that, you care [about] that— Bring me some information and let's talk about it." That's the way it worked. So I had to make myself clear about what was going on in Austria.¹⁸

- 20 In 1952, Tressler wrote and directed several entertaining documentary films about industrialized chicken farms and more efficient methods of agriculture modelled after developments in the United States. In *Traudl's Neuer Gemüsegarten* (1952), he charmingly recommends adopting new methods of growing and eating healthy vegetables. The protagonist plays the young daughter of old fashioned Austrian farmers who are finally convinced of the new ideas suggested by an agricultural advisor (presumably working with ECA support). In *Hansl und die 200.000 Kücken* (1952), a young boy becomes the model for a new generation of entrepreneurs. In order to buy himself a new bicycle, Hansl increases the production of eggs by accepting a consignment of Marshall Plan chicks. The instructions on how to build a more efficient chicken house are mirrored by the efforts of other farmers to produce eggs in great masses in specially designed factory-like buildings.¹⁹ Tressler would later continue to become an influential director in Germany with celebrated films such as *Die Halbstarken* (1956), *Endstation Liebe* (1957/58), or *Das Totenschiff* (1959) based on the the adaption of B. Traven's novel *The Death Ship*. Two years after his successful documentaries funded with Marshall Plan money, Tressler shifted his focus from economic to cultural themes in his docudrama *Wie die Jungen Sunge* financed by the United States Information Service. Despite the new challenge of the film program after 1950 to explain to Europeans the urgent need for defense during the Korean War and collective security within the Cold War, Tressler's social utopia of a United States of Europe surpassed the American framework in more than one aspect.

2. Cross-Cultural Networks, Multi-Lingual Education, and the Risks of Color Blindness

- 21 *Wie die Jungen Sunge* tackles three different themes at the same time: first, the future of a new transnational Europe; second, multilingualism vs. French as a new European lingua franca; third, redirecting pre-war racial prejudice towards a climate of racial tolerance in the future. The third topic is particularly important to understand the potential connotations in translating the "promise of Young Europe" via the medium of film into a transatlantic context. The title *Wie die Jungen Sunge* offers a revealing twist of a popular saying: "Wie die Alten sunge, so zwitschern es die Jungen" which roughly translates into "the way the old folks sing, the young twitter accordingly." Tressler reverses the call and response pattern of the popular saying. In post-war Europe, the old are well advised to learn from a new generation of young, open-minded future citizens of a united New Europe whose cosmopolitan attitude would hopefully render another world war impossible. Tressler finds an intriguing visual narrative in portraying new educational models in what might be labelled a docudrama.

- 22 Tressler sets his story in the metropolitan center of Austria in the newly established international Lycée Français in Vienna.²⁰ Here, children from all over Europe come together and form a multi-national and multi-racial nucleus. The protagonist of the story is a little blond Austrian girl called Gerti who is about to enter the Lycée Français. Tressler does not shy away from referring to the aesthetic language of the past. Instead, he re-appropriates successful strategies to utilize them for a different kind of "propaganda." As in Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph des Willens* (1935) and Billy Wilder's black satire of the American occupation troops in Germany aptly entitled *A Foreign Affair* (1948), Tressler begins his film with aerial shots. The audience, however, is not introduced to Berlin but to Vienna. With a documentary approach he portrays the Lycée Français de Vienne where students come from all over the world: Peter is from Hungary, Sidney from the United States, Michèle is French, and Karin Swedish. In their new environment, they must – just like in Freedland's *Let's Be Childish* – interact and overcome language barriers. The camera follows Gerti, a little blonde girl from the city, who has just arrived with her mother. She appears isolated in a panoramic view shot within the main hall of the school. A wall of glass separates her from the familiar cityscapes of her home town. This feeling of isolation makes her cry. Among those who seem to be most curious about the shy newcomer is a black boy.

Fig. 5: Gerti's initiation at school, stills from *Wie die Jungen Singen*

- 23 The contrast of color and the assignment of colors to competing groups of people have played a major role in the ideological warfare of the past. Familiar connotations of black and white have been routinely used in World War II propaganda on both sides of the Atlantic and spilled over in the re-education films conceived under the Office of Military Government US (OMGUS).²¹ For example, with the establishment of the Office of War Information (OWI) in 1942, a centralized agency was created to control all government press, radio and film productions and general contact with the media.

Michael Hoenisch has called the OWI the "most powerful propaganda institution in the U.S." (Hoenisch, 1999) One of the most influential and complex efforts in this vein is the series *Why We Fight* (1943-45). The American director Frank Capra activated the talents at Disney studios for elaborate animation sequences in which the global threat of Nazism was used to counterbalance fascism with democracy by contrasting the colors black and white. After World War II, Stuart Schulberg, the American director and head of the Marshall Plan Film program in Paris, used these techniques to visualize the geo-strategic situation in Europe in films such as *Hunger* (1948) or *Me and Mr. Marshall* (1949).²² Those countries, which accepted the offerings and help of the Marshall plan, assumed the color white. Those who rejected the helping hand from across the Atlantic changed their color and became black.

- 24 From this perspective, the first inter-racial encounter in Tressler's film is crucial. The introduction of a black boy as a fellow outsider who would bond with the blonde newcomer undermines the conventions audiences had been accustomed to by propaganda efforts of the past. The emphasis on the visual contrasts of color is intensified by the nonverbal exchange of looks. This sequence sets the stage for a story that will follow certain conventions: two outsiders must overcome their limitations, rise to the occasion and emulate the Cinderella pattern of turning inferiority into superiority. With the help of the black boy and his playful nature Gerti gains self-confidence. This allows her to interact more freely with her classmates. Later, she assumes the role of a tourist guide on the Vienna Ferris Wheel pointing out the various sites. In turn she gets invited to visit the home countries of her newly found friends in Sweden, Italy, France, and even to Africa. One of the close observers of Gerti's success story at school is the bus driver. Realizing that children from different corners of the continent with different skin color do not exhibit any inhibitions interacting with each other, he starts to learn French himself. At the end of the film, he even brings his son to the Lycée Français. The sequence reflects the essential message which had been at the core of the preceding Marshall Plan films. In a dialogue in heavy Austrian dialect the father tells his sceptical friend about his change of mind. It is the children who will lead the way toward a better understanding. The final word goes to the sceptic while he observes the children entering the gates of the school: "Was die Leute alles probieren... Na ja, Probieren geht über Studieren. Vielleicht kommen sie auf diese Art zu einer Verständigung in der Welt."²³
- 25 The film seems to be a perfect candidate for the kind of subtle propaganda that Marshall Planners had in mind: By focussing on the perspective of school children Tressler adapts the American creed "e pluribus unum" and the democratic ideal of the American Constitution to the cultural framework of the European continent, namely that all human beings are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The children's initiation at the international school is turned into an aesthetic and didactic tool. By stylizing the way they cope with each other's different national backgrounds and languages, children emerge as persuasive role models for their parents, showing them how to make a multicultural and multinational society work. Tressler's message is one of self-empowerment. There are no didactic voice-overs as in numerous other Marshall Plan films. The director relies completely on the enchanting power of his children actors, the story, and the positive implications of his aesthetic compositions. Apart from the initial reference that the production was funded by the "US Information Service," there

are no explicit references to American models or the Marshall program. And yet, the notion that Europe might be able to emulate the American way of life and its democratic promise of equality runs through the picture like an invisible undercurrent. Does *Wie die Jungen Sunen* have anything to say about what W.E.B. Du Bois identified as the problem of the 20th century, namely the color line? Let us look at a scene in which color becomes the subject in class, albeit not in an explicit conversation about racial issues but veiled as an exercise in writing.

- 26 One might argue that in Tressler's film "e pluribus unum" translates into "la grenouille est verte" – a sentence, which the teacher of a writing class asks a student to spell out on the blackboard. When another student remarks that actually not all frogs are green the teacher does not recognize the contribution as valuable. This explicit color-blindness may be interpreted as a metaphor. Tressler finds a concrete visual reference to allude to the goal of the Marshal Plan to re-educate the former enemies and persuade them to create a new socio-political environment where all are considered equal, sharing in the same dream of a unified Europe with one language of communication. In a literal sense, color as a racial marker does not exist any more. The white school girl Gerti does not seem to be aware of racial differences. This perspective turns out to be persuasive for adults as well. While at the beginning, nobody wanted to sit next to Gerti, the black boy is happy to enjoy the presence of his new friend during various occasions. When the bus driver looks in the rear view mirror and observes this joyful interaction of black and white children he learns a crucial message: "It is unbelievable how children can get used to each other." What are the audio-visual strategies to convey this innovative message? In how far can *Wie die Jungen Sunen* be described as a successful contribution to overcoming racial prejudice and opening up a new dialogue about identity constructions that are inclusive instead of exclusive?

3. Screening Color Blindness in a Transatlantic Context

- 27 The controversial topic of so-called "brown babies" was widely discussed before and during the time Tressler conceived his idea of a film about school children at the *Lycée Français*. For example, the cover picture of Alfons Simon's pedagogical booklet *Maxi unser Negerbub* (*Max our Negro Lad*) from 1952 shows an Afro-German boy in Lederhosen next to a blond boy suggesting successful integration in school. In Germany, heated debates about challenges of integrating these babies into society grossly exaggerated the number of so-called black "Mischlingskinder" (children of mixed race).²⁴ A highly successful German movie called *Toxi*, also from 1952 (and followed by *Der Dunkle Stern* in 1955 with the same Afro-German actress Elfie Fiegert), displayed the integration of Afro-Germans both as a political and humanitarian problem of national importance. The film reinforces and reifies, as Heide Fehrenbach remarks, "the black-white binary, since it insists that the pull of race is as strong among black as among white characters." (Fehrenbach, 129) Themes of racial tolerance and multiethnic integration played an important role in black press reports about Germany. In the 1950s, the fate of about 3000 occupation children conceived by African American GIs and German women shifted the focus to American concerns of moral responsibility. Articles such as "German War Babies" (1951), "Germany's Tragic War Babies" (1952), "We Adopted a Brown Baby" (1953), or "Should White Parents Adopt Brown Babies" (1958) focussed on

the need to help these children in their uncommon living situation abroad. In general this meant bringing them "home" to the United States, which is also the main story line in the German film production *Toxi*. The legal challenges of incorporating "brown babies" in the United States was reported widely and in many cases celebrated as a "triumph of American democracy."²⁵

- 28 The situation in Austria was not too dissimilar. As the oral history project "Welcome Ami Go Home" reveals, Austrians emphasized black soldiers' friendliness towards children during the first decade of the occupation.²⁶ Nevertheless, these attitudes do not necessarily translate into a new acceptance of racial diversity. Instead, interviews show that Austrians vacillated between regarding Americans as liberators or conquerors, sneered at mixed relationships and entertained racial prejudices reminiscent of national socialist propaganda. Despite Tressler's effort of showing an ideal new society with no racial biases and cultural frictions, the docudrama becomes an ambivalent trope of European blindness to racial discrimination and stereotyping. The trajectory was clearly to present the black boy as a likable and unthreatening member of society. In several cases, I will argue, this was accomplished in racist ways drawing on a familiar set of racial stereotypes.
- 29 In *Wie die Jungen Sungen*, Tressler avoids the discussion of Austrian identity constructions and the challenge of mixed-race off-springs right from the start. In the opening credit sequence, the children's names and nationalities are identified. Gerti is Austrian, Peter Hungarian, Michèle French, and Karin Swedish. Only Boula, the black boy whose name is actually never mentioned in the film explicitly, does not have a nationality. The title cards introduce him with reference to a continent. Boula is labelled "ein Afrikaner," an African. The question of racial integration was important not only to Austria. Considering that in the early 1950s about 3000 bi-racial occupation babies were entering an all white German school system,²⁷ it can be assumed that the boy playing Boula may be the off-spring of an Austrian woman and an African American GI.
- 30 In his docudrama, Tressler offers a seemingly innovative approach, which proved to be quite controversial at the time – not so much to Europeans but to the American heads at the United States Information Services. Tressler's film argues that children provide a test case that racial differences do not need to matter. A peculiar classroom situation about spelling out the color of frogs in French is again revealing in this context. *Wie die Jungen Sungen* suggests that color blindness is not an inherent characteristic of children. Instead, it is indoctrinated by teachers. When a girl critically insists that "not all frogs are green" the teacher replies in a harsh voice that nobody was interested in her opinion. The classmate who is asked to write the sentence on the blackboard makes a telling mistake mismatching the French conjunction "et" ("and") with the modal verb "est" ("is"). Instead of ascribing the color green to the frog, the girl intuitively divides the spheres of colors and beings into separate categories. Within the confinements of the film script, the separation of color becomes visible in various scenes of multi-racial interaction.
- 31 Boula, the black boy does not engage intellectually with his classmates. As a matter of fact, he does not seem to know any language at all. His preferred means of communication is through exaggerated mimicry and gestures. Two scenes make this clear. First, during lunch Boula holds fork and knife in the wrong hands, sticks out his tongue in disgust, and exaggerates his facial expressions thereby getting sympathetic

laughs from his fellow classmates. Second, Boula plays the class clown in the ethnological museum of Vienna. He is particularly attracted to an Austrian carnival mask. It displays the very grotesquely overdrawn features connected to American minstrelsy: thick protruding lips and large round eyes. The black boy lives up to the blackface tradition by assuming these features himself. Standing in front of the mask, he shapes his lips to make them appear larger. Gerti then asks him to imitate another evil looking mask. Boula follows suit by pretending to have horns with an undistinguished expression on his face while at the same time sticking out his tongue. An elaborate set of tin soldiers with their colourful traditional Austrian uniform, which is presented by the museum guide with considerable pride, is of no interest to the black boy.

- 32 The playful interaction between the black boy and the white female protagonist on the bus during the ride home from a visit of the Vienna Ferris Wheel is also nonverbal. Boula tries to kiss Gerti. In response, she laughs, pretends to bite him and finally kisses him joyfully. Thus, the evocative image from the beginning where the black boy hides behind a classmate to observe Gerti's introduction to school with keen eyes is resolved by an image of harmony. The two outsiders at school have finally successfully bonded. However, they have done so by paying a different price.
- 33 The various scenes between Boula and Gerti are intended to overcome racial hierarchies and argue in favour of racial equality. Nevertheless, the sequences re-establish stereotypes from American minstrel shows, caricatures, and movies. Despite honourable efforts to subvert fascist and national socialist propaganda, the visual codes continue along the lines of appropriated forms of discrimination. They also hark back to American cultural traditions of black representation: Black degeneracy, animality, and sexual madness became standard racial stereotypes in American culture with Thomas Dixon's popular novel *The Clansman*, published in 1905 and turned into a highly successful film by David Griffith under the title *The Birth of a Nation* (1915). The climax of the book is the rape of a young white virgin. Similar visual codes were established by post World War I propaganda in German films such as *Die Schwarze Schmach* (*The Black Shame*, 1921), where black French soldiers raped German women of the occupied Rhineland thereby "poisoning" allegedly pure Aryan blood. In his political autobiography *Mein Kampf*, Hitler envisioned a conspiracy against German purity by an unholy alliance of French, Jews, and Blacks.²⁸ During the third Reich, propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels preached racial discrimination labelling African and African American culture degenerate; minister of the interior, Hermann Göring, ordered the sterilization of almost 400 black occupation children which the Nazi jargon stigmatised as "Rhineland bastards." (Pommerin, 56)
- 34 Tressler clearly subverts the white fantasy of the "brutal black buck" or the alleged fear of miscegenation in favour of a more open-minded approach. He does so at the cost of pushing the black boy to the margins. The presence of blackness in an international European school is important and part of an emerging tolerant society mirrored in the interaction of young school children. Many of the scenes described above, however, regress to the American stereotypical notion of black kids as picaninny caricatures. Black children were exploited for comic effects as early as 1904 when Thomas Alva Edison presented the *Ten Picaninnies*.²⁹ Established in the 1920s via comedy short films such as *The Little Rascals*, a motley collection of black school children called Farina, Sunshine Sammy, Pineapple, Stymie, and Buckwheat became popular foolish coon

characters easily recognizable for their stereotypical depiction.³⁰ Boula's ridiculous efforts to eat his meal resemble picaninny scenes such as played by Farina trying to eat an entire chicken in one piece in one of Hal Roach's *Our Gang* (1922) shorts or images of black kids eating gigantic watermelons. The black boy Boula is thus far from being represented as an equal person among equals. Within the German and Austrian racial discourse the threatening, violent, sexualised racial other has shifted towards acceptance as the feeble-minded, joyful simpleton who serves as a re-enforcement of white dominance.

Fig. 6: The "African boy" called Boula, four stills from *Wie die Jungen Sungen*

4. Transatlantic Repercussions

- ³⁵ The daring proposition and images of multi-racial encounters caused transatlantic frictions. Al Hemsing, then head of the Marshall Plan film program in Paris, felt obliged to censor the final sequence of Gerti and the black boy playing with each other on the bus. According to Tressler, the American representative considered the *mise en scène* too provocative.

There were many different kids of different nations. One was a little Negro boy — a little black boy with a very funny face, yes? — and he made fun with another— with one of the pupils around him. A little blonde girl, a kid of six or seven. So they had fun together, ja? In a museum which they visited by school. They went all in a museum. They went to a museum of Austrian history. And then when some masks in the museum, put on the wall, and this little Negro boy was just asking about it. He said, "Oh, they make faces, you know". And they had a wonderful time, all of them. And then, a friendship began, in a way. And then they were taken by a bus to — I don't know — to the school back again. And you saw them, this little Negro boy and Susi, or whatever — Gerti, she was called — had fun. And the driver sees it in the mirror in the car. And so that's charming, they all get together, you see? And

[Al] Hemsing said, "Ah, I don't know – racists may be open to that—I said, "Al". "Yeah, George, that's a problem. And so we had to shorten it. It doesn't have to be too fraternization, and so forth – Yeah. So we cut it — arranged it. I shortened it a little bit, so that he was satisfied. I found it a little strange. I told him, "Al, what's so ...?" "Yeah, you know, this situation in America (and so forth) that the blacks -- blah, blah, blah—" You know? I said, "If you want to, but I find it ridiculous." But we did shorten it a little bit, so he was satisfied.³¹

- 36 One of the guidelines of film productions maintained that contents of documentaries should not "endanger the security or prestige of the Occupying Forces or give offense to existing moral standards or arouse racial or religious hatreds."³² With this reasoning and considering that the film was produced with American money, Tressler's film qualified for censorship. The black and white relationships on the screen bore the stigma of miscegenation for the head of the Marshall Plan film program in Paris. Despite Tressler's efforts to argue in favour of the democratic message underlying the sequence, Hemsing insisted on cuts to shorten the scene.

Fig. 7: Boula and Gerti on the bus, stills from *Wie die Jungen Singen*

- 37 The sequence was, indeed, highly controversial considering that the gates to schools in large parts of the United States had been closed for blacks.³³ At about the same time that Tressler shot his story about school integration from the perspective of a little white girl and a black boy, the Supreme Court justices announced a decision in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* which said that separate schools were not equal. The demand to integrate public schools sparked nationwide civil rights activities. In addition, the courage and moral integrity exhibited by Rosa Parks when she refused to obey to the Jim Crow laws in Montgomery on December 1, 1955 "restaged" in a widely distributed photo offers yet another reference to the scene of interracial contacts on a bus.³⁴ Rosa Parks set an example regarding how to courageously respond to democratic

gaps in the U.S. South. The scene and the famous photo echoes the sequence, which Al Hemsing ordered to be censored from Tressler's film.

- 38 Thus, Tressler's film created a transatlantic mirror regarding the integration of school children and provided a critical commentary on the discrepancy between the principles and practices of American democracy.³⁵ However, by introducing Boula as an African, his sojourn at the Lycée Français is only temporary before he will return to his home country. This narrative uses a potential cosmopolitan framework in which young children are educated. However, the reality of racial mixing and the presence of young dark-skinned German or Austrian citizens resemble a blind spot. Instead, Tressler points his flashlight towards international settings of innovative school systems. This technique ultimately stabilizes national conceptions of citizenship and cultural traditions.³⁶ Nevertheless, the message of powerful images caught on film such as the final sequence of Gerti and Boula kissing each other on the bus struck a transatlantic chord in 1954.³⁷

Conclusion

- 39 Marshall Plan films relied on the persuasive power of children actors to tell stories about a future United States of Europe. While the 18 Marshall Plan countries were encouraged to produce their own narratives about democracy and the success of the Marshall Plan aid, the challenges of overcoming national stereotypes, coping with language barriers, and acting out the role of cosmopolitan Europeans resembled autobiographic stories of immigration and acculturation to American culture from the late 19th and early 20th century. As spelled out in *Let's Be Childish* "[m]ay their initiative serve as an example to the world at large" the promises of young Europe followed along the lines of American fantasies and fantasies about America. Only one film, however, introduces racial encounters. It thereby challenges the model character of America. Tressler's *Wie die Jungen Sunen* functioned as a European mirror to American educational and racial issues in which an important lesson of democracy was turned into practice: no segregation in schools based on color.
- 40 The case of *Wie die Jungen Sunen* shows a surprising, unforeseen twist of the re-education program: in the context of the early civil rights movement in the US, the democratic re-education efforts produced a European visual narrative that seemed to suggest that the American ideals could be turned into practice in Europe in a more thorough way than in the American South. This idealized image, however, comes at a high price. It localizes the racial other not within but outside the European continent. Tressler's film stylizes the presence of blackness as African or African American and thereby outside of Europe instead of integrating it as a part of the Austrian, German, or European society. This misconception undermined the basis of the promises of a new "Young Europe," which would be built on a cosmopolitan spirit of international exchange and intercultural communication.
- 41 25. Anonymous, "Should White Parents Adopt Brown Babies?" *EBONY* (June 1958): 26-30, 28. In the immediacy after World War II, the majority of newly recruited black GIs emphasized the warm-hearted German responses regarding the presence of black GI's and a surprising lack of racist attitudes. Under the headline "Germany meets the Negro Soldier," *EBONY* magazine featured an article on the notion of racial equality in occupied Germany in 1946. "Strangely enough, here where once

Aryanism ruled supreme, Negroes are finding more friendship, more respect and more equality than they would back home - either in Dixie or on Broadway. [...] Today in Berlin the common people of Germany, minus uniforms and no longer goose-stepping, are meeting black Americans face-to-face after lifting of the U.S. ban against fraternization. Race hate has faded with better acquaintance and inter-racialism in Berlin flourishes." (*EBONY*, 1946: 5) Other articles created sites of cultural contrast to question American racial politics. In "Brown Babies Go to Work," *EBONY* ran an extensive article on what appeared to be a frictionless move for 1500 Afro-Germans to assume their place as equal citizens in democratic Western Germany. "As a whole, the country has risen to the challenge posed by its newest minority and is eagerly seizing the opportunities to erase the stigma which Hitler's brutal enforcement of his 'super race' schemes attached to the nation." (*EBONY*: November 1960, 97)

- 42 **28.** The National Socialist vision/nightmare of an elitist Aryan mono-cultural society produced the illusion that being black meant at the same time being an (inferior) outsider. During the first three decades of the 20th century, black people in Germany were mostly recognized as exotic curiosities displayed in ethnic shows called "Afrika-Völkerschauen" in zoos (Thode-Arora, 26) or demonised for propaganda purposes in the context of the French Rhineland occupation (Camp: 2004, 33). In their historical overview of Afro-German culture, Patricia Mazón and Reinhild Steingröver remark that the German society continues to recognize those citizens of mixed German and African or African American parentage as "foreigners", i.e. not German (Mazón and Steingröver, 2).

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APPENDIXES

Filmography

- Air of Freedom*. Germany, 1950. Director: Unknown. B/W, 11 minutes.
- Animal Farm*. Great Britain, 1954. Directors: John Halas and Joy Batchelor. Color, 72 min.
- Bergbauern von Morgen*. Austria, 1950. Director: Victor Vicas. B/W, 20 min.
- Besatzung Dora*. West Germany, 1943. Director: Karl Ritter. B/W, 91 min.
- Birth of a Nation, The*. United States, 1915. Director: D.W. Griffith. B/W, 190 min.
- Dunkle Stern, Der*. West Germany, 1955. Director: Hermann Kugelstadt. B/W, 95 min.
- Ein interessanter Nachrmittag*. 1952. Austria and West Germany. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 7 min.
- Endstation Liebe*. West Germany, 1957. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 85 min.
- Ertragreicher Kartoffelanbau*. 1951. Austria. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 20 min.
- Foreign Affair, A*. Germany and United States, 1948. Director: Billy Wilder. B/W, 116 minutes.
- Freundschaft Ohne Grenzen*. 1948-1950. Director: Jacques Asseo. 7 min.
- Frischer Wind in Alten Gassen*. West Germany, 1951. Director: Fritz Peter Buch. B/W, 16 min.
- Grosse Liebe, Die*. West Germany, 1942. Director: Rolf Hansen. B/W, 102 min.
- Gute Ernte*. Austria, 1950. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 15 min.
- Halbstarken, Die*. West Germany, 1957. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 96 min.
- Hansl und die 200000 Kücken (Hansl and the 200.000 Chicks)*. Austria, 1952. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 14 min.
- Hunger*. Germany, 1948. Director: Stuart Schulberg. B/W, 12 min.
- Ich und Mr. Marshall (Me and Mr. Marshall)*. Germany, 1949. Director: Stuart Schulberg. B/W, 13 min.
- Keine Sorge Franzl*. 1955. Austria and West Germany. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 15 min.
- Let's Be Childish*. France, 1950. Director: George Freedland. B/W, 19 min.
- Our Gang*. United States, 1922. Director: Robert F. McGowan. B/W, 20 min.
- Rund um die Milchwirtschaft*. 1954. Austria and West Germany. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 26 min.
- Schwarze Schmach, Die*. Germany, 1921. Director: Carl Boese. B/W.

- Shoemaker and the Hatter, The*. Great Britain, 1950. Directors: John Halas and Joy Batchelor. Color, 16 min.
- Story of Koula, The*. Greece, 1951. Produced by Vittorio Gallo Films, Rome. B/W. 21 min.
- Tom Schuler – Cobbler, Statesman*. Great Britain, 1952. Director: n.i. Color, 28 min.
- Totenschiff, Das*. West Germany, 1959. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 79 min.
- Toxi*. West Germany, 1952. Director: Robert A. Stemmle. B/W, 79 min.
- Transatlantique*. France, 1953. Directors: Jacques Asseo and Andre Sarrut. Color, 10 min.
- Traudls Neuer Gemüsegarten (Traudl's New Vegetable Garden)*. Austria, 1952. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 16 minutes.
- Triumph des Willens*. Germany, 1935. Director: Leni Reifenstahl. B/W, 114 min.
- Trois Hommes au Travail*. France, 1951. Director: n.i. Color, 8 min.
- Why We Fight: Prelude To War*. United States, 1943. Director: Frank Capra. B/W, 53 minutes.
- Wie die Jungen Sungen*. Austria, 1954. Director: Georg Tressler. B/W, 25 minutes.
- Without Fear*. Great Britain, 1951. Director: Peter Sachs. Color, 15 minutes.

NOTES

1. The roughly 300 films include newsreel style reports about the economic progress in the Marshall Plan countries, re-enactments of economic success stories due to Marshall Plan aid, docudramas, and animation films.
2. As Brigitte J. Hahn pointed out, while substantial research has been devoted to the impact of American feature films on German (and European) markets, the impact of the weekly news reel reports WELT IM FILM produced by the U.S. and British military governments, and the development of the West-German film industry, documentary films have received surprisingly little attention to understand the complex American reeducation program. See Brigitte J. Hahn, *Umerziehung durch Dokumentarfilm? Ein Instrument amerikanischer Kulturpolitik im Nachkriegsdeutschland (1945-1953)* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 1997), 6-7.
3. My work on the films of the Marshall Plan draws on the archival work conducted by Linda Christenson in her Marshall Plan Filmography (MPF). Thanks to her continuing support and kind hospitality during various research trips to the National Archives in Washington, DC, I was able to complete this project. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to Eric Christenson, Ed Carter, David Ellwood, Esther Hemsing, Dieter Kosslick, Rainer Rother, Sandra Schulberg, and Georg Tressler, who took time to do interviews regarding their work on or involvement in the production/re-screening of Marshall Plan films. I would also like to thank the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy and Jessica Gienow-Hecht, who organized the international conference "Culture and International History IV" in December 2009. This article is dedicated to the late Georg Tressler.
4. See Hans Tuch, "Communicating with the World. The U.S. Government's Practice of Public Diplomacy," *A Study prepared for the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, DC*, 1989. p. 13. Quoted in Manuela Aguilar, *Cultural Diplomacy and Foreign Policy. German-American Relations, 1955-1968* (New York: Lang, 1996), 10.

5. See in this context my article "Propaganda für die Demokratie? Deutschland und das Neue Europa in den Filmen des Marshall Plans," German Historical Museum Berlin. Film Archive (<http://www.dhm.de/filmarchiv/film-im-kontext/propaganda>)
6. In order to coordinate foreign information measures, the National Security Council (NSC) confirmed that the State Department would manage existing outlets and initiatives such as the radio system Voice of America, the Fulbright educational and cultural exchanges, as well as the United States Information Service. The backing for the latter was provided in 1948 with the U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act (commonly referred to as the Smith-Mundt Act). It laid the groundwork for the collaboration between U.S. official agencies and private groups to implement political, economic, and cultural programs. It supported U.S. foreign policy for "the preparation, and dissemination abroad, of information about the U.S., its people, and its policies, through press, publications, radio, motion pictures, and other information media, and through information centers and instructors abroad." The ultimate goal was to ensure "a better understanding of the U.S. in other countries and to increase mutual understanding." U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act, January 1949, Public Law 402, 80th Congress, 2nd Session, 62 Stat. 6. Quoted in Liam Kennedy and Scott Lucas, "Enduring Freedom: Public Diplomacy and U.S. Foreign Policy," *American Quarterly* 57.2 (2005): 309-333. 313.
7. See in this context Hans-Jürgen Schröder, "Marshall Plan Propaganda in Austria and Western Germany," in Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka, and Dieter Stiefel, eds., *The Marshall Plan in Austria* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 212-246, 214.
8. Ibid. 18. In addition, anthropologist Margaret Mead explored at the same time efforts to facilitate cultural transformation by using food as a means to trigger feelings of acceptance and gratitude. See Margaret Mead, "Food and Feeding in Occupied Territory," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 7 (1943): 618-628.
9. These national variants display not only the unavoidable presence of American culture but tell different stories of reception. Cultural critic Rob Kroes recognized and traced back similar effects in other media contexts in postwar Europe. See Rob Kroes, "Americanization: What are we talking about?" *Cultural Transmissions and Receptions. American Mass Culture in Europe*, in Rob Kroes, Robert W. Rydell, Doeko F.J. Bosscher, eds., (Amsterdam: VU Press, 1993), 302-318, 313.
10. The efforts of winning the hearts and minds of the former enemy are concerned with the relation of information and power. The US finds itself in a competitive situation in which the goals and benefits for both sides need to be communicated. As Joseph Nye Jr. asserts, the difference between asymmetrical situations, the world of trade and information, is striking. In economic terms, power "goes to those who can afford to hold back or break trade ties, power in information flows goes to those who can edit and authoritatively validate information, sorting out what is both correct and important." Nye, Joseph S., Jr., *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go it Alone* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 67.
11. David Ellwood summed up the message of the Marshall Plan neatly in his talk on Oct. 16, 2004 at the Symposium on the "Films of the Marshall Plan" in the Goethe Institute of New York. The change of strategy from aggressive didactic re-education to a more subtle tone of friendly persuasion encouraged an optimistic outlook on the future. It became, in the words of historian David Ellwood, "the biggest propaganda effort ever seen in peace time." Instead of visualizing the moral and political failures of the past or addressing questions of guilt, the promise "you too can be like us" set the tone for a utopian language of a United States of Europe. See my report "Selling Democracy – Winning the Peace: Die Marshall-Plan-Filme in New York," *Filmdienst/Rheinischer Merkur Spezial zur 56. Berlinale* (2005): 16-17. See also my article "You too can be like us! Friendly Persuasion, Self-Americanization, and the Utopia of a

- New Europe" in Rainer Rother, ed., *Selling Democracy / Friendly Persuasion* (Berlin: DHM, 2006), 35-46. See also David Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe: Western Europe, America, and Postwar Reconstruction* (London and New York: Longman, 1992).
12. The chief officers of the film unit in the information and film sections in Paris knew that democratic persuasion had to be treated with particular skill and care considering the harsh propaganda war lead by Minister Josef Goebbels. For example, the logo of the European Reconstruction Program "ERP" was supposed to appear in a subtle manner only once every reel of 20 minutes. For a detailed evolution of the propaganda efforts the guidelines in a similar media context see Larry Hartenian, *Controlling Information in U.S. Occupied Germany, 1945-1949. Media Manipulation and Propaganda* (Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003).
 13. For a description of the various channels of distribution of the 16mm films refer to Al Hemsing's article "The Marshall Plan's European Film Unit, 1948-1955: A Memoir and Filmography," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 14 (1994): 269-297.
 14. Based on information collected for the Historical Division Office of the Executive Secretary, Office of the U.S. High Commissioner For Germany in 1951, compiled and explained by Henry Pilgert in *The History of the Development of Information Services Through Information Centers and Documentary Films* (1951). Chart by F. Mehring.
 15. See Linda Christenson's archival compilation "Marshall Plan Filmography," 17 July 2010. URL: <http://www.marshallfilms.org/mpfdetail.asp>
 16. In the animation film *Tom Schuler - Cobbler, Statesman* (1952), the success story of a shoemaker turned delegate to the first American congress is on display. In some cases, the ideological counterpart to the American efforts in cultural diplomacy is rendered visible. Compared to the emphasis on technological wizardry and entertaining transcultural encounters in *The Shoemaker and the Hatter*, the anti-Communist-themed animation film *Without Fear* (1951) differs in its ideological overtone due to a more abstract and darker visual language.
 17. Regarding the controversial focus on future oriented therapeutic encouragement of democratic behaviour while largely blending out reflections on WWII and the Holocaust see Jeanpaul Goergen's excellent article "Blick nach vorne: Re-orientation-Filme unter HICOG 1949-1952," in Ursula Heukenkamp, ed., *Schuld und Sühne: Kriegserlebnis und Kriegsdeutung in Deutschen Medien der Nachkriegszeit (1945-1961)* (Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 2001), 415-428.
 18. Interview with Georg Tressler conducted by Linda and Eric Christenson and Frank Mehring in Berlin on February 12, 2004. Published on *Witnesses to Austria and the Marshall Plan: Interviews 1993-1996 with Austrians*. Audio-CD prepared by Eric and Linda Christenson with the assistance from Christoph Höllriegl for the 2008 conference *Images of the Marshall Plan: Film Photographs, Exhibits, Posters*. May 19-20, 2008. The artistic liberties, which Tressler enjoyed regarding potential themes and narratives, had to be played down when the American audience was informed about the Marshall Film Program. In his Article "Of All People" from 1949, the head of the Marshall Plan film unit at the time, Stuart Schulberg, implies total control over the film units. The trajectory in Germany was twofold: ideological and aesthetic manipulation. See Stuart Schulberg, "Of All People," *Hollywood Quarterly*, 4, 2 (Winter, 1949): 206-208.
 19. Other films by Tressler include *Gute Ernte* (1950), *Ertragreicher Kartoffelanbau* (1951), *Ein interessanter Nachmittag* (1952), *Rund um die Milchwirtschaft* (1954), or *Keine Sorge Franzl* (1955). For an analysis of gender specific depictions in Tressler's *Gute Ernte* see Ramón Reichert, *Im Kino der Humanwissenschaften: Studien zur Medialisierung wissenschaftlichen Wissens* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2007), 240-241.
 20. The United States had a vital interest in creating strong Austrian allies. Like in Germany, US-American troops were stationed in large numbers in Austria after World War II; the

metropolitan centers Vienna and Berlin were divided into four occupation sectors respectively. Political de-Nazification and cultural re-education went hand in hand. The establishment of a new international school in Vienna in 1954 proved to be a welcome topic for a film which would qualify to be financially supported from the United States.

21. The terminology of psychological warfare was transformed from the blatant reference of "propaganda" to neutral sound expressions such as "persuasion", "communication", and "information." Sproule analyses the transformation from "propaganda" to "communication" by analyzing the emerging field of communication under sociologist Bernard Berelson, Robert Leigh, Paul Lazarfeld, and Harold Innis. See J. Michael Sproule, *Propaganda and Democracy: The American Experience of Media and Mass Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 218-222. In this context see also Anthony Pratkanis and Elliot Aronson, *Age of Propaganda. The Everyday Use of and Abuse of Persuasion* Rev. ed. (New York: W.H. Freeman, 2002). See also James Combs and Dan Nimmo, *The New Propaganda: The Dictatorship of Palaver in Contemporary Politics* (New York: Longman, 1993). See also Michael Sproule, *Propaganda and Democracy: The American Experience of Media and Mass Persuasion* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
22. Schulberg understood the peculiar ideological situation in Germany. "The U.S. documentary program is designed primarily, of course, for the political, social, and economic reorientation of the German people. A secondary aim, however, has been the reorientation of German short-film producers. Here, as in so many other fields, we have bumped into the traditional German lack of political and social initiative. Too many of our licensed producers are still dedicating themselves to "Schönheit über alles," a propensity which brings forth "Kulturfilme" rather than documentaries ["People" 208]. Despite his professional background, multilingual competence, and cultural sensitivity, Schulberg's efforts failed at the beginning, too. A case in point is his first production "Hunger" from 1948. It portrayed the terrible living conditions in Europe after World War II following a two-part strategy: to inform the German population about the havoc they brought to their neighbouring countries and to contextualize their frustrating situation with those of British, French, Greek, or Italian people. Schulberg utilized Third Reich propaganda material to identify Nazi leaders as the cause of ongoing economic and social crises. Images of marching soldiers before the war are contrasted with destroyed cities after 1945. The film displayed great technical skill, effectively employed super-impositions, and featured an excellent audio-visual dramaturgy.
23. "It is amazing what people are willing to try out. Oh well, the proof of pudding is in the eating. Maybe this is the solution to accomplish a better understanding in this world." Translation F. Mehring.
24. As Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria points out, the debates in the United States about the future of dark-skinned children in Germany were also dominated by ideology and exaggeration. For example, news reports claimed that "almost half a million black children" were treated in an inhuman way. See Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung: Afrodeutsche „Besatzungskinder“ im Nachkriegsdeutschland* (Berlin: Metropol, 2002), 167. Regarding the evaluation of Afro-German children and their chances of successfully integrating into West German society see the report of Hermann Ebeling, *Das Problem der deutschen Mischlingskinder: Zur zweiten Konferenz der World Brotherhood über das Schicksal der farbigen Mischlingskinder in Deutschland*. Nachdruck aus der *Monatsschrift für Pädagogik, Bildung und Erziehung*, 7 (1954): 612-630.
26. See Ingrid Bauer, ed., "Welcome Ami Go Home": *Die Amerikanischen Besatzung in Salzburg 1945-1955 : Erinnerungslandschaften aus einem Oral History Projekt* (Salzburg: Verlag Anton Pustet, 1998).
27. See Heide Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), 74.

29. For a critical overview of African American caricatures on popular culture see Donald Bogle, *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, and Bucks. An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films* (New York: The Viking Press, 1973), 7.
30. On early popular culture uses of the coon character see R.W. Rydell's article in this issue.
31. Interview with Georg Tressler conducted by Linda and Eric Christenson and Frank Mehring in Berlin on February 12, 2004.
32. Document 23, Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.), Motion Picture Branch, 'Operation Report', March 21, 1949. Box 242, Record Group 260, Records of the United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, GAD-Suitland. Lawrence H. Suid, ed., *Film and Propaganda in America: A Documentary History*, 4 vols. (New York, Westport, London: Greenwood Press, 1991), Vol. 4. 58.
33. In her detailed case study of the city of Baumholder, Maria Höhn has pointed out that inter-racial encounters had caused heated discussions about decorum and questionable sexual relationships in occupied Germany. Particularly in 1954, popular magazines featured photos of black GIs dancing or embracing blonde German women. The reports combined voyeurism with moral finger pointing. See Maria Höhn, *Amis, Cadillacs und "Negerliebchen,"* in particular pp. 206 and 329.
34. The photo taken by a UPI reporter on December 21, 1956 (one day after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled Montgomery's segregated bus system illegal) shows a somber Rosa Park on a school bus sitting in front of a white man (reporter Nicholas C. Chriss) in black dress.
35. I investigate the connection between process of democratization and the Civil Rights Movement in detail in my monograph *The Democratic Gap: Transcultural Confrontations of German Immigrants and the Promise of American Democracy* (Heidelberg: [forthcoming 2012]).
36. In a way, the films document what Rob Kroes defined as "Europe's inner contradictions," namely the struggle between nationalism and cosmopolitanism. See Rob Kroes, "Imaginary Americas in Europe's Public Space," in Alexander Stephan, ed., *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy, and Anti-Americanism after 1945* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2006), 337-360. 354.
37. The African American press used reports regarding a growing tolerant society within the lines of former enemies to criticize the situation at home. The general notion was summed up in the impression that democracy had more meaning in the former capital of Nazi fascism than in the American South. In the late 1940s, the *Pittsburgh Courier* ran similar articles announcing on the front page that few GIs were eager to return to the United States. Compared to their white fellow occupation forces, African American soldiers developed a special sensitivity regarding the respect they received from people in Germany. The appreciative responses from Germans, who seemed to downplay racial differences in favor of racial tolerance, reaffirmed not only their American identity but also generated a new sense of self-respect. Heide Fehrenbach emphasizes that Germany had not become a "racial paradise." Rather, the elevated economic status and socio-political power of the occupational forces determined responses of respect and (relative) friendliness among Germans (Fehrenbach, 37). For an analysis of the function of the re-education program overseas and the segregation in the American South see e.g. Martin Klimke, "The African American Civil Rights Struggle and Germany, 1945-1989," *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* (Washington, D.C., Fall 2008): 91-106 (in particular 95-98).

ABSTRACTS

Marshall Plan films played a crucial role in US cultural diplomacy. This paper will analyze how European film makers of the Marshall Plan used docudramas to envisage a multi-ethnic and cosmopolitan “young Europe” free from the political baggage of the past.

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Keywords: cosmopolitanism, cultural diplomacy, democratization., documentary film, Marshall Plan, reeducation

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