

# STAGING HITLER MYTHS

Judith H. Lechner

Dr. Roger Cook, Thesis Supervisor

## ABSTRACT

In my thesis *Staging Hitler Myths*, I analyze the depiction of Adolf Hitler in the contemporary German movies *Der Untergang* (2004) and *Mein Führer – die wirkliche wahrste Wahrheit über Adolf Hitler* (2007). Both movies have been harshly criticized for offering a personalized depiction of the historical character of Adolf Hitler. A crucial question that came up in the reviews was whether the depiction of Hitler in these films has been “adequate”.

To me all these depictions circle around the mythology that has been developed around Hitler. Referring to the concept of the French linguist Roland Barthes I would like to expose the correlation of the image, the history and the representation of both for the myth. The depiction of Hitler is never simply a depiction of a historical figure. It includes the interlude between the staging of Hitler himself and the representation of history. This opens up space for interpretation. This interpretation is unable to display any historical accuracy based on fact. Since filmmaking is a selective process it can only provide us with an interpretation of these facts. It tells us more about the purpose of the filmmaker than it does about Hitler.