

'DETECTING THE PAST' CRIME WRITING PROJECT

The 'Detecting the Past' research project is transnational, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary. It examines the depiction of criminality, conflict, history, memory, trauma and justice in over a hundred post-1945, Nazi-themed crime narratives from twenty different countries, drawing extensively on author interviews (Ian Rankin, Val McDermid, Robert Wilson and others), online reader responses, and a range of theoretical discourses.

Research questions

- Are there discernable 'waves' of Nazi-themed crime fiction and their screen adaptations? If so, to what extent can these be linked to pivot-points in historical and cultural discourses about the Nazi past, such as the 1980s *Historikerstreit* (Historians' Dispute) or discussions about perpetrator motivation (Goldhagen and Browning)?
- Do topics - such as German wartime suffering - enter the crime genre in response to public discussions, or do the texts play a role in placing these issues on public agendas?
- In what ways do texts utilise the conventions of the crime genre and/or make claims to historical authenticity in order to shape readers' perceptions of the National Socialist past?
- Can crime fiction contribute to discussions on the Nazi past in ways that other types of literature cannot?
- What light can Nazi-themed crime fiction cast on current theoretical debates about historiography, memory and trauma?

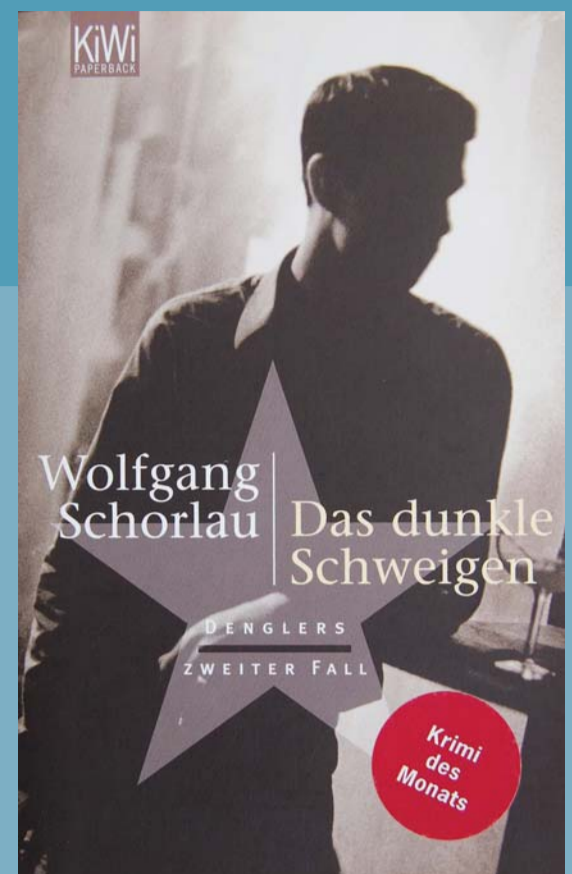
CriMeNet (Criminal Minds in German Studies Network) is a network for Germanists and other academics with a research interest in crime narratives, criminology, and themes relating to crime. It seeks to promote this fast-expanding field of study, and to provide opportunities for academics working on crime fiction, TV, film, media and other narrative forms to network with one another more effectively across institutional and national boundaries. For a directory of members and interests see

www.swansea.ac.uk/arts/research/DetectingthePastCrimeWritingProject/CriMeNet

For audio-reviews of transnational crime novels, see

katscrimecorner.wordpress.com

www.swan.ac.uk/arts/research/DetectingthePastCrimeWritingProject



Author: **Dr. Katharina Hall**
Modern Languages

(Centre for Contemporary German Culture, MEICAM, Callaghan Centre)

Contact: k.hall@swansea.ac.uk