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Hollywood & Hitler

A 52-minute documentary by Clara & Julia Kuperberg - Produced by Wichita Films

This year, *All Quiet on the Western Front* became one of the biggest hits of 2023. This Netflix film picked up fourteen nominations at the British Academy Film Awards and won in seven categories including Best Film. It also picked up nine Academy nominations and won in four categories including the Academy Award for Best International Feature Film. Finally, it was nominated in twelve categories at the German Film Awards. All this, makes it one of the most awarded films in the last decades.

This epic anti-war film, which is set in the bloody trenches of World War I and seen from the perspective of young German soldiers, has restored Netflix's reputation as the film's worldwide producer.



Very few people know that this film is actually a remake of the 1930 Lewis Milestone film. And even fewer know that behind it lies an unthinkable and almost unknown part of history. That of the collaboration between Hollywood and the Nazis in the 1930s.

This film marked the starting point of the collaboration between Hollywood and the Nazis. The Nazis refused to distribute the film as shot, deeming it too anti-German and anti-militarist, and imposing various cuts and changes. This was the beginning of a long series of compromises on the part of the American studios.

For almost a decade, before the beginning of World War I, Hitler dictated his pro-Nazi and anti-Jewish rules to Hollywood studios, who complied because they were too afraid, that otherwise, they couldn't continue to do business with Germany, which they needed for the distribution of their films.

Hollywood studio bosses chose to collaborate with the Nazis, who were invading Europe, although they knew all about what they were doing to Jewish people, and despite the fact that most of the studio bosses were of Jewish descent. They all agreed to collaborate.

Through two sensational books, this documentary sheds light on Hollywood's taboo history with the Nazis.

Harvard professor David Gaetz reveals in his book called *Hollywood's Pact with Hitler* how the American studios wrote Jewish staff members off the credits, called off some films and even went so far as to force one of MGM's executives to divorce his wife because she was Jewish. These historical findings are supported by, among others, film historian and Professor of American Studies at Brandeis University; Thomas Doherty who, in his book *Hollywood and Hitler, 1933-1939*, reveals how the Nazis were deliberately made invisible in American films, when the depiction of their savagery could have swayed public opinion. Unfortunately, no anti-Nazi film would be released in Hollywood before 1940.

So many questions then remain:

How did major studios like Universal Studios Lot, Paramount Pictures, Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation and MGM, all of which were run by Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, agree without protesting to what seems unimaginable to us today?

Why did Hollywood acquiesce to Nazi censorship?

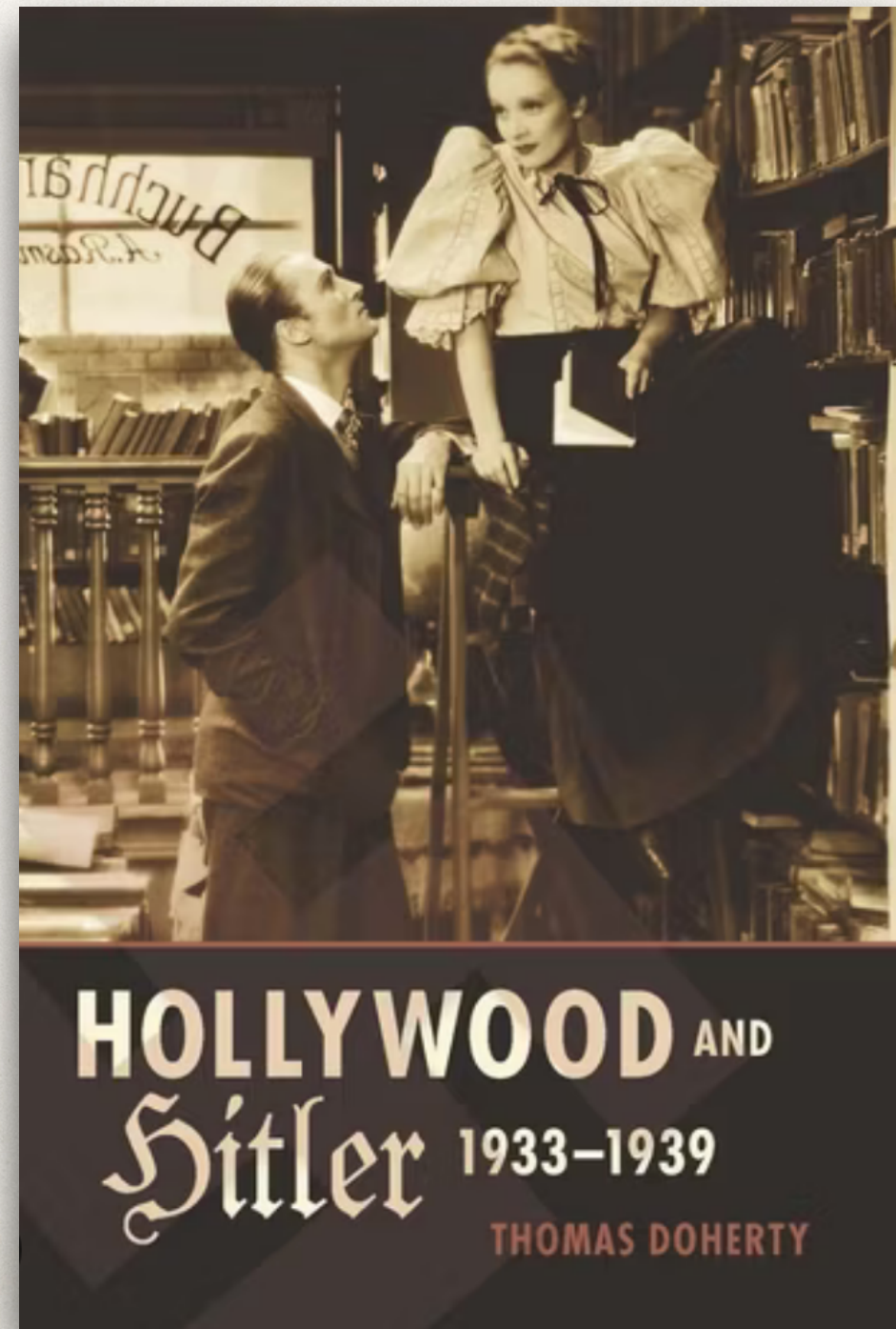
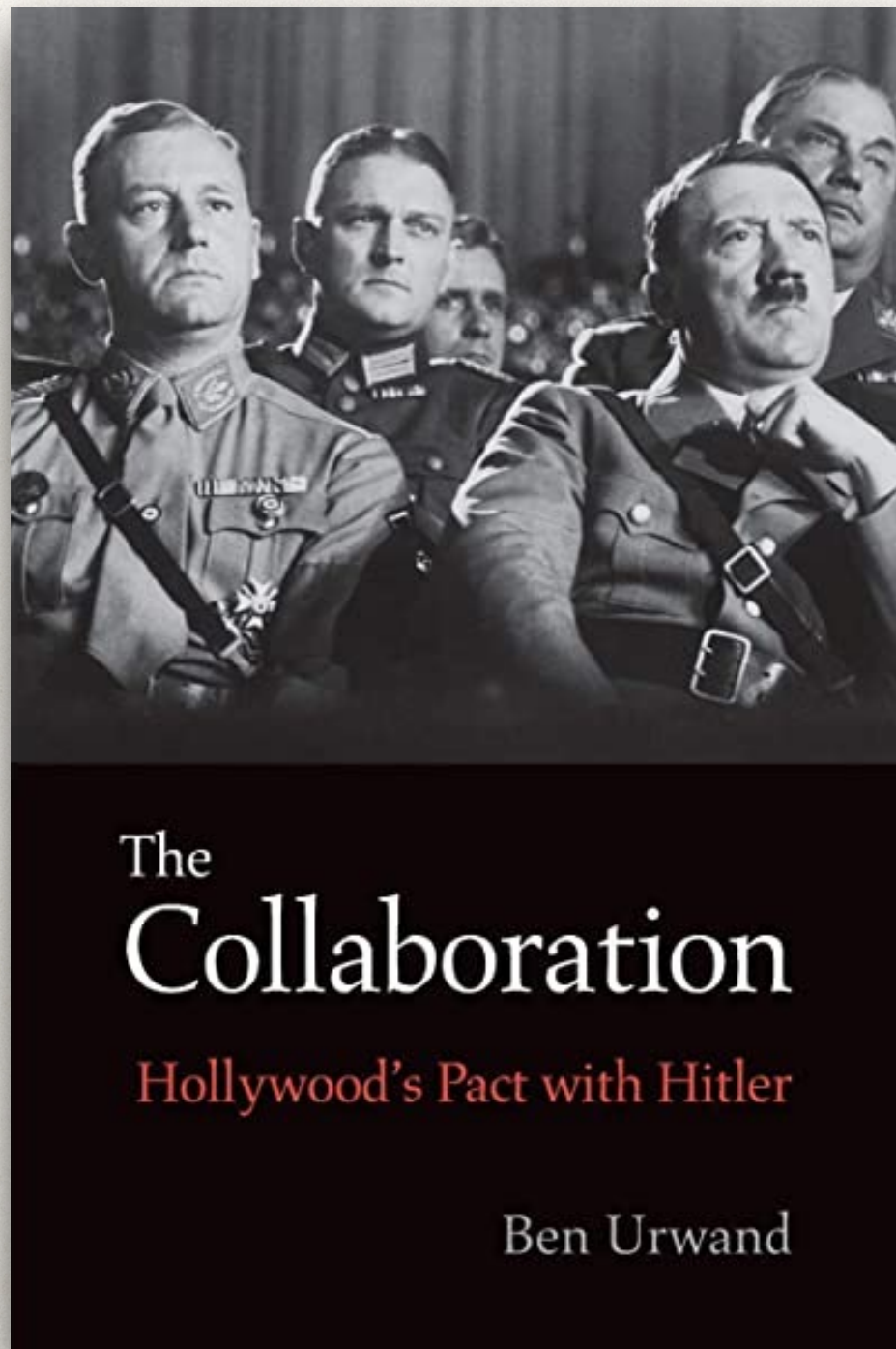
Why did no American studio executive decide to defy the ban and fight the Nazi regime through American film propaganda?

Was the only motivation for this collaboration purely commercial?

How did the American Jewish community react at the time?

What were the attempts, whether successful or not, to fight this collaboration?

These are all the questions that historians and experts analyze and discuss in this documentary, using never-before-seen archives, clips from emblematic films that were censored and reedited to please the Nazis, and shocking propaganda scenes.





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