# Play it Again, James

Seriality in the Craig Bond Films

ANETTE PANKRATZ AND SVENJA BÖHM

Thank god, now it all makes sense. *Spectre* (2015) reduces the confusing colour codes represented by the Messrs. White, Greene, and Silva to the black-and-white formula of the criminal mastermind pitted against James Bond. Ernst Stavro Blofeld confronts 007 with the pure and simple truth: "Me. It was all me, James. It's always been me" (1:41:34-1:42:25). After almost a decade of paranoia, characterised by anonymous, invisible, and ungraspable terror networks, the Western world is safe again. Not only do all evils boil down to the machinations of one person, his motivations are also all too human. After all, hating one's father and rival sibling belongs to the conventional Oedipal repertoire.

With this reduction of complexity comes a resurrection of Britishness, of Union Jacks, fierce bulldogs, and references to high culture (Korte 2014, 72-73). In that respect, it also helps that Blofeld was born Franz Oberhauser, speaks with a German accent, and looks like the evil Nazi from Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009). National stereotypes are put firmly back in place and so are gender norms. M no longer stands for "Mother", but for robust "Masculinity" embodied by the Arthurian Gareth Mallory (McMillan 2015, 197). All of this seems to propel *Spectre* far back into the Bondian past of the 1960s.

But, according to *The Importance of Being Earnest*, "the truth is rarely pure and never simple". Like *Casino Royale* (2006), *Quantum of Solace* (2008), and *Skyfall*
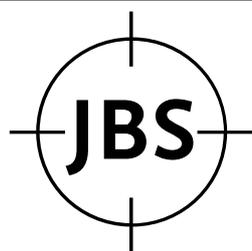
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(2012), the world of *Spectre* is still shaped by neoliberalism, anxieties about (cyber-)terrorism, whistle blowers, and inimical friends. Q and Moneypenny may have been back since *Skyfall* and with them some traditional comic relief, gadgetry, and ostentatious flirting, but by casting Ben Whishaw (who is gay) and Naomie Harris (who is of Trinidadian-Jamaican heritage) in the roles, the films also contain a quantum of queerness and hybridity (Smith 2016, 147). Moreover, Daniel Craig's Bond has maintained the general characteristics of the reboot since *Casino Royale*: he is still reluctant to execute his main opponent[1] and foregoes the ironic swagger of his predecessors. While the other Bonds usually live from film to film,[2] Craig's Bond is endowed with a more sustained serial memory and is, moreover, also burdened by the traumas of his past (Murray 2016, 7).

In short: the series' reduction of complexity in terms of the constellation of characters and constructions of Britishness stands in a dialectical relationship with the enhanced complexity in terms of plot and strategies of representation. This article will analyse this dialectic as an effect of multiple seriality. It will show how the Craig Bonds go beyond the standard practice of repetition and variation prevalent in the Bond franchise. In particular, *Skyfall* and *Spectre* develop a special serial memory, looping back into the 1960s and constructing their version of the Cold War, at the same time erasing traces of ideological complicity with the phantasms of terrorism and the commercialisation of the Bond franchise.

Currently, the Bond franchise is "the longest running series […] in the history of cinema" (Chapman 2008, 130; Strong 2018, 1). The commercial success of the films in the 1960s as well as early global Bondmania provided an easy incentive for producers Albert R. Broccoli and Harry Saltzman to keep on investing in Bond. Indeed, the very first film, *Dr. No* (1962), was not planned as a stand-alone. The producers had bought the rights for seven stories from Ian Fleming, with the option to acquire more (Chapman 2007, 43; 2008, 137). Fleming's Bond novels had by then also been serialised, were being sold as paperbacks, and had been turned into a comic strip (Chapman 2008, 137; Tesche 2002, 87). After 1962, the films boosted the success of the novels and created a very lucrative form of mixed-media seriality (Strong, 3). As we will discuss below, the novels and films also entered into a direct dialogue with one another.

Both novels and films follow the strategies of a classical series. Each text forms a self-contained unit and can be read or viewed as a single piece of work; at the same time, the Bond universe features a stable cast of characters and situ-

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1   With the exception of Raoul Silva in *Skyfall*.
2   Sean Connery's Bond even forgets that he lives the same plot twice, in *Thunderball* (1965) and *Never Say Never Again* (1983).

ations, making use of "repetition, iteration, [and] obedience to a pre-established schema" (Eco 1985, 162). They adopt a common pattern, popularly known as the "bang-bang, kiss-kiss" formula (Fleming qtd. in Carpenter 2002, 190; cf. Chapman 2008, 141-142): Bond fights and defeats a villain, saves the Western world, and gets the girl. He does so in exotic locations while enjoying a consumerist lifestyle. Bond never dies, and nor does he age either too much or too ostensibly.[3] Torture and near-death experiences, such as those in *Die Another Day* (2002) or *Skyfall*, may result in temporary lapses in his physical abilities, but by the end of each film these are more or less forgotten. And ever since *From Russia with Love* (1963), the films promise that "James Bond Will Return" (Chapman 2008, 138). Meanwhile in the real world, ageing actors are replaced by younger and fitter ones, thus establishing smaller series within the overall series, defined by the leading star.

Viewing or reading pleasure in a series derives from the "dialectic between order and novelty – in other words, between scheme and innovation" (Eco, 173; cf. Sielke 2013, 221-222). The longer a series continues, the more it is under pressure to offer something new (Jahn-Sudmann and Kelleter 2012, 206-207). Novelty for Bond, by and large, means more spectacle. The production costs for each film rise successively, following Broccoli's imperative to "lay out money to make money" (qtd. in Chapman 2008, 144). Accordingly, new Bond films are usually promoted as the "Biggest Bond of All!" or "Far Up! Far Out! Far More!" (qtd. in Chapman 2008, 138, 144). This strategy of spectacularisation holds especially true for the later Moore and Brosnan films (Hochscherf 2013, 301). With the Craig Bonds (and to a lesser extent those starring Timothy Dalton), the attempts to reboot and thereby to bring the series back to basics seem to move in the opposite direction, aiming at more "authenticity" and "realism".

In both variants – dramaturgy of excess and purified reboot – the series competes with other films (and film series). *Moonraker*'s (1979) space theme, for instance, is clearly inspired by the success of the first *Star Wars* (1977) film and Craig's Bond owes much to recent action heroes like Jack Bauer or Jason Bourne (Hochscherf, 304, 313).[4] At the same time, the series also enters into a competition with itself (Jahn-Sudmann and Kelleter, 208). A film in the Bond series al-

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3 Apart from *Never Say Never Again*, the "unofficial" Bond film, in which a decidedly aged Sean Connery returns to the role. Here, Connery's "vintage" is played for mild humour.

4 It is probably not a coincidence that all three action heroes share the same initials (Strong, 18). This intermediality also serves as an example of hyperreality: JB simulates simulations of JB in order to boost his originality.

ways tries to be "more" than its predecessors – be it more spectacular or complex, more entertaining or realistic: in any case, more profitable. The series thereby develops certain "recursive dynamics" as well as a "meta-serial awareness" of itself (Jahn-Sudmann and Kelleter, 207, 208; our translation). Especially in the case of the reboots, this correlates with a return to the novels and to the processes of remediation, shifting between immediacy and hypermediacy (Fahle 2012, 173). The films may be formulaic, but the formal frame allows for the enhancement of complexity on other epistemic planes – for example, cinematic style, construction of the diegetic world, or character development (Fahle, 176-177). The longer the Bond series continues, the more it accrues possibilities for variation, often simply by bringing Bond in line with the politics of the extra-textual world – for example, by emphasising that the Cold War is over in *GoldenEye* (1995). At the same time, the series must maintain the brand's core stability (Jahn-Sudmann and Kelleter, 206-207). Hence, the iconic Aston Martin DB5 makes regular appearances, as do variations on the dry Martini. The series' recursive dynamics creates its own history and, moreover, its own historicity (Engell 2004, 183, 193; Hochscherf, 301; Kelleter 2012, 21). As Lorenz Engell points out, a series creates a memory about its own seriality and about its situatedness in history. Due to the dialectic between repetition and variation, the series serves as "operative memory" of a culture (Engell 2011, 116). In doing this, it does not so much preserve the serial past but adapts the past to the present, engaging in "continuous rewriting, updating, forgetting, re-membering, and re-cognizing in new contexts" (Sielke, 223).

Our interest in seriality is threefold: First, it allows us to gauge the special position of the Craig Bonds within the franchise and to describe the interrelationships between the four films. In turn, and second, this special position can be interpreted as interserial competition. Third, in addition to intermediality and the processes of meta-serial awareness, the interplay between memory and forgetting also has ideological ramifications. The Craig films are very obviously situated in a post-9/11 world (Funnell and Dodds 2017, 15). At the same time, the loops back to the past within these films create special (re)versions of imperial Britishness. What is more, in *Spectre*, Blofeld's long-awaited return very specifically evokes the 1960s and the geopolitics of the Cold War.

The four Bond films starring Daniel Craig merge the patterns of the classical self-contained episodic series with strategies commonly associated with serials, using an ongoing (or supposedly ongoing) narrative (Hagedorn 1988, 7; Klein 2012, 226). In contrast to Funnell and Dodds, who distinguish between an "orphan origin trilogy" (157) and *Spectre* as a possible beginning of a "Blofeld tri-

logy" (158), we argue for a terror tetralogy. *Casino Royale* and *Quantum of Solace* clearly form a narrative unity. Not only do René Mathis and Felix Leiter return, in *Quantum of Solace* Bond also tries to hunt down the organisation responsible for Vesper Lynd's death in *Casino Royale*. Moreover, the network of Quantum still operates successfully worldwide. Although Bond manages to stop the main villains, MI6 is unable to bring all the conspirators to justice. Considered on its own, *Skyfall* seems to depart from the terror narrative, as it deals with the revenge plot of former MI6 agent Raoul Silva, who appears as a single mastermind – the themes of trust, betrayal, and memory introduced in the first two Craig films, however, remain, as do those films' concerns with cyber-terrorism and surveillance. What is more, Silva's bombing of the MI6 building in the heart of the metropolis and the chase on the London underground evoke associations with the 7/7 attacks. *Spectre* connects all four of the Craig films retrospectively by revealing that Bond's previous nemeses actually work for the global terror network SPECTRE, led by Ernst Stavro Blofeld, also known as Franz Oberhauser – Bond's foster brother.

The employment of this type of seriality within the franchise also lends the character of Bond greater psychological depth (Murray, 6-7). In their first encounter in *Casino Royale*, Vesper Lynd taunts Bond about his being an orphan – a back-story inspired by the obituary in Fleming's *You Only Live Twice* (1964), but here used to signify the trauma of the film's protagonist. This notion is enhanced in *Quantum of Solace* when Bond tries to come to grips with Lynd's death and supposed betrayal (Hochscherf, 303-304). In *Skyfall* and *Spectre*, the discoveries about Bond's family – the eponymous estate in Scotland and the alpine foster parent – further fuel the plot. Due to the serial format, the erstwhile, rather one-dimensional protagonist develops into a more fully-rounded character with a complicated past (Denson and Mayer 2012, 187-191; Hochscherf, 316).[5]

The complexity of the serial narration also affects the presentation of Bond's enemies. The story of Mr. White as the central but mostly elusive antagonist is the best case in point. Mr. White consistently works in the background and appears in three of the four Craig films. In *Casino Royale* and *Quantum of Solace*, he exemplifies the workings of the Quantum organisation, which threatens to un-

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5 This horizontal form of narration also introduces a different way of consuming and perceiving the films. The ongoing plot of *Casino Royale* and *Quantum of Solace* as well as the dense references to the Bond series in *Skyfall* and *Spectre* demand a high degree of close reading (and remembering), which is usually associated with Quality TV (Jahn-Sudmann and Kelleter, 211; Hochscherf, 298). The ideal spectator now owns the complete Bond DVD set, which s/he watches again and again at regular intervals.

dermine the Western world. In contrast to the often physically grotesque primary antagonists Bond faces, Mr. White is remarkably unremarkable – his very name suggestive of his supposedly unblemished nature. Only on closer inspection does the significance of the character become apparent; it is Mr. White, and not the more prominent Le Chiffre, for instance, who is Bond's more formidable foe in *Casino Royale*. Mr. White appears immediately after the title sequence in *Casino Royale*, and even before Le Chiffre is introduced. Cinematically, he often serves as vantage point. As Jason Sperb notes,

> [i]n the first camp scene, Mr White is framed in a high angle point-of-view over Colonel Obanno, indicating early his symbolic power over him and many of the characters throughout *Casino Royale*. When Le Chiffre arrives, he drops to the background. But he never stops watching. That scene's conclusion likewise is again framed from Mr White's point of view, as he watches Le Chiffre's caravan leave Obanno's camp. White's looking is particularly heightened by the subsequent reverse-shot which lingers on his face for a delayed moment. This panoptic shot is mirrored by a shot much later in the film, as a point-of-view image again captures Mr White watching in the foreground. This time, White is surveying Bond as he kneels besides Vesper's corpse, after the building collapses in Venice, reasserting Mr White's continuing narrative power over diegetic events. Mr White is a literal surveillance mechanism in *Casino Royale*. (2009, 60)

But although *Casino Royale* closes with Bond's capture of White, the film's ending does not reveal "the big picture" (0:34:38) evoked by M and sought for by both MI6 and the audience. While several of the Bond films end with similar cliffhanger moments (most famously, the murder of Tracy by Blofeld in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969)), they are usually never followed up within the next film in the series. This is different in *Quantum of Solace*, which starts almost immediately following the conclusion of *Casino Royale*. The pre-title sequence begins with a car chase, in which Bond brings Mr. White to an underground prison in Siena in order to have him interrogated. Bond and M's attempts to extract information from White fail, and White cannot hide his amusement at the ignorance of Western intelligence services: "the first thing you should know about us is that we have people everywhere. Am I right?" (0:09:51). His question is directed at Mitchell, M's bodyguard and Bond's respected colleague – and a Quantum mole within MI6 – who then unexpectedly opens fire on M's security force. When Bond returns from his pursuit and killing of Mitchell, Mr. White has dis-

appeared, a bloodstain on the floor being the only evidence for his existence. After this, Mr. White recedes into the background of the film, returning briefly in the scene in which Quantum convene a secret meeting during a performance of Puccini's *Tosca* at the Seebühne in Bregenz. Although *Quantum of Solace* reveals more solid information about the terrorist network, Mr. White himself remains for the viewer an undefined and mysterious entity.

Things take a surprising twist in *Spectre*, where the return of Mr. White (after an absence from *Skyfall*) not only taxes the audience's memory and obviously links the criminal organisations of Quantum and SPECTRE, but provides the basis for an important plot-line: Bond's protection of White's daughter Madeleine Swann. Parallel to Bond and Blofeld, White, too, gains a family history. In presenting White as a former assassin who wants to save his daughter, the film structures Bond's relationship with White as personal. White has turned against Blofeld on the grounds of conscience and – just like Bond – is pursued by the organisation in recompense. Instead of dying painfully from SPECTRE's poison attack, he commits suicide after making a pact with Bond to protect Madeleine in exchange for information on Blofeld's whereabouts. Thus, the former hunter turns victim and ally. This is further strengthened by the frequent parallels which the film draws between Bond and White regarding their status as professional killers. The fact that Bond engages in a serious love relationship with the daughter of a criminal challenges his moral line between "good" and "evil". It also alludes to the theme of remembering: Madeleine Swann's name evokes both the protagonist in Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913-1927) and the famous tea cakes which trigger the narrator's suppressed memories.

As a reboot, *Casino Royale* both refers back to an "original" Bondian source while also attempting to distinguish itself from earlier Bond films. While *Casino Royale* and *Quantum of Solace* form a tightly-knit serial within the series, *Skyfall* seems to reboot the reboot – or rather, to resurrect the classical Bond (Korte, 71; Smith, 166; Wight 2014). Successively, the old cast of characters returns. In a retrogressive movement, the nameless female field operator from *Skyfall*'s pre-title sequence develops into a seductive but perfunctory Bond girl, only to find her true place as Moneypenny at the end of the film. Similarly, Judi Dench's M dies to be replaced by Ralph Fiennes' Mallory (Wight 2014); the maternal figure makes way for someone who has seen action in the field and who has himself killed people (seen in *Skyfall*, mentioned in *Spectre*; cf. Hobbs 2018, 251). In this new set-up, Craig's Bond no longer represents the inexperienced, raw agent, but a tired veteran. While he was once able to hack into M's computer and the MI6

network with great speed, cheekiness, and efficiency in *Casino Royale*, now Bond needs the assistance of Q. Bond has also visibly aged after his return from quasi-death (Moneypenny accidentally shoots him off a train driving over a bridge in the pre-title sequence), and his unfitness to serve is highlighted by the physical and psychological tests which he fails miserably. Thus Bond and MI6 alike are correlated with the old-fashioned but patriotic spirit of the nineteenth century. In the parliamentary inquiry scene, M quotes Alfred Tennyson's "Ulysses" (1842), and Bond meets the new Q in the National Gallery in a scene in which William Turner's painting, *The Fighting Temeraire* (1839), assumes great significance (Korte, 72-73). In the latter scene, the painting of an old warship being decommissioned bears decisively nostalgic and melancholic overtones – but at the end of Bond's successful mission, the endeavouring spirit of the nineteenth century triumphs, as the *Temeraire* makes another appearance: this time depicted in Thomas Buttersworth's *The Battle of Trafalgar* (1805), which hangs in the new M's office. The painting is a celebration of Britain's naval victory over the French (Wight 2014). *Skyfall*'s preoccupation with nineteenth-century British culture ties in with Bond's journey to Scotland, where he says he is going "back in time" (1:40:49; cf. Smith, 150), as well as with his decision to fight Silva using old-fashioned methods and weaponry ("sometimes the old ways are the best" (1:46:04; cf. Smith, 150)). Going "back in time", here, also means that Bond is returning to the family estate, named "Skyfall", which represents an act of "deep nostalgia" in the original sense of the term (Smith, 163).

By means of these various allusions to British cultural icons and national mythologies, *Skyfall* returns its audience to the traditional spirit of British patriotism, as Barbara Korte has analysed in meticulous detail:

> The Union Jack appears repeatedly [...] Not least [...] on the trashy bulldog figurine on M's desk – the only item saved, as Bond observes mockingly, from the MI6 headquarters after Silva's bomb attack, and later M's only bequest to Bond as a message that he must pursue their old ways because the country needs them. [...] The most important association of the bulldog in *Skyfall* is that with Winston Churchill [...] *Skyfall* [...] establishes a link between Churchill's war and that of MI6. After its modern headquarters have been destroyed, the secret service finds new quarters in the underground tunnels [...] from which Churchill governed the nation during the war. (73-74)

The Churchillian underground – complete with nostalgic references to the glorious British past of the Second World War – already featured in *Die Another Day*. This was where Brosnan's Bond first meets M after his return from Cuba and it is where Q hands over Bond's twentieth (and fortieth anniversary) watch as well as the invisible Aston Martin. Bond's capture by the North Koreans, as well as his physical torture and resurrection in the early parts of *Die Another Day*, anticipate the more sustained recovery of the secret agent in *Skyfall*. These parallels do not seem coincidental. Both *Die Another Day* and *Skyfall* celebrate the longevity of the series: forty and fifty years, respectively, since the release of the first Bond film in 1962. *Die Another Day* features many of Bond's most iconic gadgets and many "visual references to the series' past" (Chapman 2007, 239). Jinx's first appearance recalls Honey Rider's emergence from the sea in *Dr. No*, and Gustav Graves' spectacular arrival at Buckingham Palace (he descends from a helicopter using a Union Jack parachute) is a clear allusion to the opening sequence of *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977) (Chapman 2007, 238). Graves' infiltration of British high society equally calls to mind the character of Hugo Drax in Fleming's novel *Moonraker* (1955), while the character's use of plastic surgery (he undergoes racial reconstructive surgery to conceal the fact that he is a renegade North Korean colonel) recalls Blofeld's use of similar treatments in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* and *Diamonds are Forever* (1971). Parallels to the latter film are further enhanced by *Die Another Day*'s focus on illegal diamonds and threatening super lasers (Funnell and Dodds, 141).

Skyfall's references occasionally comment on the Brosnan era as outdated. When he hands Bond a simple but elegant gun and a rather unglamorous tracking device, Q, for example, remarks to Bond: "Were you expecting an exploding pen [one of the central gadgets in *GoldenEye*]? We don't really go in for that anymore" (0:39:20-0:39:24; cf. Smith, 163). This sardonic commentary sustains the inter-serial competition that began with *Casino Royale*. On the meta-level, or on the level of media-enhanced fan memory, the series also points towards its own status as hyperreal construct. Bond and M's journey to Scotland takes the audience back to the early Bonds and to Sean Connery's distinctive Scottishness (Alpert 2013). The number plate of the Aston Martin DB5 in which they travel, evidently part of Bond's family heirloom, is BMT 216A, the same as in *Goldfinger* (1964) and *Thunderball*. Again, *Skyfall* distinguishes itself from the Brosnan era: in his very first appearance as Bond in *GoldenEye*, Brosnan drives an Aston Martin DB5 with a number plate whose number (BMT 24A) deviates slightly from the "original" model. But, as postmodernists and Bond fans alike know all too well,

there is no such thing as an "original", for in *Goldfinger*, Q fits Bond's Aston Martin with a revolving number plate that can be changed at the flick of a switch (0:22:26-0:22:37).

This hyperreal play, operating with "models of a real without origin or reality" (Baudrillard 1994, 1) – albeit on a much more complex and ideologically saturated scale – can also be observed in the different cinematic versions of Blofeld within the Bond series, with his return in *Spectre* serving as the end-point of quite a few serial loops. The lack of an "original" Blofeld, or, rather, the proliferation of a "real" Blofeld, as well as the countless references to past Bond films, produces a series of hyperreal images within *Spectre*. Consequently, "[w]hen the real is no longer what it was, nostalgia assumes its full meaning" (Baudrillard, 6). In the case of Blofeld, nostalgia and a retro style connect *Spectre* to the 1960s and to the Cold War as a time of relative ideological simplicity. Where *Casino Royale* starts as prequel to the whole Bond series, showing how the secret agent acquired his Double-O status and the "physical, emotional, and moral struggle" associated with it (Funnell 2011, 461), *Spectre* serves as prequel to the "Blofeld series" of films of the 1960s, exploring the origins of his grotesque facial disfigurement and his hatred for Bond. As one of the few villains in the franchise to return, the figure of Blofeld represents another complex version of seriality. Despite his iconicity as Bond's primary antagonist, Blofeld does not have one recognisable face. The role has been played (variously) by Anthony Dawson, Donald Pleasance, Telly Savalas, Charles Gray,[6] John Hollis, Max von Sydow, and Christoph Waltz. *Diamonds are Forever* enhances this veritable "hall of mirrors" assembly and explicitly plays with the idea of Blofeld having literal doubles. Apart from his appropriation of the Las Vegas tycoon Willard Whyte's identity, Blofeld uses a series of exact, surgically-altered bodily doubles to conceal his true identity from Bond. In the pre-title sequence to *Diamonds are Forever*, one of these Blofelds reacts to Bond's drowning of another Blofeld in a mud bath with: "He would have been me in a matter of days" (0:03:26). Later in the film, there are not only two Blofeld replicas, but also two white cats. Here, Blofeld has entered the realm of hyperreality, in a scene that is set most fittingly in the equally hyperreal landscape of Las Vegas (Baudrillard, 91-92).

To a much lesser extent than Bond, Blofeld also leads something of a life outside of and beyond the franchise. Nowadays, the image of the bald and scarred man in a pale Nehru suit caressing a fluffy white cat connotes the epitome of the stereotypical (Bond) villain, established in the early films of the

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6 With the intriguing twist that Gray had also played Bond's ally Dikko Henderson in *You Only Live Twice*.

series and sustained by countless parodies – most famously, the figure of Dr. Evil in the *Austin Powers* trilogy (1997-2002). Blofeld's return very obviously highlights the seriality of the franchise, and this seriality is enhanced in *Spectre* through a number of sequences that pay homage to other well-known Bond set-pieces and to famous Bond moments: the love story between Bond and Madeleine Swann (and her criminal father, Mr. White) is reminiscent of Bond's relationship with Tracy (and her criminal father, Draco) in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*; the rather unmotivated train journey through the Moroccan desert reminds one of *From Russia with Love*, with Blofeld sending a Rolls Royce – Auric Goldfinger's car of choice – to collect Bond; the alpine sanatorium serves as variation of the one on Piz Gloria in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*; the meteorite crater concealing SPECTRE's global surveillance centre resembles the volcano crater which accommodates Blofeld's secret rocket launch base in *You Only Live Twice* (1967); and the conspiratorial SPECTRE meeting in Rome replays the assembly in *Thunderball*, with the killing of Guerra by Mr. Hinx modelled on Blofeld's electrocution of No. 9. Apart from these more sustained references, there are further nods to Bond fans: the plaque on the safe house in London reads "Hildebrandt / Prints and Rarities. Est. 1932 London" (1:53:00), referring to the title of one of Fleming's short stories; and Hannes Oberhauser, Franz's father and Bond's foster father, appears in "Octopussy" (1966), another short story by Fleming.

In Fleming's oeuvre, the "Blofeld trilogy" (*Thunderball* (1961), *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1963), and *You Only Live Twice*) marks the point at which one can observe an intertextual dialogue between the novels and the films. Ursula Andress, the first filmic Bond girl, belongs to the jet set mingling at Piz Gloria in the novel *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (Fleming 2002a, 149): so enamoured was Fleming of the actress when they met during the filming of *Dr. No* that he inserted her into his later novel. And the fake obituary at the end of *You Only Live Twice* gives Bond a Scottish father, thereby acknowledging Connery as the foundational Bond (Fleming 2002d, 256).[7] In turn, the early films take their cue from one of Fleming's later books (*Thunderball*), by having SPECTRE appear as the central villainous organisation from the very first film.

The references within *Spectre* to the 1960s also activate the audience's serial memory and recall the period of heightened Bondmania (Chapman 2008, 132),

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7   In the novel of *The Man with the Golden Gun*, Fleming parodies this (and himself) somewhat: upon refusing the offer of a knighthood, Bond remarks with parodic emphasis that: "EYE AM A SCOTTISH PEASANT AND WILL ALWAYS FEEL AT HOME BEING A SCOTTISH PEASANT" (Fleming 2002b, 198).

the heyday of the franchise and point at which the films accrued their greatest net profits. Both *Skyfall* and *Spectre* loop back to the beginning of Bond's success, irrespective of temporal plausibilities, by erasing from their diegeses traces of the 1970s and 1980s, a "time of crisis for the Bond series" and for Britishness (Chapman 2008, 138). But just as *Skyfall* makes the audience forget about *Die Another Day* in order to position itself as the *true* anniversary Bond film, so *Spectre* disremembers the Bond films of the 1970s and 1980s in order to be able to indulge in the nostalgia of Empire and modern consumerism, characterised, for instance, by the ostentatious product placement of *Moonraker*, in which Bond perfunctorily speeds past a number of billboards advertising 7Up, Marlboro cigarettes, Seiko watches, and British Airways (1:08:44-1:10:25). In the Craig era, Bond can have his Heineken and drink it, too, while the Union Jacks evoke Moore's patriotism without looking cheesy.

The dialectic between past and present in *Spectre* becomes especially obvious in the duel between Ralph Fiennes' Mallory and Andrew Scott's Denbigh. At certain points in the Craig series, both Gareth Mallory and Max Denbigh represent Whitehall officialdom which positions itself in opposition to Bond's bravado, denouncing espionage and fieldwork, in particular, as outdated and irrelevant. In *Skyfall*, Mallory discretely asks Judi Dench's M to retire and advises Bond to quit his work as a field agent because it is now a "young man's game" (0:34:43). However, in *Spectre*, Mallory as the new M has changed his position and assumes a traditional stance as ex-officer who insists on keeping the Double-O branch and its hands-on approach to fieldwork. Now, it is the young "mandarin" Denbigh who praises the merger of MI5 and MI6 as a move from the "dark ages into the light" (0:18:18), and who endorses modern warfare with drones, global surveillance, and Big Data (0:59:00). As it transpires, Denbigh actually works for SPECTRE and is conspiring with Blofeld to bring about a British totalitarian surveillance state. Intriguingly, it is Mallory's M, the head of a department that normally advocates for strict military hierarchies and clandestine operations, who explicitly supports transparency, democracy, and legality. Mallory and Denbigh, then, represent opposing discursive visions of the "War on Terror": Denbigh's position as enemy of the state serves as a means of externalising and reifying official government surveillance measures taken in the wake of 9/11 and 7/7; while Mallory and the apparatus of MI6 confirm the efficacy of the very same surveillance measures by applying them successfully (in this case, to stop evildoers). In other words, Q's surveillance methods and computer skills are just as subtle and potentially as pernicious as those of SPECTRE.

But *Spectre* loops even further back into the 1960s and the geopolitical contexts of the Cold War. On the surface, the early Bond films can be said to undermine the ideological faultlines of the Cold War by introducing SPECTRE as a third global power (Price 1992, 30). In the classic words of Dr. No, Bond's nemesis in the film of the same name: "East. West. Just points on the compass. Each as stupid as the other" (1:27:53; cf. Black 2005, 95). But in the SPECTRE films of the 1960s and early 1970s, the Cold War context remains present in the series' conception of the nation-state (Woodward 2004, 176). Dr. No's toppling station and Blofeld's space centre in *You Only Live Twice* could well belong to the USA or to the Soviet Union; many of the climactic scenes of the Bond films present SPECTRE as an armed force (*Thunderball, You Only Live Twice, Diamonds are Forever*); and in *From Russia with Love* the organisation is geographically reified through the naming of their training facility: "Spectre Island" – a veritable land mass given over to their nefarious purposes. What is more, in *From Russia with Love, Thunderball*, and *You Only Live Twice*, Cold War tensions serve as a realistic historical and political background for these films, so much so that East-West antagonism has certainly formed a central interpretive framework for the reading of these films. *From Russia with Love*, especially, plays upon such Cold War tensions and demonstrates the interchangeability of Soviet Russia and SPECTRE. Indeed, that Rosa Klebb and Kronsteen have defected to SPECTRE from SMERSH, the Russian counter-intelligence agency, suggests that SPECTRE itself is merely an unsophisticated transposition of SMERSH.

Both *Skyfall* and *Spectre* ignore the ambiguous (and existentially threatening) role of the Cold War in the 1960s; in each, the Cold War is presented as the central paradigm of an unspecified historical past. In so doing, these films employ what Marouf Hasian terms a "nostalgic longing [...] for the return of a Cold-War ideology and form of state decision making that allows nations to fight in 'the shadows' without the encumbrances that come from too much democratic meddling" (2014, 572). With its nostalgia for the 1960s, *Skyfall* and *Spectre* in particular advocate for the glory days of conventional spycraft and the clearly-bounded nature of Cold War territories. Implicitly, these films evoke the "patriarchal protection logic" celebrated in earlier Bond films (such as *The Spy Who Loved Me*) by coding Britain – represented by Bond, M, Q, and Tanner – as masculine (Funnell and Dodds, 96), a move that fits in with the recent trend of Cold War revival thrillers in popular culture, typified by the films *Bridge of Spies* (2015) and *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* (2011) and television series such as *The Americans* (2013-2016) or *Deutschland 83* (2015).

The Bond series serves as a "memory bank of our culture" (Bennett and Woollacott 1987, 14); it continually loops back into history and its own cinematic past – thereby actively rewriting, erasing, and re-imagining – in order to make sense of the present day. The serial loops most frequently refer back to the Cold War as Blofeld's ideological *nostos*, a war that was supposedly won by the West and which, in retrospect, appears to present clear-cut geopolitical, social, and cultural identities. In the Craig Bonds, the members of Quantum and SPECTRE represent the ideologies of a neoliberal market. Greene, Silva, and Denbigh personify Slavoj Žižek's analogy between terrorist networks and the operations of "big multinational corporations – the ultimate rhizomatic machine, omnipresent, albeit with no clear territorial base" (2002, 47). Denbigh, especially, stands for cost-efficiency, public-private partnerships, lean management, and youthful, non-hierarchical leadership. Situating both Denbigh and *Skyfall*'s Silva within British intelligence (together with minor characters such as Mitchell in *Quantum of Solace*) complicates such clear-cut ideological positions and stands in contrast to the films' Cold War simplicities. Moreover, the story of Mr. White – who metamorphoses from terrorist opponent to honourable late colleague and quasi father-in-law – equally undermines both ideological and moralistic oppositions. In the Craig era, Bond's enemy is also his brother: in *Skyfall*, M is symbolic parent to Bond and Silva alike; while in *Spectre*, Blofeld is Bond's literal foster brother. By constructing loops into the past, by foregrounding the simplicity of former ideological battle lines, and by cherishing (as *Skyfall* does, in particular) a crisp retro style, the latter Craig films admit to a nostalgic search for ideological certainties that never existed. In these complex loops the series points to its paradoxes and ideological faultlines, creating further realms of doubt and uncertainty. Both *Skyfall* and *Spectre* thus inadvertently contribute to the phantasm of global terrorism and condone through surveillance culture the very "War on Terror" they purport to unmask. In the pithy words of Žižek (who paraphrases Brecht): "what is committing an act of terror to a state power waging war on terror?" (2009, 100).

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