# BALANCED TRUTH: STEVEN SPIELBERG'S *SCHINDLER'S LIST* AMONG HISTORY, MEMORY, AND POPULAR CULTURE[1]

## CHRISTOPH CLASSEN

> "History resolves into images, not into stories."
> *Walter Benjamin*[2]

> "I'd like the whole thing to look like a documentary film. The story should be dominated by facts, not by emotions as in my other movies. It should tell itself."
> *Steven Spielberg*[3]

## ABSTRACT

Looking at the public reaction to it, one might say that Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* is undoubtedly the most successful film about the Holocaust. The film's success in the U.S. and other Western countries can be traced back mainly to the fact that it creates the impression of telling a true, apparently authentic, story.

This essay investigates how this impression of historical truth and authenticity emerges in a fiction film. For this purpose the essay reverts to a concept developed by Jörn Rüsen, which distinguishes among three dimensions of historical culture, namely political, aesthetic, and cognitive. In addition to the historical context that serves as a specific precondition for the film's success, the essay primarily investigates the strategies of authentication Spielberg applied at both the visual and narrative levels.

The investigation concludes that the impression of evidence produced by the movie is significantly a result of the sophisticated balancing of the three dimensions mentioned above. The film utilizes artifacts of an existing and increasingly transnational (visual) memory for the benefit of a closed, archetypical narrative. It follows the aesthetic and artistic rules of popular narrative cinema, and largely recurs to conventions of representation that were common in film and television programs of the 1990s. Although these forms condense the historical course of events, the film manages to stay close to insights gained by historiography.

The hybrid amalgamation of history and memory, and of the imaginary and the real, as well as the combination of dramaturgies of popular culture with an instinct for what can (not) be shown—all of these factors have helped *Schindler's List* to render a representation of the founding Holocaust myth in Western societies that can be sensually experienced while being emotionally impressive at the same time.

*Keywords*: film, Holocaust, history, memory, fiction, popular culture, authenticity, hybrid, evidence

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## I. *SCHINDLER'S LIST*: THE FIRST "AUTHENTIC" FILM ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST?

"Visit places from *Schindler's List*. Every day two-hour trips with guide"—anyone who has visited Krakow, Poland recently has encountered offers like these to foreign tourists, offers that seem to be quite popular.[4] Like no other town, Krakow has become a center of a virtual Jewish culture, a mixture of memorial, re-creations, and touristic scenarios that can function without any Jews, but not without the initial spark of Spielberg's movie.[5] Interest is focused on the former Jewish quarter of Kazimierz, where in 1993 Spielberg shot his dramatic adaptation of the liquidation of the Jewish ghetto in March 1943. Podgórze, a part of Krakow located on the other side of the Vistula, where the original ghetto was located between 1941 and 1943, is not a tourist attraction, however; it has been mostly built over and was thus deemed not suitable for filming.

What looks like the triumph of a fictional movie over history is first of all nothing less and nothing more than evidence of the enormous impact *Schindler's List* has had on the culture of memory. If you measure this by the movie's success, indeed *Schindler's List* can hardly be topped. After the movie's premiere in the U.S. in December 1993 and its subsequent release in Europe in spring 1994, the film was met with an overwhelming response: just two months after its release in the U.S., 7.5 million tickets had been sold, 3.4 million in Germany alone.[6] Worldwide the film grossed more than $321 million.[7] In 1997 it was broadcast without commercial breaks on NBC at prime time,[8] and, soon after that, it was also broadcast in Germany in two parts. In the U.S. alone as many as 65 million people watched the movie on TV.[9] For Germany and the UK, possibly one-third and one-quarter of the populations, respectively, saw the movie.[10]

Perhaps even more impressive than its box-office success are the awards with which the film and its director have been showered. In 1994 the film was nominated for twelve Academy Awards, and received seven, including best movie, best direction, and best adapted screenplay. Numerous other awards followed.[11] In 1998 the American Film Institute (AFI) voted *Schindler's List* number nine of the 100 most important American movies ever, and in 2004 the Library of Congress

4. Similar wording is used on the Web in advertising for study trips for school classes and youth groups, Cf. http://www.ic-gruppenreisen.de/polen_klassenfahrten/ju_krakau_spezial.html, retrieved on March 29, 2008.

5. Cf. Ruth Ellen Gruber, *Virtually Jewish: Reinventing Jewish Culture in Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

6. Cf. Martina Thiele, *Publizistische Kontroversen über den Holocaust im Film* (Münster: LIT, 2002), 432.

7. http://www.the-numbers.com/movies/records/worldwide.php. retrieved on March 29, 2008.

8. Nevertheless, a controversial discussion broke out about the acceptability of showing the logo of Ford, which sponsored the broadcast, due to the renowned anti-Semitism of its founder, Henry Ford.

9. Thiele, *Publizistische Kontroversen*, 433.

10. Bruno de Wever, "Prologue: Historical Film as a Palimpsest," in *Perspectives on European Film and History: Film & TV Studies Series*, ed. Leen Engelen and Roel Vande Winkel (Gent: Academia Press, 2007), 8.

11. Other awards included seven British Academy Awards in 1993 and several Golden Globes.

labeled it as "culturally significant," and selected it for preservation for future generations in the National Film Registry.[12]

Attended and commented on by high-ranking politicians, the respective premieres of the movie gained a nearly mythic character, especially in the U.S., where President Bill Clinton spoke his famous words of recommendation: "Go see it!" In Germany Steven Spielberg was decorated by the German president Roman Herzog with the *Bundesverdienstkreuz* (Federal Cross of Merit) in 1998, a decoration awarded exclusively for outstanding service to the Federal Republic of Germany. The film continues to be a cornerstone of both formal and political education.[13]

However, film reviews and responses by academic and cultural institutions have not been unanimously welcoming. On the contrary, the film has polarized opinion, and spurred numerous controversial discussions in the United States as well as in Europe and Israel, mainly focusing on the generic question if, and if so, how, the Holocaust may become the subject of a popular form of representation.[14] But despite the initial skepticism concerning Hollywood director Spielberg, the reviews were surprisingly positive, and not only in Germany: many critics and intellectuals praised the film as a "masterpiece" and a "milestone of film history." Even in the case of adverse reviews, debate about the movie reflected the enormous response Spielberg had triggered: it is no exaggeration to state that no other movie has managed to achieve internationally a similar impact and acceptance. Meanwhile, *Schindler's List* itself has advanced to become a global media event, and in the fifteen years since its release, no other movie has accomplished anything similar, even though there have been a number of movies depicting the genocide of the Jews in Europe.

The success of historical movies does not necessarily correlate with empirical historical truth. But it is striking how cautious expert historians are when they criticize the movie. Now and again one can find a general skepticism about the filmic representation of history as such, which expresses especially the historians' concern about losing to popular film and television productions their privileged position to interpret history. But to my knowledge there is no academic expert on the history of Nazism or the genocide of the Jewish people who has negatively criticized the movie or who has reproached Spielberg for committing severe errors in dealing with historical facts.[15] Even a more than 700-page biography of Oskar Schindler, written by a professor of history, though it resulted in an abundance of new details and made some corrections, did not draw a fundamentally

12. Cf. http://www.loc.gov/film/nfr2004.html; even the Vatican lists it as one of the forty-five most important films of all time; cf. http://www.decentfilms.com/sections/articles/vaticanfilmlist. html, both retrieved on March 29, 2008.

13. Yosefa Loshitzky, "Introduction," in *Spielberg's Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on "Schindler's List,"* ed. Yosefa Loshitzky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 1-17.

14. Cf. the essays in Loshitzky, *Spielberg's Holocaust;* for the discussion in Germany, see Christoph Weiß, *"Der gute Deutsche": Dokumente zur Diskussion um Steven Spielbergs' "Schindlers Liste" in Deutschland* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 1995).

15. Cf. reviews by Wildt and Benz, both rather positive: Wolfgang Benz, "Bilder statt Fußnoten: Wie authentisch muß der Bericht über ein geschichtliches Ereignis sein? Anmerkungen eines Historikers zu *Schindlers Liste,*" *Die Zeit* (March 4, 1994); Michael Wildt, "The Invented and the Real: Historiographical Notes on *Schindler's List*," *History Workshop Journal* 41 (1996), 240-249.

different picture from the historical nonfiction novel by Thomas Keneally[16] on which the film was based.[17]

Likewise, a large number of survivors rated the film very positively, and underlined its faithfulness to reality. For example, the literary scholar and Auschwitz survivor Ruth Klüger praised the film not only as "the most impressive filmic opus on the Jewish catastrophe," but also commented that the film depicted the issue in a realistic manner.[18] In doing so, she was not alone; other Jewish survivors, such as the German journalist Ralph Giordano, confirmed Klüger's judgment, and attested that the director had "accomplished an authentic film on the genocide of the Jewish people. . . . its strength and greatness are rooted in its truth."[19] Ignatz Bubis, chairman of the *Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland* (Central Consistory of Jews), said after the premiere: "That's what it was like, even the details are correct, how they were routed in their hideouts and shot. It feels like it happened yesterday."[20] Director Billy Wilder, whose mother was murdered in Auschwitz, and who himself had wanted to adapt the script for the cinema, called the film "a document of truth." He wrote: "After the first ten minutes I had totally forgotten that this was a movie. I stopped paying attention to the camera angle and all that technical stuff—I was totally enthralled by that realism. It started like one of these weekly reviews at that time—very difficult to direct in order to make it look true. And believe me, the scenes were that authentic that they sent shivers down my spine."[21]

So it seems that Spielberg achieved nothing less than squaring the circle with *Schindler's List*: he made a movie that on the one hand met the high claims of politics, art, and science on the subject matter nearly perfectly, and on the other hand was entertaining and popular, not only in the United States but everywhere in the Western hemisphere, in the country of the perpetrators as well as in the countries of the victims. Hardly anyone would have predicted that the movie would be such an overwhelming success: not only had the controversial discussion of the representability of the Holocaust been going on for decades, but a three-hour movie on such an issue is hardly a likely candidate for a blockbuster. Who would have believed that, on a difficult topic like the Holocaust, the major production of Hollywood's most successful director at that time and notorious storyteller, Spielberg, would stand the test of time, while its maker, parallel to filming *Schindler's List* in Poland, was in the editing suite of his monster movie *Jurassic Park*?[22]

16. Thomas M. Keneally, *Schindler's Ark* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1982).

17. This also holds true despite the author's attempt to leave Keneally and Spielberg behind. David M. Crowe, *Oskar Schindler: The Untold Account of His Life, Wartime Activities, and the True Story Behind the List* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004).

18. Ruth Klüger, "Wer ein Leben rettet, rettet die ganze Welt," *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt* (February 13, 1994) [translated from German].

19. Ralph Giordano, "Szenen, wie es sie nie zuvor auf der Leinwand gab," *Cologneer Stadt-Anzeiger* (March 5, 1994), [translated from German]; a similar attitude can be found in Andreas Kilb, "Warten bis Spielberg kommt," *Die Zeit* (January 21, 1994).

20. "Premierengäste kämpfen mit den Tränen," *Die Welt* (March 3, 1994) [translated from German].

21. Billy Wilder, "Man sah überall nur Taschentücher," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Magazin (February 18, 1994) [translated from German].

22. On (German) restraint with regard to the Hollywood storyteller, cf. Ralf Schenk, "Porträt eines Retters im Stakkato des Grauens," *Neues Deutschland* (March 1, 1993).

If we take a closer look at those positive voices it becomes clear that they all have one thing in common: the film is perceived as "true" and as backed up by evidence. Time and again the impressions of realism, authenticity, and truth are articulated, which culminates with apodictic judgments like that of a renowned German weekly that saw the question of the representability of the Holocaust as having received an "answer as impressive as it is final."[23] Thus the question emerges: how is the impression created that this film shows an "authentic" and "true" or at least an "appropriate" representation of the genocide of the Jewish people in Europe? To my mind, this phenomenon not only demands an explanation in that we are talking about the medium of "fiction film," a medium that is generally not evidently linked with the claim of historical authenticity. Moreover, this impression is astonishing with regard to the film's subject matter, which provides a point of crystallization for questions of epistemology: like hardly any other subject, "the boundaries of the speakable," as Foucault has it, are narrowly confined in it. In order to explain this phenomenon of the film's veracity it is not sufficient to analyze the film in detail: it seems to be necessary, too, to attend to the characteristic traits of the Western culture of memory in the 1990s, preceded by some theoretical reflections.

## II. FILM AND THE HOLOCAUST IN HISTORICAL CULTURE AT THE END OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

What must a film on this subject include to be perceived as "true"? Certainly, faithfulness to historical facts is not enough—these have been offered by numerous films before and since. Even if we add the nature of the medium, and assume that film as a medium has its own rules that each director must follow in order to produce a successful movie—this is still not enough; obviously, both aspects are necessary but insufficient conditions.

To approach the subject one could start by seeing films as representations of historical culture, thereby invoking Jörn Rüsen's theoretical reflections.[24] Analogous to the anthropological constants of emotion, will, and reason, his model comprises three ideal dimensions of historical culture: aesthetic, political, and cognitive. The aesthetic dimension not only includes the historical contents of art, but more generally the sensual qualities of perception regarding historical representations and their formal coherence. The political dimension refers to the political function related to the present, the field of historical politics. Finally, the cognitive dimension involves the area of assuring knowledge, an area that modern societies have institutionalized in historical studies. Rüsen claims that no dimension can exist without the others, and that only in balance do they generate the effect that is perceived as historical meaning. Despite this, each dimension tends to make itself independent at the others' expense.

23. Kilb, "Warten bis Spielberg kommt" [translated from German].
24. Jörn Rüsen, "Was ist Geschichtskultur? Überlegungen zu einer neuen Art, über Geschichte nachzudenken," in *Historische Orientierung: Über die Arbeit des Geschichtsbewußtseins, sich in der Zeit zurechtzufinden* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1994), 211-234.

Fiction films, as art, can easily be allocated to the first dimension: they evoke emotions and are designed according to separate aspects of art and aesthetics, for example, by following narrative rules. Additionally, they open a space of possibility that achieves its impact especially by the fact that it is not identical with reality. To that extent it seems quite surprising at first glance that a growing number of historical films—non-documentary films—claim to tell "true" stories that are supposed to have occurred in this or a similar way. This amounts to a self-constraint that seems to counteract their actual potential. Nevertheless, that is what the so-called "documentary drama" does, a genre that has increasingly established itself as one for issues of contemporary history, mostly on television, but increasingly also in film. *Schindler's List* can also be filed under this genre.[25]

From the standpoint of historical culture, this contradiction seems to be explicable: the aesthetic dimension, that is, the sensual experience of film, is amalgamated with the cognitive dimension. Here we can presume a strategy being applied to increase apparent evidence. However, a tension remains between the two dimensions, even if one does not adopt the prejudice regarding visual representations that is common among many historians. The main feature of a historical film—to re-create a past for which no other visual means of access exists—will always remain a problem from the perspective of critical source analysis: a critical discussion of sources and a general analytical approach can hardly be combined with the visual and narrative requirements of a major film production. Moreover, in the case of contemporary history that "is still smoking,"[26] the political dimension is never absent either. Many films, including the historical films made by Spielberg, present themselves as comments on historically controversial issues or even as explicit contributions to current political issues and problems.

All representations of historical culture face the difficulty of how to balance aesthetic, political, and cognitive claims and their respective strategies and discourses. However, when compared with other subject matters, photographic representation of the Holocaust seems to present a particular challenge, as the question of historical truth is of paramount importance. This became evident immediately after the war when the Allied Forces attempted to force the Germans to confront the reality of the concentration camps. Likewise, the survivors of the Holocaust tried desperately to make their fates seen and heard, but failed largely because post-war societies showed little empathy toward this group of victims.[27] For a long time, the main emphasis was to convey to larger parts of society that the Holocaust had really happened. Until the 1970s this viewpoint dominated. With this emphasis in mind, fictional treatments were at a disadvantage, as it was rather the documentary form that seemed to meet the demands of the educationalist imperative because it promised to render reality objectively by means of photographs.[28] Even when discussing *Schindler's List*, critics continually referred

25. Cf. Derek Paget. *True Stories? Documentary Drama on Radio, Screen and Stage* (Manchester. UK: Manchester University Press. 1990).

26. Barbara Tuchman. *Practicing History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), 25.

27. Cf. for Germany: Christoph Classen. *Faschismus und Antifaschismus: Die nationalsozialistische Vergangenheit im ostdeutschen Hörfunk 1945–1953* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2004). 111-129.

28. Cf. Judith Keilbach. "Photographs, Symbolic Images. and the Holocaust: On the (Im)possibility of Depicting Historical Truth." *History and Theory, Theme Issue* 47 (2008). 54-76 (this issue).

to documentary productions such as *Nuit et Brouillard* (Alain Resnais, 1955)[29] or *Shoah* (Claude Lanzmann, 1985). Furthermore, once the culture of memory began to focus increasingly on the genocide of the European Jews, the question of truth continued to remain present in a way that had peculiar consequences: given the group of notorious Holocaust deniers, radical constructivists shied away from the final consequences of their position,[30] and in numerous countries politics interfered directly by making the denial of the Holocaust a reason for legal prosecution.[31]

Similarly controversial are questions of design and mediation: what is permitted and what is not are the subjects of a continuing struggle, which is manifest in the debate about the "trivialization of the Holocaust" in which Spielberg's movie, as well as the NBC mini-series at the end of the 1970s, played a pivotal role. The background of this debate is the old confrontation of high versus popular culture, of the "apocalyptic and integrated,"[32] updated because of the moral dimensions of this issue. The relevant positions, based on Adorno's famous pronouncement that to write a poem after Auschwitz would be barbaric, go from a total prohibition of depictions and representations, to privileging the educationalist documentary, to a liberalization of visual and descriptive conventions and a plea for more popular forms of mediation. (As all of these positions are commonly known, I will waive further discussion of them here.[33])

What is the background of the high sensitivity and heat of the debate with regard to the forms of representation of the incident with respect to political and historical truth? The moral imperative and the political responsibility arising from it, and in the end the victims' dignity, all contribute to explaining why this is indeed a highly controversial issue that is discussed and often negotiated in upsetting and shocking ways. Still, a glance back over the post-war era shows that this has not always been the case: up to the 1960s the genocide of the European Jews did not play a major part in the culture of public memory, whether in Israel, Germany, or the United States.

Therefore it seems necessary to recall—at least roughly—the context of the culture of memory in the 1990s, a culture that shaped *Schindler's List*, too, and that can also be seen as one of the prerequisites of the film's success. Here I mean less the immediate political context after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism, even though the film is open to neo-totalitarian interpretations

29. Cf., on film, Sylvie Lindeperg, *Nuit et Brouillard: Un film dans l'histoire* (Paris: Jacob, 2007).

30. Cf. Wulf Kansteiner. "Success, Truth, and Modernism in Holocaust Historiography: Reading Saul Friedländer Thirty-Five Years after the Publication of *Metahistory*," *History and Theory, Theme Issue* 47 (2008), 25-53 (this issue).

31. The denial of the Holocaust is prosecuted in, for example, Israel, Germany, France, and Canada.

32. Umberto Eco. "Apocalyptic and Integrated Intellectuals: Mass Communication and Theories of Mass Culture," in Umberto Eco, *Apocalypse Postponed*, ed. Robert Lumley (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 17–35.

33. Cf. the summary in Miriam Bratu Hansen, "*Schindler's List* Is Not *Shoah*: Second Commandment, Popular Modernism, and Public Memory," in *Spielberg's Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on "Schindler's List*,"," ed. Yosefa Loshitzky (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997), 80-85.

that were then in vogue (something I will refer to later). Rather, I refer to the general, long-term change in the Western culture of memory in the last quarter of the twentieth century, which I see as more important and as shaped mainly by three tendencies: first, a general turn toward history, especially toward contemporary history; second, a comprehensive mediatization and thus transnationalization of recent history; and last, for the Holocaust, the successive replacement of primary memories with those of later generations born after World War II.

An increasing fixation on history in Western cultures is a simple and undeniable fact. Today nobody is asking: "What is the use of history?," a question raised in 1970 at the most important German conference of historians, the *Historikertag*. The end of the modernist utopia and its *telos* of progress; the loss of the ideological certainties related to it; and the media communication that seems to accelerate the processes of transnationalization that are part of so-called "reflexive modernity" all seem to increase the desire for an "ascertainment in time."[34] In this context, mediatization acts as a catalyst in these developments; at the same time the rules of the media leave a sustainable imprint on memory. This involves not only the inherent logic of different types of media, but also that of marketing, which often decides on what will be remembered in the first place. Given the conditions of a fast-paced event-culture, media products have to fight for attention such that spectacular and disastrous events are privileged from the very beginning. Where a large financial investment is needed, as is the case with movie-making, the products are subject to forces of international exploitation that dictate both the choice of the issue and the way it is treated. In brief: because of the high demand for historical orientation, historical culture today is far more influenced by public spheres where conditions of popular culture, commercialization, and latent transnationality rule—more even than state actors may be able to do.

The processes of mediatization and transnationalization as constituting factors of the culture of memory, in relation to national socialism, war, and the Holocaust, meet another process of similar importance: the transition from primary memories of the survivors to secondary memories, or, put differently, from a communicated to a cultural memory.[35] At the beginning of the 1990s, this process—the memories of the survivors being replaced by the interpretations of later generations—had already been in full flow for more than a decade. It is typical of this process that the need of later generations to create meaning moves into the foreground, while the culture of memory shaped by plural experiences of different people—partly contradicting each other—moves into the background. According to Jan Assmann, this process is accompanied by processes of canonization, ritualization, and a finalization of memory, or in other words the emergence of a master narrative that is now able to generate something like binding meaning.[36]

The unique trajectory of the Holocaust as a location of transnational memory, and maybe even the increasing displacement of (heroic) war memories of the post-war era by a victim-centered, disaster memory, can be explained against this

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34. Jörn Rüsen, *Historisches Lernen: Grundlagen und Paradigmen* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1994), 11.
35. Cf. Jan Assman, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, 5th ed. (Munich: Beck, 2005).
36. *Ibid.*, 93-97.

background. The need of postmodern Western societies to express their discomfort with modernity and the excess of violence experienced in the twentieth century found a suitable point of reference in the genocide of the European Jews.[37] Awareness of the social, ecological, and other costs of modernity has increased since the 1970s. Certainties and heroic tales that previously went unchallenged came under a lot of pressure to legitimize themselves. Thus, even the victims of the excessive "social engineering" in the first half of the twentieth century came more into focus. This is connected with a politically motivated message: referring to the Holocaust serves the purpose of legitimizing the political order of Western democracies. The collapse of the eastern bloc in 1990–91 bolstered this founding myth even further.[38]

At the same time this process was subject to the emergence of a "cultural memory" that met the conditions of a public that had been shaped by mediatization and popular culture and that was in a transnational state. The conditions of this public helped to privilege and establish the Holocaust as a universal myth of history. Contrary to what has often been assumed, today the transitional process toward secondary memory is shaped less by ritualization and political utilization than by the conditions of an event-culture that presents contemporary history as a never-ending loop of events in seemingly new and spectacular forms.[39] Only the interlocking of these two factors, that is, the contemporary need for meaning in industrialized Western societies in the late twentieth century and the visually shaped popular cultures at home in these very same societies, paved the way for the triumphal march of Holocaust memory since the 1970s.[40] It seems that this topic is especially suited to linking the social needs of creating meaning and identity with the necessities of an event-culture that feeds on spectacles, superlatives, and borderline experiences. This holds true despite—or maybe even because of—the obvious tension between the sacral, artificial, and extraordinary character of the culturalized memory focused on commemorating the victims on the one hand, and the conditions of a public shaped by popular culture and international marketing on the other. This tension structured a significant part of the public debate on the appropriate forms of representation. What would be more suitable to illustrate this tension than the religious term "Holocaust," which only became widely used with the NBC mini-series of the same title in 1978?[41]

37. The question remains why the war lost its then dominant position. It might stand to reason to refer to the moral ambiguity of wars (especially after the experience of the Vietnam War): Spielberg dealt with this issue in his movie *Saving Private Ryan* (1998).

38. Cf. Dan Diner, *Beyond the Conceivable: Studies on Germany, Nazism, and the Holocaust* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

39. Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in a Global Age* (Philadephia: Temple University Press, 2005).

40. The fact that Nazism and more specifically the Holocaust have thus become a preferred topic of TV programs and fiction films can also be linked to the large audiences they still manage to attract, even from voyeurs; cf. Wulf Kansteiner, "The Radicalization of German Memory in the Age of its Commercial Reproduction: Hitler and the Third Reich in the TV Documentaries of Guido Knopp," in *Atlantic Communications: The Media in American and German History from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Norbert Finzsch and Ursula Lehmkuhl (Providence: Berg, 2004), 335-372.

41. A similar thing happened with the term "Shoah," whose public usage by non-Jewish groups was promoted through Claude Lanzmann's film; cf. Moshe Zimmermann, "Die transnationale Holocaust-Erinnerung," in *Transnationale Geschichte:Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, ed. Gunilla

Both processes—the replacement of primary memory by a meaning-creating narrative and its adaptation by popular culture—had already begun more than a decade before *Schindler's List*. The TV-series *Holocaust* especially can be seen as a first manifestation of this development, which was then followed by a large number of TV and film productions on this topic.[42] The series had a leading role to the extent that it marked the turn from "high politics" to everyday life, thus replacing the common didactic-educationalist approach with a popular, emotional approach that aimed at viewers empathizing with the victims. Regarding all this, *Schindler's List* was by no means the first movie to turn over everything that had been there before, as some critics hyped it. The large number not only of fiction films but of TV documentaries on Nazism had not only enlarged popular knowledge about national socialism and the Holocaust; the films also coined a set of stereotypes and visual *topoi*, and introduced a canon of continually recurring documentary pictures, including their associated aesthetics. Unlike thirty years earlier, the visual display of the Holocaust in the beginning of the 1990s was no longer unconditioned; it could build on a Holocaust iconography that had already been established.[43]

The *Holocaust* television series played a leading role in another way, too: despite telling a fictional story of invented characters, the series placed great emphasis on its authenticity. The link between fiction and reality was already referred to in the title sequence that read: "It is only a story. But it really happened." The fictional characters were regularly confronted with authenticated historical events that were buttressed by the insertion of photographic and filmic documents. Although the claim to tell a true story was made only for the series' framing narrative and not for its every detail, and the series did not use the re-creation of historic events, it is obvious that this program was a precursor of "historical event television"[44] that is so popular today. The series started a trend not only because of its tendency to use popular and suspenseful modes of depiction, something for which it was heavily criticized at the time, but also because of its clearly articulated claim to authenticity that marked most later productions on Nazism.[45]

Taking up Rüsen's general reflections on historical culture, it seems logical to interpret the claim for authenticity regarding more recent fictional productions on topics of national socialism as an expression of the specific tension between

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Budde, Sebastian Conrad, and Oliver Janz (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2006), 203-204; on terms, cf. also James E. Young, *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narrative Consequences of Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 85-86.

42. Cf. Frank Bösch, "Moving History: Fictional Films and the Nazi Past in Germany since the late 1970s," in *Popular Historiographies in the 19th and 20th Century*, ed. Sylvia Paletschek (Oxford: Berghahn, forthcoming); Wulf Kansteiner, "Nazis, Viewers and Statistics: Television Audience Research and Collective Memory in West Germany," in *Journal of Contemporary History* 39, no. 4 (2004), 575-598; Mark A. Wolfgram, "West German and Unified German Cinema's Difficult Encounter with the Holocaust," in *Film & History* 32 (2002), 24-37; Annette Insdorf, *Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

43. Even this iconography was not without a predecessor, as it followed Christian and artistic motifs.

44. Cf. Tobias Ebbrecht, "History, Public Memory and Media Event: Codes and Conventions of Historical Event-television in Germany," *Media History* 13, no. 2/3 (2007), 221-234.

45. Cf. Bösch, "Moving History."

mythical commemoration and distribution by popular culture. If it is accurate to say that cultural memory always aims at the need for transcendence by emphasizing the larger-than-life, the extraordinary,[46] then one can say that products of popular culture in the "age of mechanical reproduction" represent quite the opposite: the loss of the auratic, of the real, or, depending on one's own theoretical or ideological preference, the emergence of historical representations that are trivial, manipulative, commodified, and ephemeral.[47] Therefore it comes as no surprise that the utilization of the Holocaust in forms of popular culture is met by opposition, just as it is no surprise that this topic seems ideal for exactly the purpose of contemporary cultural memeory due to its larger-than-life qualities that guarantee attention—something both central and scarce in a society of media and consumption—and that assure this not only with targeted audiences but on an international scale.[48]

The need for authenticity can be interpreted as a consequence of the increasing dominance of popular consumer culture and media society; paradoxically, it is exactly this need such that a culture continually seeks to satisfy.[49] Relating this more closely to the Holocaust, this need seems to emerge additionally from the dimension of the crimes and the resulting moral-normative imperative of the present, especially at a time when its witnesses are dying out and cultural memory is emerging. Using Rüsen's terminology we can say that the more the aesthetic and political dimensions move into the foreground, the more paramount is the dimension of truth.

So there is an obvious need for authenticity, and this need is served by market structures. But what can be seen as authentic? Can images, can documentary or even fiction films, be authentic? Cultural studies sees it as a commonplace that there is no immediate access to the "true," and that thus the term as such is an inherent paradox. As Jan Berg puts it: "Because even the immediate and unquestionably true has to be mediated, to be displayed—otherwise we would not know that it is authentic. Thus the agents of authentication try to make it unmistakably clear that it would be an error to understand that which they have displayed as absolutely true, immediate, holy, and pure, merely as a result of their presentation."[50] The paradox, however, does not lead one to deny any claims of authenticity, but rather to continually renewed efforts of authentication: "the actual betrayal," as Norbert Bolz has it, "lies in the promise of the real."[51]

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46. Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, 52-56.

47. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968). 471-508; the range of relevant perceptions reaches from culturally conservative critics on mass culture to critical theory.

48. Cf. for a critical perspective on the attractiveness of Nazism in popular culture, Saul Friedländer, *Reflections of Nazism: An Essay on Kitsch and Death* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984).

49. It is likely that the whole affinity of popular media and history in general since the 1970s relies on this paradox.

50. Jan Berg, "Techniken der medialen Authentifizierung Jahrhunderte vor der Erfindung des 'Dokumentarischen,'" in *Die Einübung des dokumentarischen Blicks: Fiction- und Non-Fiction-Film zwischen Wahrheitsanspruch und expressiver Sachlichkeit 1895–1945*, ed. Ursula Keitz and Kay Hoffmann (Marburg: Schüren 2001), 57 [translated from German].

51. Norbert Bolz, "Der Kult des Authentischen im Zeitalter der Fälschung," in *Fälschungen: Zu Autorschaft und Beweis in Wissenschaften und Künsten*, ed. Anne-Kathrin Reulecke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2006), 416 [translated from German].

According to this interpretation, authentication is first a means of constructing evidence. In the worst case this results in a synthetic concealment of the subjectivity, sectionality, mediality, and timeliness of representations and interpretation. In this case "Authenticity is not a question of factitiousness or reality, but one of authority: things are authenticated, and as long as the authority is not challenged they will be seen as being authentic by any audience that accepts the authority."[52] But one does not have to share this pejorative reading; one can maintain a more positive conception that sees authenticity as a norm to be strived for, and can connect the term to artistic credibility, genuineness, and revisability.[53] Nevertheless, in either case authenticity is a cultural construct: what is seen as authentic depends on interpretations and allocations of meaning; it is based on conventions of representation, established discourses, and also on faith in the appropriateness of images, symbols, and metaphors serving as representatives of reality. Thus, "authenticity" has to be historicized and contextualized. It goes without saying that the quality of things that people take to be true—the presentation techniques and iconography a display has to use to be accepted as a "true" representation of reality—changes over the course of time. Because of this it might seem peculiar that the most successful director of major fiction films at the time of *Schindler's List* was also successful in this regard; but maybe this isn't so peculiar: what else does a Hollywood director need if not a grasp of the *zeitgeist*?

## III. INTEGRATION AND BALANCE: AUTHENTICATION IN *SCHINDLER'S LIST*

Much authenticity was ascribed to Spielberg's film, as can be seen by the reactions of critics, survivors, and historians cited above. But how did the film achieve this effect? Which images did it use, and how were they integrated into a plausible narrative? How exactly was it possible to convey the requirements of a popular, consumable story with the authenticated historical facts? Or was this impression only the result of deception? And why did a majority of Western audiences quite obviously believe the images and the story of the film to be an appropriate form of representation, especially regarding the fact that cultures of memory are of a plural nature, not only at the international level but also within the individual West European and North American states?

Steven Spielberg said in one interview that for the first time he had become interested in the truth;[54] and, looking at the fantasy worlds depicted in his previous movies, one is inclined to believe him. It can be seen in the film that this desire to depict the truth has been realized with extreme effort in order to re-create a

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52. Helmut Lethen, "Versionen des Authetischen: sechs Gemeinplätze," in *Literatur und Kulturwissenschaften: Positionen, Theorien, Modelle*, ed. Helmut Böhme and Klaus R. Scherpe (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt. 1996), 228 [translated from German].

53. Cf. Tanjev Schultz, "Alles inszeniert und nichts authentisch? Visuelle Kommunikation in den vielschichtigen Kontexten der Inszenierung und Authentizität," in *Authentizität und die Inszenierung von Bilderwelten*, ed. Thomas Knieper and Marion G. Müller (Cologne: Herbert von Halem Verlag, 2003), 10-24.

54. Cf. "Die ganze Wahrheit schwarz auf weiß: Regisseur Steven Spielberg über seinen Film *Schindlers Liste*," Discussion between Steven Spielberg and Hellmuth Karasek, in *Der Spiegel* (February 21. 1994), 186.

historical milieu true to detail, including the accurate placing of props, the styling of the actors, the precise language, and the naming of places. A high degree of perfectionism can be discerned, that is, a tendency to depict a "concretist natural-ism of illusions."[55]

As is commonly known, Spielberg exerted great effort to film at original loca-tions wherever possible, moving the filming entirely to Europe.[56] Even where it took a lot of work, and the film team encountered opposition, for example, filming at Auschwitz-Birkenau, where permission to shoot had already been granted only to be withdrawn after protests from Jewish organizations, Spielberg did not give up on this location. Instead, he had a replica of the platform erected outside the entrance gate in order to film the arrival of the female *Schindlerjuden* who had been deported to Auschwitz by mistake. The use of historical locations did not mean that there was not a re-creation of locales. Hanno Loewy has pointed out, for example, that the replica of the Birkenau platform allowed the distances among the platform itself, the gate, and the chimney of the crematory to be shortened, that is, a dramatic condensation of space was possible that did not correspond with the large distances of reality, but that enabled a symbolic grasping of the se-quence of arrival, selection, and extermination.[57] A similar situation can be found in the scenes where the ghetto is evacuated, as the dramatic narration of the film represents a climax compared with reality in which the liquidation had been an-nounced as a "resettlement," and was executed in several waves.[58] These scenes, too, benefit from the narrowness of medieval architecture. Here, one principle of the film can be illustrated: condensed imaginations of what persecution or what Auschwitz meant or could mean from today's perspective are re-created. This imagination, however, is simultaneously tied up with reality and with the original locations: "Spielberg's Auschwitz is a fairytale-like place, and that was maybe why he was so keen on the original location, as he could dare to transform the real into the imaginary, the traumatic into the dreamlike place only by using the authentic remains."[59] Just as the audience might find it difficult to generate faith in these representations regarding the specific topic, the director also might have needed for himself this form of authenticating his imagination.

The use of original locations underlines that the movie did not rely only on the "pathos of the documentary" to create an impression of truth. Re-creating what was or might have been the essence of the Holocaust—the archetype—was done by referring to documents and remains. This principle of equipping the—after all—fictitious imaginations of the Holocaust is a mark of the entire film; it shapes the culture of memory with reference to pictures, symbols, people, and places

55. Gertrud Koch, "Nachstellungen – Film und historischer Moment" in *Die Gegenwart der Ver-gangenheit: Dokumentarfilm, Fernsehen und Geschichte,* ed. Eva Hohenberger and Judith Keilbach (Berlin: Vorwerk 8, 2003), 226.

56. In this interview Spielberg emphasized that he had not been near Hollywood before the film was finished (*Der Spiegel,* "Die ganze Wahrheit schwarz auf weiß").

57. Hanno Loewy, "Ein Märchen vom Zocker: Zur Rezeption von Steven Spielbergs Film Schindler's List," in *Entscheidungen: Vorschläge und Materialien zur pädagogischen Arbeit mit dem Film Schindlers Liste,* ed. Gottfried Kößler (Frankfurt am Main: Fritz Bauer Institut, 1995), 61.

58. Nevertheless such "hunts of humans" by the SS did happen; cf. Wildt, "The Invented and the Real," 242.

59. Loewy, "Ein Märchen vom Zocker," 61 [translated from German].

that are assumed to be directly linked to real life. Nevertheless they remain a simulacrum of reality; they are dramatic material of artistic imagination or serve its legitimization. Spielberg deliberately decided against making a documentary, as he was of the opinion that the only appropriate approach to the unimaginable would be via art, by a narrative.[60] But at the same time he thought that the aesthetic representations required authentication to make them more objective and thus to generate faith, if not authority.

The attempt to benefit from the magic of an authentic location is only a secondary expression of how the film tries to authenticate its fiction. The example of Auschwitz cited above illustrates the power the film repeatedly exerts by recalling the metaphors and semiotic repertory of extermination on the visual level, especially the gate of the camp, one of the "metasigns" of extermination. In addition, the railroad tracks and transport cars; the symbols of captivity such as the barbed wire, the barracks, and watchtowers; and finally the smoke and ashes—all are part of a set repertory of signs signaling extermination. In other scenes of the film the remnants of the deported are shown as we know them from today's museums and memorial places: the suitcases, the piles of clothes and shoes, the cut-off hair, the collected gold teeth, and finally the piles of dead bodies that we have seen in the film footage made by the rescuers and that have been made familiar by Resnais's *Nuit et Brouillard* in particular.

These repeated and canonized motifs act as monuments of collective memory, that is, as "icons of extermination."[61] The motifs are often based on documentary photos, film footage, or remnant objects, often made or retrieved directly after the camps were freed; but these motifs recur in later re-creations, for example, in fiction films. In each case their semantic content exceeds the individual motif itself; the motifs can even leave behind the concrete meanings of the objects shown, or even turn them into their very opposites.[62] They recall associations, myths, and meta-narratives that relate to the industrial extermination of the Jews in the broadest sense. Due to their function as monuments of cultural memory, they are particularly familiar to us; thus they appear to be "true."

To this extent the existence of an established memory of images, of a transnational iconography of the Holocaust, is a central prerequisite for the film to work; this had not been the case even ten years before. The film uses this canon of signs and images partly emblematically, but dilutes it, too, by integrating its motifs into the scenic action.[63] At least some of these motifs can be clearly allocated to the rescuers' perspective, such as the piles of bodies or the hair and the gold teeth. First, they represent the disintegration of the camps more than their functioning;

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60. Cf. *Der Spiegel*. "Die ganze Wahrheit schwarz auf weiß." 184.

61. Cornelia Brink, *Ikonen der Vernichtung: Öffentlicher Gebrauch von Fotografien aus nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern nach 1945* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998).

62. Cf. Nicole Wiedemann, "'So ist das, was das Bild dokumentiert, das Gegenteil von dem, was es symbolisiert': Holocaustfotografie im Spannungsfeld zwischen Geschichtswissenschaft und Kulturellem Gedächtnis," in *Die Medien der Geschichte: Historizität und Medialität in interdisziplinärer Perspektive*, ed. Fabio Crivellari *et al.* (Konstanz: UVK. 2004) 317-349; cf. also Keilbach, "Photographs, Symbolic Images, and the Holocaust."

63. Cf. here and on the following, Manuel Köppen, "Von Effekten des Authentischen—Schindlers Liste: Film und Holocaust," in *Bilder des Holocaust: Literatur—Film—Bildende Kunst*, ed. Manuel Köppen and Klaus R. Scherpe (Cologne: Böhlau, 1997), 145-171.

second, they refuse to seamlessly fit into the film's narrative—for example, the people deported in the film are not dead yet when the gold teeth are shown. It seems as if the reference, the room for associations opened by these images, is more important than an accurate and logical sequence of action and linear time.

The play on established images is by no means limited to the iconic "meta-signs" of the Holocaust and the associative room connected to them. Before filming the movie, the film crew viewed many contemporary photos and much film footage, and then partly re-created them in the movie. For example, in one scene German soldiers cut off the beards and side locks of orthodox Jews, or another the memory of one survivor featured in Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* is represented.[64] The documentary aesthetics of such "secondary memory images"[65] and the inter-textual references again serve the purpose of authenticating; they create an atmo-sphere of familiarity, or, even more, they benefit from photography's promise to deliver an objective picture of reality.

The scenes in the beginning of the film—often criticized—that show life in the Jewish ghetto, are part of the same context.[66] The "haggling Jews" in the synagogue and the rich businessmen financing Schindler's factory correspond to standard stereotypes and even to anti-Semitic clichés. Still, these stereotypes in aesthetics and content trigger effects of recognition; at the same time they are recombined, and their associations are put into the context of the narrative, thus helping to stage those images of the film that could not be made available by documentary material that had been passed down. In doing so the film uses the collective memory (of images) that it helps to consolidate and rewrite at the same time.

Of course, at the end of the twentieth century, intertextual references and the resulting hybridity are far from unusual; regarding the comprehensive mediatiza-tion, it has probably become next to impossible to produce texts or films that are not rife with explicit or implicit references to those made before.[67] The special quality of Spielberg's movie, however, is the way in which it integrates these ref-erences and forms them into a seemingly smooth, logical, and coherent entity. Let us first look at the visual level to find examples of this. Various sources have as-serted that the film has the aesthetics of a *Wochenschau* (that is, a weekly cinema newsreel), criticizing this look as a false chumming-up to documentary.[68] In fact,

64. In *Shoah* one survivor relates that on the train going to Auschwitz, he saw a fieldworker who mimed the fate awaiting the people on the train. Only later did he understand the meaning of that gesture. Spielberg shows—shot from the train—a boy making this gesture, and thus symbolizing to the viewer that the train is not going to the safety of Brünnlitz, but to Auschwitz instead; cf. Tobias Ebbrecht: "Sekundäre Erinnerungsbilder: Visuelle Stereotypenbildung in Filmen über Holocaust und Nationalsozialismus seit den 1990er Jahren." in *Medien—Zeit—Zeichen*. ed. Christian Hissnauer and Andreas Jahn-Sudmann (Marburg: Schüren, 2007), 39.

65. *Ibid.*, 37-44.

66. For example, Art Spiegelman was reminded of "slightly gentrified versions of Julius Streicher's *Der Stürmer* caricatures"; see *Village Voice* (March 29, 1994), 24-31.

67. Even such contrarian thinkers as Niklas Luhmann and Umberto Eco agree that a distinction between primary knowledge of the world and secondary knowledge conveyed by media has become virtually impossible. Cf. Eco, "Reports from the Global Village," in *Faith in Fakes: Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1986), 133-179; Niklas Luhmann, *The Reality of the Mass Media* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

68. Cf. David Ansen, "Spielberg's Obsession," in *Newsweek* (December 20, 1993).

the film was shot in black and white, notable exceptions being the opening and closing sequences (to which I will refer later) and the two famous, pivotal scenes in which a child's red coat appears. But, rightly so, it has been pointed out that the black-and-white aesthetics of the film have little in common with historical footage from the 1940s, and this is not only due to the film's high resolution.[69] The impression that it is a documentary is mainly the result of camera operation. Spielberg and his cinematographer, Janusz Kaminski, deliberately rejected the emotionally overwhelming Hollywood cinematography of dolly and crane shots.[70] About forty percnet of the film was shot using a hand-held camera whose position moved constantly between that of an observer and that of an omniscient narrator. In some parts, the style of the camera and the editing remind one of present TV-news footage, especially the war footage of U.S. networks, which does not intend to give the viewer a feeling of purposeful staging, but to create an impression of an unmasked, present share of the action due to its imperfect look (following thus their very own strategies of authentication).

Likewise, Manuel Köppen has pointed out that this newsreel aesthetic is only one aspect of the authenticity effect. Additionally, there are references to more recent, but already established, patterns of spectacular representations of violence in cinema, especially in the war movies of the 1970s and 1980s. The camera imitating Amon Goeth's telescopic sight, the scenes of perpetrators liquidating the ghetto and disinterring bodies—scenes that, facing an excess of violence, oscillate between hysteria and mania—all correspond with the conventions of genre movies.[71] The double reference in the film to current patterns and conventions of showing violence on TV news and in war movies creates the impression of dealing with genuine and valid images; at the same time these images are—being black and white—coded as historical images belonging to the past. Whereas historical conventions of representation cause a feeling of alienation, these images cite the familiar journalistic aesthetics of news and violence of the late twentieth century, and project them onto the past: the feeling of authenticity derives precisely from the hybrid nature of their composition.[72]

How strongly the film relies on the viewers' expectations and their knowledge can be shown by the controversial shower scene. The female *Schindlerjuden*, deported to Auschwitz by mistake, are taken to the barracks after their arrival; as they are undressing, the (hand-held) camera moves among the bodies of naked women to the shower room, but stops at the door that is closing behind the last

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69. Köppen,"Von Effekten des Authentischen," 158.

70. Cf. Ansen, "Spielberg's Obsession." To further enhance the realism of the film, Kaminski explained that "forty percent of the film was shot using hand-held cameras." Spielberg admitted, "I tried to be as close to a journalist in recording this re-creation, more than being a filmmaker trying to heighten the suspense or action or the pathos. The black and white and hand-held camera gives the film sort of a cinema verité, documentary feel. It embodied the truth we were trying to explore and communicate what happened. It made it seem more real, somehow." http://www.schindlerslist.com, Behind the Scenes, retrieved on March 29, 2008.

71. Similar scenes can be found in American movies about the Vietnam War, for example, by Kubrick or Coppola.

72. It is said that the director and cinematographer deliberately pursued the intention of making it nearly impossible to date the film based on its visual aesthetic; cf. Thiele, *Publizistische Kontroversen*, 426.

women entering. The camera is directed only at a spy-hole in the door. Only after tormenting moments of uncertainty does it become clear that the showers are real: water is coming out instead of gas. The non-representable, the actual murder, is transferred to the viewers' imagination; the building of suspense relies on the viewers' knowledge of the context. This scene works only because the Auschwitz gas chambers masked as shower rooms have already become a *topos* of the culture of memory.

But films do not only show images and stereotypes, they also weave them into a narrative.[73] Following the classic conventions of fiction narrative, film action is characterized by linearity, well-balanced elements of moderate complexity, a plausible motivation of the action, and a narration that creates rhythmical intervals of suspense and relief.[74] This is quite a narrow frame that, as stands to reason, is incompatible with the postulate that the Holocaust is not narratable. Spielberg's film follows the rules, and is also characterized by deep structures and action-roles that recall classic fairy-tale structures: at the heart of the story is the hero who has to decide between good and evil, followed by struggle, triumph, the eradication of evil, and redemption. Thus what we have is an archaic sequence of motifs and actions that remind one of Vladimir Propp's classifications of Russian folk tales,[75] or, to follow Northrop Frye's categories, a romance.[76] As Hanno Loewy points out in his acute reflections on genre and the Holocaust, this structure seems to be a pattern frequently used with this subject matter, maybe in classical narrative cinema in general.[77] Romances deal with evil being defeated by good, and with the adventures and dangers the hero has to overcome, and it is thus no coincidence that fairy tales have a romance narrative as they tell of the desire to see the good win.

At first, it might seem paradoxical to trace the impression of truth in *Schindler's List* back to its adaptation of the romance genre and to its fairy-tale-like qualities. Should we assume that the film gains its realistic look mainly from its narratological conventionality, that is, from the fact that it follows the established patterns of previous movies about the Holocaust on the one hand, and the general conventions of narrative Hollywood cinema (including a happy ending)—and thus centuries of literary tradition—on the other? This assumption would support those critics who reproached Spielberg for an unacceptable popularization of the topic, for submitting content to form.

But even though this argument has certain advantages, things are not that simple once we take a closer look. The fairy-tale-like narrative of the victory of good over evil is not totally unfractured in Spielberg's film. In this context another intertextual reference plays a role, as Loewy points out: the narrative recurs to a ver-

73. Cf. Edward Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).

74. David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

75. Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folk Tale* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968).

76. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957). Readers of Hayden White know that Frye was not referring to the current colloquial usage of the term as a love story, but its medieval interpretation as an adventure tale.

77. Hanno Loewy, "Fiktion und Mimesis: Holocaust und Genre im Film," in *Lachen über Hitler— Auschwitz-Gelächter? Filmkomödie, Satire und Holocaust*, ed. Margit Fröhlich *et al.* (Munich: Edition Text und Kritik, 2003), 37-64.

sion of the classic Western or, to be precise, to the gambling variation of that genre in which a lone rider comes into a town terrorized by outlaws. At first it looks as though he is teaming up with the outlaws, but in the end he decides to commit himself against them for the sake of society before he rides out of town alone.[78]

At first glance the Western reference seems to be only a modern version of the romance. In fact, the element of gambling introduces chance to the narrative as a major element. The film emphasizes time and again the randomness of survival, the contingency of situations. Schindler is—at least in large sections of the film—not the classic hero fighting evil and winning in the end, but an obsessive gambler leaving the impression that his actions are caused mainly by his gambling obsession and his egocentric interests. At first, the survival of his workers is nothing more than an accidental by-product, and even once Schindler has decided on gambling for his workers, the rules of play are not in his sphere of power. Then he is nothing more but "a testing probe dipped into chaos in order to look for a fixed point."[79]

A similar statement can be made about the polarity of good and evil: on the one hand, it clearly exists (personified in the two protagonists Oskar Schindler and Amon Goeth), but on the other hand it is fractured. Both characters are designed to mirror each other as alter egos whose qualities are to be experienced as contingent, something that holds especially true for Schindler, whose moral ambiguity is kept up for a long time. The characterization of Goeth, however, though it manages to avoid the explicit cliché of the unteachable ideologue, instead clearly follows the stereotype of the Nazi perpetrator as a sadist and psychopath (which seems to reflect his personality in real life).[80] The variations of narrative perspective underline this ambivalence: often the camera seems to jump between the perspectives of victim and perpetrator just to retreat to an omniscient position later on. Here, too, the "simple" way, the identification with the victims or with the "good," is avoided. Only toward the end of the movie, when Schindler becomes more and more the hero in the classic meaning of the word, do the conventions of the romance hit with full force:[81] Schindler is turned into a monument representing the classic "knight in shining armor" who is fighting a losing battle against superior strength. Nevertheless, as the closing scene suggests, he wins in the end as he saves the principle of humanity: "Whoever Saves One Life Saves the World Entire," the film's motto, which is taken from the Talmud. Again the impression of truth is based mainly on the film's hybrid nature in which archetypes (the triumph of good, that is, of hope) merge with representations of the past and the normative horizon of the present.

Sometimes the frame of the film, especially at the end—that is, in the scene set in the present in which survivors and children of *Schindlerjuden* place stones on Schindler's grave in Israel—has been perceived as a mark of the relationship between fiction and history, both visually and in content. To a certain extent this

78. *Ibid.*, 43-52.
79. Loewy, "Ein Märchen vom Zocker," 65 [translated from German].
80. He is characterized as a convinced Nazi only at the end, standing at the gallows.
81. Cf. Gertrud Koch, "'Against All Odds' or the Will to Survive: Moral Conclusions from Narrative Closure," in *History & Memory* 9, no. 1-2 (1997), 393-408.

is the case, as the scene was filmed in color, and the film's protagonists are "doubled": the actors accompany their real-life counterparts or their living relatives to the graves. The temporal fracture of past and present is clearly marked. But simultaneously, in addition to the "magic of the place" and the "documentary," a third figure is called upon to authenticate cultural memory, the "pathos of the primary," that is, the survivors themselves. They also represent the non-falsified, authentic memory by being a part of it, and of course the appearance of the survivors does implicitly authenticate the message, "Time has passed, but all is true."

Here it might be even more important to observe that the film ties in another powerful master narrative: the tale of the sacrifice and the rescue of the Jewish people, a narrative that is very popular in Israel and has the Holocaust at its center, even though its roots are steeped in the Old Testament with the history of the people of Israel as its vanishing point.[82] There is an obvious analogy in the last part of the film between Moses as the rescuer of the Jewish people and Schindler. The openness and compatibility of the film is striking in the way its use of the myth of Jewish sacrifice and rescue is compatible with different national and transnational myths and narratives. The film is open to interpretation, for example, as a narrative of reconciliation between Judaism and Christianity symbolized mainly in Oskar Schindler as a person. Other tie-ins are the empathetic construction of the individual as a free and responsible agent, and even a response to the neo-totalitarian elements catching on in Europe right after the collapse of communism, as the film shows de-individualization and bureaucratization as the foundations of inhumanity. The value of consensus and its suitability concerning important myths and ideologies of mainstream Western political culture in the U.S. and Europe has a great impact on the film's impression of truth. Only where this canon of values is rooted in a political culture can the film work. Thus the negative response and low interest in Eastern Europe so soon after the collapse of communism can hardly come as a surprise.

A very important condition for the film to be accepted as an appropriate representation of the Holocaust is a kind of self-restraint that runs through the entire film, at the visual level as well as in the narrative layout. This restraint is based on the feeling that one cannot represent its topic by means of extreme modes of artistic expression. Thus the "documentary" style of the film is also an expression of restraint, reducing the typical Hollywood dramaturgy of emotional overwhelming to small doses, a dramaturgy that has its full effect only at the end of the film when Schindler bids "his" Jews farewell. It is also important that the story of Oskar Schindler does not tell *the* story of the Holocaust as such, but has a nearly anecdotal story line that contributes tension to the main story line of extermination. Only this concentration on the seemingly remote (that is, the rescue of 1,100 Jews), in which the so-called final solution becomes a marginal part of the narrative, allows for a fictional dramatization of the subject in the film.

In this context one also has to consider the decision to tell a small story that manages to focus mainly on three characters and that is not told primarily from a

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82. Cf. Moshe Zimmermann, "'Täter-Opfer-Dichotomien als Identitätsformen," in *Verletztes Gedächtnis: Erinnerungskultur und Zeitgeschichte im Konflikt*, ed. Konrad H. Jarausch (Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus-Verlag, 2002), 199–216.

victim's perspective; the viewer is not even offered a proper figure of identification.[83] Spielberg knew very well that a film aiming at empathetic identification with the victims would have run into the "trap of concernedness," and would consequently have been perceived—at least by critics—as hardly appropriate, because it would have reduced the topic to an intense yet too convenient emotional experience for the audience.[84] How little emphasis the film places on emotional engagement with the victims can be seen in the casualness with which they are staged: they are never introduced as characters, they do not show any traces of martyrdom, and the camera never dwells on their "tortured" bodies. Of course the little girl in the red coat does represent the archetype of childish innocence, but the composition of that scene is not one of individual psychology but of aesthetic avant-garde. It is a literal marking that implies only one individual fate in a whole immense universe of dying. Given the extent of death and suffering, the "compressed time"[85] does not allow for the representation of one single fate. (By the way, this might actually be the largest difference from the first popularization of the topic, that is, the Holocaust mini-series on NBC.)

Not everywhere is the self-restraint as consistent as in this case; for example, the music of Ithzak Perlman and John Williams tends to use arrangements for strings in minor keys and vocal arrangements reminiscent of sacral music. As film music often influences the audience below the level of conscious perception, its use here shows the thin line on which the film is walking even in that regard: on the one hand, it serves the narrative conventions of successful entertainment movies concerning emotional manipulation and stimulation, thus even approaching the boundaries of what can be shown; on the other hand, it respects the canon of what is deemed not depictable. The shower scene can be seen as a most impressive example of this balancing act.

All in all, the impression of truth the film manages to create is based on both the skillfully and sensitively weighed combination of hybrid references and the balance of the three dimensions of historical culture. Spielberg's powerful imagination of the Holocaust refers largely to already existing image-memory, and to the increasingly transnationalized and culturalized forms of memory and interpretations of the Holocaust in the late twentieth century, but not without their additional authentication by the "pathos of the primary." He merges artifacts and signs into a coherent entity that follows the rules of fictional narrative cinema, especially in the editing and narrative layout, but also in the recurrent use of conventional and archetypical patterns of narrative, and conventions of representation and stereotypes established in the media in the 1990s (though these hardly ever remain fully intact). The amalgamation of history and memory, and the condensation of the artifacts, in such a powerful composition made according to cinema's rules, create a resounding impression of truth. This implies a complex relationship of hybridity and homogeneity that constitutes the basis of the film's transnational

83. A decision for which Spielberg came in for a lot of criticism, as the common reproach was that the Jews were shown only as an anonymous mass.

84. Cf. *Der Spiegel*, "Die ganze Wahrheit schwarz auf weiß," 185.

85. Dan Diner, "Gestaute Zeit: Massenvernichtung und jüdische Erzählstruktur," in *Kreisläufe: Nationalsozialismus und Gedächtnis* (Berlin: Berlin-Verlag, 1995), 123-139.

success. On the one hand, *Schindler's List* serves the increasingly canonized and culturalized memory of the Holocaust, as it refers to the established aesthetic and narrative conventions of popular genre movies; on the other hand, many references are called upon that leave room for different associations, and allow the film to accommodate different master narratives and allusions.

## IV. THE TRUTHS OF THE FILM

We should look at the film once more while considering Rüsen's dimensions of the culture of memory, that is, the aesthetic, the political, and the cognitive. In doing so, the assumption is confirmed that film as a medium of illusions creates an impression of truth following its own medium-specific rules. What is perceived as true is that which follows the common artistic and aesthetic conventions of cinema. But at least in the case of Spielberg's movie, it becomes clear how much effort was invested in keeping this aesthetic dimension in balance with the other two, that is, the cognitive and the political, in order to evoke an impression of truth.

Given the successful balance and reconciliation of elements that seem to be contradictory, one has to ask how much this process has cost. That the topic does accommodate to the rules of public, popular culture, and that Spielberg does not shy away from shocking images and "negative suspense" and thus follows the rules of cinema with virtuosity, should be obvious by now. This does not mean, however, that the film did not compromise in this regard. The restraint that I discussed above, the film's approximately three-hour length, and its black-and-white aesthetic are not features that would normally support the birth of a blockbuster. Too, the film's look is not identifiably contemporary in a way typical of Hollywood film: Spielberg and his director of photography Janusz Kaminski are said to have taken precautions against situating the style of the film in a particular moment by creating a visual aesthetic that is supposed to be timeless and difficult to date.[86]

So let us pursue the path historians usually take when they approach representations of historical culture, that is, measure them against the results of historiography (without reflecting on their respective parts in historical culture and the associated epistemological borders). As implied in the beginning of this article, historians view the film mostly positively: "There is scarcely a murder in Spielberg's film that was not reported by witnesses in trial after the war," as Michael Wildt has it.[87] Even in its focus on the perpetrators the film complies with more recent research on national socialism. A lot of the criticism can be summarized as, first, "reducing complexity" and second, "condensing historic facts," but these inevitably derive from the principles of film as a medium. These two points mainly affect the personalization, that is, the narrative focus on the protagonists Schindler and Goeth, and on the bookkeeper Itzhak Stern, whose character merges several historical figures, among them the actual maker of the lists (there was more than one), Raimund Titsch, and the man who managed Schindler's enamel factory,

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86. Cf. Thiele, *Publizistische Kontroversen*, 426.
87. Even the way through the camp being paved with Jewish tombstones corresponds to real life; cf. Wildt, "The Invented and the Real," 242.

Abraham Bankier. This very dense personalization leads to the effect that many things are ascribed to these protagonists in which they were only indirectly or not at all involved. For example, Oskar Schindler did not directly influence the creation of the different lists, and he did not go to Auschwitz in person to "free" his Jews. Likewise, Amon Goeth was not the one Schindler bribed; instead the SS had already arrested him because of corruption when the ghetto of Plaszów was being evacuated.[88]

For the purpose of fictional condensation, all of this seems legitimate to me. But the combination of numerous characters in each of the two antagonists Schindler and Goeth, who, despite all ambiguity, come to personify the principles of "good" and "evil" in the course of the movie, causes several constraints, too. For example, the unambiguous change for good that Schindler undergoes in the film may not do justice to the real-life character full of contradictions and complexity; likewise, the lists do not just represent the "good," as suggested in the movie.[89] It is Schindler's ambiguity especially, his own ties with the system, that mark his success: if one wanted to change things, one had to follow the logic of the perpetrators, often quite deeply, which led the involved parties to act in a kind of morally grey area.[90] On the other hand, it seems that Goeth was indeed the sadistic psychopath that is portrayed in the film.[91] To my mind, the problem here lies rather at the level of representation: it might be correct to say that the concentration and forced labor camps offered ideal conditions for acting out such inclinations;[92] yet it is also well known that most of the murders were committed by totally "ordinary men."[93] There is a risk that due to this symbolic personification the Holocaust appears in the end to be a problem of individual character and morale, a result that would totally distort the results of research about the perpetrators.

This risk is lastly a result of the fact that the historical preconditions of the events it depicts are hardly articulated in the film. The excess of violence in the so-called "general government" (that is, Poland under German occupation) was the result of a utopian political vision, radical anti-Semitism, and the lack of assurance granted by institutions and other mechanisms, a mixture that gave perpetrators like Goeth the necessary room for maneuver, and allowed them to gain a certain momentum and self-radicalization. In the end it is also important to recall

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88. *Ibid.*; Crowe, *Oskar Schindler.* 349-360; 394-399.

89. Indeed, the lists were subject to the manipulations of a Jewish worker who accepted money for exchanging single names; cf. Crowe, *Oskar Schindler,* 361-404.

90. Something that can also be illustrated by the communist resistance in the concentration camps; cf. Lutz Niethammer. *Der gesäuberte Antifaschismus: Die SED und die roten Kapos von Buchenwald* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1994); research on concentration camps has also shown that the notion of a simple dichotomy of victim–perpetrator can hardly be maintained under the extreme social conditions of the camps; cf. *Verfolgung als Gruppenschicksal,* ed. Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Diestel (Dachau: Verlag Dachauer Hefte, 1998).

91. Tom Segev. *Soldiers of Evil: The Commandants of the Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1987).

92. Spielberg himself used a slightly odd metaphor of the film business when he talked about Hitler's Germany as a fantastic casting office; cf. *Der Spiegel.* "Die ganze Wahrheit schwarz auf weiß," 186; cf. on this question Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror: The Concentration Camp* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

93. Cf. Christopher R. Browning. *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992).

the discursive prerequisites of the Holocaust's mass murder, namely, defining one group as the ultimate enemy on the one hand, and over-valuing one's own group on the other. However, morality is not a timeless reference; it was the effective deferral of the "moral frame of reference" that enabled the perpetrators to view themselves as morally superior beings.[94] Of course, the film could have hardly articulated all of these things, but it can be shown that its representation is quite narrow. Despite all the facts, this is not a historically correct movie about what caused the Holocaust, but an allegorical film related to the present, a parable of guilt and morality.

Finally, consider the political dimension, that is, the meaningful message of *Schindler's List* related to the present. In her notes on the relationship between film and history, Gertrud Koch has argued that film as a medium has an affinity to historical myths: "The seamless transition between first nature found and the second one created by filmic signs is . . . the psychological strength of film . . . . Nothing seems to be more difficult than seeing through the film's pretense and then to forget its images." Referring to historical movies, she writes: "the more the aesthetic universe of signs resembles signifiers and the stronger its cohesion, the sooner the viewer will fall for the myth."[95] As we have seen, this argument is also true for *Schindler's List* in some respects. The condensation of the iconic "metasigns" can be seen as the substantial core in creating the film's impression of evidence.

The transition toward a mythical, meaningful, and transnational memory fifty years after the events it portrays is as much a prerequisite of this movie as it is a process the film has shaped in a powerful way. Indeed, it is something Spielberg's movie has done in quite a particular way. Thus its message hardly differs from those of his "monster movies" such as *Jaws* or *Jurassic Park*: how can the individual survive in a hostile world, that is, modernity, and especially how can one act morally in a world that seems to have abandoned all moral impetus?[96] Even here we find a balance between the absolute horror on the one hand, that is, the evil that can hardly be portrayed in a more drastic manner, and, on the other hand, a hope that relies on one individual coming to its moral senses: "Whoever saves one life saves the world entire." Thus it is no coincidence that the film's viewpoint focuses on the survivors and, by doing so, on the present and the future. The question it raises is how can we achieve a more humane future, which one could say to be the central question of all politics. This de-historicization and universalization of the Holocaust is also the central feature of the transnational culture of memory at the end of the twentieth century: the Holocaust and Auschwitz have become ciphers of "evil" as such; identifying with the victims has become a reference point in the political culture of the United States and, spreading from there, of Western Europe including Germany. Detached from the actual historic events, this cipher serves the purpose of fashioning a universal and transnational morality—including attempts to create meaning.[97] The murder of the Jews in Europe becomes a

94. Harald Welzer with Michaela Christ, *Täter: Wie aus ganz normalen Menschen Massenmörder werden* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 2005).

95. Cf. Koch, "Nachstellungen—Film und historischer Moment," 223.

96. Cf. Georg Seeßlen, *Steven Spielberg und seine Filme* (Marburg: Schüren, 2001), 156, 217.

97. Cf., for example, the declaration of The Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, A

reference for all possible injustice and suffering in the world. *Schindler's List* can be identified as a milestone in the emergence of a transnational myth of history.

One might welcome this emergence (and thus *Schindler's List*) as a contribution to a global implementation of human rights—certainly one full of good intentions. Yet at the same time one has to ask the question what exactly is legitimized when appealing to the Holocaust: in actual political conflicts the distinction between good and evil is usually less simple than the historical reference might suggest. In the end, there may be no conflicts or victims for which such references are not invoked, be it implicitly or explicitly, reaching from ethnic conflicts and military interventions to drug victims and factory farming. Referring to the Holocaust has already become a strategy with a civil-religious character.[98]

Once truth is expressed this way, the question of the cost arises and, eventually, the question of its social and cultural borders. Obviously, this truth does work transnationally, but is at the same time—as shown by the film's success—limited to the Western hemisphere and to a value community that has Western Europe and Northern America as its center. On the one hand, this is the result of the fact that the political and meaningful dimension is aimed at the foundation of Western democracies, and only here has the Holocaust become a historical myth; on the other hand, the aesthetic and cognitive strategies of evidence do not function globally, but are tied to cultural contexts and traditions. In fact, in our cultural area, ideas of authenticity and truth rely on the European tradition of the Enlightenment, and as such they do not simply disappear by reshaping popular culture. Additionally, the transnational dimension should not lead us to ignore that in the Western countries, too, social and ethnic borders can be found. For example, some blacks in the U.S. responded to the persecution scenes of the film with laughter, and hence *Schindler's List* became a point of contention in the competition for victim recognition between African Americans and American Jews.[99]

## V. CONCLUSION

A while ago Natalie Zemon-Davis wrote that authenticity is achieved if films represent the values, relations, and issues of a period, and let the differences of the past be, instead of remodeling the past such that it might resemble the present.[100] *Schindler's List* implies rather the counter-argument: the impression of truth should be based on the current conventions of cinema and the convergence with present-day normative and political beliefs, namely the universalization and

Conference on Education, Remembrance and Research, January 26–28, 2000: "the first major international conference of the new millennium, declares its commitment to plant the seeds of a better future amidst the soil of a bitter past. We empathize with the victims' suffering and draw inspiration from their struggle. Our commitment must be to remember the victims who perished, respect the survivors still with us, and reaffirm humanity's common aspiration for mutual understanding and justice." http://www.manskligarattigheter.gov.se/stockholmforum/2000/page1192.html, retrieved on March 31, 2008.

98. For a critical view on historical analogy, cf. Tony Judt, "The 'Problem of Evil' in Postwar Europe." *The New York Review of Books* 55, no. 2 (2008).

99. Loshitzky "Introduction," in *Spielberg's Holocaust*, 6.

100. Natalie Zemon-Davis, "'Any Resemblance to Persons Living or Dead': Film and the Challenge of Authenticity." *Yale Review* 76, no. 4 (1987), 457–482.

Americanization of the Holocaust after the fall of communism. Yet this antago-nistic thesis is as one-sided as Zemon-Davis's. As we have seen, the impression of truth rather relies on balancing elements of the present and even the future with those that actually do refer to the past. This idea might be true for all forms of historical discussion;[101] the decisive factor seems to be, however, that the times appear to blur seamlessly into each other, and that the historicizing, transient im-ages—being semiotically and emotionally charged, too—give authority to a cre-ation of meaning related to the present and the future.

It is this seamlessness, this skillful composition of intertextual references and different time layers, that are systemically concealed on the one hand and that are made accessible to reflection on the other, that has become a major point of criticism of Spielberg's movie.[102] Good arguments have been made to criticize the narrative closing toward salvific history;[103] beyond this, the ability to represent the Holocaust in a closed narrative has been generally challenged,[104] followed by a plea for a radical self-reflexivity of postmodern cinema.[105] But such criticisms miss the point that film thrives on its ability to make us forget that we are not deal-ing with immediate images, but with narratives.[106] As a medium able to explain the world, cinema ideally delivers the images for the mythical narratives that give present meaning to the past. Facing contingent living conditions and increasingly unmanageable amounts of information, the need for an orientation in time, for reliance and certainty, is as urgent as ever. What we need is not a constant debunk-ing of the portrayals films provide, but rather a general awareness that films are able to represent only *particular* truths from a particular perspective despite their apparent omniscience.

When cultural historians analyze films today, they do so mostly on the pre-condition of seeing them as a kind of "mentality reservoir," as artifacts that can provide information about the values and ideas that were common at a certain period of time. Regarding *Schindler's List*, such an analysis may be premature: the "Americanization" of the Holocaust, that is, the establishing of a transnational salvation-narrative focusing on Western values, has not recognizably passed its zenith yet, despite (or maybe because of) 9/11. Nevertheless, developments have occurred: authenticity has ceased to be the sole silver bullet regarding the issue of the Holocaust. Since the second half of the 1990s, there has been in the cinema an increasing number of satirical discussions of the so-called "final solution" and Nazism overall.[107] This trend can be seen as an indication that both forms have become a part of the common knowledge of popular culture, a trend to which

101. Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

102. Joshua Hirsch, for example, talks about "postmodern reactionism": *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), 141.

103. Koch, "'Against All Odds' or the Will to Survive."

104. Hayden White, "The Modernist Event," in *The Persistence of History: Cinema, Television, and the Modern Event*, ed. Vivian Sobchack (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), 17-38.

105. Cf. Anton Kaes, "Holocaust and the End of History: Postmodern Historiography in Cinema," in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution,"* ed. Saul Friedländer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 206-222.

106. Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film*. 1.

107. The biggest success was Roberto Benigni's film *Life is Beautiful*, Italy 1998, awarded three Oscars in 1998.

*Schindler's List* has contributed a good deal. Apparently, historical authentication is not necessary in order to create evidence. The next generation has decided to apply its own standards.

The debate between Saul Friedländer and Martin Broszat has shown that history and memory can be separated only in an ideal view, and that these two should rather be thought of as two poles of a continuum rather than as clearly distinguishable categories.[108] Something similar could be said about the relationship of the aesthetic-artistic truth of film and the empirical (re)constructions of historiography, which are complementary and should likewise not be seen as independent from each other. However, this should not keep us from pointing out time and again the tensions between the different approaches, from discussing their associated capabilities and limits, and from reflecting upon their changing historical conditionality.

*Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam*

TRANSLATED BY KIRSTEN WÄCHTER

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108. Cf. Jörn Rüsen, "The Logic of Historicization: Metahistorical Reflections on the Debate between Friedländer and Broszat," in *Passing into History: Nazism and the Holocaust beyond Memory. In Honour of Saul Friedländer on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Gulie Ne'eman Arad (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 113-147, and in *History and Memory* 9, no. 1 & 2 (1997), 113-144.