

PART II

TRUTH

Chapter 5

History, Myth and Memory

"Scientific truth is not burdened with moral issues; it is *knowledge*." p. 545

One of the most fundamental assumptions of modernism in contrast to postmodernism is the presumed difference between fact and fiction. Fictional representations are not to be assessed by the same criteria of truth as historical ones. There are many reasons which might suggest to some readers that I am a postmodernist. For one, this book is concerned with an exploration focusing on a *representation* of the Holocaust rather than the Holocaust itself. Further, it is a representation in two fictional formats - a novel and a film - though they claim to represent the 'truth'. This seems to fit in with the postmodernist tendency to take the minor leaves (the saving of 1100 rather than the murder of six million) and the representation of an important event rather than the event itself as important issues to be explored. My analysis is, in fact, a comparison of *two* artistic representations in *two* different media of Schindler's rescue efforts in the Holocaust in relationship to the victims and the perpetrators. Since I seem *more* preoccupied with the representation of events - Schindler's saving of the 1100 and the Holocaust - than the evidence for either interpretation of the event, this reinforces the suggestion that I have adopted a postmodernist perspective. As shall become even clearer, I go further and emphasize the contrast between the emplotment which the respective author and director use to develop somewhat different characters for Oskar Schindler and explanations for his behaviour; this reinforces the view that I have bought into the postmodernist mode of discourse in which the narrative presentation is the critical issue and not individual claims about facts.¹ Modernists tend to regard narrative as the neutral container for historical facts. Postmodernists take the narrative construction itself to be the central critical issue in examining competing accounts.

Postmodernist writing seems to identify fiction and history, though perhaps using different methods, rather than radically separating them and identifying history with science. When the focus is on the narrative structure in differentiating interpretations of the same historical event, the suspicion is reinforced. And when the effort is directed at what would appear to be the aestheticization of history, then queries about truth and the relationship of the story to reality would seem to be out of place. Since this book can be considered to be an analysis of two pieces of work at the same time as it cannibalizes the works of others (the extensive footnotes on Holocaust literature, historiography and films) to undertake the analysis, this might confirm for many that this work is, indeed postmodernist.²

But in insisting that fictional representations of history also have to be assessed by such measures as distortion and misrepresentation of facts, I appear to be applying modernist criteria. Evidence is crucial to that task. By contrast, postmodernists argue that, "we can never test our

conclusions by comparing the elected text with 'the past' itself. So narrative substances do not refer to the past, nor is such reference required from the point of view of historical debate."³ Postmodernists, while not denying that individual statements in an historical account must be true, claim that the crucial factor in historiography is the narrative and not the truth or falsity of individual statements. As Ankerspit summed up the postmodernist position: "Saying *true* things about the past is easy--anybody can do that--but saying the *right* things about the past is difficult. That truly requires historical insight and originality."⁴ In contrast, for modernists, the critical area in historiography is the selection and arrangement of the facts. "The reason for historians' carefulness in this selection-procedure is that these statements, when considered together, determine 'the picture' of part of the past they wish to present to their readers and for historians this 'picture' is no less important than the statements that make it up."⁵

I disagree fundamentally with the postmodernist position that the primary and almost exclusive concern is with the narrative. But I also have major differences with modernism as well. There have been two trends in modernism.⁶ History, if it is to deal with truth, has to deal with objective truth as a description and explanation of what really happened in the world. History is to be modelled directly on science; an individual action is only explained when it is subsumed under a general law. This is history designed to serve the present and control the future. The other trend of modernism, following Kant and subjective idealism, upholds the ideal of history as understanding the goals, values, perceptions of conditions, alternatives and expectations of the historical agent and of past societies in general; it is history dedicated to an authentic representation of the past by getting inside the minds of those historical agents who were the key actors in the past. We have to know Schindler's history to know him and why he did what he did. Thus, all human reality is historical, and the right way of investigating Schindler's mind is by use of the historical empathetic method. Historical understanding is knowing that the action was the thing to have done for the reasons given. History alone can assess what Oskar Schindler's motives were for doing what he did. And historical methods are radically different from scientific ones.

In both the scientific and idealist view of historiography, fiction is something wholly other than historical fact. Further, both stress thought to the exclusion of affects, whether those thoughts are considered from the inside as it were, or as objective data indicated by external behaviour. There is also a tendency of both positivist and empathetic historians to try to make history objective by excluding any evaluation of why the agents did what they did.

It is one thing to get inside Schindler's mind and subsume his beliefs under a general norm - 'If Schindler believed x, y, and z, then the thing to do was x,' - or to subsume ordinary rational behaviour under a generalization about human behaviour - 'Agents of Schindler's type, under specific sets of kinds of conditions, generally do x. But in neither case is it the duty or responsibility of the historian to evaluate the norms of the agent or the behavioural patterns under which his or her actions could be included. For, in getting into the minds of the perpetrators of an action - in some cases, an unspeakable crime - or subsuming the action under a behavioural norm considered 'rational' in some sense, in understanding their motives, there is the appearance of excusing them. For a key guideline of an empathetic historian is to understand and **not** judge; a key guideline of a positivist is to subsume under a general law and not judge. This gives the appearance of removing any moral responsibility from both the agents and the historians.

So I appear to be a postmodernist by concentrating on fictional forms and taking a heightened interest in the effects of the narrative structure on the interpretation. But in assessing factual details in terms of the evidence for what really occurred, I appear to be a modernist. But in insisting that we evaluate the norms of both the narrator and the agents in history, I appear to be pre-modern.

This book is confusing in other ways. Postmodernism tends to celebrate the death of Whig history which glorified the individual and concentrated on explaining an individual historical agent's actions. This work celebrates the focus on a few key individuals. With Oskar Schindler, the autonomous individual has been resurrected for history. But, as Jason Epstein complained, Spielberg failed to provide historical perspective for either the Holocaust or Oskar Schindler.⁷ Instead of a loss of historicity and the past, this monograph is concerned with its more comprehensive recovery. And instead of allowing the story of Schindler to disintegrate simply into emanations of our present projections, this monograph argues that the various projections can be weighed, not simply relative to one another in a series of unrelated presents, but to the real past.

Assessing the truth claims of a movie and a novel (and later the moral values of both the interpreters and the historical agents) should seem very peculiar to both postmodernists and modernists. Such an effort would seem suspicious from a modernist perspective which separates fact and fiction into two radically different fields; in modernist thought, the distinction between historical fact and fiction is unproblematic. A concern with the truth value of a fictional account seems doubly suspicious when it runs counter to a major focus on the aesthetic characteristics of the

representations of Schindler. The latter might lead one to believe I am a postmodernist, and postmodernists aestheticize philosophy and history.⁸ The issue is **not** the truth value of a construction, but the power each construction serves.

This raises the question of the relationship between the "truth" about the Holocaust and Oskar Schindler and the fictive narrative in which both are presented. For postmodernists, fictive modes for exploring history are as valuable as historiographical modes.

"(O)ne must face the fact that when it comes to apprehending the historical record, there are no grounds to be found in the historical record itself for preferring one way of construing its meaning over another."⁹

Is Hayden White correct that there are no reasons to choose one narrative account over another, that Keneally's or Spielberg's or an historians are of equal value? Then would those who construct a narrative denying the Holocaust altogether be equally valid? Would a story which said that the gas chambers were a fiction, that the Jews were merely deported to the East, that many of them died from disease and execution for rebellion, but that there was no systematic genocide, would such a narrative have equal merit? Is there such a thing as a 'true' narrative versus false ones?

"Within this shattered realm of historical discourse, how is one to situate the 'revisionist' enterprise? Its perfidiousness lies precisely in its seeming to be precisely what it is not, an attempt to write and think through history. It is not a matter of *constructing* a true narrative."¹⁰

If much of the current exciting debate in the theory of history is between the postmodernists and the modernists, I am afraid I am out of the current stream or swimming upstream against the current. While avant garde historians are proposing to replace modernist themes with postmodernist ones, I have begun with postmodernist topics - such as an analysis of a novel or a film - and want to subject them to modernist criteria of truth and evidence while accepting that fiction and fact are not necessarily separate enterprises. Fictional forms which claim to portray 'truth' must be evaluated according to the criteria of truth. But unlike the modernists, affects are as important as the thoughts of historical agents. Further, such actions must themselves be evaluated and not simply subsumed under a normative or lawlike behavioural generalization. And history must not presume a God's eye view, whether a perspective from the scientists outside history altogether, or from inside the mind of the historical agent. Finally, history must not only be faithful to the actual past,

but must be written to penetrate the armor we wear in the present and be memorable for the future. On these latter counts, unlike the vast majority of 'histories', Keneally's novel and Spielberg's movie are very superior forms of historiography.

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Spielberg claimed that in his movie he was creating a document about the Holocaust though it was also a story of rescue based on historical fact. In an interview in *Newsweek*, he stated, "I never in my life told the truth in a movie. My effort as a moviemaker has been to create something that couldn't possibly happen. So people could leave their lives and have an adventure and then come back to earth and drive home. That was one of the things I thought: if I'm going to tell the truth for the first time, it should be about this subject."¹¹

Spielberg wanted to tell a story about an actual world rather than a possible world, though the tale he was telling - a story of salvation from terror - was one he had told many times before. What is the relationship of the heroic tale of rescue and the portrait of the Holocaust to history?

Many have argued that the Holocaust cannot even be represented; as a subject, it defies the minimal conventions of dramatic narrative. Others claimed that the story of the Holocaust cannot be told in realistic history; the Holocaust is so extraordinary that it requires presentation in a fictional mode. Others argue that the uniqueness of the Holocaust is such that no narrative - fictional or historical - can portray it. The Holocaust belongs to a grotesque science fiction world rather than any order of reality with which we are familiar? If this order of reality is so gross and incomprehensible that any interpretation is equal in value as far as truth is concerned (though not, perhaps, aesthetic values), is a more authentic response silence rather than something which will simply give the feeling of a novel fabrication? Or do we take the opposite stand and say, as Professor Zaicek does in Amos Oz's novel, *Touch the Water, Touch the Wind*, "Surely there are moments in the life of an individual or of a people when silence is an abhorrent misuse of speech...In the face of evil, we must stand up and say: evil!"¹² Should the genuine response be a collaboration between history and fiction to produce silence, since the "ineffable lies beyond the frontiers of the word,"¹³ or should it be a scream in the face of evil?

Do we speak or stay silent? If we speak, is the Holocaust so incomprehensible that any speech must inherently distort that to which it refers? Or is speech so inherently inadequate that as soon as we construct a narrative which selects facts

about the subject matter, we impose our own set of values; the result is not a portrayal of the Holocaust, but of **our** Holocaust, with the result that the Holocaust comes across as an arbitrary construction from which it is only one short logical step to allowing equal time to any Holocaust denier?

That last step, which feeds Holocaust deniers, is not a logical one, however. Hayden White, in suggesting there is no reason to choose one narrative construction of meaning over another is not claiming that reference to accuracy, completeness and consistency are irrelevant. "Competing narratives can be assessed, criticized, and ranked on the basis of their fidelity to the factual record, their comprehensiveness, and the coherence of whatever arguments they may contain."¹⁴ Holocaust deniers flout these basic rules of evidence. But both Spielberg and Keneally insist they are following them.

However, are the minimal conventions of narrative, whether historical or fictional, inadequate to deal with a representation of the Holocaust? Why do some claim that the Holocaust cannot be represented in a dramatic narrative?

The reasons have to do with the nature of the Holocaust itself and the forms of dramatic narrative available to tell the story. Though the Holocaust is about the mass murder of six million Jews, it can only be represented in a dramatic narrative if it is also about the nature of all humans and the situation in which humanity finds itself. If the Holocaust is so unique in being only about one people and is totally without precedent in history, then its very exceptionality means that it cannot be represented in a dramatic narrative. For dramatic narrative structures use the particular to make generalizations about the human predicament.

Secondly, dramatic narratives, if told from the side of the victors, are heroic or epic. The qualities of virtue belong to the victorious side. Does anyone want to write the tale of the destruction of European Jewry by the Nazis in heroic or epic terms? If told from the side of the victims, the story must be told as a romance or tragedy.¹⁵ The issue becomes the flaws of the victims which they can overcome to produce happy results, or which can overwhelm them and result in tragedy. In the case of the Holocaust, though the Nazis lost World War II, they won the war against the Jews. They overwhelmed and virtually eliminated Jews from their prominent place in Europe. In the short run at least, the forces of evil were victorious with respect to the Jews in Europe. If the story is to be told from the side of the Jews, it could never be a romance. The interesting factors would be the flaws in the Jewish character that helped bring about this disaster. But no flaws, whatever they might be, are commensurate with the result of six million dead. Genres of dramatic narrative

are not structured to tell a story of the defeat and virtual elimination of a people from a part of this world by the forces of evil.

There is a third reason that the Holocaust seems immune to narrative. Not only does evil appear to win, but moral choices, which are the sinews of a narrative, seem superfluous in the context of the Holocaust. Moral choices were apparently meaningless given the arbitrariness and systematic nature of the extermination process.¹⁶ For many, it did not seem to be possible to construct a narrative of the Holocaust based on a conflict between good and evil in which the resolution, through the choices and sequence of actions of the significant historical agents, provide an important message for humanity.

(T)he dramatic narrative is composed of the following essentials: a significant conflict whose development and resolution induce a serious reflection on and refine our perception of the human predicament; the behaviour of the dramatic agents in the framework of the basic conflict whose actions involve crucial decisions that affect the progress of the narrative and bear special moral weight; and a complete action whose narrative units relate to each other in a sequential manner, creating expectations for probable and meaningful developments whose fulfilment is achieved and dominated by an overall coherence.¹⁷

The claim that the Holocaust cannot be represented, at the very least in a dramatic narrative, is not based on the claim that the facts of the Holocaust cannot be known and shown, but that explanatory structures which relate to the significance of moral choices seem inappropriate, and the values central to the issue of the Holocaust cannot be represented given the conventions of dramatic narrative. A unique story may have no lessons for humanity; evil wins and moral choices seem irrelevant to changing the course of that victory.

Those who claim that the Holocaust cannot be represented in dramatic narrative do not necessarily claim that it cannot be represented in narrative at all. Historical narrative might do.

Spielberg, like Keneally, claimed he wanted to tell the truth about the Holocaust. Based on an historical figure and actual events and persons saved, Spielberg wanted to tell the story about a saviour in the midst of the Holocaust. In asserting this, he was making a claim that the particular facts about both the Holocaust and the story of Schindler's actions would be factually accurate. A dramatic narrative is historical if the facts portrayed in it claim to represent the facts as they actually occurred in history. A dramatic narrative is fictional if the facts portrayed do not represent what

actually occurred. Spielberg was making a claim to be historical in at least this minimal sense.

But if a narrative simply represents the facts as they occurred, it cannot be dramatic. It cannot even be history; it is only a chronology. As soon as you have agents in conflict, values are at stake. The issue is not just about facts. Secondly, there is a need for explanation, a need to understand why one side wins and the other loses. That is why some argue that the Holocaust is unrepresentable in a dramatic narrative. They claim that the Holocaust is so unique and so horrendous that it is inexplicable through any dramatic narrative that attempts to explain what occurred.

We are now quite certain, however, about some aspects of the death camps. We all agree that commonsense explanations simply don't explain. None of the ordinary hypotheses of lawlessness, lust, the desire for personal gain, utility, or even simple hatred are really plausible. Nazi motivations largely defied normal expectations or predictions.¹⁸

The problem is not explaining the fact of mass murders. After all, "There is nothing more common, nothing more sadly banal in human history than massacres."¹⁹ The issue is explaining the motivations for them in contrast to our expectations of rational behaviour. Is the Holocaust explicable? Can the motivations of the perpetrators be explained? Both fictional and historical dramatic narratives necessarily include an explanation, even if only to explain why what happened is inexplicable.

History is scientific if the facts are established through conventions accepted as scientific and if explanations are offered in terms of normative and/or empirical generalizations which can be verified or falsified by reference to history, particularly the facts of history. If an explanation is offered using the facts of history, but the explanation is not itself falsifiable by those facts, then we do not have scientific history, only history in the form of a fictional narrative structure or an *idée fixé*, whether that history is told in an historical form or in a fictional one. Thus, if one believes that the Holocaust is inexplicable, or if one offers an explanation which cannot itself be tested, but uses the facts of history to relay the dramatic narrative, then what we have is a fictional narrative utilizing historical data to construct the fiction.

In assessing the truth value of the account offered in Spielberg's version of *Schindler's List*, I am concerned with both the issue of whether the facts are accurate and the issue of whether the explanation offered is consistent with all the facts available. Assuming that the Holocaust is not immune to

dramatic narrative, did Spielberg get the portrait right in both its factual details and in its overall explanatory account of what happened? Did he do the same for Oskar Schindler? What is the relationship of the narrative story to his intention of telling the truth about the Holocaust? What is the connection between the narrative of the Holocaust to actual history and to the dramatic narrative of rescue?

There is irony in the contrast between the two tales - the one of mass murder and the story of the rescue. A con artist, money grubbing, opportunistic Nazi (according to Spielberg) can save 1300 Jews (1100 of them Schindler Jews), more than all the good burghers of Germany put together. And it is not just the Germans who failed so atrociously; all the western states failed to help the Jews.²⁰ The *immobilism* of the virtuous West is one abhorrent truth of history confronted by this exceptional story of salvation. This is, however, to use truth in a different sense than reference to a particular fact which is accurate. This is a general factual truth - western countries failed to assist the Jews when they could have helped. Further, it is a sense of truth which embodies within it an evaluation - Western countries are condemned for the failure to act. The books on this topic²¹ not only describe that failure to act; the descriptive generalization entails a condemnation.

Thus, scientific narrative history, whether in a fictional or historical format, must deal with both true particular facts and true empirical generalizations. Further, when they include the latter, norms are, at the very least, implicitly involved. Yet both the story of the Holocaust and the tale of rescue seem to stand outside the norms of descriptive and explanatory historiography in very different ways. Both the Holocaust and the tale of rescue seem to be exceptions to normal historical generalizations by which we live and deal with experience. If the story of the Holocaust is claimed to be so unique that it has no lessons for humanity, the story of rescue seems to be a tale of a very different type of exceptionalism. Spielberg, the master of fabulism, was not just taking on an everyday problem of historical narrative - the facts and explanation of the Gulf War, or the facts and explanation for John F. Kennedy's assassination. The Holocaust is central to the history of the twentieth century and claimed by many to be unique in history. The story of salvation from terror, on the other hand, is a central myth in all cultures which provides an ironic contrast, a counterfactual, which sets the Holocaust in starker relief.

Myth is neither historical nor anti-historical: it is counter-historical. Jesus is not presented as an historical figure (in the Gospels), but as a figure who drops into history from another dimension of

reality, and thereby shows what the limitations of the historical perspective are.²²

Myth in the above sense means a story which conveys a basic truth - in this case about salvation - in contrast to a general historical truth - the fact that so few individuals and states acted to help save the Jews. However, since Herodotus, historians have tended to use myth to mean a fiction, a lie and not a story which tells a basic truth. This is the way Pierre Vidal-Naquet, the famous French historian of the classical world, uses myth when he battles against Holocaust deniers. "I call 'revisionism' the doctrine according to which the genocide practiced by Nazi Germany against Jews and Gypsies did not exist but is to be regarded as a myth, a fable, or a hoax."²³

Myth thus means a story which tells a basic truth.²⁴ It also refers to a particular or general factual falsehood. Myth also means false in a different, larger sense; it refers to an historical explanatory thesis which is immune to any falsification. A myth is a closed system. Thus, even legitimate historians, such as Lucy Davidowicz, can be accused of propagating myths. Vidal-Naquet claims her intentionalist thesis about Nazi motives, namely, that the Nazis always planned to exterminate the Jews, is a myth because it is immune to falsification. In reference to Lucy Davidowicz's intentionalist thesis in the War Against the Jews, Vidal-Naquet writes, "The structure is not that of an historical process, composed of advances and setbacks, of chance and necessity; it is that of the self-enclosed structure of myth."²⁵

Thus, myth is used in at least three senses. In one sense, it refers to stories that tell basic truths about humans. In a second meaning, myths are claims about events or actions, or denials about events or actions, that are patently false. In a third sense, myths are ahistorical explanatory frameworks which are: a) immune to falsification, and b) immune to historical forces.

There is a fourth sense of myth. In addition to myths being stories that convey basic truths or tell particular falsehoods or which convey a message immune to falsification, myth is used in the sense of conveying a moral message to guide future action. The Holocaust can itself be used for mythical purposes in this sense, as in Emil Fackenheim's insistence that the Holocaust commands Jews to survive as a people lest Hitler be given a posthumous victory. With respect to the latter, Yosef Yerushalmi stated, "it is hard to escape the feeling that the Jewish people after the Holocaust stands today at a juncture not without analogy to that of the generations following the cataclysm of the Spanish Expulsion. They...ultimately chose myth over history." Further, he continued, "Myth and memory

condition action. There are myths that are life-sustaining and deserve to be reinterpreted for our age. There are some that lead astray and must be redefined. Others are dangerous and must be exposed."²⁶ Thus, myth, in the sense of tales that remain memorable as stories to instruct us about future behaviour, can be creative and useful or destructive and dysfunctional.

There are then four senses of myth: myth as rendering a basic truth; myth as a particular falsehood opposed to a fact; myth as an ahistorical explanatory framework for history immune to falsification and historical forces; myth as a use of history as a foundation on which to base current and future behaviour. The second, third and fourth senses are mythical constructions - one of facts, one of the development of the Holocaust, and the third of its meaning for the future. Only the second and the third are opposed to truth. The fourth, as a constructions of the whole for *future* use, is not itself measurable in terms of truth. The second and third senses use myth in relation to truth - one in the sense of not telling factual truths and the other in the sense of offering explanations which are not supported by facts or are immune to being falsified by the facts of history. Though myth in the first sense is related to truth, it appears to be unlike senses two and three where the criteria for assessing truth are used to judge the narrative as false in relation to the truth. Myth and truth are congruent when the myth communicates what is considered to be a basic truth accepted by a culture even when the narrative is not true in senses two and three, and even when it does not effect responsible action and even may counteract it.

Like myth, therefore, the concept of truth is also equivocal. In one meaning, when myth is said to capture a basic truth, truth is an insight into essential norms accepted by a society to guide behaviour. Stories of salvation told in all cultures are intended to relay truths accepted as basic. More often in our scientific age, truth refers to the second sense, the verity of particulars or empirical generalizations. Did this happen or not? Were there or were there not gas chambers used by Nazis to exterminate the Jews? This meaning of truth contrasts with myth in sense 2 above. Truth and myth are mutually exclusive opposites. In the relationship of truth to particulars, the famous nineteenth century German historian, Otto Ranke, offered a formulation of the relationship of truth and falsehood, would seem to be appropriate. Truth is the opposite of falsehood and is independent of the synthetic interpretation offered in the narrative connection of those particulars. In the German historiographical tradition of the Enlightenment, "the disciples of Clio could reach agreement only when uncovering facts. The moment they imparted meaning to these facts, the same disputes arose which had existed prior to the development

of the improved methods."²⁷ Facts could be agreed upon; descriptions were either true or false. Interpretations were subject to disagreement. This led some past historians of the seventeenth century and subsequently to believe that, unlike science, "History, at its best, could offer only correspondent truth."²⁸ Thus, in the seventeenth century, Christian Wolff²⁹ would designate history as the science of particulars, the 'bare knowledge of fact'.

Facts include empirical generalizations. Historical empirical generalizations are made in historiography as they are in general life. To say that the western nations did not help the Jews during the 1933-45 period to survive the Holocaust does not mean that there were no examples where states acted positively - the actions of the King of Denmark and of the citizens of Denmark are examples that indicate that at least one state did. Nor does it mean that the other nations never did anything to help a single Jew. It just means that, given their capacities and the need, generally most of the states in the West did not offer much help to saving the Jews from the Nazi murder-machine. Exceptions are granted even though the generalization is said to be true. However, if many states behaved as Denmark did, or if many states helped a large number of Jews instead of only a few, then the generalization would be regarded as false.

But truth is also used in relationship to the synthetic account as a whole and not just the many particulars that make it up or generalizations based on those particulars. I adopt the following guide concerning synthetic wholes. They are lies, and not just mythological narratives, if the key particulars on which they are based are false or if the generalizations at which they arrive are immune to falsification by particular pieces of evidence. "It is the distinguishing characteristic of a lie to want to pass itself off as truth."³⁰

We thus have empirical truths of fact, both particular and general, which are contrasted with myths which are based on that which is not factual. Secondly, we have explanations which are said to be true if they are based on historical facts and if they account for what happened without remaining immune to falsification by what happened: those that remain immune are considered explanatory myths. Thirdly, the facts and explanations are welded into narrative wholes which convey "a truth" which can be used to guide action, and which is a lie only if it is based on false facts or ill-considered explanations. Such narratives are intended to become myths. Fourth, there is the sense of truth as a basic insight into human nature held by the society. Our most important cultural narratives are myths intended to convey such basic truths. In that sense, myths and truths are not opposite, but convergent.

Holocaust deniers are liars because they construct a

parody of history based on particulars which are outright lies and falsifications. And they do so because they do not follow the conventions for establishing the truth or falsity of a particular, but follow a method which determines the results in advance. Holocaust deniers are the spiritualists of the twentieth century; they choose incomprehensibility as a superior value over the consistency of reason. In their Manichaeic world, those reborn with this sight into the anti-world, the shadow world, are reborn witnesses to the revealed truth irrespective of the amount of empirical evidence. They bring forth phantasms that never existed, and cast into a netherworld existential facts. They constitute a sect whose only unity is their opposition to empirical rationality. For the source of truth is the inner vision within each of them. There can be no institutionalized framework of value and truth norms. It is as possessors of an inner light, immune to negative evidence, that they have become, like other sects, a new church militant. They believe that the real witnesses to the truth are in the ranks of heretics denying the Holocaust simply because what they pronounced is a heresy. Being heretical made it true.

There is a second kind of Holocaust denier of a very different order. They do not deny the facts of history; they minimize their significance. The error is not made primarily in falsifying facts but in offering explanations which are selective in the use of facts and, in extreme cases, are absurd; in all cases, they remain immune to falsification by evidence. Ernst Nolte³¹, a former student of Heidegger³², is a German historian who attributes the Nazi genocide to a protective and mirrored response to "the more original Asiatic deed", to which the Nazi innovation was only the technology of gassing (which was Keneally's thesis). This is a thesis not only of moral minimalization, but one which remains immune to falsification by facts. The thesis depends on a very careful selection of facts, both in what is excluded and in what is included.

There is not only distortion that results from falsifying facts and exclusion, and from drawing generalizations that can neither be supported by the facts and/or are immune to falsification by them. Distortion can result from placing the Holocaust in an inappropriate context. Historical narratives are also constructed using this type of deformation. Andreas Hillgruber³³, for example, while clearly placing the blame for the genocide of the Jews on Nazi racist policies **and** the complicity of the Wehrmacht, as well as the *army's* ideology of *lebensraum*, parallels two tragedies, the genocide of the Jews in the East **and** the ethnic cleansing of the eleven million Germans from the East after the war and their forced relocation back to the heartland of Germany, during which process an estimated two million Germans died. Hillgruber, in drawing a parallel between the two disasters, has been accused

of trivializing history by inadvertently and indirectly reducing the significance and historical import and uniqueness of the Holocaust. Like Fackenheim, the issue here is not the representation of history, but the use of that history for evaluation and guiding human action. Hillgruber, like Nolte, engages in moral minimalization, but not by the selective use of facts to create explanations immune to falsification, but by creating a synthetic whole intended to teach one lesson rather than another.

Hillgruber validates the choice of the Wehrmacht to fight on even after Army Group Centre, the strongest German army facing the Russians, was overwhelmed with a loss of 350,000 casualties in June of 1944, because they wanted to diminish the revenge that would be visited on the German populations of the East by the Soviet troops as well as sow the seeds of discord rather than responsibility. This justification for the army's continuation in the war on the basis of reasons of state also meant that the mass slaughter of the Jews would continue for another year, including the murder of Hungarian Jewry, not to mention the death of up to two million additional German military and civilian casualties. Hillgruber's main historical message is to lament the loss of Germany's traditional role as the linchpin of central Europe, mediating between East and West instead of becoming a satrap divided in loyalties between the American and Soviet empires (Hillgruber died in 1989.), but without discussing the key role of the German Jews in this process of mediation. Charles Maier dubbed this the "politics of nostalgia." German character and identity did not depend on race or on culture, what Hume called the inner element of historical life and Collingwood called the thought side. German character was related to territory, "the land of the middle."³⁴

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In assessing whether Spielberg lived up to his claim to tell a true story, I will be concerned with all four senses of truth applied to dramatic narrative. The Holocaust must be accurately represented; the account must satisfy a correspondence theory of truth. Secondly, the account must offer an explanation which is consistent with all the facts available and not just a selection of them; the account should be comprehensive with regard to the facts, Thirdly, the account must not only be accurate and comprehensive in both the particular facts cited and the explanations drawn based on those facts, but the context in which the story is told must also be assessed. Is the story placed in an appropriate context so that we come to understand the historical significance of the Holocaust? That is, what coherence does Spielberg offer to both the Holocaust itself and the tale of rescue told in the context of the Holocaust? "To understand *Shoah* is not to *know* the Holocaust, but to gain new insights

into what *not knowing* means, to grasp the ways in which *erasure* is itself part of the functioning of our *history*. The journey of *Shoah* thus paves the way toward new possibilities of understanding history, and toward new pragmatic acts of historicizing history's erasures."³⁵

Shoshana Felman is here speaking about Claude Lanzmann's representation of the Holocaust in *the documentary film, Shoah*. There is a scene in the film in front of a Polish church where Srebnik, the only survivor of this town, stands amongst a Polish crowd of older people who are recounting their memories of the Holocaust. Srebnik is silent throughout this long section of the film, though his facial expressions and body language convey the impression of increasing embarrassment, though familiarity rather than surprise, at the "myths" of his former countrymen with which he was undoubtedly familiar. One older fellow interrupts to claim he knows why all the Jews were killed and why there was no protest, even from the Jews he said. A direct witness had told him that he had listened as a rabbi told all his congregants that they should do what the Nazis told them because they carried the blood of Jesus on their backs.

"The film's strategy is not to challenge the false witness, but to *make the silence speak* from within and from around the false witness: the silence within each of the testimonies; the silence *between* various silences and various testimonies; the irremedial silence of the dead; the irremedial silence of the natural landscapes; the silence of the church procession; the silence of the ready-made cultural discourses pretending to account for the Holocaust; and above all, in the center of the film, Srebnik's silence in front of the church, in the middle of the talkative, delirious, self-complacent Polish crowd."³⁶

"(T)he Polish villagers are not aware that they themselves are in turn acting out precisely such a *ritual murder story*, actually *enacting* both the Crucifixion and the Holocaust in *annihilating Srebnik*, in *killing once again the witness* whom they totally dispose of, and *forget*."³⁷ As Claude Lanzmann himself said, "When one deals with the destruction of the Jews, one has to talk and be silent at one and the same moment...I think there is more silence in *Shoah* than words."³⁸ In Spielberg's version of the Holocaust, there are few such silences, though Helen Hirsch's profound silence in the face of Amon as he circles her threateningly and accuses her of trying to talk him into seducing her, could be cited. But it is the silence of reproach rather than of a witness. What witness to history does *Schindler's List* perform?

Finally, *Schindler's List* may be mythological in

conveying a basic truth accepted by the society in which and for which it is primarily produced. This is one way in which narrative communicates. It appeals to existing beliefs. Truth and myth are also complementary when a narrative structure is so powerful that it reaches the level of myth to penetrate the blinkers on our current vision. Almost all of us are like handicapped children who have been desensitized and handicapped so that we are unable to see any more, not because we have become deaf or blind, but because we have been so overstimulated by sensory overload that our vision is as stunted and distorted as if we were autistic children. The average TV viewer sees a thousand murdered humans a week, three hundred and sixty thousand a year. Further, a flood of fictional images have preceded any encounter with actuality however reality has been represented. One requirement of a historical representation is that it be penetrating. It must reach our hearts and touch us. On this level of evaluation, there are two issues. One is readily answered - does the movie have a powerful emotional impact? It undoubtedly does. Secondly, what emotions does it touch to reach our sensibilities? Does it permeate sensibilities which are considered primary in that society and by means of myths accepted as basic truths by that society? Or does the narrative challenge different sensibilities by creating a myth which undermines what are considered to be basic truths.

The four meanings of myth and four meanings of truth are related. They correspond to four uses of narrative to which the different senses of myth and truth are connected. We thus have four different levels for assessing the historical validity of the movie. As antiquarian history, is it true to the facts of both the Holocaust story and the story of Schindler's rescue? Myths are created based on false facts and false empirical generalizations. Facts which correspond to reality and on which generalizations are formed yield authentic historical or even fictional narratives which are authentically historical in this sense. In measuring the factual truth, I do not hold the view that the criteria of truth are simply relative to the culture from which a concept emerges or the framework and methodological assumptions of the inquiry being employed.³⁹ On the other hand, I do not hold they are ahistorical as Moltke Gram suggests.⁴⁰ The criteria for assessing the facts of history are themselves debatable in history, provided the positions are responsible and responsive to criticisms offered by other positions and to the 'data' available. This is not the case for the deniers of the Holocaust.

Secondly, as explanatory history which takes into account the behavioural norms and expectations of the reader or viewer, does the narrative pander to explanatory generalizations which are themselves immune to falsification by history, and, if so, is this done by selecting the facts used so that the account offered is inconsistent with the

facts available? If the narrative does this, then we have historical myth in a second sense.

Myths are also narratives which use the stories of the past as guides to future action. The representation of the Holocaust must be memorable as well as antiquarian in conforming to the facts of the past and scientific in offering a convincing explanation which is both consistent with all the facts and not immune to falsification by them. "I am equally convinced that a historiography that does not aspire to be memorable is in peril of becoming a rampant growth."⁴¹ To be memorable, the narrative must penetrate our desensitized hearts and consciousness if it is to serve the future.

The truth of the film must not only be assessed on whether it penetrates our insensitivities, but what it makes us feel when we are emotionally involved. The suffering felt by the victims may be as important as their terror. "Nor does the film give us any sense of the level of suffering people experienced in the concentration camps quite apart from their actual extermination. Jews often starved to death."⁴² The film may not be truthful in representing what emotionally happened in a *representative* way. The Holocaust must not only be recorded; the story must not only be told, but it must be done in a way that it can be used by humans in the future to revisit the Holocaust. As the survivors of the Holocaust die, we will no longer have the stories of those who experienced the event first hand. We have to be taught, informed or shown what the Holocaust was. By keeping alive the story, we keep the memories of the ghosts of those who died alive, and through that identification, keep ourselves alive as well through identification with death, so that both they and we will not be beasts going into the present "like a number, without leaving any curious remainder."⁴³ Narrative in this context is intended to provide lessons about the future.

The dilemma is that which is most memorable is most likely to monopolize the future image of the past. This is particularly true where people know little history in general and even less about the Holocaust. "(I)n a land without history, whoever fills memory, coins the concepts and interprets the past, wins the future."⁴⁴ But a representation which is memorable and serves the future by penetrating our desensitized souls is not necessarily a representation which is truthful in the way it portrays the past or in conveying an explanation which conforms to the norms of what counts as an adequate explanation in the present. Yet it is precisely a representation that is penetrating and memorable that has the greatest responsibility towards that past. Since "many more are likely to view his (Spielberg's) new movie than read Keneally's book, it bears an even heavier burden of veracity and engagement."⁴⁵

An adequate representation of the Holocaust and the story of rescue must be faithful to at least two types of history: antiquarian and scientific in the explanations on which the narrative is based. The film has a responsibility to be faithful to the past as it actually occurred. It must not bear false witness.

The essence of Nazism was the erasure of Jewish history. The Nazis burned even the buried bodies so there would be no witnesses to the Holocaust, so that even the mass graves of the dead would not be available to give witness.⁴⁶ Giving inadequate or false witness to the past is a betrayal of those who were made victims of Hitler's attempt to erase history. As antiquarian history, the representation of the Holocaust must be truthful in conveying particular facts and empirical generalizations. As scientific history, the narrative offers an explanation which takes into account all the facts and is not immune to being falsified.

False witnesses are a noisy lot. The thoroughness with which the SS shot all those who tried to escape the clearing of the ghetto, killing 4,500 Jews who tried to evade the relocation to Plaszów in that one night alone, clarifies why there are so few witnesses. Spielberg offers us the witnesses who did survive. Does Spielberg distort that witnessing? Does he attempt to explain the silence and inaction of others at the time, the role of false witnessing in the past that continues into the present that make current and future Holocausts possible?

I take it as a given that Spielberg has created a narrative through which the Holocaust has been made memorable. The issue about the memorable aspect of the film is what we are told to remember. The representation is effective if the history is monumental in reaching us. But even in this case, the way it penetrates must be measured. The narrative must be directed towards the future by feeding our struggle to remain responsible for our actions so that we assume the duty to act against the heinous acts of others to achieve salvation and deliverance. The narrative must be passionate in enabling us to penetrate our resistance to understanding suffering in being directed towards the preservation of the past and one of the black holes of human history. "History is necessary to the living man in three ways: in relation to his action and struggle, his conservatism and his reverence, his suffering and his desire for deliverance."⁴⁷

What is the lesson taught by the film? Does it invite the viewer to act in the future to prevent such genocides? What lesson does it teach about future action? To be 'truly' memorable in a basic way, a representation of the past should serve our need to have memories which will guide our future actions. The film must cut through our desensitized souls and encourage us to be active, responsible agents in history.

There is need for monumental history that enables future generations not only to recall what happened, but to understand why it happened, and use it as a guide for the future. In doing so, what basic truth does the film communicate if it aspires to be a myth that is true?

The issue of the truth value of a narrative is critical for assessing the story in antiquarian and scientific terms. But to assess a narrative as memorable and monumental - that is, as an account which provides us with myths for the future and which penetrates our desensitized souls to either question or, if valuable in assisting us to become responsible human agents in history, to reinforce our basic truths - then we must finally deal with the issue of memory itself, the subjective experience in dealing with 'truths' of history.

For the Greeks, memory was a technique, a craft, to awaken the truth that was already within us or to recall the image of a past occurrence so that we are better able to discern in the present what truly is and to predict in the future what will be. In contrast, for other Middle Easterners including the Hebrews, memory was a testament. It had nothing to do with prediction. It had nothing to do with separating out appearances from the underlying reality. Memory at its most basic was a written and recorded chronicle of the past so that it could be available as a record for the future to discern who deserved to be rewarded and who deserved to be punished. Thus, King Ahaseurus wrote in the book of Chronicles, during the Israeli captivity in Babylon, that Mordechai had informed the king of the treachery of Bigthan and Toresh, the King's gatekeepers, who were hung for their treason.⁴⁸ Later, in reading the Chronicles, he inquired whether Mordechai had received an appropriate honour.⁴⁹ Memory as a written testament was in service of moral reward and punishment.

For the Greeks, memory as a *mental* skill was itself a moral virtue. For the Roman but Platonic Cicero, virtue has four parts - prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. One of the three key components of the virtue prudence is memory. The other two are intelligence and foresight. Prudence is knowledge of what is good, bad, or neither. "Memory is the faculty by which the mind recalls what has happened. Intelligence is the faculty by which it ascertains what is. Foresight is the faculty by which it is seen that something is going to occur before it occurs."⁵⁰ Thus, for the Greeks, memory was a faculty of the mind, and the art of memory "like an inner writing,"⁵¹ rather than an externally written record. Recollection or reminiscencing are **not** memory for the Greeks, for the point of memory was to bring into the mind either things or words to be used in the present rather than simply a record of the past.

This difference is important because it permeates the current debate about historiography and its relationship to fictional creations, on the one hand, and moral judgement on the other. More specifically, it is critical to understanding the relationship between the cinematic and fictional versions of the Schindler story and history itself. For Aristotle⁵², memory is a part of the soul, a collection of mental images of sense impressions taken from the past. Further, it belongs to the same part of the soul as the imagination. Augustine followed this Greek pattern of thought and, thereby, influenced the whole attitude of the Catholic church to memory and history. "Augustine conferred on memory the supreme honour of being one of the three powers of the soul, Memory, Understanding and Will, which are the image of the Trinity in man."⁵³ Memory is associated with affects and the imagination (The Holy Ghost) in mediating between thought (God the father) and action (Jesus as the Son of God). Thus, the art of memory and the creative arts belong to the same part of the soul. Using memory, imagination serves as the intermediary between perception and thought, between thought and the will and between the will and action. The soul requires a mental picture in order to both think and act.

A very brief description of how the memory skills were taught will provide a more concrete grasp of the differences between this Hellenic/Christian version of memory and the Hebraic conception. Essentially it worked by constructing a **spatial** realm in one's mind, usually an architectural construction consisting of a series of enclosed places - living room, bedrooms, kitchen, courtyard, etc. The more unique and more imaginative - either grotesque or unusual - in which each space was configured, the more powerful the ability of that spatial organization to serve as the backdrop to the memory images which were to be recalled by first impressing each of them on the different basic spaces. Further, the order of the places was intended to preserve the order of things in our memory. This was not the order in which they occurred, although they could be, as when a professor wants to impress his students on the power of his memory by immediately recalling the names of his fifty students in the same order in which they introduced themselves in the initial class. In this memory system, there were two architectural constructions, one for words and one for things. Each of the spatial rooms and the designs in them were used as signs of what we want to recall.

This system of memory can be contrasted with memory systems common to nomads⁵⁴ and the Hebrews before record keeping was invented. In the Hellenic system, images were impressed on an internal mental artificial construct or theatre set. In Hebraic thought, the events in time were imprinted on features of the natural landscape. In the Greek system, an architectural artifact was used as a constant

backdrop on which to impress the images which we may wish to recall. In nomadic and Hebraic memory, specific places in the natural landscape were used both to record memorable past events with a small monument and as a geographical mapping device so that one could orient oneself in one's travels. Greek memory was a mnemonic device for thought and performance rather than travelling through space and time. Hebraic memory was externalized and allowed travel into the past.

Why this is critical to issues of truth in history and in fictional representations of that history is that the Greek system of memory had two horrible results, quite aside from its excellence as a mnemonic trick. One error was associated with the architecture that was used as the backdrop on which the images were to be impressed. The second was related to the conception of images as an impression on the mind as if the mind were a wax tablet.

The first error led to a long line of thinkers⁵⁵, and particularly totalitarian dictators, into a belief in the magic of memory, into the use of memory as an occult device for mind control, and into the construction of a mental architecture as if it were itself a mirror of the cosmic order. For they began to believe that there existed in actual reality a correspondence that could be established between the external world and the order of images in our minds. Ordering those images properly could provide the secrets to the universe. This was the occult version of the correspondence theory of truth. Its most grotesque excesses were not only astrology, which can be an innocent enough recreation if not taken seriously, but the pseudo sciences of phrenology and physiognomy, and the links between character traits and the size of one's chin, the hook in one's nose, the shape of one's ears, and even the bumps on one's skull as reflections of the actual construction of space in the brain itself, reflecting in turn a cosmic deviance from the natural order of the universe.

There is a less heinous but nevertheless dangerous aspect of this occult version of a memory system. As long as the architectonic of the memory system was just a signal device to facilitate recall of the particulars stored therein, there is no problem. If the architectonic is suddenly taken, not simply to be an artifact, but itself as a representation of reality, there is a terrible danger. Leibniz, for example, not only was a rationalist who believed in a universal mathematical norm as the foundation for all human knowledge, but viewed the universe, the cosmos, as reflecting in each of its units this architectonic order. The dilemma is that such a belief easily leads to the creation of self-enclosed circular arguments and transcendental assumptions immune to empirical falsification.

Between the use of this architectonic memory device as a heuristic tool and the belief in it as a reflection of a

cosmic order, there is a third, and possibly the most prevalent version. The framework or architectonic for the memory influences what can and what cannot be stored there. It itself acts as a selection system.

If the occult version of the correspondence theory of truth based on this fictive construction of how memory worked and its role in the soul led to catastrophic consequences in reality and to distortions in creating imaginative reconstructions, the scientific version was intellectually as disastrous. It was equally magical, based on "a theory on which certain mental representations necessarily refer to certain external things and kinds of things."⁵⁶

The scientific version of the correspondence theory of truth held that facts, more precisely, propositions about facts, were descriptions based on initial impressions made on the mind by sense impressions. "(M)ental representations no more have a necessary connection with what they represent than physical representations do. The contrary supposition is a survival of magical thinking."⁵⁷ But according to this magical way of thinking, *historical* facts were recollections of these original impressions. If history was to be truthful, it had to replicate these original impressions. The way this debate permeated the post Second World War philosophical debates in the English-speaking world was in the form of a debate between the two modernist philosophical interpretations of history discussed earlier in this chapter.

In one version, the positivist or realist one, the truth of facts were checked by comparing the description to the external data that gave rise to those impressions. In the other version, the idealist one, one checked the 'facts' by envisioning a situation as an agent in that time and place would have beheld it. For history was concerned with actions and not just events, with the reasons that gave rise to initiatives and not just the automatic responses of humans to forces impacting on them. Thus, history required that we enter the mind of the individual agent to perceive how that agent perceived the world. "(A)n action is the unity of the outside and the inside of an event," and by the inside of an event is meant "that in it which can only be described in terms of thought."⁵⁸

I have made these two versions equivalent⁵⁹, two sides of the same coin of what Hilary Putnam called the God's eye view. From the positivists or realist perspective, it meant the ability to rise above time and space, to stand outside of history *sub specie aeternitatis*. >From the idealist point of view, it meant the ability to get inside the mental space of a past actor in history, what I referred to as *sub specie internitatis*. Both versions were ahistorical in postulating a method of undertaking history that presumed a magical

ahistorical act.

But the fact is that facts are **not** impressions on the mind. They are established by societies according to conventions. There must be agreement about some basic rules for establishing truth, for evaluating the worth of documents and the testimony of witnesses. "A dialogue between two parties, even if they are adversaries, presupposes a common ground, a common respect--in this case for truth."⁶⁰ Witnesses are a critical part of these conventions when it comes to observational facts. This is not just a matter that our original impressions can be distorted. Rational procedures establish what a fact is and "our notions of rationality and of rational revisability are not fixed by some immutable book of rules, nor are they written into our transcendental natures, as Kant thought."⁶¹ Those rational procedures are social conventions of truth that emerge and are refined over time. There are no ahistorical conventions to determine the truth.

This means that memory has a far greater kinship with nomadic conceptions than the the Western tradition going back to the Greek philosophers. Further, it is consistent with the results of current cognitive science. General concepts, for example, are not the result of particular sensory inputs being matched with already given categories in the brain, nor the derivation through induction from particulars of those general categories, but from what Gerald Edelman called brain maps.⁶² Sense impressions are not impressions at all, as if a form were impressed on a wax tablet. Rather, the brain hypothetically consists of sheets of neurons which 'map' corresponding points in our sensory receptors - the retina of the eye for example - and other neuron sheets in other parts of the brain, the latter enabling many parallel sensory paths to operate at the same time. Further, these neuron clusters are not tablets, but organic cells which live or die as they are needed to adapt to deal with the environment with which the human is faced as he or she develops. The brain changes its configuration in response to the environment. As a result of these combined factors, global maps are created which permit not only categories and generalizations to be developed, but nodal cognitive points which coordinate what we see and how we act. Memory is not just receptive but critical to what we see and how we behave, a dynamic process constantly capable of reformulation depending on what we experience. Images are critical to both thought and behaviour. Memory is not a passive storage file in a cabinet or a computer, but an active process of recategorizing and reformulating descriptive and normative generalizations. To do this, the brain selects what it sees in order to learn and adapt. That means that 'basic truths' are the prime means which determine what sensory inputs we permit to stimulate the brain. These, in turn, can be reinforced or undermined if the brain has

difficulty finding inputs which conform to basic convictions and, in fact, encounters inputs which challenge those convictions.

That is why history as a myth-making device to guide future action and as a myth which either reinforces or undermines 'basic truths' is so critical. History is not just a neutral representation to be stored in our brains to use or not to use as we see fit. It is the basis upon which we act and even the basis upon which we select what we see in order to determine what to do.

If Spielberg's film is more important than historiographical accounts in creating myths for guiding future behaviour and for either reinforcing or undermining the basic way in which we even perceive the world, then it is critical that we understand the 'facts' which the image has selected to reinforce, the explanatory generalizations which account for human behaviour implicit or explicit in the film, and the effect of the film on the mythos which will govern future behaviour and the mythos which will be reinforced or undermined by the powerful images of the movie.

ENDNOTES

. "(T)he differences among competing narratives are differences among modes of emplotment' which predominate in them." Hayden White, "Historic plotment and the Problem of Truth" in Friedlander (1992) p. 40.

. Cf. Frederic Jameson, "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," *New Left Review* 146 (1984), pp. 53-92.

. F.R. Ankersmit, "Reply to Professor Zagorin" *History and Theory* XXIX:3 1990:281.

. Ankersmit (1990) p. 278.

. F.R. Ankersmit, "Reply to Professor Zagorin" *History and Theory* XXIX:3 1990:277. See also: F.R. Ankersmit, *Narrative Logic: A Semantic Analysis of the Historian's Language*, The Hague: 1983; D. LaCapra, *History and Criticism*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985; H. Kellner, *Language and Historic Presentation*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.

. Cf. Howard Adelman, "Rational Explanation Reconsidered: Case Studies on the Hempel-Dray Model," *History and Theory*, XIII, 3, 1974, p. 208-224, which tries to mediate the opposing conceits of both the positivist and idealist (empathetic) schools.

. Cf. Jason Epstein, "A Dissent on Schindler's List," *New York Review of Books* 11:8, April 21, 1994, p. 65.

. What I call the postmodernist historiographical creed is summed brilliantly by Professor Ankersmit. "That narrative language has the ontological status of being an object; that it is opaque; that it is self-referential; that it is intentional and, hence, intrinsically aestheticist; that the narrativizing of an (historical) text is undecidable in an important sense of that word even bears the mark of self-contradiction; that narrative meaning can only be identified in the presence of other meaning (intertextuality); that as far as narrative meaning is concerned the text refers but not to a reality outside itself; that criteria of truth and falsity do not apply to historiographic presentations of the past; that we can only properly speak of causes and effects at the level of the statement; that narrative language is metaphoric (topological) and as such embodies a proposal for how we should see the past; that the historical text is a substitute for the absent past; that narrative presentations of the past have a tendency to disintegrate (especially when material representations of the past are present);" F.R. Ankersmit, "Reply to Professor Zagorin" *History and Theory* XXIX:3 1990, pp. 295-6.

. Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historic Presentation*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1987, p. 74.

.. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust*, tr. Jeffrey Mehlman, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, p. 1.

.. Steven Spielberg, *Newsweek*, December 20, 1993, p. 116.

.. Amos Oz, *Touch the Water, Touch the Wind*, tr. Nicholas de Lange, New York: Doubleday, 1973, p. 23.

.. Saul Friedlander (1992, p. 378) quotes George Steiner in a footnote as follows: "It may be that the Auschwitz-universe, for it was that, precisely marked a realm of potential-now realized-human bestiality, or rather, abandonment to human and regression to bestiality, which both precedes language, as it does in the animal, and comes after language as it does in death. Auschwitz would signify on a collective, historical scale the death of man as a rational forward-dreaming' speech organism...The languages we are now speaking on the

lluted and suicidal planet are 'post-human.'" George Steiner, "The Long Life
aphor: An Approach to the Shoah," *Encounter* 68, February, 1987, p. 55. S
so by George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*.
.. Hayden White, "Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth,"
iedlander (1992) p. 38.
.. In Part III, I will discuss the role of conventions of narration
relationship to *Schindler's List*.
.. Cf. L. Langer, *Versions of Survival*, Albany: SUNY Press, 1982, ch. 2.
.. Ilan Avisar, *Screening the Holocaust: Cinema's Images of the Unimaginable*
omington: Indiana University Press, 1988, pp. 47-8.
.. Richard L. Rubenstein, *After Auschwitz: History, Theology, and Contemporary
laism*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, (1966) 1992, p. 29.
.. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of t
locaust*, tr. Jeffrey Mehlman, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992,
5.
.. For example, Canada allowed only 5,000 Jews to enter a vast underpopulat
ntry with enormous natural resources between 1933 and 1948. (Irving Abella a
old Troper, *None Is Too Many*)
.. For example, cf. David S. Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and t
locaust 1941-1945*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984, and Irving Abella and Harc
oper, *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948*. Toront
ster and Orpen Dennys, 1983.
.. Northrop Frye, *The Double Vision: Language and Meaning in History*, Toront
iversity of Toronto Press, 1991, p. 16.
.. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of t
locaust*, tr. Jeffrey Mehlman, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, p. 7.
.. For a postmodernist deconstruction of four major efforts to convey bas
aths through myth, see Marc Manganaro, *Myth, Rhetoric, and the Voice
thority: A Critique of Frazer, Eliot, Frye, and Campbell*. New Haven: Ya
iversity Press, 1992. James Frazer's, *The Golden Bough*, used anthropologic
nparativism to claim that apparently dissimilar ideas, peoples and beliefs h
common ground, and demonstrated that there has been an evolution of hum
ought from savagery to civilization. T.S. Eliot then used Frazer's work in *T
ste Land* to insist that an aesthetic product and aesthetic sensibiliti
sided outside history to resist empirical tests and was antithetical to t
cial scientist in pursuit of a larger truth. Northrop Frye in *Fearful Symmet
ith its emphasis on the great genius with the colossal simplifying vision) a
atomy of Criticism* and in *The Great Code; The Bible as Literature*, invert
lot's Classical, Royalist and Catholic vision for a Romantic, radical a
otestant one. He sought to use both literature and theology, not for a clc
ading of singular texts, but a reading between texts to develop a sing
sionary conception of the unity of the human mind embodied in the hermetical
aled literary universe as his ideology of going beyond ideology. Like Elic
ever, in the traditon of Aristotle, poetic insight could rise above i
stedness in history, establishing an autonomy for the literary realm and t
ere of the imagination as a socially integrative functional power. Jose
mpbell, first in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and then in *Masks of God*, we
en further in reversing Frazer by establishing myth's autonomy; myth was view
the only gate to essential truth and the mythic essence. In effect,
ofusion of 'facts', multiple voices, sources, cultures, and epochs are used
sguise the dominating voice of the author in creating the myth of a singul

minating truth through the use of myth. The modernist dichotomy of fact and fiction, of reason and imagination, were used to construct a myth by the author of the vision of an autonomous, self-sustaining imaginary world independent of history. It should be clear that my effort in comparative analysis is textual and aims in exactly the opposite direction, to demythologize imaginative constructions and relate them to history and value choices.

.. Pierre Vidal-Naquet (1992) p. 105.

.. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, Seattle and Washington: University of Washington Press, 1982, p. 85, pp. 99-100.

.. Peter Hanns Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975, p. 12.

.. Ibid, p. 13.

.. Christian Wolff, *Preliminary Discourse on Philosophy in General* (1728) translated by Richard J. Blackwell, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963.

.. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust*, tr. Jeffrey Mehlman, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, p. 5.

.. Ernst Nolte, "Between Myth and Revisionism? The Third Reich in the Perspective of the 1980's," in *Aspects of the Third Reich*, ed. H.W. Koch, London: Corgi, 1985. For a criticism of Nolte in particular and the neo-conservative German historians in general, cf. Jürgen Habermas, "On the Public Use of History," in Jürgen Habermas, *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historical Dimension*, tr. Shierry Weber Nicholson, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989, pp. 22-31.

.. Heidegger supported the Nazi regime. Nolte has defended Heidegger, not Jacques Derrida did, in terms of a misguided "metaphysical humanism," (cf. Richard Wolin, ed., *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, Cambridge: MIT Press - the original 1990 hardback Columbia University Press edition contains the Derrida interview deleted in the MIT paperback version), or as a temporary aberration, a flight from philosophy into everyday politics in Hannah's Arendt's *On Violence*. Nolte defends Heidegger's support for the Nazis as historically and politically justified and demonstrates the links between Heidegger's philosophy and his political commitment to the "inner truth and greatness" of the Nazi movement. (Cf. Thomas Sheehan, "A Normal Nazi," *New York Review of Books*, XL:18 January 14, 1993, pp. 30-5.)

.. Andreas Hillgruber, *Zweierlei Untergang: Die Zerschlagung des Deutschen Reiches und das Ende des europäischen Judentums* (Berlin, 1986) - *Two Sorts of Destruction or Two Kinds of Ruin: The Smashing of the German Reich and the End of European Jewry*. Cf. Perry Anderson, "On Emplotment: Two Kinds of Ruin," in *James Callaghan* (1992) pp. 54-81.

.. Similarly, Francis Parker, the American historian, once declared that the American character depended on having a frontier, and numerous literary commentators and historians have declared that Canadian character depended on Canada being the "land of the north" where nature always seemed to be on the verge of overwhelming the thin line of civilization that mediated between the vast wilderness and the wild passions of populist America. The doctrine of the influence of geographical location on the national disposition of a people flourished through writers from Montesquieu and Herder to Fernand Braudel. "Armenia extended herself beyond her frontiers to such an extent, both to her advantage and to her detriment, that she ceased to be a state, if not a human reservoir of great potential, after the fourteenth century. Armenia was lost through her own success." Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip I*

l. I, tr. Siân Reynolds, New York: Harper & Row, 1972, p. 51.

.. Shoshana Felman, "The Return of the Voice: Claude Lanzmann's Shoah," *testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, New York: Routledge, 1992, p. 253.

.. Ibid, p. 266.

.. Felman (1992) p. 267. Cf. Peter Canning, "Jesus Christ, Holocaust, and the Culmination of the Jews in Christian and Nazi History," *Fin de siècle 2000*, Fall 1997, pp. 170-3.

.. Felman (1992) p. 266, from Lanzmann's interview with Roger Rosenblatt on Channel 13 (Public Television WNET) in 1987.

.. Cf. Karl Löwith in Hans-Georg Gadamer, ed., *Truth and Historicity*, Translated by Leo G. Sussman, New York: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972.

.. *History and Theory*, XIII:1, 1974, pp. 83-96.

.. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, Seattle and Washington: University of Washington Press, 1982, p. 101.

.. Michael Lerner, editorial, "Victims and Victimizers," *Tikkun*, March/April 1994, p. 7.

.. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, p. 5.

.. Michael Stürmer, a neo-conservative German historian (*Dissonanzen des Fortschritts*, Munich, 1982), speechwriter and advisor to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, is frequently quoted in Richard Wolin, "Introduction," Jürgen Habermas, *The Age of the Question: Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*, tr. Shierry Weisberg, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989, p. xiv.

.. Steven G. Kellman, "Schindler's List--Spielberg's Homecoming," *Midstream*, February-March, 1994, p. 12.

.. "Why is Shoah a great work of history rather than a collection of tales? It is neither a novelistic recreation like *Holocaust*, nor a documentary-only assemblage of documents from the period is read in it, concerning the trucks at Chelmno, nor a film in which men of today speak of the past...witnesses reconstruct a past that was all too real; testimonial accounts overlap and confirm each other in the diversity of voices and diction." Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust*, tr. Jeffrey Mehlman, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, p 111.

.. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, p. 12.

.. *Esther*, 3:23.

.. *Esther*, 6:1-2.

.. Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966; New York: Random House, 1969, p. 36.

.. Ibid, p. 22 .

.. Cf., Aristotle, De Anima

.. Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966; New York: Random House, 1969, p. 62.

.. Cf. *Songlines*

.. Giordano Bruno, perhaps the most famous, died in the Inquisition because he would not recant his heresy that memory was not just a skill, an important practical part of the soul, but could itself provide an image of the order of the universe, and that through memory alone, without any external grace, the unity of the soul could be reestablished. Cf. Yates (1966) chapters 9 and 11-14 as well as Frances Yates previous book, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, London: Duckworth, Chicago, 1964.

- .. Hilary Putnam Reason, Truth and History, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 15.
- .. Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 3.
- .. R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1954; Galaxy Book, 1956, p. 213.
- .. Howard Adelman, "Rational Explanation Reconsidered: Case Studies on the Hempel-Dray Model," *History and Theory*, XIII:3, 1974, pp. 208-24.
- .. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust*, tr. Jeffrey Mehlman, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, xxiv.
- .. Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 83.
- .. Cf. Gerald Edelman, *The Remembered Past: A Biological Theory of Consciousness*, New York: Basic Books, 1989; cf. also *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire: On the Matter of the Mind*, New York: Basic Books, 1992.