

Holocaust Literature and Cinema: Aspect of Relation

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between Holocaust literature and film. It describes the relationship between the specific contribution of cinematic interpretation to the formation of Holocaust literary studies and the reciprocal influence of Holocaust literature and cinema on each other. Holocaust literature is constantly searching for new ways to tell the untold story of holocaust suffering, constructing a new manual way, whereas cinema opens up new ways of interpreting these stories and creates a sound layer for the stories. The influence of Holocaust literature and film on its theme and effect has become a subject of similar close observation and analysis. With the influence of cinema, the Holocaust undergoes a new transformation at the end of the 20th century, when Holocaust cinematography receives the most attention. For the reader, literature is becoming increasingly visual, whereas cinema is becoming a more influential and developing form of literature. This paper is a small attempt to find ways to figure out how much Holocaust literature has influenced film.

Keywords: Literature, Holocaust, cinema, and Movie interpretation.

Introduction

The modern period is intertwined with the search for new expressive opportunities. It is well-known in the context of Holocaust literature and cinema, which is the most defining feature of the modern world and appears as an intense dialogue of Jewish suffering in literature, theatre, and film, as the book *Holocaust Cinema in the Twenty-First Century: Images, Memory, and the Ethics* (2015) aptly explains.

The dissemination of Holocaust memory is mainly taking place outside the realm of academia. Since the communicative memory of the holocaust is dying with the least eyewitness, widely available media, in particular, film, are assuming an increasingly significant part in the transmission of what Joshua Hirsch has aptly termed a form of posttraumatic historical memory. (Bayer 1)

The touch of Holocaust literature first infiltrates the author's world, which is vastly distinct from the film industry. The book *Historical Dictionary of Holocaust Cinema* (2012) quotes the cinema's influence as "how can actor, how dare actors presume to imagine and tell us what it felt like" (Reimer 90). Notable is the fact that the connections between writers and film directors can be quite unanticipated, despite the fact that some of them are based on the similarity of motives and experience, as the *Historical Dictionary of Holocaust Cinema* defines, about the moral questions that come up when the Holocaust is written about or shown in movies. It believes that the Holocaust was a one-of-a-kind event that any discussion of it must remember the victims' sufferings with dignity and compassion and understand how terrible it was for the Jewish people (Reimer 206). Holocaust survivor Elie Weisel stated in an interview, "The paradox is that we cannot tell the story, and yet it must be told" (Reimer 1); however, cinema based holocaust depicted Jewish suffering in a more harrowing fashion than literature The relationship between the arts of literature and film is frequently concealed in the depths of the creative idea, and the thematic similarity of the Holocaust, as well as the expression of the actual pain and suffering of Jews, become the key elements. In the second half of the 20th century, filmmakers became increasingly interested in Holocaust analysis, demonstrating the connection between Holocaust literature and film. Film directors looked at the versions of Holocaust literature that were changed for the screen and figured out how they were similar and different.

Review Of Literature

According to Brito, "In the era of interdisciplinary, nothing is healthier than trying to see the literature's verbality from the perspective of cinema and the movie iconicity from the perspective of literature" (Gualda 202). In this regard, it is also intriguing to consider the reasons for cinema's relationship to literature, as well as the processes by which literature becomes film author's material, as a concentration on Holocaust cinema and literature has the potential to create a truly remarkable cultural phenomenon in the interaction between Holocaust literature and film. Henryk M. Broder, commenting in *Der Spiegel* (1999) on the interaction between Holocaust literature and film, stated, "Real Nazis only appear at the margins, but (the film) is filled with every cliché about Jews: they are contentious, demanding, miserly, undisciplined and sentimental. Yet they cling to life and defend it with the only weapons they've learned how to use: anarchic wit and faith in the impossible" (Henryk). Holocaust survivor Elie Weisel referred to how the movies influenced Jewish life in terms of narrative structures when he stated in his book *The Sea Is Never Full* (1999) that whoever among us managed to stay alive would be the one to give evidence on our behalf. He would speak up for us and demand justice. As our representative, he would also work to make sure that our history is ingrained in the minds of all people (Wiesel, 405).

At the end of the 20th century, the issue of the mutual influence between Holocaust literature and film has garnered considerable attention. These two landmarks of Holocaust literature and film are coincidental, as the Holocaust occurred in the early 20th century and was subsequently associated with the growing popularity of cinema, as Lawrence Baron pointed out in his 2005 book, *Projecting the Holocaust into the present: The changing focus of contemporary Holocaust cinema* (2005) pointed thus,

"In the 15 years following World War II, 14 countries produced 119 feature films about the holocaust. In 1990, thirty-one countries produced more than two hundred holocaust movies. Of these nations, China, Iceland, Japan, and South Africa had at best a tenuous connection to the travail of the Jews who fell under the yoke of the Third Reich" (Baron 10-11).

Thus, all those who come into contact with the Holocaust speak with one voice, which was the defining feature of Europe's sociocultural climate at the turn of the 20th century. After this happened, the movie played a big part in getting people interested in holocaust fiction at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries.

The Relation Between Holocaust Literature and Cinema

The representation of the Holocaust literature in cinema is also the starting point for the analysis. This is not the first time the author has addressed broadcast Holocaust narratives or, more generally, the ethical issues surrounding the portrayal of Nazi murderers and Jewish suffering. It demonstrates how numerous modern films are affected by historical Holocaust books and documentaries. Reusing fictitious and photographic images, films generate an intermedial dialogue between historical cinema and audiences. As a clear result, a dispersed archive of history has been created, in which holocaust cinema seems to play a major role. Studying more recent films about the Holocaust means, pondering issues pertaining to recollection and loss of consciousness rather than focusing on the reconstruction of historical facts, as well as the provision of contexts for the pictures associated with the Holocaust. However, almost all of the films that have been made about the Holocaust use different practices. When we look back, we see that the study of books has provided an essential component for any kind of analysis. In recent years, there has been a lot of interest in thinking about the Holocaust, intermedial, and historical descriptions.

The Holocaust film adaptations of literary works utilised and effectively integrated the gratification principle. In this regard, the use of cinema is the framework of actual literary works such as *The Pawnbroker* (1961) by Edward Lewis Wallant, *The Truce* (1963) by Primo Levi, *Sophie's Choice* (1979) by William Styron, *Schindler's List* (1982) by Thomas Keneally, *Life Is Beautiful* (1998) by Roberto Benigni, *The Pianist* (1999) by Wladyslaw Szpilman, *The Book Thief* (2005) by Markus Zusak, and *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2006) by John Boyne. They were selected as theme-based films. Sidney Lumet's *The Pawnbroker* (1964), based on the same-named novel, is a notable Holocaust film. Francesco Rosi's film, titled *The Truce*, is based on Primo Levi's autobiography, *The Truce*. The 1982 film *Sophie's Choice* by Alan J. Pakula is based on W. Styron. Steven Spielberg directed the 1994 film *Schindler's List*, a work of historical fiction centred on the character Oskar Schindler and based on historical events. The films *Life Is Beautiful* (1997) and *The Pianist* (2002), based on the autobiographies of Roberto Benigni and Wladyslaw Szpilman, are directed by Roberto Benigni and Roman Polanski, respectively. Brian Percival directed the film adaptation of *The Book Thief* (2014), based on the novel by Markus Zusak, which tells the story of a young Jewish girl named Liesel. Mark Herman's 2008 film adaptation of the same novel, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2006), is titled *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.

With the exception of films based on novels, there are numerous documentaries about the Holocaust that depict the pathetic way in which Jews lived, such as Alain Resnais's *Night and Fog* (1955) and Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1977). Many viewers are moved to tears and disbelief by the graphic images of the concentration camps. On-screen, the actual subject of the Holocaust, its history, and its victims have been given a cinematic framework. The current trend of collaboration between writers and filmmakers is comparable to L.A. Sander, the author of *Jewish Frontiers*, writes thus:

Film and the holocaust are initially linked in footage of a massacre of Jews...from the short set of images the medium becomes the primary means of the western representation and comprehension of this incomprehensible moment in history. From documentaries to feature films, in Europe and Hollywood, the Holocaust became one of the central topics of the modern cinema. (Hirsch, Joshua. *Afterimage: Film, trauma and the Holocaust*)

Films that focus on the Holocaust often feature Jewish protagonists who embody the sufferings endured by all European Jews during World War II; this helps convey the narrative of the Holocaust and what happened to the Jews. Cinematic and literary representations of the epistemic truths of Nazism and the Holocaust tell history using different truths, such as the truth of Jewish ghettos and the reality of the Holocaust. In other words, Holocaust films negotiate using historical relativism and their perspective of reality, where available resources are veiled by suffering and subjective remembrance, and the image is formed by ideological and philosophical goals. Here, we can see how a number of critically acclaimed films about the Holocaust have directly influenced. The literary work was adapted very well for the movie, making for an impressive cinematic director. As a result, Holocaust literature has been historically equipped for an expressive style of cinema, and one could even term cinema a transferential way of conveying information. Literature is moving in the direction of becoming more repulsive and is being thought to be the next big thing in film as cinema moves in the direction of multiplying the means by which it can articulate its ideas.

Conclusion

In light of the growth of screen adaptations of Holocaust literary works and their sources, as noted by Holocaust survivor Primo Levi in an interview, an important challenge is the formulation of the Holocaust in the film of its notions, "On many occasions, we survivors

of the Nazi concentration camps have come to notice how little use words are in describing our experiences... In all of our accounts, verbal or written, one finds expressions such as 'indescribable'. 'Inexpressible', words are not enough" (Levi, Primo. "Featured course Holocaust Literature").

Holocaust writers and survivors, on the other hand, are interested in rewriting Holocaust literature, and cinematic interpretation also plays a role in the formation of Holocaust literary history. This is due to the fact that it is evident that any film adaptation can be regarded as a variation on the activity of reading the original book. The study is interaction between Holocaust film and Holocaust literature and determine its influence in both mediums. However, Holocaust literature contributes to the film, particularly because many writers have written screenplays, and it organically combines with film analysis methods. However, the holocaust film and literature connect the past, the present, and the future. Nonetheless, humans must comprehend what transpired between 1933 and 1945 that nearly wiped out an entire culture, the Jews of Europe, and millions of other innocent people. This study illustrates the Holocaust as a sobering reminder since the 21st century began. The moral and ethical lessons of the Holocaust must be learnt through Literature and films so that we can all apply them to our own moral quandaries.

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