

INTRODUCTION

“PRIVILEGED” JEWS, HOLOCAUST REPRESENTATION, AND THE “LIMIT” OF JUDGMENT



On 17 October 1962, the fragmented and partially indecipherable manuscript of Salmen Lewenthal, a Polish Jew, was unearthed at the site where the crematoria of the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp once stood. Although he died before the camp’s liberation, Lewenthal had included in his testimony the following passage:

We were shamed of one another and we dared not look one another in the face ... [...] I admit that I, too, ... [...] it appeared that my actions, too, [...] were [...] ... the truth is that one wants to live at any cost, one wants to live because one lives, because the whole world lives. And all that one wishes, all with what one is, if only slightly, bound [...] is bound with life first of all, without life [...] such is the real truth.¹

Lewenthal had been a member of the *Sonderkommando* (“special squad”) forced to work in Birkenau’s gas chambers and crematoria.² The tasks of these prisoners, the vast majority of them Jews, involved using deception to keep order among those about to be gassed; sorting their confiscated belongings; hosing down the corpses; cutting hair and extracting teeth from the bodies; burning the corpses in the furnaces or on outdoor pyres; crushing the remaining bone fragments; and disposing of the ashes, which were used as fertilizer or insulation, or were scattered on

the Vistula River. Men were chosen for the *Sonderkommandos* upon arrival at the camp or, less commonly, as a form of punishment. In return for their cooperation, members of the *Sonderkommando* had access to clothing, bedding, food, cigarettes, and alcohol, all taken from newly arrived "transports." Lucie Adelsberger, who survived as a prisoner doctor in Auschwitz, writes that the members of the *Sonderkommando* "were well paid for their labours. They were allowed to take whatever they wanted from the booty, including cigarettes and brandy. On the other hand, they had their own death sentence in their pocket."³ There were thirteen successive "special squads" in the Birkenau extermination camp, as each group was routinely executed after approximately four months. Any refusal to cooperate was answered with immediate death. Survival invariably came down to chance.

The members of the *Sonderkommandos* belonged to the important category of so-called "privileged" Jews—the central focus of this book. In addition to referring to crematorium workers such as Lewenthal, the term "privileged" is used here to refer to the camp inmates who held positions as prisoner-functionaries, such as the supervisors of prisoner barracks and *Kapos* ("heads") of labor squads. The term is also understood here to refer to inhabitants of the ghettos who were members of the *Judenräte* ("Jewish councils") and *Ordnungsdienst* ("order service," or Jewish police), who are also viewed as having held "privileged" positions.⁴ The ethical dilemmas encountered by this group of victims have proven very problematic for Holocaust survivors, scholars, writers, and filmmakers alike in their attempts to understand and represent such experiences. Jews suffered unprecedented persecution in the camps and ghettos, places where the normal concepts of "choice" and "responsibility" were radically undermined. When confronted with the traumatic circumstances of "privileged" Jews, the practice of passing judgment over their actions becomes highly contentious. The complexities involved in approaching this issue are revealed most clearly in an essay written by the influential Holocaust survivor Primo Levi entitled "The Grey Zone," the central text from which this study arose.

Levi's paradigmatic concept of the "grey zone" directly addresses the issue of "privileged" Jews and is of particular importance due to its engagement with the problem of how their extreme situations are to be understood. A crucial part of Levi's final book, *The Drowned and the Saved* (first published in 1986), "The Grey Zone" raises fundamental questions regarding the treatment of liminal figures by those who represent the Holocaust.⁵ Subjected to extreme levels of coercion, these "privileged" victims were compelled to act in ways that have been judged as both self-serving and harmful to fellow inmates. Indeed, "privileged"

was a term commonly used by other prisoners to describe these individuals.⁶ A crucial, often overlooked, aspect of the Holocaust, the issue of “privileged” Jews concerns victims who, in order to prolong their lives, were forced to behave in ways that have often been interpreted as contributing in some way to the killing process. As Susan Pentlin argues in her essay “Holocaust Victims of Privilege,” in order to develop a deeper understanding of the Holocaust and its ethical implications, one must listen to the “voices from the grey zone” and explore the often taboo issues of “position and privilege.”⁷ Levi writes similarly that the grey zone of “prisoners who in some measure, perhaps with good intentions, collaborated with the authority, was not negligible, indeed it constituted a phenomenon of fundamental importance.”⁸

Drawing on his experiences in Auschwitz, Levi engages with the problematic of *not* judging “privileged” Jews. In his essay he is chiefly concerned with *Kapos*, members of the Auschwitz *Sonderkommandos*, and the controversial Jewish “elder” Chaim Rumkowski of the Lodz Ghetto. While he unequivocally holds the perpetrators of the Holocaust responsible for their actions, he warns that one should abstain from judging their victims. In the case of the *Sonderkommandos*, Levi declares that “our need and ability to judge falters” and that any moral evaluation of them must be “suspended.”⁹ Likewise, he asserts that the same *impotentia iudicandi* “paralyses” us when considering Rumkowski’s behavior. While we should not condemn Rumkowski, Levi writes, we cannot “absolve him on the moral plane” either.¹⁰ At the same time, Levi argues that praising the morally ambiguous behavior of “privileged” Jews is also inappropriate, as he feels that “not all their acts should be set forth as examples.”¹¹ In short, he contends that “privileged” Jews should not be judged for their actions *in extremis*—that negative and positive moral evaluations of their behavior should be suspended. Levi’s meditation on the grey zone poses a number of questions: If “privileged” Jews are not to be judged for their behavior in situations beyond their control, can judgment be suspended in the representations of their experiences? And while passing judgment on “privileged” Jews may be impossible, is it not also inevitable?

Primarily a work of cultural criticism, this book takes an interdisciplinary approach to examine how moral judgments of “privileged” Jews are conveyed in representations of the Holocaust. In investigating this issue, I adopt what might be called a “metaethical” perspective. John K. Roth defines “metaethics” as a reflection on judgments that have already been made, which “seek[s] to understand more fully *how those judgments work* as well as what limits they face and problems they entail.”¹² The focus of this book is on *how* judgments of “privileged” Jews

are constructed; the separate, but intrinsically related, question of *why* judgments of these liminal figures may be inappropriate is secondary. Nonetheless, this chapter and those that follow will also unavoidably reflect on the latter question, particularly when considering the often controversial ideas that historical and cultural representations of "privileged" Jews communicate to their audiences.

While numerous studies have focused on the contribution of Holocaust representations to collective memory, identity, and knowledge, no studies have concentrated specifically on the representation of "privileged" Jews and how this involves making moral judgments. A consensus has formed among those who have engaged with the events of the Holocaust in one form or another that capturing the "reality" of the tragedy—in writing, film, or any other medium—is impossible. Taking this idea further, many scholars argue that some or all representations trivialize the Holocaust through "simplification." Significantly, Levi's anxiety over this phenomenon was an important driving factor in his exploration of the issue of "privileged" Jews. Not only did he raise the question of whether judgment can be suspended, by pointing to historians and filmmakers as being particularly predisposed to making judgment, but his own representation of "privileged" Jews in "The Grey Zone" can itself be seen to entail certain judgments. Going forward, the proceeding chapters of this book explore the possibilities for portraying "privileged" Jews in different representational modes or genres.

Taking Levi's concept of the grey zone as a point of departure, the chapters that follow provide a close analysis of representations of "privileged" Jews in important examples of Holocaust writing and film. Detailed attention is given to how judgments are revealed in Levi's own writings, the highly influential work of Raul Hilberg, and several documentary and fiction films. Many of the specific representations to be examined have been selected in part because of their prominent status in the field of Holocaust studies. Levi's testimonies, Hilberg's scholarship, and the major films examined, including Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985) and Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993), are consistently highlighted for their "canonical" influence on Holocaust consciousness.¹³ Tor Ben-Mayor and Dan Setton's less well-known documentary *Kapo* (1999) and Tim Blake Nelson's fiction film *The Grey Zone* (2001) take considerably different approaches to representing the behavior of "privileged" Jews than the approaches taken in the seminal films of Lanzmann and Spielberg. An analysis of these representations exposes different modes of judgment vis-à-vis different modes of representation. First, however, a book that engages with such a deeply sensitive subject as the behavior of "privileged" Jews under Nazi persecution necessi-

tates some observations in relation to its conception, construction, and limitations.

As Geoffrey H. Hartman has remarked, Holocaust studies is a veritable “minefield,” where “even the *words* ... in which we express our thoughts on what happened” are disputable.¹⁴ It will already be clear from the preceding pages that the problematic implications of judging Jewish victims of the Nazis render the term “privilege” a nebulous one. Indeed, the phrase is likely to raise some curiosity, if not a degree of suspicion. While my research into this area saw several shifts in the terminology adopted, I settled on “privileged” due to its common usage both at the time of the Holocaust and in its aftermath. It must be emphasized that no matter what physical or other benefits “privileged” Jews may have gained for their cooperation with their persecutors, they experienced immense suffering and were, along with all other Jewish victims, intended to perish. The use of the term “privileged” therefore needs to be understood in the context of the unprecedented conditions of the Nazi-controlled ghettos and camps; the term’s positive connotations must be qualified. Indeed, the categorization of a group of Holocaust victims as “privileged” may be viewed as oxymoronic and the fraught nature of the term must be constantly kept in mind (hence the pervasive inverted commas).

I argue here that moral judgment is inevitable and, furthermore, that when one is faced with such a catastrophic event as the Holocaust, moral judgment is almost unanimously thought to be essential, if not obligatory. However, as Levi’s essay on the grey zone suggests, when confronted with the extreme circumstances of Jews in so-called “privileged” positions, it may be impossible to pass judgment on them. “Impossibility” here does not imply that one is literally unable to pass judgment—far from it, as the following chapters reveal. Instead, the “impossibility” of judgment refers to the perceived invalidity or *inappropriateness* of any moral evaluation of “privileged” Jews. Yet suspending judgment, even of those forced to confront irresolvable ethical dilemmas, is no easy task. I come to the study of the Holocaust from a non-Jewish and non-German background, although I make no claims to any form of “objectivity.” Throughout the researching and writing of this book, my own judgments have undoubtedly impacted on the final result. The more I engaged with representations of the *Sonderkommandos*, for example, the more I felt I sympathized with them. Other cases perhaps produced the opposite effect. This was unavoidable. Even the selection of images for a book such as this can be read as implying judgment. I have endeavored in my critical analysis to avoid “judging the judges,” so to speak, whenever I disagreed with a judgment made in their representations of

"privileged" Jews; nonetheless, my own limitations and the intrinsically judgmental nature of language itself mean that my own judgments will have impinged on the analysis. The emotionally and morally fraught issue of "privileged" Jews at least necessitates an awareness of this.

In order to map out the terrain to be covered in the subsequent chapters, this chapter includes the following sections, which highlight key concepts and debates that inform the book as a whole. First, a more detailed explanation of the phrase "privileged Jews" is accompanied by a broad account of the experiences of the particular groups of people to be the primary focus of analysis. The discourses and controversies that have formed around the interrelated problems of judgment and representation—problems that remain unresolved in Levi's writings and more widely—are then surveyed, with Lawrence L. Langer's concept of "choiceless choices" providing particularly valuable insights into the ethical dilemmas confronted by Holocaust victims. Finally, I explore the problems faced by those who attempt to represent liminal figures and the Holocaust in general by positioning judgment as a "limit" of representation, thereby charting a path for an investigation of how "privileged" Jews are portrayed in different genres.

A Matter of Life and Death: The Category of "Privileged" Jews

"Privileged" Jews include those in the Nazi-controlled camps and ghettos who held positions that gave them access to material and other benefits beyond those available to other Jews. This study adopts a very specific definition of "privilege" in order to concentrate on the extreme ethical dilemmas that many victims faced, although the term has also been used at times to categorize Jews in Germany whose deportation was postponed due to prior military service, marriage to non-Jews, and so on, or Jews in the ghettos who held a higher socio-economic status than others. Indeed, the use of the term "privileged" in relation to victims in the ghettos and camps has been far from consistent. For example, Marlene Heinemann's analysis of camp inmate relations in Holocaust testimonies is partly divided into reflections on "privileged" and "less privileged" prisoners.¹⁵ Levi himself implies a similar distinction (or "spectrum") when he separates the categories of "privileged" prisoners at issue in this book from both the "unprivileged" prisoners and the "picturesque fauna" of "low-ranking functionaries," who included "sweepers, kettle washers, night-watchmen, bed smoothers ... checkers of lice and scabies, messengers, interpreters [and] assistants' assis-

tants.”¹⁶ Setting the ambiguities of the term aside, it is the victims who held the particularly controversial—and frequently condemned—roles of *Kapos* and crematorium workers in the camps or Jewish leaders and police in the ghettos with whom I am primarily concerned here. In addressing the crucial issue of “privileged” Jews, therefore, it is essential to understand—to what extent possible—the unprecedented situations in which victims became “privileged.”

A common theme running throughout survivor testimony is the extreme dehumanization experienced by Jews in the ghettos and camps and the moral compromises they were forced to make in order to survive (or at least to prolong their lives). Part of the Nazi system of dehumanization involved the creation of a complex network of “privileged” prisoners to be responsible for aspects of the administration of, and discipline within, the numerous camps and ghettos.¹⁷ Conditions in these settings varied markedly, both geographically and temporally, thus it is difficult to generalize.¹⁸ Isaiah Trunk’s detailed study of the *Judenräte* demonstrates that although there were extensive differences between ghettos, in every one a façade of “ghetto autonomy” was used by the Nazis to disguise “the satanic purpose of using the victim himself [*sic*] to assist the hangman in his work.”¹⁹ Exposed to widespread starvation, disease, slave labor, and random executions, tens of thousands of Jews died in the ghettos even before deportations to extermination camps commenced. As one survivor has noted, “You can’t apply any normal criteria to the ghetto. I didn’t wonder about what was moral and what was immoral.”²⁰

The ethical dilemmas that “privileged” Jews confronted in the ghettos are epitomized in the establishment of the Jewish councils and police forces. Being part of these organizations had the potential to prolong one’s life and the lives of one’s family members through the provision of extra food, freedom of movement, exemptions from searches and evictions, and (at least initially) immunity from deportation; however, it is crucial to keep in mind that the establishment of the ghettos was only to be a temporary measure. In the end, most “privileged” Jews did not survive the Holocaust.

The role of the *Judenräte* has been the subject of intense debate, as will be discussed later in the chapter. The councils were comprised of up to twenty-four men, who were directly responsible for carrying out Nazi policies and overseeing the daily operation of the ghettos.²¹ Supervised and often abused (verbally and physically) by the Nazi administration, Jewish leaders were made responsible for registering and housing the ghetto population; distributing life-prolonging work permits; organizing health, education, and sanitation services; rationing the always-

inadequate food supply; and providing law enforcement and the required number of Jews for forced labor. Faced with massive unemployment, overcrowding, hunger, and epidemics, *Judenrat* officials found themselves in an impossible situation. After 1941, some council members were forced to draw up lists of people demanded by the Nazis for deportation to "the East," although due to their captors' efforts at secrecy, it was rarely clear that this meant certain death. Indeed, many *Judenräte* were established before the total physical annihilation of the Jews was decided upon. Furthermore, while a position on a council generally bestowed significant "privileges," the vast majority of Jewish leaders died before the war ended, having been deported to various camps,²² shot by killing squads, or, in some cases, dying by their own hand.²³ While councils were supposed to consist of the prewar Jewish community leaders, the degree of continuity varied, and there were some instances where the SS chose ordinary civilians. In any case, the ethical dilemmas *Judenrat* officials confronted were beyond anything they had encountered previously. The councils were formed and governed, metaphorically speaking (and often literally), at gunpoint. This may be also said of the *Ordnungsdienst* (Jewish police).



Figure 0.1. The senior officer of the Krakow Ghetto police (*Ordnungsdienst*) straightens the cap of one of his men during roll call (#06224). *Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives*



Figure 0.2. A member of the Jewish police and a German soldier direct pedestrian traffic across the main street dividing the two parts of the Lodz Ghetto. The sign reads: “Jewish residential area, entrance is forbidden” (#37316).
Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives



Figure 0.3. Leon Rozenblat, the controversial chief of the Lodz Ghetto police (left), and other members of the *Ordnungsdienst* pose with a newlywed couple (#63000). *Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives.*

Jews became members of the *Ordnungsdienst* by volunteering, having advantageous contacts, or being randomly conscripted by the Nazi authorities. Armed with truncheons and sometimes whips, Jewish police were charged with keeping order in the ghettos; enforcing Nazi regulations; guarding fences and *Judenrat* institutions; collecting property the SS ordered to be confiscated; and, most controversially, escorting fellow Jews to the trains bound for extermination camps, sometimes even through violent means. Jewish police often had to arrest a daily quota of people for deportation, lest they suffer the same fate. While some ghetto police forces were independent of their *Judenrat*, they were often directly supervised by armed Germans or collaborators to ensure that they undertook the tasks expected of them and that they behaved with the required brutality. Significantly, holding these "privileged" positions could also benefit or protect one's family. The testimony of Calel Perechodnik, one of the few firsthand accounts by a member of the Jewish police, recalls his trauma in helping the SS assemble 8,000 Jews for deportation to Treblinka. The Nazis had deceitfully promised exceptions would be made for Perechodnik's wife and daughter, along with the families of other ghetto police, although as soon as the police had



Figure 0.4. Jewish police escort a group of Jews in the Lodz Ghetto who have been rounded up for deportation (#10055). *Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives*



Figure 0.5. Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto board a train for deportation with the assistance of Jewish police (#37287). *Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives*

done what was required of them, their families were deported anyway. Dying before the war's end, Perechodnik wrote in the opening lines of his memoir, which is filled with loathing for himself and his fellow "privileged" Jews: "Please consider this my deathbed confession. . . . I don't ask to be absolved."²⁴ While self-reproach is perhaps understandable under the circumstances, it might be argued that such remorse is the result of the coercive actions of the Nazi perpetrators and no cause for moral condemnation on Perechodnik's part.²⁵ Importantly, many Jews in the ghettos (and some Jews who did not experience persecution in this setting) were subsequently incarcerated in the camps, where Nazi-enforced hierarchies also saw a proliferation of "privileged" positions.

Prisoners in the concentration camps were subjected to primitive living conditions, constant fear, rampant disease, long hours of meaningless manual labor, roll calls in extreme weather, limited access to sanitary and medical facilities, and random physical beatings. In the various camps that made up the Auschwitz complex in particular, Jews (along with a number of other groups of prisoners) were exposed to an intentional policy of starvation and continuous "selections" for the gas chambers. Faced with the inverted morality of the *univers concentrationnaire*,²⁶ victims were turned against each other in a literal struggle for survival, leading to a widespread impression among prisoners that life for one meant death for another. Exemplifying this is the German prisoner doctor Ella Lingens-Reiner's reflection on the dilemma she faced in trying

to use her "privileged" position in Auschwitz to help others amidst the Nazis' obsession with numbers: "If I rescued one woman, I pushed another to her doom, another who wanted to live and had an equal right to live. ... Was there any sense in trying to behave decently?"²⁷ Similarly, in discussing the proliferation of coercion, "privilege," and "compromise" in Auschwitz, Levi writes that the Lager was "an excellent 'laboratory,'" and that "the hybrid class of the prisoner-functionary constitutes [the camp's] armature and at the same time its most disquieting feature."²⁸ Notably, most of these "privileged" positions were automatically allocated to *non-Jewish* inmates, particularly criminals and political prisoners, although the number of Jewish prisoner-functionaries increased toward the end of the war due to a shortage of labor. By having access to better shelter, increased rations, and other items for trade, "privileged" inmates were less vulnerable to—though not immune from—camp punishments. For these reasons, Levi writes that "prominents," or camp officials, along with other "privileged" prisoners, including doctors, messengers, musicians, interpreters, kitchen hands, shoemakers, and so on, comprised the majority of survivors.²⁹ In terms of "privileged" prisoners in the camps, this book is primarily concerned with the *Sonderkommandos* (described earlier) and the *Kapos*.

The behavior of *Kapos*, who generally served as supervisors of forced-labor squads, is a particularly controversial topic. *Kapos* are infamous in survivor literature for their brutal treatment of their subordinates, with some even taking part in the decision-making of the "selections" for the gas chambers. Although not all *Kapos* are demonized by survivors, positive portrayals are generally the exception to the rule. The behavior of *Kapos* often included the intimidation or abuse of some of the prisoners "beneath" them, while favoring or even rescuing others. The motivations behind the behavior of Jewish *Kapos* in particular are fiercely contested and inherently difficult to evaluate. Significantly, *Kapos* were subject to punishment by Nazi guards for any problems arising from the prisoners they were responsible for, and Jewish *Kapos* were arguably under more pressure to keep their positions through violence.³⁰ The most crucial distinction between Jewish and non-Jewish prisoners, whether "privileged" or not, is that from late 1941 onward the Nazis intended to kill every Jew.³¹ Any reprieve was only temporary.

Importantly, the focus of this book on (some) Jewish experiences in (some of) the ghettos and camps should by no means be viewed as representative of the Holocaust, as Nazi persecution also occurred at mass-shooting sites, in deportation trains, during the death marches toward Germany at the end of the war, and through a variety of other means. Equally, just as the experiences of Jews varied in a number of

settings and over a number of years, the situations, experiences, and behaviors of “privileged” Jews were incredibly diverse, with important differences existing between the groups of prisoners outlined above and within these groups themselves. On the other hand, emphasizing such differences too strongly often means passing clear-cut moral judgments on some victims over others, in effect constructing a “moral spectrum,” the likes of which will be highlighted at different stages in the forthcoming chapters. In any event, the extreme situations of “privileged” Jews during the Holocaust has placed large, if not insurmountable, obstacles in the path of moral judgment, raising the question of whether or not such judgment should be (if at all possible) suspended. By placing “privileged” Jews within what he calls the “grey zone,” this suspension of judgment seems to be what Levi recommends.

Primo Levi’s “Grey Zone” and the Problems of Judgment and Representation

Levi’s influential essay entitled “The Grey Zone” highlights the interrelationship between judgment, representation, and the category of “privileged” Jews. Indeed, Levi’s writings constantly draw attention to the problems faced by those who seek to represent the Holocaust. In his first memoir, *If This Is a Man* (1947), Levi emphasizes the immense physical and moral degradation experienced by Jews in Auschwitz, arguing that “our language lacks words to express this offence, the demolition of a man [*sic*].”³² Subsequently, in his essay on the grey zone, published just one year before his suicide, Levi expands on the obstacles to representation. Here he stresses not only the incomprehensibility of the suffering of the victims, but also the problem of moral judgment. His sober, questioning, and self-reflexive analysis offers some invaluable lessons on how one might perceive and portray the Holocaust.

Levi’s “grey zone” is in the main a metaphor for moral ambiguity, a conceptual realm with “ill-defined outlines which both separate and join the two camps of masters and servants. It possesses an incredibly complicated internal structure, and contains within itself enough to confuse our need to judge.”³³ This in itself highlights the way in which Levi’s concept problematizes judgment, as his characterization of the grey zone could be (and often has been) interpreted to involve a merging, if not a blurring, of the fundamental categories of persecutor and victim. However, Levi stresses elsewhere in his essay, and for good reason, that “to confuse [perpetrators] with their victims is a moral disease or an aesthetic affectation or a sinister sign of complicity; above all,

it is precious service rendered (intentionally or not) to the negators of truth."³⁴ Accepting the inherent difficulties in judging "privileged" prisoners, Dominick LaCapra reiterates that "one may judge quite harshly and with little qualification Nazis who were instrumental in creating the situation that gave rise to the grey zone."³⁵ In short, the distinction between victim and perpetrator must be maintained.³⁶ Here then is the crux: how are distinctions between groups of victims—those with "privileged" positions and those without—to be drawn without undermining the crucial separation of victims from their persecutors?

Levi's effort to impress on his readers the precariousness of addressing such a complex and sensitive issue is of critical importance. Meditating on the unprecedented situations that "privileged" Jews faced works toward exposing the horror and degradation of the Holocaust experience for its victims, helps to avoid falling into stereotypes that simplify or trivialize the event, and arguably leads to a deeper understanding of the Holocaust. Levi's concept of the grey zone is particularly valuable as it destabilizes clear-cut moral distinctions, such as those between "good" and "evil," and warns against hasty judgment—or, in some cases, calls for it to be suspended. For these reasons, an acknowledgment of the grey zone poses significant obstacles to representation, which Levi shows to be strongly related to judgment. Commenting on the human need or desire for "simplification" early in his essay, Levi writes:

[T]he network of human relationships inside the Lagers [camps] was not simple: it could not be reduced to the two blocs of victims and persecutors. In anyone who today reads (or writes) the history of the Lager is evident the tendency, indeed the need, to separate evil from good, to be able to take sides, to repeat Christ's gesture on Judgment Day: here the righteous, over there the reprobates.³⁷

The notion that simplification results from passing moral judgment in and through representation is evident in this passage. Indeed, Levi opens his essay by stressing the prominent, even necessary, place of simplification in human affairs: "What we commonly mean by 'understand' coincides with 'simplify': without profound simplification the world around us would be an infinite, undefined tangle."³⁸ To state the problem Levi evokes briefly: understanding requires representation, which involves making moral judgment and, inevitably, results in simplification.

Significantly, part of the reason Levi felt compelled to reflect on the grey zone was due to his concern about historical and filmic representations that he felt trivialized the complexity of Holocaust experiences. Levi singles out popular histories, the history taught in schools, and films as particularly predisposed to the simplifying trend he identi-

fies—the “Manichean tendency which shuns half-tints and complexities” and resorts to the black-and-white binary opposition(s) of “friend” and “enemy,” “good” and “evil.”³⁹ Levi’s skepticism toward history and film highlights the problems of judgment and representation in relation to “privileged” Jews, and it is partly for this reason that historical and filmic representations of these figures have been chosen for analysis in this book. Indeed, in a highly critical essay on *Schindler’s List*, Bryan Cheyette argues that “the ethical uncertainty at the heart of Levi’s writings is the necessary critical yardstick by which one ought to understand present-day films and novels, many of which glibly assimilate the Holocaust in a breathtakingly untroubled manner.”⁴⁰ Reflecting on his impetus to write about the grey zone, Levi himself proclaims:

From many signs, it would seem the time has come to explore the space which separates ... the victims from their persecutors, and to do so with a lighter hand, and with a less turbid spirit than has been done, for instance, in a number of films.⁴¹

In the more than twenty years that have passed since Levi’s essay was published, hundreds of Holocaust-related films have been made. Nelson’s representation of “privileged” Jews in his film *The Grey Zone*, discussed in chapter 4, engages directly with Levi’s ideas, and therefore I examine the relevance of Levi’s aversion to the medium of film to contemporary Holocaust cinema.

As noted earlier, Levi argues that one should abstain from passing positive and negative judgments when representing “privileged” Jews. One way in which Levi’s concept of the grey zone suggests judgment should be suspended is to dispose of ethical Manicheisms and “heroic” discourses. The extreme situations of “privileged” Jews reveal traditional notions of heroism to be highly problematic. In his literary analysis of the “anti-heroic” in Levi’s writings, Victor Brombert observes: “Heroic models and heroic expectations are shown to be illusory and misleading. Offended by any rhetoric that might present the victim as hero, Levi is interested rather in what he calls the ‘gray zone’ of moral contamination.”⁴² While the need to avoid demonizing perpetrators is the chief concern of Ronnie Landau’s contention that “one must seek to guard against grotesque oversimplification and debasement of Holocaust terminology and imagery,”⁴³ rejecting stereotypical representations of Jews as passive victims, heroic martyrs, or complicit traitors is arguably just as important. Finding the language to describe the severe ethical dilemmas faced by victims, a task with which survivors themselves invariably struggle, is immensely difficult. While the distinction between perpetrators and victims must be upheld, an abandonment of

a Manichean perspective and any related heroic discourse is essential in order to highlight the complexity of the situations that "privileged" Jews faced. Nonetheless, avoiding black-and-white stereotypes alone does not guarantee that all judgment is suspended when representing the impossible scenarios that confronted these liminal figures.

The ethical dilemmas encountered by "privileged" Jews render issues of agency—and thus accountability—highly problematic, as without choice and subsequent responsibility, the faculty of moral judgment is threatened. While the wider philosophical debate over free will and determinism lies outside the scope of this book, it is clear that evaluating Jewish experiences during the Holocaust relies on the existence of choice.⁴⁴ This problem is exemplified in what the influential Holocaust scholar Lawrence L. Langer terms "choiceless choices," which scholars have frequently connected to Levi's grey zone.⁴⁵ In his study *Versions of Survival: The Holocaust and the Human Spirit* (1982), Langer characterizes "choiceless choices" as "crucial decisions [that] did not reflect options between life and death, but between one form of abnormal response and another, both imposed by a situation that was in no way of the victim's own choosing."⁴⁶ Heavily influenced by Levi's early writings, Langer states:

Choiceless choices are perversions of power and will; they proclaim the impotence of the victim, who contaminates his [*sic*] future by the very compulsion to survive in which his oppressors seek to drown his moral nature.⁴⁷

Due to their unresolvable quality, Langer argues that choiceless choices do not even involve deciding between a "greater" or "lesser" evil and can thus be seen to have existed in an environment constructed by the perpetrators not of immorality, but of "non-morality," an environment "beyond good and evil."

Persecuted Jews' "decisions"—if they can be called that—were made under extreme duress, and the notions of intent or volition, which are central to most concepts of justice and judgment, are therefore impossible to evaluate. "Privileged" Jews have often been said to have acted at the expense of fellow prisoners in various ways, for various reasons, and under varying levels of coercion. However, at such a distance of time and experience (and arguably even without this distance), it is problematic for anyone to evaluate the consequences, motivations, and personal autonomy that were in play during the events in question. If it is the case that, as Slavoj Žižek briefly puts it, "only a free choice is morally binding,"⁴⁸ then Levi's imperative to suspend judgment of Jews *in extremis* seems to hold some weight. As Levi writes in *If This Is a Man*, "In the Lager there are no criminals nor madmen; no criminals because there is

no moral law to contravene, no madmen because we are wholly devoid of free will, as our every action is, in time and place, the only conceivable one.”⁴⁹ Nonetheless, a reliance on conventional notions of choice and free will has still been influential in many conceptualizations of victim behavior during the Holocaust.

Some scholars optimistically argue that Auschwitz is “capable of showing us essential aspects of the *human spirit*, and hence of bringing our knowledge of *good* and *evil* into sharper focus.”⁵⁰ The link between an affirmation of choice and a moral judgment of the victims of the Nazis is clear in Victor Frankl’s statement that “man” is “ultimately self-determining”:

What he becomes—within the limits of endowment and environment—he has made out of himself. In the concentration camps ... we watched and witnessed some of our comrades behave like swine while others behaved like saints. Man has both potentialities within himself; which one is actualised depends on decisions but not on conditions.⁵¹

Likewise, Bruno Bettelheim condemns what he views as the passive submission of inmates, pondering why millions of prisoners marched “willingly” to the gas chambers rather than rebelling and dying “like men.”⁵² Such views simplify the complex pressures on, and responses of, victims. While Terrence Des Pres devotes much attention to the “excremental assault” on camp prisoners, he maintains that survival depended, above all, “on forms of social bonding and interchange, on collective resistance, on keeping dignity and moral sense active.”⁵³ In the case of “privileged” inmates in particular, this view is problematic. The victims who are the subject of this book did not survive through what might be readily described as “heroic” means—if, indeed, they survived at all.

Langer argues that the ethical dilemmas engineered by the Nazis render preexisting moral systems an “irrelevant luxury” that cannot be used to understand victim behavior.⁵⁴ In his chapter entitled “Auschwitz: The Death of Choice,” he draws heavily on survivor testimony to describe the “optionless anguish of the death camp” and points to its implications for judgment and representation.⁵⁵ Considering choiceless choices to be a defining feature of the Holocaust, Langer stresses the inappropriateness of preexisting categories of morality and representation when attempting to come to terms with the event. He rejects optimistic explanations for survival that draw on conventional notions of dignity, courage, sacrifice, heroism, and freedom, arguing that these concepts, along with “choice,” are part of the long “list of free words that died in Auschwitz, leaving no successors.”⁵⁶ Like Levi’s conceptualization of the grey zone, Langer’s discussion of choiceless choices confirms

the desirability of suspending judgment. Reflecting on the "dismal fate" of the *Sonderkommandos*, forced to perform such ghastly activities before an inevitable death, Langer declares: "We reserve judgment for the authors of that fate, not its victims."⁵⁷ Warning against "formulas and single truths" when contemplating the Holocaust, Langer contends that "those who attempt to generate such truths ... *sacrifice ambiguity* for the sake of coherence, seeking to construct a possible future from the debris of an impossible past."⁵⁸

Levi and Langer focus primarily on Auschwitz, although the associated problems of judgment and representation also apply to the ghettos. Zygmunt Bauman states in his study *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989) that *Judenrat* officials and Jewish police played "a crucial mediating role in the incapacitation of the Jews," although he also emphasizes their lack of "choice."⁵⁹ Reflecting the concepts of the grey zone and choiceless choices, Bauman stresses the high level of coercion and minimal choices created by the Nazi authorities, forcing the *Judenräte* to partake in the "save what you can" game—a game of acting *rationaly* on good intentions that invariably resulted in death for the many and survival (albeit temporarily) for the few.⁶⁰ While Levi writes that all camp inmates were engaged in "a desperate hidden and continuous struggle,"⁶¹ Bauman describes a similar situation existing in the ghettos:

The individualization of survival strategies led to a universal scramble for roles and positions deemed to be favourable or privileged, and to widespread efforts to ingratiate oneself in the eyes of the oppressors—invariably at the other victims' expense.⁶²

Nonetheless, a strong divide has often been constructed between victim behavior in the camps and victim behavior in the ghetto environment, with philosophers, historians, and other scholars judging the behavior of the prewar and wartime Jewish leadership in various European countries according to clear-cut moral standards. Indeed, the various controversies over the behavior of "privileged" Jews reveal a longstanding tradition of passing judgment on them.

In terms of ethical discussions that focus specifically on the behavior of "privileged" Jews, Levi's reflection on the grey zone stands almost alone. The few other exceptions include writings by Massimo Giuliani, Abigail Rosenthal, and Richard Rubenstein.⁶³ Like Levi, Giuliani and Rosenthal conclude that "privileged" Jews should not be judged. On the other hand, Rubenstein's direct response to Levi's attempt to represent Rumkowski as a morally ambiguous figure rejects the survivor's moratorium on judgment and concludes that "in Rumkowski the gray zone had turned black."⁶⁴ Likewise, David Jones argues in his study entitled



Figure 0.6. A group portrait of members of the Warsaw Ghetto Jewish police (#48568). *Courtesy of USHMM Photo Archives*

Moral Responsibility in the Holocaust (1999) that many Jewish leaders were “blameworthy” for “collaborating” with the Nazis.⁶⁵ Also problematic are Ervin Staub’s brief reflections on the Jewish councils, which attempt to classify the “psychological experience” of Jewish leaders by examining the possible effects of various contextual factors on the likelihood of resistance. Staub concludes that “many Jews must have progressed along a continuum of victimization and *abandoned themselves* to the currents that invariably led to destruction.”⁶⁶ Significantly, Rubenstein, Jones, and Staub draw heavily on Hilberg’s work (the subject of chapter 2), adopting the very negative judgments of Jewish leaders that they seem, at times, to be critiquing. The problem of judgment that Levi highlights is further evident in the furor sparked by Hannah Arendt’s writings on Jewish councils; the controversial treatment of former “privileged” Jews in the years following the Second World War; and the historiographical debate over Jewish responses to Nazi persecution.

In evaluating Jewish behavior, Arendt makes a distinction between what she calls the “limited freedom of decision and of action” in the ghettos and the utter lack of choice in the camps, which she views as having inhibited any possibility of effective resistance.⁶⁷ Her major

study, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), stresses the unparalleled "total domination" of the prisoners in Nazi camps, including the intentional and systematic erasure of Jews' legal status, personal identity, and moral being. At one point, Arendt describes a situation that to some degree reflects Langer's concept of a "choiceless choice":

When a man is faced with the alternative of betraying and thus murdering his friends or of sending his wife and children, for whom he is in every sense responsible, to their death; when even suicide would mean the immediate murder of his own family—how is he to decide? The alternative is no longer between good and evil, but between murder and murder.⁶⁸

Adopting an apparently sympathetic attitude, Arendt suggests that there is "no moral problem" regarding Jewish behavior in the camps because of the extreme situations that confronted the prisoners (although ironically, the dilemma she describes above appears to more closely fit the circumstances of the Jewish police in the ghettos).⁶⁹ On the other hand, after attending the Israeli trial of the perpetrator Adolf Eichmann in 1961, Arendt published *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, in which she aggressively censures the activities of the *Judenräte* and Jewish police. While some argue that Arendt never intended to judge the Jewish leaders,⁷⁰ her language clearly condemns their actions. Arendt draws heavily on Hilberg's work, arguing that without the "collaboration" of Jewish leaders, "the total number of victims would hardly have been between four and a half and six million people."⁷¹ Many critics contest the depth of Arendt's understanding of conditions in the ghettos and her sweeping generalizations regarding the *Judenräte*.⁷²

Criticisms of Jewish behavior began long before the Eichmann trial. Indeed, denunciations of the "inaction" of Jews were made during the war itself by members of the Jewish resistance. Such criticism is exemplified in the partisan leader Abba Kovner's oft-repeated declaration that the Jews of the Vilna Ghetto must not go to their deaths like "sheep to the slaughter."⁷³ There was also considerable conflict between the *Judenräte* and resistance groups in the ghettos, and "privileged" Jews in the camps were vilified both during and after the war.⁷⁴ After the liberation, a number of *Kapos*, including Jewish *Kapos*, were murdered as "collaborators" by survivors or executed en masse by Soviet forces.⁷⁵ The problem of judgment became a divisive issue in Israel when public discoveries and denunciations of former "privileged" Jews led to what came to be known as the "Kapo Trials" (1951–1964).⁷⁶ During the approximately forty trials that took place, several defendants were acquitted; those found guilty were given light sentences; and the one case of a

death penalty was commuted to a ten-year imprisonment.⁷⁷ Idith Zertal suggests that the trials were “purges” motivated by political agendas and aimed at “the lowly and the trivial.”⁷⁸ These problematic trials of Jewish “collaborators” serve as the basis of *Kapo*, one of the documentary films to be analyzed in chapter 3.

A statement in a postwar report by Rudolf Kastner, a former Jewish leader in Hungary and the focus of the most prominent legal case involving a “privileged” Jew, closely reflects Levi’s ideas in its account of the situation *Judenrat* officials faced:

Common sense is almost incapable of drawing the line between self-sacrifice and betrayal. ... To judge the *Judenräte* after the fact, on the basis of testimonies, documents and sources—this is a task that is beyond the capacity of any human tribunal.⁷⁹

Lawrence Douglas writes that the demonization of Kastner, who was accused by the presiding judge of selling his “soul to the devil,” reveals the widespread tendency to examine Jewish behavior in “Manichean terms.”⁸⁰ Later, in the formation of Israel’s national identity, themes of resistance and martyrdom superseded criticisms of survivor behavior. These developments underline the importance of Levi’s warning against ethical Manicheanisms and discourses about “heroism,” which cannot encapsulate the complex ethical dilemmas of “privileged” Jews. The historiographical debate over Jewish behavior during the Holocaust has also pivoted on the binary opposition constructed by the terms “collaboration” and “resistance,” further bearing out the problem of judgment.

The debate over Jewish responses to Nazi persecution often condemns or glorifies Jews who, depending on the judgment, are labeled “collaborators” or “resisters” respectively. This arguably simplifies the complex influences on, and nature of, Jewish behavior and deviates considerably from Levi’s warning against employing ethical Manicheanisms. Discussions of “collaboration” first arose in the context of the Vichy regime’s relationship with the Nazis in France,⁸¹ and the negative connotations of the term render its use in relation to “privileged” Jews dubious at best.⁸² In what might align more closely with Levi’s ideas, Yehuda Bauer’s reflection on “privileged” Jews in *Rethinking the Holocaust* (2001) usefully distinguishes between “cooperation,” which he says signifies “unwillingly yielding to superior force,” and “collaboration,” which he says stands for “collusion based on identical ideological premises or a conviction that the Germans would win the war.”⁸³ Under these definitions, Jews seldom, if ever, collaborated with their Nazi oppressors. On the other hand, the judgment and representation of the controversial

behavior of "privileged" Jews often hinges on the positive appraisal, if not glorification, of Jewish "resistance."

The disagreement between historians regarding what constitutes Jewish resistance during the Holocaust has often involved those who argue that resistance is characterized only by armed action and those who extend the concept to incorporate more passive forms.⁸⁴ Hilberg conceptualizes Jewish resistance as referring exclusively to direct opposition that impeded the perpetrator, and he is very critical of Jewish leaders for not having encouraged this response. Yet there is an extensive literature that disputes claims made by Hilberg in *The Destruction of the European Jews* that resistance was unusual, and which stresses the vast array of obstacles to armed resistance in the camps and ghettos.⁸⁵ Hilberg's definition of resistance is considerably narrower than Bauer's more inclusive definition, which includes any conscious action—individual or collective, armed or unarmed—that was taken "in opposition to known or surmised laws, actions and intentions" directed against Jews by Germans and their collaborators.⁸⁶ Despite disagreements over its definition and scope, "resistance" is generally perceived as involving clear-cut, virtuous acts that can be portrayed in an unambiguous, "heroic" manner. Indeed, Levi's characterization of the inhabitants of the grey zone seems to exclude any individuals involved in active "resistance."

Levi writes of those "privileged" political prisoners who were also "members of secret defense organisations," stating that these functionaries "were not at all, or only apparently, collaborators, but on the contrary were camouflaged opponents."⁸⁷ In this way, he seems to view resistance and the behavior of "privileged" Jews as incompatible, separate phenomena. Likewise, Philip Friedman views anything that constitutes "non-collaboration" as Jewish resistance.⁸⁸ I argue that this issue is far from clear-cut due to the inherently ambiguous nature of some acts of resistance on the part of victims. To be sure, many acts of what may be termed "resistance" by "privileged" Jews might also be seen to involve an element of "moral compromise." For example, Gisella Perl and Miklos Nyiszli, who were both prisoner doctors in Auschwitz-Birkenau, saved fellow prisoners from death while simultaneously aiding Josef Mengele in his medical experiments.⁸⁹ There are also many accounts of members of the Jewish police rescuing individual Jews from deportation while participating in the process of rounding up others.⁹⁰ Such extreme situations not only render judgment problematic, but raise considerable challenges for representation. With these interrelated problems in mind, judgment is conceptualized here as a "limit" of representation.

Approaching Liminal Figures: Judgment as a “Limit” of Representation

Conventional vocabulary limps through a situation that allows no heroic response, no acceptable gesture of protest. . . . This predatory profile of survival, when fear of such death, not affirmation of a basic human dignity, drives men and women to behavior they would not consider under normal circumstances, confirms another moment when reality defeats both a language of judgment and a mode of moral behavior.

—Lawrence L. Langer, “*The Dilemma of Choice in the Deathcamps*”⁹¹

Despite highlighting major obstacles to the representation of the Holocaust, Levi never intimates that it should not be represented. Indeed, in response to Theodor Adorno’s oft-cited proclamation that “after Auschwitz, to write a poem is barbaric,”⁹² Levi ironically commented in an interview that “after Auschwitz it is barbaric to write poetry except about Auschwitz.”⁹³ There is widespread agreement among scholars that the question of *if* the Holocaust should be represented has given way to *how* it should be portrayed.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, the paradoxical notion of “representing the unrepresentable” is a foundational idea underlying the writings of the Holocaust historian Saul Friedländer and many others, with the problematic variously termed “speaking the unspeakable,” “comprehending the incomprehensible,” and so on.⁹⁵ The impossibility yet inevitability of passing judgment on “privileged” Jews (discussed further in chapter 1) may be fitted in here as well.

While a considerable critical literature has been preoccupied with the (un)representability of the Holocaust experience, little explicit attention has been given to the place of moral judgment in representations of Jews, particularly those holding “privileged” positions.⁹⁶ Friedländer points out that the events of the Holocaust are often perceived as “so extreme and so unusual that they are considered events at the limits, posing unique problems of interpretation and representation.”⁹⁷ He addresses the necessity of both maintaining the memory of the past through representation and avoiding its distortion in his introduction to the seminal collection, *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the “Final Solution”* (1992). He argues that “there are limits to representation *which should not be but can easily be transgressed*. What the characteristics of such a transgression are, however, is far more intractable than our definitions have so far been able to encompass.”⁹⁸ By highlighting the intersection between Levi’s writing on the grey zone and the notion of “representational limits,” I propose that the ethical dilemmas confronting “privileged” Jews may be seen to give rise to a “limit” of judgment.⁹⁹

The problems or "limits" of representation are crucial, for as Claire Colebrook writes in her general study of ethics and representation, "Representation marks a limit, a point beyond which knowledge cannot go: a recognition of the point of view of knowledge. For knowledge's very possibility lies in perspective, point of view, position and finitude."¹⁰⁰ However, the problems with, rather than possibilities of, Holocaust representations are often the sole focus of scholarly reflection. While the obstacles encountered by writers and filmmakers when representing "privileged" Jews are addressed in this book, the chapters that follow also highlight the *potentialities* for a nuanced representation of these figures. Many commentators contend that conventional techniques, whether literary, historiographical, or artistic, are particularly inadequate for representing such a traumatic and incomprehensible event as the Holocaust. While it appears that the extreme situations confronted by "privileged" Jews should be represented, there are undeniably considerable obstacles to doing so in what might be termed an "authentic" manner.

One problem to be considered is that the vast majority of "privileged" Jews have left no testimony of their own, which raises the question of how others can represent their experiences. For instance, very few *Sonderkommando* members lived out the war, and fewer still have spoken of their experiences or written memoirs.¹⁰¹ Annette Wieviorka suggests that "certain categories of survivors" have tended to abstain from recalling their experiences, highlighting "privileged" Jews as a case in point.¹⁰² Nonetheless, those holding "privileged" positions in the camps and ghettos make frequent appearances in survivor testimonies and other modes of representation.¹⁰³ In the field of life-writing, G. Couser emphasizes the ethical obligations an author has when "representing vulnerable subjects," who "are unable to represent themselves in writing or to offer meaningful consent to their representation by someone else."¹⁰⁴ These problems may be seen to apply more widely to genres other than life-writing and are of particular relevance to the situations of "privileged" Jews—situations that arguably contribute to the "empathetic incomprehensibility" of the Holocaust.¹⁰⁵ As these liminal figures invariably perished along with other victims of the Holocaust, it is important to examine representations of them with a critical eye.

The need to suspend moral judgment of "privileged" Jews, as espoused by Levi, can be connected to the influential anti-redemptory approach taken by some theorists of Holocaust representation. For example, James Young identifies what he terms an "anti-redemptory aesthetic" in Friedländer's writings, which self-consciously exposes "its own limitations, its inability to provide eternal answers and stable meaning,"

while “call[ing] for an aesthetics that devotes itself primarily to the dilemmas of representation, an anti-redemptory history of the Holocaust that resists closure, sustains uncertainty, and allows us to live without full understanding.”¹⁰⁶ Oren Stier likewise stresses the value of a self-conscious approach, arguing that “the ideal form of Holocaust memory bears within it a sense of its own deconstructive potential.”¹⁰⁷ Significantly, in his reflection on the problem of judging “privileged” Jews, LaCapra writes that “something like a middle voice that suspended judgment or approached it only in the most tentative terms might be called for.”¹⁰⁸ Through exploring the use of anti-redemptory and self-reflexive discourses by some writers and filmmakers, I examine the potential for these modes to facilitate a nuanced representation of “privileged” Jews, if not the suspension of judgment.

One of the premises of this book is that language is never neutral or value-free, and I contend that judgment is inherent in all forms of representation. Drawing heavily on the work of the postmodern theorist Hayden White, William Guynn writes that unmediated representation does not exist and that this applies to “all levels and all units of discourse.”¹⁰⁹ He states:

There is nothing within discourse, written or filmic, which bears infallible witness to the “truth” or “falsehood” of a field of reference. We accept “truth” or *judge* it according to signs of truth we find in the text, but these signs can be—and in certain realist texts both fictional and documentary often are—simulated.¹¹⁰

Indeed, if one considers Richard Freadman’s discussion of representation as narration that goes beyond “mere physical ‘facts’” to involve “subjective individual feelings, and interpretations of what various ‘facts’ mean in historical, moral and other terms,”¹¹¹ it is perhaps unsurprising that representations of “privileged” Jews are permeated with moral judgments of their behavior. An investigation of Levi’s own writings provides crucial insights into the simultaneous impossibility and inevitability of judgment. A massive literature has focused on Levi’s life and writings, reinforcing his status as one of the foremost witnesses to the Holocaust.¹¹² However, relatively little attention has been paid to the implications of his essay on the grey zone for the issue of judgment, and there has been no sustained discussion of his own representation of “privileged” Jews.

By invoking the need to suspend judgment, Levi implicitly calls for a nuanced representation of “privileged” Jews. However, while at times he seems confident that judgment of “privileged” Jews can be suspended, at other times his writing suggests that it is unclear whether suspend-

ing judgment of these figures is possible. Early in "The Grey Zone" he writes: "The condition of the offended does not exclude culpability, and this is often objectively serious, but I know of no human tribunal to which one could delegate the judgment."¹¹³ This statement seems to suggest that while "privileged" Jews *are* to be blamed and found morally responsible for their behavior, it *might* be the case that nobody can take such a position. In asserting that "privileged" Jews should not be judged, it is evident that Levi's judgment precedes this. Even in the midst of questioning the possibility of judgment, he appears to make tentative judgments about the behavior of Jews *in extremis*, suggesting some form of compulsion to judge. While Levi is highly regarded for his sophisticated and unemotional prose, his own representation of those he argues should not be judged reveals that he himself struggled to suspend judgment. Chapter 1, "*La 'Zona Grigia': The Paradox of Judgment in Primo Levi's 'Grey Zone,'*" explores the evolution of Levi's concept of the grey zone in order to investigate the origins of his ideas. Levi's grey zone is a multilayered, often contradictory concept, and his own portrayal of "privileged" Jews highlights the limit of judgment in his testimony.

Friedländer stresses that the "limits of representation" apply to all forms of representation but always in different ways.¹¹⁴ Indeed, he fully expects that the obstacles to understanding the Holocaust will remain "even if new forms of historical narrative were to develop, or new modes of representation, and even if literature and art were to probe the past from unexpected vantage points."¹¹⁵ With the "limit" of judgment in mind, this book turns to the ways in which judgment is passed in the work of Raul Hilberg, documentaries, and fiction films. It must be stressed here that it is not my intention to formulate value judgments regarding which genre best represents "privileged" Jews, but to reveal the problems and possibilities of representing their experiences and behavior in different modes.

In alignment with Arendt's argument regarding *Judenrat* complicity, Bettelheim writes: "In retrospect, it is quite clear that only utter non-cooperation on the part of the Jews could have offered a small chance of forcing a different solution on Hitler. This conclusion is not an indictment of Jews living or dead, but an empirical finding of history."¹¹⁶ Such a statement overlooks the crucial importance of the ways in which historians construct the past in their research through their selection, arrangement, organization, and analysis of their evidence, and it raises the question of how these decisions impact on their representation(s) of "privileged" Jews. While stressing that historians should be aware of the influence of their own personal context and ideological outlook,

LaCapra notes that objectivity remains “a goal of professional historiography related to the attempt to represent the past as accurately as possible.”¹¹⁷ Significantly, he argues that Hilberg’s “unquestionably important and groundbreaking” study, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, reveals a marked “insensitivity” toward the *Judenräte*, portraying them “in a distanced and harshly critical way, largely oblivious to the double binds or impossible situations in which Nazi policy placed these councils.”¹¹⁸ LaCapra’s criticism of Hilberg’s negative judgment of “privileged” Jews necessitates the question of *how* Hilberg reveals this judgment in his publications. Chapter 2, “The Judgment of ‘Privileged’ Jews in the Work of Raul Hilberg,” investigates the ways in which Hilberg—who positions himself as aiming to “objectively” reveal how the Holocaust was possible—judges Jewish leaders of the time. A close analysis of the techniques used in Hilberg’s major text and subsequent writings examines whether his work shows any engagement with the choiceless choices that confronted “privileged” Jews.

Anna Reading notes that “historical texts are in continual re-articulation with other cultural forms through which the past is also handed down,” particularly films.¹¹⁹ An ever-expanding literature on Holocaust film has contributed much to legitimizing it as an important field of research,¹²⁰ however, little attention has been given to the ways in which films have represented “privileged” Jews. As noted earlier, Levi’s skeptical attitude toward the medium of film had a particularly strong influence on his conceptualization of the grey zone. In relation to the main concern of this book, relevant and notable examples of documentary films and fiction films are explored in order to highlight the possibilities each genre holds for the representation of “privileged” Jews.

An often neglected aspect of the crucial importance of Hilberg’s work and persona can be found in his influence on Claude Lanzmann’s seminal film, *Shoah*, which serves as an ideal bridge between my investigation of Hilberg’s writings and my subsequent analysis of various other films. In *Shoah*, Lanzmann uses the on-screen figure of Hilberg to represent the Jewish leader Adam Czerniakow in a considerably different manner from Hilberg’s scholarly publications. Indeed, *Shoah* may be viewed as challenging the strong dichotomy that has developed between discussions of “historical” and “imaginative” Holocaust texts and discourses (frequently at the expense of the latter).¹²¹ Some commentators argue that artistic representations are more capable of revealing a historical “essence.” Levi himself states that documentary evidence “almost never has the power to give us the depths of a human being; for this purpose the dramatist or poet are more appropriate than the historian or psychologist.”¹²² This book therefore investigates what poten-

tialities for representing "privileged" Jews are revealed in Lanzmann's film and other Holocaust documentaries. *Shoah*'s intricate relationship with history also highlights the need to distinguish between the genres of documentary and fiction film.

In an attempt to define the specificity of the documentary form, Guynn notes that "the documentarist—or rather the plurality of artists and technicians who produce the film—exclude and order, and form the discourse in a continuous succession of operations."¹²³ However, the same may be said of the process of producing a fiction film. Indeed, the boundary between nonfiction and fiction is often intentionally blurred in the medium of film, and some Holocaust-related productions self-consciously aim to situate themselves in between the two genres.¹²⁴ Nonetheless, while the stylistic features of documentary film invariably bear similarities to those of fiction film, along with the preeminence of narrative in both genres, documentary may be defined by a reliance on a so-called "truth claim." Keith Beattie identifies the presence of this "truth claim" as "a tacit contractual agreement or bond of trust between documentary producers ... and an audience that the representation is based on the actual socio-historical world, not a fictional world imaginatively conceived."¹²⁵ Documentary filmmakers portray "real" historical figures in certain ways, often through on-screen interviews that have been edited in postproduction. Of course, the possession of a truth claim—developed through this and other techniques—does not mean that documentaries by nature portray history more "accurately" than fictional representations (although many documentaries implicitly suggest this).

The influential theorist of documentary representation, Bill Nichols, exposes the strategies, structures, and stylistics of documentaries, showing them to be anything but objective vehicles of historical representation.¹²⁶ Reworking Nichols's contention that all documentaries convey "a particular viewpoint" or "argument,"¹²⁷ Noël Carroll characterizes such works as consisting of a "presumptive assertion," or assertive stance, that plays on audience expectations of what is "real."¹²⁸ Indeed, the fundamental tendencies of documentary film have been identified elsewhere as not only to "record," but to "persuade," "interrogate," and "express."¹²⁹ This reveals the prevalence of implicit (and often explicit) ideological positions within documentary work, hence it must be asked what implications the use of filmic techniques in constructing such "arguments" in Holocaust documentaries might have for the judgment of "privileged" Jews. Chapter 3, "Bridging History and Cinema: 'Privileged' Jews in Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* and Other Holocaust Documentaries," will compare and contrast the representation of "privileged"

Jews in Lanzmann's singular film and in what may be considered more conventional Holocaust documentaries, principally Ben-Mayor and Seton's *Kapo*. Unlike *Shoah*, the latter film relies on devices such as narrative voiceover, archival footage, and a musical score. Lanzmann's film is particularly interesting in relation to the notion of a documentary film's "assertive stance," as at times Lanzmann seemingly eschews a concrete position regarding "privileged" Jews. On the other hand, *Kapo* directly engages with the problem of judgment by framing its representation with details of Israel's controversial Kapo Trials.

Like documentaries, fiction films also have ideological underpinnings, although the manner in which these are constructed reveals considerable differences between the two genres. First, there is the need to take into account the wider dissemination and commercial considerations of fiction films. The release of feature films in cinemas, their availability in the form of home (and online) entertainment, and their frequent use as educational resources in the classroom attests to their importance to collective memories of the Holocaust.¹³⁰ "Mainstream" films are primarily influenced by financial considerations in the form of box office receipts. While this acknowledgment does not suggest that fiction films are a subject unworthy of analysis, it is important to take into consideration the money-oriented goals of filmmakers within this genre. "Hollywood" films in particular prioritize entertainment and often draw on conventions such as action, romance, and sentimentality to attract the widest audience possible. In order to do this, Holocaust fiction films may romanticize or universalize Jewish resistance by portraying their protagonists heroically and ending on a sentimental note of survival, hope, and triumph. A filmmaker's employment of an emotive musical score and sympathetic characterization of certain figures, for example, can make strong appeals to audience identification. Such a strategy potentially lends itself to clear-cut moral judgments.

Providing an "accurate" portrayal of the Holocaust is generally not the primary concern of fiction filmmakers, although much of the literature on Holocaust film suggests an "authentic" representation of the event is a filmmaker's obligation.¹³¹ Fiction films are frequently the target of virulent criticism. Many descriptors are employed by scholars for what they perceive as filmmakers' alleged misuse of the Holocaust, including (among others) "trivialization," "banalization," "vulgarization," "manipulation," "simplification," "falsification," and "exploitation." This perspective is particularly prevalent in critiques of the "Americanization" or "Hollywoodization" of the Holocaust, reflected in Langer's statement that "upbeat endings seem to be *de rigueur* for the American imagination, which traditionally buries its tragedies and lets them fes-

ter in the shadow of forgetfulness."¹³² In response to widespread negative attitudes toward Holocaust cinema, the analysis of fiction films in the final substantive chapter of this book raises the question of whether or not the genre has the potential to provide a nuanced representation of "privileged" Jews. In contrast to documentary representations of actual historical figures on the screen, characters in fiction films are constructed through the use of actors and scripted dramatization. Chapter 4, "Portraying 'Privileged' Jews in Fiction Films: The Potential to Suspend Judgment?" analyzes two considerably different approaches by filmmakers in their fictional dramatization of "privileged" Jews, beginning with the representation of Jewish police in *Schindler's List*. The reliance on a redemptory aesthetic in Spielberg's film is then contrasted with a recent trend in Holocaust fiction films that rejects a number of mainstream conventions. By engaging directly with Levi's ideas on the problem of judgment, Nelson's depiction of members of an Auschwitz *Sonderkommando* in *The Grey Zone* will be shown to self-consciously resist and respond to Spielberg's sentimental strategies. Just as an exploration of Levi's multifaceted concept of the grey zone provides a highly valuable framework through which to understand the representation of "privileged" Jews in Nelson's film, the engagement with Levi's ideas within *The Grey Zone* reveals much about Levi's concept and its attendant problems (and possibilities) of judgment and representation.

The unease that addressing the subject of "privileged" Jews evokes is understandable, perhaps even necessary. Responses to the issue at Holocaust and Holocaust-related conferences and other public forums seem often to be split between intense dismissals of the subject and sincere interest in it. Tentative comments and questions that perhaps reveal an anxiety about "saying the wrong thing" are common. When I visited the Sydney Jewish Museum in Australia, in 2012, I was told by one guide that she dared not raise the issue when talking to students and other visitors; it was too difficult. On the other hand, when I organized a film screening relating to this subject at the Jewish Holocaust Centre in Melbourne that same year, the interactive discussion and debate between the panel of guest speakers and the audience lasted more than twice as long as the film itself. My experiences of how the issue is negotiated (or otherwise) in the public domain may be far from representative, yet two things seem to me to be abundantly clear: that judgments of "privileged" Jews are prevalent and that they are also frequently problematic. The same may be said of the treatment of these figures in Holocaust representations across many (or all) genres. In practical terms, given the extreme situations they confronted, where refusal to comply with their persecutors meant possible, likely, or even certain death, any

condemnation of the cooperation of “privileged” Jews—communicated explicitly or implicitly—is equivalent to pronouncing “you should have died instead (by your own hand or at the hands of the Nazis).” Such a judgment under any circumstances is a controversial one, and in the circumstances of Holocaust victims perhaps considerably more so. This is one reason why reflecting on the judgments of “privileged” Jews is of crucial importance, something that Primo Levi recognizes fully in his writing.

Notes

1. Quoted in Jadwiga Bezwinska, and Danuta Czech, eds., *Amidst a Nightmare of Crime: Manuscripts of Prisoners in Crematorium Squads Found at Auschwitz* (New York: Howard Fertig, [1973] 1992), 136, 139. Most of the approximately thirty buried testimonies were never discovered and only one of the authors survived the war. For further discussion, see Nathan Cohen, “Diaries of the *Sonderkommando*,” in *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, ed. Yisrael Gutman and Michael Berenbaum (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein, and Adalbert Rückerl, eds., *Nazi Mass Murder: A Documentary History of the Use of Poison Gas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 142–45. Parts of this chapter have been published as Adam Brown, “Beyond ‘Good’ and ‘Evil’: Breaking Down Binary Oppositions in Holocaust Representations of ‘Privileged’ Jews,” *History Compass* 8, no. 5 (May 2010): 407–18.
2. Varying numbers of prisoners made up the *Sonderkommandos* in the death camps of Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka, and up to a thousand men at a time were assigned to work in the crematoria of Birkenau.
3. Lucie Adelsberger, *Auschwitz: A Doctor’s Story* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995), 79.
4. It is important to note that the terms *Ordnungsdienst* and *Sonderkommando* also designated military formations of German perpetrators and their collaborators.
5. See Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (London: Michael Joseph, [1986] 1988), 22–51.
6. Levi highlights the widespread use of the term in his essay on the grey zone, to be discussed further. See Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 26–27.
7. Susan L. Pentlin, “Holocaust Victims of Privilege,” in *Problems Unique to the Holocaust*, ed. Harry James Cargas (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 39, 26.
8. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 9.
9. *Ibid.*, 41, 43.
10. *Ibid.*, 43, 49.
11. *Ibid.*, 9.
12. John K. Roth, *Ethics During and After the Holocaust: In the Shadow of Birkenau* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 60 (my emphasis).
13. See, for instance, the texts highlighted as key teaching resources in Robert Eaglestone and Barry Langford, “Introduction,” in *Teaching Holocaust Literature and Film*, ed. Robert Eaglestone and Barry Langford (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 7–8. Nelson’s *The Grey Zone* is also mentioned here.

14. Geoffrey H. Hartman, "Closing Remarks," in *Lessons and Legacies, Volume 1: The Meaning of the Holocaust in a Changing World*, ed. Peter Hayes (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 329 (author's emphasis).
15. See Marlene E. Heinemann, *Gender and Destiny: Women Writers and the Holocaust* (Westport: Greenwood, 1986), 87–108.
16. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 29.
17. For details of prisoner hierarchies in the camps, see Paul R. Bartrop, *Surviving the Camps: Unity in Adversity During the Holocaust* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2000), 27–31.
18. On the various types and locations of ghettos, see Philip Friedman, *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust* (New York: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980), 74–76. Many smaller ghettos constructed later in the war were only short-lived, with the population being quickly deported to an extermination camp or disposed of by mass shootings.
19. Isaiah Trunk, "The Organizational Structure of the Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe," in *Yad Vashem Studies on the European Jewish Catastrophe and Resistance VII*, ed. Livia Rothkirchen (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1968), 147. For his major work, see Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Scarborough, [1972] 1977).
20. Krystyna Żywulska, quoted in Barbara Engelking, *Holocaust and Memory: The Experience of the Holocaust and Its Consequences: An Investigation Based on Personal Narratives* (London: Leicester University Press, 2001), 129.
21. Ghettos holding fewer than ten thousand Jews formed a council of twelve members, while councils of ghettos with more than ten thousand consisted of twenty-four members. In the Ukraine, a chairman was appointed in each location to select a (short-lived) council of three to ten members. See Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941–44* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 32. While the main focus here is Eastern European ghettos, it is important to note that there were also centralized Jewish institutions formed in other countries.
22. According to one estimate, approximately 80 percent of *Judenrat* officials were killed by the Nazis. See Peter J. Haas, *Morality After Auschwitz: The Radical Challenge of the Nazi Ethic* (Philadelphia: Fortress, [1988] 1992), 161. Jewish leaders from Central or Western Europe were generally deported to Theresienstadt or Bergen-Belsen, and those in Eastern Europe to death camps.
23. Research points to at least forty acts of suicide by *Judenrat* officials. See Jacob Robinson, *And the Crooked Shall Be Made Straight: The Eichmann Trial, the Jewish Catastrophe, and Hannah Arendt's Narrative* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1965), 186.
24. Calel Perechodnik, *Am I a Murderer?: Testament of a Jewish Ghetto Policeman*, trans. Frank Fox (Boulder: Westview, 1996), xxi. For another example of this rare testimony, see Stanislaw Adler, *In the Warsaw Ghetto 1940–1943: An Account of a Witness* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1982).
25. For further discussion, see Adam Brown, "Trauma and Holocaust Video Testimony: The Intersection of History, Memory and Judgment in the Interview Process," *Traumatology: An International Journal—Special Issue: History, Memory, and Trauma* 15, no. 4 (December 2009), 44–45.
26. This term is taken from the title of Rousset's highly influential work, published in English as David Rousset, *A World Apart*, trans. Yvonne Moyses and Roger Senhouse (London: Secker and Warburg, [1946] 1951).
27. Ella Lingens-Reiner, *Prisoners of Fear* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1948), 82.

28. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 27. While Levi's main focus is Auschwitz, it should be noted that there existed several different types of camps, including prison, transit, labor, extermination, and "multipurpose" camps. In all of these, "privileged" positions were occupied by prisoners. Auschwitz combined labor camps and extermination facilities, incarcerated a much larger number of Jewish prisoners, and saw a higher (though still extremely low) survival rate, thus giving rise to more postwar testimonies and other representations. In the extermination camps, where most arrivals were gassed within a few hours, only a small number of Jews were (temporarily) kept alive to work in the *Sonderkommandos*. There were approximately fifty survivors of Sobibor, forty from Treblinka, four from Chelmno, and two from Belzec. These numbers are taken from Lawrence L. Langer, *Versions of Survival: The Holocaust and the Human Spirit* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982), 254–55n.7.
29. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 62–63. "Prominents" was a category officially introduced by the Nazis in 1942.
30. See Primo Levi, *If This Is a Man; and, The Truce*, trans. Stuart Woolf (London: Abacus, [1979] 1995), 96–97. For further reflections on *Kapos* that highlight the varied circumstances and judgments that have been attributed to them, see Elie A. Cohen, *Human Behaviour in the Concentration Camp*, trans. M. H. Braaksma (London: Jonathan Cape, 1954), 200–203; Rousset, *A World Apart*, 78–81.
31. The literature on the evolution of the Nazis' genocidal policy is immense, although the vast majority of historians now hold that the "decision" to exterminate all European Jews occurred between June 1941 and early 1942. It should be noted here that the distinction made between the persecution of Jewish and non-Jewish victims is a historiographical one; no value judgment is being rendered about which group suffered "more" or "less."
32. Levi, *If This Is a Man; and, The Truce*, 32. Levi's account draws specifically on his experiences in the labor camp Buna-Monowitz (Auschwitz III).
33. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 27.
34. *Ibid.*, 33. In discussing the "blurred" dividing line during a 1984 interview, Levi stated that while both victims and perpetrators could be seen to have undergone "dehumanization," for the former it was imposed, and for the latter "more or less chosen." Quoted in Marco Vigevani, "Words, Memory, Hope (1984)," in *The Voice of Memory: Interviews 1961–87*, ed. Marco Belpoliti and Robert Gordon (Cambridge: Polity, [1997] 2001), 253.
35. Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 210n.18.
36. Didier Pollefeyt makes a useful distinction by defining both perpetrators and victims as "free" human beings on an anthropological level and positing a marked difference in the "freedom" of both groups on an ethical level. See John K. Roth, ed., *Ethics After the Holocaust: Perspectives, Critiques, and Responses* (St. Paul: Paragon House, 1999), 128.
37. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 23.
38. *Ibid.*, 22.
39. *Ibid.*
40. Bryan Cheyette, "The Uncertain Certainty of *Schindler's List*," in *Spielberg's Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on Schindler's List*, ed. Yosefa Loshitzky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 227.
41. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 25.
42. Victor Brombert, *In Praise of Antiheroes: Figures and Themes in Modern European Literature, 1830–1980* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 8–9.

43. Ronnie Landau, "The Holocaust: The Unique and the Universal," in *Film, History and the Jewish Experience: A Reader*, ed. Jonathan Davis (London: National Film Theatre, 1986), 11.
44. Reflecting on the "limits of morality," the philosopher John Kekes questions the assumption that morality is solely concerned with chosen actions and agents, preferring an Aristotelian-inspired "character-morality" that prioritizes "virtue" over a Kantian-influenced "choice-morality." Nonetheless, Kekes concedes that an evaluation of "choice" must be what judgment turns to when "unexpected or unusual situations occur for which moral education has not prepared agents." See John Kekes, *Facing Evil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 94.
45. For a detailed analysis of the intersection between Levi's grey zone and Langer's writings, see Ruth Leys, *From Guilt to Shame: Auschwitz and After* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 18–24.
46. Langer, *Versions of Survival*, 72.
47. *Ibid.*, 146.
48. Slavoj Žižek, *Enjoy Your Symptom!: Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2001), 74. It is also noteworthy that Žižek gives attention to the notion of "forced choice," drawing on the "Sophie's Choice" of popular culture as a "limit case." See Žižek, *Enjoy Your Symptom!*, 69–77.
49. Levi, *If This Is a Man*; and, *The Truce*, 104.
50. Irene Kajon, "Auschwitz as Crucial Experiment: The Lord's Suffering Servant in the Interpretation of André Neher and Emmanuel Levinas," in *Good and Evil After Auschwitz: Ethical Implications for Today*, ed. Jack Bemporad, John T. Pawlikowski, and Joseph Sievers (Hoboken: KTAV, 2000), 192 (my emphasis). For another example of this kind of interpretation, see Melissa Raphael, *The Female Face of God in Auschwitz: A Jewish Feminist Theology of the Holocaust* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
51. Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy* (New York: Pocket, [1959] 1977), 212–13.
52. Bruno Bettelheim, *The Informed Heart* (London: Penguin, [1960] 1988), 264. See also the (not always consistent) analyses of "Individual and Mass Behavior in Extreme Situations" and "Surviving" in Bruno Bettelheim, *Surviving and Other Essays* (London: Thames and Hudson, [1952] 1979), 48–83, 274–314. Importantly, Bettelheim had been incarcerated in the prison camps of Dachau and Buchenwald in 1938–39, hence arguably did not witness the kinds of persecution and situations facing the majority of Jews during the Holocaust.
53. Terrence Des Pres, *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camps* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1976] 1980), vii.
54. Lawrence L. Langer, "Redefining Heroic Behavior: The Impromptu Self and the Holocaust Experience," in *The Holocaust: Origins, Implementation, Aftermath*, ed. Omer Bartov (London: Routledge, 2000), 237.
55. Langer, *Versions of Survival*, 74.
56. *Ibid.*, 95.
57. *Ibid.*, 97.
58. *Ibid.*, 4 (my emphasis).
59. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 129.
60. *Ibid.* Similar attitudes toward the *Judenräte* can be found in Robert Rozett, *Approaching the Holocaust: Texts and Contexts* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2005), 90; Haas, *Morality After Auschwitz*, 136; Berel Lang, *Act and Idea in the Nazi Genocide* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 75.
61. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 23–24.
62. Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 134.

63. Massimo Giuliani, "Aberrant Freedom and Impious Heroism: Observations on Conscience and Suspension of Ethical Evaluation in the Auschwitz Case," in Bemporad, Pawlikowski, and Sievers, *Good and Evil After Auschwitz*; Abigail L. Rosenthal, "The Right Way to Act: Indicting the Victims," in *Echoes from the Holocaust: Philosophical Reflections on a Dark Time*, ed. Alan Rosenberg and Gerald E. Myers (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988); Richard L. Rubenstein, "Gray into Black: The Case of Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski," in *Gray Zones: Ambiguity and Compromise in the Holocaust and Its Aftermath*, ed. Jonathan Petropoulos and John K. Roth (New York: Berghahn, 2006). For a highly abstract discussion of the *Judenräte* (problematically termed "Selectors") that fails to address the complexity of their ethical dilemmas, see Frances M. Kamm, "Harming Some to Save Others from the Nazis," in *Moral Philosophy and the Holocaust*, ed. Eve Garrard and Geoffrey Scarre (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).
64. Rubenstein, "Gray into Black," 308.
65. See the many criticisms of Jewish behavior in David H. Jones, *Moral Responsibility in the Holocaust: A Study in the Ethics of Character* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), 171–97.
66. Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 165 (my emphasis).
67. Hannah Arendt, *The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age* (New York: Grove, 1978), 249.
68. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, [1951] 1966), 452.
69. Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, revised ed. (New York: Penguin, [1965] 1994), 123. However, Arendt herself appears to contradict her argument when she accuses the Jewish *Sonderkommandos* of "commit[ing] criminal acts" when they were employed in the "actual killing process." *Ibid.*, 91. Members of the *Sonderkommandos* mainly worked with corpses and never handled the gas, therefore they were not involved in the "actual killing process." Similarities can be seen here between Arendt's reflection on the crematorium workers and the difficulty Levi encounters when representing those he argues should not be judged (addressed in chapter 1).
70. See, for example, Richard J. Bernstein, *Hannah Arendt and the Jewish Question* (Cambridge: Polity, 1996), 161–63.
71. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 125. A similar controversy was sparked in the Netherlands by the work of Jacques Presser, who described the *Judenrat* as "inextricably involved in a *danse macabre* with Satan calling the tune." See Jacques Presser, *Ashes in the Wind: The Destruction of Dutch Jewry*, trans. Arnold Pomerans (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, [1965] 1988), 165 (author's emphasis).
72. See, in particular, Robinson, *And the Crooked Shall Be Made Straight*, 142–226; Barry Sharpe, *Modesty and Arrogance in Judgment: Hannah Arendt's Eichmann in Jerusalem* (Westport: Praeger, 1999), 57–68, 71–83. Arendt's ideas are contrasted with Levi's writing on the grey zone in David H. Hirsch, "The Gray Zone or The Banality of Evil," in Roth, *Ethics After the Holocaust*, 97–103; Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 139–42. Curiously, in Arendt's only discussion of the Jewish councils prior to *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, she praises Jewish historian Léon Poliakov for neither excusing nor accusing, but reporting "fully and faithfully what the sources tell him ... [about] the terrible dilemma of the *Judenräte*, their despair as well as their confusion, their complicity and their sometimes pathetically ludicrous ambitions." From Arendt's review of Poliakov's *Harvest of Hate* in *Commentary* (March 1952), quoted in *Hannah Arendt: For Love of the World*, Elisabeth Young-Bruehl (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 522n.56.

73. Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933–45* (London: Penguin, [1975] 1990), 379.
74. For further discussion, see Dorothy Rabinowitz, *New Lives: Survivors of the Holocaust Living in America* (Lincoln: iUniverse.com, 2000), 177–81, 197.
75. Aaron Hass, *The Aftermath: Living with the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 117; Haas, *Morality After Auschwitz*, 155.
76. At one point, a newspaper called for “collaborators” to be “liquidated,” and during Eichmann’s trial, proceedings were interrupted by violent outbursts from the audience during the testimony of a member of Hungary’s *Judenrat*. See Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust*, trans. Haim Watzman (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 260; Raul Hilberg, *Documents of Destruction: Germany and Jewry, 1933–1945* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1972), 198–99.
77. For further discussion of the trials and their historical context, see Hanna Yablonka, “The Development of Holocaust Consciousness in Israel: The Nuremberg, Kapos, Kastner, and Eichmann Trials,” *Israel Studies* 8, no. 3 (Fall 2003); Orna Ben-Naftali and Yogev Tuval, “Punishing International Crimes Committed by the Persecuted: The Kapo Trials in Israel (1950s–1960s),” *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 4, no. 1 (March 2006); Hanna Yablonka, “The Formation of Holocaust Consciousness in the State of Israel: The Early Days,” in *Breaking Crystal: Writing and Memory After Auschwitz*, ed. Efraim Sicher (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 123–29. Legal trials of “privileged” Jews also occurred in other countries, an account of which is given in Peter Wyden, *Stella* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 273–76. The much-criticized Dutch authority titled the “Jewish Court of Honour” examined twenty-three “privileged” Jews, two of whom asked to be investigated. The “trial” of two council officials eventually broke down and resulted in what amounted to a “moral censure.” See Bob Moore, *Victims and Survivors: The Nazi Persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands 1940–1945* (London: Arnold, 1997), 244–49.
78. Idith Zertal, *Israel’s Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [2002] 2005), 42, 64, 66. It is noteworthy that Zertal draws on Levi’s grey zone. See *ibid.*, 70–71.
79. Quoted in Leora Bilsky, “Judging and Understanding,” *Law and History Review* 19, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 183. For Kastner’s testimony, see Israel Rudolf Kastner, *Der Kastner Bericht über Eichmanns Menschenhandel in Ungarn* (Munich: Kindler, 1961).
80. Lawrence Douglas, *The Memory of Judgment: Making Law and History in the Trials of the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 156. See also Lawrence Douglas, “Language, Judgment, and the Holocaust,” *Law and History Review* 19, no. 1 (Spring 2001), 177–82. When Kastner sued Malchiel Gruenwald in 1955 for libel due to inflammatory remarks on his actions, the presiding judge concluded that Kastner had knowingly “collaborated” with the Nazis; nonetheless, subsequent calls to try Kastner as a “collaborator” were refused, and his name was cleared on appeal in 1958, just after he was murdered. A detailed account can be found in Segev, *The Seventh Million*, 253–320. For more on Kastner, see Ladislaus Löb, *Dealing with Satan: Rezső Kasztner’s Daring Rescue Mission* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2008); Yehuda Bauer, *Jews for Sale?: Nazi-Jewish Negotiations, 1933–1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 145–251; Ruth Linn, *Escaping Auschwitz: A Culture of Forgetting* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004). While the reasons behind Kastner’s assassination remain unclear, Asher Maoz contends that it was probably Halevy’s demonizing remarks “more than anything else, that led to the attack on Kastner and his fatal injuries two years after the delivery of the judgment.” Asher Maoz, “Historical Adjudication: Courts of Law, Commissions of Inquiry, and ‘Historical Truth,’” *Law and History Review* 18, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 592. The legacy of the Kastner trial

- is such that it inspired Motti Lerner's play, *Kastner*, staged in 1985, a controversial television miniseries by Uri Barbash, *The Kastner Trial* (1994), and two novels: Amos Elon, *Timetable: The Story of Joel Brand* (London: Hutchinson, 1980) and Neil Gordon, *Sacrifice of Isaac* (New York: Random House, 1995). A documentary film entitled *Killing Kasztner* has also recently been released.
81. Gerhard Hirschfeld, "Collaboration in Nazi-Occupied France: Some Introductory Remarks," in *Collaboration in France: Politics and Culture during the Nazi Occupation, 1940–1944*, eds. Gerhard Hirschfeld and Patrick Marsh (Oxford: Berg, 1989), 1–3.
 82. Timothy Brook notes that the "capacity of the word [collaboration] to judge, even before we know upon what basis those judgments are being made, interferes with analysis. ... As soon as the word is uttered, it superimposes a moral map over the political landscape it ventures to describe and thus prevents the one from being surveyed except through the other." Timothy Brook, *Collaboration: Japanese Agents and Local Elites in Wartime China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 5. It must be noted here that while Levi employs the term "collaboration" in his essay on the grey zone, his use of the Italian word *collaborazione* does not evoke the negative connotations often associated with the word's English translation (which parallels the Italian word *collaborazioniste*).
 83. Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, [2001] 2002), 148.
 84. See the opposing views expressed in Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 2nd ed. (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), 1030–44, and Yehuda Bauer, *The Jewish Emergence from Powerlessness* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 27–40.
 85. See, for example, Reuban Ainsztein, *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe, with a Historical Survey of the Jew as Fighter and Soldier in the Diaspora* (London: Elek, 1974); Shmuel Krakowski, *The War of the Doomed: Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942–1944*, trans. Orah Blaustein (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1984); Lucien Steinberg, *The Jews Against Hitler (Not as a Lamb)*, trans. Marion Hunter (London: Gordon and Cremonesi, [1970] 1978); Isaiah Trunk, *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution: Collective and Individual Behavior in Extremis* (New York: Stein and Day, 1979).
 86. Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, 119. As all Jews were targeted for extermination, survival itself constituted a passive means of subverting Nazi goals.
 87. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 30.
 88. Philip Friedman, "Problems of Research on the European Jewish Catastrophe," in *The Catastrophe of European Jewry: Antecedents, History, Reflections. Selected Papers*, ed. Yisrael Gutman and Livia Rothkirchen (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976).
 89. See Gisella Perl, *I Was a Doctor in Auschwitz* (Salem: Ayer, [1948] 1992); Miklos Nyiszli, *Auschwitz: A Doctor's Eyewitness Account*, trans. Tibere Kremer and Richard Seaver (New York: Arcade, [1960] 1993).
 90. See, for instance, Wladyslaw Szpilman, *The Pianist*, trans. Anthea Bell (London: Phoenix, [1946] 2002), 105–106. For a discussion of how the behavior of Jewish leaders fits into the debate over Jewish resistance, see Dan Michman, "Jewish Leadership in Extremis," in *The Historiography of the Holocaust*, ed. Dan Stone (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).
 91. Lawrence L. Langer, "The Dilemma of Choice in the Deathcamps," in Rosenberg and Myers, *Echoes from the Holocaust*, 121.
 92. Quoted in Irving Howe, "Writing and the Holocaust," in *Writing and the Holocaust*, ed. Berel Lang (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1988), 179.
 93. Quoted in Anthony Rudolf, "Primo Levi in London (1986)," in Belpoliti and Gordon, *The Voice of Memory*, 28.

94. This point is made in Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 122.
95. Reflecting on this, Dori Laub writes of "the imperative to tell" and the simultaneous "impossibility of telling." See Dori Laub, "An Event without a Witness: Truth, Testimony and Survival," in *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, ed. Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub (New York: Routledge, 1992), 78–80.
96. For examples of this extensive literature, see R. Clifton Spargo and Robert M. Ehrenreich, eds. *After Representation: The Holocaust, Literature, and Culture* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010); Ronit Lentin, ed., *Re-presenting the Shoah for the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Berghahn, 2004); Gary Weissman, *Fantasies of Witnessing: Postwar Efforts to Experience the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004); Michael Bernard-Donals and Richard Glejzer, eds., *Witnessing the Disaster: Essays on Representation and the Holocaust* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003); Sue Vice, ed., *Representing the Holocaust: In Honour of Bryan Burns* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003); Shelley Hornstein and Florence Jacobowitz, eds. *Image and Remembrance: Representation and the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); Michael Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); Michael Bernard-Donals and Richard Glejzer, *Between Witness and Testimony: The Holocaust and the Limits of Representation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001); Lea Warnick Fridman, *Words and Witness: Narrative and Aesthetic Strategies in the Representation of the Holocaust* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000); Andrew Leak and George Paizis, eds., *The Holocaust and the Text: Speaking the Unspeakable* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000). For a useful overview of the literature on the representation of the Holocaust, see Tim Cole, "The Holocaust Industry?": Reflections on a History of the Critique of Holocaust Representation," in *Contemporary Responses to the Holocaust*, ed. Konrad Kwiet and Jürgen Matthäus (Westport: Praeger, 2004).
97. Saul Friedländer, *Memory, History, and the Extermination of the Jews of Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), x.
98. Saul Friedländer, "Introduction," in Friedländer, *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution"* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 3 (author's emphasis).
99. Frank Stern relates the "limits of representation" to "privileged" Jews in another way, interpreting "limits" as "another word for *taboo* or the feeling of uneasiness when specific touchy topics of the Holocaust are the subject of aesthetic representation." He mentions the *Sonderkommandos* and *Kapos* as examples of such "taboos." See Frank Stern, "The Holocaust: Representing Lasting Images in Literature and Film," in Kwiet and Matthäus, *Contemporary Responses to the Holocaust*, 212 (author's emphasis).
100. Claire Colebrook, *Ethics and Representation: From Kant to Post-structuralism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 2.
101. For examples of this rare testimony, see Filip Müller, *Auschwitz Inferno: The Testimony of a Sonderkommando* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979); Jan Potudniak, *Sonder: An Interview with Sonderkommando Member Henryk Mandelbaum*, trans. Witold Zbirohowski-Kościa (Oświęcim: Frap-Books, [1994] 2008); Rebecca Camhi Fromer, *The Holocaust Odyssey of Daniel Bannahmias, Sonderkommando* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993); Hermann Langbein, *People in Auschwitz*, trans. Harry Zohn (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, [1972] 2004), 191–202. Video testimonies of *Sonderkommando* members have been included in films such as Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985), James Moll's *The*

- Last Days* (1998), Ralf Piechovak's *Hitler's Holocaust* (2000), and Laurence Rees and Catherine Tatge's *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State* (2005). Recent studies of *Sonderkommando* testimony include Gideon Greif, *We Wept Without Tears: Testimonies of the Jewish Sonderkommando from Auschwitz* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Eric Friendler, Barbara Siebert, and Andreas Kilian, *Zeugen aus der Todeszone: Das Jüdische Sonderkommando in Auschwitz* (Lüneburg: Klampen, 2002). The artwork of a former *Sonderkommando* member can be found in David Olère, *David Olère, 1902–1985: A Painter in the Sonderkommando at Auschwitz* (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1989).
102. Annette Wieviorka, *The Era of the Witness*, trans. Jared Stark (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 18.
 103. Evaluations of the general attitude of “non-privileged” survivors towards “privileged” Jews are not always consistent. Alan Mintz describes Jewish “collaboration” as “rife and the object of deep and implacable hatred on the part of Jews who were its victims,” while Aaron Hass argues that most Holocaust survivors are reluctant to condemn “Jewish collaborators” due to the pressures they were put under to survive. See Alan Mintz, *Popular Culture and the Shaping of Holocaust Memory in America* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 184; Hass, *The Aftermath*, 172.
 104. G. Thomas Couser, *Vulnerable Subjects: Ethics and Life Writing* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), xii.
 105. For a discussion of the “empathetic incomprehensibility” of the Holocaust, see Dan Magurshak, “The ‘Incomprehensibility’ of the Holocaust: Tightening up Some Loose Usage,” in Rosenberg and Myers, *Echoes from the Holocaust*, 422–25.
 106. James E. Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 6 (author's emphasis).
 107. Oren Baruch Stier, *Committed to Memory: Cultural Mediations of the Holocaust* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 17. Similar calls for a self-reflexive acknowledgment of artifice can be found in Paul Eisenstein, *Traumatic Encounters: Holocaust Representation and the Hegelian Subject* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 3; Dan Stone, *History, Memory and Mass Atrocity: Essays on the Holocaust and Genocide* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006), 125–26; James Hatley, *Suffering Witness: The Quandary of Responsibility After the Irreparable* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 112.
 108. LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 30. LaCapra describes the free, indirect style of the “middle voice” as prioritizing intransitivity and self-referentiality over referential statements and truth claims, and suggests that such an approach is suitable for victims who found themselves “in double binds not of their own making.” *Ibid.*, 198. Crucially, the device of the “middle voice” has been characterized as “militat[ing] against facile and misleading oppositions.” See Brian Macaskill, “Charting J. M. Coetzee's Middle Voice: *In the Heart of the Country*,” in *Critical Essays on J. M. Coetzee*, ed. Sue Kossew (New York: G. K. Hall and Co., 1998), 80–81. Hayden White identifies stylistic characteristics of the middle voice as including the rejection of an “objective” perspective “outside” the text; the use of a doubtful or questioning tone in interpreting events; and the use of interior monologue to discourage any impression of a known “reality.” See Hayden White, “Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth,” in Friedländer, *Probing the Limits of Representation*, 50–51.
 109. William Guynn, *A Cinema of Nonfiction* (London: Associated University Press, 1990), 42.
 110. *Ibid.*, 15 (my emphasis).
 111. Richard Freadman, *This Crazy Thing a Life: Australian Jewish Autobiography* (Crawley: University of Western Australia Press, 2007), 53.

112. See, for example, Charlotte Ross, *Primo Levi's Narratives of Embodiment: Containing the Human* (New York: Routledge, 2011); Jonathan Druker, *Primo Levi and Humanism After Auschwitz: Posthumanist Reflections* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Lina N. Insana, *Arduous Tasks: Primo Levi, Translation, and the Transmission of Holocaust Testimony* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); Robert S. C. Gordon, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Primo Levi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Lucie Benchouiha, *Primo Levi: Rewriting the Holocaust* (Leicester: Troubador, 2006); Stanislao G. Pugliese, ed., *The Legacy of Primo Levi* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Joseph Farrel, ed., *Primo Levi: The Austere Humanist* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2004); Carole Angier, *The Double Bond: Primo Levi, A Biography* (London: Penguin, [2002] 2003); Ian Thomson, *Primo Levi: A Life* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2002); Roberta S. Kremer, ed., *Memory and Mastery: Primo Levi as Writer and Witness* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001); Robert S. C. Gordon, *Primo Levi's Ordinary Virtues: From Testimony to Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Frederic D. Homer, *Primo Levi and the Politics of Survival* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001); Judith Kelly, *Primo Levi: Recording and Reconstruction in the Testimonial Literature* (Market Harborough: Troubador, 2000); Daniela Amsallem, *Primo Levi* (Paris: Ellipses, 2000); Gillian Banner and Colin Richmond, *Holocaust Literature: Schulz, Levi, Spiegelman and the Memory of the Offence* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2000); Paolo Momigliano Levi and Rosanna Gorris, eds., *Primo Levi: Testimone e Scrittore di Storia* (Florence: Giuntina, 1999); Myriam Anissimov, *Primo Levi: Tragedy of an Optimist*, trans. Steve Cox (London: Aurum, 1998); Anne Sizaire, *Primo Levi* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1997); Judith Woolf, *The Memory of the Offence: Primo Levi's If This Is a Man* (Hull: Hull University Press, 1996); Nicholas Patruno, *Understanding Primo Levi* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995); Mirna Cicioni, *Primo Levi: Bridges of Knowledge* (Oxford: Berg, 1995); Anthony Rudolf, *At an Uncertain Hour: Primo Levi's War Against Oblivion* (London: Menard, 1990).
113. Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, 29.
114. See Saul Friedländer, "Afterword: The Shoah between Memory and History," in Slicher, *Breaking Crystal*.
115. Saul Friedländer, "Trauma, Memory, and Transference," in *Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory*, ed. Geoffrey H. Hartman (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 263.
116. Bettelheim, *Surviving and Other Essays*, 269.
117. LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 99.
118. *Ibid.*, 100.
119. Anna Reading, *The Social Inheritance of the Holocaust: Gender, Culture and Memory* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 76.
120. Works published in the last several years alone include Marek Haltof, *Polish Film and the Holocaust: Politics and Memory* (New York: Berghahn, 2012); Libby Saxton, *Haunted Images: Film, Ethics, Testimony and the Holocaust* (London: Wallflower, 2008); Giacomo Lichtner, *Film and the Holocaust in France and Italy, 1956-1998* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2008); Terri Ginsberg, *Holocaust Film: The Political Aesthetics of Ideology* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2007); Millicent Marcus, *Italian Film in the Shadow of Auschwitz* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007); Caroline Joan Picart and David A. Frank, *Frames of Evil: The Holocaust as Horror in American Film* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2006); Toby Hagith and Joanna Newman, eds., *Holocaust and the Moving Image: Representations in Film and Television Since 1933* (London: Wallflower, 2005); Omer Bartov, *The "Jew" in Cinema: From The Golem to Don't Touch My Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); Lawrence Baron, *Projecting the Holocaust into the Present* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005); Janet Walker, *Trauma Cinema: Document-*

- ing Incest and the Holocaust* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Joshua Hirsch, *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004).
121. For a forceful critique of this opposition, see Ernst van Alphen, *Caught by History: Holocaust Effects in Contemporary Art, Literature, and Theory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).
 122. Primo Levi, *Moments of Reprieve*, trans. Ruth Feldman (London: Abacus, [1981] 1990), 99–100.
 123. Guynn, *A Cinema of Nonfiction*, 17.
 124. Here I am thinking of films that merge oral testimony with fictional reenactment, such as Lena Einhorn's *Nina's Resa [Nina's Journey]* (2005) and Rees and Tatge's *Auschwitz*. Bill Nichols identifies a "blurring" of fiction and nonfiction forms as a central process within many documentary representations. See Bill Nichols, *Blurred Boundaries: Questions of Meaning in Contemporary Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).
 125. Keith Beattie, *Documentary Screens: Nonfiction Film and Television* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 11.
 126. See, in particular, Bill Nichols, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).
 127. *Ibid.*, 125.
 128. Noël Carroll, "Fiction, Non-Fiction, and the Film of Presumptive Assertion: A Conceptual Analysis," in *Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures: An Anthology*, ed. Noël Carroll and Jinhee Choi (Malden: Blackwell, 2006), 162–65.
 129. Michael Renov, ed., *Theorizing Documentary* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 21.
 130. See Eaglestone and Langford, *Teaching Holocaust Literature and Film*; Jeffrey Shandler, *While America Watches: Televising the Holocaust* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Daniel Anker's documentary film *Imaginary Witness: Hollywood and the Holocaust* (2004) also gives a valuable indication of this.
 131. Annette Insdorf, for example, writes that "filmmakers confronting the Holocaust must assume a special responsibility, commensurate with its gravity and enormity." See Annette Insdorf, *Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [1983] 2003), 4.
 132. Lawrence L. Langer, *Admitting the Holocaust: Collected Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 159.