

SCHINDLER'S LIST

MARCH 13 1943

What happens?

Jews are forced out of the Ghetto and sorted into essential and non essential workers.

Incidents

Jews are lined up and shot

Suitcases and belongings are thrown out of the upper balconies and abandoned as litter.

Genia Dresner – only one in spot colour apart from candles (shabolt candles) at the beginning/end.

Importance

It is Oskar Schindler's turning point. Oskar Schindler's motivation to save the Jews is never completely clear but the film suggests that having seen the liquidation of the Ghetto it drives Oskar Schindler to save the Jews.

Genia Dresner in spot colour of red – the little girl in the red coat walking through the liquidation oblivious to the violence around her.

This has great social significance – represents the red flag the Jews waved at allied powers as a cry for help. She walks through violence unaffected, ignoring the carnage around her – mirrors inaction in saving the Jews.

She also represents innocence – her eventual death signifies the loss of humanity/innocence. This is witnessed by Oskar Schindler when he is talking to Amon Goeth – her lifeless body is transported to a large pile of burning bodies.

Techniques

All are used to develop (as a build up) Oskar Schindler's empathy.

Spot colour – we notice her, as does Schindler.

POW – from Schindler's perspective intensifies his reaction.

Panning of chaos

Sound effect of silence – intensifies the moment, we know it's Schindler's turning point.

Quotes

Themes

Moral dilemmas and individual choice – Schindler does everything in his power to save the Jews, including sacrificing all his money and wealth.

Dehumanisation – the treatment of the Jews as objects rather than humans, exemplified by pointless killings seen – incidents.

Manipulation of Audience

We are manipulated by the director through close up shots of Schindlers face showing his reaction as he witnesses the Liquidation of the Ghetto. The panning of the chaos coupled with the sound effect of silence is used by the director so that we too can witness the violence of the liquidation and understand/realise the effect this has on Schindler. We are manipulated by camera/production techniques and understand why this is defining moment of Schindlers transformation.

Message for Society

The film exposes the inhumanity of the Holocaust and is warning us not to repeat the event which occurred

SCHINDLER

Originally just after the money

Goes through transformation from bad to good

Risked his life to save the Jews

Schindler was capable of empathy, viewing the liquidation of the ghetto had a profound impact on him

He liked to manipulate events and people

Member of the Nazi party but from Czechoslovakia and so he was an 'outsider' not as heavily influenced by Nazi propaganda

WHY

"I knew the people who worked for me, when you know people; you have to behave towards them like human beings"

"There was no choice. If you saw a dog going to be crushed under a car, wouldn't you help him?"

Initially Schindler was motivated by friendship to individual Jews, but gradually the Nazi industrialist won a reputation as a kind compassionate man. He was a 'saviour'. His factory was a haven Schindler began to glory in his reputation as a kind compassionate man. He liked the role he was playing. It made him feel good. It filled a psychological vacuum in his life.

Goeth is pure evil, Stern is good and Schindler is the grey area, he is able to change.

Schindler was still a human with weaknesses

HUMANITY

Schindler's list is about Schindler who makes the ultimate sacrifice of his safety and livelihood to save 1100 doomed people who had no connection to him.

A film of celebration. It skips some of the more violent parts of the holocaust, and tends to focus on Schindler's deeds.

A film about the horrors of humanity during Nazi control, but also for the potential of goodness of humanity.

Balances the good scenes with the horrible ones to show the contrast between to sides of humanity.

The preciousness of life is shown throughout the film with children, they are innocent and vulnerable.

The contrast between Goeth and Stern is shown, while Schindler is on the fence and finally goes towards Stern's side.

INCIDENTS

Looks over the liquidation of the ghetto and realises he's the one that needs to save these people

Trades a large amount of diamonds for 1100 Jews

Trades a lot of money for every Jew from Goeth

Talking to his wife saying he did something no one else did

Breaking down even after he saved all of the Jews at the end

Goeth shows his inhumanity when he only cares about the car roof and not liquidation

QUOTES

"Who ever saves a single life saves the world entire"

"They are mine"

"He did something no one else ever did"

DIRECTORS PURPOSE

Spielberg is a Jew whose grandparents emigrated from Poland during the war

Portrayed the holocaust in a documentary to depict the atrocities accurately without "Hollywoodification"

Spielberg showed clearly the real life, non fictional story of the Nazis reign in a very understandable way

Tells the story of three men and through these stories show how people change and adapt in adversity, and comments on the human condition by

saying some people are pure evil(Goeth) and some are good (Stern) and there is the indistinct middle ground which changes between (Schindler) Shows us how people can change, Through Schindler we see this in that judgements of people are not always accurate, or people may change after you judge them, Spielberg's message to society know people before judging.

SCHINDLER'S LIST GOOD VS EVIL AND THE USE OF CONTRAST

Schindler vs. Goethe

Humanity vs. inhumanity

"Power is when we have every justification to kill and we don't"

(Schindler)

"You think that's power?"(goeth)

Contrast of good and evil ways of viewing the same thing

Both Schindler and Goeth have womanising/corrupting

Shows Schindler is not perfect but in contrast to Goeth, he respects women etc. Goeth sees women as objects he can abuse.

Shaving scene is used as a touchstone to convey similarities between the two men. Their actions after contrast each other.

Turning point for Schindler is seeing Genia hiding in plain sight. At the same time Goeth is conducting a massacre.

"Schermer told me something else about you You know the meaning of the word gratitude"

Goeth does not understand gratitude, Schindler does

"they say you are good" Elsa Krause/Regina Perlman to Schindler

In the scene where Schindler and Goeth are bargaining for people, Goeth is in darkness and Schindler is in the light.

"Whoever saves one life saves the world entire" (about Schindler)

Stern is the touchstone between Schindler and Goeth and is the normality which allows us to see the contrast between Schindler and Goeth.

"The list is life" Schindler's list gives life to the Jews,

At Auschwitz Schindler in light while bribing Commander

Commander in darkness, enigmatic, when he leans forward to accept bribe "portable wealth" he comes into light to symbolise goodness.

GENRE – ELEMENTS OF BOTH BIOPIC AND DOCUDRAMA

BIOPIC

Not truncated or conventional

Not only positive aspects of Schindler, shows his flaws. Spielberg shows his compassion coming late, after a cold blooded profiteering drive and suggests only gradually maturing into a noble person

Not conventional as it shows a short piece of Schindler's life 1939 – 1943

Not the story of one man but three: two are heroic and the other Goeth

Goeth (Schindler's bad side)

Stern (Schindler's good side)

DOCUDRAMA

Documentary/drama, real events and people to life

Use of black and white film

Use of superimposed titles

Use of hand held camera (liquidation scene Krakow)

No actual footage except Churchill's audio

Discourse on history, talks about history as it is depicted – Goeth voice over before liquidation of Krakow ghetto

Personalising the fate of Schindler in specific stories – Dresners, Perlman

No pornography of violence – restraint, not sensationalised, violence is suggested.

Final scene the jump to the cemetery is a jump from story to documentary, allows Spielberg to show that the real people own or authenticate the representations of themselves and the events they lived through on the film

STERN

Moral integrity

Honourable

Represents under class

Saves his people by risking his own life

Realises how terrible event is: Jews won't "weather the storm"

Foresight to realise ultimate threat

Never accepts a drink from Schindler until what seems to be an imminent end – shows Schindler gained his respect

Touchstone doesn't change

Representative of unrealised power of Jews "their future"

Touchstone of moral integrity

Manipulated Schindler throughout the film into rescue

In charge of account

Saves the lame and the crippled (one armed man)

Forges documents to keep people alive, knows what needs to be done eg: history teacher – useless, metal worker – useful

Being powerless manipulated himself into power

Knows the regime, knows who they target

Real hero because he is the hero from the start

Puppeteer – suggests that Schindler hire Jews as they are cheaper than Poles

Never tells anything to Schindler, only implies ideas that Schindler then thinks about then acts on

"Where would I be?" Schindler

Makes Schindler see the truth about Goeth and the regime, "Do I need to create a whole new language?"

Keeps factory running, knows Schindler is undermining the war efforts

See little of him, but his influence is enormous

If Schindler is the test tube, Stern is the catalyst and achieves the activation energy required for reaction

Schindler wept uncontrollably at Stern's funeral, knows his significance

Important to Schindler as Schindler insists on getting Stern off the train

Schindler buys Jews back from Goeth, Stern commends him

Stern like Schindler, was an opportunist and was the main contributor to the rescue of the Schindler list

QUOTES

"Herr Director, don't let things fall apart. I worked too hard"

"Whoever saves one life, saves the world entire"

"The list is an absolute good, the list is life"

"By law, I have to tell you, Sir I am a Jew"

"There will be generations because of what you did"

INNOCENCE AND PRECIOUSNESS OF LIFE

Images of children

Genia little girl in red

Olek little boy hiding in the latrine

Evoke theme of innocence and vulnerable potential

Technique of spot colour: emphasises Genia symbol of large bloodstain on Allies radar but no country did anything to intervene and help the Jews

Children symbolises death of innocence, brutality of war

Schindlerjuden walking to freedom

Black and white images of Schindler Juden walking to freedom merge with colour images of those people still alive fifty years on

Symbolises hope and survival

“Whoever saves one life saves the world entire”

Message is that people are precious and that every person is precious, life is precious, the most precious thing of all.

Watching liquidation of ghetto, turning point sees how many people

Nazi's kill with one shot

Decision to buy Jews as his wife sleeps

‘God Bless the Child’ by Billie Holiday – ironic

Shows abandoning ambition to leave Krakow with steamer trucks of money and is now totally committed to saving Jews. Change from Nazi war profiteer to Jew saviour/advocate

Conversation to Goeth about intentions to buy Jews. “No, no what's one worth to you?”

Fundamental difference between Schindler and Goeth

Typing Schindler's list

Ironic because lists represents death with the Nazis

This one gives life and hope

Cuts between the names of people with bribes signifying life being bought

“they are mine” Schindler – possessiveness of Jews, intent on saving them

“There's no future in it, They don't have a future” – Nazi opinion
dichotomy of Schindler.

Stern Touchstone of morality. Realises preciousness of life since the beginning

BLACK AND WHITE SPOT COLOUR TECHNIQUES

Spot colour of Genia in red (little girl) in the film Schindler and his mistress witness the liquidation of the ghetto. Amidst the forsaken humanity (monochrome), sees girl in red coat. One of four occasions in film otherwise black and white film is used. Keneally writes that the sight of the child dressed in red compelled Schindler's interest because it made a statement

Girl in red is a literary device. Child is a symbol of innocence

Child presented as individual beside the grey masses.

Serves to remind viewer that the mass of forsaken humanity in the ghetto was a mass of individuals – Nazis murdered 1.5 million children

Know she is murdered – see her a second time passing on a cart of dead bodies

Easy to get lost in numbers, 6 million murdered – Girl is just one.

(Black and white dimension throw back to old expressionist and film noir works)

Constant use of shadows and silhouettes. Striking patterns of light and dark, chosen deliberately.

“Vision of holocaust in stark black and white,” wanted to get rid of all distractions ie:colour

PFEFFER BERG – POLDECK MILO

Poldeck is very quick witted “clearly the clearway is the liquidation of the ghetto”

Runs through the sewer, but Milo does not want to. Milo has some class

Goes into the church removes his band, begins the relationship with Schindler, could get things for Schindler, started a long and prosperous relationship with Schindler, black market ideas

Dresners Danko Mrs Dresner

Wondering through the ghetto Levy who hasn't fully propaganda hide them

Interaction through whistling

Often had the camera focussed on them

Whistling, bridge lots of close up

Bosners

Musicians Henry is the leader of the musicians, plays violin

Because of this he is always very close to the action, sees Schindler kiss a Jew

Irony because at the liquidation of the ghetto was told not to be musicians by Stern and others. Yet survived and survived well because of it.

HEALTH INQUISITION AND TRAIN (SCHINDLER AS HERO)

Plaszow: employ cattle cars brought to train depot

Muddy open space between barracks and clerks set up table and lists

Goldberg and cupboards

White gowned doctors and stethoscopes

New shipment of Hungarians to Goths camp meant he must reduce the size of Plaszow workforce

“We’ve got to separate the sick from the healthy to make room” like culling cattle on a farm, Jews are a resource, used and gotten rid of at the disposal of the Nazis

Music played on speaker – false sense of security

Jew stripped naked and must run across compound to prove to doctors they are fit. Women and men separate

In barracks, women prick fingers and rub blood on their cheeks to add a healthy red colour – to such devices they have descended, in order to stay alive – shadow and lighting- frightened women, emotion audience connection,

Quick medical exams determine their fate

Music switched to children’s song. Children mass movement onto trucks – unknowingly inching towards their doom like lemmings. Fit women overjoyed until they see their children go. Mass breaks out

Olek Rosner (boy) slips away tries to find a place to hide, everywhere packed with the clever children, he ends up in a toilet hole. Again forced to such low human behaviour

The unfit in striped uniforms (like criminals) marched like human cattle to cattle transportation trams. Hot stinking weather and tin carriages, Jews totally packed and suffocated dying of thirst

Schindler in white suit (knight in white shining armour) – symbolism

Other Nazis and drinks. Contrast against Jews physically and socially

“What do you say you get your fire hoses out here and hose down those cars?”

Goeth “ This is really cruel Oskar you are giving them hope”

Goeth typical Nazi humour found in pain

Schindler takes advantage of the other Nazis finding entertainment in his actions asks for larger extension to reach carriages at the end, the smiles fade from the Nazi faces.

Jews are the evil Nazi's source of entertainment while Schindler treats them as people, relieves them from what discomfort he can.

QUOTES

(Inside the Judenrat)"What they tell me changes from day to day. (From one of the Jewish officers)

SCHINDLER

It could not be better

He did something extraordinary

And left with a steamer trunk – two steamer trunks full of money

They're mine

Then where would I be (to Stern after Oskar got Stern out of the train)

And he's got war which brings out the worst in people, never the good, always the bad

Power is when we have every justification to kill and we don't

Do I have to invent a whole new language?

I could have got more out; I didn't do enough (at the end)

I updated the race and resettlement act.. I killed a Jewish girl

STERN

The Jews themselves receive nothing

He gets nothing

I think I better have it now (accepts Schindler's drink in the end)

This list is an absolute good. This list is life. All around it's margins lies the gulf

You're buying them?

There will be generations because of what you did

AMON GOETH

Today is history

I've got to make room

I pardon you

I would like so much, to reach out and touch you in your loneliness

No, no, no. What's one worth to you?

Control is power

OTHER

He who saves one life saves the world entire

You shouldn't get stuck on names

It's the inconvenience to the list
It will take more than that
The more you see of Herr Commandant, the more you see there is no set
of rules that you can live by
This is it, this is the bottom
It could be worse
How? Tell me how on earth that this could possibly be worse
Money's still money
They say that no one dies here, that your factory is a haven