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Between Tragedy and Heroism: Staging the West German Past in Ilona Ziok's Fritz Bauer: Tod auf Raten*

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The West German postwar society of the 1950s and 60s is marked by the complex tensions of a society that is silent about its Nazi past while it simultaneously seeks, especially in literature and film, ways to overcome this silence. It is also marked by a tension between efforts at denazification and the presence of former National Socialist officials who simply adopted the capitalist ideology of the new state and seamlessly transitioned into similar roles in the West German political, legal, and economic systems. It is a time in which West German society struggled to begin to acknowledge its war guilt and its responsibility for the Holocaust. When a twenty-first century film attempts to depict the atmosphere of this past, a challenge arises: Today's historical consciousness is dominated by the perception of Nazi Germany as a criminal state, as well as a master narrative that sees the history of West Germany, and later reunified Germany, as an economic and political success story. Yet even the most novice student of West Germany's postwar history is familiar with at least some aspects of the country's difficulties with both denazification and its coming to terms with the Holocaust and Nazi past. For example: One can certainly discuss whether Tom Cruise as Graf Claus von Stauffenberg in Brian Singer's 2008 feature film Valkyrie is simply a very ironic Hollywood interpretation of a heroic freedom fighter, forgetting Stauffenberg's military and aristocratic convictions, yet the audience whether in the U.S. or in Germany - presumably did not doubt that Stauffenberg could be cast as a heroic figure attempting to end Hitler's dictatorship and consequently representing some kind of justice.

It might therefore come as a surprise to a contemporary mainstream audience that in West Germany in 1952 it was not taken for granted that Nazi perpetrators could be criminally prosecuted or that resistance against Hitler still was widely regarded as treason. Fritz Bauer, after returning from his exile

^{*} I would like to thank the film director Ilona Ziok for providing me with a DVD copy of the film and particularly for the time she spent explaining her vision and project to me in two long phone conversations in June 2011.

in Denmark and Sweden, was Attorney General for Lower Saxony between 1949 and 1956. In 1952–53 he led a trial against Otto Ernst Remer, commandant of the Wachbataillon Großdeutschland in Berlin, a unit which was instrumental in foiling the plot to assassinate Hitler. Remer had called the conspirators «traitors of the country,» and Bauer sued Remer for libel with the goal of legally declaring the Nazi state unconstitutional and rehabilitating the conspirators.¹ One could argue that the Remer trial was the, or at least one of the, biggest trials of postwar Germany in terms of the country's attempt to deal with the past.²

It is at this surprising split between today's historical consciousness and the historical atmosphere of the 1950s that Ilona Ziok's documentary film Fritz Bauer: Tod auf Raten (2010) sets out to narrate Fritz Bauer's story. Bauer was born in Stuttgart in 1903. After studying law and completing a dissertation, he was given a probationary judgeship (the position of Gerichtsassessor) in 1927. Having briefly been imprisoned due to his political engagement in the SPD and his Jewish heritage, he emigrated to Denmark in 1935 and fled to Sweden in 1943. After once more residing in Denmark (1945–49) he returned to Germany in April 1949. From 1956 until his death in 1968 he served as the State Attorney General (Generalstaatsanwalt) of Hesse.³

Ziok's film ran in the Panorama program of the 2010 Berlinale and then toured through approximately 100 German cities as the German contribution to the Aktion Mensch film festival (Nov. 2010-Nov. 2011). Tod auf Raten also opened the festival of ten international films in the Zeughauskino of the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin. The press reaction to the film was mixed. In general, reviews focused primarily on the story of the film and did not have much to say about its artistic aspects. 4 The positive reviews stated the importance of bringing Bauer's story to a wider audience than just historians and legal experts (e.g. Seeliger) and pointed out that the film achieved a suspenseful, almost thriller-like effect on the viewer (Kothenschulte; Gutmair). The critical reviews, however, perceived any emotionalizing and dramatizing effects as a distraction from history and as inappropriate or at least unnecessary for representing a topic as solemn as the Holocaust.5 Another criticism was directed at Ziok's narrative use of Bauer's death to express openness to the idea that Bauer might have been murdered or committed suicide.6 The film generated a lot of interest with educators in Germany, and audiences - many Aktion Mensch screenings were followed by public discussions, often with Ilona Ziok present - were excited about the importance of Bauer as a principled civic role model.7

A more nuanced analysis of the film can explain this uneven reception. The documentary does not present any facts or interpretations other than those

that could already be found in historical and biographical research.8 Neither does Ziok attempt to create a balanced, objective representation that aims at scholarly objectivity. Instead, she uses the contrast between today's historical consciousness and the atmosphere of the postwar era in order to restage the atmosphere of the 1950s and 60s while simultaneously providing a model for social and human rights related activism. Whereas at first glance Ziok's blackand-white portrayal of a still Nazified postwar West Germany on the one hand and Bauer's principled humanistic idealism on the other could be characterized as a simplification of historical complexities, this essay will argue that it is precisely this simplification that is needed to steer the viewer emotionally so that she or he can gain access to the past through the (constructed) point of view of Fritz Bauer and experience the (simulated) historical atmosphere of the 1950s and 60s. It allows Bauer to be staged in a dualistic way, between heroic achievements and tragic failures, both as a hero and as a victim. Ziok's feature film-like dramatization of Bauer's story has all the hallmarks of a documentary film. It is almost exclusively assembled from interviews with historical witnesses and some footage from the Third Reich and the postwar era, which enables Ziok to create a historical space that conveys authenticity by steering the emotions of the viewer rather than by providing a historical analysis of proven sources.

Most important, the perspective and convictions of the human rights advocate Bauer9 are staged against the atmosphere of a society neither ready nor willing to come to terms with the past. The film, mostly without a narrator (with the exception of brief explanations of historical events), represents Bauer by two means. The first means is black-and-white footage of Bauer himself, mainly from the talk show «Heute Abend Kellerklub» by the Hessische Rundfunk filmed in Frankfurt in the 1960s, wherein Bauer talks with students about his ethical principles and about the German legal system's method of dealing with National Socialism. The second means is the testimony by exclusively Bauer-friendly witnesses who describe and analyze his life, actions, and convictions. Tod auf Raten explicitly focuses on Bauer's more humanist and universal statements on the talk show. The historical specifics are related by the witnesses rather than by Bauer. This shared workload approach highlights Bauer's function of expressing universal human rights values. In contrast to these ideals, the film depicts a collective historical reality specific to West Germany in the 1950s and 60s that is characterized by the silence and disinterest of West German society in coming to terms with the Holocaust and National Socialism, and shows how deeply ensconced Nazi Germany still was in the Federal Republic to the point of influencing and manipulating its judicial and political systems. These two

poles lead to a victimization of Bauer on the one hand, and to a heroization of him on the other. *Tod auf Raten* juxtaposes four storylines to achieve such an effect: the first is the continuous story of Bauer's convictions concerning justice and human rights, his universal value system; the second the success story of Bauer's trials; the third the tragic development of how Bauer's endeavor fails in the anti-humanistic climate of postwar Germany; and the fourth the story of Bauer's death.

The universal ideal as seen from Bauer's point of view is immediately established in the first scene. Bauer represents a principled humanism. 10 Right before the opening title, one sees his face in a close-up, while he says in a calm but persistent tone, accompanied by quiet piano music: «Ich möchte eigentlich wünschen, dass junge Leute heute vielleicht den selben Traum von Recht besäßen, den ich einmal hatte, und dass sie das Gefühl haben, dass das Leben einen Sinn hat, wenn man für Freiheit, Recht und Brüderlichkeit eintritt.» After a cut to the production firm's name and the film title, underscored by dramatic, agitating music, Bauer is shown again, this time at the talk show of the Hessische Rundfunk (which becomes a thread linking various segments throughout the film) discussing the importance of Auschwitz as both a crime committed by the state as well as by all the people who participated in it. The contrast in music underscores the main contrast between idealism and historical reality in the film. The film ends with Bauer's nephew Rolf Tiefenthal silently visiting Bauer's grave while Bauer is shown in the same interview footage from the film's beginning, citing an episode with his mother who could not answer his question of what God is, but who gave Bauer the advice that «Was du nicht willst, das man dir tut, das füge auch keinem anderen zu.» The film establishes its basic tone through the voice of Fritz Bauer as an ahistorical, universal one, defending human rights in general as well as the human value of loving your neighbor. The Bauer interview spliced into the film (twelve minutes of footage in the 100-minute film) has only a few historically specific references such as when Bauer addresses the lack of repentance among the defendants in the Auschwitz trial. It is centered on general human and ethical values that immediately speak to a diverse twenty-first-century audience. Parallel to the idea of human rights, the film emphasizes Bauer's confidence in young people very early on (specifically in its second talk show scene). The Bauer seen in the film is presented as though he is talking to today's audience promoting human values, which, from a Western democratic standpoint, seem fully up-to-date.

How does the film become more historically specific? First, Ziok hardly uses a narrator in the film, but relies on the aura of authentic historical witnesses. The film consists primarily of a collage of testimonies by eye-

witnesses interviewed in recent years. The film director is never seen; sometimes her voice can be overheard in some questions or comments while the witnesses are speaking, sometimes she gives a brief narrative comment or intervention to contextualize the witnesses' utterances. Ziok uses historical footage, photographs and filmed documents, and some comments that are often quotations read by several male and female voices. With the exception of footage that is sometimes shown for a few seconds while the eyewitnesses are speaking, voice and image usually correspond directly with one another.

Second, the film creates historical specificity by establishing the atmosphere of the time. A good example of this is the representation of the arrest of Adolf Eichmann in 1960, which is selected as the film's first important trial chapter. Bauer, circumventing the German legal system, had given decisive hints to the Mossad. He had never really talked about his involvement in the trial, a fact revealed in the first eyewitness account by journalist and author Ralph Giordano. 11 Consequently, there is no footage of Bauer talking about the trial and, as elsewhere in the film, eyewitnesses - here Giordano; author and film director Thomas Harlan; the chief of Mossad at the time, Isser Harel; and the executor of Bauer's will, Manfred Amend-interspersed with film footage and narrated comments about the footage, start to remember and interpret Bauer's specific role. Harel's account that Bauer was afraid of a leak in the German public prosecutor's office initiates the set-up of the whole film: that Bauer and a few friends were fighting against the Nazi-infiltrated German legal system, which would have certainly tipped off Eichmann. Amend speculates that this was the only way for Bauer to assure Eichmann's prosecution, and Giordano concludes that Bauer contributed to Eichmann receiving his deserved and just punishment. After footage from the end of the trial, Harlan elaborates on how Bauer's actions transcended specific national interests, and therefore the idea of nationality. In this chorus of eyewitnesses and authentic footage, the film has established not only Bauer's universal principles, but also the atmosphere of collective resistance in the German legal system against which he had to fight in the name of human rights.

As many small-scale TV documentations and film documentaries since the early 1990s have done in order to create an «aura of authenticity and a compelling narrative framework,» often circumventing the discussion of complex historical issues such as the guilt of German society in the Second World War (Kansteiner 154), Ziok fragments the voices of the witnesses by cutting eyewitness interviews into individual pieces and integrating them into the larger narrative arc of the film. Unlike Guido Knopp, the producer of highly popular retrospectives on German history such as *Hitlers Helfer* (1996), however, Ziok does not produce what Wulf Kansteiner has described

as Gesamtkunstwerkeffekt, in which image, sound, speed, and scale are coordinated at the level of the film as a whole (162). Even more important, there is no single narrator who controls the story and the film's message. Ziok uses the witnesses to represent Bauer's point of view. Consequently, the criticism that she does not represent Bauer's enemies (Platthaus, «Bauers Feinde») misses the aesthetic idea of the film. It does not use witnesses as emotionless and thereby reliable informants 12 but to establish the atmosphere around Bauer at the time in general and Bauer's point of view in particular. It matters how Bauer felt, not whether the memory of the witnesses is accurate. Consequently, emotional accounts such as those by Thomas Harlan, Ralf Giordano, Rolf Tiefenthal, Bauer's friends Heinz and Gisela Meyer-Velde, and many others, work perfectly towards the film's expression of Bauer's perspective and of the atmosphere of the time, not simply of its historical facts. Since the witnesses' function is the representation of Bauer's story, rather than their own stories, the fragmentation does not undermine the authenticity of each witness. The eyewitnesses come together as a heteroglossia of many different voices and emotional registers, reconstructing the viewpoint of Fritz Bauer in the 1950s and 60s.

In the typology of four types of witnesses by Aleida Assmann (85–92) the witnesses in *Tod auf Raten* function as historical witnesses who authenticate the past through their closeness to the historical events and persons – in this case, the life and activities of Fritz Bauer. They are neither witnesses in court—the film quotes the statement by Auschwitz trial defendant Hans Stark to give an impression of the defendants' rhetoric – since they are explicitly represented as partial witnesses, nor are they religious or moral witnesses. The last category is closely linked to genocide survivors in Assmann's typology, but Ziok's emotionalizing of the witnessing leads to the effect that her witnesses also give a kind of public testimony in the arena of a moral community (91).

The film builds up to a climax as it relates Bauer's successes in society – changing their chronological order for the sake of narrative structure – from Eichmann's arrest and trial, through the Remer trial, and up to the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials. The last of these, which took place from 1963 to 1965, also marks the turning point in Bauer's transformation into an increasingly persecuted victim of West German society himself. The film reaches its climax at the beginning of the Auschwitz trial. Bauer is shown quoting the first paragraph of the *Grundgesetz* that the «Würde des Menschen ist unantastbar,» followed by a montage that includes a brief eyewitness statement and historical footage of the trial and culminates in Bauer's statement «Der Prozess soll der Welt zeigen, dass ein neues Deutschland, eine deutsche Demokratie gewillt ist, die Würde eines jeden Menschen zu wahren.» In its

first half, the film has established the second story line of Bauer's historica success story. The viewer is torn between reacting to the absurdity tha something like putting Remer on trial – or even the Auschwitz trial, which i frequently cited as a turning point in the public consciousness of the German people as well as in West German historians' understanding of the scope of th Holocaust¹³ – was so difficult to achieve, and the sense of accomplishment, th victorious feeling that Bauer achieved something by making these trial possible in such a difficult climate. The film enacts this tension formally by putting competing, heterogeneous narratives into play.

At this point, the film has already established part of the third narrativ story line: the resistance of the West German collective to dealing with o working through the past. One example before the narrative of the Remer tria can illustrate this in nuce. The publisher Christoph Müller-Wirth is show remembering when Bauer was invited to give a talk for politically engage students at the Technische Hochschule Karlsruhe about his work prosecuting Nazi crimes in Frankfurt while all of Karlsruhe's legal professionals, as well a the city's journalists, ignored the talk (and had never invited him to speak in Karlsruhe). The interview with Müller-Wirth is divided into three segments After the first two, Bauer's statements from the talk show are spliced in. First Bauer reflects upon the task ahead in a society where all university facultie from Sociology to Philosophy needed to be cleared of Nazi perpetrators. Fo Bauer, Germans needed to stand together to fulfill the enormous task o working through the past. In the second segment, he reflects positively upon the new German democracy and its laws and institutions, before he conclude that all institutions, amendments of judgments, the Grundgesetz, and human rights would be in vain if they are not lived by the people. Müller-Wirth's third statement notes that the judges from the Federal Court of Justice (Bundes gerichtshof) in Karlsruhe all came from the Third Reich's Imperial Court o Justice (Reichsgericht) in Leipzig, including the first and second presidents o the court. The film cuts to real footage of the Imperial Court of Justice underscored by monumental music; then one sudden single note is struck lik a whip crack, after which the music breaks off, so that a moment of silence i created, before it moves to the next episode. Here, numerous eyewitnesses tel the story of Hans Globke, the author of the commentary on the Nurember: Laws and close aid to West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer from 195. to 1963, one of the most blatant examples of someone who was heavily involved in the judicial system of the Third Reich. He prepared the legal basi of the Holocaust, and then had a high-profile career in West Germany.

The brief Karlsruhe episode shows precisely how the film establishe Bauer's persona by narrative means as universal and heroic, while simulta neously creating a historical world that allows the viewer to feel the atmosphere of the past and to understand the legal and moral absurdities of the time. This is a mutual process: the depiction of Bauer's universal principles and the historical specificity of the episodes that show Bauer's unending fight in a society that did not want to come to terms with the past are each intensified in relation to one another. Part of this technique is Ziok's decision not to raise problems of specific interpretations. For example, the viewer could ask why the same «Nazi infiltrated» federal court felt obliged to grant Bauer's request to assign jurisdiction for the Auschwitz trial to Frankfurt, which meant initiating a massive effort of working through the German past. The witnesses just reflect upon how it happened and how such an assignment was legally possible in the West German legal system. To express the interplay between Bauer and the West German society in the 1960s, the film deliberately shies away from an excess of meta-reflection; the story lines must be clear.

However, the film does not leave all interpretative authority about the collective psychology of West German society to the witnesses. This means that it relies on an interactive mode of documentary, whether the witnesses were involved in the trial such as the attorney Joachim Kügler and the examining magistrate (Untersuchungsrichter) Heinz Düx, or whether they were analyzing the events as observers, such as Ralph Giordano and Thomas Harlan. The film also uses a hybrid of what Bill Nichols calls the «expository mode» and the «observational mode» in documentary filmmaking (32-44). For instance, the film employs an anonymous voice-over narrator, who provides what Nichols describes as a kind of factual «voice of God commentary» (34) when introducing the first defendant in the Auschwitz trial on whom the film focuses. This is the bookkeeper Wilhelm Boger, who invented the torture instrument known as the Boger-Schaukel, which is also known by the name «parrot's perch.»¹⁴ While the voice-over narrator is speaking, the film first shows a photograph of Boger; then a newspaper article detailing the torturing; then it zooms in on the picture of the Boger-Schaukel in the article. While the narrator finishes his description, the film shows German newsreel footage of Boger being escorted into the courtroom. Then the voice of the examining magistrate asks him whether he finally had anything to say in consideration of «these horrific accounts.» While the judge speaks - in audio footage of the trial - the film shows footage of the empty courtroom in the Bürgerhaus Gallus, 15 before it switches back to footage of the historical trial where, after a moment of silence, Boger notes that he has nothing say. The film then continues with footage of an interview with Boger's wife who lived with him and their children in Auschwitz. She maintains in a

monotone voice that she could not imagine her husband would have done anything like that: he was a very punctilious person, but he would not have murdered children because he had children of his own and was such a good father at home. 16 In this sequence, the film presents a snapshot of a perpetrator refusing to comment and of his wife ignoring any reality and retreating into platitudes, as did many Germans who said they did not know anything about the Holocaust. The viewer perceives Ziok's hint about the silence of the German people both in Boger's behavior and in his wife's defense. The film intentionally leaves out that Boger, at other points after his imprisonment and during the trial, attempted to justify his torturing methods,¹⁷ in order to highlight the silence that seems to evoke further frustration and disbelief in today's audience. Ziok deviates from the expository mode to an observational one, conveying «the sense of unmediated and unfettered access to the world» (Nichols 43). The viewer is led to feel that he or she perceives the essence of the trial and the issue in German society. At the same time, Ziok breaks the illusion of such an unmediated access, in particular through the footage of the empty courtroom that reminds the viewers of the distance between past and present. Consequently, Tod auf Raten is able to avoid the tendency of the public discourse about the Auschwitz trial in the 1960s to focus on the atrocities of individual monstrous and cruel acts (cf. Miquel 105). Its representational method, through the interplay of Bauer's perspective and the gaze on the public discourse, functions to express the death machinery of the Holocaust as a systematic act that needed to be brought to public light at the time.

While representing the Auschwitz trial, Tod auf Raten shifts from an idealistic tone to an increasingly disillusioned one. The film has established the collective psychology of the German perpetrators in postwar society, mirroring Bauer's statement that Auschwitz goes deeply into the collective psychology «of us all,» i. e., of all Germans. Bauer, who was earlier presented as the one who convinced all juvenile offenders in his early years as a district court judge, immediately after the war, to confess and to show signs of repentance, notes: «Ich muss Ihnen sagen, seit dem Dezember 1963 warten die Staatsanwälte, dass einer der Angeklagten, also einer der unmittelbar Betroffenen, ein menschliches Wort zu den Zeugen und Zeuginnen findet, die überleben, nachdem ihre ganzen Familien ausgerottet sind.» Later in the film he continues: «Also ich muss Ihnen sagen, die Welt würde aufatmen, nicht bloß die Staatsanwälte in Frankfurt, ich glaube, Deutschland würde aufatmen, und die gesamte Welt, und die Hinterbliebenen der, die in Auschwitz gefallen sind, und die Luft würde gereinigt werden, wenn endlich einmal ein menschliches Wort fiele.» Here again, the film's dual trajectories come to light: on the one hand, the film continues its narrative of universal ethics by

pitching the idea of youth versus adult society and the accused in the trial; on the other hand, the film almost abandons its success narrative during its representation of the Auschwitz trial, because Bauer's vision of universal values seems to fail. No «humane word» has ever been said to the survivors.

The representation of the Auschwitz trial culminates in Ralph Giordano's statement that Bauer's tragedy was that Germany was not ready for a judicial working-through of the Holocaust and Nazi crimes. The film spends a considerable amount of time - through footage, music, and reflections by witnesses - representing the uniqueness of the Holocaust because of its status as administratively organized mass murder on an industrial scale. Here the film apparently departs from merely focusing on the 1950s and 60s. Instead, the witnesses provide the historical case about the atrocities of the Holocaust and its incomprehensibility. However, with a few brief exceptions, apparently footage from other films or the audio recordings of the trial, 18 Ziok does not interview or show actual witnesses from the Auschwitz trial, whether witnesses for the prosecution or witnesses for the defense. The film can therefore function as the expression of Fritz Bauer's point of view and the reception of the Holocaust in the 1950s and 60s while avoiding the traumatization of victims through the visual representation of the atrocities which can be related to concepts of precarious witnessing and Traumatifizierung (Keilbach 153-66; Plato, «Vom Zeugen zum Zeitzeugen»). Eyewitness Holocaust survivors hardly received the opportunity to tell their full personal story in court, since they had to act as judicial witnesses to very specific acts in which the defendants were involved.19

From today's perspective, the film's representation of the 1950s and 60s confirms widely accepted historical knowledge. Consequently, the film intensifies the disbelief of today's viewers that Bauer's investigation and the various Nazi trials could have gone the way that they did. Investigations, particularly Bauer's plan for a final major trial against the former presidents of the higher regional courts as well as the attorneys general who did not resist the so-called euthanasia program at the infamous conference in Berlin in April 1941 (see Wojak, Fritz Bauer 448-49), failed or fizzled out. Another important episode that Tod auf Raten uses for expressing the tragedy of Bauer's story is the case of the jurist Eduard Dreher, who was the leading prosecutor of the Special Court in Innsbruck during the Nazi era. In postwar West Germany, he drafted an apparently harmless bill, deceiving the Bundestag, which in combination with the statute of limitations made the punishment of Nazi criminals virtually impossible for the future. The film leaves open whether Bauer was aware of these developments in 1968, shortly before his death.20

Tod auf Raten culminates the absurdity of the NS trials in a sta representation of a 1962 trial against Obersturmbannführer «P.,» who 1939 received the order to kill ten Polish people in a prison. The film uses voice-over narrators, one male and one female, to document the case, mai by their reading laws concerning murder. The court notices the bi obedience of P.; he killed his victims deliberately with his machine pis The female voice-over, accompanied by footage of a prison cell today and paragraphs about murder, says «Mord, nein» before she reads § 211 from German criminal law.21 With the two narrators' staccato-like readings the stages, and through its presentation also deconstructs, the verdict. The kil was neither perfidious nor cruel according to the Ansbach jury court at time: it was not cruel, because - besides the announcement of the killing victims did not suffer any other pains; and it was not perfidious since victims knew about the killings, so they were not unsuspecting. A prison ce then shown, while the male narrator quotes the verdict, which also appear text in the foreground on the screen. The verdict states that it had been poss that P. could have pointed out his intention of killing them right before deed, so that, for example, the victims could have defended themselves v furniture or could have pled their case. The female voice explains that defendant is not a murderer because of the lack of malice aforethou, consequently, it is only manslaughter, and since he was ordered to do it, h only an accessory to the killing, leading to mitigation on various levels. film stages this one case as exemplary of the whole judicial system. The vie is emotionally manipulated to feel anger towards the system and consequer bonds even more with the victims and with the «tragic hero» Fritz Ba

The fourth and final story line of the film – that of Bauer as a victim and mysterious circumstances of his death – frames the whole work. Bauer found in his bathtub on July 1, 1968. After the film sets the tone for Bau universal values, it shows his nephew Rolf Tiefenthal noting that it speculation that Bauer took his own life, before Tiefenthal continues ponder about how Bauer's many enemies could have forced him to take his or murdered him. The film clearly plays – intensified through the dram orchestra music contrasting the piano music that accompanied the first sce with Bauer – on the mystery of Bauer's death without forcing the iss Manfred Amend, the executor of Bauer's will, and the coroner Joacl Gerchow, describe the discovery of Bauer's corpse and the investigation i Bauer's death. The Frankfurt prosecutor Johannes Warlow points out there were rumors that Bauer was murdered, though he seems to indicate they were just the typical rumors in such a case. Warlow later also vigorou dismisses the idea of suicide. Amend is then shown again maintaining

plements the process of victimization and intensifies this contrast. It links two perspectives on universal rights for today's generations with atmosphere of silence, forgetting, and continuation of Nazi ideology dur the postwar era that is so foreign to today's viewers. This allows Ziok combine generational remembrance from the twenty-first century persp tive and the past. She does not represent a factual past of the 1950s and 60s, uses stylization and streamlines the narrative to co-temporalize past a present.

This contrasting technique between past and present also explains why film intentionally streamlines history. Complexities of international pos ons, such as the involvement of the CIA in protecting former Nazis, are: mentioned. Neither are other people who resisted like Bauer, people w might have repented, etc., given any representation in the film. The file construct is deliberately a black-and-white picture: Bauer as the model figh for universal values and human rights on the one hand, and the Na infiltrated West German society on the other. Since the twenty-first centi viewer naturally identifies with Bauer's established universal perspective : is naturally appalled by the postwar West German society, the film creates affective response in the viewer that allows them to experience a simula Nazi-stricken West German society.²² The viewer presumably does simply feel sympathy for Bauer, since Bauer is too strong a figure a role model. His victim status is paired with a heroic, exemplary, and univer narrative that makes him a tragic hero. Consequently, the viewer is made identify with, i. e., apprehend and comprehend, Bauer's situation and hun rights mind-set in the sense of empathy (Breithaupt 10-11); she or he seem: watch with Bauer's eyes and imagines her- or himself in a similar fight justice. This empathy cannot be transferred to any witness, but rema focused on Bauer, and it is an emotional empathy, ahistorical in the sense t the viewer is made to feel the force of Bauer's ideas in tension with the reality his time. The film only achieves this effect because it has established historical atmosphere - the counterperspective to Bauer - as well.

By making Bauer and his vision the focal point of the film, Ziok is able blur the lines of victim, investigator, and perpetrator. The Nazis in W German society presented themselves as victims (which the film document the self-defense strategy of several of the Auschwitz trial defendants) althou for the viewer they are clearly the perpetrators. Bauer investigates the crir of National Socialism to improve society and achieve repentance by perpetrators, but then becomes a victim of the collective hatred of the W German legal profession and in parts of West German society. Toda perspective then reverses Bauer's fate as a victim and makes him a role mo

Tiefenthal before – that Bauer had enemies, though it was hard for Amend to understand, because Bauer was such a remarkable man. The film establishes the model prosecutor who can be honored and admired today against the one who had enemies and was persecuted himself because of his convictions. The film then returns to the idea of Bauer's death much later after it has established German society's and the German legal profession's resistance to Bauer's investigative efforts. Right before the chapter on the Auschwitz trial, Ziok discusses with Heinz Düx that Bauer carried a gun and received murder threats. Later several witnesses, including Bauer himself in the talk show footage, reflect upon the threats, hate mail, and anti-Semitic insults that Bauer received, particularly during the Auschwitz trial. Thus, Bauer becomes a victim of Nazi propaganda himself in the eyes of the viewer, mirroring the anti-Semitic past of the Third Reich in the 1960s.

In its final part, the film returns to Bauer's death. Amend reflects that when such a prominent and controversial figure as Fritz Bauer dies, there is usually a forensic autopsy, not just a clinical one. Then Gerchow ponders how unusual it was - especially since Bauer had been occasionally threatened - that the prosecution did not follow procedure. The film does not comment; it does not fuel explicit speculations besides letting its witnesses point out ambiguities and unusual events. Some journalists read the narrative of Bauer's death as «frivole Verdächtigungen» and «Raunen von Tod und Freitod» (Platthaus, «Raunen»). Kothenschulte maintains that the film argues that the Dreher amendment to the criminal law had driven Bauer to suicide; yet Tod auf Raten simply expresses the tension and uses the rumors at the time to create suspense and leave an emotional gap that highlights the pressures in West German society in the 1950s and 60s. A clear murder or suicide thesis would undermine the film's idea of making Bauer a victim and a hero at the same time. Otherwise, the film would have included the case of the federal court in Karlsruhe acquitting the judge of the Volksgericht Hans Joachim Rehse in April 1968 since any perversion of justice could not be proven (cf. Wojak, Fritz Bauer 373-74), to intensify the disappointment in the final year of Bauer's life. Ziok uses the death narrative as a certain suspense frame for the film, but, more important, this narrative completes the representation of Bauer as a victim. The death story line emotionalizes the film's narrative and consequently allows for a balance between tragedy and success story, between historical atmosphere and hope in Bauer's universal value system and role model function. The exact circumstances of Bauer's death do not matter for the narrative technique of the film. Instead it is important that Bauer serves as a tragic hero, a role model, and a universal figure for courage and human rights in opposition to the society of the 1950s and 60s. The murder plot sup-

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or hero that opens up the narrative to a pedagogic and human rights activist message.

Reading the film as a mostly factual representation of Bauer's life and of the trials in the 1950s and 60s is clearly a misreading. The film has certainly a historiographical and educational mission to tell Bauer's story and make him a figure of today's historical consciousness again, but to achieve this, it must blur fact and anecdote, as well as history, memory, and myth. It creates three different effects of historical authenticity: The first one is the one of testimony. through the eyewitnesses and the historical footage.²³ Second, Bauer's voice himself, used as the ethical point of view, adds historical and testimonial authority. Third, there is the simulated historical atmosphere of the time. This is supplemented by footage, yet it particularly comes into effect through the staging of the different story lines against one another. Consequently, the film's main effect is not the presentation of factual detail. Rather, it first simulates the atmosphere of the past and, second, emotionalizes the present viewer through the various contrasts between past and present, allowing the tragic hero Fritz Bauer to become a universal role model. Here one can see why the film is successful in a pedagogical sense, but has been criticized as a historical misrepresentation. The film mirrors Bauer's particular interest in youth by recreating him as a model for today's youth. Thus, the past merges with the present and opens up to the future. This allows Tod auf Raten to cotemporalize past, present, and future. The disturbing effect of the simulated atmosphere of the West German past seems too strong for the viewer or the filmmakers to simply fall into moral complacency about knowing better in hindsight. Thus, the film has less an effect of catharsis on the viewer, but rather one of a constant warning that human rights cannot ever be taken for granted. The idea of simulating a struggle between the ideals of human rights and the historical atmosphere of the 1950s and 60s is consistent with the film's effect through the last spoken words of the film by Rolf Tiefenthal, who says, spontaneously and in English: «I think all of the Germans [...] Nazis alive [sic] saw him as major enemy. They were afraid of him, yes. [...] But he won.» It is not the circumstances of Bauer's death that truly matter, but the dichotomy between Bauer and his opponents. Tiefenthal's subjective standpoint as a relative supports the film's dramaturgy: despite becoming a victim himself, Bauer's universal worldview is represented as successful in the end.²⁴

¹ See Bauer's closing arguments in the trial in «Eine Grenze hat Tyrannenmacht» Humanität 169-79).

² For the historical context of the Remer Trial and a detailed summary of the trial's co in court see Wojak, Fritz Bauer 265-84. It is apparent that the witnesses in Ziok's do not convey any new historical knowledge about the trial. Wojak's historiograpl approach to West German history can represent the Remer trial in its impact and in context of other trials much more precisely than a documentary film. Yet a fact approach describing the difficulties and the public outrage, in Germany and abreabout earlier judgments that marked political resistance as illegal so that poli prisoners could not receive any compensation for their time in prison (see the case of Social Democrat Georg B., Wojak, Fritz Bauer 278-79) cannot unlike Ziok's fictionnect the past to the present and involve the recipient in any emotional way. Toa Raten needs a narrative stepping-stone.

³ For a full biographical take on Bauer, with an emphasis on legal questions, see Woj biography Fritz Bauer 1903-1968, published in 2009.

⁴ The only review that discusses the film's method in detail in a very positive way written by Koep-Kerstin. He sees – similar to the film director Ilona Ziok herself in oral reflections upon the method of her film – *Tod auf Raten* in the tradition of Ma Ophüls und Krzysztof Kieslowski. The documentary resembles a feature 1 structured in suspenseful and dense episodes.

⁵ There has been some criticism of the use of music in the film, particularly the clo song «My Way» sung by Frank Sinatra (e.g., Kothenschulte; Gutmair). Koep-Kei defends the film's use of music, especially of the symphonic laments by Henryk Mik Górecki's «Third Symphony» and Krzysztof Penderecki's Auschwitz oratorio «I Irae.» He recognizes that the aesthetics of the film are based on a numbe representational layers whereas most critics simply look for straightforward equat between story and representational method.

6 See in particular the most negative review of the film by Andreas Platthaus («Raune

⁷ This corresponds to Ilona Ziok's own descriptions of post-screening discussions my own experience at a discussion in the *Blackbox – Kino im Filmmuseum* in Düssel on July 17, 2011. The podium discussion with Ilona Ziok was moderated by Tim En from the *Vereinigung Demokratischer Juristinnen und Juristen e. V.*, regional gr Düsseldorf. The audience was intrigued by the film and Bauer's function as a role m for the youth in the present. For press descriptions of the audience's reaction to the see Michels. For the effect of the film see also Naxos-Kino's announcement of a sec showing of the film in their theatres (Naxos-Kino).

8 See note 3

9 See Bauer's essay «Im Kampf um des Menschen Rechte» (1955) for his idea that crim law needs to focus more on the delinquent, instead of merely on the offense (Bauer, Humanität 37-49). The volume Die Humanität der Rechtsordnung with a selectio Bauer's essays, speeches, and interviews between 1955 and 1968 gives a good idea l Bauer wanted to transform the German criminal law and how this relates to worl through the experiences of National Socialism and the Holocaust.

10 See Bauer's search for a definition of justice in Auf der Suche nach dem Recht, in whe develops his idea of a modern criminal law that stresses rehabilitation and hurrights.

- ¹¹ See Wojak, Fritz Bauer 285-302 for the detailed facts of Bauer's involvement in Eichmann's arrest.
- 12 See Horn (237) for the idea of an objective witness («Zeitzeuge») in the pre-Knopp era of West German television. For a general critique of the uncritical use of memory fragments of eyewitnesses see also Blanke; for the role of experience and oral history as sources about National Socialism and the Holocaust see Plato, «Geschichte ohne Zeitzeugen.»
- 13 See Wojak, «Der erste Frankfurter Auschwitz-Prozeß» 57. See also Atze 644-46 for the role of the media. For the reaction of German historiography to the Auschwitz trial see Frei.
- 14 See Wojak, ed. Auschwitz-Prozeß 4 Ks 2/63, 388-437 for a comprehensive documentation of the trial against Boger. For a comprehensive synopsis see Kingreen 52-53.
- 15 The trial began in the Römer, Frankfurt's city hall, in 1963, but moved to the newly built Bürgerhaus Gallus in April 1964.
- 16 See Wojak, ed. Auschwitz-Prozeß 4 Ks 2/63, 395-96 for Marianne Boger's statements in court. Ziok's selection of interview footage highlights the absurdity and paradox of Boger's wife claiming that she did not know anything and that Boger was a good human and father.
- ¹⁷ See Wojak, ed. Auschwitz-Prozeß 4 Ks 2/63, 401 where Boger downplays the torture effect of the swing. He also attempted to distance himself from the Holocaust, arguing that he was merely interrogating the Polish Resistance and Bolshevists, and did not participate in the Holocaust against the Jews (432).
- 18 For example when the activities of Josef Klehr, the head of the SS disinfection commando in Auschwitz, are described to intensify the idea of the silent and unrepentant perpetrators.
- 19 See Knellessen's detailed analysis of witnesses from different postwar countries in the Auschwitz trial. While it is a consequent aesthetic decision to exclude traumatic testimonies by Holocaust victims so that Bauer's point of view can be emphasized, this decision also runs the risk of reducing the specificity of the historical events of the Holocaust to a secondary, exemplary story.
- ²⁰ Generally for the debate on the extension of the statute of limitations to Nazi crimes and Dreher's amendment to the criminal law (§ 50/2) that came in effect in October 1968 see Miguel 109-10.
- ²¹ The German criminal law has historically not recognized the idea of mass murder (see Wojak, ed, *Auschwitz-Prozeß 4 Ks 2/63*, 271–73). For the legal context and a detailed discussion of the challenges to apply the murder paragraph to mass murder in the Third Reich see by example of the Auschwitz trial Wojak, «Mauer des Schweigens» 33–34. See also Perels who discusses the inseparability of criminal trial and effect on public consciousness (136), as well as Bauer's essay «Genocidum (Völkermord)» (1965) in which he talks about the function of genocide trials to «re-educate» the perpetrators and create tolerance in society. Consequently, the criminal law focusing on the individual delinquent can only be a part of the necessary social education of society (Bauer, *Die Humanität* 61–75, esp. 74–75).
- ²² For the concept of simulating historical experience and atmosphere see Jaeger 92-95.
- 23 Pirker and Rüdiger (esp. 15) differentiate between two modes of historical authenticity: The first one is testimony which includes objects from the past, auratic places, eyewitness accounts, and historical sources. All of these manifestations of testimony suggest something original, a relic from the past that works through its authenticity. The

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second mode of authenticity is experience. This can be achieved through the view handling, or creation of replicas, the reenactment of the past, and through the evoca of an authentic feeling that relates to the mood or atmosphere of the past. The poir view of Bauer simulated and represented in *Tod auf Raten* seems a hybrid of both for

²⁴ As explained above, this positive development trumps any possible resignation of B: in the eyes of the film, so that the film neither advocates a suicide theory (Bauer hope) nor a theory of murder (conspiracy against Bauer and the ideals that he stood!

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