

Memory and Identity in Film

Nowadays we must often specify what we mean exactly when we talk about memory: do we mean the memory, which we keep in our brains or do we mean some digital data, which is stored on a hard drive somewhere in cyber space? Although in probably all languages the figure of speech “I remember” is still widely used, it is meant increasingly more often as an inscription into a memory, which is uttered in some recollection residing somewhere “outside” of our brains. In our digital era, when implications of such an assumption have become obvious, we should look back to understand the genealogy of this state of affairs, and to be able to analyse a structural composition of our so-called post-modern reality. The complexity of meanings regarding the notions of memory has become more complicated and yet simpler at the same time from the beginnings of the development of the first photography and then film, as it entered human history and the lexicon of ordinary language already in very early popular culture. Images, which represented the visual world more convincingly than any artist’s work – not because they were better as images, but because they were recognised to be “truer” – have forever changed human perception. How was human perception organised and how it functioned before this process of change started, we are unable to say in detail, but we can take into account many such written records as various philosophical texts, especially those