

PREFACE

Film - a medium that is now over 120 years old and has developed and changed in the context of art, history, and society - should be recognizable not only in its contexts, but also in its factual details. A chronicle can make history accessible in a different way than an overarching narrative. The building blocks that can be assembled do not simply add up to a finished building, to a view of the whole. They convey the vicissitudes of history: foundations and liquidations, initiatives and paralysis, ups and downs, departures and crises. In the language of film, a chronicle appears at first glance to be a series of detailed shots. On closer inspection, however, it is a montage of quite different shots: in addition to the momentary close-up, there are also long shots, company histories, cinema histories, life histories on the occasion of a death. At the center, in the close-up, is always the most important thing: the films that have meaning beyond the year. From this perspective, I see the chronicle as a panorama in many colors and perspectives.

In the international context, German film currently plays a rather subordinate role. All the more reason to remember how important it once was: a hundred years ago, during the Weimar Republic. The Chronicle of Weimar Film offers a calendar from 1918 to 1933. It provides numerical statistics on cinemas, audiences, and films. It recapitulates events, including inventions, company foundations, cinema openings, film-political events, censorship cases, institutional changes. It pays tribute to the most important German films of each year and refers to "other films" by important directors with well-known actors and actresses. It comments on film books published at the time.

Filmographic and biographical research has been part of my daily life for more than fifty years. During this time, the amount of factual and source material on German and international film history has increased to an astonishing degree. In the meantime, new technologies have made it easier to access this material. However, the film historical archives are still at the center of our work. With its collections and publications, the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek has played a major role in laying the foundations.

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