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| Kazan, Elia (1909-2003) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Elia Kazan is arguably one of the most influential directors of mid-century mainstream America. Kazan is renowned for his introduction of the Moscow Art Theatre’s method acting into American film and theatre, his semi-documentary style of shooting on location, and a thematic variance that ‘reflects changes and tensions in the national culture’ (Neve 2) of the United States. His nineteen-film oeuvre continues to exert great influence in its pioneering of cinematic realism.  Kazan’s career can be divided into two parts: the socially conscious films he produced before his testimony in front of HUAC (House Un-American Activities Committee), and those produced afterward, which reflect on the traumatic effect this event had on his life. Nevertheless, an unforgiving dedication to contemporary social and political dilemmas resonates throughout his films: *Gentleman’s Agreement (*1947) deals with anti-Semitism, his masterpiece *On the Waterfront* (1954) concerns workers’ rights, and his adaptation of John Steinbeck’s *East of Eden* (1955) focuses on the modern American familial crisis. After the successful staging of plays by Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller, Kazan’s film adaptation of Williams’ play in *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) further cemented his reputation as a dramaturge and actors’ director. Kazan’s long-take style of shooting, corroborated by an acute attention to *mise en scène*, grants a suspenseful yet clear atmosphere to the rather simple diegeses in all his films. |
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| Further reading:  (Dombrowski)  (Kazan)  (Neve)  (Pauly)  (Schickel) |