

1997

# The Inexorable Work Life of Manoel de Oliveira: Addressing the Trends and Movements of the 20th Century as a Form of Understanding the European Film Industry

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**The Inexorable Work Life of Manoel de Oliveira/ Addressing the Trends and  
Movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century as a Form of Understanding the European Film**

**Industry**

**By**

**Beatriz Saiani**

1972-

**THESIS**

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of**

**Master of Arts**

**in the Graduate School, Eastern Illinois University**

**Charleston, Illinois**

**1997**

**I Hereby Recommend this Thesis be Accepted as Fulfilling  
this part of the Graduate Degree Cited Above**

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### Abstract

Manoel de Oliveira is perhaps the most prestigious Portuguese filmmaker of the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His work has influenced Portuguese society as well as the European cultural context. Oliveira's importance is the result of his work, which enhances more "quality" than entertainment, and his years of experience in making films. Three major themes are analyzed in this study, literature, German Expressionism and Existentialism, and the experiences of memory and "saudade." This is a thematic analysis, which aims to identify the themes that emerged through Manoel de Oliveira's own life experiences while being part of trends and movements that characterized the dialectics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The way people interpret a work of art is the way that art will be judged within a specific society. The judgment depends on the audience's willingness to participate in this intriguing process of decoding high art quality.

### Acknowledgments

To my father who taught me how to be sensitive when looking at the world, to its challenges and rewards, as well as freeing me to pursue great and important moments in my life. To my mother, whose strength and character has always been an example to me, from the moment I wake up in the morning until the time I go to bed, in everyday of my life.

My special admiration to Rudolf Steiner, who made me imagine things with different colors, shapes and intensity... To Luciana Gomes, who has always shown me all the possibilities... To Caco Huette, who made a difference in my life and to all of my family and friends back in Brazil and all over the world.

My immense gratitude to Doug Bock, and to Joe Huemann, who gave me the idea for this study. To Mark Borzi, my advisor, who had the patience to read this thesis over and over, and to Mary Hogg who helped with the grammar. My attention to Instituto Portuges de Cinematografia ( IPACA ) and to Cinemateca Portuguesa, whose support was greatly appreciated, and my devotion to Manoel de Oliveira, whose work has been an example of art quality in the world of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and it will continue to be for those who know how to look and see, hear and understand.

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## Introduction

Portugal is one of the countries that has received little artistic recognition on a world-wide level. This oversight is perhaps no where more true than with Portuguese film making. Although Portuguese films are well known in Europe, they do not seem play well in the United States. This is probably a result of their inclusion as part of the European film tradition. The European tradition leans more toward symbolic and metaphorical representation while American films lean toward realism and fantasy.

Few Portuguese producers/directors have received any international attention. Manoel de Oliveira is an exception. Oliveira has received acclaim in Europe and has had his films shown in several international festivals and has won a number of international awards. Even with this excellence, his work is still relatively unknown in the United States.

The purpose of this study is to introduce Manoel de Oliveira's work and to analyze the influences that made his work so important. Oliveira, as a 20<sup>th</sup> century European film producer, was well versed in classical literature and European philosophical traditions as were any of his peers. What made Oliveira stand out was his ability to combine these traditions with lived experience and translate them to the screen. The influences that will be examined in this text are 19<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese and English literature and German Expressionism, the philosophical tradition of Existentialism and the experiences of memory and "saudade."

### Influence of Manoel de Oliveira

In an interview, Manoel de Oliveira once addressed Karl Marx's idea that "an individual, to be able to see and enjoy a magnificent view should be able to climb a very high hill". In Manoel de Oliveira's viewpoint, climbing a high hill takes a lot of effort and it is rare to find someone who has the will to do it. People do not want to struggle to reach the top. However, "only the individuals who struggle to reach the highest point of the hill, are able to enjoy the magnificent view". (Oliveira, 1997). It is for this reason, a lack of desire that Oliveira uses to justify why people usually prefer the entertainment film industry to the European film industry.

To Nuno Sena, Assistant Director of IPACA (Instituto Portugues de Cinematografia), the impact of Manoel de Oliveira's work within Portuguese society is marked by various antagonisms. Since Oliveira's work is more commented on than actually seen, there are two major ways to examine the way the Portuguese society looks at it. To some, Manoel de Oliveira's work is a unique art form. It is creator-oriented with non-aesthetics or narrative restrictions. To other people, Oliveira's work is characterized by an inadequate form of art being unable to create a pleasant relationship between his work and the audience, whose goals of entertainment are based in a mass production perspective. Oliveira's films are then, industrially feeble. (Personal Correspondence, 1997). Whatever the view, the dialectical tensions that the work produces provides aficionados and critics alike with significant material for thought. As a result, the impact of Oliveira's work within the Portuguese society as well as within the European environment is associated with the idea of "work quality" rather than "work quantity".

The importance of Manoel de Oliveira to the Portuguese culture is due to his artistic manipulations over the 20<sup>th</sup> century movements and trends. Oliveira's importance is also based on the fact that he is one of the former European film directors who is still active and his body of work continues to grow. Thus, we have an ongoing catalog of the 20<sup>th</sup> century through Oliveira's eyes. He is important because of his experience, knowledge and the uniqueness displayed in his work.

Finally, Manoel de Oliveira has greatly influenced critics of art as well as young film directors. Oliveira's work influences the way trends in society are exposed to the audience in a critical art form. Nuno Sena stated that Manoel de Oliveira's age is also a characteristic that makes him extremely influential. His age makes him a more consistent film director, delineating the kind of position he has within the artistic and cultural community in Portuguese life. Oliveira then, inspires young film directors due to the individualism of the productions techniques that his work has shown in the last thirty years. (Personal Correspondence, 1997).

Therefore, Oliveira's influence occurs on those people, critics, film directors and artists who allow themselves to experience a work of art that has no restrictions to the aesthetics and narrative structures. To be influenced by Manoel de Oliveira depends on the epistemological approach that a person experiences in relation to a work of art.

This study attempts to introduce Manoel de Oliveira's work and to provide an analysis of the influences, which shape his work. In order to meet this challenge, I will begin by examining Oliveira's biography with an eye to his life and work in Portuguese society. From there, I will turn to examine several literary and cultural themes, which

have influenced his work. Finally, I will conclude by outlining some of the sources of Oliveira's success as they emerge from the themes.

## Methodology

The methodology applied to this study is the one of criticism. In May of 1997, I went for two weeks to Portugal to collect the data for my research. While in Portugal, I visited the Instituto Portugues de Cinematografia (IPACA), as well as the Cinemateca Portuguesa, both in Lisbon. At the IPACA, I watched twelve fiction films of Manoel de Oliveira (see appendix A). At the Cinemateca Portuguesa, I watched nine non-fiction films by Oliveira. In addition, at the Cinemateca Portuguesa, I researched all the material relevant to Manoel de Oliveira's work. Most of the material collected were articles in French and Portuguese magazines. From the time I decided the theme for my research, I started personal correspondence to collect information, via fax or telephone. My main source and supporter was Nuno Sena, Assistant Director of IPACA, in Lisbon, Portugal.

To expand my understanding, two interviews were conducted. The first one was with Jose de Matos Cruz, a Portuguese Journalist and great admirer of Manoel de Oliveira's work. A book by Jose de Matos Cruz (1996) about Oliveira's work was useful to my study. The other interview was the filmmaker himself, Manoel de Oliveira. This interview occurred in the city in the city of Porto, where the filmmaker lives. This occurred at the end of my trip to Portugal, on May 28<sup>th</sup> of 1997.

Thus, the methodology applied is the one of a phenomenological process, where only through my experience while in contact with Manoel de Oliveira's work, themes emerged.

The themes in this study appeared while watching the twelve films available (see Appendix A) in Lisbon, Portugal, at IPACA (Instituto Portugues de Cinematografia), in May of 1997. The first theme I will examine is Manoel de Oliveira's biography. His life and work in the Portuguese society. The second theme I will deal with, is literature and its influence in the films of Manoel de Oliveira. This part is divided into seven sections. The first one examines the influence of the Portuguese writer, Camilo Castelo Branco in Oliveira's film, *Amor de Perdicao (Fated Love)*. The second section examines the common themes between Manoel de Oliveira and the contemporary Portuguese writer, Jose Regio. The third section analysis the influence of Augustina Bessa Luis in the psychological complexity of middle class women, in films such as *Francisca (Fanny Owen)* and *Vale Abrao (Valley of Abraham)*. The fourth assumption examines the importance of Lord Byron to the characters of the "Frustrated Loves" theme by Manoel de Oliveira. The fifth section analysis the Biblical influence in *Ato da Primavera (Act of Spring)*. The sixth section examines the good and evil sides of the film; *A Divina Comedia (The Divine Comedy)*, and lastly, the seventh section examines the influence of Johan Wolfagang Goethe, in the film *O Conevento (The Monastery)* by Manoel de Oliveira.

The third theme is based on trends of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that affected Manoel de Oliveira's invention, arrangement, style, memory and delivery. In this chapter, I will deal with subject such as German Expressionism , and sub-themes that emerged from the movement and affected Oliveira's work. The sub-themes are: the search for the absolute, the reaction to the traditional realism and the dissatisfaction with the self. The other trend, is Existentialism. In this section, three other sub-themes have been linked to

Oliveira's films. The sub-themes are: Death, freedom of choice and anxiety based on Jean Paul Sartre's philosophical approach to Existentialism.

The last, and fourth theme, concentrates on the concept of memory and the influence of the Portuguese word "saudade", in the film, *Viagem ao Principio de Mundo (Journey to the beginning of the World)*. This chapter is divided in two parts. The first part addresses the difference between memory and imagination, and how these concepts fit in the characters of *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo*. The second part deals with the use of the word "saudade", and how this is viewed and experienced by the characters of *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo*.

## Biography

Manoel Candido Pinto de Oliveira was born in Porto, in Northern Portugal, on December 11, 1908. Approaching his 89<sup>th</sup> birthday, Manoel de Oliveira is one of the most prestigious, and well-known Portuguese film directors in Europe. Manoel de Oliveira participated in all trends and changes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, being always attached and aware of political, social, economic, religious and artistic issues that led the dialectics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in people's minds. He has lived and made up the 20<sup>th</sup> century, adding always more of his knowledge to develop a better understanding about his own society and about all of the changes that have occurred in the world of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His interpretation of the world is grounded in his understanding of the events that he experienced, and his will was to make this interpretation part of a reality in the 20<sup>th</sup> century through the use of cinema. The cinema is the medium where Manoel de Oliveira based his interpretation and understanding of the world. Manoel de Oliveira created his own cinema, the cinema that allows viewers to frame his own interpretation of 20<sup>th</sup> century reality. With the use of theater, painting, music and literature, Manoel de Oliveira helps viewers develop their own narrative structure. He gives us a sense of chronology, but the narrative, what I freely call the interpretation, is the worthiest gift of Oliveira to his audience.

Manoel de Oliveira's life has been, in a sense, a very simple type of life, where expectations were held, frustrations swelled, happiness and satisfaction experienced, and it all occurred with simplicity. Oliveira was born into a rich family. His father had a company that produced electrical bulbs, called "Electrical Bulbs Hercules". Manoel de Oliveira's father, Francisco Jose de Oliveira, was Manoel's first influence in terms of the



movies. He took Oliveira to watch Charles Chaplin and Max Linder films, placing himself as the comedian in the film. As a student, Manoel de Oliveira attended the “Colegio Universal do Porto” (Universal School of Porto), continuing his studies in Spain, where he attended the La Guardia School. Even while following the rules of the time, going to school and obeying the society’s norms, Manoel de Oliveira never discarded the passion he had for the art of the filmmaking process. This passion stayed with Oliveira and, today he is known as the most prestigious Portuguese filmmaker.

In his early 20’s, Manoel de Oliveira also became notorious because of his athletic talent during his youth. Manoel de Oliveira was an excellent swimmer, as well as a competitive racecar driver. In Brazil, he won the famous Gavea circuit in Rio de Janeiro, becoming famous there as well. At this time in his life, Manoel de Oliveira lived a very bohemian life, together with his oldest brother, Casimiro de Oliveira. (Matos-Cruz, 1996).

It was in 1928 that Manoel de Oliveira had his first involvement with the cinema. In Porto, the city where he grew up, he attended a school to become an actor, participating in two different productions, *Fatima Milagrosa (Miracle Fatima)* and *Rino Lupo*. (Matos- Cruz, 1996).

Oliveira first production happened in 1929. He bought his first camera and together with his friend, Antonio Mendes, they created *Douro*, a documentary about the main river that crosses the city of Porto, and all the Northern region of Portugal. *Douro, Faina Fluvial (Douro, River work)* was first shown in the V International Congress of Film Criticism of Lisbon in 1931. To film *Douro*, Manoel de Oliveira and Antonio Mendes used their free time. In an interview, Manoel stated that “ filming *Douro* was

how we occupied our free time. Antonio Mendes was an employee in a bank, and to film we even improvised a lab beneath a staircase to develop the first pieces of *Douro*, and we did editing directly on the negative, just to save money. It was only later that we could have a better environment to work, but still, money was lacking”. (Interview, 1981).

*Douro* was first introduced to the public as a silent documentary, and it was only in 1934 that *Douro, River work*, was with sound. The creation of this documentary and the presentation at the International Congress of Lisbon was what actually introduced Manoel de Oliveira to the public. The congress was important because it also was work influence. Oliveira met a number of people who were influential in shaping his art. These new friends included, Jose Regio, whose literary support is great in Manoel de Oliveira’s film, and Adolfo Casais Monteiro, who gave Manoel de Oliveira his first interview in “Image Magazine”.

In 1933, Manoel de Oliveira participated in the film *A Cancao de Lisboa (Lisbon Song)*, by Continelli Telmo. In the following year, 1934, Manoel de Oliveira showed *Douro, River work* with sound for the first time. During the 30’s, Manoel de Oliveira worked on several productions that stayed only as unfinished projects, such as the film dedicated to Walter Ruttmann’s work, entitled, *Miseria, Roda, Luz (Misery, Wheel, Lighting)* and *A Mulher que passa, desemprego, prostituicao (The Woman that passes by, unemployment, prostitution)*.

In 1940, at the age of 32, Manoel de Oliveira married Maria Isabel Brandao Carvalhais, his wife, supporter of his work and confident until nowadays. Manoel de Oliveira had four children with Maria Isabel: Manuel Casimiro, Jose Manuel, Isabel Maria and Adelaide Maria.

The first professional step in Manoel de Oliveira's career came in the year of 1942. With the release of his first fictional production, *Aniki Bobo*, (102 minutes long), which was named for a game that children used to play during his early years in Portugal. With *Aniki Bobo*, Manoel de Oliveira emerges as a classic film director. The producer for this film was Lopes Ribeiro, his friend and collaborator.

In the 1930's and into the 40's, Oliveira started but did not finish a number of productions. Many of these films remained visions with nothing concrete to show for the effort. By 1943, Oliveira was so frustrated by the number of incomplete films that he tried to quit his career as a filmmaker. Returning to film making in 1945, Oliveira completed four documentary productions by the end of 1963. During this period, Manoel de Oliveira participated in a number of congresses for filmmakers, such as the "50<sup>th</sup> year of the Cinema" and the "The First International Meeting for the Films' Directors, that occurred in Paris in 1956.

One year before, in 1955, Manoel de Oliveira went to Italy and Germany to study color in the cinema as well as to examine the new equipment and techniques that were being introduced to the market. The year that Manoel de Oliveira spent in Italy and Germany led him to the creation of the documentary, *As Pinturas do Meu Irmao Julio* (*The Paintings of my Brother Julio*), a 15 minutes long film, where he added the new techniques learned in Germany and Italy.

In 1959, Manoel de Oliveira created his documentary, *O Pao* (*The Bread*), 58 minutes long, which was sponsored by the industries of Portugal. In 1960, at the University of Gottingen in Germany, Manoel de Oliveira exhibits for the first time a collection of his work. The 60s determined his consecration on an international level, and

it was in the year of 1965, in France, that Manoel de Oliveira had a first retrospective of his work. (Matos - Cruz, 1996).

By this time, Oliveira was considered the major force in the Portuguese cinema. In 1963, he released the film, *Ato da Primavera (Act of Spring)*, 94 minutes, as his second fiction film. Manoel de Oliveira's first international award, was received at the Lacarno Festival in Switzerland in 1965.

The beginning of a successful career was already marked during the 60s. Manoel de Oliveira became well known in the major countries within Europe, which made his image worthier to his own country, Portugal.

In the 70s, Manoel de Oliveira adopted a new trend in his work. The "Frustrated Loves" theme was what led him to a catharsis in the 70s. In 1971, the film *O Passado e o Presente (The Past and the Present)*, was released. *The Past and the Present* was the first film of the tetralogy of the "Frustrated Loves". In the same year, Oliveira also participated in a Spanish Film Retrospective, in Madrid. Following this Film Retrospective in Madrid, in 1974, Manoel de Oliveira joined the Film Festival in Brussels. Other festivals happened during this decade, such as the Retrospective in La Rochelle, France, and the exhibition of Portuguese films in Bologna, Italy.

After *The Past and the Present*, the second film belonging to the tetralogy of the "Frustrated Loves" is released in 1975. *Benilde: ou a Virgem Mae (Benilde: or the Virgin Mother)*, 110 minutes long, enhances the idea of the impossibility of loving due to the search for the perfect love that is never totally achieved by human beings. The theme first introduced in *The Past and the Present*, is examined again in *Benilde: or the Virgin Mother*, where men and women try to achieve an equal relationship. They try to

transform their realities easier to be swelled and experienced; but loving is a feeling that is differently expressed by men and women, and this is how the impossibility of loving reigns as a theme.

The third film in the tetralogy was *Amor de Perdicão (Fated Love)*, 265 minutes long and released in 1978. The theme of “Frustrated Loves”, was emphasized again, as being the major impulse in the process of facing reality from a more dramatic, passionate and emotional perspective. Love is then what makes life so emotional and frustrating to those who get into the “impossibility of loving” experience.

In 1980, Manoel de Oliveira received the Gold Medal for his life work from CIDALC, which is the National Center for the Defense of the Arts and Literature in the Cinema.

The 50<sup>th</sup> year of Manoel de Oliveira’s career was marked by a statement written by Louis Marcocelles in *Le Monde* about “Cannes’ Stories”. He said: “Manoel de Oliveira is one of the three or four major film directors still alive”. In this particular year, Manoel de Oliveira received a variety of different international awards. In Berlin, with the 31<sup>st</sup> Festival of Berlin, he received President of the honor and Gold Medal award in the Festival of Sorrento. A special work retrospective done by the National Cinemateque of Spain and the Portuguese Cinemateque was a principal event in 1981. The fourth film that ends the “Frustrated Loves” theme, is *Francisca (Fanny Owen)*, 166 minutes long, released in the same year. (Matos - Cruz, 1996).

The following years of the 80s’ celebrated the recognition of Manoel de Oliveira’s work within the European environment. In 1982, Oliveira had a retrospective of his work shown in Switzerland, and he was given an award in Bologna, Italy by the

president, Sandro Pertini. In 1983, Manoel de Oliveira was named as the Art and Literature commendator by the French Government. In 1984, another retrospective of his work occurred in Brussels. (Matos-Cruz, 1996).

The next major fictional project by Manoel de Oliveira was the film, *Sapato de Cetim (The Satin Slipper)*, 415 minutes long, and released in 1985. In the same year, Oliveira received an award for *Sapato de Cetim* at the “Film Festival of Veneza”. The next two fiction films in Manoel de Oliveira’s career were, in 1986, *Meu Caso (My Case)*, 87 minutes long, and *Os Canibais (The Cannibals)*, 90 minutes long, in 1988. Throughout the 80s, Manoel de Oliveira also produced and directed many documentaries, such as *Lisboa Cultural (Cultural Lisbon)*, 58 minutes, and *Sobre a Bandeira Nacional (About the National Flag)*, 8 minutes. One interesting project that Manoel de Oliveira developed in 1987 was the play *De Profundis*, presented at the Festival of Santaracangelo of Theater, written by Manoel de Oliveira and based on a story by Augustina Bessa, his friend and collaborator, using poems by Jose Regio, Antonio Nobre and Fernando Pessoa. Then in 1988, Manoel de Oliveira was named at the Festival of Rotterdam among one of the 20 Directors of the future. (Matos- Cruz, 1996).

In 1990, Manoel de Oliveira received a special honor at the Cannes’ Festival for the cinematographic contributions he gave to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The film by Manoel de Oliveira released in 1990 and presented at the Cannes’ Festival was *Non ou Va Gloria de Mandar (Non or the Vain Glory of Command)*, 112 minutes long. One of the most important awards that Manoel de Oliveira received was at the Festival of Venice in 1991.

The film that received the award was *A Divina Comedia (The Divine Comedy)*, 141 minutes long.

From 1990 to 1997, Manoel de Oliveira released a film per year. For each of the films he released since 1990, Manoel de Oliveira received a different award or honor. In 1992, the award was received at the Festival of Lacarno, with the film *O Dia do Desespero*” (*The Day of Despair*), 76 minutes long. In 1993, the film that received an award in San Francisco ( USA) was *Vale Abrahao ( Valley of Abraham)*, 187 minutes. In 1994, the award was received in Rome, Italy.

The last four films by Manoel de Oliveira were in 1994, *A Caixa ( Blind Man's Buff)*, 93 minutes. In 1995, *O Convento ( The Monastery)*, with Catherine Deneuve and John Malkovich, 91 minutes. In 1996, *Party*, 91 minutes; and in 1997, *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo (Journey to the Beginning of the World)*, 90 minutes.

Throughout his life, Manoel de Oliveira had many different events that either interrupted his work or put him ahead of other directors.

From *Aniki Bobo* in 1942, to the *Ato da Primavera (Act of Spring)* in 1962, Manoel de Oliveira had an interruption in his fictional production for twenty years. Portugal, during that time, was in an authoritarian type of government. With Salazar as Prime Minister since the year of 1932, Portugal became a corporative state with a planned economy, and its new regime was called the “Estado Novo” (New State). In 1936, Salazar supported the insurgents, led by General Francisco Franco in the Spanish Civil War. In 1939, Portugal signed a contract of friendship with Spain, and in 1940, both countries remained neutral during World War II. With these events, the planned economy existent in Portugal fell apart. The fishing industry declined, exports lessened,

and many refugees entered the country. Salazar died in 1951, but the authoritarian regime was maintained by the next Prime Minister, General Francisco Lopes, a supporter of Salazar. It was in the fifties that Portugal developed close relationships with the United States. During the 60s, Portugal faced opposition to its rule in the overseas territories (Africa and India). The Portuguese government mounted intensive military campaigns against each African Rebellion. Until the 70s, rebellions continued throughout the Portuguese territories and Portugal was condemned for waging colonial wars. In the mid 60s, Portugal received loans that aided in the construction of major irrigation and other projects, which encouraged some economic growth to Portugal (Quintas, 1995).

With this in mind, we can clearly see Manoel de Oliveira's position during the 20 years he had no fictional productions. At that time, everything was prohibited by the authoritarianism of Salazar and his regime. No money was put into the arts or in the cultural development of the country. Although Manoel de Oliveira had a series of objections to his work, especially during the twenty-year break, he remained as a prominent film director in Portuguese lands.



Literature and Cinema

*“ All streams flow into the sea,*

*yet the sea is never full.*

*To the place the streams come from,*

*there they return again.*

*All things are wearisome.*

*More than one can say*

*the eye never has enough of seeing*

*nor the ear its fill of hearing.*

*What has been will be again,*

*what has been done will be done again:*

*there is nothing new under the sun.”*

*Ecclesiastics 1:7:9*

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the film industry has been divided into different categories. D. W. Griffith described two “schools” of film practice as American and German (European). The American School was said to be a place where you come and “have” a great experience! Whereas, at the German school you come and “see” a great experience. (Monaco, 1977, p.316). Vincendeau (1995) argues that the European film industry invented the kind of film culture that elevated the movies to the level of self-conscious art. From the early 1900, there also appeared throughout Europe the film *d’art or autorenfilm* (literary adaptations), modernist and experimental film, *auteur* films and realist cinema. Intellectual movements also appeared all over Europe and European cinema was the first one to become deliberately an art form. (Vincendeau, 1997, p. XIV).

Culturally, factions of the European art cinema see itself as the inheritor of high European culture. Its movements, genres, and auteurs reflect older arts such as literature and painting. Its great visions, its political and philosophical commitments oppose Hollywood escapism. Europe's artisanal base is heroically contrasted to the Hollywood dream factory ( Vincendeau, 1995, p.XIV ).

Charles Eidsvik (1978), taking a Marxist view, argues that the history of the American cinema in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is based on popular art. The mainstream of film aesthetics has always been bourgeois, searching to please its customers. To Eidsvik, cinema as popular art is based on fantasizing the past: there is no evident critical view to situations in the present time. Entertainment is the category embraced by the popular art. In a popular art form, people share their perceptions, which engage the viewers in a low art quality. While the cinema of the 19th century fantasized the past, literature dealt with the present, exploring the problems of society. The modernistic art was based on literature as well as on the idea that everybody sees differently. The wit, ambiguity, and irony were the values to the modernistic form of art (Eidsvik, 1978).

In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in Europe, the raising of the independent European cinema occurred, elevating the cinema to literary stature. The cinema, then, became a high quality of art, producer- oriented, dealing with present problematic situations and offering not a common perception process to the viewers but an individual one. Since the art is creator- oriented, the perception of the audience will be individualized (Eidsvik, 1978).

Manoel de Oliveira is part of the European independent film tradition. In this “work of art” , the name given to the movies that had a modernistic approach to their

delivery and inventive process. Manoel de Oliveira delineated the reality lived in his country, Portugal, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. All the transformations in society, after the Salazar regime were being exposed in his films. Political, economic and social values changed quite a lot during that period, not only in Portugal but all over the world, regarding World War II as a point of support to the development of new cultural and technological tendencies.

In the work of Manoel de Oliveira, the influences from the outside world were immense. Literature, then, became a creative frame. Historical facts were attributed as the cause of present situations, or in other words, past historical facts influenced the present, and the delivery of these new concepts was done through art. Manoel de Oliveira adopted the cinema as his main vehicle in delivering reality, but he based this reality on past historical facts. Manoel de Oliveira based the reality of his society and of the world, on literature.

Watching a film by Manoel de Oliveira is like reading a book. All writers leave some textual construction to their audience. Oliveira's work moves beyond the original texts, by incorporating the cultural symbols and signs familiar to his audience. A writer creates a frame in which the action occurs. The reader engages in the process of filling the gap, in description, with cultural constructions of what would be expected. A film director goes beyond this frame and must assist the audience in filling the gaps. The camera movements, the lighting, the characters' representation, and the dialogues are all absorbed by the literary influence that Manoel de Oliveira received in his work. Literature lacks the visual impact, and Manoel de Oliveira played the game of creating, or in other words, making the "emptiness of description that the writers leave in their

books”, come alive. Manoel de Oliveira’s responsibility was then, to fill the emptiness that the writers gave to the readers. Therefore, Manoel de Oliveira had to deduce what he believes should be done to the visual, or the appearances in the films he created based on the literary works he used. The decisions that Oliveira makes are not in isolation, previous experiences help shape current views and recreates old views.

A number of authors and texts have directly influenced Oliveira’s construction. I’ll examine in four different sections the ways, Camilo Castelo Branco, Jose Regio, Augustina Bessa Luis and Lord Byron influenced Manoel de Oliveira’ work on the “Frustrated Loves” theme, analyzing films such as *Benilde: ou a Virgem Mae* (*Benilde: or the Virgin Mother*) (1975), 110 min; *Amor de Perdicao* (*Fated Love*) (1978), 265 min; and *Francisca* (*Fanny Owen*) (1981), 166 min. In the fifth section, I will examine the ways that *The Bible* influenced *Ato da Primavera* (*Act of Spring*) (1962), 94 min. Following that, the sixth section will examine how the Russian writer, Dostoyevski and *The Bible* influenced in *A Divina Comedia* (*The Divine Comedy*) (1991), 140 min; and lastly, the seventh section, examines how Goethe influenced *O Convento* (*The Monastery*) (1995), 91min.

Camilo Castelo Branco, Manoel de Oliveira, and the process of deducing what has to be transfigured into image.

*Amor de Perdicao* (*Fated Love*) is a film released in 1978. The story was originally written by Camilo Castelo Branco (1825 - 1890), who was a romanticist in Portugal, but who always had advanced ideas. His writings portrayed the social and domestic life of his time, in which, the idealization of some of his characters was

intermingled with savage ridicule of such characters as a member of the commercial middle class. (Encarta, 1996). His novel, *Amor de Perdicão* is a true story written by Castelo Branco while he was in prison. Castelo Branco was imprisoned because of his modern ideas and tendencies leaning to the new German philosophies, French socialism, science and realistic art. (Mendonca, 1997). In *Amor de Perdicão* (1978), he describes his uncle, Simão, and his love towards Teresa.

The story occurs at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, between two families that are enemies. Both families belong to the Nobil social Portuguese class, but they, each have particular caprices, which at the end, lead their own children to unhappiness and death. (Marques, 1979). Domingos Bothelho is married to Rita Caldeirão. They were parents of Manuel, Simão and Rita. Simão was a revolutionary and always liked to be this way. He lived in Coimbra, where he studied. One day, back home in Vila Real, he sees his next door neighbor, whom he falls in love with from the first sight. They start seeing each other, in secret because their families were enemies.

Through the windows, Simão and Teresa talk. Their parents find out about their relationship, and Domingos Bothelho sends his son, Simão back to school in Coimbra. On the other side, Tadeu de Albuquerque, Teresa's father, tries to marry her daughter to Baltasar Coutinho, her cousin. One day, upon returning to his home, Simão finds out about the news. Desperately, he goes to talk to Teresa but is shot by some of Baltasar's employees. A friend of Simão's father, João da Cruz, took Simão home and looked after him. Actually, Mariana da Cruz's daughter, took care of Simão. Mariana fell in love with Simão, but did not tell anybody. When Simão recovered, he went back home again and tried to talk to Teresa, but her Dad had sent her to a monastery, and then, misfortune

started. Simao met Baltasar and killed him. He is imprisoned and mistreated. Teresa continued in the monastery, where later, she died of sadness. Simao escaped from prison and went into a boat with Mariana and some other sailors. Simao got sick on the way, because without Teresa, his life did not have any meaning. Simao died. Mariana, the dedicated friend, being in love with Simao, also does not see any meaning to her life, and after the sailors threw Simao's body out to sea, she jumped off the ship to die as well.

Manoel de Oliveira, in an interview after the film was released, described his perspective on the book as: " Love being itself imprisoned, ask to the door of freedom, to be open to its total realization, until it exhausts itself in happiness and plenitude". (Marques, 1979 ).

To Manoel de Oliveira, Camilo Castelo Branco describes the "romantic" through the characters, and the lie of the romanticism (sentiment) through the truth experienced by the "romantic" characters. (Matos- Cruz, 1996). The literature has the advantage over the cinema, of carrying the "romantic" sentiment and the "romantic" characters, or in other words, the truth (Matos - Cruz, 1996). It is more difficult to show "romantic" characters in films than it is in the books.

The contrasting point between the literature of Castelo Branco and the film, *Amor de Perdicao* (1978), can be seen in the narrative structure of the film and in the narrative structure of the book. The film is narrated by Manoel de Oliveira, as if he were Camilo Castelo Branco. Manoel de Oliveira's voice plays the role of Camilo Castelo Branco. This simultaneously puts everything in action and is the point from which everything is going to happen. The word still belongs to the text, as the image belongs to the light but

the literary content is what gave meaning to Manoel de Oliveira's film, or in other words, the literary content gave meaning to the image. Oliveira created the delivery of a story that had already been told a century prior. The delivery he created is what filled the emptiness existent in literature. Through Manoel de Oliveira's work, appearances and visibility were given to us. Camilo Castelo Branco wrote the book, but the lack of description is what lent creativity to Manoel de Oliveira. In an interview collected in 1979 by Jose Vieira Marques, Manoel de Oliveira said: "in dealing with a romantic structure, Camilo Castelo Branco omits certain details about things, places, furniture and clothing. For instance, there is a scene where I know one of the characters is seated because of the dialogue he has. Baltasar, turning to Teresa, says: Please, stay seated a little bit longer. "Through this, I can deduce that he is seated, but we do not know if it is inside or outside, or even where it is. It is not explicit. And in this way we can fill the emptiness with what we, filmmakers, understand". (Marques, 1979). To Manoel de Oliveira, to do this filling in the emptiness that writers give us, is a hard thing to be done because we all see in different ways. Interpretation is given individually by each viewer, and is dependent on what he/she sees on the screen.

Therefore, the romanticist, Camilo Castelo Branco influenced Manoel de Oliveira's work in the way the story relates the romantic characters to the romanticism. Implied by the author, romanticism is in this instance, the sentiment of romance. The sentimentality displayed by Castelo Branco allowed Manoel de Oliveira to fill the emptiness that was left in the literary description of the romance. The act of creating the film changes the original literary work. It is a creative process to Oliveira, due to the fact that when one reads the book, he or she creates in his/her mind what he/she imagines

about the characters and their reactions. Thus, Manoel de Oliveira gave the story the light and image that emerged in his mind while he read the book, serving as a mediator in the creative process.

Jose Regio and Benilde: ou a Virgem Mae (Benilde or the Virgin Mother) (1975).

110mm.

Jose Regio (1901 - 1969) was a contemporary Portuguese writer who introduced a new narrative technique. Themes such as existentialism, neo-realism and social-realism were his favorites. (Mendonca, 1997).

Jose Regio incorporated the Portuguese modernism in a very traditional way. His poetry and his novels reflected the bourgeois in Portugal, facing the realism and neo-realism tendencies experienced in those times. (Bernard da Costa, 1988).

Manoel de Oliveira and Jose Regio were good friends, who respected and admired each other. The first work that Regio and Oliveira did together was a documentary, *As Pinturas do Meu Irmao Julio (The paintings of my Brother Julio)*, in 1965. The real influence of Jose Regio in Manoel de Oliveira's work came in 1974 with the film, *Benilde: ou a Virgem Mae ( Benilde: or the virgin Mother) (1975)*. This film determines a turning point in Manoel de Oliveira's career. (Bernard da Costa, 1988).

The film is about an eighteen-year-old girl, Benilde, whose virginity has been threatened by mysterious events. Benilde lives with her father, aunt, maid, and her cousin, who is her fiancée as well. The whole family believes that Benilde got pregnant through sexual intercourse, but she swears that it is not true. She says that she is



pregnant because God wanted her to be so. At the end, Benilde dies, and she dies due to the lack of faith people had in her story. Her fiancée, being desolated, dies as well.

Jose Regio had always been a great admirer of Camilo Castelo Branco, whose literary works have also influenced Jose Regio. The themes that Regio dealt with were: the division existent in men between God and Evil, the evasive things of daily life experienced by human beings, and the aspiration for the “Great Ideal”. These themes are also Manoel de Oliveira’s themes. Both Oliveira and Regio search for the value of reality and they believe in the modernistic approach that art has the power of transfiguring reality. (Bernard da Costa, 1988). The concept of the dialectic between culture and nature, as well as the search for the collective conscience, is what Regio did in influencing Manoel de Oliveira (Bernard da Costa, 1988).

*Benilde: ou a Virgem Mae* (1975) is an adaptation of Regio’s novel done by Manoel de Oliveira. Benilde, the young girl, is a product of her oppressive society. Her truth and aspiration is to have the baby that God gave her. She aspired what is suspicious to the other members of her family, whose main concern belonged to the evasive things of daily life, such as the concern that Benilde is pregnant and not married. The theme of God and Evil is also clear in the narrative structure of the film. Evil are the temptations, and perhaps the idea of a collective conscience. Within the film, to the characters’ understanding, Benilde operated the “Evil” force, and the other characters are the God side, because they followed what society wanted them to follow. The collective conscience attached the characters to what they believed, as being truth and good, was also an evil force, due to the fact that individual’s own desires and aspirations are substituted by the collective conscience that tells them that Benilde lied to them saying

that it was through God that she was pregnant. On the other side, to the viewers, or the audience, Benilde is the God side and the others are the evil in the film. What is real to us, is what is truth to Benilde: she is pregnant by God's will. Nobody understands that but the audience.

Therefore, Manoel de Oliveira and Jose Regio have a similar viewpoint about reality, and also about the way reality is understood and delivered. With a modernistic approach, it is only through art that reality is transfigured, and both Regio and Oliveira transfigured reality through art.

Augustina Bessa Luis: *Francisca (Fanny Owen)* (1981) and *Vale Abrao (Valley Abraham)* (1993): women, skepticism and eroticism in Manoel de Oliveira's films.

In a modernistic literal trend in Portugal, Augustina Bessa Luis (1922 - ) is one of the most interesting figures. Her main goal is to trace the incommunicability and psychological complexity of middle class women. (Mendonca, 1997). Augustina has a great impact on Manoel de Oliveira's work, in films such as: *Francisca (Fanny Owen)* (1981) and *Vale Abrao (Valley Abraham)* (1993).

In *Francisca* as well as in *Vale Abrao*, Manoel de Oliveira emphasized what the desires of women are, which is one of the most important themes to Augustina Bessa Luis. *Francisca* is based on a true story that involves the Portuguese writer, Camilo Castelo Branco. *Francisca* (1981) tells the story of a young English girl who is passionately in love with the best friend of a friend who adores her. (Tomadjoglou, 1993). Camilo Castelo Branco, the famous Portuguese writer, is *Francisca's* friend, and it happens that she falls in love with Jose Augusto, Camilo's friend. This is when the action

takes place, and even with the slow camera movements of Manoel de Oliveira, the thrill between the characters is delineated by their acting. Jose Augusto and Francisca get married, and this is when love and fatalism turn the film into a tragedy. Jose Augusto rejects Francisca, and she dies destitute and a virgin.

In this film, what is shown to us is the ambiguity that exists between the relationships that are developed among the characters. Manoel de Oliveira stated that *Francisca* (1981) was an internal film. It is a film that analyzed the internal crises of the characters, as they were struggling to solve their problems. (Marques Vieira, 1981). However, the problems are all internalized. External problems are not seen in this film. Augustina developed a story where the woman is the fragile one, but at the same time, it is her frailty that makes the other characters, Camilo Castelo Branco and Jose Augusto, experience their own internal problems.

What male's lack is harmony between power and sentiment. Jose Augusto carries the power when he is the one that denies having sex with Francisca; on the other side, Camilo Castelo Branco is the representation of the pure sentiment. The way he behaves and the way he lacks power when facing the desire to pursue a woman who he is in love with, makes the character, or perhaps the real Castelo Branco, a purely sentimental person. Francisca is the medium that operates power and sentiment, and it happens that she does not know how to deal with either of them. That is her frailty. When she dies, Jose Augusto's power dies as well. Without Francisca, he is nothing, because he lost his object of control. Pleasure for him was based on control.

At the end, Augusto becomes fragile, and then he dies. The sentimental character remains true to his thoughts and ideas. He is a romantic by sentiment, and being

a romantic by sentiment, he is free to suffer, but not to die because he is not placed in the extremes of the experiences. Francisca and Augusto were in the extremes, that's why death came to them; skepticism is the emotion that made them able to handle the extremes. Skepticism was the limit, or in other words, their death. Eroticism was also limited to their experiences, leading them to death as well.

Augustina Bessa Luis also delineates women's desires in another famous story filmed by Oliveira; *Vale Abrao* (1993). The main character, Ema, is a beautiful woman, whose love is materialized and soluble by the inconsistency of her relationships. Ema is married to a doctor, and they live in a small town in Portugal. Ema is quiet and discrete, but only she knows what she aspires. Nothing thrills her more than experiencing inconsistency. Stability is in her marriage with the doctor. She does not love him, but she respects him. Outside her marriage, Ema had lovers, and it was through these lovers that Ema could experience instability and seduction, and these were two things that made her alive. When life became meaningless to her, she killed herself, not with despair but with hope. On earth, Ema could not experience anything else to make her seductive or unstable. In another life, that could exist. Therefore, hope is the way that led her to death. In this film again, we see how skepticism and eroticism play an important role. Skepticism, contrary to Francisca, is unlimited to Ema. It is through skepticism, or uncertainty, that she is able to have hope. On the other hand, the excess of eroticism is what led Ema to death. All of her different experiences made her more willing to participate the small little world that she was living in.

Thus, we can see that skepticism and eroticism are both themes applied by Augustina Bessa Luis in Manoel de Oliveira's films. The literary work done by Bessa

Luis became real and visible when Oliveira placed his camera toward a better understanding of what skeptical and erotic meant to both characters: Francisca and Ema. In *Francisca* (1981), Oliveira showed what had to be shown; skepticism led to death because experiences are limited and unsatisfactory; while in *Vale Abrao* (1993), Ema found that skepticism led her to hope. The same with eroticism. To Francisca, eroticism is limited by Augusto, or in other words, by his power. To Ema, eroticism is unlimited due to the lack of power her husband displayed. She experiences everything she wants to, and that is why her life later is meaningless.

Thus, both films emphasize extremes. The good and evil sides of life, and the evasive things of daily life are themes that Oliveira likes to deal with in his films. (Bernard da Costa, 1988). Skepticism and eroticism each have ambiguous connotations, good and evil sides. In one film, *Vale Abrao*, skepticism is hope through uncertainty, and in the other film, *Francisca* (1981), skepticism is the only way to stop experiences in life. In *Francisca* (1981), what is erotic is limited, and in the character of Ema, what is erotic is life. Life is a continuous set of erotic experiences. In comparison to Manoel de Oliveira's themes, the evasiveness of daily life experiences are also skeptical and erotic, they both lead to meaningful and meaningless experiences, depending on the level of the experience. They become evasive if they are experienced in extremes as the two characters, Ema and Francisca, did in the films by Oliveira.

“The Frustrated Loves” theme, and the magic contribution of Lord Byron to the characters of Manoel de Oliveira.

Manoel de Oliveira defines in the “Frustrated Loves” that death is the only way to the totality of love... what is not concretized in life. Death deceives this realization. After death, lovers are equals, being together. Everything seems to either end or begin.

(Matos-Cruz, 1996)

“She was like me in lineaments; her eyes,  
Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone  
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;  
But soften’d all, and temper’d into beauty:  
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings...  
Pity and smiles, and tears - which I had not;  
And tenderness - but that I had for her;  
Humility - and that I never had.  
Her faults were mine - her virtues were her own-  
I loved her, and destroy’d her!”

- Lord Byron - ( Bigland, 1956, p. 167).

Lord Byron (1788 - 1824) was born in England and he is famous for his skeptical style of writing on death and love. Lady Byron once said that Lord Byron’s misfortune is a habitual passion for excitement, which is always found in ardent temperaments, where the pursuits are not in some degree, organized. ( Bigland, 1956 ). The pursuits of love in Manoel de Oliveira’s films are also not organized, because all of his characters, the protagonists and antagonists, carry this passion for excitement that

Lord Byron also experienced. The lack of organization of pursuits is what justifies frustration in the characters.

In 1972, with the release of *O Passado e o Presente (The Past and the Present)*, Manoel de Oliveira began his exploration of “The Tetralogy of Frustrated Loves” theme, or the idea of the “irreparable loss”, as expressed in Portuguese literature of the period. (Tomadjoglou, 1993). To Manoel de Oliveira, the “passion for everything in life, starts when we remember them”. (Filmoteca de Andaluçia (Ed.), 1981). Irreparable loss is then, what leads to remembrance, and perhaps, death.

In the poem above, Lord Byron refers to the way the woman he is in love with is similar to him, physically and psychologically. “She was like me in lineaments; her eyes, her hairs, her features” and later “ She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings...”. In these two lines, Byron states the physical and psychological connection to his lover. When one is in love, he or she tries to identify with his/her lover on all possible sides. At the end of the poem, Byron states that he loved her but destroyed her, and here is when the irreparable loss theme comes alive. Love searches for identification, if this is denied for any motive, then, the sense of a loss of love , destroys what once existed.

Manoel de Oliveira’s “Frustrated Loves” theme maintains the idea that death is the path to the totality of love. If in life love is denied to us, in death that will exist and be totally experienced. Manoel de Oliveira’s films are structured through a disagreement of desires (Fonseca, 1981). Lord Byron, in the last line of his poem quotes “I loved her, and destroy’d her”. The disagreement of desires that Manoel de Oliveira adds in his Frustrated Loves Tetralogy is also seen in Lord Byron’s poem.

The male characters in the Tetralogy of Frustrated loves, regarding their different personalities and aspirations, are all in a process of disagreement within themselves when facing the impossibility of loving, which will later lead them to death.

Byron's life has also an association with love and death:

“Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;

All earth was but one thought-and that was death

Immediate and inglorious; and the pang

Of famine fed upon all entrails - men

Died, and their bones were tombles as their flesh;” - Lord Byron - “Darkness”.

(Wilson, 1997).

Simao, the main character in *Amor de Perdicao* (1978) is a pure representation of the two symbols: love and death. To him, life with Teresa is impossible, death is what gives him hope: or in other words, creates the possibility of loving. Of the other films, Manoel de Oliveira says that, *O Passado e o Presente* (1972), *Benilde: ou a Virgem Mae* (1975), and *Francisca* (1981) have a passion developed within the impossible, and it is this impossible that excited the lovers and made them want each other more than ever before (Matos -Cruz, 1996). According to Lady Byron, when she gave a description of her husband, she stated that this excitement is always found in ardent temperaments. (Bigland, 1956). Lord Byron's temperament is equal to the lovers of the frustrated loves theme: full of excitement and where the pursuits are not in some degree, organized.



Ato da Primavera (Act of Spring) (1962) and the Bible

*O Ato da Primavera (Act of Spring)* (1962) is a popular representation of Jesus Christ being crucified, based on a text of the 16<sup>th</sup> century written by Francisco Vaz de Guimaraes. *O Ato da Primavera* (1962) represents the daily life of the people in the fields. It is a theatrical performance within a realistic environment (the field and its laborers). (Manoel da Costa, 1984).

Manoel de Oliveira expressed through the *Ato da Primavera* (1962) a moral judgment on men as well as hope. (Louro, 1981). In *Ato da Primavera* (1962), what is interesting is the textual value of the representation as a bridge of connection to the contemporary world.

Manoel de Oliveira compared Jesus' murder to the historical characteristics of world in the 60's. In the film, during Christ's death, a series of wars' scenes, as well as bombings and weapons, were shown in juxtaposition with the scene of Jesus hanging on the cross. The Bible states the death of Christ as follows: "at the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, and at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice; my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:33). In the film, *Ato da Primavera* (1962) images of bombings, weapons firing and the violence of war are shown at the moment Christ is crucified, representing all that had been forsaken. The people and the world were forsaken as well as Christ suffering on the cross. The world's catastrophes were represented with Christ's perception of being forsaken, and this perception was expressed in hope, which is considered to be the only way to cure the despair, the loss and the pain. Due to that, Christ cried, "my God, my God, why have

you forsaken me ?”. Jesus stated this as a question because of the hope he still had, and being released after that. Therefore, the film creates a relationship between the world’s catastrophes and Christ’s death. After war, as well as after death, the only thing that remains is hope, which in *Ato da Primavera* (1962) is represented in Christ’s resurrection.

Good and evil and A Divina Comedia (The Divine Comedy) (1991).

Dante Alighieri (1265 - 1321), the author of *The Divine Comedy*, was born in Florence, Italy. *The Divine Comedy* is a political, as well as poetic, work done by Dante Alighieri (Edwards, (Ed.), 1967). In the *Inferno* (hell) , which is part of *The Divine Comedy*, is actually what influences Manoel de Oliveira’s film. The *Inferno* is where sins are analyzed, and also where there is the search for the way of salvation., but which is no longer possible for the damned. In Dante’s *Inferno*, there are pagans and other non-Christian characters. The souls in the *Inferno* have injured others, or have broken the social fabric in one way or another. (Edwards, (Ed.), 1967, p.293). Therefore, we have the idea of the *Inferno* (hell) in *The Divine Comedy* by Alighieri , where the sins, the search for salvation and the injured souls are directly influencing *A Divina Comedia* by Manoel de Oliveira. One way to look at this is through the thematization. In Oliveira’s film, the sanatorium is the *Inferno*. It is in the sanatorium that everything happened, where all the crazy people are placed, or in Dante’s words, where all the sinners gathered, together in search for their own way of salvation. In Manoel de Oliveira’s film, to be a sinner is to be on earth. The film enhances the interaction that exists between saints and evils, that is why the sinners look for salvation, and God, in this view, becomes

the only sinless conception in the world. The sanatorium, or the *Inferno*, happens on earth, where good and bad act together (being judgments in this case), irrelevant due to the fact that on earth, we are “all” sinners. This is what *A Divina Comedia*, by Oliveira and *The Divine Comedy* by Alighieri, have in common.

The Russian novelist, Dostoevski (1821 - 1881), is also an influence in Manoel de Oliveira’s film, *A Divina Comedia*. Dostoevski penetrated the human mind and heart with exceptional instinct, influencing with his fiction a modern intellectual climate. (Lindstrom, 1996). His most famous themes were; redemption and happiness through suffering; and the struggle between good and evil.

In *A Divina Comedia*, the novel by Dostoevski that influenced Manoel de Oliveira, was the *Brothers Karamazov* (1879 - 1880). This novel dealt with issues such as the extremes experienced by human beings in life. The extreme situations drive the characters to a philosophical justification for their existence. (Lindstrom, 1996) In *Brothers Karamazov*, there are two major characters, the intellectual and skeptical Ivan, and the emotional man of action, Dimitri. In *A Divina Comedia*, Ivan and Dimitri are characters in the film, and the reference to Dostoevski’s work is done through the personalities of the characters. *Crime and Punishment* (1866) is also a novel by Dostoevski that influenced the construction of *A Divina Comedia*. According to Manoel de Oliveira, on earth people are either punished for the crime they committed or rewarded for their virtues. (Matos Cruz, 1996). *Crime and Punishment*, by Dostoevski enhanced moral and political problems, having autonomous heroes placed in extreme situations

(Lindstrom, 1996). The heroes in *A Divina Comedia* are all sinners, or in other words, all the people who live in the sanatorium, because they are all placed in extreme situations. The questions addressed by Dostoevski are then: How one is to live? And to live by what? (Lindstrom, 1996). In *A Divina Comedia* by Manoel de Oliveira, there is the search for truth and self-fulfillment. The characters in *A Divina Comedia*, *Brothers Karamazov*, as well as in *Crime and Punishment* investigate hidden motives for their existence and an intuitive understanding for their attitudes, which led them all to insanity.

The opening scene of the film is about the forbidden fruit, Adam, and Eva. The scene happens in the yard of the sanatorium. Adam and Eva are characters in the film, and the scene is that they are both being persuaded to eat the forbidden fruit. As soon as they bite the fruit, they come out of paradise and start to face reality. The reality is that, all of the other characters standing on the porch of the sanatorium were, watching Adam and Eva in the scene of the “forbidden fruit”.

In the Bible it is stated: “You will not surely die, the serpent said to the woman. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:4). In the Bible, Eve is the one that persuaded Adam to eat the forbidden fruit. In the film, the same thing happens, and the sanatorium then becomes the place where good and bad will be known, due to the inexistence of a paradise. The paradise had been thrown away in the moment that Eve bit the forbidden fruit. In the film, Manoel de Oliveira supported the existence of anguish, despair, desire, revenge and competitiveness in the characters, through the bite that Eve gave to the forbidden fruit. After that, the film starts already in the *Inferno* (hell) that Dante

Alighieri described in his novel, *The Divine Comedy*. Therefore, Manoel de Oliveira finds in the Bible a way to explain the passage from paradise to hell, or in other words, a way to explain the transition from purity (when Eve let herself be persuaded by the serpent) to extreme situations, which make the characters investigate for hidden motives, allowing them to become insane. Thus, the Bible is the introduction to the narrative in *A Divina Comedia*, which makes us understand better the situations lived in hell, sanatorium, and why they occur.

Manoel de Oliveira terms *A Divina Comedia* “either the eagerness for life, sex as an idol, power as the ultimate ambition and death as limitation for everything; or the acceptance of suffering and of resurrection as a real glory. This is the dilemma. After all, *A Divina Comedia* is an allegory about Western civilization.”(Oliveira, 1994).

The influence of Goethe in Manoel de Oliveira’s film: O Convento (The Monastery)  
(1995)

Johan Wolfgang Von Goethe was born in Germany in 1749, and died in 1832. He became one of the world’s most famous writers, and is known for his themes on humanity’s relationship to nature, history and society, delineating as well a profound understanding of human reality based on a existential viewpoint. (Lange, 1996).

Goethe created the German movement known as the “Sturm und Drang”. His most famous novel is “Faust”, which is nothing other than an allegory of human life. It emphasizes the right and power of the individual to inquire freely into affairs both human and divine, working out his/her own destiny, which accounts for his universal reputation. (Lange, 1996).

Manoel de Oliveira once said; “ I believe that the strongest human attribute is affection”. (Matos - Cruz, 1996). The affection and non-affection as a theme is enhanced in Manoel de Oliveira’s films. In this particular case, *O Convento ( The Monastery )* (1995), the bad equals non-affection, and the good equals affection. In *O Convento* (1995), Manoel de Oliveira also draws on Goethe’s belief that it is the individual ‘s right and power to inquire freely into affairs both human and divine. With human and divine, we achieve an understanding of what is good, and of what is evil as well.

The plot of the film suggests a division between what is on the good side and what is placed on the bad side. Professor Michael is an American researcher who is trying to prove that Shakespeare has Spanish ancestors rather than British ones. To this, he goes with his wife, Elene, to Portugal, to research in the monastery of Abadia. While there, they meet Baltar and Piedade, who both live in the Monastery. What is interesting is the way that the opposites are created. Professor Michael and Piedade are considered the good side, while Baltar and Elene are considered the bad side. Michael, as soon as he gets in the monastery, forgets his wife Elene, and starts working on his thesis. Piedade, the other good side, helps him, while Baltar entertains Elene. With this structure, the division of affection and non-affection is created. The forces fight against each other, and it is this intrigue that makes us believe that an expected outcome will happen. At the end, the couples are back together. The opposites again meet each other to maintain a certain equilibrium. The harmony is only sustained when affection is paired with non-affection. The affection needs the non-affection to be stimulated, and the non-affection needs the affection to be challenged. Frailty is also a theme displayed among the male characters.

Baltar is intellectually fragile, while Michael is fragile when dealing with power and manipulation.

German Expressionism and Existentialism, a Common Ground to Manoel de Oliveira  
German Expressionism

Expressionism was an artistic tendency that started in Germany in 1910 and went on until 1924. It was the period of the Great War, and Expressionism became the herald of the coming catastrophe of the Great War. It is a period in art where artists tried to reproduce the problems in society and in the individuals of that society, rather than trying to solve the problems. (Samuel & Thomas, 1971). In Europe, German Expressionism in films enhanced the idea of art and quality. Filmmakers in general worked more closely with established painters, musicians, and play-wrights. (Monaco, 1981). The whole idea of Expressionism was in “emphasizing” what was wrong rather than explaining why and how it was wrong. In German Expressionism, the elements of the grotesque and caricature are enhanced.

Kasimir Edschwid (1890 - 1966) said that there is no longer merely a subject for an artist, consisting of a stone, ugly or beautiful; it has to be looked at until its true form has been recognized, until it is liberated from the muffled restraint of a false reality, until everything that is latent within it is expressed. (Samuel & Thomas, 1971, pg.11).

Expressionism was a spiritual movement of a time that placed inner experiences above external life. (Samuel & Thomas, 1971, pg18). The function of all Expressionist art was to give voice to these inner experiences.

In this context, of an artistic tendency based on the inner side of life rather than on the external issues, we see a theme linked with Manoel de Oliveira’s films. In this



section, three main themes of German Expressionism are going to be analyzed with Manoel de Oliveira's work. The search for the absolute, the reaction to the traditional, and the dissatisfaction with the self are themes that emerged out of Expressionism (Norris , 1996), and are analyzed in Manoel de Oliveira's films.

### German Expressionism and the search for the absolute

The search for the absolute emphasized by the Expressionists, is also the search for the absolute emphasized by Manoel de Oliveira in the "Frustrated Loves" theme. Starting from *O Passado e o Presente ( The Past and The Present )* (1971), *Benilde: Ou a Virgem Mae (Benilde : Or the Virgin Mother)* (1975), to *Amor de Perdicao (Fated Love)* (1978), and *Francisca (Fanny Owen)* (1981), Manoel de Oliveira's characters are all searching for the absolute. Kasimir Edschmid states that the sick man is not merely the cripple who suffers. He becomes sickness itself. (Walter, 1959). Oliveira emphasizes all of the characters in the "Frustrated Loves" theme as being all, without exception, sick people. We all suffer and we are all sick because we, as human beings, search for the absolute. The search for the absolute by Oliveira's characters is what makes them all destitute and sick. Although the absolute is never found on earth, the absolute is thus, found in death.

### The reaction to the traditional realism and the film by Oliveira, O Convento ( The Monastery ) (1995)

The reaction to traditional realism was another theme for the Expressionists. This theme deals with the idea of the discontentment with the spiritlessness found in

contemporary societies.(Norris, 1996). Since what mattered to the Expressionists was based on the inner side of life, rather than the external side, the spiritlessness found in contemporary societies is what the expressionist named as traditional realism. The traditional realism is merely the outside world, or the external side of life. The traditional realism is what we see with our eyes and then, what we classify as being real. To the expressionists, what we see is spiritless. The Expressionist valued what is not in appearances, but rather, what is inside. The spirit is inside of the individual, being then his/her inner side, as well as what really matters in the sense of what is real. To the Expressionist, realism is alive inside, not outside.

*A Convento (The Monastery)* by Manoel de Oliveira is a pure expression of what goes on in the inner side of an individual. All the characters in *O Convento* have this inner side. Their “inside” is what is real. Realism is alive within them, rather than in the spiritless contemporary society they live in. What the characters see about each other's behaviors is not real. Realism, or what is real, is based on their inner associations with each other. Professor Michael, the researcher, and Piedade, the assistant, represent the internal “good sides” of the film. Elene (Professor Michael’s wife) and Baltar (the housekeeper of the Monastery) represent the internal “bad side” of the story. To the audience then, what is real is not what we see, but what we also experience imaginatively through the behavior of the characters. The characters see each other inside, and due to that, there is a high level of identification, which leads them to stick together due to the characteristics, and desires they carry inside themselves.

Therefore, the reaction to the traditional realism in Manoel de Oliveira’s films is on what happens inside the characters rather than what happens outside. What is real to

viewers, is what is also real to the characters. The characters' internal desires and aspirations are then, the reaction to the traditional realism. Their inner thoughts are what the expressionist would classify as realism.

The dissatisfaction with the self and *A Caixa* ( *The Blind Man's Buff* ) (1994)

What the German Expressionists would call "Ichschmerz" is the dissatisfaction with the self. One of the themes used by Expressionism is the "Ichschmerz". Engaged in this idea of the dissatisfaction with the self are other sub-themes, such as death, madness, poverty, and oppression among the disadvantaged in society. (Norris, 1996). The theme of being dissatisfied with one's self comes from the idea of being oppressed and depressed. To expressionists, the dark side of life was an effect of a sick society, which was caused by inner experiences, or in this case, the dissatisfaction with the self.

Manoel de Oliveira, in *A Caixa*, emphasizes dissatisfaction of the self. The story happens in the streets of Lisbon, Portugal, in a very poor neighborhood. The idea of poverty is already linked to the Expressionist idea of the dissatisfaction of the self. The characters live a very simple life, but at the same time are in a very dramatic situation. The main character is blind and the only thing he does is to beg for money in front of his house. With this money, he supports his daughter and his son-in-law, who is an incompetent. The characters have no names in this film, which creates a more universalized idea about poverty. Manoel de Oliveira states that the idea of not giving names to the characters is because they represent all the poor communities in the third world. It is then represented in the characters as a certain universal idea. (Matos - Cruz , 1996). The universalization of the characters is also a universalization of the world's

situations. The people in the world are dissatisfied with what happens in their lives. The inexistence of names for the characters, universalizes the idea of the dissatisfaction with the self. To the expressionists, as well as in Manoel de Oliveira's film, *A Caixa*, the dissatisfaction with the self is associated with the dissatisfaction with the world and the melancholy that emerges from this idea.

In *A Caixa*, Manoel de Oliveira describes egocentrism, selfishness, and lack of money, as major points for a person with which to show dissatisfaction. The blind man gains his identity in the film due to the fact that he is blind, and also because he is the money provider to his family. The satisfaction of the characters is never reached. They all have internal problems that delineate their dissatisfaction. The blind man, besides being blind, is also a beggar; his daughter is selfish, and his son-in-law is egocentric. These characteristics, surrounded by the poverty issue, are what creates in the characters their dark inner side, or their dissatisfaction with themselves and with the world they live in.

### Existentialism

Existentialism was a philosophical movement or tendency emphasizing individual existence, freedom and choice that influenced art in many diverse ways in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. In Manoel de Oliveira's work, the existential idea is enhanced in almost all of his films. Major existential themes associated with Manoel de Oliveira's films are: death, freedom of choice, and anxiety.

Death and existentialism: a Manoel de Oliveira's understanding about equality

“ What is indeed more disheartening than the equality to which men sometimes flee, the equality of death, which makes all equally poor?” - Soeren Kierkegaard- (Winn, (Ed.), 1960).

In the “Frustrated Loves” theme, Manoel de Oliveira places the lovers in unequal situations, where their feelings and emotions are not in a sense organized. The characters of the “Frustrated Loves” theme search for the possibility to love. In an interview, Manoel de Oliveira states that death is a path to the possibility of loving, what is not possible in life will be in death. Lovers will be equals, and everything either starts or ends. (Matos - Cruz, 1996).

As quoted earlier, men are all equal in death. It is through death that the impossibility of loving will cease to human beings in Oliveira's films. The human species is the only one that knows it will die, and it knows this through experience. (Edwards, (Ed), 1967). The lovers in Oliveira's films die because they “experience” this impossibility of the absolute love. They know they'll die due to the fact they become fragile with the experience of loving. Dying, to the lovers in Manoel de Oliveira's films, is not a problem, since they know that loving will be possible in the moment they face death. To Epicurus, “death is nothing.... It does not concern either the living or the dead, since for the former it is not, and the later are no more”. (Edwards, ( Ed.), 1967). To the Existentialist, Jean Paul Sartre, it is important that we, as human beings, cultivate the awareness of death. The knowledge of death gives to life a sense of urgency that it would otherwise lack. To Sartre, the awareness of death confers upon

man a sense of his own individuality. Dying, he says, is the one thing no one can do for you; each of us must die alone. To shut out the consciousness of death, is therefore, to refuse one's individuality, and to live inauthentically. (Edwards, (Ed.), 1967).

Manoel de Oliveira's characters in the "Frustrated Loves" theme are aware of death. This is why they are existentialists, experiencing in life this sense of urgency that Sartre talks about. The lovers want to experience the absolute, and there is an urgency in this. In the Frustrated Loves theme, the characters, such as Simao and Teresa in *Amor de Perdicao (Fated love)*, and Francisca and Jose Augusto in *Francisca (Fanny Owen)*, are characters that suffer individually the pain of loving and not being understood. The process of falling in love is already a process of urgency. Loving is a need expressed by the characters and it is individually experienced as well as the process of dying.

Thus, the existential idea that death is what makes us all equally poor and at the same time individualized, gives human beings the urgency to live and experience. It is based on this existential concept that Manoel de Oliveira created the reactions and behaviors of the lovers in the "Frustrated Loves" theme.

#### Freedom of choice and the possibility to love

"There is freedom only in situation, and there is a situation only through freedom". Jean Paul Sartre - (Danto, 1975). With this line, Sartre clarifies the idea that there is no action without a cause. Each one of us is free only to the extent that we determine what are the causes of our acts. This constitution of actions is what makes choosing sensibly and even logically unavoidable, but of course we have no choice as to

whether, only how, to choose: human beings are condemned to be free. (Danto, 1975, pg.139).

The idea of choosing to the existentialists creates the unique nature of human beings, and as Jean Paul Sartre quotes; "existence precedes essence." Choice then, is inescapable. Even if we choose not to choose, the refusal is a choice. (Dreyfus, 1996). Since this is the central idea of existentialists, freedom of choice is a responsible act. Each individual is responsible for his or her decisions. Thus, each individual creates his or her own destiny.

"Existence precedes essence." To Manoel de Oliveira's characters, such as Simao and Teresa, in *Amor de Perdicao (Fated Love)*; there is a choice that both have to make. Simao and Teresa had two options, either forget each other and continue to be alive, and probably not happy; or trying to be together, even if negative forces tried to separate them. Also, the acceptance of death as the only possibility to make them become equal and together. With these two options in hand, Simao and Teresa decided to love, and the impossibility of that love delineated their essences. In this case, existence preceded essence, or in other words, what they chose to do, preceded what they became at the end.

In *Vale Abraao, (Valley of Abraham)*, Ema also experienced the idea of existence preceding essence. She chose to have many different and possible affairs in life. She loved many different types of men. These situations delineated also the type of life, or in other words, the essence she had. At the end of the film, the emptiness in her life created the essence she had, and her essence led her to death.

Ema in *Vale Abraao*, as well as Simao and Teresa in *Amor de Perdicao*, are pure and clear examples of being aware of freedom of choice. Most of Manoel de Oliveira's

main characters experience this awareness of freedom of choice; and it is due to the fact that they choose the kind of experiences they want to have in life, and they choose what draws the kind of “end” or “essence” they have. These characters are also aware of the possibility of dying, discussed earlier. This awareness of death is the leading pathway accompanied by their urgency in experience. These characters search for the desire of loving and being loved, but as Soeren Kierkegaard once said: “The fulfillment is always in the wish.” (Winn, (Ed.), 1960, pg. 23).

At this point, it should be noted that existentialists value the individual. Death is what makes us realize the fact that we are individuals, due to the fact that nobody can die for us. We die on our own. (Edwards, (Ed.), 1967). The individual himself or herself has to search for the meaning of life on his/ her own, and he or she is the only one responsible for his/her choices. The “Existence” is individualized as well as the “Essence” is. As quoted by Peter Koestenbaum (1974): “ You can choose love; you do not have to.” To Koestenbaum, existential love is the one that is real and it is only possible to the mature, authentic individual. With this idea, Koestenbaum wants to show that first, human beings should work on themselves, and then work on others. (Koestenbaum, 1974 ). In other words, the individual who has worked on himself or herself is first individualized, which also means, to be an authentic person, wherein the individual is ready to love and be loved in an independent manner.

Manoel de Oliveira’s characters in the “Frustrated Loves” theme are all extremely individualized, and this is because they follow their instincts. Nothing on earth stops their way of thinking and acting in life. They are independents because they search the absolute, or in Sartrean words, “their own” absolute. Due to this, they suffer. Ema, in



*Vale Abrao*, is totally independent character. Even being married, she still had many different affairs, and this can be attributed to the fact that she sees herself as an individual, with her own desires and possibilities. *Francisa*, is also an interesting character to be observed. She is independent because she loves a man and waits for him. She wants him and she takes all the possibilities she has in hand to keep him by her side. She delineated the kind of existence she wanted to have. In Manoel de Oliveira's films, the main characters have the freedom of choice to love who they want. Whether this love concretizes or not, is another issue. Therefore, the fact that they choose to suffer is what makes them independent existential lovers, because they experience the suffering themselves.

#### Dread or anxiety: a major theme to Sartre and Oliveira

According to Soeren Kierkegard, "Dread is the possibility of freedom." (Winn, (Ed.), 1960).

The possibility of freedom to the characters of the film *A Caixa (Blind Man's Buff)*, is the one of begging for money. The main character begs for money, and his freedom then, is based on having the courage to beg for money. This was because there are no other possibilities for him. The act of begging connotes the idea of being crippled and helpless. This crippled human being experiences dread, because he faces the fact that he does not fit in society. In *A Caixa*, the characters do not fit in their society because they either have a physical problem, or because they are poor people.

To Sartre, anxiety exists due to the confrontations that individuals have every moment with the idea that they are free to choose. When human beings face the fact that

they can do what they want, they experience anxiety. In the case of *A Caixa*, the characters have the total freedom to beg for money, and this is what caused their situation to be one of dread.

In an existential quote by Martin Heidegger, “dread is always a dreadful feeling “about” - but not about this or that. The indefiniteness of what we dread is not just lack of definition: it represents the essential impossibility of defining the “what”... dread reveals nothing.” (Winn, (Ed.), 1967). When the characters of *A Caixa* experienced the idea of nothing, or not being accepted by their society, they experienced anxiety.

To Jean Paul Sartre, there is one way to reach nothingness, or anxiety. The way he talks about it is the way of the self for-itself and the self in-itself. The For - itself is the subject that human beings have to be. It introduces the notion of nothingness and time ( past and present ). The For-itself is impersonal and stays in the outside world. On the other hand, the In -itself is simply there, complete, with no association to time. The In-itself is internalized and it is the personal side. Therefore, the For-itself would be our representation in the world, and the In - itself would be our representation to ourselves. The moment human beings leave their In-itself they face the possibility of freedom of choice, and choosing leads them to the For-itself, which is once more, the subject they have to be. The gap created between the For-itself and In-itself, is what causes anxiety and dread, due to the multiplicity of choices. (Craib, 1976).

With Manoel de Oliveira’s characters, the traditional paths, or what they were expected to follow, is the In-itself; and what they run away from, or the rules they cut off, is the For-itself. In other words, Ema, in *Vale Abrao*, is a married woman. The idea that she is married and has a family delineates the traditional structure that she has to

follow. It is her In-itself. It does not matter why and how, time or space; she is married and she should be devoted to her situation of being married. That would be her complete state due to the fact that is simply there. In contrast, the For-itself is the subject she has to be. Leaving her home and searching for erotic adventures, Ema is the subject of her position as a married woman. She leaves the position of wife and mother to become the subject of that position, which is based on the other possibilities she has in life. With this ability to choose, Ema creates the gap to experience anxiety and dread. The nothing existent on the way from her In-itself to her For-itself puts Ema in a state of anguish (anxiety); and it is in the For-itself, that time will matter to her. In other words, her past, present, and future gained value when she chose to have different experiences in her life, following her individual desires to live the subject that she wanted to be. She was being a woman not only to her husband, but to other men as well. That was her human reality.

To conclude, the German Expressionism, as well as Existentialism, tendencies are both concerned with describing the ineffable. They seek to do justice to that which lies beyond or beneath conceptual understanding; both seek to define the feel of experience that is by definition incommunicable. In Existentialism, the essential self abstracts the external life; and Expressionism gives voice to this essential self, or inner feel. (Sokel, 1959, p.53). Therefore, Manoel de Oliveira expressed both the process of abstracting the selves from external experiences, as well as the process of giving voice to these abstracted selves ( inner feels), in his films. The characters in Manoel de Oliveira's films search for an internal understanding of their emotions, and they give voice to that through the use of their instincts. Manoel de Oliveira creates thus, an Existentialist and Expressionist style to his film making process.

Memory and “Saudade” - How Manoel sees Manuel and the French actor in *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo* (Journey to the Beginning of the World ) (1997)

### Memory and imagination

Memory is the capacity to bring to one’s mind an event from one’s past experience, a fact about the past beyond one’s own experience and a proposition relating to the past. (Flew, (Ed.), 1979, p.211). Also, in a more contemporary approach, memory is closely related to knowledge, either as a special case of knowledge, or insofar as it is only possible to remember what was once known. (Flew, (Ed.), 1979, p.211 ).

In Manoel de Oliveira’s film; *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo* ( *Journey to the Beginning of the World* ) (1997), the concept of memory is what gives to the film a certain melodic, sensitive, and personal tone. In this particular case I’ll compare the theme of memory to John Hume’s viewpoint on “ memory and imagination.” To John Hume, the idea of “memory” is much stronger and livelier than those of the “imagination.” To Hume, memory involves belief, whereas imagination does not. Another interesting observation in differing memory from imagination is the fact in memory, nothing else can be added. It is a recall from a past real event. While in imagination, the imaginator creates or adds details to an event that was either real or not. It is a process of addition. (Edwards, (Ed.), 1967).

In the representative theory, memory is the “feeling of familiarity” as well as the “feeling of pastness”. The “feeling of familiarity” leads us to trust the images, while the “feeling of pastness” leads us to refer to the images of the past and assign places to them in time order. (Edwards, (Ed.), 1967, p.2 67).

In *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo* (1997), Manoel de Oliveira establishes this idea of “memory and imagination,” as well as the idea of “feelings of familiarity” and “feelings of pastness,” using the characters Manuel (Marcelo Mastroianni) and Afonso (Jean Yves Gautier) as mediators within these ideas.

Afonso, a French actor (whose father was Portuguese), is hired by a Portuguese film Director, Manuel, who shoots a French - Portuguese co-production. Afonso wants to visit his father’s village in Portugal, hoping to meet a surviving aunt. Because he doesn’t speak Portuguese, Manuel, the Portuguese Director who hired him, and two other actors, go with Afonso to Portugal. On the way, Manuel remembers his childhood and the things lived in his past. When they find the surviving aunt, the French actor Afonso, cannot communicate with her in the same language. This makes her believe that he is not the son of her brother who moved to France. The film is an allegory to the past and present situations of any human beings’ life.

The “feeling of familiarity” is what is lacking between Afonso and his surviving aunt. She cannot trust her nephew because she is unfamiliar with his existence and with his language. There are no “feelings of familiarity” to her, which also tells us that there are no “feelings of pastness”. To her, memory lacks, and it lacks because she is not aware of anything. On the other hand, to Afonso, the “feelings of familiarity” and the “feelings of pastness” are associated with his father’s own memories. Afonso only knew things through his father’s narration. He trusted the images his father told him, but not because he actually saw or experienced things himself. His “feelings of familiarity” and “feelings of pastness” were what his father told him. Thus, to him, what happens is “imagination” rather than “memory.” He imagines things, adding to his father’s own

story more events or situations. He creates an image of his surviving aunt as well as an image of his father's country. Everything is imagined because there was no previous experience from Afonso's perspective.

To the film director, Manuel (Marcello Mastroianni) the "feelings of familiarity" as well as the "feelings of pastness" are directly connected to himself.

Manuel trusts the images he sees due to the fact there was a previous experience. He was born in Portugal and he goes to visit the house where he was born. In this particular scene, where he is together with the other actors, through his "feelings of familiarity," Manuel brings back to his mind all of his "feelings of pastness." He remembers things that happened in his past, and he shares those experiences with his friends ( the actors ). The process lived by Manuel is the one of "memory." He remembers his past experiences and brings them all to his mind in the way they happened. To Manuel , time does not relate to his remembrance. The present time of his memories is what matters. His emotions are in the present time when he faces his past.

Manoel de Oliveira once stated the difference existent between chronological time and the idea of duration. In the case of memory and especially to the film *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo* (1997), Oliveira places more emphasis on the duration rather than on chronological time. In memory, time does not matter, what is relevant are the "feelings of familiarity" and "feelings of pastness" a person retains. In an interview, Manoel de Oliveira said that "there is a difference between chronological time and duration. The chronological time in a film is associated with the sunrise and the sunset, while the duration only happens in a film of reflection. One instant can take millions of seconds, and these millions of seconds can take one instant to happen." (Interview,

1997). The moment that both Afonso, as well as Manuel, were in contact with those “feelings of familiarity” as well as “feelings of pastness,” they did not relate either to Afonso’s imagination, nor Manuel’s memory. The importance was in the duration of those “feelings.”

Therefore, Manuel and Afonso are important tools to Oliveira’s film, *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo* (1997). Memory and imagination, as well as the “feelings of familiarity” and “feelings of pastness” are the ways that Manoel de Oliveira expresses duration in his film. In other words, “a film of reflection has duration, where one instant can represent millions of seconds”. Thus, *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo* (1997), is a film of reflection.

### “Saudade”

“Saudade” is a word in Portuguese that has no equivalent in English or in any other language. Many people say that the origin of the word comes from the idea that the Portuguese were a people of navigators, who spent months or years going around the world and missing their native soil. “Saudade” comes from the Latin *solitas* (loneliness) and denotes a feeling of nostalgic remembrance of people or things, absent or forever lost, accompanied by the desire to see or possess them once more. (Thomson, 1996, p.40).

To Chico Buarque (1977), Brazilian singer and composer, “saudade is the worst agony, it is worse than forgetfulness” (*Pedaco de Mim*). Manoel Bastos Tigre (1996), says in one his poems that “saudade is similar to a thorn smelling like a flower, a desire to be close to who is far away from us. Saudade is supported by hope and love and even

if painful, makes good to the heart. Saudade is a desire to see those that see us from distance. (Cancoo da Saudade).

Manoel de Oliveira (1997) states that “saudade has to do with the future and not with the past. Saudade is not taken backwards but it is associated with the desire of what is yet to come. It is a desire of the future and it is not associated with someone or something we have lost forever. Saudade is sentiment, and sentiments we do not have to explain.” In the same interview, Oliveira states that “the scientists explain everything, but comprehend nothing, and the poets comprehend everything but explain nothing.” What Oliveira meant through this last statement is associated with the idea that “saudade” is a sentiment, and sentiments we do not have to explain. Poets and artists, in general, do not explain “saudade” in their work of art, they feel it.

In the film, *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo* (1997) what is saudade is what Manuel ( Marcello Mastroiani ) experiences. He goes back to his country, Portugal, because he wants to accompany the actor who works for him, Afonso, on the search for Afonso’s father’s family. On the way, Manuel brings back to his mind his own memories. His “feelings of pastness” are his sentiments being exposed and in the present situation he faces his country. His memories are from his own past, but the process of recalling what is lived in the present, and what he feels, is “saudade.” He has the desire of bringing the past back to his mind in the situation he presently finds himself placed in, which is the idea of being back in his country. “Saudade” then, is Manuel’s desire of being “there”, in the place that belonged to his past, which will give him new impressions and emotions. To Manuel, recalling the past is a way to break the stupidity of daily life, and in doing that, the sentiment of saudade emerges inside himself.



Memories make Manuel live the present more intensely due to the fact that he experiences and has “saudades.” Therefore, we see “saudade” as the desire for the feelings that are yet to come.

Memory, imagination, and “saudade” are the ways that emotions, feelings and sentiments are expressed in the main characters of the film, *Viagem ao Principio do Mundo* (1997). The chronological time does not matter, but the duration. The characters are thirsty to recall what is in the past, through either imagination or memory, to experience the sentiment of “saudade”, which in this case, is expressed by Manuel. “Saudade” is longing in the present, what was lived in the past, and expecting to live that again, and it is this idea of living the past again, that connects “saudade” to imagination and to memory. Memory and imagination are only alive if the past was significant to the recaller, and “saudade” is only experienced if memory and imagination are held within the individual. “Saudade” does not happen if forgetfulness takes place. Thus, “saudade” is the future of memory and imagination being experienced in recalling of that past; and it is the ideas of memory, imagination and saudade that makes the film more durable (reflective) than chronological (following right sequences).

## Conclusion

Climbing a high hill to experience a magnificent view is not an easy thing to be done, and this is how Manoel de Oliveira serves himself of Karl Marx's idea to express the purpose of art quality, where you "see" a great experience (Monaco, 1977, p.316). To Oliveira, the mainstream of film aesthetics is based in the idea that we (audience) "see" the images delivered, but interpretation is done individually. Interpreting an art quality production depends on climbing a high hill that Oliveira mentioned.

This study examined the ways Manoel de Oliveira delivers his films to his audience. His importance in the Portuguese culture, as being one of the most valuable vehicles to international art recognition for Portugal. Oliveira's work also provides a visual history of major European film trends of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The fact that he is one of the few European film directors whose career spans so many social, political and economic changes accounts for his importance.

Three major themes emerged from this review of Manoel de Oliveira's work. The themes are literature, German Expressionism, Existentialism, and the sensations of memory and "saudade." The first theme, literature, examined how a number of important Portuguese literary works influenced. Oliveira's contribution was his ability to extend the literature. From books and texts, Oliveira delineated his aesthetics limitations but also expanded his creative process when trying to express common themes between himself and other writers as well as trying to transfigure into image what has been left out of the books. This, causes a certain limitation in the audience's illusions and

creativity, due to the fact that put them in contact with a more realistic representation of reality.

The themes of German Expressionism as well as Existentialism entail what the artistic trends and movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were about. Reality enters the imaginary process of the artist, in this case Manoel de Oliveira, addressing issues and concerns that those who climb a high hill are expecting to see. German Expressionism as well as Existentialism are movements that conducted the film aesthetics of Manoel de Oliveira, increasing his importance as well as his influence, not only in Portugal, but in Europe, due to the fact that people could see what was a more realistic representation of their problems and concerns.

My last theme, memory and “saudade” express what is left in the sub-consciousness of any individual. Memory and “saudade” are things experienced within oneself. To Oliveira, his characters are the ones that feel and experience the feelings of memory and “saudade”. However, aren’t we all experiencing, in one way or another, the feelings of memory and “saudade”? What emerges here is the idea of penetrating the inner side of the viewers addressing the inner side of the characters. The identification of feelings and emotions is also an important tool to Oliveira’s thematization. Memory takes us all away from the present, and “saudade” makes us experience the agony and anxiety of the things we have once lived, and expecting them to be back, maybe in different shapes and forms. The feelings of memory and “saudade” makes us all feel more intrigued in the present. These feelings make us aware of past experiences and what can be expected in the future. This awareness is important to the process of interpretation.

Oliveira's influence only occurs on those who allow themselves to climb a high hill. Critics, filmmakers and the viewers, they are the ones influenced by Oliveira if they have the willingness to be advised, changed and contradicted, but most of all to "see" a great experience.

This study has a clear purpose of showing that this experience can be possible. Art quality deserves attention due to the fact that it is creator-oriented and it has the function to tell the others; values, beliefs and most important, the audience's own realities, that are many times, denied by the entertainment film industry.

To my study, literature, German Expressionism, Existentialism and memory as well as "saudade", had the intention to explain what Oliveira's views were and still are in his society. His way of interpreting and his personalized film aesthetics makes the audience intrigued. Being only intrigued is not enough. Being Intrigued is the first position one should feel when experiencing a work of art, after being intrigued what has to be searched for, is interpretation, while in contact with art, and this is only possible when one is aware of the possibilities to "see" a great experience.

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## Appendix A

Film analysisAniki Bobo - 102 min. - black and white - 1942

The transition from bad to good and vice versa is the most enhanced theme in the film. The protagonist is Carlinhos, a good little naïve boy, whose main goal is to demonstrate his affection to Teresinha, the girl he likes. However, like all films that enhance the good and bad side of life, there is an obstacle. Eduardo is the obstacle. He is the leader of the boy's group. Teresinha is the link between the two boys. Eduardo is the cute one, the courageous one, and the one that attracts Teresinha the most, due to his strength. On the other hand, Carlinhos is the good one. He has a good heart and he would do anything to get Teresinha's heart and attention.

The children in the film are extremely expressive. It seems that Manoel de Oliveira's intention was to show the children's facial expressions. The music in the film makes us (the audience) perceive ourselves as if we were watching a cartoon. It follows the children's behavior. What is interesting in Oliveira's film as well, is the contrast/comparison of ideas between men and children. The children still carry purity and naiveness in their behavior; at the same time, they all suffer the same problems that adults do. They experience competitiveness, jealousy/ love, passion, hate and the desire of recognition in their social group. Oliveira shows these feelings clearly in Aniki Bobo. He also shows how the children learn how to deal with these feelings by themselves. Adults in the film are always trying to stop the children's impulses toward wrong behaviors. The end of the film represents the idea that the good always wins. Camera

movements in the film remain always between the medium and long close up's, and even the film being in black and white, the film is a high key light - the lighting is bright.

Lastly, I would like to say that Aniki Bobo is the name given to a children's game. It is just like somebody's name, probably somebody that created the game.

Acto da Primavera / Act of Spring - 94 min. - Color - 1962

This film is a biblical film. The film shows the passion of Jesus Christ, the crucifixion act, and the way Christ dealt with his own reality in contrast to the reality of society. What is interesting about the film is the theatrical side of it. It is an epic theater experience, where all the dialogues are sung by the actors. The film is done outdoors, in the northern area of Portugal, where the field is dry, and there is almost no vegetation. The characters are also dressed with epic costumes, and the intention is the pure and simple representation of Jesus Christ's life. This representation (aesthetically), does not seem realistic. The costumes seem fake and poorly designed. Again, in this film, Oliveira raises the issue about the good and bad. It is a political film, and it is the first color film by Manoel de Oliveira in the fiction film category.

Although the film is regarded as a fiction film, to me, it also demonstrate the structure of a non-fiction film due to the fact that at the very beginning of the film, field laborers are shown in their daily reality. Oliveira's camera movements show the laborer's hands and their dirtiness. At the end of the film, the political question raised by Oliveira is clearly understood when Jesus Christ is crucified and scenes of the atomic war are shown in black and white: " wars are everywhere".

The lighting of the film seems pretty natural, following the outdoor light, which also enhances the idea of the film being classified as a non-fiction film.

Benilde: ou a virgem mae/ Benilde: or the virgin mother - 110 min. - Color - 1975

The film starts with a very strong, fast, and visible camera movement. Actually in this film, the camera is what holds the attention of the audience.

The plot is about a girl who is eighteen years old, and who is supposedly pregnant. The main idea is that the girl says that God gave her the baby as he did with the virgin Mary. Benilde, who is the girl, holds the attention of all other characters. She is the centrality of the film. The whole film happens in Benilde's father's home, and everything is lived in one single day. Benilde has to convince everyone that she is really pregnant by the "grace of God", and not because she was "promiscuous."

The camera shots are tight ones, which canalizes the audience's attention at a more dramatic level. Music is played during the entire film, it never stops, which also makes the audience tense. The lighting is darkened, brownish red most of the time. Facial expression is enhanced as well.

The thrill of the film is based on the idea that we (the audience) wait for our questions to be answered, and nothing is answered at all. Things seem to be left up in the air, and the characters' attitudes and behaviors seem to be sinister. The action - the camera action - is the main important tool that maintains tension in the air.

With this film, Manoel de Oliveira starts showing us the "frustrated love" idea, where the males are the fragile ones, and death being the ultimate. *In Benilde: or The Virgin Mother*, Benilde's fiancée is the fragile one. Benilde dies and due to that, Benilde's fiancée, in his fragility, dies as well. The only way to escape from reality (or the moment we have to face the truth) is death.

Amor de Perdicao/ Fated love - 265 min. - Color - 1976

“ The search for death through the impossibility of love.” Love and death are bound together in Manoel de Oliveira’s film - *Amor de Perdicao*

Simao falls in love with his neighbor, Teresa. Because of their purity and inexperience, they truly believe in this love they feel toward each other, and they live this love until they die. The impossibility of living and experiencing this love is due to their parents’ relationships. They are enemies. Simao and Teresa have a secret relationship that is revealed later to their parents. This terminates everything that once existed between Simao and Teresa. The film is almost five hours long, and through the whole film what is shown is the fight of Simao and Teresa to be together, which unfortunately does not happen. They fight until they die and that’s the end of the film.

Love is taken extremely seriously. Love is the only way to reach eternity and to be alive. Real love is also impossible, because huge expectations are created by those in love. The only way to escape from frustration or disillusion is through death. Death is the ultimate. Then love becomes universalized, because the individuals cannot face human realities if not in love/ or getting responses from the ones they love.

Improvements in Oliveira’s film making techniques are clearly visible in this film. Camera movements are planned better, color and lighting have abrupt changes from bright to dark, accompanying the rhythm of the plot.

There is a certain level of “theatricalism” in this film. The film is narrated, and it seems, especially in the beginning of the film, that the scenes are frozen while the story is being narrated.

In conclusion, the main idea of the film is based on “feelings with consequences.” The desire that Simao and Teresa had toward each other is never crystallized, and death, which I describe as “loss,” is irreparable, which creates frustration.

Francisca / Fanny - 166 min. - Color - 1981

Death and loss based on the impossibility to love and be loved. *Fanny* or *Francisca* is also a film that deals with the idea of frustrated love in Manoel de Oliveira’s films.

Francisca is a young girl who is devoted to a man’s love. This man is selfish and extremely egocentric, and only thinks of himself. Francisca is devoted and good. She expects others to be the same with her, but the outside world is much bigger than her own little compassionate world. Facing this big outside world to Francisca is hard, due to the existence of cruelty. Francisca knows how to give things away and does not expect to receive anything back, only love and respect. She marries this man who is selfish and cruel, and his insensitiveness is what kills Francisca. When Francisca dies, we clearly see that she is also her husband’s power, because he could test his power on her fragility. Now that she is dead, he cannot test his power anymore. This is what makes him a weak man at the end. He doesn’t know he needs Francisca until she dies. When she dies, he falls into a big empty hole. This sense of loss that he experiences ends up killing him as well. The impossibility to love and be loved happens on earth, but in heaven everything can be possible because in the frustrated loves theme, death is the totality of love.

Oliveira’s film has a great power in the way it holds dialogue among the characters. The film is extremely poetic in the ways the characters talk to each other. The

dialogue is very poetic, which, according to Manoel de Oliveira is very important. He says that poetry does not explain anything, but comprehends everything.

The lighting associated with the music holds the tension in the air. The camera movements always hold the static position, which makes the film more theatrical than cinematographic. However, the characters have impressive facial expressions, which shows the anxiety and existential crises in their lives.

Os Canibais / The Cannibals - 90 min. - Color - 1988

Manoel de Oliveira's work, *The Cannibals*, is a pure representation of a theatrical experience. The plot is based on the idea (again) of the impossibility of loving, with a huge literal dialogue based on "Byronism."

The entire film is sung by opera singers and there is a narrator who is willing to explain the actor's reactions. It is a satire on human being's selfish ways of loving each other. That's why the only way to loving each other completely is through death. In life, love is nothing else than the "manifestation of the ego." All forms of love in real life are selfish ones. In death, the impossibility of any act might become possible.

In the film, due to the impossibility of love because of selfishness, the opera singers engage in cannibalism. This is the first of Oliveira's films where there is a criticism of selfishness in not only a dramatic level, but a comic one as well. The film is extremely comic.

The camera movements, again, enhance Manoel de Oliveira's theatrical manifestation in the art of his film making process. The camera remains static, which enhances the facial expressions of the characters. The dialogue is one of the most

important things for Manoel de Oliveira. The lighting is darkened in this film, which creates a more suspicious atmosphere in the scenes.

The difference between this film and the others by Manoel de Oliveira is the satirical approach. The impossibility of loving, the irreparable sense of loss, and the idea of perfection after death. Death is the ultimate, and the characters are faithful to that. There is faith in love, as well as theater is faith in death and fatality. This film is done satirically to show that life is nothing but a giant comedy - “where we eat each other” or where we always expect things out of what we love and experience, and this is nothing other than our selfish way of living our lives ; always waiting for responses for the things we give away.

Non ou va Gloria de mandar / Non or the vain Glory of command - 112 min. -

Color - 1990

The film is about Portuguese soldiers while they are away from their hometown participating or ready to participate in the war. Almost the entire film is filmed in the trunk of an army truck. One of the soldiers is the one that narrates the story. He recounts all of the important battles in which the Portuguese army was involved. He deals with the former Portuguese discoveries and wars. While the stories are being narrated, images from the past are shown, the representation of history happens while the narration goes on.

This is doubtless a historic film. Patriotism and courage are the weapons used to explain the wars, not only in Portuguese lands, but in the world as well. The question that remains is: Is patriotism a law? Are we all patriots because we are taught to be so?



The film also deals with the idea of longingness and the impossibility of being emotionally satisfied. Are racism and the fear of facing another reality part of this idea of patriotism ?

The film is quite slow - again the camera doesn't move fast. There are tight shots and the lighting is pretty clear. What stays in history is based on what is given not on what is taken away.

The time /space sequence of the movie is short. It was too slow most of the time. What was interesting, though, was the allusion to patriotism and courage associated with the war; but the structure/delivery and invention of the film lacked creativity. The dialogue is excellent in most of the parts of the film. It is undoubtedly, a political historical film.

A Divina Comedia/ The Divine Comedy - 140 min. - Color - 1991

The story happens within a house for mentally disable people. The plot, or the story itself, is supported by heavy dialogues taken out of the Bible, Dostoevski's books, and Dante Alighieri's literature. The entire film is a mixture of personalities and the representation of the good and bad.

The film opens with a scene in the yard of the clinic, where two characters represent Adam and Eve naked, eating the forbidden fruit; and all the other characters in the balcony of the clinic watch, astonished as the couple performs the Biblical representation.

To be or become a sinner is to be on earth. There is no division between heaven and hell. On earth, both are experienced daily by human beings.

In this film, we clearly see interactions between “Saints” and “Evil.” Saintliness denies life and all pleasures of the body. God, in this view, becomes the only sinless conception in the world. The color of the clothing worn by the characters in the film also represents their psychological characteristics. White, black, and red are the main colors. The film supports the idea that all the things done in life with bad intentions will be punished.

Watching this film is a unique conscious experience. What is good ? What is bad? Who am I to judge ? Who knows the better thing to do if power is based on human instincts, and power only exists for those whose willingness to pick it up are apparent.

Vale Abrao / Valley Abraham - 181 min. - Color - 1993

Ema is the main character in the film, and the whole story is based on the way Ema leads everybody’s emotions in their lives.

Ema is extremely beautiful and her beauty is actually what gives us the power to think about everyone’s fragility. She marries a rich man who she doesn’t love, but with whom she stays together until she dies. Her husband has no romanticism but this doesn’t mean he doesn’t love her. He is a fragile man, and he is most fragile when he is close to Ema. He is spiritually fragile.

Ema is a liberal woman who has many different affairs while married. Each of the men in her life seems to add a little bit more frustration and sadness into her life. All of these men depend on her but they flee as well as she does all the time. She always tries to flee from her reality to a reality that seems more original to her. Pleasure is what leads her to all the experiences she has. All of these experiences create a certain level of

defensiveness in Ema, what make her sometimes pretty selfish with others. Ema also seems to enjoy the gloomy environment she lives in. Melancholy seems to make her move on.

The film shows again the idea of frustration or the impossibility of happiness. Emptiness is what emerges from the experiences Ema has, but the males are always the fragile part.

At the end, Ema dies accidentally, and after some time, her husband dies as well. He dies because he is weak. The absence of Ema in his life created the emptiness that led him to death.

The film brings with it a beautiful lighting process. The camera movements, even being slow, create a soft view to the audience, which actually supplements the whole plot of the film.

A Caixa / Blind Man's Buff - 91 min. - Color - 1994

This film by Manoel de Oliveira has a simpler plot to be followed. The story is about a blind man who receives money from the pedestrians who pass by his door. He lives with his daughter, but he is mistreated by her and by her husband, who only exploit him. They are a very poor family.

The whole film happens in front of the house where the blind man lives. There, people pass by and neighbors stop by to gossip about people's lives. The money that the blind man receives is kept in a box. The box disappears, or better, is stolen and due to that fact, people die. At the end, the blind man kills himself and his daughter starts living by her father's life story. She carries a box (as her father used to do), and people give her money when she tells them the story.

The idea that Manoel de Oliveira had when creating this film was interesting. The way he delivered the story was interesting as well. Throughout the film we (the audience) expect for something really exciting to happen, because Oliveira holds our attention in the way he delivers and has the invention of the film, but nothing really exciting happens. It is suspenseful to be waiting for something apprehensive to happen, and at the end there is really nothing too big, and it that happens mirrors life. The box was the only reason to live to the blind man, his daughter, and his son-in-law. When the box was gone, the power of the males was gone as well, and the daughter took advantage of it.

O Convento / The Monastery - 93 min. - Color - 1995

This is a very profound film by Manoel de Oliveira, which I consider difficult to interpret.

This film, as most of Oliveira's films, carries a heavy dialogue based on literary work. This time Manoel de Oliveira uses dialogues from *Faust*, by Goethe. The film is very theatrical, and the main idea remains as a secret.

Good and evil are the two main caricatures in the film. They are represented in the character Michael, who is a researcher (and is played by John Malkovich, and by his wife, Elene who is played by Catherine Deneuve). Michael represents the good and Elene the evil. On the other hand, in the monastery where Michael is doing his studies, the housekeepers are Baltar, who is the evil force, and Piedade who is the good side. With this division in mind, we have the two good sides together - Piedade and Michael; and the two evil sides also together - Baltar and Elene. Throughout the film, these forces are divided and they work as teams against each other. By the end of the film, the partners get together again. Michael and his wife end up escaping from the monastery, and

Piedade and Baltar end up dying in a fire in the forest. Again, to me, the idea is that bad and good are always together in any experience and in any part of our lives. The good without the bad doesn't exist, and harmony occurs due to this contrast between evil and good.

In the film, Piedade and Michael, the good sides, hold the idea of pleasure based on the intellectual activity and sensitivity they both display in their characters. On the other hand, Elene and Baltar hold the idea of pleasure based on revenge and ordinary thoughts.

The good needs the evil to be stimulated and the evil needs the good to be challenged. Again, we can see the male's fragility displayed. Michael, the good one, is fragile in his power, and Baltar is intellectually fragile.

Viagem ao Principio do Mundo / Journey to the Beginning of the World - 90 min.

Color - 1997

This is the most recent film by Manoel de Oliveira. The plot is based on memory, or the idea of returning to the past. Four major characters constitute the story. The story is about one filmmaker and three actors who travel together to visit the filmmaker's country, Portugal. One of the actors has some relatives in Portugal who he has never met before. His father was Portuguese, but the actor was born and raised in France. The French actor, as well as the filmmaker want to visit Portugal to find out a little bit more about their past. The filmmaker is played by Marcello Mastroianni whose, all life and career were developed in France. Being very old, the director goes back to visit the place where he was born, Portugal, and does not find anyone related to his past. The only thing

he has to visit is his memory, and the images he kept from the past. The three actors that travel with him are the representation of the present, while Mastroianni is the representation of the past.

The camera movements are pretty stable. However, Manoel de Oliveira uses the camera in three different moments of the film to represent the idea of past - the return to the memories. The four characters spend quite a long time in the car. On the back of the car, through the window, the camera follows the road backwards, which for me is the representation of the director's attempt to get the images from his past back into his mind. Manoel de Oliveira also tries to keep three people (at all times), in his camera shots, like trying to form a triangle. When this doesn't happen, Oliveira is using a close up instead. Most of the scenes have pretty clear, bright, lighting and the dialogue is the substance of the film. It is pretty poetic, with historic allusions and relations to World War issues. Political issues are also expressed in this film. What is interesting as well, is the idea of using the name Manoel in the film. Marcello Mastroianni is the filmmaker named Manoel, and the father of one of the actors is Manoel as well. The film is a reference to his name, work, and life.

To me, one of the most beautiful parts of the film is the reference to the word "saudade" that only exists in the Portuguese language. The word, according to Manoel de Oliveira, is associated to the desire we attach to the things that are yet to come.

Lastly, I just want to mention that the film enhances the importance of the past as the main tool that disconnects us all from the stupidity in our daily lives.

### Filmography

- 1931 - Douro, Fauna Fluvia (Douro, River Work), documentary, 30 min.
- 1932 - Estatuas de Lisboa (Lisbon's Statues) - unfinished documentary
- 1938 - Eles ja Fabricam Carros em Portugal (They already Manufacture Cars in Portugal), documentary, 11 min.
- 1938 - Miramar, Praia das Rosas (Miramar, Rose Beach), documentary, 10 min.
- 1939 - Famalicao (Famalicao), documentary, 18 min.
- 1942 - Aniki Bobo (Aniki Bobo), fiction, 102 min.
- 1956 - O Pintor e a Cidade (The painter and the City), documentary, 32 min.
- 1958 - O Coracao (The Heart), unfinished documentary.
- 1959 - O Pao (The Bread), documentary, 58 min.
- 1959 - As Pinturas do meu Irmão Julio (The Paintings of my Brother Julio), documentary, 15 min.
- 1962 - Ato da Primavera (Act of Spring), fiction, 94 min.
- 1963 - A Caca (The Hunt), fiction, 21 min.
- 1970 - Porto: 1100 Anos, A Proposito da Inauguracao de uma Estatua, (Porto: 1100 Years of a Statue's Foundation), documentary, 29 min.
- 1971 - O Passado e o Presente (The Past and the Present), fiction, 115 min.
- 1975 - Benilde: Ou a Virgem Mae (Benilde: or the Virgin Mother), fiction, 110 min.
- 1978 - Amor de Perdicao (Fated Love), fiction, 265 min.
- 1981 - Francisca (Fanny Owen), fiction, 166 min.

- 1982 - Lisboa Cultural (Cultural Lisbon), documentary, 58 min.
- 1985 - O Sapato de Cetim (The Sattin Slipper), fiction, 415 min.
- 1986 - Meu Caso (My Case), fiction, 87 min.
- 1987 - A Proposito da Bandeira Nacional (About the national Flag), documentary, 8 min.
- 1988 - Os Canibais (The Cannibals), fiction, 90 min.
- 1990 - Non ou a Va Gloria de Mandar (Non or the Vain Glory of Command), fiction, 112 min.
- 1991 - A Divina Comedia (The Divine Comedy), fiction, 140 min.
- 1992 - O Dia do Desespero (The Day of Despair), fiction, 76 min.
- 1993 - Vale Abrao (Valley of Abraham), fiction, 187 min.
- 1994 - A Caixa (Blind Man's Buff), fiction, 93 min.
- 1995 - O Convento (The Monastery), fiction, 91 min.
- 1996 - Party (Party), fiction, 91 min.
- 1997 - Viagem ao Principio do Mundo (Journey to the Beginning of the World), fiction, 90 min.