
Gutiérrez Herranz, R. (Coord.), *El cine y su doble: Relato, documento, representación*. (1ra ed.) Barcelona, Asociación Shangrila Textos Aparte, 2019, 202 p.

The interest in cinematography and its interdisciplinary form has been – and continues to be – a rich quarry of images to extract economic, social and philosophical theories. In *El cine y su doble: Relato, documento, representación* [Film and its counterpart: Tale, document, representation] film is understood from the standpoint of these three ways of seeing. Even though it is not made explicit in its title, there is a fourth one: myth. In this compilation of short essays, myth has the task of articulating a discourse on the female figure in film. In any case, whichever standpoint we choose will affect (and have effects on) our understanding of reality – if such a thing exists – to actually produce ‘its counterpart.’ Conscious of the framework within which the authors are writing, Rosa Gutiérrez Herranz, coordinator of the project, addresses these standpoints as ‘reverberations.’ The notion of ekphrasis comes to mind: a constant transfer, translation and translocation of the image through gaze.

Each chapter holds on to a title with the purpose of rooting the discourse: the first one, ‘[Document] History told by film’ compiles texts by Javier Antón Pelayo and Valerio Carando; the second one, ‘[Tale] Reading Stanley Kubrick’ is articulated with writings by Joan Carles Cirera and Lluís Laborda Oribes; the third, ‘[Myth] Images of women on the big screen’ revolves around essays by Montserrat Jiménez Sureda and Ludovico Longhi; and the fourth, ‘[Representation] From text to image: art, literature, film’ has studies by Rosa Gutiérrez Herranz, Olga Dzhumaylo and Jaume Vidal Oliveras. Information regarding the purpose of each chapter may be found in Gutiérrez Herranz’s introduction to her colleagues which also serves very well as a bearing to understand the specificity of each essay. However, as subtly suggested earlier in this review, a question with regards to the omission of the third section, myth, as part of the book’s subtitle can peck on the proposed paradigm. As much as there must be reasons to have done so one cannot help, but wonder why.

Still, to wonder might be the key to understanding. The book presents itself as a kaleidoscope which stresses the fact that, as John Berger states in his book *Ways of Seeing*, the relation between what we see and what we know is never settled (1990: 15). Of course, there are many words to hang on to in this short but rich sentence: ‘seeing’ and ‘knowledge’ being the ones that stand out the most. And yet, the ‘between’ and ‘we’ seem to be the two

words – let’s put it that way or, if the reader prefers, the space and subjectivity – that allow the whole book to be actually written: without space or subjectivity the iconic gesture embedded in each essay of this book could not, or might not, have happened. This ‘between’ and ‘we’ are two marks of the gap which shows our outmost inadequacy to fulfill the thirst for knowledge.

Each author, each essay, attempts to bring closer what is seen in film. Bringing it closer allows to create a relationship between what we see, we know and we believe. The effect of this triad is a screen, a different kind of screen: it’s a screen that forms the writing. It’s what gives the book its diversity and interdisciplinary base, not only because the study demands it, but because the authors themselves have taken interest in developing intersectionality within their own fields. Historians, film critics, art critics, professors, curators, philosophers, philologists: interchangeable categorical naming – an attempt to establish a limit to which is considered unquenchable, infinite¹.

In a way, this project is equivalent to that of the camera as a mechanical eye in constant movement, “...*coordinating any and all points of the universe...*” (Berger, 1990: 17) and, in this sense, it is as broad as it is narrow, as general as it is specific. As a matter of fact, reading the index might seem a bit misleading at first for it includes wide-ranging terminology which is, in itself, constantly evolving. Examples of this are essay titles like *Un arte del fragmento, la apropiación y el reciclaje: del collage al found footage [The art of the fragment, appropriation and recycling: from collage to found footage]* by Vidal Oliveras. Nonetheless, a frame is always provided to respond to a linear conception of time, an empirical conception of space or an objective process: *collage* being the beginning and *found footage* being the end, in this scenario. This dynamic can be seen in other essay titles like Laborda Oribes’ *Representaciones del laberinto: la novela gótica y el romanticismo oscuro en El resplandor [Representations of labrynth: the gothic novel and dark romanticism in The Shining]*. In this case, the frame is *The Shining*. A grid, as thought by Rosalind Krauss in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths (1986)*, is carefully constructed both to constrain and release the discourse.

It is noticeable how each essay, within its scope, treats the different themes as subversive mechanisms of a particular culture system: exile; marriage; laughter (and madness); artificial intelligence; the very solitude of subjectivity, of the performers; tradition and the periphery, the outside or the outsider; darkness; reality and dreams; the female presence (or absence); the very impossibility to write – to create. By bringing these texts together, Rosa Gutiérrez Herranz suggests a system of understanding and analysis,

¹ One could also state that what is infinite might as well be eternal, this means, in a way, to be out-of-time and thus, the need to bring things closer, embed them in time and space, creative controlling notions.

a how-to-write about an image. Interestingly enough, screenwriters and directors, and many others, write images made of screaming greens and shouting reds (Danchev, 2011). Is it possible that, through this book, as readers, we create our own screenplay? A possibility of what is? Do we extract our own film – our own image – systematically as we read? Do we, by any chance, suffer from a Kuleshov effect? Maybe we just think we see (read) what others see (write) and nod in the desire of actually grasping what has been – apparently – brought closer to us.

As a by-product of a seminar held at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, the essays contained in this book are written in a simple, didactic and educational way held to a high standard of thorough research and documentation which is reflected in the bibliography section of each piece of writing. It is clear that each author responds to rigorous academic standards which makes the book – and project as a whole – a solid reference for a wide audience. Whether the reader is just treading on the field of theory of film or is looking for a specialized psychological and sociological intersectional analysis of the female figure in Italian film in the beginning of the 20th century in search for further references and trails of thought, *Film and its counterpart* is definitely the go-to book to look for, if not answers, a systemic and systematic debate.

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