

FILM & TV ANALYSIS

IV. NARRATION

Introduction

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1. Examples for the use of editing, cinematography, mise en scène in narration
2. Aristotle's *Poetics*

1. Examples

use of editing, cinematography, mise en scène
in narration

1. Examples

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- Narrative: creating a plot out of a story
- use of editing, cinematography, narration

Editing, Cinematography & Narration

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 *Quantum of Solace*
(Marc Forster, 2008)

 **Interrogation/Fight**

00:08:40 - 00:14:20

Simulation: Game/Reality, Underworld, Bond's Character,
Spheres: Public v Secret etc;
normal lighting vs. high key / low contrast

 **Opera**


00:37:30 - 00:44:06


Tosca: Betrayal / Bond-Vesper, Spheres, Ruthlessness,
guiding the audience: who sees what / whose perspective,
Bond/Villain duality


Narration


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Cheyenne Autumn (John Ford, 1964)


 **Overture**
00:00:00 - 00:02:00

 **Arrival of Cheyennes**
00:11:25 - 00:15:12

 **After Battle**
00:48:15 - 00:51:15

 **No Buffalos, Dodge 1**
01:18:00 - 01:21:36

 **Dodge 2**
01:35:55 - 01:39:10

 **Fort Robinson**
02:18:50 - 02:25:48

- telling the Indian story by a renowned Western director
- function of the Dodge City scenes?
- representation of women as indicative for culture
- responsibility
- depiction of genocide

Editing, Cinematography & Narration

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Lost Highway

(David Lynch, 1997)

Main Titles

00:00:00 - 00:03:00

Familiar Image, used in *Blue Velvet*,
reused in *The Straight Story*

Editing, Cinematography & Narration

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The Straight Story

(David Lynch, 1999)

Opening

00:00:00 - 00:07:14

Moving Stars – Landscape – Age – Characters

Drive

00:24:12 - 00:27:40

Speed – Narration of Age

Bar / War

01:12:24 - 01:18:06

depiction of atrocities without pictures
(just dialog & sound)

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2. Aristotle's Poetics

A Founding Text for Literary Criticism

2. Aristotle's Poetics

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- Aristotle: 384-322 BC
- exoteric writings: Plato-style philosophy - lost
- akroamatic / esoteric writings:
for teaching purposes

2. Aristotle's Poetics

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- περὶ ποιητικῆς (peri poiêtikês)
- ποίησις (poiêsis) – making, creating
(poiein: to make)
- writes on dramatic poetry, tragedy, epic, comedy
- context: drama festivals / contests

2. Aristotle's Poetics

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- ΠΕΡΙ ΠΟΙΗΤΙΚΗΣ:
 - Book 1:
 - ch 1-5 general remarks
 - ch 6-22 tragedy
 - ch 23-26 epic
 - Book 2:
 - comedy (lost)
 - online text:
 - English/Greek: [Perseus Project](#)
 - English: [Internet Classics Archive](#)
 - German: [DigBib](#)

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- basic motive: mimêsis / mimicking / creating representations
 - ▣ human beings create representations
 - ▣ they take pleasure in looking at representations

- comedy: representation of bad people / portraying the ridicule of ugliness

- epic+tragedy: representation of good people

2. Aristotle's Poetics

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- tragedy: „through pity (*eleos*) and fear (*phobos*) it effects relief (*catharsis*) to these and similar emotions” (ch. 6)
- most central: plot (*mythos*)
- plot comes out of the story (*logos*)
- other elements: characters (*êthê*), speech/diction (*lexis*), thought (*dianoia*), spectacle/Inszenierung (*opsis*), song/melody (*melopoiía*)

2. Aristotle's Poetics

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- classic tragedy:
 - choir
 - later actor
 - later 2, even later 3
- oftentimes, protagonists known (like Oedipus, Alcibiades, Odysseus)

- for Aristotle, plot determines the character of the protagonist
- today: focus on the individual

2. Aristotle's Poetics

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- Ch 7:
- “Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is **complete**, and **whole**, and of a **certain magnitude**; for there may be a whole that is wanting in magnitude. **A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end.** A **beginning** is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An **end**, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it. A **middle** is that which follows something as some other thing follows it. A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at haphazard, but conform to these principles.”

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- Ch 9:
- “The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose. The work of Herodotus might be put into verse, and it would still be a species of history, with meter no less than without it. The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other what may happen. Poetry, therefore, is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular.”
- history = *historia* = science → *logos*
- poetry = *poiêsis* = art → interpretation, plot, *mythos*

2. Aristotle's Poetics

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- Ch 23:
- “As to that poetic imitation which is narrative in form and employs a single meter, the plot manifestly ought, as in a tragedy, to be constructed on dramatic principles. It should have for its subject a single action, whole and complete, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. It will thus resemble a living organism in all its unity, and produce the pleasure proper to it.”
- →

2. Aristotle's Poetics

- “It will differ in structure from historical compositions, which of necessity present not a single action, but a single period, and all that happened within that period to one person or to many, little connected together as the events may be. [..] Here again, then, as has been already observed, the transcendent excellence of Homer is manifest. He never attempts to make the whole war of Troy the subject of his poem, though that war had a beginning and an end. It would have been too vast a theme, and not easily embraced in a single view. If, again, he had kept it within moderate limits, it must have been over-complicated by the variety of the incidents. As it is, he detaches a single portion, and admits as episodes many events from the general story of the war- such as the Catalogue of the ships and others- thus diversifying the poem.”

2. Aristotle's Poetics

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- Aristotle prefers the stricter structure of the tragedy to the looser of the epic
- narrative focus --- plot ---
anything superfluous must go