Deception Cinema.
An Analysis of Allegory in Baroque Film

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Abstract

The use of allegory in cinema, as a rhetorical figure, prompts consideration of the possibility of its presence in images and/or staging, as well as in the entirety of a given film, as a story, as a movie itself may be an allegory. The present investigation focused on the analysis of different films that, in one way or another, used allegorical strategies that invited the audience to play an active role. The basic question is as follows: how does allegory work in cinema, which favors a baroque writing regime (not as a historical period, but as a style)? By way of three movies (intentional corpus), in the field of film studies, oriented toward hermeneutics, it is concluded that these films, both in staging and story, deconstruct and dismantle meanings, in this case, relating to life, identity, and the conditions of the capitalist world.

Key words: Cinematic research; Baroque cinema; Cinematographic rhetoric; Allegory; Film discourse.

1. Introduction

Human beings move through life in a constant search for meaning, the creation of significance for themselves, their existence, events, and the world that surrounds them. For this purpose, they have a tool at their disposal, which has been developed over thousands of years, by diverse cultures. However, despite the sophistication of this resource, which we know as language, communication is not completely transparent. This is because language is unnatural, a device, and an instrument that permits the creation of significance. That constructed is susceptible to decline, a vital cycle, which ends in ruins. In order to create significance, language uses several tools, known as rhetorical figures, which are artefacts used in fields such as politics and arts (sculpture, painting, architecture, literature, dance, music, and cinema), among others, by way of which humans may enhance their expression. Allegories are just one of these ways to create significance, and the seventh art is its niche, apt for the bearing of its best fruit.

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From this perspective, language, as a system of signs that serve to represent ideas orally, visually, or in writing, applies rhetorical figures as tools that permit the representation of different ideas, in accordance with many factors. Among these is the context in which they are constructed and received. All of these variables must be considered when something is to be said, as when there is discourse, or a group of thought processes that express a given thesis, it is important that this be understood. As such, rhetorical figures are accessed as linguistic resources, so as to communicate-persuade poetically, or to lend significance, in the case of cinema, by way of images, sounds, movement, context, etc. Here, it is of interest to examine the use of allegory, considering the presence, in filmic language, of other figures, such as metaphors, symbols, and metonymy.

Within this framework, and with the intent to address those forms in which certain cinema represents reality, by way of symbolic language or the baroque cinema writing regime, an attempt was made to respond to the question: how does allegory function in cinema, which favors the baroque writing regime (not as a historical period, but as a style)? Based on this question, allegory was reviewed, as a tool for cinematic deconstruction. For this, three films were analyzed. They may be categorized within fiction cinema, which invites the audience to be vigilant of that which appears on screen.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1. Within the framework of rhetorical figures

Rhetoric is the goal of the discipline that studies discourse. As such, its purpose is to guarantee communicative effectiveness. As Barthes (1966) explains, discourse creation may be divided into five phases (invention, disposition, elocution, memory, and action), and systematized by a group of rules, procedures, and techniques for language use. The above is directly related to rhetorical figures, especially in terms of the third phase of discourse preparation, elocution, in which linguistic elaboration occurs. Semantics determines the order of and relationship between thematic materials, which are selected and structured during stages one and two, respectively, by way of linguistic artifices or figures.

Rhetoric uses these tools, called figures, to transmit discursive messages, such that these, in addition to being understood, may stir, thrill, and persuade their receiver. Often, we hear word figures together, with their rhetorical names. But what are rhetorical figures?

A figure is a diversion that may occur in different dimensions. If there is a diversion in a grammatical model, it occurs due to a semio-syntactic figure. If the sign-emitter-receptor relationship deviates, it interrupts the communication model, and as such, a pragmatic figure is present. Thirdly, if there is a sign-reality model relationship, it is a semio-semantic figure (Mayoral, 1994).

Another way to look at rhetorical figures is by way of their transposition task. To transpose means to move or change. Figures change the habitual meaning of signs, by way of incorrect

expression. In other words, figures change the original nomination of something, so as to evoke a new meaning, a second meaning, that does not normally correspond to the signifier. The result of the transposition exercise is the appearance of indirect meaning, as the figure does communicate, but conveys something different than was said.

As affirmed above, figures have a close relationship with the third phase of discourse creation: elocution. This occurs, provided that they reference the form and disposition of discourse, the way in which it is exhibited or presented. Figures characterize both the attitude and form of the language therein. It is for this reason that the elocution doctrine revolves around a framework of discourse virtues. These virtues are the same figures, and generally, seek perfection in language mastery Grammatical virtues, for example, seek idiomatic purity. Here, one must ask: can language be pure? Rhetorical virtues procure clarity and ornate linguistics, or decorate. Signs used must be convenient, in terms of that which one wishes to convey, and combine harmonically. Just as there are virtues, there are also vices which provoke the contrary effect: darkness, unintelligibility, ambiguity, and disorder. That said, do these qualities not also lend character to discourse? Are they not also figures?

Virtues or vices operate by way of accessory ideas. These are their source or basis, as they give rise to the many figured meanings. Accessory ideas are the expression and impression of an emotion that is generated when something is named, beyond its basic significance. Whenever something is named, and nothing more than its basic meaning is evoked, a significated, or principal idea is produced. However when something is said, and it has a different meaning, this is an aggregate, or accessory idea that emerges from an association, or relationship, between two ideas or objects. Figures live within accessory ideas. The former serve as pre-existing accessory ideas, and calls a basic idea by the name of one of its accessory ideas, without explicitly stating what one has to do with the other, because their relationship is implicit, which is more than sufficient. Figures are managed by way of recollection, which is no more than an association between ideas or objects, or an indirect appeal therebetween.

Ultimately, rhetorical figures do not name an object, but rather suggest an idea that indicates the psychological attitude of the subject, in terms of their statements. Figured expressions signify feelings, such as passion or contempt, provoked by a main idea, and are not just raw, or simple in their meaning. When a subject has access to a rhetorical figure, they are positively or negatively moved, because they are familiar with the principal idea, by way of sentimental experiences that were transmitted to them. Memories are nothing more than the evocation of a feeling produced. Thus, accessory ideas emerge from the link between the principal idea and a memory. In the same way that a smell or song can evoke the image of a special person, and take their name, neither the smell nor the song will be described again by that individual, by way of conventional language.

In accordance with Mayoral (1994), another way to explain the procedures of rhetorical figures is by way of transgression. This practice consists of the crime that several linguistic operations commit on different linguistic planes or norms (phonological, morphological,

syntactical, textual, grammatical, semantic, etc.) so as to evoke figures, which, as explained above, constitute secondary linguistic units.

Considering the above, and in accordance with Todorov (1993), both old and new rhetoric may be discussed. In the first, figures are the stylistic means that seek the appropriate and convenient, because it is also thought that language may be transparent and have unique meanings. There, rhetoric is no more than an enumeration of figures, a list of tools, a single harvest from a time long past. New rhetoric applies a contemporary view of figures, as these have not yet been exhausted. They are plentiful linguistic resources that enable as many variations as human ingenuity permits. As such, figures enrich, create, and continue to have the ability to mobilize, soul and intellect. Further, that which is 'pertinent' or 'adequate' is no longer considered valid, because what really matters is discourse in itself, its content. Finally, from the point of view of form, all language has its presentation, character, and there is nothing that has not been shaped.

2.2. The allegory as a rhetorical figure

In the field of rhetorical figures, it may be affirmed that language possesses various means by which meaning can either be found or created. One of these, the allegory, which comes from the Greek ἀλληγορία. This, in its connotation of symbolic meaning or figuration, represents ideas by way of key components from daily experiences (objects, people, animals, etc.). As such, allegories are signs, as they have the potential to represent or designate. However, this sign has characteristics that make it an allegory, and not something else, and which have adopted different uses, by way of which these characteristics may be more easily identified. One practical option for its study, then, is the analysis of their use. Broadly speaking, there are two: didactic use, and the allegory as a ruin.

From the standpoint of didactic use, allegories are a device whose abstract significance is embodied in an object or idea closer to the material or physical world used as an example. Based upon this definition, the allegory may be confused, quite easily, with symbols or metaphors. In a certain way, symbols, to paraphrase Todorov, serve the same function as allegories, given that these breathe life - almost material - into an abstraction. The difference is that symbols perform this task naturally, while allegories do so artificially. For example, the color black represents black, by itself. It naturally symbolizes death. However, this does not occur, with the celebrated representation of "justice", which is allegorical. There, the idea of justice, which not even verbal language can explain with precision and clarity, takes form. This, however, does not occur directly, as with symbols. Rather, it is a product of a type of contrivance, or design. Everyone associates black with death, but a group of six-year-old-children would likely offer multiple interpretations of the representation of justice.

It has also been said that allegories are single metaphors, presented in continuous succession. In other words:

> The allegory is defined, as Cicero said, as a series of metaphors, or a bundled metaphor. This sometimes creates problems that reappear in the definition of the example: as this, in contrast to metaphors, conserves the meaning of

the initial affirmation in which it is contained, and still, Quintiliano links it to allegory (Todorov, 1977, p. 33).

With metaphors, the same occurs. Allegories would seem to be metaphors, but are not. They simply calls upon them, for example, as in: "Justice is a blindfolded woman [...] a woman who holds a sword in her right hand [...] a woman with a scale in her left hand...". In this case, a collection of metaphors is observed. Separately, they convey nothing, nor do they approach justice as a concept. However, when these metaphors are connected, the meaning of justice is clear. Thus, allegories are not metaphors, but strings of metaphors, in which the meaning of the chain must be recognized, based on each of them, as the allegorical task is to provide clues to decipher the correct meaning and significance.

The way in which, with this first definition allegory, seen from its didactic use, language can have meaning different than it otherwise would, and how this figure has an illustrative, or moralizing function, as it seeks to explain abstract concepts with images, is notorious. However, in 19th century, this idea of allegories became widely accepted.

In their initial use, allegories are able to illustrate meaning, and in the second, derive hundreds of meanings. *The allegory as a ruin* is a concept attributed to Walter Benjamín (1989). By way thereof, said German philosopher hoped to convey that there was no meaning or significance. This must be viewed from an existential point of view, wherein lies the origin of the word ruin: in life it is impossible to find meaning, this is only possible a posteriori, by way of death. Allegories deconstruct, use, and feed off of ruins, so as to construct significance. Ruins exist in the house of death. Thus, meaning may be found after, as one looks back at a life lived, and for this reason, allegorical work evokes reminiscence. Further, as it attempts to grasp unique meaning, an impossible task, the allegorical world becomes an illegible forest of complexity and excess feelings.

Allegories dissect that which is known, in order to decipher meaning, as with hieroglyphics. In an effort to understand this, and finally, the way in which allegories function, author José Luis Brea (1991) suggested his strategies by way of the visual area and vanguardist art.

For example, in surrealist work, as analyzed by José Luis Brea (1991), one frequently finds a grouping of objects or elements that would normally not be found together, as their original spaces are quite different from and alien to each other. Their representational spaces should be others, and would never be shared. It is by way of the allegorical procedure and juxtaposition that these elements may be found in planes that create a crisis for the receiver, with an intersection of meanings, and as such, a subversion of representation.

Prior to juxtaposition, fragmentation must occur, by way of which those elements that will later be juxtaposed are removed from their contexts and realities, isolated, and deprived of their functions. After accumulating fragments, they come together in juxtaposed form, as occurs when text and image are united on the same plane, or an umbrella with a sewing machine in "Encuentro de paraguas con máquina de coser" by Salvador Dalí. The result is the intention to compose meaning, when another had previously been clear, when each of the juxtaposed elements were in their original place. There, they had been bearers of

meaning, but with their abduction and movement to another place, they became empty signs of meaning. Finally, on being reunited with other signs that were subject to the same treatment, not just a single new meaning emerges - many do.

To summarize, the first allegorical step is appropriation. It is important to clarify that this, in itself, produces an allegory. For example, the reproduction of existing images causes the artist to communicate something new, based on the newly-composed image, different, but similar to that which was usurped. The same occurs with photography, which captures a transitory moment, and confiscates its environment. However, in summary, allegorical procedures may be condensed into two steps: extraction and gathering, or staging, of the moved fragments, where in the last step, they are put together and organized into a new whole, a new space that is no more than a collage.

2.3. The baroque and baroque cinema

Following review of the notion of allegories and their strategies in the visual arts, it is key to contextualize their presence in cinema, particularly their use in baroque cinema. Just as with other rhetorical figures, they occur in the visual field. The baroque period provokes a very different idea to that which one normally has, as it is not merely a name, but also a historical period with which one refers to the artistic work which occurred between the 17th and 18th centuries in music, painting, architecture, and literature. For Michel Foucault (1966), the baroque was a time of deceitful senses. Might this be related to allegory use?

The baroque and allegories are closely linked. Where this is baroque, there are allegories, and where there are allegories, there is baroque. This is supported by certain topics analyzed by professor José Luis Brea, in his texts *Nuevas Estrategias Alegóricas* (1991), *Nole Mi legere*, and *El enfoque retórico el Primado de la alegoría en el arte contemporáneo* (2007). In order to not reduce Brea's perspective, one must address that which he called the semiotization of the world and baroque economy.

Due to the appearance of the mass communication media and capitalist production mode, objects are fetichized as merchandise. As such, anything that may be sold or purchased, despite the fact that it may hold meaning. Failing this, all that which could acquire a meaning is put up for sale. Everything situated in public space possesses potential allegories, texts, images, objects, words, or even people. Based on its appropriation, extraction, recollocation, and staging, the world is semiotized.

In terms of the baroque economy, this matter is associated with writing. As José Luis Brea indicates, when one writes, one does nothing but register signs, and finally, meanings. This occurs by way of two elements which are normally excluded. The first of these, the image, displays the meanings, while the other, text, announces, states, and names them. In baroque writing, this rivalry between text and image ends, as both writings exist in allegories, in their natural state, and complement each other in their eventual transformations.

Allegories, for Brea (1991), break from representation, or unique and diaphanous meanings. Significance becomes something fleeting, and is endowed with the ability to re-

present many things without fixating on just one. Secondly, Brea indicates, allegories form part of event aesthetics, as they seek to capture each of the differences from that on their paths. Consequently, discourse is always in the midst of a constant slide and metamorphosis. This implies an expansion of both representation and a cinematic meaning, which is equal in overload and excess, both characteristics of the baroque.

Said overload implies an excess of elements in the representation system. However, another excess is produced in form, because the purpose of perfection, in the representation of reality, is surpassed. A new, artificial reality is created, which breaks with the normal order of perception. Given its artificiality, it is similar to nothing, despite having borrowed elements from reality. The baroque representation is relatively natural, however, because there is an illusion of reality. It supposes a perfection of a naturalist sort, a perfect simulation of reality.

On the other hand, this excess of elements causes baroque discourse to be eccentric, as it fails to express truth, thanks to the abundance of meanings that it produces. As such, the baroque embodies a complexity that is in constant growth. Before, it was said that the world of allegory was an illegible forest of complexity (perhaps Foucault referred to this). The world of allegory lies within the baroque.

Another distinctive feature of the baroque is artificiality, which relates to two ideas that have already been discussed, in addition to excess. The first concerns allegorical writing, in which there is always new meaning, based upon the possible combinations between text and image. This causes the original language to be devoid of any meaning, which proves to be artificial. The second is that of the slide and metamorphosis characteristic of discourse, in accordance with which, we once again conclude that, where there are allegories, there is constructed, temporary and artificial, meaning, and where there are allegories, the baroque is present.

Lastly, the baroque is easily recognized by the presence of fragments. The verb 'to break' comes from the word fragment, which, in its etymology, stems from the Latin *frangere*, which translates to 'to break'. Omar Calabrese, in his book La Era Neo Barroca, wrote:

> Unlike the detail, the fragment, despite having formed part of a previous whole, does not need to consider the presence of the whole, except as loss [...] In effect, however, the geometry of the fragment is that of a breakage, in which the dividing lines are produced by forces (e.g., physical forces) responsible for the «accident» that has isolated the fragment from the «whole» to which it previously belonged (1987, p. 89).

When the fragment is isolated from its place, there is double fracture: from the whole to which it previously belonged, and from its representation.

In addition to fragments, the use of detail is also characteristic of the baroque. The world detail comes from the French Renaissance *detail*, which meant to cut from, and supposes a subject who performs the intentional action of cutting something that interests them from a unit. Following separation, the subject wishes to highlight the unit separated, which

simultaneously implies a state of things before and different from that of the resulting cut. Thus, detail, firstly, it is recognized by its unit.

Details and fragments exhibit similarities and differences: detail is recognized with greater ease in its relationship with the unit to which it belonged. This is clear, given that the detail had a meaning for he who created it. As such, there is a nearly logical relationship between the detail and its unit. This, however, cannot occur with the fragment, because, as stated, it is the result of an accident or seizure that does not facilitate the definition of its relationship with the unit to which it previously belonged. These characteristics, despite their contrasts, constitute a similarity, as they also are characteristic features of the baroque. They have, in common, a phenomenon that Calabrese calls "the decline of detail", which is explained thus: "The fact is that system detail and fragmentation become autonomous facts; valorized independently, cause us to lose sight of our larger general frames of reference" (1987, p. 105). When details and fragments cease to be part of their original, complete groups, this integrality is modified. This is why one speaks of the baroque, because there are breakdowns and ruptures (here, it is important to recall Walter Benjamín's definition of allegories).

Once the principal characteristics of the baroque are recognized, and the idea of its intrinsic relationship with allegories is examined in depth, both concepts may be addressed in the visual field, and more specifically, in cinema.

To begin, what is the writing regime for baroque cinema? Before responding to this question, the cinematic writing regime must be explained. This is nothing more than a series of decisions which lend identity and style to each movie, in the same way that one chooses what pants to wear, and what shoes to coordinate with them. The representation is decided. According to Francesco Cassetti, in filmmaking, there are two decisions to be made: first, whether the neutral or marked is desired, and second, whether the neutral or marked will be used exclusively, or will be combined.

In terms of the baroque writing regime, Cassetti affirms that, "...this is defined by way of expressive linguistic choices, characterized by marking and homogeneity. From there, two extreme, radical options are presented, which are addressed insistently and exclusively: if a non-marked solution is adopted, this is only so that it may act as a brief transition between two marked moments" (1990, p. 116). Among the opposites mentioned by the Italian is the naturalist presentation and figurative distortion of appearances, flat, deep images, in illumination, darkness and luminous revelations, in terms of color, white, black, grey, chromatic vivacity, and lastly, in regards to mobility, statism and dynamism. Thus, the rules of normal representation are broken.

For improved comprehension, there are clearer examples of marked selections within a movie. In terms of staging, for example, certain plans are superimposed over others, one passes from one to another and another, abruptly, without any type of connection or transition therebetween. In the case of shot composition, this is so well-adjusted that it embodies the baroque excess perfectly, and produces confusion between that which is artificial and natural. Camera movements are nervous, convulsive, and zooms in and out furiously.

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Among other things, blurry lighting is used, as are changes in color tonalities, time slices, and accelerations. The music in the film has no relationship whatsoever to that contained in the images. It serves only to confuse and bother the audience.

Precisely that which disorients the audience is the absence of neutrality in film writing: the marked, extreme, and opposite decisions made by their directors. The cinematographic experience becomes aberrant, as one is accustomed to the classical representation, in which there is a semantic structure, characterized by staging, in which there is escalation between the shots that guide the audience. With respect to the classical writing regime, Cassetti wrote:

> Firstly, the entire space for action is shown. Later, the action and space are fragmented into more frames, and finally, the entire space is shown again, representing unitary vision. The spectator, thus, always knows what they are seeing and where they are, as if a continuous action in a fluid space were perceived (1990, p. 114).

However, the difference between audience contextualization, as in classical cinema, in the baroque, is that the interest of narrative continuity is maintained, as is the idea of the extension of life itself, although it begins to introduce subjective elements, which provide interior points of view in film products.

This occurs by cutting tension in the image, another mechanism by which to recognize the baroque character of a movie, which is no more than a form of building a movie based on detail. These may be applied by using zoom or slow motion, techniques with aesthetic value, and which permit communicating the perception of a subjectivity within a film's story, its viewpoint of things, people, or events therein. The use of slow motion may generate two types of detail: temporary or narrative (Cfr. Calabrese, 1987). The first of these seeks to create tension for the height of dramatic action, while narrative detail seeks to present story events such that they occur with the appearance of real time.

Despite all of these characteristics, baroque cinema is *mannerist cinema*. Mannerism is the name for the artistic style developed in the midst of the renaissance and baroque times. It was recognized because it ceased to comply with the parameters imposed by classicism (proportionate, balanced, harmonic, and naturalist composition), as these restricted artistic creativity and freedom of expression. The same occurred in the case of cinema, but there, mannerism was between classicism and postmodern cinema (these are the three lines of historical transformation in Hollywood cinema - systems for cinematographic representation). In the latter, the dynamic of naturality is shattered completely.

A comparative look between these three forms of cinema and a list of mannerism characteristics serve to include, more broadly, that which is baroque in cinema, why it appeared, and the integration of all that, which, up to now, has been reported on the topic.

Classical North American cinema, from the 1920s, 30s, and 40s, is a group of mythical and symbolic stories (Cfr. Gonzales-Requena, 2006). Its narrative, as such, concerned the origins of cultures and their individuals, defining their moral principles and the direction of their paths. This was possible thanks to the symbol, a faithful companion of the myth.

In classical cinema, that which symbolizes individual and societal values is the hero figure, their goals and sacrifices. Heroes symbolize values and cause society to desire their actions. In the 20th century, the only artistic discourse constructed around myths (and symbols) was cinema. The rest followed the path of deconstruction (and allegory).

Postmodern cinema no longer contains nature. Reasoning exterminated both myths and symbolization processes. This resulted in empty representations. Without symbols or myths, however there is nothing to reconstruct. The purpose of cinematographic products is mere entertainment, and this lacks meaning.

In the midst of these two extremes, as emphasized by Jesús Gonzales-Requena, there is a tract called mannerism. In the 1950s and 60s, classical cinema remained, as its superficial story forms were apparently still valid. However, its essence had disappeared, because the staging and construction of representation were no longer done symbolically, but were enhanced. This resulted in film writing work that was ever more sophisticated, refined, and autonomous. Owing to the disappearance of the symbol, in mannerism, myths were weakened, and the function of film heroes entered into a crisis.

To summarize, mannerist characteristics, to paraphrase Requena (2006), are as follows:

1. Variations in the aesthetic of classical representation are introduced, to express new emotions. As such, sometimes shots are taken from other positions, from new angles, or with colors with unrealistic tones.

2. The hero is doubtful of their objective or of achieving this. The moral dimension is unraveled, and they act lawlessly to achieve their goal. Thus, their heroic character is lost, and they instead become a subject brimming with doubt and contradictions.

3. There is a constant dilemma between good and bad.

4. Protagonism is no longer the hero. The writer is.

5. Technical boasting: the story ceases to be important. The way in which it is portrayed instead becomes the priority. The effects of the writing on narration is prioritized. All of its strength is concentrated on the cinematographic writing form. This makes the narration more problematic, but generates an authentic mobilization of special effects and visual tricks that trap the spectator and oblige them to surrender to a world in which fascination with the unrealistic reigns.

6. Ambiguity: the filming form uses a multitude of subjective shots (in which the concrete point of view of a character is shown). These appear in the form of characters' dreams or dreamlike states, and it is unclear, many times, whether or not these are real.

In accordance with the review of the characteristics of baroque cinema, allegories are found nearly in its entirety. As indicated previously, the strategies for their use in the visual field has already been addressed. However, it has still not been explained how these appeared, on a cinematographic level. In order to do this, three movies will be analyzed, clarifying that, in each of these, allegory presents itself differently. Before commencing with said analysis, these manifestations of allegory must be specified: 1) The shot, as an image

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and minimal unit of cinematographic language, is an allegory. 2) The staging, or combination of images, is allegorical. 3) The story is allegorical.

3. Methodology

In the field of film studies, and in the face of the question of the use of allegories in baroque-style cinema, a qualitative methodology was employed, based on the filmic exegesis for the analysis. The interest is the approach of allegories present in the stories, and in the staging, as central points, considering that this may encompass, in itself, an entire film. Similarly, the investigation was placed within the framework of case studies in the social sciences and communication.

The forms of allegory presentation are addressed via the analysis of three movies (study corpus), which were selected intentionally: *Psycho,* by director Alfred Hitchcock (1960), *Rabbits,* by director David Lynch (2002), and *In time,* by director Andrew Niccol (2011).

4. Analysis

4.1. *Psycho*

This American movie, from 1960, was directed by Alfred Hitchcock, and protagonized by Anthony Perkins, Vera Miles, John Gavin, Martin Balsam, and Janet Leigh. It is the story of two murders that occur in a motel. The first is that of Marion Crane, a secretary who fled by car, after stealing a considerable amount of money, when her boss had asked her to take it to the bank. The second is that of a private detective hired by Marion's boss, in order to learn her whereabouts. The only person in charge of the motel is Norman Bates, a charming, attentive young man, who lives in the house next door with his mother.

The murder scenes do not reveal the identity of the murderer to the audience, but at some point, it is suggested that the material author of the crime is Norman's mother. Thus, the first mannerist characteristic is manifested. While in classical cinema, truth and lies are shown clearly, and so the audience always knows when a liar lies, owing to the gestures captured by the camera, in mannerism, one always doubts the words, gestures, and points of view of those shown. The goal of this is to mislead the audience, which enjoys the uncertainty. In *Psycho*, the audience hears the voice of Norman's mother speaking to him, and also sees her shadow in the window of their house. Only at the end does one realize that she has been dead for years, and that Norman was the murderer who, disguised as his mother and taking on her role, killed the woman he was attracted to. All of this owes to a psychological disorder caused by his mother's death.

Mannerism, however, cannot reduced to mere deception, but also includes its presentation, which reveals its theatric character of artificiality, staging, and representation. Staging

is created by the author, who uses this to deceive (mannerism characteristics one and five). The staging is the ordering of shots to produce said deception, as is the selection of shots which contain the events of the film's story. *Psycho*, then, is a clear example of the way in which allegory may be cinematographically highlighted, by way of staging designed to deceive the audience.

Psycho contains various detailed shots. At the beginning of the movie, in the first such shot, the window of Marion, and her lover, Sam's, room is shown. Here, these shots are allegorical, from the time in which an object isolated from its context becomes a fragment, and the natural is represented in the baroque style. In the same way, the bag Marion uses to pack before fleeing, the license plate of the car in which she escapes, the sign for the Bates Motel, and the newspaper in which the stolen money is hidden are presented.

 With respect to detail, Omar Calabresse (1987) opines that:

> Always, in the mass communications environment, we assist in the emphasis of that which could be called the «porno effect». A pornographic character is he who demonstrates a scandalous detail [...]. However, the «porno effect» concerns not only sex, but also other detailed procedures which are similarly scandalous, such as those which concern violent action (1987, p. 99).

The latter scenario is exactly that which occurs in the scene in which Marion is killed in the motel bathroom. The camera zooms in on her mouth, as she screams in panic, her hand slips down the wall as she falls, dead, and her face lies rigid against the floor.

Doubtless, this is the scene from *Psycho* that most uses said resource. Also, details of the shower, from which water falls to wet Marion's body, is shown. Once the knife attack concludes, the focus shifts to the rings that hold up the shower curtain. The way in which this is ripped from the rings, when Marion grabs it, in her last effort to remain standing is shown in detail. Lastly, the water running to the drain, in which a centripetal movement is used to captures the gaze of the audience. It, finally, is confronted with a beautiful, immobile, dead eye. In other scenes, there are additional detailed shots, such as that of Norman's eye, as he spies on Marion from the room next door, and of the desiccated birds that he collects, but this will be explored later.

Another Hollywood mannerism present in this production is the death of the hero. While, in classical cinema, the protagonists were heroes, said figure no longer exists here, given that good is no longer the character's motive. The entire value system is erased. Good and bad become entangled. This is the case of Marion, who, with the theft of money that belonged to her boss, began the story. An altruistic story is not put into movement in this film. Instead, the opposite occurs: the violation of norms, and escape from their consequences. Later, the story seems to end with the death of Marion, and the audience must ask itself: if Marion stole the money, was escaping, and was killed, what comes next? At this point, the story is reborn with another evil action, performed by a second anti-hero, Norman Bates.

One peculiarity of this movie is the conversations which occur while Marion is driving. The camera only shows us her face, her gaze, focused on the highway, but nothing else oc-

curs before her. The audience is also provided the possibility of simultaneously listening to the conversations which occur between other characters, while Marion flees (her boss and coworker are worried about her and the money, both of which are lost). Two actions and two different spatialities are mixed, but temporarily coincide. This resource is interesting, as it provides to the audience, in a single scene, information which would normally be provided in two different scenes. For this reason, it could be said that this original maneuver is baroque, as it is not a cinematographic norm.

Among other things, baroque stylistic determinations include the sound of the violins that vibrate in the background, as Marion escapes, as this music is in no way natural. They also incorporate the busy decoration at Norman's house, bursting with arches with arabesques and stained glass, in addition to its imposing architecture, as well as the atmosphere of the motel office, full of dead birds, and the use of light and shadow. The camera angle that places the audience in the unnatural form of looking, with Marion's contorted neck, to see nothing more than the ceiling, merits mention.

She looks to find nothing. However, she continues to observe, understand, and find meaning in the shots. It could be said, then, that *Psycho,* as a story, is an allegory of cinema itself. Beyond that, the role of the audience is allegorized in the field of cinema, by way of scrutiny. In *Psycho*, precisely, it is that which is staged: the audience's gaze. For example, when Norman spies on Marion's room, or the fact that the camera never reveals his mother, shown as a shadow, on the shower curtain, as she approaches. All of this allegorizes the interest of the audience, and what they wish to see, but certain details elude them.

As a story, *Psycho* is also an allegory of the ruin of identity and the life that one unfruitfully attempts to conserve. In fact, the story exists because there are ruined, crisis-ridden identities that give rise to psychological disorders. Firstly, that of Marion, the protagonist, whose secretarial work represents little for society. Her lack of satisfaction with her romantic relationship, as she cannot be together with the man she loves, owing to his lack of economic stability, leads her to rebel against her work situation, and elude the norms, the law, and the police, with her boss' money.

The second ruined identity is that of Norman, who, as explained by the psychiatrist in one of the final scenes, has two personalities. His male personality is confronted by feminine gestures and labile body. Finally, the male is defeated and completely destroyed by his mother's personality, which lives in Norman's mind. In this case, the ruin of his identity was caused by an attempt to keep his mother alive within himself, in an attempt to redeem himself for her murder.

However, the allegory of the life that he attempts to maintain does not materialize only in the conflict of Norman's identity. It also occurs by way of his hobby, conserving the bodies of dead animals, by way of taxidermy. This fills the naturally dead with falsity (artificiality), creating the illusion that life continues. The same occurs with the body of his mother, which is conserved in his house, and is found in the basement, by Marion's sister. There, recall that, for Walter Benjamin, skulls are allegorical of baroque drama, as they are the expression of the way in which life, as plentitude of meaning, is always ruined.

4.2. *Rabbits*

Rabbits is a movie by American director David Lynch (2002). There are three characters: three man-rabbits or rabbit-humanoids. In any event, there are three human bodies, with human clothes, and rabbit heads. Jack, Suzie, and Jane interact in the living room of what seems to be their home. Perhaps they are siblings, or maybe husband, wife, and daughter (their ties are never made explicit). Each of them enters and leaves the living room speaking strange lines that have no connection to one another. Everything seems to occur on a television set, given that the actions of these rabbits result in laughter or applause, as when Jack enters and exits through the door. Happenings are not explained to the audience. It, rather, is confused more and more. Later comes the appearance of a bizarre being that floats and has a macabre voice, just like the musicalization of the entire film, which additionally, has no relationship with that which occurs. The audience feels more and more uncomfortable and confused, given this marked stylistic music decision.

In *Rabbits*, there allegories abound. First, because allegories deform the emotional and immediate reality, the representation of two rabbits is the result of a joining of fragments (the human body and rabbit head) does nothing but eliminate this. On the other hand, it is already known that allegories are deconstructive and take apart meaning. Here, the audience is confronted with something that is not recognized as cinema because there are ruptures. That known as cinema is dismantled and thrown into a dimension in which hundreds of interpretations of that represented may occur.

This movie is also an example of staging, as an allegory. Each time there is an interruption in speech or events in the film, in each of its scenes, it cuts and suspends that which is represented, deconstructing, at each step, the meaning. Each audience member must lend their interpretation to the movie. There is no defined central thread. Not even a beginning or conclusion may be clearly identified.

4.3. *In Time*

In Time is also an American science fiction film, directed and written by Andrew Niccol (2011). In and of itself, it is the construction of a society in which the concept for life is present, in the strictest sense of the word. It is a synonym for time: its members neither live nor die by the oxygen that does or does not fill their lungs, but rather by the time remaining on the watch on their arms. Beginning at 25 years of age, the aging process stops, and the amount of time remaining on their watches, like timers, reduces over time. When the watch shows zeroes, the person dies immediately, and plunges into the soil, as if they had suffered a withering heart attack. However, there is a way to continue living: to obtain more time. The problem is that time approaches zeroes day by day, because time is acquired by way of work, and this is used to buy and sell everything. For example, a coffee costs four minutes. The rich, thus, have thousands of years, while the poor work to survive the day. The movie is an allegory that explains that life is the time that, many times, may be obtained when one has the economic resources that correspond to social position. In reality, how many people are afforded several years of extra life because they have the monetary ability to initiate

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treatment against a terminal illness? *In Time* is a story that allegorizes the concepts of life, time, and money, and their relationship to each other.

However, the story in itself is also an allegory for the capitalist world, in which the gap between rich and poor is enormous, and the rich are rich at the expense of the work of the poor, and taxes, which are hiked every day. The poor turn to criminal activities, in an attempt to generate equality. *In Time* clearly exemplifies the way in which class society functions, the way in which one lives within it, and its perversions. One of the most transparent ways in which the story alludes to the society of classes is the idea of time zones, which represent neighborhoods or strata: *New Greenwich* is for the rich, and *the Ghetto* is for the poor.

The logic of the capitalist system, in the film, is no different than the present-day reality, in which extreme, crushing capitalism prevails. In the movie, many must die in order for a few to be immortal, and the cost of life increases, such that people continue to die. Thus, the rich continue to obtain more money, time, and life. Even lifestyles implied by the system are shown: the poor live in constant activity, running and working in order to earn more time and live another day. On the other hand, the rich live passively, amongst leisure, comfort, and luxury. This is even highlighted by the impression of one of the inhabitants of *New Greenwich,* on observing the behavior or the film's protagonist, when newly arrived from the *Ghetto*: "...you do everything so fast".

From the allegory of the capitalist world, three other allegories more emerge. First, the allegory of hope that the protagonist represents. He is a type of Robin Hood, as with the opportunity to come to the *New Greenwich* time zone, and everything that the plot implies, he begins to rob the rich to help the poor. Secondly, the allegory of the way in which justice occurs in a capitalist society, in the form of *timekeepers*, or *the time police*, is present. They represent the justice that works to maintain the status quo, and protect the powerful, not the unprotected. This allegory is flagrant in one conversation, at a time in which the *timekeepers* work to avoid system imbalance, given that a *Ghetto* citizen has attained approximately a century. Thus, one of the time guardians says: "It doesn't matter who loses years (remember, time is money), rather who took them". Lastly, there is an allegory of delinquency, embodied in those who steal time, even from individuals from their own social class, because this makes them more powerful, less weak, and more likely to survive. This is an allegory of natural selection.

Another of the aspects which may be highlighted from the film is that of baroque artificiality. The natural and artificial are intermixed, and differentiating between them is difficult. The reality represented in the movie is different from natural reality, although it is similar, insofar as the way in which society functions, even in the appearance of places and people. However, this is unreal, fictitious. At the end, no human has a digital watch on their forearm that shines on their skin with a green fluorescent light that adds or subtracts time, following a cash transaction. *In Time* is an allegory, a deviation, a transgression of the model of reality.

Therein, a latent allegory for idealized beauty may also be found, which is characteristic of today: a large variety of alternatives are used to diminish the traits of old age. This is notorious, in the film, because, as mentioned, its characters do not age. However, simul-

taneously, this allegory for idealized beauty is shown with the interiorization of money in the body, which in the film occurs explicitly when people exchange, steal, or donate money (time and life) by way of forearm contact. In our reality, it could be said that money is interiorized in certain bodies when these are submitted to costly procedures such as implants and prostheses, in order to achieve thus idealized beauty.

With all of these elements, *In Time* presents a reflection on that which is life, by way of allegorical phrases within the film's dialogue. Basically, the moral of the movie is that life, although many times it may depend on the amount of time or money that we possess, is much more, and holds profound meaning. This idea is almost palpable in the line, "the poor die, the rich do not live", which encompasses much of that which may be seen in the film. Despite the poor dying in their attempt to survive, they are able to enjoy to the fullest that which they may lose at any moment: their time and money. Although they live short lives and are poor, they live, in the sense that they enjoy their existence despite everything. The rich, however, go through life dead, because they cannot learn the value of that which they have in excess, precisely for that reason.

Thereby, it is proposed that life is more than a mere physical experience: it is a mental experience, which creates meaning by way of time and economic limits. This is affirmed by the character who commits suicide as the movie begins. They are an inhabitant of *New Greenwich* who have lived over a century, and who have considerable wealth on their watch. When they go to the *Ghetto*, they explain to the individual who saved their life the way in which their society operates, and among other things, say: "Your mind may be spent, although your body is not. We must die, we need to". In this same scene, they ask their savior what they would do if, on their watch, they had as much time (money) as they. They respond: "I would stop watching it, if I had all that time, I would not waste it". And at the end of that scene, in first plane, a dirty window is shown, where the individual from *New Greenwich* writes *don't waste my time*, as they had just donated all their wealth to their savior, who would take advantage of the time, as they had not lived as much, nor had fortune. Based on all this, a close relationship is revealed between the perception of time and the way in which life is lived, and that mortality is an essential part of life because it lends it meaning.

Definitively, *In Time* is an allegorical story of capitalist society, which is replete with allegories that come alive by way of images, ideas, and conversations.

To conclude, in accordance with the movies analyzed, it may be affirmed that allegory germinates in the cinema in multiple ways. One clue to identify it is to ask oneself if it is present in the shots, staging, or story. A question also emerges: can a movie be an allegory? The response will depend on how film is understood: if a film is a story, or a series of events with a beginning and end, this story must develop by way of a staging of shots. In other words, a movie may be an allegory for the story told and/or with its staging, or may simply contain shots, actions, or conversations that constitute allegories.

5. Finale

To summarize, it may be concluded that the movies analyzed are allegories. *Psycho* is an allegory in two ways. Its staging reflects a pure theatrality that deceives the audience and as the story is the allegory for the ruin of identity and a frustrated attempt to hold on to life. Secondly, *Rabbits* is an allegorical film, from the point of view of its staging, given that the story, in itself, has no clear meaning. As such, it cannot be said, with certainty, whether it allegorizes anything. In this sense, the story, with disperse staging, transforms the movie into an allegory of the concepts of unity and totality. Lastly, *In Time* is an allegory for the story it tells, as it allegorizes the capitalist world, and meanings of life, time, and money. In terms of allegorical planes, actions, and statements, found in the three movies, these have been studied amply.

Lastly, cinema will always be allegorical, whether because it leaves us with a message, explains a concept, deceives us with its stories, perturbs us, or recreates non-existent realities.

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