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PARADIGMS OF CINEMA COMMUNICATION – CONSTELLATIONS IN THE FIELD OF CINEMA ART

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Abstract. Determining the structuring models of communication in the plane of cinema art – the paradigms of communication in the field of art that mediate not only the interactions in the ‘author-film-audience’ relation but also function as implicit premises, both in the creation of a film and the establishment of its expressional, emotional and meaning consistency, and in its being perceived, experienced and understood by each separate viewer, as well as by the audience as a whole – would contribute to the restored legitimacy of cinema as an art in the current informational and cultural contexts.

Keywords: paradigms; communications; cinema; author; audience

The models of being public are created by the media, and the ways in which they support e.g. the presence of a film in the shared cultural space, reflect the ‘life’ of the film and of its creators. On the other hand, this is also one of the easiest ways of feeling a part of the world, of acquiring a sense of one’s worth, becoming, through your desire and your attitude, a part of something bigger, in taking the common taste as your own. The individual nature of communication processes in the field of cinema is also mediated by the membership in certain *sub*-cultures that also form certain *sub*-audiences according to specific interests, specific needs and specific tastes. Thus one is not left isolated due to one’s specific worldview, character, or taste. This becomes possible not just because of the specific nature of the film art that allows it to be included in and be an important part of the dynamic changes of the epoch, but also thanks to functional models, immanent to cinema itself, that mediate and support its existence as an art in the era of information, communication and media, as well as the creation, perception, experiencing and understanding of each individual film – the paradigms of communication in the field of cinema.

The paradigm of mythological projections

This paradigm is the third conceptual framework of the overall system of paradigms of cinema communication that moulds the communication processes in the field of cin-

ema in a wider but now, rather, particular context related to cinema (since the first two paradigms are presupposed by the general cultural context) that encompasses historical, philosophical, culturological, sociological, aesthetical etc. perspectives. This paradigm has two main semantic layers – the one that encompasses the myth as a specific system and the other that concerns the mechanisms of attribution of a particular mythological content, structure or model in the artistic unity of the work of cinema. It is important to stress that practically every film consists of a story in images into which mythological content can be projected but it also could essentially create one by itself – the film can acquire mythological functions or generate such meanings.

The contemporary interpretations of the concept of *myth* develop along diverse lines but as a whole they all concern the creation, perception, experiencing, understanding and ‘life’ of a film. On the one hand once can view the myth as an archaic ontology through which one can reconstruct archetypal or paradigmatic models that verify in a specific historical time as reality, as an identity or another social or cultural norm.

Regarding the myth as a mode of reality that is subject to actualization as an objectivity of the world and to a certain logic of interactions with the others, as well as a form of objectivation of the internal states of man, finds expression in the theoretical developments of Boas, Frazer, Malinowski, in Durkheim’s theory of collective representations, or of Levy-Bruhl, also in Levi-Strauss or the Jung’s analytic psychology. In the perspective of Jung, the myth finds a relatively clear ontological definiteness as a formal archetype taken as a phenomenon of the collective unconscious and creates paradigmatic projections in time in all layers, levels and spheres of life. But in the field of cinema art a similar thesis is more relevant, found in Vladimir Propp in whose view folk tales are an archetypal form of transfer of sign and symbol content. The myth in this case does not possess absolute semantics but has a clear structure, meaning and sense, functional definiteness. (Propp, 2001) We can find such projections of myth into the cinema in films like Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Stalker*, Terry Gilliam’s *Brazil*, the *Europa* trilogy of Lars von Trier or even his next cycle formally defined as the *USA* trilogy, in a film like *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* of Ang Lee, or in Carlos Saura’s *Bunuel and King Solomon’s Table*, etc.

Another view relates the myth to a system, immanent to man, that represents a specific body of common laws of the mind, or of being, or of the interaction between them. (Cassirer, 1998) In this regard, Ernst Cassirer introduces the distinction between mythological, mythical and mythic. The first is made of the functional definitions of the myth in the course of their systematization. All forms and structures belonging into the sphere of myth and projected into the mind, are defined as ‘mythical’, and ‘mythic’ are those structures that possess the myth’s characteristics but are now viewed as a part of the mythical consciousness or are perceived as having a reality independent of it. Moreover, according to Cassirer, ‘the phenomenon which is to be considered is not the mythical content as such but the significance it possesses for human consciousness and power it exerts over consciousness. The

problem is not the material content of mythology but the intensity with which it is experienced, with which it is *believed* – as only something endowed with objective reality can be believed’ it and with which we believe in it as in something objectively existing and active.’ (Cassirer, 1998: 20)

Beyond the pragmatic definition of an image, a content or an action on the plane of myth, the distinction Cassirer proposes is crucial and adequate in the context of cinema since it reveals the layers of perception, understanding and experience of the film in the system of interactions that accompanies these processes, it reveals the very *conceptual basis* and the *logic* of this paradigm.

There exists another line, now of our contemporary interpretations of the concept of *myth*, that can be introduced as a semantic layer in relation to film (films) – the myth as a unity of meaning and form, as a semiological system, or the myth as a language. Along this line, there is a significant contribution by Roland Barthes who notes that the most essential in such a conception of myth is that in this case ‘the form does not suppress the meaning, it only impoverishes it, it puts it at a distance, it holds it at one’s disposal. One believes that the meaning is going to die, but it is a death with reprieve; the meaning loses its value, but keeps its life, from which the form of the myth will draw its nourishment. The meaning will be for the form like an instantaneous reserve of history, a tamed richness, which it is possible to call and dismiss in a sort of rapid alternation: the form must constantly be able to be rooted again in the meaning and to get there what nature it needs for its nutriment; above all, it must be able to hide there. It is this constant game of hide-and-seek between the meaning and the form which defines myth.’ (Barthes, 1991: 117)

With regard to the film expression and the establishment of a sign and meaning organicity of the artistic interpretation in the film, some conclusions of Barthes’s have a very high degree of validity. In the case, such an analytic approach definitely allows the deduction of correlations that can be operatively applied also to the cinema, to the film work. ‘A signified can have several signifiers: this is indeed the case in linguistics and psycho-analysis. It is also the case in the mythical concept: it has at its disposal an unlimited mass of signifiers: [...] the concept is much poorer than the signifier, it often does nothing but re-present itself. Poverty and richness are in reverse proportion in the form and the concept: to the qualitative poverty of the form, which is the repository of a rarefied meaning, there corresponds the richness of the concept which is open to the whole of History; and to the quantitative abundance of the forms there corresponds a small number of concepts. This repetition of the concept through different forms is precious to the mythologist, it allows him to decipher the myth: it is the insistence of a kind of behaviour which reveals its intention.’ (Barthes, 1991: 118-119) In his theoretical system, Barthes formulates the relation between myth and history as a way of actualization (reviving) of ideas, notions, meanings and models. Moreover, Barthes sees into this interrelation the principle itself of the myth, namely that the myth ‘transforms history into nature’. (Barthes, 1991: 128)

There are many mythological projections in the cinema also in this direction, but much more interesting interpretations are offered by such films as e.g. *All That Jazz* of Bob Fosse, *Wings of Desire/The Sky Above Berlin* of Wim Wenders, Krassimir Krumov's *The Forbidden Fruit*, *Ulysses' Gaze* of Theo Angelopoulos, etc., in which the myth is deployed as form, content, and meaning through a given historical or cultural context, in order to confirm the truth and meaning of the life of individual man as a part of much more tremendous spiritual processes surpassing the concreteness of the historical time and even of man himself.

In practice, the paradigm of mythological projections mediates not only the processes related to the creation of a film as a possible modeling, shaping, of creative intentions, but also the specific communicative processes in the layers of the social and the cultural in the film's realization, in its meeting with the audience. Mythological projections are realized as reconstructions of a certain model as from the position of 'its own time' and the legitimation of its status as universal (or at least as generally valid, very popular, widespread) and also as a certain and relatively recognizable logic of spontaneous experiences, of the formation of individual worldviews transformed into creative intentions, or in the very attitude to a film on the part of the audience. Of course this doesn't make realism in cinema stand against the deep inward gaze, the objectivist reading and factual correctness against the flight of fantasy, it merely reveals the possible directions as well as the possible intersections. Falling into extremes is just one of the possible variants that accompany cinema in its development as artistic expression, as an art, and in our days also as a medium, as a form of active cultural communication. These processes are very clearly recognizable, for instance, in the post-WWII decades when, in the emotional layers of the dominating realistic interpretation of reality in film art, and also outside this tendency, there is an expressive uncovering of the internal world of man as emotions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, fears, fantasies and visions of the future.

In its formal projection in the cinema, the myth functions primarily as a *re*-interpretation of already familiar ideas, themes, plots, or as a *re*-construction of popular film structures or contrivances, of patterns of action or interactions. Evidently myth finds in cinema a rich habitat for all kinds of transformations, but this also sets the problematic as to the acceptable limit of mutual influences crossing which would push the aesthetics of cinema into an extremity. On this plane of interactions in the field of cinema, there is also the specific case of projection of myth, the so-called 'star industry', because 'movie stars are iconic. Here viewers are not so much citizens as *communicants*. The stars are public; yet the relation between the viewer, the public and the star is intensely private. The communication is transmitted from the private image of the star to the private self of the viewer. It has not the logic nor the definition of narrative. [...] We exteriorize our sense, our sensuality in the star. Yet this not individualized; it is somehow collective.' (Lasch, 2004: 217 – 219)

It is important to note that, as regards cinema, no interpretation of *myth* restricts or excludes the role of creative imagination and of fantasy in the *re*-construction or forma-

tion of paradigmatic mythological projections in films. The pragmatic gaze assumes the distinction of at least two layers of such projections – as primary and secondary myth in cinema. Virtually every model that is new or gaining popularity can be viewed as a primary myth – new or well forgotten) ideas and themes, unusual stories or interestingly constructed fables, new visual or stylistic solutions, and even new popular actors or directors, etc. Secondary myths are, rather, *re*-constructions of the familiar (or popular) in the classical sense of the concept, including mythological fables or mythologemes. On the plane of the second, the most exploited plots are those I which usually a hero (in the sense of heroic behaviour) stands up facing evil, injustice, deadly menace etc. and wins (often also in the name of all humanity). Here the spectrum of possible interpretations and film works is immense indeed. This is also one of the most working schemes in the *action movie* genre. In the same perspective, such films are located that narrate of the struggle against strong animals, monsters, or with extraterrestrials, robots, mutants, with ghosts, vampires, wizards and other magical creatures, etc. Obviously we can place here also all sequels or remakes of films, irrespectively or whether this is a modern reading of great film paragons¹, or a *re*-discovery of films through the possibilities of new technologies.²

In the context of the paradigm of mythological projection it must also be noted that every generation, along with taking on old models, forms (or actualized) also its own myths according to the concrete historical moment or the cultural situation. This tendency becomes especially pronounced as a result of technological progress and of the increase of the possibilities of film art to *re*-create ever more realistically imaginary worlds in which myths find enough room to deploy freely their content and meanings. Thus since the 1980s the orientations of each generation are prominently projected in the great film sagas of the respective decade – from George Lukas's *Star Wars*, including the remake of the same films and the sequels, through the trilogy *The Matrix* of Andy and Larry Wachowski, Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings*, or the Marvel culture that definitely dominates the decade that followed, etc.

The taking up, actualization or formation of myths is usually done in a regime of communication, i.e. myths acquire their meaning as basic orientations setting the framework of man-world relations only when embedded into a certain system of interactions, and any film work can mediate these processes. It is here that the link is revealed between art, and more specifically cinema, and myth. 'The crucial achievement of every symbolic form lies precisely in the fact that it does not have the limit between I and reality as *pre-existent* and established for all time but must itself *create* this limit – and that each fundamental form *creates* it in a different way. [...] myth, too, does not start from a finished concept of the I or the soul, from a finished picture of objective reality and change, but must achieve this concept and this picture, must form them from out of itself.' (Cassirer, 1998: 221 – 222)

In the final account, myths are constructed in consciousness as some individual or common collective representation but they find their environment in the film work

by projecting certain content and meaning into a certain perceptive form and artistic wholeness in order to have the audience experience them directly. In this sense, art and especially cinema do not merely represent being, they construct *being* that can have an impact on whoever decides to experience it.

Paradigm of subject-object transpositions

Most generally, this paradigm is realized on the plane of the realization of understanding of the ability to 'believe' and 'experience' the reality that a film presents, to understand its messages – both explicit and hidden beyond the objectivity of the image. By that paradigm, the author-film-viewer link is realized. The most essential in this link lies primarily on the side of the viewer's relation to the film. Every viewer knows that what they see or hear from the screen is not actually taking place, that the coming train is not going to hit them³, that the battles they watch are no danger to their own life or that their favourite actor is not hurt or isn't going to really die, but despite that, the viewer believes it unconditionally, experiencing, suffering or rejoicing, immersed in this alternative reality.

In the formal regard, this specific and peculiar paradox can be explained by the mechanisms of recognition and transfer. Film reality, understood as objective presence, as certain people, animals, things, objects etc. being in a certain environment (however fantastic it may be), is too perceived through the senses, similarly to reality and according to the same logic. Cinema presupposes the maximum activity of the two main sensory mechanisms, vision and hearing, that play the greatest role in the formation of cognitive skills and in providing the normal development of cognitive processes in every human, i.e. at a first-instance level the film is perceived in a way very close to the way in which we perceive the world in real life. On this basis, the principle of recognition is deployed. Thus, when the viewer sees on the screen and hears a human who moves, communicates and looks exactly like everybody else, they almost instinctively and without any particular resistances of the mind accept that the film character is a real human and they choose to believe in everything happening to him or her. In the same logic, they recognize animals (even fantastic ones), things, objects, Nature itself, the Earth, cosmic Space. This principle holds also with completely unfamiliar or imaginary stories and people, creatures, places and worlds. In these cases, the natural propensity for analogies that could support the perception and understanding of a film finds expression in an attitude of curiosity for secrets and taboos, restraints and prejudice, or for the new and unknown, for worlds belonging into other dimensions of spirit or ones still unreachable by man – the Universe.

In the context of cinema, the mechanism of transfer is to be regarded a little wider than its psychoanalytic definition offers. Regarding cinema and films, and with the mediation of the paradigm of subject-object transpositions, the transfer presupposes primarily evaluative functions on the plane of emotional experiences. It is an undeniable fact that the impact of a film on the viewer is as strong as the degree of emotional rela-

tion to the story, the heroes and their fates. On the one hand, the transfer is facilitated by the fact that every viewer, even unconsciously, analyzes what they see and hear from the screen through their own life, experience, notions, opinions and tastes. The spectrum is very wide here – from the usual liking or disliking of the plot, the role, the actor's performance or the actors themselves to the full empathic experience, even of stories that openly challenge the subjective notions about the world. Thus films as Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* or Andrei Konchalovsky's *The Runaway Train* have become symbolic on the basis of the deep psychological, social and cultural section into the layers of reality thanks to which they succeed to reach their audiences and throw to them their emotional challenges. A strong effect on the viewers is also achieved by films that question stereotyped thinking or unified models and styles of life, prejudice and restrictions to which one becomes accustomed with time, and some of the most adequate ways of rethinking their logic and foundations comes as an emotional shock with such films as Mike Leigh's *Secrets and Lies*, Sam Mendes's *American Beauty*, or in the recent years a film like *Crash* of Paul Haggis. This impact is even stronger when films challenge and raise questions related to serious existential problems and choices. Good examples along this line are *All About My Mother* or *Talk to Her* of Pedro Almodóvar, Alejandro Amenábar's *The Sea Inside* etc. that not merely have an emotional influence but presuppose a socially conscious attitude and stance, i.e. the viewer's ability of putting themselves in a film hero's place, or the viewer's trying to experience the situation itself through their own part experience, throwing challenges to themselves and to their own value system.

In the context of the paradigm of subject-object transpositions, another ability facilitates the specific communicative processes in cinema, again more strongly pronounced on the side of the viewer – the ability of empathy. Unlike transfer, it is believed that empathy is in the basis of constructive social communication and as a whole of altruistic behaviour. Empathy is usually defined as emotional, cognitive or intellectual and it undoubtedly has a direct relation to the degree of influence that a film has on its audience. The cognitive approach in psychology claims that empathy is based primarily on attributive projection since it is believed to be strongest when related to previous experience. In this case, even the slightest stimulus (image, sound, facial expression or gesture) can evoke a certain reaction by way of empathy. Objectively, empathy is directly related also to the creative process. There hardly exists a god director or actor devoid of this ability. As a whole, empathy facilitates the understanding of the world-view and the choices of the other human. Irrespectively of the context, however, this essentially communicative process allows the viewer not merely to come into a world different from their own but also to experience it (*co-experience* it) and respectively to understand 'otherness', to enrich one's own notions of the world and humans. The paradigm of subject-object transpositions facilitates a peculiar process of interpenetration of individual worlds, mediated by the film (films), which provides a specific ontological advantage to experience over sensation, to understanding over perceiving, enables the

actualization of one's own experience and notions not only on the basis of one's own life but through the experiencing of the alternative worlds of films. So described, this process strongly approximates one of the basic principles of fantastic literature formulated by Tzvetan Todorov, namely 'transgression of the border between material and mental worlds' (Todorov, 2009: 104) This principle is revealed in several layers of the structuralist analysis of fantastic literature as proposed by Todorov, but they can apply with the same degree of validity of conclusions also in the context of film art on the plane of subject-object transpositions. At the first place, both in that literature and in cinema, we can accept the presence of a peculiar causality that structures the content as well as the form in which it unfolds. Todorov defines this interrelation and interdependence as pandeterminism. Another aspect of this principle is realized on the plane of the multiplying personality or the ability to feel like another human, even like many other humans. As to cinema, the phenomenon of such metamorphoses proceeds in two directions – when the viewer is interactively involved in a certain relations with the heroes from the screen, e.g. when a film character addresses and/or talks directly to the viewer (an approach used by Ingmar Bergman in *Autumn Sonata*), or the more general case when the viewers empathize when they succeed, even for a moment, to put themselves in another's place. An interesting interpretations of the latter can be found, for instance, in the film *3 Iron* by Kim Ki-duk in which the unordinary relationships involve the viewer, imperceptibly making him follow the course of action with a heightened attention. The blurring of the border between subject and object is determined. 'The rational schema represents the human being as a subject entering into relations with other persons or with things that remain external to him, and which have the status of objects. The literature of the fantastic disturbs this abrupt separation. We hear music, but there is no longer an instrument external to the hearer and producing sounds [...]. We look at an object – but there is no longer a frontier between the object, with its shapes and colors, and the observer. [...] For two people to understand one another, it is no longer necessary that they speak [...].' (Todorov, 2009: 102) This definition of Todorov strongly approaches the *logic* and the *functional principle* of the *paradigm of subject-object transpositions*, in practice also clarifying the plane of its most immediate application in the context of the specific communicational processes in the dynamic system itself of 'author, authors, creators of a film – film – viewer, audience'. All these layers facilitate the mutual penetration of the physical and the spiritual world, which brings about transformations of their basic categories, such as time and space are. Within the frame of this process we can explain phenomena know as 'film time' and 'film space' that have been a formal and aesthetic subject of interest for creators since the very dawn of film art (e.g. the famous experiments of Lev Kuleshov and many others). It is a doubtless fact that the viewer perceives the time and space of film without resistance and without constantly comparing it to the real physical time and space. The viewer is immersed in the film's alternative reality in understanding wit no difficulty every transition, every change of circumstances, not only at the level of film punctuation but also as an expe-

rience akin to physical experiences at the level of everyday life, or as deeper spiritual transformations when films succeed to unlock associative chains.

The paradigm of subject-object transpositions can be also introduced as a functional model that *pre*-determines the actions and interactions on the plane of communicative processes that take place in the field of film art. Communicative interactions in this case proceed not just on the basis of a shared (or familiar to a certain degree) semiotic system but also as a cognitive process directed in two ways simultaneously – to the others and the world, and inwards, to the hidden corners of the human soul. The latter is usually a considerably more intricate and complex process. Thus in the context of cinema one of the main functions of the paradigm of subject-object transpositions is to shape the ‘going inside’ as a process of knowing oneself through the other and the acceptance, comparison or rejection of ready models provided from without. ‘With the structure of the personality of the addressant and the addressee becoming more complex, with the individualization of the complex of codes composing the content of the consciousness of the personality, the claim and the sender and the receiver use the same language becomes increasingly more ungrounded. [...] Therefore the act of communication [...] should be regarded not as a mere transfer, from the sender’s mind to the addressee’s mind, of a message that remains adequate to itself, but as a *translation* of a text from the language of my I to the language of your You. The possibility itself of such a translation is determined by the fact that the codes of both communicants, although not identical, are still intersecting sets. But since in the concrete act of translation a certain part of the message will always happen to be cut off, and the I in the course of translation will be transformed into the language of You, precisely the specificity of the addressant will be lost, which is what is most important in the message from the point of view of the whole.’ (Lotman, 1992: 342 – 343)

In the case, Lotman’s conclusions can be applied primarily to communicative situations in which the viewer is entirely given to what happens on the screen and are valid as far as we study the processes of communication in the field of cinema without putting the films themselves to a semiotic analysis, since that presupposes many more layers and a much more complex approach to the problem. The film, not being regarded as a literary text, still represents a relatively autonomous semiotic system structured not only according to the logic and rules of film art *and/or* the creative intentions of its authors, but also according to a presupposed interactive communication within which the ‘addressee game’ (to follow Lotman) indeed facilitates the transformations of every separate viewer in the field of their own consciousness, their reincarnations, travels in time, in space, in the world of the other or even in other worlds. Another possible approach in this context is the recognition of the individual through the universal. We can find interesting interpretations in this direction under the form of a personal story, located in the layers of culture and of one’s own time as the life of a separate human, realizing as a process parallel to the society itself as values and representations, attitudes, models,

goals, ideals, missions, in films like Joel Schumacher's *Falling Down* or *Forrest Gump* of Robert Zemeckis.

Thus, in the final account, every film (similarly to literary text) implicitly introduces into the process of communication between a film's creators and its viewers not only a common code allowing interactions within the system itself to take place, but also the *re*-construction of familiar models, the *re*-interpretation of social or cultural contexts, or introduces new ones, through the mechanisms of the game, or of subject-object transpositions. This is a *communication-at-a-distance*, but with the same feeling of 'reality' as in real life, revealing the phenomenological essence and force of internal experience.

Paradigm of sign-symbol interpretations

On the plane of this paradigm, the question rises again how to define, and therefore how to analyze, the artistic structure and the significance of the film, and respectively its artistic expressivity and the means through which a film is realized as a definite influence on the viewers, i.e. the question of the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic context in the construction of a film as an artistic unity.

At the current stage, film theory hasn't yet reach unanimity as to the categorical definition of expression means *in/of* cinema in their artistic interpretation as a language. Irrespectively of the conditional use of such terms as 'film language', 'cinematographic language' or 'language of images', this nevertheless presupposes the presence of a definite, in the case sufficiently complex, semiotic system of artistic interpretations (meanings and symbols) as well as a certain code centered on the principles of correlating expression and content as well as on the understanding of these. The problematic around the constitution of a certain specific language of the film work or of cinema is oriented mainly in two directions. On the one hand, constructing a film as a formal and semantic unity (completeness) presupposes placing the analysis on the plane of a descriptive semiotics, of a description of specific and strictly cinematographic elements that can be articulated as a relatively autonomous semiotic system. On the other hand, one cannot neglect also the functional definition of a so-called film language as a means of communication in the context of the communication processes that the film itself mediates.

The possibility to conceptualize a definite notion of a 'film language' as such presupposes the orientation of analysis in the perspective of structural linguistics and introduces mainly the image as a basic plane of expression. Roland Barthes, for instance, regards the image as a perfect analog of reality when he explores the specifics and the characteristics of the photographic message. In this sense, he defines the photographic image as a 'message without code'. (Barthes, 1983: 199)

As other codeless messages, i.e. as diverse types of analogous reproduction of reality, Barth takes drawings, paintings, cinema and theatre. 'In fact, however, each of those messages develops in an immediate and obvious way a supplementary message, in addition to the analogical content itself (scene, object landscape), which is what is called

the *style* of reproduction; second meaning; whose signifier is a certain 'treatment' of the image (result of the action of the creator) and whose signified, whether aesthetic or ideological, refers to a certain 'culture' of the society receiving the message. In short, all these 'imitative' arts comprise two messages: a *denoted* message, which is the *analogon* itself, and a *connoted* message, which is the manner in which the society to a certain extent communicates what it thinks of it.' (Barthes, 1983: 196 – 197) The existence of two messages is described by Barthes as a 'structural paradox' which consists in the fact the connoted message – the one located on the plane of a certain art and within a certain cultural context – develops on the basis of a message without a code, which also cinema is a certain image of a real object (an analog of reality, a denotation of reality) that becomes creatively interpreted in the artistic structure of the film.

One can see such a purely semiotic thesis into some interesting film interpretation like Alfred Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* and *The Birds*, Alan Parker's *Birdie*, *La Strada* and *8½* by Federico Fellini, Andrei Tarkovski's *Mirror* and *Stalker*; *Dersu Uzala* by Akira Kurosawa or *Loves of a Blonde* by Miloš Forman, Jane Campion's *The Piano*, Luc Besson's *Léon*, Lasse Hallström's *Chocolat*, Zhang Yimou's *Hero*, etc. Moreover, cinema offers a very wide field of possible creative interpretations even on the plane of the basic rules of organizing the artistic unity of a film. For instance, in films like Wayne Wang's *Smoke* and Lars von Trier's *Dogville* the authors themselves undertake a much bolder interpretation of a content that is crucial to the film's artistic message.

Another sign orientation to cinema is proposed by Christian Metz who theoretically clarifies some necessary distinctions regarding the semantic range of the cinematographic and of what can or cannot be defined as specifically cinematographic, in his attempts to determine the different systems of elements that make up a film and the ensemble of specific systems that form the content of the concept itself of *cinema* as a whole. Metz introduces the notion of film expressivity as 'speech without language', as a correlation of codes. The system of particular cinematographic codes, which Metz himself defines as homogenous systematic sets or as code groups, don't just form the overall message of a film but also have structure-defining functions at the levels of expression and at the level of content. Cinematographic codes that can be universal or common (referring to a certain school stylistics, to cinema as a whole or even beyond the specific limits of the cinema), or particular (referred to a concrete film), in practice represent the genuine cinematographic ways making possible the introduction (coding) of a given content into a given matter of expression (picture, sound, music etc.), brought up in the structure of the film work primarily as a sign function. (Metz, 1988: 554 – 555) Interesting examples in this relation could be films like *Dancer in the Dark* of Lars von Trier and *Amélie* of Jean-Pierre Jeunet, in which the force of the experience is to a very large degree deployed through a specific expressions of form, as its sign function is brought to the foreground in an extraordinary elegant manner.

In such a perspective, the interest of Umberto Eco is also directed. In his view, when it is a matter of visual communication or generally of communication on the plane of art, codes facilitate the revealing of contents by structuring the sign system that corresponds to this content (meaning). 'Codes, insofar as they are accepted by a society, set up a "cultural" world which is neither actual nor possible in the ontological sense; its existence is linked to a cultural order, which is the way in which a society thinks, speaks and, while speaking, explains the purport of its thought through other thoughts'. (Eco, 1991: 133)

The artistic content of a film, as an object of semantics, represents a collection of cultural units or sets of interrelated cultural units whose referent can be found not in the really existing objects but, rather, at a higher level of abstraction in the layers of culture. From the perspective of cinema, film represents precisely such a set or system of cultural units that are subject to deciphering and cultural interpretation on the part of viewers. Introducing the paradigm of *sign-symbol interpretations* could cope with the tensions arising in the attempts to study the mechanisms through which meaning is constituted in the process of realization of the creative intentions of a film's authors, as well as clarify some essential aspects regarding the specifics and mechanisms of influence of the film work on the viewer or the audience as a whole. As regards film, the paradigm of sign-symbol interpretations works at the level of the creative process as a selection (choice), structuring and organizing of the body of artistic means of expression through which, with maximum adequacy and impact, a subjective emotion, meaning or message become 'living tissue' and transform the logical sequence of frames into the organic artistic wholeness and emotional force of a film.

In the segmentation of components (elements) of film expressivity as a definite semiotic system, in their sequence at the level of expression, what comes to the fore is primarily their sign function. At this level, the paradigm of sign-symbol interpretations acts as a modulating system that encompasses the whole body of means of expression as invariance or as substitutive relations. In this regard, the understanding of the semantic layers of the content that is embodied in a certain sequence of images, frames, or episodes, can presuppose that the emotional experiencing of the film takes place primarily as a function of the revealing of meaning, especially in more expressive and unusual artistic methods or conceptions. Thus films like *The Day of Full Moon* of Karen Shakhnazarov, György Pálfi's *Hukkle*, Gaspar Noé's *Irreversible* or Gus van Sant's *Elephant* achieve an especially strong impact only after the meaning is conceptualized by the viewers. This allows them to experience in its entirety what happens on the screen as a possible reality primarily in the soul but with the help of reason (as an unusual interaction within this traditionally accepted opposition) with the whole force and emotional influence that the films themselves have. An interesting interpretation in this direction can be found in the film *The Beaches of Agnès* of Agnès Varda in which, literally by a game with signs, meanings and senses, the world is constructed as a reflection of the human internal world where everything looks much more perfect than reality can offer.

The most essential in the case, however, remains the fact that the intention of the creators of a film, articulated as a complex system of sign-symbol interpretations, as a semantic unity of a system of meanings, turns the image from a 'simple denotation of reality' (as Barthes takes it) into an alternative reality in the field of art. This 'denotation' has enough of its own energy to create in the viewers that experience it the feeling of reality, sometimes stronger and more organic than as they have in their everyday life. It is because of the circumstance that the phenomenon of creation in any art in particularly in cinema is difficult to put to a thorough analysis, the creators themselves resolve the structural dilemmas in interpreting their own expressive materials much easier than theoreticians. In this regard, for instance, Bergman writes: 'It is fairly obvious that the cinema became my means of expression. I made myself understood in a language that bypassed the words – which I lacked – and music – which I did not master – and painting, which left me indifferent. With cinema, I suddenly had an opportunity to communicate with the world around me in a language that is literally spoken soul to soul in phrases that escape the control of the intellect in an almost voluptuous way.' (Bergman, 2004: 31) So, that's why there is the strong emotional impact of such a film as e.g. Bergman's *Wild Strawberries*, *Persona*, *Scenes from a Marriage*, etc. Similarly *The Return* of Andrey Zvyagintsev, in which behind the concreteness of characters, the relatively simplified structure and the experiences of the heroes there stands an extraordinary depth of messages, set as a metaphor in the very first frame of the film. Such a shaking effect and force of the experience on the basis of laconic form and content, leading to a rethinking of the state of world around us as existential basis and value systems, we can find in films like *The Death of Mr. Lazarescu* of Cristi Puiu or in the film *Ága* of Milko Lazarov.

As far as we can unify the expressive means of cinema in a common semiotic system, however we may define it, we can still establish with some categoricity that within the system itself there is a high degree of variability of representation at the level of expression. As to content, the spectrum of possibilities encompasses virtually from every denoting and connoting procedure carried out in the course of the creation process by a film's author to every possible reading that the individual viewer could make of a given sign inbuilt in the film's tissue. In the context of communication processes in cinema, this raises questions as to the constitution of meaning at the level of film expressivity, or of the *handwriting* of the creator as a specifics of artistic interpretation and of *reading* as peculiarities of viewer's perception, of the interpretation of the synthetic wholeness of expression and content on the plane of film on the part of viewers.

As regards the paradigm of sign-symbol interpretations also in the context of processes of communication through which the perceiving, experiencing and understanding of a film takes place, one can single out some specific modalities that structure the general (or basic) attitude of the viewer (the viewers, the audience) towards a film.

Aristotle is the one who introduced the conception of art as *mimesis*. Although his analyses deal mostly with the poetic art, the principle of imitation is of fundamental

importance to virtually every aesthetic tradition since it provides a most general frame for correlating real life with what can be tentatively called 'artistic reality', understood as the specific continuity of a work of art. According to Aristotle, there are three differences of imitation that distinguish an art – differences of medium, object and mode (Aristotle, 1975: 67) In the context of cinema, at the level of film expression, this thesis finds both its quite literal application and rather free interpretations. In a wider reading of the Aristotelian tradition on the plane of communication and from the positions of the viewers of a film, imitation goes mainly in two directions. The attitudes and interests of viewers are very often oriented to object, people, milieus or themes that can be described as familiar. The post elementary example of such behaviour and attitude of viewers is the so-called 'star cult' in cinema. When an actor receives the status of 'star', or a director is singled out as 'extraordinary', they begin to accumulate viewer interest and very often become the main reasons to go to cinema to see a whole film. This plane of imitation can be defined as *mimetic repetition*, when the familiar attracts the attention, very often even displacing the interest and curiosity for the unfamiliar.

The second direction is set by *mimetic empathy*, i.e. the viewer has a strong interest to patterns they know, to which they sympathize, which they like or have another definite attitude, as this may include virtually everything from specific recognizable props, through a concrete gaze to Nature or Space, peculiarities of the heroes' character – their external appearance, their behaviour, through specific themes and plots to *sub-cultural* or cultural specifics reflected in films.

In studying the transition from the Renaissance attitude to the world to modern science, Foucault has dealt with the *paradigm of similarity* which, on his part, Eco expanded to an interpretive criterion ('hermetic semiosis'), i.e. the establishment and functioning of certain associative automatisms based on the premise that 'the similar may influence the similar' (Eco, 1997: 44) In this connection he notes that 'sometimes the two things are similar for their behavior, sometimes for their shape, sometimes for the fact that in a certain context they appeared together. As long as some kind of relationship can be established, the criterion does not matter. Once the mechanism of analogy has been set in motion there is no guarantee that it will stop.' (Eco, 1997: 44) As regards cinema, the logic is the same.

Another specific modality, which structures the attitudes of viewers within the frame of this paradigm, comes along the line of entertainment. As man is more inclined to seek for the familiar or for similarity, i.e. to realize relations by analogy, man is also inclined to *reproduce the models of pleasure*. The contemporary cinema viewer more than any other is tempted by models of recreation or entertainment assume or take place in an alternative reality. Moreover, *divertissement* has become a necessity turned today since, in a world oversaturated with information, with images and sounds, with signs and meanings, even the very idea of the familiar, as knowledge and attitude to the others and the world, becomes increasingly more often displaced by a formal principle of being informed. Against the background of the dynamic processes that accompany the

development of technologies, of television and internet, people seem to start losing the adequate idea of their own life and their capacity for profound emotional experiences. Thus, as a natural response to the ongoing changes, the cinema as an industry and films as a presence in the media space begin to actively introduce the plane of an attitude that can be described as the *hedonist shift*. In this connection, popularity is gained not only by the comedy genres and films but also action, fantasy etc. The attractive vision in all its layers turns into the fundamental prerequisite for experiencing the pleasure of watching a film, and the film industry does its best to satisfy that need.

Conclusion

The paradigms of communication in cinema function as *models* structuring and facilitating the processes of communication themselves in the field of cinema. They can also be defined as elements of an operational system that shapes cultural and social interactions in the context of the specific communicative situation mediated by a concrete film. Paradigms can also, simultaneously and separately, influence or even form the individual taste and preferences of the separate cinema viewer. Such an 'involvement' in the world through specific communication process, which comprises the creation, perception, experiencing and understanding a film, can also be defined as unconscious, but in any case it is influenced by variables of the type of informational, cultural, social., aesthetic etc. models as well as by current models of behaviour or attitude, i.e. it is inscribed in a definite paradigmatic structure at the level of constitution of actual meanings and senses but also of the reconstruction of the past as memory and as experience. In the context of cinema, the bodies of meanings and senses get their legitimacy mostly from the interest towards them, thanks to their *being-in-public* through the separate films.

In the world of today, more than ever, cinema can be viewed as an 'other' or 'particular' being of man, different from pragmatic reality, as a specific alternative reality offering not only an opportunity of emotional experiences objectivated by an act of empathy in the actions and experiences of the other. But along with that, it also presupposes reflection (or auto-reflection) with regard to a rather internal experience, directly determined by the processes of rethinking ethical, aesthetic, cultural and other bodies of representations, ideas, beliefs, models of behaviour and attitude, transmitted by every film. These processes have their internal logic that is inscribed in the logic of paradigms of communication in the field of cinema that mediate the abstraction of the forms of subjective experience to the degree of symbolic representation by the possibilities of the film art, as well as the perception of the others' thoughts and feelings also as one's own. Thus films can, and do, facilitate our efforts to understand man and the human world, the nature of feeling and the mechanisms of it, of the emotional *being-in-oneself*, to think the insoluble antinomies inherited from history and tradition, to build visions of the future.

NOTES

1. Examples to this effect can be such films as *King Kong* of 1933 by James Creelman and *King Kong* of 2005 by Peter Jackson, or *Solaris* of 1972 by Andrei Tarkovsky and *Solaris* of 2002 by Steven Soderbergh, etc.
2. For instance, the *Star Wars* saga.
3. The Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station of 1895 by the Lumière brothers.

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