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Spring 2020 – Performances of Trauma

Anne Rutherford: Film, Trauma and the Enunciative Present

Attempts in trauma studies at detailed, blow-by-blow recounting of atrocities in intimate detail are doomed to failure, as due to the unspeakable and unfathomable nature of trauma there is always a gap between experience and language. This approach is also inconsiderate of the pain of survivors who may be present in the audience and could lead to re-traumatisation. The paper reflects on alternative ways of working with trauma, based on an inclusive ethical approach, caring for the survivors, and looking at other, polyvocal forms of representation apart from language or the emotional attachment to characters, such as sensory and affective tools. These engage with viewers on other levels and create commitment through an embodied, sensory and/or affective experience. Two films, one narrative, one documentary, working with these methods are reviewed: Bahram Beyzai's *Bashu (The Little Stranger)* (1986), a fiction film, is articulated through the character of a child and works with somatic registers. Garin Nugroho's *Puisi Tak Terkuburkan (A Poet)* (1999), a stylized Indonesian documentary, works with *didong*, a traditional sung performance poetry, and re-enactment, played by a survivor who appears alternatively as a witness and as a character in the film.

Lóránt Stóhr: Returning to the crime scene. The trauma of the Holocaust in Hungarian documentaries from the Kádár era

In this article I explore three Hungarian documentaries made under János Kádár's regime, representing the trauma of the Holocaust. The three documentaries, *Eva A 5116* (1964), *The Visit* (1982) *Package Tour* (1985) have the common narrative of the journey, returning to the past to the location and/or the reminiscences of the traumatic events. The analyses examine filmmakers' strategies of interpreting Holocaust survivors' facing and struggling with the trauma, psychological consequences of time elapsed since the traumatic event, and the changing filmmaking style and focus of the representation affected by the actual politics of memory and the dominant documentary paradigm.

Dávid Szőke: Holocaust and Coming to Terms with the Past in *On the Spot: Children of the Enemy*

The aim of the present paper is to examine the issues of Holocaust trauma and coming to terms with the past in *Children of the Enemy*, the eighth season of the documentary series *On the Spot*,

discussing two episodes, one about Edith Eva Eger and the other about Gábor Máté. What is special about these stories is that instead of exploring the Holocaust in historical depth, the makers' focus falls on the narratives of the survivors and their children, whereby they not only reveal the truth of storytelling, but they also recapture the subject's past traumatic experiences in the present time. The filmmakers Eszter Cseke and András S. Takács make the viewers see these stories as important components of memory culture, and they do it so by moving toward the past not merely in itself, but by looking back from the present state of consciousness, discussing how the trauma of the past and the constant feeling of stress was and has been passed on to the next generation of survivors. Examining the life stories of Eger and Máté, I identify storytelling as an essential part of coming to terms, which makes both the teller and its audience face their trauma of the past by recalling the events of it. The paper also discusses the ways Eger and Máté have dealt with their own traumas, made their own self-discoveries, and used what they have learnt about themselves as an essential part of their psychotherapeutic practice.

Kamilla Simor: The "long exposure" of the post-war moment. Analysis of the Bosnian war from the perspective of space theory and photography theory

The paper analyses the representation of the post-war state and the visual and film language aspect of the problem of trauma through the examination of *In The Shadow of War* (2014). The study argues that the temporality of this documentary is analogous to the time perception of its characters; although the Yugoslav Wars have ended, the war is not necessarily over for the ones who are currently living there, they are in the "post-war present", in the infinite and constant moment of war. The paper discusses this stationary and still moment through the concept of hesitation, heterotopy and the frame as a phototheoretical problem.

Vera Kérchy: Death and the Leiter Maiden

This article examines how the newly invented aesthetic form of *Son of Saul* (2015) returns relevantly in László Nemes Jeles's second feature film, *Sunset* (2018). It assumes that the deconstruction of the totalizing representational method, which suggests the possibility of objective (historical) recognition, makes a unique sense in the story of Írisz Leiter and the dying Monarchy, unfolding the original invention. The subversive performances of Írisz, which divert the conventional gender roles, her autobiographical efforts, which are fragmentary because of her incomplete, traumatic life story, create this time – after the film of invisibility – the film of unreadability.

Antal Bókay: The Tale and the trauma – The deconstructive self-creation of Jennifer Fox

The director and writer of the film titled *The Tale* is documentary filmmaker Jennifer Fox. In this film, however, she produced a harrowing documentary and in the same time fiction film of her own inner world, of her childhood trauma and pictured the long second "tale" how she, at the age of 40, could reconstruct her own haunting past. The film is a complex web of a childhood story, the different phantasies, hallucinatory images formed around this, and the history of her adult

struggle to meet and reconstruct something that really cannot be remembered properly. The film is an excellent example of how childhood abuse of a little girl by an adult man can ruin personal possibilities to remember and to love. The whole story (tale) is built on the rhetorical construct of “afterwardness”, the psychoanalytic essence of all traumatic self-construction.

Zoltán János Tóth : History of MILF Porn: An analysis of sexual traumas of post-millennial male spectators

This essay is an interdisciplinary culmination of the growth of MILF porn that also offers insight about the history of the MILF videos. The study provides a broad view of subgenre across genre theory, with the inclusion of important debates on feminism and sociology. The point of departure for this research is based on the recognition that changes of mainstream porn scenarios indicate new traumas and the disposition of the post-millennial male spectators.

Student's Workshop

Árpád Könyű: Traumatized bodies in neo-easterns of the Hungarian National Film Fund

Márk Kostyál's film entitled *Kojot* (Coyote) forces the viewer to radically face the reality that has produced it. In the 10-year history of the Hungarian Film Fund it is not unprecedented that a film abounds in protagonists beaten up to the point of bleeding, or has an edge of social critique. The essay looks into potential backgrounds of this phenomenon, hypothesizing that the gradual erosion of the rule of law in the past few years is represented on screen as a collective trauma, resonating on social phenomena through the exposure of wounded bodies of protagonists. The argument offers criteria for further research, delineating a body of films that may be examined as one corpus or as individual works.

