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FILM NOIR, SOCIETY, MODERNITY

Linda Huszár: Film noir: a dubious figure of film history

The paper follows the history of the notion and the reception from 1945 up to the present times. Film noir's divers identity and its schizoid nature expresses itself in troubles of defining the term itself, as well as difficulty of fixing the relevant corpus. This unsteadiness continuously encumbers and inspires the noir studies, setting up new aspects like non-American film noir or its historical emplacement. In order to illustrate film noir's intermediary status between classical and modern filmic storytelling, the paper analyses three film's opening scenes (*Double Indemnity; The Lady from Shanghai; Sunset Boulevard*) translating theory into practice.

Jean-Pierre Esquenazi: The critique of modernism and film noir

The text published here is the last chapter of a comprehensive work dealing with film noir. The book, with its foundations in sociology, reflects the background of the author, who examines noire as the filmic embodiment of modernism's critique, analyzing the history of the genre, its narrative structures and the unique historical context of its authors. He reaches back to authors such as Walter Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer, and claims that film noir is not merely the telling reflection of the American studio system, but is also embedded in Western European culture, and thus is the filmic cornerstone of modernism, primarily representing the modern metropolis, the ville noire.

Thomas Elsaesser: A German Ancestry to Film Noir? Film History and its Imaginary

Regarding German expressionist film to be the connecting link between German immigrants to the US and American film noir has become one of the clichés of film history. It is important to note, however, that the relationship is founded on connecting two fundamentally different, and mostly imaginary histories. This is also what makes this system of relations interesting, not so much as fake history, rather as the epitome of the history of fakeness, or even of film's imaginary. A lateral model of "interferences" has to accompany the linear model of "interaction", thus introducing the diverse imaginaries of "otherness". The only way to delineate the interferential history of film noir is to examine, through a series of individual studies, the circumstances that played a crucial role in the decision of German filmmakers to emigrate to the US.

James Naremore: High Modernism and Blood Melodrama: The Case of Graham Greene

The film noir of the forties represents the appearance of modernist values within the realm of

commercial melodrama. This phenomenon is particularly characteristic in case of Graham Greene, who approaches the composition of lurid novels with a special sensitivity to international modernism, and who followed the path of Joseph Conrad and T.S. Eliot, and created a new type of fiction, naming it *bloody melodrama*, following the tendencies of pre-war French film. It is characteristic of Green's entire career that he was capable of maintaining tensions between contradictory cultural and ideological phenomena. The article examines the way Graham Green's oeuvre influenced cinema, especially through movies such as the *Brighton Rock* (John Boulting, 1947) and *The Third Man* (Orson Welles, 1949), an international coproduction.

Jonathan Auerbach: Darkness Visible. Postscript

In his book, Jonathan Auerbach investigates the tension and connection between the genre of film noir and American citizenship. The book's last chapter published here provides deeper analyses of three outstanding film noir movies, *Gun Crazy* (1950), *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955) and *Touch of Evil* (1958). Through positioning these three prominent Cold War films within the noir cycle Auerbach demonstrates and emphasises their political and cultural significance along with their place in cinema history, briefly drawing up the central issues and the general moral of American society in the 1940s and 1950s. The author interprets and presents this new direction of '50s film noirs with an intended focus on the emotional and psychological affects of the three above mentioned movies.

Zsolt Pápai: Freedom, love, death. Bonnie and Clyde and modernist cinema

The paper intends to map out the modernist features in *Bonnie and Clyde* by focusing on its connections with European art film, such as *nouvelle vague* in general and Godard's *Breathless* in particular. Arthur Penn self-consciously used an elaborate filmic style in his 'lovers-on-the-run' movie to undermine the conservativism inherent in Hollywood cinema in the 60s. The argumentation claims that *Bonnie and Clyde* is heavily impregnated with social critique, while it may also be seen as a revisionist genre movie fuelled by a quest for artistic freedom from traditional means of representation, that is, the movie is both influenced by political and romantic modernism. It is precisely this connection between the elements of romantic and political modernism that makes *Bonnie and Clyde* unique in film history.

ANIMATED SINS

Zoltán Varga: Rodents and Quadrupeds Against Crime. The Appearance of Crime Genres in American, Hungarian, and German Animated Films

This essay inquires animated films belonging to certain crime genres (types of detective fiction, and thriller). The question of how popular film genres appear in animated films, is still a highly underdeveloped field of both the theory of animated film and genre theory. However, animated crime films show some recurring elements. From the point of view of the crime genres, it is

typical that animated films tend to take the edge of the violent content or even try to eliminate it at all, and they usually use a combination of violence and comical elements. The phenomenon of anthropomorphism can be considered as a special animated feature: in these cases animal characters with human attributes appear in those roles (i.e. detective, criminal, victim) that belong to genre conventions and are played by humans in the live-action versions of crime genres. These tendencies can be seen in films such as *The Great Mouse Detective* from Disney, which is based on the classical detective genre; the Hungarian cartoon *Az erdő kapitánya / Captain of the Forest*, which can be considered as a cop movie; and Disney's *One Hundred and One Dalmatians*, which tends to emphasize *suspense*, otherwise the key element of the thriller genre. In this regard, there is an exceptional animated feature film, *Felidae* from Germany. Although the characters in *Felidae* are anthropomorphic cats, in contrast with the above mentioned cartoons, this film is definitely not for children, because it is centered on violence, or especially showing the aftermath of violence. Thus, *Felidae* belongs to those thrillers which are made for adults.

Krisztián Benyovszky: A night in the Poe Museum. An animation version of "The Tell-tale Heart"

Edgar Allan Poe's influence has not been confined merely to literature even at the decades following his death. His inspiring presence can be detected in painting, graphic art, illustrations as well as music. Film, animation and comic book adaptations appear at the early twentieth century, and the transmedial interest towards his works remained since. The study examines an animated version of his 'The Tell-tale Heart' (1843), a work duly regarded as his greatest psychological horror story. After pointing out some thematic, narratological and stylistic features of the short story, the argument examines three diverse animation adaptations (works of Ted Parmelee, Raúl García and Anette Jung) as well as a short movie that combines a live actor with animation elements (Ron Shovey). The paper focuses primarily on Anette Jung's *Der Verrückte, das Herz und das Auge* (2005), examining it as a case of comic-parodic transformation.

STUDENTS' WORKSHOP

Márk Sebestyén Hegedüs: The questions of giallo as a genre

The questions of giallo as a genre argues for the possibility of defining *giallo* as a genre: an exiciting, but much neglected area of international genre theory. The term „g*iallo*" implies an Italian exploitation genre, which blends mystery, thriller and horror conventions. This study attemps to define *giallo* as a genre, while exploring its relations to the above mentioned three categories, and the questions of genre theory they suggest.

Renáta Lipták: Modern myth and elements of metafiction in Neil Gaiman's Sandman series

I construe Neil Gaiman's *Sandman series* as an essay of creating a modern myth. Mythology isn't just the topic of the *Sandman*, but a poetical principle, too. My first thesis is that the medium of comics follows the structure of myths, and at the same time gives the possibility to use citations as postmodern literature does. I try to highlight the most important metafictional motives of the

text, which are reflecting the questions of modern myths and authority.

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