

Nº 18 VOZ E IMAGEN

FICTIONS FILMS AND HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Sergio Alegre

The study of the relationships between cinema and history turns around three main areas: cinema as a historical fact, cinema as a source of history and cinema as a historical narrative. This paper, after a brief survey of the two first areas, analyses the problems, the uses, the advantages and the disadvantages of a historical narrative when presented through images. It also endeavours to answer two fundamental questions: Can filmed history compare with written history? What happens when history is told in images, not in words?

As the presence of audiovisual communication increases in every domain of everyday life opening a host of new possibilities, the author finds it urgent to approach these issues. He also stresses the inconsistency of some arguments which object to the use of images as a means of expressing scientific knowledge. And after pointing out some specific features of historical narrative, he concludes by thinking about the new questions that, if not formally at least at content level, poses cinema -a new but already a hundred-year-old medium- to the historian's task.

TRANSCRIPTION IN ORAL HISTORY

Victoriano Camas Baena

The contents of this paper are pointing towards the necessity of going in depth with the work done up to this date on the criteria of transcription in oral history, criteria that appear as specifically relevant factors, not only in the elaboration of coherent methodological devices for the complex process of transforming "oral" into "written", but also in the theoretical developments that underlies this device and the biographical perspective in general.

Starting from the reflexion that oral language and written language are two parallel systems with relative independence and specific structures (Willems, 1989) and recognizing the practical impossibility of executing "objectively literal" transcriptions (Bourdieu, 1993), a model of transcription is proposed that is not limited to the merely mechanical written registration (Ibáñez, 1979) of the information produced in the interviews for later analysis.

Such model incorporates several criteria that, along with the Transcribers Journal as an innovative methodological device introducing the transcriber as an "third instructed party" (using the terminology of Serres), intends an approach mediating between the two languages, conserving, within the limits of the possible, the particular features of the life stories (the interview being defined as a communicative process in a situation of interaction between persons, wherein the performance of the implied persons adjusts to a discursive aim: To produce a biographical narration useful within the aims of social research).

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF FEATURE FILM

J.M. Caparrós Lera

Since 1982 and as a result of a seminar on the relationships between cinema and history directed by the author at the Universidad de Barcelona, a new methodology for analysing fiction films began to take shape which was later evaluated as well as endorsed by well-established foreign scholars in several scientific studies.

Today, after several years of experimenting, the so-called Film-History Methodolgy has brought about a system of analysis which gives priority to historical and filmical contexts, as well as to the creative process and the study in detail of every film -together with its ideological and aesthetical elements- so as to produce a better understanding of the values and the message conveyed by a particular film.

All this will lead to the contextualization of the film in the rest of the mass-media and to the discovery of immediate and long-term consequences; it will also result in a personal critical appraisal following the diagram proposed by the author.

THE HISTORICAL FILM: A DIDACTIC EXPERIENCE

Anna M. Gaya

The *Cinema and History* project, which derives from the analysis of the interactive relationship between cinema and history and from the consideration of cinema as *art*, is firmly determined to introduce the study of cinema in secondary education syllabuses. Its main aim is to help learning through "direct vision" and to try to develop the pupils-spectators' empathy as well as their critical capacity with regard to the film.

Being reflections of reality and life, cinema and history possess a global dimension of knowledge which justifies their presence in a syllabus. If every film is a result of a historical context and its content has a historical character, it is also an agent of history. Therefore, the analysis as well as the interpretation of historical films are the base for an active methodology that stimulates a film reading which, apart from being emotional and rational, is capable of revealing the "hidden" message underlying all such films.

Cinema and History didactic directions are complemented with a few examples of teaching-learning activities which have been designed according to each film's singularity and which doubtlessly help to strengthen a humanist, free education pivoting around the image world.

ANTHROPOGRAPHIES: FROM RATIONALIST ILLUSION TO METHOD'S MULTIPLE VERIFICATIONS

José Antonio G. Alcántud

The author positions himself in social anthropology's logical crisis stemming from the radical relativism caused by its field acquisitions. He questions the operativeness of such concepts as "logos" and "strategy" for the current socioanthropological theory. Consequently, for the study of society he suggests recovering the "alea" logical role as opposed to that of teleologically oriented strategy. Finally he finds it apposite to recover the notion of concreteness as a figure capable of illuminating certainties, for which he emphasizes the possibility of reorienting this discipline towards "graphos". Nevertheless, he shuns anthropological poetics, which he considers the postmoderns' escape.

INTERVIEWS AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL AS MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AND METHODS OF INFORMATION GATHERING

Anders Houltz

In this study four written autobiographical narratives, written by "ordinary people", are compared to extensive life story interviews with the authors themselves. These informants - three men and one woman - are all metal workers, responding to a campaign for collecting autobiographical narratives for the Nordic Museum in Stockholm.

The starting point for the paper is the apparently obvious fact that people communicate their experience in different ways, depending on a whole range of factors and considerations - some of them deliberate, some not. The way in which we say things can, carefully interpreted, be just as informative as what we in fact say. The differences between written and oral narrative are analysed from four important aspects: 1. the structure of the intrigue; 2. the interactional situation; 3. language; 4. the duration of the creative process. Finally, some conclusive remarks are made about the methodological gains to be made from combining these two sources - interviews and written narratives.

AUDIOVISUAL AIDS AND HISTORY TEACHING

Ángel Luis Hueso Montón

This study stems from the notion that in the history of mankind each period has made its own history. Historiographic patterns have changed in accordance with society's changing characters. Therefore, we shall have to set off 20th Century's key features in order to know what kind of history we want to build.

The importance of audiovisual means stands out as one of the most specific features of modern world, but though we admit this and acknowledge the many possibilities these aids offer, we nevertheless enumerate some reasons which might explain many historians' resistance to use them systematically and scientifically in their research.

We also comment on the features concomitant with using didactically audiovisual aids in a historical context and we conclude acknowledging the existence of a number of scholars who are determined to fully incorporate these aids so as to reach a better understanding of historicity.

THE USE OF ORAL SOURCES IN CINEMA RESEARCH

María del Pilar Mendoza Egea and Pedro Nogales Cárdenas

This essay intends to show the many possibilities that using oral sources may provide to the study of cinema history, taking into account some studies which have been recently done as well as the experience carried out by the Unitat d'Investigació del Cinema in the Universitat Rovira i Virgili.

In spite of the fact that the use of an oral source poses some reliability problems, it is an extremely useful tool when searching qualitative information in any field of research of cinema history, if a referential kind of information is looked for. Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly more interesting and useful in some specific aspects, such as the study of amateur, non-professional cinema, or the film-goer vision along history, or when studying the role of cinema in local history, specially in villages.

PERVERSION OF THE WORD: THE ROLE OF TRANSCRIPTS IN ORAL HISTORY

Kate Moore

This paper critically examines oral history methodology in preparing transcripts and argues that valuable communicative information is lost and sometimes distorted through the transferal from oral to written form. It is maintained that traditional oral history research has been too strongly influenced by a written, prescriptive bias, which by definition eliminates communicative signals found in verbal interaction. Thus, features of the communicative interchange that frequently occur during interviews - hesitations, pauses, false starts, repetitions and back-channeling signals- are often assumed by oral historians to be meaningless parts of language and therefore excluded from written transcripts. It is proposed that the above-mentioned verbal features can serve as open windows to recall, emotion, and narrative attitude.