Cinematic Techniques in the Prose Fiction of Beatriz Guido

by
Christine Mary Gibson

ISBN: 1-58112-058-3

DISSERTATION.COM

2001

Copyright © 1974 Christine Mary Gibson
All rights reserved.

Published by
Dissertation.com
2001 • USA

ISBN: 1-58112-058-3

www.dissertation.com/library/1120583a.htm

CINEMATIC TECHNIQUES IN THE PROSE FICTION

OF BEATRIZ GUIDO

By

Christine Mary Gibson

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Romance and Classical Languages and Literatures

1974

To my mother

Ruth Ober Gibson

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am sincerely grateful to Professor Donald A. Yates for his aid in preparing this study, for his helpful suggestions, for his sensitive guidance, and for the independence allowed me.

I wish to extend special appreciation and thanks to Beatriz Guido, for our many hours of conversation about her work and life, and for the access to her library and invaluable manuscripts.

To Anatilde Otegui, I extend my sincere thanks for supplying me with critical materials not available elsewhere.

I would like to thank the following Argentine organizations which were of help in the preparation of this study: La Cinemateca Argentina, El Instituto Nacional de Cinematografía, and Aries Film.

To my mother, Ruth Ober Gibson, whose very generous financial support made possible the research for this study done in Argentina in 1972, I wish to express my deep gratitude.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Pa ge
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I. CINEMA AND LITERATURE	5
II. BEATRIZ GUIDO: THE WRITER, THE SCENARIST	42
III. GUIDO'S "STYLO-CAMERA"	63
Equivalents of Fixed Camera Shots	65
Equivalents of Special Camera Effects	73
Equivalents of Moving Camera Shots	76
Cinematic Symbolism	84
Lighting	86
Point of View	88
IV. THE PRESENTATION OF TIME	92
V. THE LITERARY SOUND TRACK	108
VI. ASSEMBLING THE FINISHED WORK	126
CONCLUSION	142
BIBLIOGRAPHY	147

INTRODUCTION

The cinema's influence on literature has intrigued many twentieth-century literary critics. That such influence should exist seems so obvious that these critics do not hesitate to speak of it. But usually they allude in generalities that frustrate the reader looking for a concrete illustration of just how the presence of cinema might have modified actual narrative and descriptive techniques. With the purpose in mind of synthesizing such general statements on techniques and then applying them in specific, concrete illustrations, I have chosen for study, from among the writings of many modern writers whose work merits attention in this respect, the prose fiction of Argentine writer Beatriz Guido (b. 1925).

Since 1954 when Guido's first novel was awarded the prestigious Emecé Editorial prize she has been considered one of her country's leading writers. In large part her novels and stories owe their success to Guido's focus on her country's most pressing problems. She unhesitatingly draws aside the barriers of ignorance and awe to expose Argentina's history of political corruption from local levels to the presidency; she reveals the depravities of the upper class (the class into which she herself was born); and in the process has also undone the illusion that childhood is all innocence. In addition to writing novels and stories Guido actively works as a scenarist. When she was first beginning to write she met, then later married, the eminent Argentine film director Leopoldo Torre Nilsson, and began to collaborate with him in writing scripts for his films. Almost all of his films in the late 1950's and early 1960's were adaptations of Beatriz Guido's own novels and stories. Working for an even broader film audience brought her even further reknown, and today she is an established author and scenarist whose work in both print and film is acclaimed.

One of the most notable features of Guido's prose writing is her continuous experimentation with new techniques. Her experience as a scenarist definitely appears to have inspired a significant portion of these experiments. She herself believes firmly that her writing has changed drastically as a result of the familiarity with cinematic techniques gained through her work. However, at the same time she is careful to point out that a lifetime of movie-going, and not only her work as a scenarist, has doubtless left its mark on her art, as indeed it has on the work of countless other twentieth-century writers. In emphasizing the nature of this pervasive, broad type of cinematic influence, she herself brings out the crucial point that, in the case of any writer who has seen many films since early childhood and who has also worked in films, it is most difficult to ascribe any single technique or usage to the influence of such specific work in films. One must also keep in mind that film and prose fiction are both narrative arts and for that reason alone have features in common that do not necessarily involve either causality or influence. Nonetheless, along with the use of techniques which appear to be merely narrative parallels, developments in Guido's writing do in fact accompany the progress of her career in films and for that reason seem to be both conscious and unconscious responses to her awareness of cinematic techniques, an awareness stimulated by her work as a scenarist. My study analyzes those techniques in Guido's prose fiction whose appearance and use parallel her career in films.

The first chapter examines prose fiction and cinema, their similarities as narrative arts, their different media forms, and the significant though frequently indirect influences that each appears to have had on the other. These topics are of the utmost importance to any discussion or analysis treating the influence of one medium on the other. The chapter includes many of Guido's own comments on these theoretical and aesthetic questions, which serve to illustrate her own both perceptive and intuitive understanding of the similarities as well as the differences between the cinema and literature. The second chapter deals with Beatriz Guido's life and the two types of writing she has done. Each of the remaining four chapters takes one of the major areas of aesthetic interest discussed in the first chapter--that deals with the question of cinema's influence on literary techniques--and applies the conclusions mentioned therein to Guido's prose narratives under those four headings which, critics agree, comprise the major areas of cinema's influence on writing techniques in this century: the depiction of graphic elements, the presentation of time, the uses of sound, and the final process of editing or assembling.

In this dissertation I have posed the principal questions concerning the cinema's influence on twentieth-century narrative and descriptive techniques: (1) does such influence exist? (2) and if it does, how does one look for it in the work of an individual author? It is my hope that the study provides the convincing answer that the influence does indeed exist in the novels and stories of Beatriz Guido, together with an illustration of the manner in which this influence may be seen in certain of her narrative and descriptive techniques.

CHAPTER I

CINEMA AND LITERATURE

Near the end of the nineteenth century a new art form began its rise to prominence. It was the cinema, which also came to be known as film, moving pictures, or movies. In the tradition of new art forms, it borrowed from older arts and shares characteristics with them. This fact has been widely acknowledged by critics ever since the appearance of the cinema: as early as 1915 poet Vachel Lindsay compared film to three types of paintings;[1] and in more recent times this one comparison has been extended to all the other arts. Rarely have these similarities been expressed as effectively as by avant-garde film maker and actress Maya Deren:

> The motion-picture medium has an extraordinary range of expression. It has in common with the plastic arts the fact that it is a visual composition projected on a two-dimensional surface; with dance, that it can deal in the arrangement of movement; with theatre, that it can create a dramatic intensity of events; with music, that it can compose in the rhythms and phrases of time and can be attended by song and instrument; with poetry, that it can juxtapose images; with literature generally, that it can encompass in its sound track the abstractions available only to language.[2]

---

[1]N. Vachel Lindsay, The Art of the Moving Picture (New York: MacMillan, 1915).

[2]Cited in Louis D. Giannetti, Understanding Movies (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. xiii. Further details and

Of the above-mentioned arts, film has borrowed extensively from literature and shares many characteristics with it. It can take the form of recognizable literary genres[3] such as the narrative (The 39 Steps); the epic (Birth of a Nation); the essay (Nanook of the North); the lyric (Le Sang d'un Poète); the dramatic (usually but not always filmed plays, such as Olivier's Hamlet).

Because film's principal line of development has been and continues to be narrative, there naturally exists a close relation between it and literary narration. In comparing the two, many points of similarity arise, especially when considering the novel and the film. The way both of these manipulate time[4] and control the attention of the reader or viewer constitute the central focus of this comparison, explained here by critic Susan Sontag:

---

examples will be found in ibid., p. 3; George Bluestone, Novels into Film (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp. vii-viii; Alan Casty, The Dramatic Art of the Film (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. 2-4; Arnold Hauser, "The Film Age," in The Social History of Art, trans. by Stanley Godman (4 vols.; New York: Vintage Books, 1958), Vol. IV, p. 246; William Jinks, The Celluloid Literature (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Glencoe Press, 1971), p. 5; Peter Wollen, Signs and Meaning in the Cinema (London: Secker and Warburg; British Film institute, 1969), p. 112; and H. H. Wollenberg, Anatomy of the Film (London: Marsland, 1947), p. 30.

[3]This idea is treated by Giannetti, p. 138; Jean Benoit-Levy, The Art of the Motion Picture, trans. by Theodore R. Jaeckel (New York: Arno, 1970), p. 4; and Etienne Fuzellier, Cinéma et littérature (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1964), pp. 22-24.

[4] This is mentioned by Robert Gessner, The Moving Image (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1970), p. 29; and Marion Sheridan and others, The Motion Picture and the Teaching of English (New York: Appleton-Century—Crofts, 1965), p. vii.

> Like the novel, the cinema presents us with a view of the action which is absolutely under the control of the director (writer) at every moment. Our attention cannot wander about the screen, as it does about the stage. . When the camera moves we move, when it remains still we are still. In a similar way the novel presents a selection of the thoughts and descriptions which are relevant to the writer's conception, and we must follow these serially, as the author leads us; they are not spread out, as a background, for us to contemplate in the order we choose, as in painting or the theater.[5]

However, on the surface it would seem that film and literature are very different rather than similar: film, with its flickering, dream-like images,[6] and print literature with its black lines on white pages. Yet in spite of their obvious differences in medium of

---

[5]Susan Sontag, Against Interpretation (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1966), pp. 243-2440 Novelists who have worked in films have themselves noted the similarities between the two art forms; after working in Hollywood for a time, Robert Nathan said, "I also learned, to my surprise, that a picture is not at all like a play; that on the contrary, it is like a novel, but a novel to be seen, instead of told. Of course, seeing is simply another way of telling. . . ." ("A Novelist Looks at Hollywood," in Film: A Montage of Theories, ed. by Richard Dyer MacCann [New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1966), p. 130.) At a much earlier time, Spanish novelist and early film maker Vicente Blasco Ibáñez (1867-1928) related the novelist's perception to that of a camera, saying, "'El que verdaderamente es novelista posee una imaginación semejante a una máquina fotográfica, con el objetivo eternamente abierto. " (Cited in Andrés Surís, "Técnicas cinematográficas y la obra de Vicente Blasco Ibáñez" [unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1972], p. 10.)

[6]The resemblance between film and dreams has been remarked often, for example, by director Luis Buñuel in Lee R. Bobker, Elements of Film (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1969), frontispiece; Alain Robbe-Grillet, Last Year at Marienbad (New York: Grove Press, 1962), p. 8; Gessner, p. 17; Susanne Langer, "A Note on the Film," in Film: An Anthology, ed. by Daniel Talbot (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1959), pp. 52-55; Evelyn Riesman, "Film and Fiction," The Antioch Review, Vol, XVII, No. 3 (Fall, 1957), p. 360; John Howard Lawson, Film: The Creative Process (2nd ed.; New York: Hill & Wang, 1967), p. xv; Béla Balász, Theory of the Film, trans. by Edith Bone (New York: Roy, 1953), p. 151; and Roy Huss and Norman Silverstein, The Film Experience (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 104.

presentation, similarities are present in that both are arts based on language--and languages have communication as their goal. These two arts based on language have analogous formative elements; Robert Richardson says in his study Literature and Film that film's lexicon is the photographed image (the "frame") and its grammar and syntax the editing process which arranges these images. He goes on to point out that like words, images have meaning both in isolation and context.[7] These individual frames have, like words, both denotative and connotative meanings as well, even though images are not often thought of in this way.[8] But the frame's denotative and connotative meanings, in isolation, are incomplete; just as the full meaning of a word arises from its context, so the frame's meaning is incomplete without a context.[9] One notes that sound doubled the vocabulary of film so that it now consists of both visual and aural units.[10] It is apparent that film has an almost infinite vocabulary; its grammar, however, has not yet evolved to anything nearly as flexible and subtle as that of a verbal language.[11]

---

[7]Robert Richardson, Literature and Film (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), p. 65.

[8]Jinks, p. 110.

[9]Ibid., p. 9.

[10]Richardson, p. 66.

[11]Ibid,, pp. 65-66. For example, its use of tenses is limited to the present--even a flashback shows events unfolding in the present once the jump to the past is accomplished. A way of saying "what if," a conditional tense, is largely experimental: La Guerre est Finie and Play It Again, Sam have some examples; and split screen montage offers some fascinating possibilities in this direction (Giannetti, p. 100). In the future, film may well develop a grammar to equal in flexibility and expressiveness a verbal language (Richardson, p. 78).

Just as verbal language is made up of words arranged in a specific context in time to attain full meaning, film language is made of images and sounds, likewise arranged in a context in time to attain its meaning. Charles Eidsvik in his study “Cinema and Literature” explains how the pattern of shots in a film resembles the syntax of verbal language:

> The pattern of arranging shots in their “standard” sequence resembles the syntax patterns of speech. A long shot establishes the subject, a medium shot conveys the important action, and a close-up shows what happened to the “object” in the film sentence. A periodic sentence-pattern is achieved by placing the “establishing shot” last in the pattern. The fade-out fade-in signifies a “paragraph” or chapter division. The break between shots in a sequence means roughly the same thing as a coma. Film syntax involves the distribution of images in a sequence; the sequences frequently resemble the distributional system of the verbal language of the film-maker.[12]

Film and print, rather than being languages in themselves as is sometimes assumed, are rather ways to record or carry language. Verbal language is recorded in two ways: to be perceived by the eye using phonetic symbols, and to be perceived aurally, using tapes or phonograph records. Film language uses ideographic symbols for recording the visual component of its language (this includes, it is important to note, the visual component of verbal language--gestures, facial expressions--which print and aural recording do not capture, except through awakening the “sensory memory” of the reader or hearer), and sound-track recording for the aural component of its language (which includes the aural part

---

[12]Charles Eidsvik, “Cinema and Literature” (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1970), pp. 40-41.

of verbal language along with other sounds). Film can also include phonetic symbols in shots of printed signs, of letters or of newspapers (called "inserts"), and in subtitles. Both systems of recording, the phonetic and the ideographic, are similar in that they require learning certain conventions before one can "read" or decode them.[13] It is sometimes forgotten in film criticism that the ideographic symbol is just that, a conventional symbol, and not the actual object; why this is so is not quite clear, since the critics so misled are not confused about the nature of symbols when confronted with the printed word "house." That the ideogram involves convention in decoding its recording system can be seen in considering the Chinese symbol for a man (人), in which there is an attempt to depict something of the human figure within the symbol itself. In film a 25' image of a face in closeup likewise represents something of the human being but is, like the Chinese symbol, hardly likely to be confused with an actual human face.[14] Learning the

---

[13]Eidsvik describes the process of learning to decode as follows: "To read printed language it is first necessary to learn to communicate and receive information by everyday experience. Then one must learn to separate the audial element of the verbal code from its multi-sensory everyday context (lip-movements, gestures, etc.). One then learns that some kinds of speech sounds are represented by graphemic visual symbols. One has learned to spell. Soon words, and larger units are learned, until print becomes a parallel of speech. Film is simply a way around the processes of learning to read using a western phonetic alphabet. As Eisenstein long ago pointed out, film uses the ideogrammatic rather than the alphabetical means of recording language; fewer processes of fragmentation and abstraction are involved in ideogrammatic communication than in alphabetical graphemic communication. Ideogrammatic symbols have a less synesthetic, if equally conventionalized, method for symbolization" (p. 33).

[14]Jinks, pp. 7-8.

conventions of alphabetical recording is perhaps harder than learning those of the ideographic communication system,[15] but that to “read” film one must learn its conventions is illustrated by persons from primitive cultures, who do not readily recognize either themselves or familiar objects in photographs.[16]

The languages of film and literature therefore have similarities, as has been shown: they communicate, have analogous formative elements which emphasize context, and employ conventional symbols for recording. These symbolic languages must be learned before one can decode them; the important reverse of this point is that the symbols of both languages are meaningless without conceptuality, without the human mind to interpret them.[17]

Film language and literary language are furthermore similar in that they both have been destined for certain publics; but on the whole, however, these publics have been somewhat different. The best print literature has tended not to assume a mass public, but the same has not been true of the best films.[18] The convention of different publics has consequences for both media; in the case of film, it has meant that the

---

[15]Eidsvik, p. 31.

[16]Ibid.

[17] Ibid., pp. 8-9. Apparently the human mind interprets all the arts in terms of the senses; film critic John Howard Lawson says, “But all the arts rely on modes of seeing and hearing. Our eyes scan the pages of a novel, and we reconstruct in the mind’s eye the appearance and color, as well as the words and sounds, which we are reading. Even dreams or thoughts tend to assume visual or aural forms” (p. xv).

[18]This is mentioned by Bluestone, p. viii; Hauser, p. 250; Sheridan, p. vii; Surf’s, pp. 34-35; and Allardyce Nicoll, Film and Theater (New York: Crowell, 1937), p. 11.

tastes and preferences of a mass public have been essential to its survival.[19] From film's beginnings, it told stories and used literature's methods, myths, and genres;[20] however, it usually took over only certain literary forms: melodramas, romances, comedies, fairy tales, fantasy.[21] All of literature was made available to the filmgoing public in a form that bore no necessary relation to the original social and historical context nor even to the original literary form.[22] Much of the horror aroused in those who know the original at seeing the film version of a beloved literary work can be traced to just this type of adjustment. So can much, though not all, of the disdain with which film literature has been treated as an art form by critics and intellectuals. Melodramas, romances and fairy tales are not their currently preferred literary forms.[23]

That film has been mainly an art for a mass public is mentioned here as explanation and not as censure. It must be remembered that great drama has always reached a heterogeneous audience--and so have great films.[24] The film theorist Erwin Panofsky points out that there

---

[19]This idea is found in Sheridan, p. vii; and Rudolph Arnheim, Film as Art (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p. 158.

[20]Eidsvik, p. 4.

[21] Ibid., p. 45.

[22] Ibid., p. 46.

[23]Ibid., p. 28,

[24]Sheridan, p. 113.

exist both good and poor works in art directed for either a mass or a restricted public:

> While it is true that commercial art is always in danger of ending up as a prostitute, it is equally true that noncommercial art is always in danger of ending up an old maid. Noncommercial art has given us Seurat's "Grande Jatte" and Shakespeare's sonnets, but also much that is esoteric to the point of incommunicability. Conversely, commercial art has given us much that is vulgar or snobbish (two aspects of the same thing) to the point of loathsomeness, but also Dürer's prints and Shakespeare's plays.[25]

Within all the above-mentioned similarities, film literature and print literature have opposing but inseparable formative principles. If one thinks of space and time as defining the two ends of a continuum, then one can think of print literature lying near time and the film, along with the other plastic arts, lying near space in relation to perception.[26] Now film is a temporal as well as a spatial art and therefore does not lie as close to the space extreme of the continuum as, say, painting. This is not to speak of absolutes, but rather to seek a way to explain the particular strengths and limitations of the two media, print and film. George Bluestone explains how literature and film relate to time and space using the novel as his example from print literature:

---

[25]Erwin Panofsky, "Style and Medium in the Moving Pictures," in Talbot, p. 30. It should be remembered as well that great artists do not necessarily work for a mass public just in order to survive. Ingmar Bergman, for example, says he works for the general public, not for a few, and he seems pleased with the sensitivity of that public (Four Screenplays of Ingmar Bergman, trans. by Lars Malmstrom and David Kushner [New York: Simon & Schuster, 1960], p. xviii).

[26]Joseph Frank, The Widening Gyre (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1963), p. 8.

> Both novel and film are time arts, but whereas the formative principle in the novel is time, the formative principle in the film is space. Where the novel takes its space for granted and forms its narrative in a complex of time values, the film takes its time for granted and forms its narrative in arrangements of space. . . . The novel renders the illusion of space by going from point to point in time; the film renders time by going from point to point in space. . . . Finally, to discover distinct formative principles in our two media is not to forget that time and space are, for artistic purposes, ultimately inseparable. . . . We are merely trying to state the case for a system of priority and emphasis. And our central claim—-namely that time is prior in the novel, and space prior in the film--is supported rather than challenged by our reservations.[27]

Being largely a spatial art, the film finds itself with the problem of somehow making the visible significant, of going beneath surfaces. And print finds itself with the opposite problem--that of trying to make the significant visible or somehow appealing to the other senses.[28] Film critic André Bazin has summed up the contrast in this brief but telling comparison: "Valéry condemned the novel for being obliged to record that 'the Marquis had tea at five o'clock.' On his side, the novelist might in turn pity the film-maker for having to show the Marquis actually at the table."[29] This statement emphasizes that the film-maker's strength lies in explicitness and control, while the writer's is found in power of suggestion.[30] Novelist and critic Evelyn Riesman feels that some of the most exciting moments in any art

---

[27]Bluestone, p. 61.

[28]Several critics mention this characteristic: Richardson, p. 68; Riesman, pp. 356-357; Georges-Albert Astre, "Les deux langages," La Revue des Lettres Modernes, Vol. V (1958), p. 147.

[29]André Bazin, What Is Cinema, ed. and trans. by Hugh Gray (2 vols.; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), Vol. I, p. 127.

[30]Jinks, p. 8.

come when, rather than exploiting its natural strengths, it instead stretches the boundaries of its natural limitations: "These leapings over boundaries are always exciting: when poetry becomes painting in words, or when painting becomes a kind of calligraphy, and when photography moves more and more toward something internal, something literary, turning in upon itself, so to speak, on the mind working behind it."[31]

In its fight to stretch its boundaries and to make the significant visible, audible, tactile, good writing has managed to a large extent to be visual, to create feelings of space in the reader. It of course tries, as film does, to awaken the other senses as well, but if it is true as psychology says that some 90 percent of the information that humans react to is visual,[32] then it is natural that good writers should have concentrated on appealing to this particular sense. Joseph Conrad's often-quoted aim was, "by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel . . . , before all, to make you see."[33] And poet Herbert Read has even equated fine writing to effective evocation of the visual:

> If I were asked to give the most distinctive quality of good writing, I should express it in this one word: visual. Reduce the art of writing to its fundamentals and you come to this single aim: to convey images by means of words. But to convey images. To make the mind see. . . . That is a definition of good literature--of

---

[31]Riesman, p. 360.

[32]Eidsvik, p. 35.

[33]Joseph Conrad, The Nigger of the "Narcissus" (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1918), p. x.

> the achievement of every good poet--from Homer and Shakespeare to James Joyce or Henry Miller. It is also a definition of the ideal film.[34]

Film and print literature have further similarities in that both can deal with abstraction through metaphor, simile, and symbol.[35] Both can employ figurative language to give density and richness to their expression and they employ it in similar ways.[36] For example, a film metaphor, like a print metaphor, juxtaposes two images in a way that insinuates that one is the other: a shot of a crowd of people followed by a shot of a flock of sheep.[37] Film, like print, can employ hyperbole, understatement, irony, allusion, symbol and allegory.[38] Both art forms use figurative language in similar ways; but the person trained in literature should be aware that the film is not in any sense an artistic "poor relation" of print literature in regard to its richness of expression, since the film's juxtapositions within the shot can include people, objects, sets, sounds, costumes, lights, color, movement,

---

[34]Herbert Read, A Coat of Many Colours (New York: Horizon Press, 1956), p. 231.

[35]Because it naturally tends to define space and to show surfaces, film is not very well suited to abstractions and generalizations (Richardson, p. 74; Sheridan, p. 47), though it can deal well with argument by analogy, illustration, and symbol (Richardson, p. 76; Astre, p. 146).

[36]This is mentioned by Giannetti, p. 170; and Jinks, p. 127.

[37]As will be obvious from this example, it is hard to distinguish a film simile from a film metaphor though in verbal language it is not (Jinks, p. 116).

[38]The uses of figurative language in film and in print literature are discussed in Giannetti, pp. 161-180; and in Jinks, pp. 110-127.

angles, music, verbal expression--and include them simultaneously, which verbal literature cannot.[39]

Both literature and the film employ point of view as an important narrative device; first, second and third person narration is possible in print, but it can use only one at a time. Film tends to mix first and third person narration; experiments with exclusively first person narration have not been satisfactory, most notably in Robert Montgomery's The Lady in the Lake (1946), no doubt because the camera is not a human eye. It does not conceptualize, standardize, or interpret perception as the eye and mind do.[40] Both literature and film can also create identification or detachment in the reader or viewer.

Since the cinema and print literature share so many conventions and techniques, despite media differences, it would seem logical that similar critical methods could be applied,[41] and that the student and critic of each could benefit from familiarity with not one but both art forms.[42] A reader with film consciousness becomes more aware of the visual and aural appeals of much fine writing, and training in literature gives perspective to one's appreciation of film.[43]

---

[39]Giannetti, pp. 169-170.

[40]Huss and Silverstein, p. 151.

[41]This idea is supported by Sheridan, p. viii; and by Raúl Alfredo Marino, "El signo, símbolo del cine," in Semana de Literatura y Cine Argentinos (Mendoza, Argentina: Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, 1972), pp. 61-62.

[42]Riesman, p. 363.

[43]Richardson, pp. 3-4.

The relationship between cinema and print literature has been remarked since the first days of film making, from the time of the adaptation of literary classics for the early screen to the recent trend toward the caméra stylo.[44] Major attempts to explore the relationship of cinema to the literary tradition are the studies of Robert Richardson (Literature and Film) and Charles Eidsvik ("Cinema and Literature"), already mentioned, and Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumier's De la littérature au cinéma.[45] All three arrive at similar conclusions: that literature influenced cinema heavily, an obvious point; and, not so obvious but more significant, that cinema history is in reality the story of film's incorporating itself into the literary tradition--principally into the narrative literary tradition.[46]

Examining, then, this history in more detail, one finds critics in agreement that the development of film follows the work of Georges Méliès to Edwin S. Porter to D. W. Griffith to Sergei Eisenstein; and

---

[44]Ibid., p. 11.

[45]Marie-Claire Ropars Wuilleumier, De la littérature au cinéma (Paris: A. Cohn, 1970).

[46]Says Ropars-Wuilleumier, "... ce n'est pas le roman qui préfigure le cinéma, c'est le cinéma qui s'inscrit peu à peu dans une tradition, sinon romanesque, du moms narrative, commune à tous les montreurs d'histoires ... et c'est tout naturellement dans les formes narratives offertes par les récits littéraires que les premiers cinéastes ont trouvé un modèle pour l'agencement des histoires qu'ils allaient désorniais raconter au cinéma" (pp. 12-13). Richardson appears to agree with her statement, arguing that, ". . . if one is willing to . . . describe literature as being, in the main, a narrative art, intent upon creating images and sounds in the reader's mind, then film will appear much more obviously literary itself. This description would seem to argue that the film is only an extension, but a magnificent one, of the older literary arts" (p. 12).